

# Toward “Larger Freedom”

40th Conference on the  
United Nations of the Next Decade

Sponsored by  
The Stanley Foundation

June 17-22, 2005  
Park Hotel Vitznau  
Vitznau, Switzerland

---

## Executive Summary

*This conference, focusing on the current renewal process in the United Nations, opened just days before the General Assembly was to meet for formal consultations on the Draft Outcome Document of GA President Jean Ping. President Ping himself was present as were most of his facilitators. The discussions in Vitznau were informal and off the record. There was robust discussion on the following subjects:*

---

The leaders must show their publics that they can work together to modernize international forums....

- *Prospects for UN Renewal*
- *Human Rights Council*
- *Terrorism*
- *Development*
- *Secretariat and Management Reform*
- *Disarmament and Nonproliