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SPECIAL ISSUE ON EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE

The Continuing Quest for Early Warning and Early Response

Susanne Schmeidl

At an Early Warning Conference on 15–17 March 1997 in Toronto, Ontario (see summary in this issue), one of the participants approached me with the comment that it was interesting to see that the same issues from about ten years ago are still being discussed. Hearing such a comment makes one wonder if we will ever move beyond the stage of discussion into the implementation of early warning—rapid response and early action. In many ways such a prospect is very frustrating; one feels in a time trap, doomed to repeat history over and over again.

Yet, while I agree to some extent with the comment that early warning researchers are still struggling with similar issues as several years ago, I would argue that a shift has occurred. In the early years of early warning, the focus was not really on preventive action *before* the outbreak of a crisis, but more on early warning for preparing responses *after* a crisis has occurred and created refugees. Thus, while we may struggle with similar issues that in many ways are linked to the definition of early warning, changes have

nevertheless occurred (see also the article by Howard Adelman on the history of early warning).

One of the most important changes is that early warning is no longer an

exotic topic discussed only by a few individuals. Early warning has gone mainstream. This has led to an explosion of individuals and organizations that do early warning, or redefine their

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own work as early warning. In addition, many more governments now ponder the issue of early warning and consider the creation of special units (see the proposal by Andreas Kohlschütter and Günther Bächler to the Swiss government). On the one hand, I welcome this intense focus on early warning, since the topic deserves thorough consideration. On the other hand, I see the "early warning boom" as somewhat harmful to the cause. There is a German saying that "too many cooks spoil the soup," particularly if they disagree what the soup should look and taste like. Similarly, too many approaches to early warning will merely add to the confusion of the issues, lead to duplication, contradictions, and ultimately competition over scarce resources. This is not what early warning should be about. Early warn-

Quantitative and qualitative analysis is still done separately, and only a few efforts combine both. As briefly touched upon in an article in the last special issue of *Refuge* on early warning, the ideal would be to combine both methods, and our research should focus on achieving this goal.

Yet, despite all these advances, we still hit strong resistance in policy circles when it comes to early warning. The most widely used argument as to why early warning cannot be pursued is that there is a lack of political will, which we are unable to change regardless of our advances in information gathering, sharing and analysis. This argument, however, is an easy resignation: it cannot be done, so we will not do it. The world would never have seen some of its greatest inventions if certain inventors and scientists had

... the fruits of past early warning efforts and research are now visible. I would make the argument that information now is readily available to users. Thanks to the World Wide Web and electronic networks, information is at our fingertips.

ing, by definition, has to do with cooperation and the sharing of information. Therefore, it is important in this ever-growing field to seek collaboration among the different parties doing early warning. This issue of *Refuge* provides two such examples: the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) and the Burundi/Great Lakes Policy Forum (Barnett Rubin and Fabienne Hara).

Nevertheless, the fruits of past early warning efforts and research are now visible. I would make the argument that information now is readily available to users. Thanks to the World Wide Web and electronic networks, information is at our fingertips. Recent developments in search engines, and more importantly, computerized coding, have even facilitated the intake of the surplus of information in order to avoid an overload. While we have made advances in the research of early warning, we are still falling short of merging different approaches in order to obtain the most complete picture.

resigned themselves so easily. Whatever happened to the human spirit of pushing ahead and producing change? Has the world turned all of us into couch potatoes willing to observe events, but too hesitant and lazy to become actors?

I agree with those who argue that political will can be created. After all we know the CNN effect, when outside pressure "makes up the mind" of politicians to do something. If CNN can do it, then aimed and structured analysis with policy options should also be able to do it. The latter has the advantage of providing clear policy options based on thorough analysis, while the CNN effect merely plays on sentiments.

In addition, why not try early warning and see how it works? Of course we still need to learn much about its implementation and what action is best to take. Nevertheless, without trying—and I mean systematically not *ad hoc*—we will never know if it will work. So far, early warnings have been ignored

for many reasons. It seems we have tried so many things that have not worked, so why not give early warning a shot? If policymakers are so sure about its failure, they should at least amass some empirical evidence for this position. But perhaps policymakers

approach early warning. Despite surveying academic, UN, and NGO efforts in early warning, as well as providing some critical comments, certain areas remained untouched. One of the most important areas, as should be apparent from the discussion so far, is

So far, early warnings have been ignored for many reasons ... If policymakers are so sure about its failure, they should at least amass some empirical evidence for this position. But perhaps policymakers are afraid that early warning may actually work. Then, they would have to respond to something they may not want to respond to. After all, was it not a policy rationale that human lives are dispensable for the greater political good?

are afraid that early warning may actually work. Then, they would have to respond to something they may not want to respond to. After all, was it not a policy rationale that human lives are dispensable for the greater political good? Are policymakers afraid that we may actually be able to change events on the ground? Would it be such a bad thing to live in a world without conflict? Or are policymakers afraid they could put themselves out of business? After all, the more conflict, the more necessity to monitor, work on policy options, provide aid, etc. Surely, there must be justifications for policymakers other than going from crisis to crisis and emergency to emergency. Some might criticize me for straying from my area of knowledge. But I do know that crises *can* be prevented if we do it right, and that conflict and human suffering are in most cases avoidable and unnecessary. I disagree very much with the notion that human lives are dispensable, and I am sure that policymakers would too if it was their life (or that of family) at stake. As much as I hate to use the Nike slogan, it seems to fit when it comes to early warning: We have come a long way, so "Let's just do it!"

About a year ago, I edited the first special issue of *Refuge* on early warning. While compiling this issue, it became readily apparent that one edition alone may not be enough to provide even a glimpse of the different ways to

the link between early warning and early action. This particular link can make or break early warning in the eyes of many. After all, what good is it to know, if one cannot act. Therefore, early action or early response (or even preventive response) seems to be an inherent component of early warning, although the latter evolution only appeared in the past ten years. The article by Howard Adelman provides an historical overview of how early warning and the perception of early warning have evolved. This article is very important for an understanding of the meaning of early warning. It may also aid in clearing up certain misunderstandings about early warning that arise from different definitions.

This link between early warning and action is also explored in the two NGO perspectives that add to that provided in the last special issue of *Refuge*. The two articles do not simply provide a description of activities; one emphasizes how early warning is perceived by NGOs and linked to early action (the article by Kate Whidden); while the other provides a concrete approach on how the resources of NGOs can be pooled together for continuous early warning and monitoring of conflict areas, with the ultimate goal to impact on the activities on the ground (article by Rubin and Hara).

While the last special issue provided some critical commentary on early warning in Europe, this subject is not

specifically dealt with here. Moreover, no government approach was surveyed. Rather, this issue has a special section on European perspectives which includes an article by Kohlschütter and Bächler on the proposal of an early warning system for the Swiss government, and an article by Julie Fournier on the state of conflict prevention in France. Both articles are complementary, with Switzerland being a very small country with a long history of neutrality, and France being a very big country with a long history of interventionism and power politics in Africa. The two articles provide a perfect example of the constraints and challenges such different countries face when struggling with the issue of early warning.

Finally, rather than updating the directory of early warning (which is still in the works), I decided to include some more detailed information on a very new consortium on early warning—The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, and a brief report on a recent conference in early warning. Both efforts in a way pool the different perspectives together. FEWER comprises UN, NGO and academic members (with governments in a contact group), while the conference attempts to survey all spheres of early warning, challenges to it, and ways to overcome diversity in order to reach synergy.

I hope this issue of *Refuge* will not be perceived as a repetition of old issues, but rather as an introduction to new perspectives. We need to keep the focus on early warning and continue to try to convince policymakers to act. In addition, we need to pool our resources towards a joint effort of early warning and early response, so that we can look back ten years from now with the satisfaction of knowing that we have come a long way indeed. ■

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Humanitarian and Conflict Oriented Early Warning: A Historical Background Sketch

Howard Adelman

Abstract

This article provides a brief and informative overview of the overall development of early warning over past years. It also includes references to the author's own involvement in the field as Director of the Centre for Refugee Studies and, later, Director of the Prevention/Early Warning Unit.

Précis

Cet article fournit un survol succinct et factuel du développement général du phénomène de l'alerte préventive dans les dernières années. On y retrouve notamment des informations sur l'implication personnelle de l'auteur dans ce domaine en sa qualité de directeur du Centre d'Études sur les Réfugiés et, par la suite, de l'Unité Prévention/Alerte Préventive.

There are two historical sources for the use of early warning as a concept. One is to be found in the intelligence community. Early warning referred to a party A possessing advance notification of an immanent hostile act by an enemy B enabling A to undertake preventive action which could deter or even compel B to cancel the planned action. A second source is to be found in reference to natural humanitarian disasters, initially with respect to weather storms or earthquakes, but then applied to draught conditions in order to anticipate famines. Thus, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) developed the first early warn-

ing system that was not self-defensive. It was designed to enable the FAO to stockpile and locate food supplies to prevent famine.

The first type of early warning system was designed to enable action to be taken to deter an enemy's threat or mitigate its effects. The second was also concerned with taking action, but to prevent or mitigate suffering of others.

In the UN system, early warning was initially associated with the first type and traditional intelligence gathering to detect, deter, prevent, or counter hostile acts against UN peacekeepers in the Congo.¹ The roots of its contemporary conception, however, are to be found in the humanitarian area. Intent on enabling the UN to prepare for and perhaps even mitigate the causes of forced migration, a 1981 study by Prince Sadrudin for the UN Commission on Human Rights set forth a number of push and pull factors which contributed to forced migration. Prince Sadrudin recommended the creation of an early warning system within the UN to study and track these push and pull factors. This emphasis was reinforced when the Group of Government Experts to Avert New Refugee Flows formally requested the UN Secretary-General to establish an office to gather more complex information on refugee flows, and to report on that information in a timely fashion.

The UN system initially attempted to structure itself on the nation-state model by appending an intelligence apparatus to the executive office. Perez de Cuellar initiated ORCI, the Organization for Research and the Collection of Information in 1987 (Ramcharan 1991). The Secretary-General also envisioned that ORCI would serve the security as well as humanitarian mandate of the UN. In a perspective paper submitted to the General Assembly in

the same year in which he established ORCI (A/42/512), he stated:

The United Nations must ... give very high priority in the 1990s to monitoring potential causes of conflict and to communicating warning signs to those in a position to alleviate the situation. First responsibility should lie with the security Council and with the Secretary-General who will need to have the means to mount a global watch. Given the strong economic and social factors in regional violence, economic and social developments will have to be followed and assessed in terms of their relevance to *international security* [my italics].²

The intelligence related to security differed from the intelligence capacity developed by the UN peacekeepers in the Congo crisis. The new security intelligence was not related to deterring, deflecting, or countering hostile actions directed at military troops, but rather to assist in preventive diplomacy. The latter use of security intelligence is distinct from, but related to, early warning geared to mitigating suffering resulting from socially and politically produced humanitarian disasters such as in alleviating the conditions which produce refugees.

It was in the latter capacity that I, as Director for the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University, became involved with ORCI as an academic research partner in the initial attempt to develop a Humanitarian Early Warning System. HEW had two foci—the anticipation of refugee flows so that steps could be taken in advance to ensure health, water and food supplies as well as shelter were in place to mitigate the suffering of the refugees, and the anticipation of refugee flows so that preventive action could be taken to alleviate the causes stimulating the flow.

The costly resources needed to comprehensively gather, let alone assess,

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analyze and disseminate the information, were just not available. The chief officers of a very small staff did not even have the funds available to travel to meetings to discuss early warning in developing a partnership with research units based at universities. In the end, Boutros Boutros-Ghali abolished ORCI.

Since that time, particularly in the aftermath of the Rwanda fiasco, within the UN system, both the political (DPA and DPKO) and the humanitarian arms of the UN involved in global issues (both DHA and the UNHCR) have recognized the need for an international intelligence analysis capability. The UN in June of 1995 developed the Policy Analysis Team in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to "strengthen DPA's early warning and analytical capacity" (Ramcharan 1996, 3) to make policy recommendations. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) has developed its Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS) (rooted in a complex indicator model) as well as its IRIN information sharing system on the Great Lakes region of Africa. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has developed an Oversight Group to ensure the exchange of information and analysis between departments. These three branches meet at least weekly under the auspices of the Secretary-General as an Interdepartmental Task Force to compare notes, determine priorities, and devise strategies. Left out of this loop, but integral to early warning, is the monitoring work of the United Nations Commission for Human Rights.³ In Geneva, DHA has also developed RefugeeNet as a complementary humanitarian input into the development of an early warning capacity.

In addition to the UN initiatives, projects underway in this field are located among three other groups—NGOs, academia, and states. The NGO sector—such as the Carnegie Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, International Alert in London—have initiated different models of early warning geared to dif-

ferent forms of preventive diplomacy and different organizational models. A number of academics have attempted to develop theoretical models based on indicator systems and/or a large number of case studies. Finally, individual states on their own have taken up the issue of early warning—for example, in the CIA funding of the Minority-at-Risk project.

NGOs, with the cooperation and involvement of some international agencies such as the UNHCR, have attempted to develop a network model which depends on voluntary cooperation of a number of individuals and organizations. A key component is the sharing of information. Amnesty International is perhaps the most famous organization in the field of individual human rights abuses which utilizes a variation of this model. The various "Watch" organizations provide other examples. Academics and research centres (PIOOM in Holland, Ted Gurr's University of Maryland team, Hayward Alker, the Harvard group, have all attempted to develop theoretical models based on indicators and/or on comparative case studies,⁴ but have not had the resources to test the competing models and settle on one or two for development.⁵ Though preliminary attempts have been made to coordinate that research, mostly under the initiative of Ted Gurr, the development of a systematic network to deal with the theoretical arm can best be described as being at a primitive stage of development, even if the models themselves are much more advanced. The development of these theoretical models based on long term case study analysis seems esoteric compared with the urgency of the various crises in the field and the suspicion that such long term case study analyses can have little impact on a crisis which seems to be suddenly triggered by the crash of a plane carrying the President of a country (Rwanda) and the need to respond immediately to a conflict which appears to emerge like a volcano without warning.

The fourth structural component of an early warning system are states.

Though no state alone, except perhaps for the United States, has the capacity to develop and operate an early warning system to cover all potential complex emergencies on its own, states are reluctant to develop early warning systems as part of a consortium⁶ lest the results of such early warnings entail that they become involved in humanitarian actions which are not compatible or even run contrary to their self interests. Why have early warnings if you might not want to heed them? Yet only states have the basic capacity to manage such conflicts. And states, willy nilly, become involved, however reluctantly, in the humanitarian dilemmas of most complex emergencies.

However, very recent efforts have been taken to develop a consortium of all four groups to combine efforts to develop synergies, since none of the individual organizations or the smaller internationally-minded states on their own have the resources or capacity to monitor the myriad of complex emergencies around the globe. An NGO UK-based initiative, facilitated by International Alert, has formed a Working Group on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention to develop a network-based early warning and conflict prevention capacity. A consortium of agencies, academic research units, NGOs, and hopefully, internationally-minded states has combined efforts to develop a true international operating network involving all these groups in a single early warning system. The organization that resulted is called FEWER, the Forum for Early Warning and Emergency Response, founded in September of 1996.⁷

The basic conception of early warning is based on a central system of indicators to provide guidance for independent specialized networks focused on crisis areas to gather and analyze data and develop response scenarios in a continuing system of monitoring. The linkage with emergency response has yet to be worked out.

With the development of a formal international consortium in this area, hopefully more attention can be

shifted from structural problems to the issue of making such a system effective. ■

Notes

1. Cf. A. Walter Dorn and David J. H. Bell, "Intelligence and Peacekeeping: The UN Operation in the Congo, 1960–64," *International Peacekeeping* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 11–33.
2. This quote was brought to my attention by B. G. Ramcharan at the Clingendael conference. Cf. B. G. Ramcharan, *The International Law and Practice of Early-Warning and Preventive Diplomacy*, 1991, Chapter IV (Dordrecht, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers).
3. In his initial address to the Commission on Human Rights in 1994, the High Commissioner for Human Rights stated: "I shall look into the viability of an 'early warning' mechanism that would enable us to take action in a timely manner to protect human rights." In his first report to the UN General Assembly, he stated that, "It will be important in the future [my italics] to have as early notice as possible of situations in which various elements of the United Nations human rights program could play a role in preventing the outbreak of serious violations of human rights." (A/49/36, para. 66) Cf. Ramcharan 1996 for a more expansive discussion of these developments.
4. The following list of some early warning modellers attempts to summarize the approach of each of them:
 - i) Dr. John Davies, Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, works with GEDS (Global Event Data System), a near-real time data analysis of actions and reactions to crises as they arise;
 - ii) Dr. Helen Fein, Executive Director of the Institute for the Study of Genocide at Harvard University in Cambridge, in her studies on genocide depicts genocide as a reactive or retributive response by elites who use genocide and massacre as instruments of policy in the absence of either internal social controls and external interventions; she has already tentatively applied her model to the Rwandan situation in an article in *Refuge* 14, no. 5, October 1994;
 - iii) Barbara Harff, Department of Political Science at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, and Ted Gurr, leading scholar and researcher in Early Warning research, have worked on developing a model of Early Warning applied to Intercommunal Conflict, taking into consideration the international background conditions as well as the internal ethnic and political fragmentation and the absence of offsetting international and domestic countervailing institutions termed "accelerators";
 - iv) Alex Schmidt and Bero Jongman of PIOOM (Programma Interdisciplinair Onderzoek naar Oorzaken van Mensenrechtenschendingen, in English: Interdisciplinary Research Program on Root Causes of Human Rights Violations) at the Center for the Study of Social Conflicts of Leiden University, has undertaken to Monitor Early Warning of Humanitarian Crises through data on cultural, social, economic and political conditions correlated with Human Rights Violations and has proposed developing a model-driven forecast system for assessing the risk of political and humanitarian crises based on conflict-related indicators using a broad data-gathering effort based on actual monitoring, combined with a statistical model and an expert-based co-assessment;
 - v) the late Frank Sherman (along with Gavan Duffy and Stuart Thorson) at Syracuse University, worked with SHERFACS, a data set summarizing the conflict trajectories and management efforts of over 1400 international disputes and twice as many intrastate disputes since 1945; Alex Schmid has been the only one to run a test of two models;
 - vi) Professor David Singer of the Department of Political Science, University of Michigan works on Early Warning Signals for Culturally Distinct Groups in Danger;
 - vii) Rodney Tomlinson, Department of Political Science, U.S. Naval Academy, works with WEISS (World Event/Interaction Survey), a feedback survey model to ascertain the willingness of the respective parties to cooperate or engage in conflict;
 - viii) Jonathan Wilkenfeld, Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland, and Michael Breecher of the Political Science Department at McGill University in Montreal, have applied their Model of Crisis, Conflict and Instability to the Ethnopolitical Dimensions of International crises.
5. Alex Schmid, "Early Detection of Emerging Political and Humanitarian Crises: An Early Warning Model for Assessing

Country Proneness to Conflict Escalation," PIOOM, p. 3.

6. There have been some efforts, however. The rather open Burundi Policy Forum and the more restricted Burundi Security Forum were instituted to connect intelligence from both states, academics and NGOs specializing in human rights monitoring, refugee advocacy, conflict resolution, and emergency relief to share information and devise appropriate responses from the extreme of deploying standby forces to more modest efforts geared to impeding arms flows, freezing extremist leaders' foreign bank accounts or their abilities to travel.
7. The initial founding members included UNDHA, UNHCR, PIOOM, Centre for Preventive Action—Council on Foreign Relations, the Prevention/Early Warning Unit of the Centre for Refugee Studies and the Centre for International and Security Studies at York University. The interim and temporary secretariat was housed at York. In addition to the founding members, scheduled to attend the second meeting in January of 1997 are CSS—Ethnobarometer, the Centre for European Studies (CEPS), a representative of the European Parliament, the Swiss Peace Foundation, the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology—Russian Academy of Science, as well as representatives from Canada, Switzerland, and possibly some of the Scandinavian countries. Three pilot area studies have been initiated. For example, the Early Warning/Prevention Unit at York University initiated a WARN (Western Africa Research Network) primarily focused on Nigeria.

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Early Warning and Early Response: The Link between Information and Action

Kathryn Whidden

Abstract

While there are many agencies and states which actively monitor early warning information, few have the added challenge of linking their analysis of the information with their actions in the field. This article explores the operational reality of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, arguing that there is not a monolithic early warning system which will meet the needs of all players.

Précis

Alors qu'un grand nombre d'agences et d'états suivent de très près la circulation des informations concernant l'alerte préventive, très peu font face au défi supplémentaire consistant à établir le lien entre les informations dont ils disposent et leur action sur le terrain. Cet article explore la réalité opérationnelle de la Croix Rouge Internationale et du Mouvement Croissant Rouge, en développant une argumentation selon laquelle il n'existe pas un système monolithique d'alerte préventive qui rencontrerait les besoins de la totalité des intervenants.

For international organizations providing emergency relief, an effective early warning system functions much like a living strategic plan. Information from the early warning system is analyzed and operational decisions are taken based on this analysis. The link between analysis and action is often

made within a very short time. Other times, there is opportunity for prolonged reflection and in these circumstances one has to be vigilant in monitoring, careful not to miss a fluctuation in the indicators.

For Red Cross, the main issue at stake with regard to "synergy in early warning" is how best to serve the interests of the victims, or potential victims, in an effective and coherent way. Priority attention is also paid to increasing the strength of local coping mechanisms. Much of the early warning information comes from this level of the system and, in addition, any response which may be planned must be carried out in conjunction with structures and capacities which are already present.

Early Warning: the Red Cross Context

In the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, players come from one of three components: the National Societies, the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). A brief explanation of the organization of the Red Cross system at this point allows for a more detailed contextual analysis of our operations later on in the paper.

To begin, there exist 171 National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies around the world. Considering the additional "National Societies in formation," there is virtually a Red Cross or Red Crescent presence in almost every country in the world, forming a truly international network of assistance. The Societies must fulfil stringent conditions to become recognized and to gain membership in the Movement. They must carry on humanitarian work throughout the territory of their country. They must respect the seven Fundamental Principles¹ of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

and be recognized by their governments as voluntary aid societies which act as auxiliaries to the public authorities. Additionally, special status under International Humanitarian Law (IHL) gives National Societies and the ICRC a privileged role and responsibility in relation to victims of armed conflicts. National Societies provide a range of services, including emergency relief, health services and social assistance, to those individuals considered most vulnerable and most in need. They are responsible for disseminating information on IHL. In wartime, National Societies may act as auxiliaries to the army medical services, aid prisoners and refugees and provide a tracing service to help put people in touch with missing relatives.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the Federation), founded in 1919, is the permanent liaison body of the National Societies. The Federation is the element of the Red Cross which organizes and coordinates international response to natural disasters and to the population movements (namely refugees) which result from conflict. The Federation further assists all National Societies in developing their capacity to effectively manage staff, volunteer and governance structures, as well as programs.

The ICRC was created in 1863 and is the founding body of the Movement. A Swiss-governed institution, the ICRC acts to protect and assist victims of international and internal civil conflicts, and has official responsibilities set out in the four Geneva Conventions and the two Additional Protocols. Associated tasks include the unique mandate of monitoring the treatment of prisoners of war, and a right of humanitarian initiative recognized by the international community. The ICRC is a

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The views expressed here are the personal views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Red Cross.

neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian institution.

Both the Federation and the ICRC maintain a decentralized network of regional delegations spread out across the world, as well as a host of active country delegations. The country delegations manage the territory-specific operations; often this includes management of a relief operation. The regional delegations assist the cluster of country delegations in their jurisdictions, while also bringing a wider geographic perspective to the operations.

This combination of National Societies, country delegations, regional delegations and Geneva headquarters adds up to a Movement which, with staff and volunteers, directly includes over 250,000,000 individuals. The decentralized grassroots structure allows Red Cross to be there—on the spot—responding to crises effectively and rapidly.

Early Warning Information is ... What? For Whom? Starting When?

Organizations seek early warning information for different reasons, depending on their own unique mandate.

There does not exist a monolithic, all-encompassing Red Cross early warning system. As with most organizations, the various offices of the Red Cross seek information from many sources, depending on its unique needs. In fact the early warning terminology would, in our case, be better expressed as "trend" or "horizon scanning." It means accessing the type of information required to do our job—to assist beneficiaries.

To assist us and similar organizations, there are already many related early warning systems and tools. What they provide is raw material—information which can be subject to a variety of interpretations. As an example, the inflation rate in an economically troubled country is a piece of raw data. Having analyzed this rate, a social services organization may then call for a fight against the associated rise in child poverty. A government agency

may use the statistic as a rationale for budget cuts. A bank may see a necessity to raise the interest rates. A group representing elders may use such a statistic to lobby for the need for an increase in pensions.

Within the context of a complex conflict, the nuances of meaning surrounding one statistic or one bit of information are subject to the same variations of perception. Added to the variances can be a political or ethnic fervour which, in and of itself, further skews the interpretation.

While some data, such as inflation rates or information about political prisoners, may be released on a regular schedule, there are other bits of early

monitoring. One seeks to analyze from a national or regional perspective, while the other functions at a local or community level.

The *macro-triggers* provide data which monitors the humanitarian situation from a national or international perspective. This includes the trends in national/regional politics (such as the monitoring of political forces, military presence, ethnic factors, demographic trends); trends in the geopolitical context; in international health (i.e., the rate and transmissibility of disease); in national/regional security issues; in satellite climatological/agronomical data, and the presence and operations of interna-

If the roots of a situation, such as that of Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, goes back over generations—when does a warning no longer merit being called "early"? Given the ethnic composition and historical troubles in many regions of the world, there are already well-defined parameters for potential conflict. There would thus be little reason to call a warning "early," but rather "perpetual."

warning information which are more creeping in nature. It is difficult, for example, to quantify the extent of racism or ethnic hatred in a region. For information of this nature, it is the choice of the individual analyst as to how far back one needs to go in time to track a situation. If the roots of a situation, such as that of Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, goes back over generations—when does a warning no longer merit being called "early"? Given the ethnic composition and historical troubles in many regions of the world, there are already well-defined parameters for potential conflict. There would thus be little reason to call a warning "early," but rather "perpetual."

For this reason, it is not realistic to speak of a monolithic "early warning system." There is a semblance of a system which exists, yet it exists only to aggregate information.

Early Warning: Big Picture and Small Picture

There are essentially two intertwined early warning systems which require

tional actors (diplomatic, humanitarian, religious).

There is an international system for monitoring these macro-triggers, yet each player seeks information related to their specialized mandate. These players include, yet are not limited to: the United Nations system, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the media, all individual states and their embassies, international organizations, NGO's and universities.

Functioning at a lower level, the *micro-triggers* provide data which monitors the humanitarian situation from a local or community perspective. Some of that which is monitored has previously been mentioned, yet the narrower perspective influences what one may see in the data, thus the interpretation may not be the same. Micro-triggers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- the political situation;
- climatic conditions and food security/availability/access;

- market prices/market background information;
- the activities of international organizations and NGO's;
- security situation;
- public health situation, including the state of health facilities;
- population movements;
- "at risk" populations;
- agriculture, including land preparation trends, rainfall and germination, crops, yield estimates;
- detainees situation; and
- human rights situation.

A final micro-trigger looks at the use of a population's coping mechanisms or "insurance" policies. This could take many forms and includes the following:

- changes in cropping and planting practices;
- dispersed grazing;
- migration in search of employment;
- increased petty commodity production;
- collection of wild foods;
- use of inter-household transfers and loans;
- use of credit from merchants and moneylenders;
- rationing of current food consumption or slimming;
- consumption of relief food;
- sale of productive assets; and
- break-up of household and distress migration.

There are many different organizations which monitor the micro-triggers and, in various ways, provide the associated information. These include local governments, religious and cultural groups, community and neighbourhood associations, local public health authorities, Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies and many other players.

It is important for those larger agencies which focus on the macro-perspective to compare their national or international conclusions with that of the local perspective. Often the macro-indicators may paint a different picture than that which is viewed at the local perspective. While there may be legitimate reasons for this, that level of comparative analysis is important to

undertake in order to develop a comprehensive view of a situation.

How Do We Gather and Analyze Information?

The information yielded through the systems mentioned above is raw data. It does not form a single mechanism for early warning which can be assessed by all interested players. Thus, the data requires analysis and interpretation to become meaningful and this is a task undertaken by all individual players, using their own specialized mandate as a filter.

Using terminology of a paper presented by William DeMars (1997),² who assessed the utility of data gathered by NGOs for early warning purposes, one pragmatic response is that the variety of NGO eyes and ears are attached to different heads. Where that head is, and what it looks like, will influence how it gathers and interprets data. Is it black? White? Male? Female? Religious? Independent or organizationally-based? Canadian? African? These factors can influence what the eyes see, and what the ears hear. Likewise, what an early warning indicator is and how or if you should react, depends enormously on who you ask.

Having accessed raw data, there are a number of steps to take in assessing it. For the purpose of assessing what could be early warning information, relief organizations need to constantly test the validity of information gathered. To do so, they first ensure that those doing the data gathering are well-trained. Preferably there are multidisciplinary teams working together. In addition, organizations must analyze the data gathering system/trends to ensure that respondents are not seeking to manipulate a possible response.

Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the National Societies engage the local population in training, in networking and risk analysis. In this way, there are local people monitoring early warning indicators which they themselves find to be meaningful. Ideally, this is part of a disaster preparedness and prevention (DPP)

program, linking the capture of information to the need for action, given certain defined scenarios.

Another element of early warning data analysis is that of determining the cause for changes to raw data. If trends change, how can this be explained? What are the repercussions or consequences of this change? In this way, the analyst attempts to stay a step or two (or three) ahead of an unfolding scenario. In the case of Red Cross, this often brings about the pre-positioning of food or medical stocks. In situations when troops are called to action, it can also bring about renewed ICRC efforts to train armed forces in international humanitarian law, ensuring that soldiers understand the rules of war.

The Importance and Difficulty of Having a Neutral Approach in the Gathering of Information

Yet the context of an increasing proportion of operations today is often having little to do with organized armed forces. New armed actors of violence often do not represent nations, but rather economic, ethnic, religious interests or even organized crime. This growth of criminal behaviour and banditry imposes a new approach the context of unstructured conflicts where basic rules are not respected. It necessitates a new horizon-scanning approach for relief agencies, one which includes players not normally recognized as valid interlocutors.

Other trends which affect security of Red Cross/Red Crescent operations include the fact that humanitarian action is becoming increasingly attached to Western values and as such, are perceived to represent enemies by some parties to a conflict. Further, humanitarian action is in contradiction with the very aims of what are known as conflicts of identity or conflicts of a genocidal nature.

Despite the vast expanse of data which can be gathered from the plethora of information sources today, it can become more and more difficult to have a clear picture of the humanitarian community owing to

interagency competition, overlapping mandates, militarization and politicization. This situation is exacerbated by rampant mediatization which results in a blurred conception of each agency's mandate and may cast doubt on an operation's independence and neutrality.

The media, through its field presence and pursuit of news in time for deadlines and often for commercial purposes, comes to play a role which extends far beyond that of mere observer. This has a ripple effect for agencies which compete for media attention, as profiling of organizational logos in the international media comes to be equated with success for the entire operation. Additionally, the media pursues and distributes information from many of the same sources used by relief agencies. In being quoted as a media source, an agency may have jeopardized the extent to which it can subsequently collect information. This forces a degree of accountability from agency representatives and a sharp understanding of information, as well as the role of disinformation.

The data-gathering job is thus often not one which is, in itself, neutral. Particularly in the context of today's unstructured conflicts, there are many interlocutors who must be included in an agency's horizon-scanning. Each has their own agenda and seeks to provide information which furthers this platform. Agencies must be diligent in their own collection of information, ensuring that all parties and subgroups are consulted—aware that each has its own bias.

The Link Between Information and Action

As relief organizations must tie their analysis to their subsequent actions, attention is always paid to the local individual and group coping mechanisms. When are they being used? When are they being challenged? When are they being overwhelmed? This brings an organization to the point of then deciding when is an appropriate and necessary time to respond.

The option of response is always analyzed against the strength of local coping mechanisms. Much like a disaster, an international response may challenge and/or overwhelm the local capacities. Possible interventions are assessed for the degree to which they would be likely to make the transition to longer-term development projects, as well as the degree to which it may impact the local, national or international political scene.

Ideally, a response initiative is preventive in nature, seeking to avoid

early warning system, not all organizations are expert in monitoring an early warning system—nor should they be. A traditional development project must certainly understand the context in which it is operating yet, if it is a project focused on childhood immunization, let us not expect it to likewise provide an analysis of national political trends.

The limitations of an organization's mandate will govern the degree to which it is involved in an assessment of early warning information, likewise

It would be unwise to believe that every organization which has a hand in feeding an early warning system will likewise be a part of a response which is eventually staged. While it is believed that early warning information should be tied to early action, it is often not appropriate for a multiplicity of agencies to be involved in this action.

human suffering. While the prescriptive actions associated with avoiding a natural disaster are relatively straightforward, those associated with avoiding conflict are more complex.

It would be unwise to believe that every organization which has a hand in feeding an early warning system will likewise be a part of a response which is eventually staged. While it is believed that early warning information should be tied to early action, it is often not appropriate for a multiplicity of agencies to be involved in this action. This is particularly true in the case of a complex disaster.

Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, it is the National Society which is the "first responder." Through the prepositioning of volunteers trained in first aid and disaster preparedness and prevention, they are in a position to be informed about pending disasters and to be at the scene as it unfolds. Following from this, it is clear that each element of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement plays its own special role in disaster prevention, response or mitigation.

Likewise, each organization involved in early warning and response plays its own role. While all may formally or informally feed each others

it will govern the degree to which the organization is involved in a response initiative.

What Next?

Ultimately, an effective early warning system is but one step. Receiving appropriate and accurate raw data is important, as is the data analysis. Yet even if the coordination and collaboration among the various agencies were improved, the world may not emerge a safer place.

- 1) Response agencies need to continually assess and validate their data. The "early" warning is timeless in that it represents a constant, cyclical approach to monitoring, assessing, analyzing and comparing.
- 2) The root causes of conflicts and disasters need to be addressed. Early warning, followed by early humanitarian response, often does little more than provide victims a temporary respite. There are no technical solutions to political problems and the humanitarian agencies are not, by virtue of their own mandates, able to provide the political solutions.
- 3) The impact of international assistance needs to be measured against the possibility of finding a more

permanent solution. If refugees are spending prolonged periods confined to camps, is aid perpetuating a problem? Is dependency being encouraged? What would indicate that this is so?

- 4) The improvement of the early warning system should achieve a better balance between western-oriented systems development and the building of a locally-managed observation and response capacity in the affected countries.

In cooperating with National Society counterparts, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are working to strengthen local capacities to monitor, prevent and/or react to potential disasters, both natural and complex. The National Society in each country plays an important role in the local and national early warning systems, while the Federation and ICRC delegations function at the regional and international levels. Due to the specific mandates of all three components, there is specialized information collection responsibilities and this, in turn, leads to specialized response capacities. The clarity of each other's mandate is the key to the effectiveness of the system, yet it also is something which is repeatedly discussed and analyzed given new operational scenarios. A willingness to respond to and learn from these organizational challenges is part of our constant evolution. While this is the reality of one element of the early warning and international assistance system, the key messages are hopefully relevant to all. ■

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1. Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity, Universality.
2. William DeMars, "Eyes and Ears? Limits of NGO Information for Early Warning," paper presented at the Synergy in Early Warning Conference, Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto, Canada, March 15-18, 1997. □

The Burundi and Great Lakes Project of the Center for Preventive Action, Council on Foreign Relations: An Example of NGO Cooperation

Barnett R. Rubin and Fabienne Hara

Abstract

This paper discusses the Project on the Great Lakes region of Central Africa of the Center for Preventive Action of the Council on Foreign Relations. It focuses more specifically on an evaluation of the Great Lakes Policy Forum, which was established in January 1995 and coordinates conflict prevention activities in the Great Lakes region of US-based organizations.

Précis

Cet article trace les grandes lignes du projet sur la région des Grands Lacs en Afrique Centrale du Center for Preventive Action, Council on Foreign Relations. Il présente une évaluation spécifique du Forum politique sur les Grands Lacs, créée en janvier 1995 et qui a pour objectif d'établir une plate-forme de coordination des activités de prévention des organisations basées aux États Unis.

Introduction

The Center for Preventive Action is a Council on Foreign Relations initiative to study and test conflict prevention—to learn how and whether preventive action can work by employing it. The primary function of CPA is to learn about conflict prevention by sending teams to pre-explosion crisis areas where they map out a strategy to settle or to manage conflicts. These teams subsequently advocate action by the appropriate governments and organizations, national and international, private and public. CPA has four on-

going projects on Burundi and the Great Lakes region, the South Balkans, Nigeria and the Ferghana Valley in Central Asia.

Since January 1995, the Center for Preventive Action of the Council on Foreign Relations has convened the Burundi Policy Forum in Washington (with occasional meetings in New York) in collaboration with Search for Common Ground, Refugees International, and the African American Institute. This Forum, the idea for which grew out of discussions between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative (UNSRSG) in Burundi, has developed into an important center for discussion, information exchange, and innovation on policy toward Central Africa. It provides a unique setting in which officials of various government agencies, international organizations, and NGOs can discuss sensitive issues in an informal setting, unconstrained by the usual hierarchies and procedures. It also provides a context for more confidential meetings where more operational matters are discussed across organizational boundaries. As part of its program on Burundi, CPA has commissioned an evaluation of the apparent failure of conflict prevention in Burundi from Michael Lund of Creative Associates and Kathi Austin of the Institute for Policy Studies.

The Burundi Policy Forum (BPF)

When the BPF was established in January 1995, the profusion of international missions to Burundi had made clear to all protagonists that they were under international scrutiny. Various groups were working on humanitarian assistance to refugees from Rwanda or displaced persons within Burundi,

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conflict resolution training, civil-military relations, democratization, human rights, and other fields (see the inventory compiled at the January 1995 BPF meeting). Some major needs remained unmet, such as those for combatting hate radio or establishing a criminal justice system to deal with the problem of impunity.

Discussions with the UNSRSG in Burundi as well as with the U.S. government and several NGOs led to the

Rwanda or Zaire, particularly in regard to the issue of refugee repatriation and the flow of weapons into the region. Unfortunately, measures advocated at the Forum to prevent another violent crisis were not taken, leading to the recent renewal of war. As discussed below, the Forum has been modified to meet these new challenges.

The Forum convenes representatives of dozens of humanitarian,

media organizations like Voice of America and CNN.

The BPF convenes both regular public meetings and closed meetings of special working groups focused on security and refugee repatriation. Public meetings begin with brief reports from organizations who may wish to place questions for discussion before the group. Often, the central event will be a speaker, either someone recently returned from the field or an important policy maker. Speakers have included former UNSRSG in Burundi, Ambassador Ahmedou Ould Abdallah; the now deposed President of Burundi Sylvestre Ntibantunganya; the man who deposed him, former president of Burundi Pierre Buyoya; Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, George Moose; U.S. Special Coordinator on Rwanda and Burundi, Ambassador Richard Bogosian; Director of African Affairs, National Security Council, Susan Rice; Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, John Shattuck; Assistant Secretary of State for Refugees, Population, and Migration, Phyllis Oakley; Burundian former Prime Ministers Adrien Sibomana and Anatole Kanyenkiko; President of FRODEBU (Front pour la democratie au Burundi; the majority party) Jean Minani; Burundian former Foreign Minister Jean Marie Ngendahayo; writer David Rieff; and people returning from the field on behalf of many NGOs and UN agencies.

Among the Forum's accomplishments are the following:

- 1) Maintaining a sustained Washington focus on Burundi:
 - The Burundi Policy Forum's schedule of regular meetings has engendered continuous, unabating attention in Washington since early 1995 to the ongoing Burundi crisis by the U.S. government, NGOs and possibly other participants such as the UN and the media. This attention is not likely to have occurred without such a forum and has been achieved independently of the events in Burundi itself. This ongoing

The literature on conflict prevention in the post-Cold War environment emphasizes the need for cooperation of NGOs with official bodies. Somewhat neglected have been the equally important needs for collaboration among different types of NGOs and among different agencies within governments and international organizations.

conclusion that the major need was for coordination. Furthermore, the situation continued to evolve, and the international community needed a mechanism to respond to those changes. The ongoing Forum provided a place where such adjustments could be discussed.

The literature on conflict prevention in the post-Cold War environment emphasizes the need for cooperation of NGOs with official bodies. Somewhat neglected have been the equally important needs for collaboration among different types of NGOs and among different agencies within governments and international organizations. Often, individual humanitarian NGOs work with official humanitarian agencies, but do not coordinate their work with those in the political field. Numerous NGOs also compete for funding and seek to stake out positions for themselves, which complicates coordination and strategic action. A policy forum provides a framework in which a variety of participants can exchange information and develop ideas and strategies. It can also serve as a preexisting instrument of early warning. For instance, since the situation in the entire Central African Great Lakes region is interconnected, the Burundi Policy Forum has also served to monitor and mobilize reaction to events in

advocacy, and conflict resolution organizations working in Burundi, together with officials of international organizations and governments. These organizations include the U.S. Department of State (several bureaus), Organization of Africa Unity (OAU), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), National Security Council (NSC), Department of Defence, Embassies of Burundi, of Rwanda, of Canada, of France, UN Department for Political Affairs, UN Department for Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Committee of the Red Cross, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Missionaries of Africa, Society of St. Ursula, Unitarian Universalist Association, World vision, InterAction, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Parliamentarians for Global Action, the Carter Center, Amnesty International, the International Peace Academy, the International Organization for Migration, the International Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Human Rights Watch, and

focus occurs because the relevant government officials working on Burundi know that the BPF exists as a venue for many Burundi-concerned organizations and are regularly expected to brief and interact with the group. The BPF has also provided a venue for knowledgeable professionals on Burundi to ask the USG officials tough questions in a non-confrontational, constructive climate.

2) Providing leverage and openings for specific policy proposals:

- The BPF is not a lobbying organization and takes no position on issues. But several of its more "connected individuals" have been able to increase the attention of the NSC director and other officials to specific Burundi policy options because of the awareness that there is a BPF "constituency" which the individuals are engaged with that is watching USG policy in Burundi.
- CPA initiated a series of meetings in 1995, with members of the BPF that led to the issuance of a joint press release by 33 organizations on July 13, the 1995 anniversary of the exodus of Rwandan refugees to Goma, Zaire. The press release drew attention to reports of rearming of former Rwandan government forces. These reports came from the Arms Watch Project of Human Rights Watch, headed by CPA board member Ken Roth. This press release called on the US government to take the lead in a series of specific measures designed to address the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region in a comprehensive way. The statement was released to the press by InterAction whose collaboration with CPA made this initiative possible. The range of organizations signing this joint statement was unusually broad. CPA Chair, Gen. (ret.) John W. Vessey sent copies of the press release with letters to President Clinton and UN Secretary Gen-

eral Boutros-Ghali. Most of the recommendations were not implemented.

- Subsequently, on July 25, 1995, in response to this press release, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake convened a meeting on the region with numerous NGO representatives. The meeting included high level representatives of all government agencies working on Rwanda and Burundi. The administration argued that it was already trying to implement most of the recommendations in the press release but that it needed more support from and partnership with NGOs.
 - The NSC director convened members of the group at the White House in January and again in May 1996 to discuss contingency planning for a humanitarian intervention. Certain individuals in the group subsequently sought to keep pressure on the USG to follow through on this proposal, and the USG has done so by putting pressure on the UN to do further planning, with the assistance of the USG. Several other NSC meetings have also taken place.
- 3) Providing a forum for Burundians:
- The President of Burundi Sylvestre Ntibantunganya spoke at the Forum in Washington in October 1995. This event was televised in Burundi, where many felt it had some effect on protecting the president from assassination by Tutsi extremists in the military. Pierre Buyoya, who came to power through a coup in late July 1996, was the main speaker at the June 1996 Forum. Adrien Sibomana, Anatole Kanyenkiko, former Prime Ministers of Burundi, Jean Minani, president of FRODEBU, Jean Marie Ngendahayo, former Foreign Minister of Burundi, spoke at the August 1996 Forum on their way to attend the National Convention of the Democratic Party in Chicago.

4) Providing alternative perspectives and an outlet for government staff:

- The Forum has strengthened the ability of individual middle-level USG staffers within the United States government (and within the UN) to promote more attention to the conflict and advance specific ideas with their superiors within the bureaucratic hierarchy. The BPF provides those individuals with a place outside the regular hierarchy to gain information, discuss ideas, and get broader perspectives on the crisis that are not fostered by their bureaucratic milieu. One staffer said it was particularly helpful to have Burundian perspectives presented when the BPF had Burundian officials or NGO representatives speak to the group. Several officials of the Department of Defence and Army have commented that the Forum has provided new information to the Department and helped to keep them focused.

5) Influencing mediation activities:

- As a result of its work on the BPF, CPA has been involved in continued informal consultations with the mission of the UNSRSG, the Special Envoys of President Clinton, the Carter Center, the Community of Sant' Egidio, International Alert, and the International Crisis Group on peace-making efforts in the region. Partly at the urging of CPA, former President Carter began to pay attention to the situation in the Great Lakes Region. Carter convened a meeting of the heads of states of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Uganda, and Tanzania in Cairo in November 1995, and in Tunis in March 1996.

Being intended as mainly a focal point for exchanging information among mostly Washington-based individuals and organizations, the BPF is inherently limited in how much it can directly alleviate the conflict in Burundi. It is true however, that prominent officials in Burundi know

of the BPF and are thus aware that some nucleus of Washington organizations is "watching Burundi" with a considerable interest. This spotlight effect may have some importance on moderating the conflict itself. Nevertheless the forum realizes its main impact through indirect means, by influencing the process by which important international actors understand and deal with that conflict.

Expanding the Regional Focus

For some time now, the Forum has dealt *de facto* not strictly with Burundi alone, but with the Great Lakes region as a whole. The combined effect of the events of last year, including the coup in Burundi, the Rwanda-supported rebellion in Eastern Zaire, the resultant political upheavals in Zaire and the return of refugees to Rwanda from Burundi, Zaire, and Tanzania, as well

Mobutu Sese Seko. Further violence and disintegration is almost inevitable in Zaire. There is, if anything, an increased need for focus and analysis if the international community is to provide effective help to prevent further violence in this region.

Effective action more than ever requires understanding. Burundi shares a common ethnic structure with Rwanda, both of which have a history of post-colonial political strife between the traditionally dominant Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority (estimated at 85 percent in both countries). Rwanda experienced a post-colonial Hutu revolution, while Burundi did not. This revolution was captured eventually by racist rather than democratic forces, leading to the 1994 genocide and the victory of the current predominantly Tutsi regime, led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

Eastern Zaire, Tanzania, and northern Burundi. Recently most of the Rwandan Hutu refugees have been constrained to return. Most of the Burundian refugees, however, remain, and some who were forcibly repatriated were massacred.

Zaire and Uganda both charge each other with supporting rebel groups on the other side of their mutual border. Rwandan Tutsi rebels received support from Uganda and Burundi; Tutsi rebels in Zaire later received support from Rwanda. Rwandan Hutu rebels until recently had bases in Zaire, and Burundian Hutu rebels had bases in both Zaire and Tanzania. As a result of recent events, anti-Tutsi sentiment is high in Zaire, which is related to an increase in hostility in that country's relations with Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi. Anti-Tutsi sentiments are also affecting Tanzania, which aggravates its relations especially with Burundi.

Underlying all of these conflicts are harsh economic realities. Rwanda and Burundi are the most overpopulated countries in Africa with the most polarized social systems. Both they and Eastern Zaire rely on transit largely through Tanzania for much of their economic life.

There have also been some positive signs of regional cooperation to solve problems. As already noted, former President Carter convened the heads of state of the entire region on two occasions. Subsequently, under the leadership of Tanzanian former President Julius Nyerere, who agreed with Carter to take the lead in mediating the conflict in Burundi, a set of East African states has elaborated a common approach to Burundi, at least. The economies of Uganda and Tanzania have shown some positive trends recently, and they are reactivating a regional framework for economic cooperation that also involves Kenya.

At the beginning of 1997, the Forum changed its name to the Burundi/Great Lakes Forum in order to emphasize the regional aspect of the problem and of solutions. The Forum has

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as the increase of tension between Zaire and Uganda, has been to link the various conflicts in the region more tightly than before.

The widely seen pictures of refugees returning *en masse* to Rwanda has begun to create an impression that the problems of the region have been solved. This is far from the case. Rwanda now has to contend with about one million returned refugees, many of whom are suspected of complicity in genocide in a context of severe shortage of land and housing. Furthermore, the Rwandan political system provides no opportunity for these people to be represented or to participate. The war in Burundi has, if anything, intensified, and the Burundian refugees remain in the surrounding countries while hundreds of people a week are killed. Zaire has been divided between areas controlled by the Rwanda-supported rebels and those under the sway (if not control) of the government of dying President,

Burundi has remained largely dominated by a Tutsi-controlled military.

The conflicts in these two countries interact in a number of complex ways: the assassination in October 1993 of Burundi's first Hutu president by Tutsi army officers strengthened the fears of Hutus in Rwanda; the genocide of April-July 1994 in Rwanda strengthened the fears of Tutsis in Burundi. These are just examples. In addition, Eastern Zaire has contained for centuries populations of Rwandan origin, including both Hutus and Tutsis, whose citizenship has been revoked by Zaire.

Refugee flows from these countries have crossed all the regional boundaries. Tutsis fled Rwanda in the early 1960s for Uganda and Burundi. Burundi's Hutus fled to Tanzania and Zaire from a series of massacres by the Tutsi army since the mid-1960s. In 1994 Rwandan Hutus (including genocide perpetrators) fled the RPF, composed of Tutsi refugees based in Uganda, into

changed incrementally in order to promote a more regional focus:

- Speakers and programs have increasingly dealt with related regional questions.
- The partner organizations have made increasing efforts to coordinate with a related effort (inspired by the BPF), the International Watchers of Zaire, organized by Prof. William Zartman of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.
- In order to make the Forum into a place for more focused discussion, more presentations of analyses as well as reports from the field are presented. We anticipate more such reports, as well as appearances by analysts and experts whom we will invite.

CPA is also engaged in consultations with potential partners for a joint North American (United States and Canada), European, and African independent working group to carry out a study of the challenges to a more stable regional peace in Central Africa over the next several years. We anticipate using the Forums as platforms for discussion of the ideas coming out of these studies.

EuroForum on the Great Lakes

Since the founding of the BPF, the partner organizations have tried to coordinate their work with European ones. International Alert initially held a series of meetings on Burundi in London for European (mainly British) NGOs, including one conference which many official representatives also attended. IA's project on the Great Lakes has now taken a different direction, though it still convenes occasional trans-Atlantic conference calls, most recently one in September, to deal with the consequences of the July coup in Burundi.

In general, however, while European countries are deeply involved in the region, we have no mechanism for coordinating with European NGOs, nor do they have a mechanism for coordinating with each other. The European Union has taken a key interest in

the Great Lakes region and has appointed a special envoy, Aldo Ajello. The European parliament also includes many deputies concerned with the region, as well as with early warning and conflict prevention, and many NGOs concerned with the region have offices there. In addition, because of its colonial history, Belgium is a center of activity in Europe regarding the region.

After consultations with European colleagues, we concluded that there was interest in a forum on the region at the headquarters of the European Union in Brussels. Together with the European Center for Common Groups in Brussels (ECCG), CPA convened a planning meeting on December 19, 1996 and two meetings of the Forum on February 26 and April 24, 1997. Ambassador Richard Bogosian, U.S. Special Coordinator for Rwanda and Burundi and Ambassador Aldo Ajello, EU Special Envoy for the Region were guest speakers. Representatives of the European Commission (Direction General I and VIII), European Parliament, Belgian Parliament, Belgian Secretariat for Cooperation and Development, Association for Western European Parliamentarians, Christian Concertation for Central Africa, Centre for Peace Research, Dutch Centre for Conflict Prevention, European Institute for Research Information on Peace and Security, World Watch Institute, NGO-European Union Liaison Committee, Fondation Hirondelle/Radio Agatashya, International Alert, Disaster Relief Agency (NL), and the Amnesty International EU Association attended the meeting.

The reception was overwhelmingly positive. The obstacles are significant, as the type of informal interchange practised at BPF meetings across organizational and hierarchical boundaries is quite unfamiliar in the European context. But it was precisely this lack which made many of our European colleagues enthusiastic about the prospect. Such an effort, which will introduce a new form of NGO-government interaction into European institutions, could have effects beyond the specific region dealt with by this project. ■

Legitimate and Illegitimate Discrimination: New Issues in Migration

Edited by Howard Adelman

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Freedom of movement: If the members of a state are forced to flee, the legitimacy of that government is questionable. On the other hand, if members cannot or must leave, again the government is not democratically legitimate.

Immigration control: While limiting access and determining who may or may not become members of a sovereign state remains a legitimate prerogative of the state, the criteria, rules and processes for doing so must be compatible with its character as a democratic state.

Legitimate and Illegitimate Discrimination: New Issues in Migration, edited by Professor Howard Adelman, deals with the question of legitimacy with cases studies from the Developing World, Europe, Australia, the United States, and Canada.

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How to Establish an Early Warning System: Concept and First Steps in Switzerland

Andreas V. Kohlschütter and Günther Bächler

Abstract

The authors introduce a pilot project on a general conflict warning system mainly designed to serve the Swiss Foreign Ministry. Especially after the Rwanda disaster, the administration (backed by the Foreign Committee of the Parliament) underlines the need for a computerized system that builds the ground for early recognition and, thus, enhances the "institutionalized" pressure to (re)act in a stage of a conflict as early as possible. Questions arise on the state of the art as well as on the interface between early warning on one hand and decision making and early action on the other.

Précis

Les auteurs procèdent à la description introductoire d'un projet-pilote de prévention de conflit généralisé visant principalement à desservir le Ministère Suisse des Affaires Étrangères. Parti-

culièrement après la catastrophe du Rwanda, l'Administration (appuyée par le Comité aux Affaires Étrangères du Parlement) met l'emphasis sur la nécessité d'un système informatisé jettant les bases d'une procédure de reconnaissance préventive, et de fait amplifie les pressions "institutionnelles" favorisant une (ré)action survenant le plus tôt possible dans un conflit donné. Des questions sont soulevées concernant l'effet de mode relié à ce genre d'initiative, et concernant l'interface entre l'alerte préventive d'un côté et la prise de décision liée à l'action rapide de l'autre.

In this paper we introduce the framework and initial outline of a pilot project on an early warning system ("FAST") designed to serve the Swiss Foreign Ministry. After the disaster of Rwanda (which affected a strongpoint of Swiss Development Cooperation) the Swiss Foreign Ministry, backed by the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament, underlined the need for an early warning system.

- In view of disposing of an instrument for effective preventive diplomacy, enabling the Swiss administration to recognize and act upon a crisis as early as possible and at the same time enhancing the "institutionalized pressure" for such early decision making;
- in view also of the fact that—in Switzerland as well as other OECD states—an ever increasing part of the available development aid is being consumed by disaster and costly post-conflict emergency requirements which could be considerably reduced by early preventive action.

Three different sections of the Swiss Foreign Ministry (General Secretariat, Peace Policies and OSCE, Development Cooperation) are interested in an

early warning system, that focuses on monitoring, analysis, planning and policy options in the framework of preventive diplomacy. It is thus understood that the interface between early warning and early action and political decision making is as crucial as the overall design of an early warning system itself.

The mandate that the Swiss Peace Foundation received for drafting the pilot project contains the following major requests:

- to "explore the preconditions, the efficiency and the costs of FAST (German abbreviation for: "Early Recognition of Tensions and Fact Finding") as an instrument to prepare decisions in preventive diplomacy;"
- to provide an overview of existing capacities and services in the field of early warning;
- to explore possible cooperation with existing institutions in this field;
- to formulate proposals concerning an adequate set of early warning indicators;
- to evaluate software packages, networks, WWW-based systems, etc. for the purpose of structuring an early warning system;
- to design a minimal capacity concept for FAST in the framework of an early warning system; and
- to define the necessary manpower and financial requirements, like profile of staff members, size of permanent staff, annual costs (minimal requests) and other institutional aspects.

An effective early warning system is a part of and a precondition for effective preventive diplomacy, defined in the narrower sense of crisis avoidance or pre-conflict prevention rather than in the more general terms of in-conflict or post-conflict crisis management.

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Paper presented at Synergy in Early Warning Conference, March 14–17, 1997, Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto, Canada.

Any attempt to set up and implement an early warning mechanism for the Swiss Foreign Ministry has therefore to take into account the inherent impediments that tend to slow down or exclude preventive diplomatic action.

At the UN Conference on "Preventive Diplomacy: The Therapeutics of Mediation" (April 23–24, 1996, New York) some of the major problems concerning effective crisis prevention were addressed:

1. Lack of political will—a crisis that has not yet erupted is not generating either the pressures or the eventual rewards politicians normally need before making decisions and taking action. The absence of actual crisis visibility via media and TV ("CNN-factor") tends to reduce the sense of urgency needed for political decision makers. A still hidden crisis weakens the incentive for politicians and executive agencies to engage substantial financial, economic or even military resources in crisis avoidance. Last but not least, a still hidden crisis hampers the political will for either unilateral or multilateral action in preventive diplomacy, which in addition and as a rule, demands more patience than politicians are able to mobilize.
2. The sovereignty dilemma—preventive diplomacy to avoid the outbreak of an intrastate crisis often leads to intervention for and international solidarity with people in need. As such it can easily get into conflict with the principle of state sovereignty, which the international community is also bound to respect and protect. This tension between two conflicting goals in international affairs is an additional factor to considerably slow-down effective preventive action; as UN-Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated in his address at the above mentioned UN Conference:

Failure to take effective preventive action is only rarely due to lack of early warning; the symptoms are usually there for all to see. What is

too often lacking at present is a pre-disposition by the parties to accept third party assistance in resolving their dispute. Ways have to be found to persuade them, without infringing their sovereignty or other rights, that it is in their own interest to accept the help of the UN and other international players, rather than to allow their dispute to turn into armed conflict.

3. The limits of traditional diplomacy—traditional diplomacy tends to secretive procedures, to

interest of the parties involved and of encouraging them to refrain from violent conflict. What is needed is a well-coordinated and fine-tuned mix of political, economic, social, developmental and eventually military measures to avoid conflict eruption and facilitate crisis management. Such a mix however requires mental readiness to accept division of labour, interdependence and crossfeeding between very often competing

Any effective early warning system has to be directed to mobilize the political will for early action; that is for early decisions on concrete effective steps to get preventive diplomacy moving. Early warning systems must, hence, consider the practical problems and dilemmas of preventive diplomacy in view of overcoming them and facilitating the task of the executive agencies and governmental decision makers.

problem and tension avoidance, to business as usual, to keep smiling and appeasement. It concentrates not only on quiet but also on silent diplomacy. Effective preventive diplomacy on the other hand can never be silent; it must address the critical issues directly, go to the roots of the conflict, use confidentiality as well as transparency and publicity to sound such credible alarm as to make crisis prevention work. Effective prevention has to do with leverage and deterrence; it is usually an edgy, not a smooth operation; it is the very opposite of appeasement.

4. There are rare cases like the one in 1995 in Burundi, where the US ambassador had the exceptional courage to personally organize a preventive press conference in order to make public some of the most barbarous atrocities that were going on in that country day by day and for which he held the Burundi government responsible.
5. The bureaucracy block—effective preventive diplomacy requires a balanced blend of incentives and disincentives with the aim of appealing to the enlightened self-

ministries and departments in national administrations as well as between different governments, international organizations and INGO's. Deblocking bureaucratic obstinacies and rivalries or just streamlining overly complicated administrative procedures is therefore one of the major challenges which preventive diplomacy and its early warning instruments have to cope with.

Any effective early warning system has to be directed to mobilize the political will for early action; that is for early decisions on concrete effective steps to get preventive diplomacy moving. Early warning systems must, hence, consider the practical problems and dilemmas of preventive diplomacy in view of overcoming them and facilitating the task of the executive agencies and governmental decision makers.

These considerations have been very much on our mind regarding outline and leading criteria of our early warning project (FAST) for the Swiss MFA. The following elements for establishing an early warning system as mandated by the Swiss MFA seem crucial to us:

- FAST has to be a system which can become functional and operational on a rather short term basis and at the same time be a system based on (computerized) early warning models and indicator clusters which lend themselves to constant refinement and adjustments; FAST is meant to be a scientifically developed instrument to be of immediate use to political practitioners and decision makers, not an academic exercise for professorial experimenting and speculation.
- FAST has to be a system of multi-departmental, multipurpose and multidirectional nature; the data and information to be monitored and the geographical areas to be covered have to satisfy the early warning requirements of different agencies in the MFA: on the one hand, the more globally-oriented political department, looking after Swiss interests worldwide (trade, investments, migration, terrorism, proliferation, etc.) and concentrating on the 53 OSCE states, especially the transition of ex-communist countries to democratic civil societies; on the other hand, the more narrow and third-world-focused development cooperation agency, concentrating on some 16 focal countries with major foreign aid projects.
- FAST has to be an early warning chain-system going all the way from monitoring, collection and dissemination of information, up to analysis, evaluation, risk-assessment and finally presentation of policy options and scenarios credible enough to convince policymakers about the need for early action; it should be conceived as a bridge between crisis theatre and crisis management; it should be elaborated as a "pipeline"- or "flow chart"-system, in order to enhance institutionalized pressures, channel political decision making and thus prepare the ground for early preventive action.
- FAST has to be anchored and established outside the executive and

administrative structures of the Foreign Ministry; yet, it still has to work and function in close collaboration and feedback-relation with authorized persons and staff from within the Ministry; the Swiss Peace Foundation, which has been mandated to work out the pilot project, could eventually very well be entrusted with the actual implementation, organization and daily management of the FAST-early warning system.

- FAST should be structured and equipped so as to monitor and collect different levels and types of data, based on the fact, that crisis- and violence-breeding conflicts are dynamic processes, rooted in history and evolving in escalating or de-escalating phases: (1) background conditions of a crisis (historical, economic and social roots of the conflict, power and ethnic structures, cultural/civilizational particularities, etc.); (2) intervening conditions (power struggle within the political leadership, increasing discrimination of certain social strata, etc.); (3) so called "accelerators" (repressive measures by the regime, violent incidents, sanctions, threats of international intervention, etc.) that change the nature of the crisis and propel it into a new, more or less violent phase.

We would like to list here some of the practical questions, which we are facing in our layout for the FAST-early warning pilot project on behalf of the Swiss Foreign Ministry. For some of these questions, the academic and research community might have at least partial answers already available; others will have to wait for the trial and error test of practical experience:

- Should FAST be built on global data base or should it be more focus oriented, that is restricted to focal points and countries of interest? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each one of these two approaches?
- What models do already exist to satisfy the multidepartmental and multidirectional needs of FAST,

which has to provide three different sections of the Swiss MFA with an early warning instrument?

- Should FAST in its static part provide data (on-line) on a permanent basis or will periodical reporting be enough? Can the two concepts be mixed?
- Should FAST be totally or overwhelmingly Swiss and self-made or should it plug into existing early warning networks that also work for other governmental customers? To what extent can non-Swiss early warning capacities be explored and utilized?
- Should FAST be open to all sources of information or should the early warning source material be collected on a selective basis? How and by which criteria should this selection be implemented?
- How should the out-of-government early warning center of FAST connect with the in-government structures of the Foreign Ministry? Is a special institutional link required or will case by case contacts do?
- What are the manpower requirements of such an out-of-government early warning center? What kind of specialists are needed for FAST on a permanent or a temporary basis?
- How much ground in the direction of political decision making should FAST cover without overloading and overcommitting itself? Should for instance the presentation of policy options in a given crisis be part of the early warning chain of FAST?

The setting-up of an early warning system like FAST provides fascinating insight into the interdependent worlds of international politics on the one hand and international science and research on the other. Doers and thinkers blend in intimate interaction. They are bound to coordinate and integrate their efforts, since early warning efforts without the thinkers will develop no roots and without the doers will bear no fruits. ■

The State of Conflict Prevention in France

Julie Fournier

Abstract

This article provides a quick overview of the state of conflict prevention in France. It examines the origin of the debate, the role played by France in this field, and the obstacles hindering the development of an effective preventive diplomacy capability in Europe. Conflict prevention is a relatively new discussion in France that is fuelled by the frustration from the failure in the Yugoslav crisis and the new focus of the government to develop a new security architecture in Europe, mainly through the European Union. Current actions, however, already reveal the difficulties that impede the development of an effective capacity of preventive diplomacy in Europe. Some of these difficulties result from the idea of prevention in general, while others are more specific to the situation in France which is characterized by the absence of an official definition as well as by internal quarrels between academic, politicians and the military as to the potential and implementation of conflict prevention. However, the author argues that the critical perspective proposed by French intellectuals and scientists could, in the long run, contribute to a more accurate understanding of conflict prevention.

Précis

Cet article fournit un résumé succinct de l'état où en est la prévention de conflits en France. Il examine l'origine du débat, le rôle joué par la France dans ce secteur, et les obstacles restreignant le développement d'une diplomatie préventive efficace en Europe. La question de la résolution de conflit est un débat, relativement nouveau en France, alimenté par la frustration engendrée par l'échec

dans la crise yougoslave et par l'attention renouvelée portée par le gouvernement au développement d'une architecture nouvelle de la sécurité en Europe, principalement via la Communauté Européenne. Les actions en cours, cependant, révèlent déjà les difficultés entravant le développement d'une capacité de diplomatie préventive en Europe. Certaines de ces difficultés tiennent à ce qu'est l'idée de prévention en général, tandis que d'autres problèmes sont plus particuliers à la situation hexagonale, qui se caractérise par l'absence d'une définition officielle du phénomène, autant que par un ensemble de querelles internes entre universitaires, politiques, et militaires sur les potentialités et la mise en place de la prévention de conflits. Malgré tout, l'auteure présente une argumentation selon laquelle la perspective critique, proposée sur la question par les intellectuels et les scientifiques français, pourrait, à long terme, contribuer à une compréhension plus adéquate de la question de la prévention de conflits.

Introduction

In Western states as well as in international institutions, the concept of conflict prevention is giving rise to increasing discussion and research. If the idea is not exactly new—sharing characteristics and linkages with the broader notion of conflict resolution—the tremendous changes provoked by the end of the Cold War give to the concept both a new meaning and new opportunities. Until recently, however, the idea has been largely the prerogative of the Anglo-Saxon world, as the Francophone, and France, in particular, have remained outside of the debate. Things are slowly changing as the Europeans begin to demonstrate a certain interest in the concept. During the last year or two, a few articles have been dedicated to conflict prevention and some conferences and workshops

were organized among European security organizations and within academic circles. Particularly in France, various research institutes as well as governmental authorities have started to work on the idea. The goal of this short article is to draw a broad portrait of the state of conflict prevention in France. The origin of the interest manifested in the concept, France's role and initiatives in this area, and the many difficulties hindering the development of an effective preventive diplomacy strategy in Europe, will be briefly examined.

The Origin of the Debate

The renewed interest in conflict prevention in the international sphere looks to be mainly a conjunctural phenomenon. As Michael S. Lund observes, four trends are at the origin of this evolution:

... the emergence of a new, more co-operative international milieu; the sobering experience of international intervention in already advanced conflicts; the prospect of more threats to international stability; and the growing economic and political constraints on governments' exercise of foreign policy.¹

France is no exception to this tendency. However, two additional factors influence the growing interest in conflict prevention in France, namely, the particularly bitter feeling left in the wake of the Yugoslav conflict, and the Chirac government's recent prioritizing of certain policy directions in an effort to better define France's foreign policy.

The unsuccessful measures launched by the international community to prevent or, at least, manage most of the post-Cold War conflicts, and in particular the incapacity of international institutions to prevent the Yugoslav crisis and the genocide in Rwanda, provoked in France an im-

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portant debate characterized by a strong sentiment of culpability. Mutual accusations among military, policymakers and intellectuals (who, in this country, play a major role on the public scene), dominate the post-conflict phase. In fact, politicians, scholars and the military are still analyzing the causes of the Yugoslav failure. The latter two actors notably perceive the attitude manifested by the politicians at the beginning of the conflict as having served as an incentive for the warlike policy of Slobodan Milosevic, and assert that their procrastination is responsible for the deterioration of the situation. However, in spite of these accusations, there is a general consensus that something better could have been done to prevent the eruption of these two conflicts, in which France was strongly committed politically and militarily (being at one moment the main troop contributor in Bosnia). The assumption that some military as well as diplomatic measures could have been adopted in order to dissuade the utilization of force has encouraged the French to launch a brainstorming process on the notion of conflict prevention, and on the way it could be defined and implemented.

This movement towards the development of the concept coincides with another important evolution on the international scene resulting from the end of the Cold War, namely the need to elaborate a new European security policy. France wishes to play a major role in this process following the orientation adopted by François Mitterand which sought to make France, along with Germany, one of the major pillars of the European Union. The policy of the Chirac government, reminiscent of De Gaulle's conceptions, reflects a long-standing ambition to give to European states greater independence as regards the maintenance of peace on the continent. This approach coincides in France with the recent desire to restructure the French Army as well as French foreign policy towards Africa. The achievement of these goals implies the strengthening of European security organizations such as the Western

European Union (WEU) or the European Union (EU),² as well as the development of a preventive diplomacy capability proper to Europe. In the European context of a rapid decline in defence spending and an important restructuring of national armed forces, this goal seems far from being reached. Nevertheless, France is strongly pushing in that direction. The preceding trends determine the role and initiatives taken by France in the field of conflict prevention.

France's Role and Initiatives

Although the idea of prevention is articulated and developed within the Council of Europe as well as in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the idea is also discussed within the European Union where France has been one of its strongest supporters. Convinced of the need to define a new security structure for Europe, and confident that Europe has to build its own defence and security capacity mainly through exclusively European institutions such as the WEU or the EU, France is now trying to gather support for this idea and has proposed the creation of a Crisis Prevention Centre within the European Union.

Launched by former Prime Minister Michel Rocard and addressed to the European Parliament, the French initiative seeks to establish a collective analysis unit within the EU that would work in conjunction with NGOs, universities and research institutes, as well as with the United Nations and other regional organizations. The Centre would be aimed at early political intervention through the collection of information, its analysis, and its communication to the European Parliament. The European Parliament could then make recommendations on how it might intervene in a crisis, or launch various initiatives of political pressure, notably political condemnations or economic sanctions. The general objective behind the project is clearly to "... counter the political cost of ignoring warnings ... and to replace general appeals by substantiated recommen-

dations for preventive action: 'There is this threat and, after appropriate analysis, we think this should be done and will cost ...'"³ In other words, the unit seeks to modify the actual decision-making procedure by providing objective recommendations to political leaders. This procedure is currently subject to evaluations by national chanceries and the new procedure would minimize their influence. Conceived to complement existing bodies involved in conflict prevention in the UN as well as in the OSCE, the Centre would, among other things, monitor countries in the area of human rights and detect situations that might constitute a threat to European security.

Yet while the project may appear valuable, its implementation is hindered by many obstacles. In fact, little progress has been made in the establishment of the unit officially called the "European Union Analysis Centre for Active Crisis Prevention." The Union adopted a \$1 million ECU budget in order to study the conditions for the creation of the Centre.⁴ Nevertheless, it is still the object of a debate between the states of the Union and remains, for the moment, inoperative. The evasiveness of the Maastricht Treaty (especially of its Article 5),⁵ as well as the reluctance of certain countries (especially the neutral members of the Union) to engage their troops in military interventions, precludes significant progress. Actually, the more concrete initiative launched by the EU in the field of conflict prevention consists of a declaration concerning the will of the Union to develop an intervention capability in conflicts occurring in Africa (DG8).⁶

The Numerous and Persistent Obstacles

Many obstacles impede the development of an effective capacity for preventive diplomacy in Europe. While some of them are characteristic of the general problems raised by the concept of conflict prevention itself, others are specific to Europe or to the political situation existing in France.

A large number of obstacles are related to the development of conflict prevention in general. In fact, consensus on this matter can be said to exist among scientists and diplomats, as has been observed and enunciated in various reports and essays carried out mainly by members of the Anglo-Saxon community.⁷ In France, Maurice Bertrand, member of the UN Joint Inspection Unit, has been one of the first to address the problem, and has reached the same conclusions.⁸ Specifically, the main difficulties hampering conflict prevention in general include the absence of a common definition of the concept, the shortcomings existing in social and conflict theories, notably concerning the causes of war, and the gap that exists between intellectuals and practitioners. The success of preventive interventions is also dependent upon, as Maurice Bertrand

and of what their contribution to this field should be. This historical context impedes the development of a cohesive European strategy in the field of conflict prevention. Europe's incapacity in this respect was revealed by its inertia in the face of the crisis that recently erupted in Albania. If the concurrence existing between the various European multilateral institutions constitutes an obstacle to a rapid intervention, the absence of a common vision represents an even more important difficulty. This issue, which has dramatic regional consequences, also has endogenous causes, as the debate existing in France illustrates.

Aside from the general tendency, an important confusion prevails in France concerning the definition of conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy. As it is the case elsewhere and primarily within the UN, the concepts tend

to be able to prevent further conflict escalation.

In the same spirit, many French experts and officials are reluctant to embrace the idea of developing a rapid reaction capability within the framework of the UN as proposed by a group of states under the chairmanship of the Netherlands and Canada. They assert that there already exists a rapid mobilization capacity of the armed forces within developed states, citing their own country as an example. France can deploy within 48 hours an important and self-sufficient contingent for multipurpose interventions. In their opinion, the creation of a rapid reaction capability unit in the UN raises not only important problems of command but also the very question of its mandate. Without a clear political direction, the instrument could be the object of misuse. In summary, two elements characterize the French debate over conflict prevention: the relatively broad vision of the idea shared by intellectuals and officials, and the important infighting related to who should act in this field.

Indeed, a broad conception of conflict prevention dominates the French political scene. While international interventions related to this idea can have specific targets and objectives such as deploying troops to prevent an existing conflict from degenerating, or monitoring elections, the French seem to insist rather on the long term dimension of conflict prevention. According to this view, prevention is more than simply an emergency intervention intended to prevent violence. Rather, it is deeply related to the social factors of conflict, and thus has to address the roots of international and internal disputes through a series of long-term and more diffuse instruments, such as economic consolidation and democracy building. This perspective is reflected in the importance given by the French to the role that can be played by the European Union in this field, as well as in a concrete French initiative that gave birth to the European Pact on Stability. Concluded with the nations of the former Soviet block, it engages

Specifically, the main difficulties hampering conflict prevention in general include the absence of a common definition of the concept, the shortcomings existing in social and conflict theories, notably concerning the causes of war, and the gap that exists between intellectuals and practitioners.

emphasizes rightly, the degree of cooperation between the conflicting parties, as well as on the political will of the states dominating the so called "international community."

Alongside these general factors of obstruction stand other obstacles proper to Europe. The journey towards an effective preventive diplomacy capability in the region is indeed hindered by the difficulties encountered in forging unity and establishing common ground among political entities characterized by historical commitments to defend their ancestral traditions and their national interests. In spite of the important evolutions on the continent since the last World War and the irreversible progress made toward the construction of Europe, European states (especially the more powerful of them) remain reluctant to cede part of their sovereignty, and still have different conceptions of security

to encompass an excessive number of activities, ranking from classical diplomacy to peace enforcement, and including also humanitarian aid and preventive peacekeeping missions. In contrast to some Anglo-Saxon experts who prefer a restrictive definition of prevention,⁹ the French continue to use a broad conception of the idea, and tend to be suspicious towards specific measures such as preventive peacekeeping deployment. While this type of intervention has been cited excessively by some as a very promising and useful tool in order to prevent violent conflicts, many French scholars as well as high level military officials are of the opinion that its potential is impossible to measure. They also suggest that political pressures seem more important than military means of conflict prevention. Furthermore, French experts argue that even if violence erupts, military deployment will not

them to resolve their disputes concerning minority problems through a diplomatic system of round-tables and treaties of mutual guarantees, which seems so far to work well. The French conception therefore implies that the notion of prevention has to be proactive rather than conservative. More than a simple act of diplomacy which in a sense tends to maintain the status quo, prevention has to be a "transformative action" looking forward to changing the existing international order. Instead of working on "actors," it should work on "situations."¹⁰

The French perspective, while minimizing the short-term aspect of conflict prevention which is the more frequently used because of the inher-

ent French society for many centuries. On the one side, different views exist between the military, intellectuals and NGOs concerning the meaning that should be given to the idea of prevention, the latter two segments being more ambitious and enthusiastic concerning the potential of the concept. The lack of reflection within the main French political parties or in the various state agencies worsens the difficulties created by the absence of a coherent vision. On the other side, quarrels exist among the military, the academics and the NGOs, each one looking to impose its view, as well as blaming the others for the failures encountered so far in various situations. While the intellectuals denounce the

remain in a situation of conflict, and cooperation between the politicians and the military, if greater autonomy is granted to the latter. As these observations reveal, decision makers are involved in every aspect of the question. Despite their current rhetoric concerning the importance of conflict prevention, they are still ignorant of the potential of the concept and reluctant to mobilize the will and the resources necessary to make the idea a tangible reality. Therefore, important efforts to heighten their awareness must be launched by intellectuals and practitioners working in this field. While the broad definition of the concept and the infighting still prevailing may impede this process, the critical attitude adopted by many French intellectuals and high-level military officials can contribute, in a long-term perspective, to building a more accurate comprehension of the concept and of its potential, encouraging everyone to free themselves from a rhetoric that leads to nothing except the devaluation of the idea. Conflict prevention has to be understood as a useful but limited tool of intervention. The mixed success registered so far in conflict prevention activities in Europe, and the important obstacles remaining before an efficient capability can emerge, show that the concept must not be used as a moral alibi by decision makers to conceal their idleness. Rather, its place is as a tool whose potential is to moderate.

Conclusion

If we can be pleased that European nations and France, in particular, have started to be interested in conflict prevention, we are forced to admit that an effective European capability in this field will remain elusive until four conditions are met. First, a better definition of the concept is needed. Second, the EU'S mandate in this field, along with that of other European security organizations, has to be clarified. As an incomparable cohesive force, the Union certainly has a role to play in preventing violence on the European continent. As a matter of fact, its attractiveness seems to have contributed to

More than a simple act of diplomacy which in a sense tends to maintain the status quo, prevention has to be a "transformative action" looking forward to changing the existing international order. Instead of working on "actors," it should work on "situations."

ent reluctance of the states to intervene in situations that do not seem urgent or in which their national interests are not immediately threatened, suggests nevertheless that more substantial efforts have to be given to the study of conflict and especially to the factors and processes responsible for the eruption of violence between different collectivities. Progress in this field depends, as specialists also have observed, on the links that can be established between intellectuals and practitioners, as one of the most significant difficulties related to conflict prevention is the gap between social knowledge and action. This is particularly a problem in France which does not hesitate to speak out at an international action, but, in the end, often has problems translating its message into clear action. Therefore, even if French academics were to come to the right conclusions regarding a conflict, the rhetoric may not necessarily translate into reality.

Indeed, the French political and academic arenas are dominated by sectarian views and parish-pump politics, illustrating a trend that has character-

inertia of the political leaders in various crises, the military accuses the intellectuals as well as the politicians of failing to back their strong words with action. They assert that they are not given the means and the necessary autonomy to realize their mission. Many NGO representatives also had the impression that they had been used to the detriment of their credibility and their impartiality in various situations. They uphold that the evasiveness of the statesmen forced them to negotiate with war criminals and, in a sense, rendered their actions a contributing factor to the extension of conflicts.

Before it is able to take on the leading role it desires in the development of a European capacity for preventive diplomacy, France will first have to overcome its own internal fights. Better relations among decision makers, intellectuals, the military, and practitioners are needed. These might come about through reinforced cooperation between governing authorities and research institutes interested in conflict theory, between the government and NGOs who have experience and are often the first to act as well as the last to

the success registered so far by some of the operations conducted by the OSCE.¹¹ Its role might be effective in a long-term and more diffuse perspective. Third, the development of a military capacity for Europe is essential in order to bring a rapid response to pre-conflictual situations. So far, the question remains open. Finally, as one of the pillars of Europe, France can influence the debate positively if it is able to overcome its proper internal quarrels. ■

Notes

1. Michael S. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*, Washington D.C., United States Institute of Peace, 1996, 8.
2. In March 1997, an initiative in that sense was taken by France and Germany when the two states launched a plan to transform the EU into a defence alliance through the incorporation of the WEU. Tom Buerkle, "Make the EU a Defence Alliance? Debate Deepens Security Policy Rifts." *International Herald Tribune*, Friday March 28 1997, 5.
3. Wolfgang Biermann and Martin Vadset, "Peacekeeping Principles in a Civil War-Like Conflict. Windows of Opportunity and Realistic Options in Former Yugoslavia 1991-1993-1995," *DANORP 2nd UN Commanders Workshop*, Report of a Conference held in Copenhagen Denmark 12-14 April 1996, Copenhagen, Danish-Norwegian Research Project on UN Peacekeeping, 1996, 21.
4. The Centre, *Institut de prévention des crises* would be driven to be particularly interested by conflicts occurring in Africa. See Maurice Bertrand, "Le concept de prévention des conflits." *Politique étrangère*, avril 1997.
5. The fifth article (or *titre* in French) of the Maastricht Treaty, although enunciating the goals of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union (CFSP), does not mention specifically the establishment of an early warning capability for the Union. The objectives defined in article J.1, paragraph 2 are quite large and the means by which they can be implemented remain vague and subject to the good will of the national governments. This interpretation of the Treaty provisions are detailed in E. Zoller "Dispositions concernant une politique, étrangère, et de sécurité, commune." In Vlad Constantinesco, Robert Kovar et Denys Simon (dir.), *Trait, sur L'Union Européenne. Commentaire article par article*. Paris Economica, 1995, 781-812. They are also suggested by Reinhardt Rummel "The European Union's Politico-Diplomatic Contribution to the Prevention of Ethno-National Conflict." In Abram Chayes and Antonia H. Chayers (eds.) *Preventing Conflict in the Post-Communist World*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1996, 197-236. For Rummel, "... when the CFSP was designed, during 1991, a large part of the new conflict-ridden world had not yet unfolded ... The Treaty ... reflects change, but only a first stage ... The provisions on CFSP therefore mention the strategic fields of adaptation, but most of the provisions are more an extrapolation of the line of evolution of EPC than a qualitatively fresh start," 200. For an exact account of the role of the EU in conflict prevention, please refer to Rummel's analysis.
6. This information was obtained from a short presentation by the French "chargé de mission" at International Alert during a one-day workshop on conflict prevention held in Paris January 3, 1997.
7. For an exhaustive and pertinent analysis of the question, one can refer to the book of Michael S. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts. A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*.
8. One can refer to its article published in *Politique étrangère*. Maurice Bertrand, "Le concept de prévention des conflits," *Politique étrangère*, avril 1997.
9. According to Michael Lund, preventive diplomacy requires a narrower definition than the one commonly offered in international institutions circles which tend to confuse the concept with one of conflict management. "... equating preventive diplomacy with large portions of international relations and national policy is to dismiss the concept, for a definition that embraces everything means nothing ... A more rigorous definition should pinpoint the essence of the concept and distinguish it from other forms of diplomacy, foreign policy and conflict prevention." Michael Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts*, 32.
10. Maurice Bertrand, op. cit.
11. The desire of some East European states to join the Union and the West in general, pushes them to have a compromising attitude toward their minority problem and to see the help of the OSCE to manage the conflicting situations in which they are in. Maurice Bertrand, "Le concept de 'prévention des conflits'," *Politique étrangère*, avril 1997. □

Refugee Rights Report on a Comparative Survey

by
**James C. Hathaway
and John A. Dent**

Toronto: York Lanes Press, 1995,
pp. 82. \$11.95 • ISBN 1-55014-266-6

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Forum on Early Warning and Early Response: A New Collaborative Effort

FEWER Secretariat

Abstract

This paper provides an introduction and overview of the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER). Topics covered are: the mission statement, definitions, objectives and structure of the group as well as a description and evaluation of projects-in-progress. A member contact list, a synopsis of membership criteria and activities are included.

Précis

Cet article fournit une introduction et un aperçu du Forum sur l'Alerte Préventive et l'Intervention Rapide (Forum on Early Warning and Early Response—FEWER). Les sujets abordés sont: la formulation du mandat, la description, les objectifs et la structure de ce groupe, ainsi que la description et l'évaluation des projets en cours. Une liste de membres-contacts, un descriptif des critères à rencontrer pour devenir membre et une présentation des activités sont joints.

History

The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) was initiated in a meeting, September 3, 1996, at International Alert, London, by a group committed to moving forward early warning reporting and analysis in the larger interest of conflict prevention. At this meeting, a small steering committee was formed comprising Kumar Rupesinghe (Chair, International Alert, London), Sharon Rusu (UNDHA, Geneva), and Howard Adelman (Prevention/Early Warning Unit, York University, Toronto) to further develop the concept and the con-

sortium. An interim secretariat was assumed by one of the member institutions (Prevention/Early Warning Unit, York University, Toronto). As of June 1, 1997, the secretariat will be at International Alert where and will operate for about a year, or until sufficient funds are available for an independent secretariat. Furthermore, three pilot projects were initiated in West Africa, Central Asia and the Great Lakes region.

In a second meeting, January 24–25, 1997, at International Alert, London, the structure of FEWER was formalized. The Steering Committee was increased to five members (two of which are yet to be determined), a consortium of all participating organizations was formed, and Kumar Rupesinghe (International Alert, London) was elected chair. Government representatives were invited to participate as observers through membership in a contact group to ensure government participation.

The pilot projects provided an update on their activities. Discussion resulted in the replacement of the Central Asia project by one in the former Soviet Union in order to broaden the regional scope. The former lead agency on Central Asia (Center for Preventive Action, Council on Foreign Relations) will now carry out an evaluation of the three other pilot projects on West Africa (Prevention/Early Warning Unit, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University, Toronto), Great Lakes (International Alert, London) and former Soviet Union (Center for the Study and Prevention of Conflict, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow) due to its expertise in all three regions.

Mission Statement

The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) has been es-

tablished as an independent and interdisciplinary consortium of academic research units, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and Inter-Governmental Organisations, including UN agencies, to provide decision makers with information and analysis to warn on the potential for violent conflict in order to prevent their escalation.

The purpose of FEWER is to establish an early warning network by:

- linking with regional and country research initiatives to ensure the collection of relevant country and regional information in a timely and systematic manner;
- developing strategic responses including but not limited to the prevention of violent conflicts that lead to displacement;
- strengthening of peace-making initiatives in areas of crises; and
- developing impartial trend analyses of risks in order to present options to major actors: United Nations, governments, international organizations, regional organizations, NGOs and others.

FEWER views early warning as motivated by universal humanitarian rather than national or fractional interests. In this regard, FEWER's ultimate purpose is to provide early analysis of trends with the aim of enhancing peacemaking and capacity building for solutions in the areas of conflict.

Definition

FEWER defines early warning as the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crises for the purposes of: 1) anticipating the escalation of violent conflict, 2) development of strategic responses to these crises, and 3) the presentation of options to critical actors for the purposes of decision making.

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Objectives

- To provide an effective early warning and early action alert forum within a framework that promotes effective cooperation between NGOs, IGOs, academic institutions, and governments; and also maximizes the strengths, capabilities and roles/mandates of its members towards the common goals of prevention and early response.
- To ensure high quality standards and a coherent framework for assessing risks and reporting on the development of and consequences emerging from conflicts.
- To facilitate information exchange and dialogue amongst interested actors based on country/regional ongoing analysis.
- To facilitate, when possible and appropriate, coordination and co-operation of Consortium members on warning for early action by states and inter-governmental actors and NGOs. This will include assessments of policy options and analysis of the role of critical actors in order to provide recommendations for action.
- To identify funding options to ensure the viability of the Consortium and the promotion of information and analysis.
- To support early warning initiatives as integral to a process of prevention, risk assessment and response that lead to early action in the face of complex humanitarian emergencies.

Principal Assumptions

FEWER will strive to ensure quality of reporting and representation in its relationship with a diverse network of members whose capacities and resources are varied.

FEWER will ensure a balanced distribution of members to avoid a "northern-centric" structure and approach to reporting on areas of conflict.

FEWER will protect the confidentiality of its sources wherein disclosure

may place individuals, family members or communities at risk of violation of their human rights.

FEWER will, through establishment of effective consultation and coordination mechanisms with relevant agencies and, taking into account various levels of communication technology available in zones of conflict, promote rapid access to information and analysis (local, country and regional) with a view to providing policy options and alternatives.

FEWER will establish membership criteria which are transparent and accountable to potential members, research partners and subscribers.

FEWER reports will focus on country and region-wide issues and ensure that such reporting reflects the interests and concerns of practitioners, researchers and policy makers.

FEWER will develop an internal assessment capacity in order to evaluate its performance and products for all members and stakeholders including funders.

Membership

- Membership is open to all producers and users of early warning information. There are two types of membership:
Consortium members that contribute to the provision of early warning information, analysis and strategy development.
Supporters of the Consortium that are interested in receiving the products of such analysis and will contribute financially to the Consortium in direct proportion to their capacity.
- The Consortium is the basis of a network between member agencies and, as such, is essential for long-term sustainability.
- Members can participate/work in one or several activities according to their capacity, interests and mandates.
- Participation, effective consultation and dialogue, transparent and effective decision-making proc-

esses are central to the success of the network.

Activities

The Consortium activities could be grouped under the following areas:

- developing a standard format for reporting and assessing risk;
- promoting and monitoring results of research and analysis;
- developing quality standards for the reliability of information and analysis;
- dissemination of analysis;
- evaluating tools and methodologies to support actors; and
- publishing relevant reports, tools, analysis for policy and learning purposes.

Structure

FEWER is a forum for persons interested in various aspects of early warning and early responses. The prevailing view is that its structure should permit wide and diverse membership from different stake holders including UN, IGOs, NGOs, research institutions, governments and others. The members will form a Consortium of interests in support of the advancement of policy, practise, action and education on issues of early warning, prevention and responses. Broadly speaking, this Consortium will support efforts to facilitate early warning research and analysis, inter-institutional learning and action as well as the development of tools to undertake such activities (such as indicators and other assessment capacities). The initiatives for the exchange of information and analyses led by a member or members of the Council of FEWER are described hereafter.

FEWER will be comprised of a Consortium of members, the purpose of whose activities will support the formation of a global network of information exchange, partnership for the promotion of research, analysis and capacity building in the areas of early warning, conflict prevention and early action.

Roles and Responsibilities

FEWER Consortium

Open to UN, IGOs, NGOs, academic research units and all others including regional IGOs such as the OAU. Others who may wish to join can be accorded membership by the FEWER Council.

FEWER Council

The Council will comprise up to 25 members representing constituencies and institutions in areas of concern whether on early warning, prevention or conflict resolution. The FEWER Council represents linkages (hereafter known as working groups) within these institutions or initiatives which, in turn, will form the basis for a network of research nodes. Information and analysis deriving from these nodes may serve as the basis for FEWER reports.

The Council will take on responsibilities for broad policy making, including planning, membership, budgets, fundraising and annual reports. The Council will be headed by a Chairperson who will be assisted by a Deputy and representative from each of the major research projects supervised by various research institutions. Council appointments are for 3 years with options for an additional 2 years.

FEWER Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will comprise 5 members including the Chair of the Council and Executive Director of the FEWER Secretariat (described hereafter) who will be a non-voting member. The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are: overall direct management of FEWER including the recruitment and hiring of personnel, financial management, approval of the research work plan (wherein priorities and themes are outlined) and approval of regional network research partnerships. Membership in the Steering Committee (apart from the Executive Director) is normally for 3 years, which may be varied with the approval of the Council.

FEWER Secretariat

The Secretariat will be headed by an Executive Director who will control and direct the development and implementation of policies and research planning, personnel, budgetary controls and reporting on expenditures to donors through the Steering Committee.

FEWER Network of Working Groups

Working groups will be organised around priorities and themes identified by the FEWER Secretariat in consultation with the working groups. The working groups may meet directly or electronically. The Director of Research of the FEWER Secretariat will liaise with a lead agency (nominated from the FEWER Council) and together they will coordinate the activities of the working groups as they support the research products of FEWER. As described in the functions of the FEWER Council above, the working groups will comprise a research network to supply first-hand reports and analysis as well as to advise FEWER on changes, directions and relevant issues for follow-up and referral in support of FEWER's research program and alert reports.

FEWER Contact Group of Representatives of Governments

Government membership will comprise those representatives of governments interested in the work of FEWER and supportive of its network and products. Government representatives will have observer status in FEWER.

Research Projects

The current and future work of FEWER includes the establishment of:

- standard formats for reporting conflict situations. These will ensure a basis for clarity and consistency in reports from different sources. Standard formats will also ensure the use of a common terminology which will help to avoid miscom-

munication and support efforts in cross-conflict comparative analyses. The indicators used and field tested in the pilot projects will be evaluated after Phase I;

- a network that systematically identifies key actors in potential conflicts;
- effective ways to communicate between actors (producers and users);
- a *Directory of Tools for Conflict Prevention*. This directory, to be used by monitors, data gatherers and analysts in the field, will list and describe examples of the options available to UN agencies, IGOs, governments and NGOs to help prevent the escalation of violent conflict. It will be a tool to broaden the understanding of conflict prevention and to guide analysts in conflict areas by providing a wide variety of response options. The emphasis here is on a multi-tool approach with long- and short-term recommendations for action; and
- research on the success or failure of policy prescriptions used by key actors in order to draw the main lessons learned from the application in different contexts and develop recommendations as to how to these tools are best used to prevent conflict.

Current Field Research Initiatives

FEWER currently has analytical capabilities in three pilot regions (former Soviet Union, West Africa and the Great Lakes region). One of the strengths of FEWER is to build on existing initiatives in order to avoid duplication, support on-going programs, utilize expertise in the field, and ensure cross-regional comparison and learning. For these reasons, the pilot projects are at different stages of implementation. Once incorporated into the FEWER framework, the pilot projects will provide regular conflict updates on each region in a standard format that will be widely disseminated. The projects will also provide short, focused and corroborated analyses on conflict situations. These reports

will identify *inter alia* populations at risk, local leaders, opportunities for conflict prevention and recommend options.

Phase I for the pilot projects is April 1997 to March 1998. The dates for dissemination of conflict assessments are July 1997, October 1997 with an evaluation in late January 1998. In Phase II, April 1998–December 1999, short reports are planned on a bi-monthly basis and with greater frequency during emergencies. FEWER also plans a series of occasional working papers on emerging issues and debates. In the future, an on-line journal as well as an early warning forum to encourage wide participation are envisioned. The current pilot projects are located in the following regions:

Early Warning Network in the Former Soviet Union (EAWARN)

The lead agency for EAWARN is the Center for the Study and Prevention of Conflict of the Russian Academy of Sciences. EAWARN was established in 1993 as a part of an international project on ethnic conflict management in the former Soviet Union. Its efforts have resulted in the development of a network of leading academic experts and policymakers from NGOs and government on ethnic issues and conflict management. The network is comprised of thirty four country or regional groups that cover ten successor states from the former Soviet Union: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tadjikistan, Russian and the Ukraine). The main mode of communication and dissemination of information is electronic mail.

EAWARN produces regular reports from its regional partners and bi-monthly bulletins on important topics. The network convenes annual seminars for the purpose of interacting with other networks and strengthening its internal capacity.

EAWARN has developed a database on ethnicity and conflict which includes demographic and sociocultural profiles of ethnic groups and mi-

norities, frequent updates on ethnic groupings in the various states and regions, survey reports, official documents (e.g., legislation). This data is available through the INTERNET. The dissemination of this information in English is limited due to lack of current funding.

West African Research Network (WARN)

The lead agency for WARN is the Prevention/Early Warning Unit, York University. The current focus of this project is Nigeria. WARN has issued a report on existing information (both in print and on the World Wide Web) on the situation in Nigeria. It has prepared a first draft report providing insights on the background and current issues in Nigeria.

WARN has begun to establish a network of academic institutions and NGOs in Nigeria, comprised of seventeen field officers, six regional coordinators, and one central coordinator. Communication and dissemination of information is managed via telephone, fax and email. The coordinators ensure the collection of country of origin information and analysis. This regional information and analysis is then passed on to the lead agency for a comparative assessment, analysis, report writing and dissemination.

The Great Lakes Programme

The lead agency for the Great Lakes Programme is International Alert. While International Alert has worked extensively in this region, it has decided to refrain from directly implementing the project. The decision is based on the fact that International Alert would like to ensure that any reports are independent from its advocacy objectives. In addition, International Alert would like to maintain the integrity and viability of its program on the ground as well as protect, as much as possible, the security of staff and partners.

International Alert will play a key role in identifying a partner agency in the region who will be responsible for designing, implementing and moni-

toring the program. As part of this, a partnership between a local institution and an international one (based in the EU) will be built in order to ensure that the links between strategic options and analysis are geared to ongoing policy discussions and processes in the EU. During March and April, IA will finalize the criteria for the selection of partners and develop the Terms of Reference for their work. Resources for this project will go directly to the implementing institutions.

The project aims at creating an ongoing, reliable and credible assessment of the conflict situation in the Great Lakes region in order to collect information in a coherent manner from both primary and secondary sources. Information will be collected through a network of monitors and data gatherers in the field who will use a standard format. For the purpose of project facilitation there will be two to three annual seminars for monitors, analysts and the network of monitors on conflict analysis related issues and assessment/evaluation of work in progress. The first seminar in the region with monitors is likely to take place in August/September 1997. A concern will be to ensure that we are able to learn from existing activities in the field and other pilot projects.

Evaluation of Pilot Projects

The lead agency for this project is the Center for Preventive Action at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York. The Center for Preventive Action has projects in all three pilot node areas. This provides an excellent opportunity to develop evaluation mechanisms for the research provided by the nodes. By independently producing reports in all three regions, it is possible to compare the outcomes and contrast the findings with a view to refining and improving methodologies, approaches and linkages. Furthermore, as a party not itself involved in the research nodes, the Center for Preventive Action can assess the effectiveness of each pilot node, the methods used, and the final product in

terms of utility for policy recommendations.

Risks and Constraints of Personnel in the Pilot Regions

Monitors and coordinators in the pilot regions may be subject to some risk in collecting information and undertaking analyses. A protocol is under development to both minimize those risks and provide criteria for maximizing the safety of in-country personnel. ■

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Refuge

Canada's Periodical on Refugees
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Asylum: A Moral Dilemma

By W. Gunther Plaut

Toronto: York Lanes Press

ISBN 1-55014-239-9

192 pages, indexed; \$19.90.

Every year the refugee landscape changes, but only in that more problems are added, fewer are solved, and all become constantly more urgent. Fuelled by the explosion of the world's population, the quest for asylum is one of the most pressing problems of our age. Refugee-receiving nations—located frequently, but by no means exclusively, in the Western world—have to respond to masses of humanity searching for new livable homes. Human compassion for these refugees can be found everywhere, but so can xenophobia and the desire to preserve one's nation, economic well being, and cultural integrity. The clash between these impulses represents one of the great dilemmas of our time and is the subject of Plaut's study. In exploring it, he provides a far-ranging inquiry into the human condition.

The book presents political, ethnic, philosophical, religious, and sociological arguments, and deals with some of the most troublesome and heartbreaking conflicts in the news.

Contents: *The Issues;* Questions Without Answers; Definitions; Religion, Natural Law, and Hospitality; A Look at History; Some Ethical Questions; Through the Lens of Sociobiology; Community and Individual; Contended Rights: To Leave, Return, Remain;

The Practice; Refugees in Africa; Four Asian Lands; Glimpses of Europe and Central America; The North American Experience; The Sanctuary Movement; A Final Look; Bibliography; Index.

Asylum—A Moral Dilemma is simultaneously published in the United States by Praeger Publishers, and in Canada by York Lanes Press.

Synergy in Early Warning Conference: Background

Susanne Schmeidl and Howard Adelman

Abstract

This article provides information on the conference Synergy in Early Warning organized recently by the Prevention/Early Warning Unit in Toronto, Canada. Included are: background on the issues, a brief outline with the abstracts of the papers delivered and the contact addresses of the authors.

Précis

Cet article fournit des informations sur le colloque Synergie en Alerte Préventive organisé récemment par l'Unité Prévention/Alerte Préventive de Toronto, Canada. Y figurent: l'historique des problèmes, un synopsis du colloque incluant les résumés des communications présentées, et les adresses permettant de contacter les auteurs.

Objectives

In June of 1995, the G-7 summit in Halifax called for the exploration of the means by which to improve the analysis of humanitarian disasters and the utilization of conflict-related early warning information, noting that the issue was not the collection of more information, but the enhancement of analytical capacity, as well as the proc-

ess of making analyses available to decision makers. In response to this call, and numerous other within the UN and outside, we organized a conference on the Synergy in Early Warning on March 15-18, 1997. This conference focused on three types of synergies in establishing an early warning network: integrating diverse research methods, combining the organizational efforts of academics, states, international agencies and NGOs, and connecting analyses to strategic responses. This linkage of research, organization, and response will contribute to the early detection, and prevention or mitigation of deadly conflicts. The focus was on intrastate rather than interstate conflicts.

The conference brought together leading academics, policy makers, and representatives of relevant international organizations and NGOs. The integration of policy responses with analysis was intended to increase the capacity of early warning analyses to be sensitive to the needs of policy makers and provide them with specific tools and options.

Initially, the conference tried to address the current split between quantitative and qualitative early warning analyses. By bringing together researchers from both methodological spheres, as well as those academics that have already tried to bridge this gap, the best qualities of both types of research can be combined. While quantitative analysis can furnish the necessary comparative breadth needed for understanding similar structural components of crises, qualitative work provides the contextual sensitivity crucial to understanding specific crises. The conference also addressed the issue of organization and the fragmentation and inadequacy of early warning efforts that have been initiated. Finally, on the policy side, the conference addressed the link between

early warning analyses and policy responses. Too often, early warning is undertaken without considering the range of possible responses. The absence of well developed policy options makes it difficult for policy makers to act upon the findings of such analyses.

Relationship to Past, Current and Proposed Research

This conference built on a series of workshops held over several years at the Centre for Refugee Studies (1991, 1992, 1993) by Professor Howard Adelman, the Center for International Development and Conflict Management at the University of Maryland (1993, 1996) by Professor Robert Ted Gurr and Dr. John Davies, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa (1996), and the Mershon Center for International Security at Ohio State University (1996) by Professor J. Craig Jenkins. These past workshops generally focused only on certain parts of early warning analysis, such as quantitative/qualitative modelling and data systems, without fully attempting to bridge the quantitative/qualitative gap, the organizational issues and the analyses/response linkages. This conference sought to bridge these gaps.

Initial early warning efforts, particularly in the eighties, focused on humanitarian disasters and concentrated on the collection and analysis of information for the purpose of foreshadowing conflicts with the final goal of mitigating the humanitarian consequences. Early warning was aimed at collecting information to prepare adequate emergency relief. The current focus of early warning is on prevention rather than strictly forecasting, on conflict management rather than humanitarian relief, and on analyses and the development of strategic options rather than just information collection. As such, humanitarian early warning

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requires detailed analysis of three major dimensions: actors, situations, and contexts. Successful early warning also requires a suitable organizational structure and a specific focus on realistic strategic options.

Numerous efforts are underway worldwide to develop early warning models. Some utilize indicators and quantitative models. Others are based simply on sharing field information available from UN agencies and NGOs. Participants in this conference utilized different methodologies and approaches (qualitative analysis versus quantitative computerized coding), in such areas as humanitarian crises, major armed conflicts, genocide/politicide, refugee migrations, and human rights. Much less developed, however, is research on linking responses to early warning signals. The conference tried to bridge this gap by having focused two days exclusively on the link between research and responses and viable policy options.

Despite past efforts, an integrated early warning approach does not yet exist. More recently, however, under the auspices of International Alert, in particular the leadership of Kumar Rupesinghe, Ted Gurr and Hayward Alker, specialists in indicator research, are applying their combined talents to a series of restricted comparative case studies using a model proposed by Alexander George of Stanford University. While their work does attempt to incorporate the issue of responses, structural and organizational issues are still largely overlooked. This conference was an attempt to integrate all of these issues.

The Criteria Used to Select Program Participants

Guest speakers were selected on the basis of international recognition in early warning research and policy implementation, and their contribution to early warning analysis and response. The most prominent scholars, key decision makers and NGO leaders were selected as guest speakers. Diversity in background and regional origin was also taken into account in order to provide a balanced conference.

Synergy in Early Warning Conference: Brief Outline and Abstracts of the Papers

Day 1—Sunday, March 16, 1997—

A. Synergy in Early Warning Research

A-I. Linking Early Warning and Intelligence

"Defining Humanitarian Early Warning"

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A lot of effort worldwide is underway to create a system of knowledge and programmatic action based on a concept that may be vague and totally ambiguous—namely "early warning." What is humanitarian early warning about? What benefit does it bring, and how is early warning to be accomplished? We can refer to the long association between early warning and traditional intelligence services which were expected to deliver warnings to their political masters in sufficient time for the political leadership of a state to undertake preemptive action to prevent, deter or, at the very least, mitigate the effects of threatened violent action against one's own state. In the last two decades, early warning has been associated with humanitarian actions rather than protecting against threats to one's country's security. I do not propose to rehearse the development of the concept as it started in humanitarian efforts to anticipate food shortages to enable supplies to be put in place to prevent famine, or the extension of the term to anticipating refugee flows in order to have food and medical supplies as well as tents and water in position to mitigate the suffering of the refugees who generally flee

with minimal supplies, and its more latter extension to conflict management to prevent the circumstances which give rise to refugee flows in the first place. Instead, I propose to subject the definition adopted by FEWER, the Forum for Early Warning and Early Response, to a critical examination to unpack its meaning.

"Intelligence and Early Warning: Lessons from a Case Study"

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The paper, using the example of the February 25, 1994 shooting spree by an Israeli doctor in a Muslim Prayer Hall in the city of Hebron, tries to answer the question if intelligence should be expected to predict violent events with damaging impact on politics in the future. The case resulted in hearings and deliberation that raised certain points of controversy that provide an excellent case study of early warning, and its link to intelligence. This study addresses itself to these points, based on a study of the material available by the Shamgar Commission, as reported in open sources. No particular distinction is made between the main themes in the hearings on the one hand, and the conclusions and recommendations on the others, as there are no major gaps between them. In addition, particular attention is paid to the linkages between intelligence and early warning, which is a natural theme emerging from the proceedings.

"Potential Humanitarian Crises: The Warning Process and Roles for Intelligence"

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Warning is a process of communicating judgments about threats early enough for decision makers to take action to deter whatever outcome is threatened; or failing that, to manage events in such a way that the worst consequences are mitigated. So in a sense, then, the term "early warning" is redundant; warning that comes too late for action is not warning at all. Intelligence plays a role at each stage in the warning process but it is not intelligence in the traditional sense of stealing or discovering "secrets" that is relevant here. Rather, the intelligence needed in these cases is really information and news. The information may be rather obscure and difficult to obtain, but rarely will the task of diverting or managing a humanitarian crisis depend on discovering secrets. Still, as crises develop, international organizations and NGOs are likely to continue to turn to governments for what they will call "intelligence" on the situation. This will continue to be true because only governments will have the resources devoted to collecting and analyzing the array of information available. Thus, if warning is to be effective, the budding synergy between governments and NGOs will have to blossom as governments and international organizations help provide NGOs with a broad perspective on the crisis and NGOs provide governments with ground truths on areas to which their officials do not have access.

A-II. Quantitative Modelling and Computerized Coding

"Pattern Recognition for Early Warning: Crisis Classification using Event Data and Hidden Markov Models"

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Event data are one of the most widely used indicators in quantitative early warning research. To date, most of the models using event data have constructed numerical indicators of the likelihood and severity of a crisis. These measures are somewhat arbitrary and have yet to gain wide acceptance in the policy community. An alternative approach is to use computerized pattern recognition techniques to match an existing crisis to a set of similar historical cases, and use those historical cases to judge the likely severity of the current situation. This approach has much in common with the techniques used by human analysts—who frequently employ reasoning by historical analogy—while preserving the advantages of the inexpensive and systematic monitoring that is possible using contemporary methods of automatically generating event data from newswire reports. This paper reports on a project that uses "Hidden Markov models," a recently developed sequence-comparison technique that is widely used in computational speech recognition, to measure similarities among international crises. The model is developed using the "Behavioural Correlates of War" data set of historical crises, then applied to political behaviour in the contemporary Middle East.

"Mapping Mass Political Conflict and Civil Society: Issues and Prospects for the Automated Development of Event Data"

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Mass political conflict is examined typically in terms of violence and in isolation from routine civil interactions. We argue that mass conflict is multidimensional and that violence should be treated as an outcome of conflict, as well as a form of action. We define three dimensions of conflict—contentiousness, coerciveness, and change goals—and indices of the civil society that are central to mapping global trends in mass conflict. We then outline a strategy for mapping mass conflict and civil interactions using the PANDA protocol to generate highly reliable event data and then use these indices to trace two democratic transitions (in Poland and South Korea), a conflict crisis that was repressed (China) and a conflict escalation that flared into a civil war (the former Yugoslavia). Automation has major advantages over human coding in terms of transparency, integration with existing event data series, real time availability and long-term maintenance costs. It also opens up new ways of thinking about event data and the assessment of reliability.

"Assessing Risks of Ethnorebellion in the Year 2000: Three Empirical Approaches"

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This paper describes three empirical approaches to generating risk assessments of ethnorebellion from 1991-95 data on 268 groups surveyed in the Minorities at Risk project. The results are compared with one another and, in high risk cases, with recent political developments. The approaches are risk profiling (based on *a priori* specification of risk factors), theoretical modelling, and empirical modelling, the

latter two based on analysis of residuals from regression analysis. We distinguish risk assessments from early warnings and forecasts. Rather than estimating precise probabilities of ethnorebellion, we offer three alternative assessments of risks of rebellion in the mid-range future. These assessments are expected to hold only if the variables identified in the risk profiles remain constant—which, in a changing political world, is not likely. Our assessments should be useful because they identify key variables and high risk cases that warrant monitoring. Such monitoring CAN provide early warning, thus our assessments provide a foundation for the development of early warning systems of ethno-political conflict.

"Accessing and Analysing of E-Mail Reports Through Database Systems"

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The presentation aims to discuss an idea hypertext for improving system of query statements to database on ethnic conflict topics. The Centre for the Study of Conflict (Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences) coordinates a wide-range email early warning network. The Centre accumulates, processes and publishes essential information received from more than 20 geographical areas of the former Soviet Union. For this purpose special database is being developed in the Centre. We describe two main applications for database management. It offers new opportunities for scholars and practitioners in fast overviews data and generating new ideas.

A-III. Qualitative Analysis and Case Studies

"Early Warning for North Korean Flood Victims at Refugee Risk: Victims of Nature or Politics?"

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In the event of the recent floods which aggravated the seriousness of existing food supply problems in North Korea, the concerns related to possible instability on the Korean peninsula have revolved around the possibility of North Koreans at refugee risk. The need for contingency planning is required to prepare for massive refugee flows that might result from further economic decline and or famine in North Korea. Yet, efforts to do everything possible to halt refugee flows by stabilizing the agricultural production and feeding people in at-risk areas are more desirable, since refugee flows mean a following indicator, not a leading indicator, of insecurity. The case of North Korea, however, represents limits of early (or preventive) action due to various obstacles such as sovereignty, political propaganda ('Chu-che'), and misinformation. Citing the country's food crises initiated by natural disasters (floods) and aggravated by political manipulation, this paper will examine: under what condition is early detection difficult?; under what circumstances are preventive actions less feasible though the early warning models are successful and the crises are detected in a timely fashion? In the case of North Korea, categorizing environmental factors alone is not feasible. A comprehensive analysis is needed for comparing the natural factors causing the country's food crisis with the political factors.

"Early Warning: The Case of the Former Soviet Union"

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Early warning of conflicts in the former USSR dates its origins to 1993, when the Network of Ethnological Monitoring and Early Warning of Conflict (EAWARN) was formed within the framework of the international project "Ethnic Conflict Management in the Former USSR". The project is coordinated by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, and Conflict Management Group, Harvard Law School, in cooperation with the International Laboratory of Mass Communications (VEGA). The project is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Russian Academy of Sciences. The EAWARN is a network of leading experts in the former Soviet Union, including a number of Russia's republics and administrative regions with multi-ethnic populations and conflict situations. The Network is designed to monitor ethnopolitics, to collect and process information for early detection of potential conflicts and early preventive action. The Founding Director of the EAWARN is professor Valery Tishkov. Inaugurated on September 1, 1993, the Network includes over 25 local experts now. The goal of this presentation is to share the experience of building the Network and its development. The following issues will be explored: the specific elements of the Network's development stages from initial information sharing to current descriptive analysis of Early Warning model, based on 47 indicators; professional and personal characteristics of the local representatives who gather information and their affect on the type

of information; use of information collected for political recommendations.

"Research of Socio-Psychological Factors in a System of Early Warning"

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One of the major elements of the early warning of ethnic conflicts is the empirical data collecting through quantitative research of mass consciousness in regions of potential conflict. The report presents an experience of the North-Caucasian Centre of the Institute of Social and Political Research of Russian Academy of Sciences in studying socio- and ethno-psychological background of the potential conflicts in a region of Northern Caucasus. The region located in South-West Russia is a specific frontier between Western and Eastern civilizations and due to this fact involved not only in the Russian field of geopolitical interests but in those of Turkey, Iran, Trans-Caucasian countries and Muslim world as a whole. The structure of the Chechen conflict was observed as a phenomenon presented by focal events, induced directly by contradiction of values and interests of fighting sides, as well as peripheral events —consequences determined by catalysing influence of open violent conflict in Chechnia upon political, social, ideological and sociopsychological developments in neighbouring republics with their own conflictogeneous potential. Peripheral events could provide favourable conditions for penetrating "external" conflict and for genesis of a new one. In an applied quantitative research, we tested a hypothesis about probable types of behavioural reaction in peripheral societies determined by stereotypes of the conflict perception (a specific test

on value compatibility and tolerance between different ethnic and social groups). The first type of reaction was indicated by features of consolidation of the peripheral society on the base of solidarity with one of the fighting sides, which could provoke a conflict with another; the second was indicated by tendencies to fragmentation of the society on the basis of differences in conflict perception, which could lead to sharpening of social (interethnic) relations and transform a conflictogeneous situation into conflict.

A-IV. Synergy of Qualitative Studies with Quantitative Models

"Dynamic Data for Conflict Early Warning"

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The paper examines the need for systematic model-based early warning systems, supported by dynamic and structural data systems. It introduces GEDS as one such dynamic data system and outlines the accelerator categories developed by Harff for the use in early warning models for genocide and ethnic conflict. The paper also reports some results testing the efficacy of such accelerators.

"Early Warning and Deterrence Strategies: States versus Institutions"

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There is no definitive evidence on when and under what conditions third parties should intervene in a coercive way to prevent ethnic tensions from escalating out of control, or how to manage crises when they do. Nor do we clearly understand the conditions under which deterrent and compellent threats (or any form of coercive diplomacy, for that matter) will succeed or fail, or how credibility and resolve are influenced by (a) the "type of intervener," (b) "the type of conflict," or (c) the "stage" at which the intervention takes place. Even more disturbing is the fact that answers to these questions are becoming crucial at a time when international relations theory is being criticised for its lack of cumulativeness, or, even worse, relevance. With respect to deterrence theory, the most widely researched form of coercive diplomacy and the focus of our study, there are no clear and consistent findings. Without an empirical base to evaluate the conditions under which coercive diplomacy is likely to succeed, answers to pressing questions about the onset, escalation and resolution of ethnic conflict and violence will remain elusive. Our paper has three interrelated objectives: 1) to explore the nature of ethnic conflict de-escalation in the context of deterrence theory, 2) to produce policy relevant information on the success rates of different types of third party interventions, 3) to assess the impact of "crisis profiles" (ethnic/non-ethnic; interstate/intrastate) on the probability of success, and 4) to examine the larger implications for early warning and preventive diplomacy. Two propositions are tested against crisis data: 1) multistate coalitions are more likely than unilateral interveners, and unilateral interveners more likely than IOs, to control hostilities in both ethnic and non-ethnic crises; 2) multistate coalitions are more likely than unilateral interveners, and

unilateral interveners are more likely than IOs, to control hostilities in both interstate and intrastate crises.

"The Systemic-Evolutionary Extended Signal Approach"

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The period after 1989 has been the most turbulent and erratic since World War II. All areas of our society show far reaching signs of transformation. We are living in an "Age of Discontinuity." To analyze and assess discontinuities (global level) and crises (regional level) which may rise from changes in the areas of demography, economy, ecology, technology and politics/religion, the following approach is presented and applied to the question: "Is there a potential for crisis if ethnic minorities are not sufficiently integrated into the state?" The Kurds have been one of the largest minorities in the world for years. "Kurds" is a term comprising several groups of clans living in a divided area. By far the largest number of Kurdish clans live in Turkey. The "Turkish Kurds" have been showing a high potential for crisis for about fifteen years. The conflicts between the PKK and the Turkish government and the Army show several features of a civil war costing the lives of the civilian population. Moreover, the conflict has cost Turkey face in the international arena as well as a lot of money (about 6 to 7 million US dollars per year).

"Combining Indicator Research and Case-Based Analyses"

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While it is clear that if crises could be prevented, lives and scarce resources would be saved, there is much less clarity with regard to "prevention" as a concept and "early warning" as a tool. While prevention has proven to be an elusive goal, early warning continues to receive increased attention, with the term used to describe an increasing number of different, and differing, activities. For the last three years, the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) has been struggling to turn early warning from a sound concept into a series of implementable and fruitful activities. This has included defining what early warning is; how it can be operationalized; and most importantly, how it can be used to initiate early and effective action on the part of the UN and the humanitarian community. The Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS) was established to identify crises with humanitarian implications, recognizing that the causes of crises are as numerous and complex as the implications themselves. This paper will trace the evolution of thinking within DHA on the tools, mechanisms, and processes needed to accomplish the task. In particular, it will examine the balance required between indicator analysis and case-based research to support decision making within an organization such as the UN. Striking such a balance is critical, in order to translate analyzes derived from systematic indicator research into viable and practical policy options for decision makers.

A-V. The Media and Early Warning

"Propaganda and Genocide"

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This paper offers a preliminary comparative historical examination of the role of state and regime-supported propaganda in inciting civilians to implicate themselves in genocides and gross violations of human rights through participation and/or acquiescence in killings. Reviewing past cases in light of mass participation in the Rwanda genocide of 1994, it examines the twentieth century genocidal killings of Armenians, "kulaks" and "bourgeois elements" in the Soviet Union, Jews, Indonesian Communists, Cambodians, and several groups of victims in the former Yugoslavia. Conclusions are drawn regarding the techniques adopted by the perpetrators to demonize the victims, the role of the media of the time in mobilizing mass support for the killings, and the contributions of communication theories to understanding the circumstances under which victims become vulnerable to propaganda. Questions for future research are posed.

"U.S. Television Network Coverage on Humanitarian Crises: Can they be a Source of Early Warning?"

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Livingston's remarks will focus on the response of American television news to humanitarian emergencies. He will focus on two interrelated questions: To what extent might we reasonably expect American television networks, including CNN, to serve as a reliable source of information regarding nascent or even extant refugee crises? Secondly, what role might media play in the humanitarian policy responses of the United States government? While

considerable expectation is sometimes placed in media, particularly television, to serve as response catalysts in humanitarian crises, a close and careful examination of the evidence garnered from recent humanitarian crises suggests prudence in developing these expectations.

"The Media in Conflict Prevention and Management: Curse or Catalyst?"

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Much is expected of the media in conflict prevention and management. The reality is different from the expectation. Based on new work for the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, this paper analyzes the myths of the media's role in early warning. How accurate, how partial and therefore how credible is real-time reporting in the build up to, and prosecution of a conflict?

**Day 2—Monday, March 17, 1997—
B. Synergy in Organization**

**B-I. Governments and Early
Warning**

**"How to Establish an Early Warning
System: Concept and First Steps in
Switzerland"**

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The authors introduce a pilot project on a general conflict warning system mainly designed to serve the Swiss Foreign Ministry. Especially after the Rwanda disaster the administration (backed by the Foreign Committee of the Parliament) underlines the need for a computerized system that builds the ground for early recognition and, thus, enhances the "institutionalized" pressure to (re)act in a stage of a conflict as early as possible. Questions arise on the state of the art as well as on the interface between early warning on one hand and decision making and early action on the other.

**B-II. The Role of the UN and UN
Organizations in Early
Warning**

**"Early and Late Warning of Acute
Conflict by the UN
Secretary-General"**

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The only political role that was explicitly given to the Secretary-General in the UN Charter is early warning. (Under Article 99, he/she may bring threats to the peace to the attention of the Security Council.) But can the UN Secretary-General actually succeed in providing early warnings? By digging into the mines of UN history, I have sought to identify and tabulate the various roles played by the Secretary-General, and to highlight the instances of early warning. For over 100 conflicts examined, only a very few (e.g., Congo 1960, Bahrain 1970, Macedonia 1992) can be rigorously classified as early warning. These provide some useful pointers. The many cases of late warning (e.g., Korea 1950, Falklands/Malvinas 1982, Namibia 1989) can also yield valuable learning. Fur-

thermore, there are only three or four explicit invocations of Article 99 and about a dozen cases of implied invocations, though most would be considered "late" warnings. This paper will summarize the constraints and opportunities for early warning in each of its three stages (information gathering, analysis and dissemination), and make suggestions about how some obstacles can be overcome. For technical and political reasons, the UN Secretary-General is now in a better position to do early warning than ever before but certain improvements are still called for: better targeting of desired information, increased intelligence-sharing, tighter confidentiality systems, easier access for on-site observation, a stronger analytical capacity (including scenario building), quicker feedback at headquarters and a more proactive approach in issuing warnings and undertaking response measures. This may be a tall order at a time when the international community seems unwilling to increase the UN's staff and resources but the goal of conflict prevention is worthy of all such efforts.

**"Early Warning of Violent Conflict:
The Role of Observer Missions"**

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Military and civilian observers have been deployed by the United Nations and by Regional Organizations for a variety of purposes at various stages in the escalation and de-escalation of tensions. How can observer missions enhance early warning of violent conflict? Recent observer missions in the Balkans, Africa and Central Asia have relied heavily on military personnel. They have often been deployed after it is evident that violent conflict is likely, or is in progress. Often, the informa-

tion they provide at considerable risk has added little to the international community's ability to respond to or prevent violent conflict. With knowledge about how conflicts start and spread, we can link observer missions more effectively to other means of early warning. If they are structured, trained, and deployed to address the many dimensions of incipient violence, they can be used to help galvanize international response. This may entail linking observer missions to projects like the Forum on Early Warning and Emergency Response (FEWER), to permit mutual support. Adding police, judicial, socioeconomic, political and media analysis elements to observer missions would increase their capacity to observe non-military dimensions of incipient conflict. Missions might normally be structured with military observers in support of these elements. Providing high-level liaison officers from the observer mission to international bodies might allow the international community to respond more effectively, and lend added credibility to the mission's activities. In conjunction with international bodies, a mission media cell could help shape the international view of an emerging crisis, the better to manage response. Observer missions can help with both early warning and international response to incipient violent conflict. The next generation of observer missions should have multi-functional headquarters with analysis and assessment units, liaison to international bodies, effective team preparation, and realistic media strategies.

"Averting Famine Through Linking Early Warning with Response Mechanisms"

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FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) has been assigned the mandate of constantly monitoring the Global food supply and demand situation and alerting the international community to countries or regions threatened by serious food shortages or which have exceptional surpluses of food requiring donor assistance for disposal. In a period when the number and complexity of food emergencies has been growing, GIEWS continues to provide policy-makers and relief agencies throughout the world with the most up-to-date and accurate information available. Yet having an effective early warning system is no guarantee that timely and adequate interventions will follow. Emergency assistance is not always mobilized in sufficient volume, or it arrives too late to avert famines and save lives. However, objective early warning information continues to play a crucial role in ensuring that timely and appropriate action can be taken to avoid human suffering and loss of life. The paper outlines GIEWS experience in linking early warning with response mechanisms in some recent food emergencies. It shows how effective early warnings, rapid national/regional coordination and adequate international support have resulted in successful relief effort which averted threats of famine and saved many lives.

B-III. *The Role of NGOs in Early Warning*

"Eyes and Ears? Limits of NGO Information for Early Warning"

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Complex humanitarian emergencies generate human rights abuse, famine, disease and displacement on a massive scale, and they are almost invariably rooted in civil wars. The link between civil war and humanitarian catastrophe was a common factor in Biafra, Cambodia, Ethiopia and other Cold War disasters, and it remains a feature of post-Cold War emergencies as exemplified by events in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda. Policy responses to internal conflicts have passed through several phases since 1989. First, the withdrawal of superpower sponsorship from proxies failed to eliminate all civil wars. Next, muscular military humanitarianism stumbled in Somalia and Bosnia. Finally—and with a degree of desperation born of growing isolationism in public opinion—policymakers in governments, the UN and NGOs have turned to "early warning and conflict prevention" as a rationale for global internationalism at a discount price. The body of the paper consists of three sections. It first examines the limits of NGO information on internal conflicts, and several means to overcome those limitations. The next section describes recent initiatives to share intelligence for early warning in policy networks that include NGOs and elements of the U.S. national security bureaucracy. The third section addresses specific cases and issues of such policy networks.

"NGOs and International Relations Theory: The Rwanda Case"

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The authors analyze the role of NGOs in providing early warning of the genocide in Rwanda in order to shed

light on the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs as ringers of warning bells generally. The authors begin by arguing that on the basis of obvious structural virtues as organizations, NGOs should have some specific advantages in the capacity to provide early warning. However, the authors conclude that the Rwanda experience does not indicate that such capacities are in fact being employed. In order to capitalize on crucial assets NGOs possess in general and, in fact, did possess in Rwanda, the NGO community would have had to: 1) maintain and deepen its connection with local communities throughout an emergency which sapped NGOs energies and preoccupied its leadership; and 2) understand at both policy and operating levels the high value of the assets it had and the importance of applying them to international processes of early warning.

**B-IV. New Approaches to
Collaborative Early Warning
Information, Analyses and
Network Systems**

"RefWorld as an Early Warning Tool"

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Reliable information from a variety of tested sources within the public domain that have withstood the challenge of corroboration and verifiability over time, inevitably forms the backbone of any analytical attempt at early warning in humanitarian crises situations. Speedy access to this information has been considerably enhanced over the past years as an increasing number of governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations make the information they

generate available through the World Wide Web in addition to hard copy dissemination. Although extremely useful for its currency, the Web does however still pose limitations with regard to carrying out efficient searches of less time sensitive information that may nevertheless be crucial to assess for early warning purposes. Since the early 1990s, UNHCR has embarked on a project of converting large amounts of critical information relating to the international refugee regime, situated in the broader human rights context, and consisting of legal and country information, from hard copy into electronic format for dissemination to its field offices worldwide and the public at large. This project, known as RefWorld, has in the meantime come to fruition and the combined databases are available already in its 3rd edition on CD-ROM since January 1997 with a complementary edition available through UNHCR's home page on the World Wide Web. The end product probably constitutes the most comprehensive refugee and human rights information resource available to date, including many early warning benchmark reports on country situations around the world that are not available elsewhere in electronic format. RefWorld is also the result of unprecedented collaboration among a great variety of actors in the humanitarian and human rights fields with UNHCR, and its success can be attributed to all who had the vision and the determination to contribute to this endeavour even in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

**"Early Warning and Information:
The Role of ReliefWeb"**

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If the current humanitarian emergency in the Great Lakes has taught us anything, it is that we do not have an effective international system for intervention in humanitarian emergencies. Following the previous crisis in Rwanda in 1994, lessons learned stressed the need for an early warning system whose warnings would result in the initiation of appropriate responses on behalf of those displaced by conflict and coercion. How do the current policy-oriented approaches in early warning support or hinder the humanitarian community in transcending what has been described as the dilemma of humanitarianism in the '90s? This paper will comment on several current approaches with a view to assessing the role of ReliefWeb, a global information system developed and maintained by UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs as part of its efforts in early warning.

**Day 3—Tuesday, March 18, 1997—
C. Synergy of Analyses and
Responses**

C-I. Early Responses

**"The Paradox of Prevention:
Successful Prevention Erases the
Proof of its Success. A Case for A
New Ethic of Evaluation"**

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Populations tend to become increasingly more conservative and risk adverse when it concerns the usage of tax revenues. The level of acceptable risk premium may vary from society to society, of course, but there is always a measure of "non rational" decision taking. A critical question is: "how risk adverse is the general population when it judges the performance of its

government, of its administration and its civil servant?" And conversely, "how deep a risk aversion runs in the bureaucracy? In the Government?" Consequently "How much of a risk premium is Parliament and the Administration ready to charge the taxpayers to avoid any possibility of errors leading to political embarrassment?" Or "how irrational has its behaviour become?" The purpose of the following reflections is to attempt to decipher the specific "system of rationality" that has come to govern Foreign Affairs and Aid decisions in the recent past. Especially as they influence the decision taking for complex problems such as conflict prevention in Africa. I will first attempt to explain why prevention is difficult to undertake. I will show why managers refrain from taking high risk decisions after they have been subject to critical comments by evaluators and how they learn to cope in very specific manners: their selection of choices become increasingly more irrational. This is, of course, the contrary reaction expected by the evaluators whose primary intentions are to increase rationality in decision making. Among solutions that could be envisaged, one should spend some time assessing the impact and role that evaluation plays in the build-up of such increasing risk premiums. A new dimension must be added to the ethical code of evaluators which would take into consideration the direct effect of the evaluator's own behaviour."

"IOM and Early Responses"

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The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has the objective to ensure the orderly migration of persons in need of international assistance. IOM is an intergovernmental

membership organization with 59 Member States and 48 Observer States. IOM enjoys a close working relationship with many UN agencies, other IOs and NGOs working in humanitarian assistance. The IOM Emergency Response Unit (ERU) was established to (a) develop policies, practices and resources in order to respond more effectively to organizationally determined emergency needs and (b) to initiate or support emergency response efforts. Building on relevant materials of others, and adapting and supplementing them through IOM's unique experiences, the ERU has developed several course books and guides for internal staff training in emergency operations. Regular Workshops are facilitated for IOM staff both at Headquarters and field locations, in order to prepare for better response. The ERU participates in various UN and other interagency / interorganizational bodies dealing with better humanitarian response.

"Quantitative Approaches to Sovereign Risk Analysis: Implications for IMF Responses"

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Increased financial integration has been accompanied by greater volatility of capital flows. For many less developed countries (LDCs) this volatility can have serious economic repercussions. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been assigned an important role in dealing with the problem through emergency lending and enhanced surveillance duties. Predicting these crises, however, is difficult. The paper begins by outlining the task which the IMF has been directed to undertake, and why "early warning" is essential to fulfilling the mandate. A brief review of the literature on the use of early warning models to predict fi-

nancial crises is then provided. The paper then provides some preliminary evidence on the relative value of systemic and country-specific analyzes in managing IMF resources.

C-II. Linking Early Warning Research to Responses I

"Towards Response-Oriented Early Warning Analysis: Policy and Operational Considerations"

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The connection between conflict early warning and early response is here explored as a problem of policy-relevant analysis. The paper argues that while many advocates and researchers in the early warning field decry the absence of "political will," the fact remains that much of what currently exists as early warning is not adequately presented to policymakers. This involves both clear analysis of critical trigger factors, and better targeting of these analyzes such that they are readily utilised by policy end-users. The paper argues that current conflict early warning practices are not effective in presenting dynamic analysis that prioritizes factors and presents practical options for preventive peace-building. To illustrate this argument, a framework for early warning analysis is outlined in brief. Based on ongoing research in the Canadian foreign ministry, this framework focuses on seven political early warning categories: status of governance/political process; polarisation/potential for conflict; structural/societal tension; human rights violations; military/arms supply; external support; and context-specific considerations. Improvements in policy response-oriented

analysis will demand better interaction between early warning researchers, field monitors, and policy analysts in governments, aid agencies, and regional and international organizations. The paper concludes with some observations in this regard, and a brief review of some existing initiatives which perhaps embody this sort of interaction. Written from the perspective of a conflict analyst in the Canadian foreign ministry, the paper is informed by current policy and operational requirements for "early response" and preventive peacebuilding.

**"Bridging the Gap between
Warning and Response: Approaches
to Analyzing Effective Preventive
Interventions"**

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Early warning data systems have been proliferating for some years and are gaining validity. But analysis of what individual and multiple responses are effective in preventing violent conflicts has begun only recently. Until high-level policymakers have received authoritative analyses of what preventive interventions work under what circumstances, we cannot say whether their failures to respond arise from lack of will or lack of a way. The knowledge policymakers can use involves several key action-oriented questions—when? what? why? who? how? and whether?—but existing early warning research addresses these only partially. The paper discusses the units of analysis that might be most useful for codifying recent preventive experience, impact criteria, and two forms of such analysis that might provide policy relevant answers to the action

questions. These forms are evaluations of differing policy tools of intervention (e.g., preventive deployment, conditional development aid), and case-studies of successful and unsuccessful multi-tooled preventive interventions (e.g. Macedonia, Burundi). How this knowledge might be incorporated into the country-level strategic plans of donors and other third parties is discussed. The resulting idea of "rolling" prevention, rather than the prevailing "alarm bell" model, is offered. Evidence and examples are drawn from recent case-study research on paired successes and failures, tools' work done for the U.S. Greater Horn of Africa Initiative, and evaluation of development aid's effect on conflict.

**"Armed Conflicts and Human Right
Violations: PIOOM's World
Conflict Map 1996"**

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Since 1993 PIOOM has been monitoring armed conflicts on three levels of intensity, using a broader definition of war than some other monitors like SIPRI (Stockholm) or AKUF (Hamburg). The result is a somewhat less optimistic overall assessment of the world conflict situation. The paper presented explains and comments upon a new version of the PIOOM Conflict Map, which contains new dimensions, partly generated by PIOOM itself, partly synthesized from other sources.

The paper discusses the following variables and indicators:

1. Conflict Levels;
2. Confirmed and Suspected Presence of Weapons of Mass Destruction;
3. Countries Severely Infested with Land Mines
4. Use of Child Soldiers in Conflicts;
5. United Nations and Regional Peacekeeping Operations;

6. Refugees and Internally Displaced People by Country of Origin;
7. States of Emergency;
8. Level of Political Terror under Severely Repressive Regimes;
9. Military Rule;
10. Coups d'Etat and Army Mutinies;
11. Presence of Systematic Torture;
12. Annual and Cumulative Fatality Figures for High Intensity Conflicts;
13. UN and other Peacekeeping Operations;
14. Use of the Death Penalty;
15. Food Security; and
16. Human Development Index.

**C-III. Linking Early Warning
Research to Responses II**

**"Institutions for Managing Ethnic
Conflicts: Selected Cases"**

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What kinds of actions can help to reduce conflict before it becomes violent? There are an array of possible measures that exist, from dialogue and mediation to sending peacekeeping troops. Which measures are appropriate and effective depends on the type, the stage and the source of the conflict. This paper focuses specifically on ethnic conflict. It argues that, irrespective of the sources of ethnic conflict, institutions are an important mediating factor in fuelling or reducing the potential for ethnic violence. It proposes to deepen the research on the institutional sources of conflict to understand how institutional change can alleviate ethnic tensions. The next section situates the argument within the broader debate on peacebuilding and conflict prevention. The paper then discusses institution-building in a multi-ethnic context. It will use the cases of Indonesia and Nigeria to illustrate the discussion.

"Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes"

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The greatest danger to peace processes comes from spoilers—leaders and parties who see peace as a threat to their power, world view, and interests, and use stealth or violence to undermine attempts to achieve it. When spoilers succeed, as they did in Angola in 1992 and Rwanda in 1994, the results are catastrophic. In both cases, the casualties of failed peace were infinitely higher than the casualties of the preceding war. The paper argues that spoilers differ by the goals they seek and their commitment to achieving those goals. External actors have a range of strategies available to them, from ones that rely heavily on conciliation to ones that rely heavily on coercion. The appropriateness of a particular strategy depends on the goal and commitment of the spoiler and the constraints posed by other parties in the peace process. Selection of a robust strategy requires that the custodian overcome various organizational and individual blinders that prevent it from accurately interpreting the intentions and behaviour of the spoiler. Implementation of a successful strategy depends on the ability of the custodian to create an external coalition for peace; the resources that the coalition brings to its responsibility; and the

consensus that the coalition forms about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of spoiler demands and behaviour.

"An Early Warning about Forecasts: Oracle to Academics"

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While we develop quantitative models for forecasting political and humanitarian crises, questions linger about their efficacy. In econometrics, there are accepted methodologies for determining the closeness of fit between the predicted and observed values. However, apart from the challenges of appropriate data and methods of analysis, many of these standard techniques either a) tell us little about the relative efficiency of our forecasting model or b) they do not even apply to the *prescriptive* models. This is because, first, after decades of economic forecasting, empirical evidence suggest that no single method predominates over others. Second, since EW models are for directing public policy, the predicted values are not independent of the observed values. That is, if a model places a nation on its list of highest risk, which provokes the intended policies for averting the crisis and the early actions are successful, then how do we measure the model's success? Therefore, in this paper, I emphasize that these models should not be considered as "forecasts" and should be taken as "warnings." ■

Breaking Ground:

The 1956 Hungarian Immigration to Canada

Edited by **Robert H. Keyserlingk**

Toronto: York Lanes Press, 1993, ISBN 1-55014-232-1, 117 pages, \$6.99

This book is a collection of personal and archival-based memories on the selection, transport and settlement of about 40,000 Hungarian refugees in Canada in one year.

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Nominated for the 1997 Thomas & Znaniecki Prize, to be awarded in Summer by the International Migration Section of the American Sociological Association

PATHS TO EQUITY

Cultural, Linguistic, and Racial Diversity in Canadian Early Childhood Education

by Judith K. Bernhard, Marie Louise Lefebvre, Gyda Chud and Rika Lange

Toronto: York Lanes Press
ISBN 1-55014-277-1; 112 pages, size 8.5x11; \$18.95

Paths to Equity is based on an extensive nationwide study of 77 childcare centres in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver on the cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity in Canadian Early Childhood Education (ECE). The report presents the results this study on how the ECE system is responding to the increasing diversity of contemporary Canadian society.

A fully one third of teachers interviewed in this study responded, at the time of graduation from ECE programs, did not feel that they were well prepared to work effectively with children and parents from diverse backgrounds. In this ground-breaking study, the authors have addressed teachers' views on diversity in the education programs; parents' difficulties in collaborating within the current education system; teachers' difficulties in understanding many "ethnic" parents; desire of many parents for better communication with staff, preferably in their own languages, and for more information about their individual children, and chances for effective input; and the evidence of some continuing problems with racism, irrespective of the good intentions of centre staff.

Paths to Equity will be of interest to ECE faculty, policymakers, centre supervisors and staff and others interested in the inclusion of diversity content in professional education programs.



From Being Uprooted to Surviving:

Resettlement of Vietnamese-Chinese "Boat People" in Montreal, 1980-1990

By Lawrence Lam

Toronto: York Lanes Press

ISBN 1-55014-296-8

200 pages, indexed; \$18.95

The saga of the "boat people" is a dramatic story, a story of one of the largest refugee movements in recent years. Canada played a significant role in the resettlement of these refugees in bringing them to Canada where they could start anew. *From Being Uprooted to Surviving* by Professor Lam, is based on ethnographic data of a sample of Vietnamese-Chinese accepted for resettlement in Montreal in 1979 and 1980, who were interviewed again in 1984-85 and in 1990-91, this book provides a longitudinal account of their experience of resettlement in Canada. This experience has been marked by successive stages of their struggle to overcome structural barriers and to negotiate a meaningful niche in Canada.

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Ogenga Otunnu or Sylvia Child
Guest Editors, *Refuge* Special Issue
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CALL FOR PAPERS

WORKING WITH REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The Centre for Refugee Studies will publish a special issue of *Refuge* on "Working with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons."

This special issue of *Refuge* is intended to provide a forum to individuals and agencies working with refugees and the internally displaced persons to share information on the subject. Information will address both policy formulation and delivery of services to refugees and internally displaced persons.

Contributions with 100-word abstracts are invited. They must be received not later than June 30, 1997.

Papers should be typed, double-spaced, and referenced in proper academic form. They should not exceed 16 pages or about 4000 words. Short papers of about 900 words are also welcomed. Word-processed submissions may be sent on disc or by email.

Les rédacteurs acceptent aussi des articles en français. Le style doit conformer aux normes exigés pour les articles rédigés en anglais.

Deadline: July 31, 1997.

For further details, please contact:

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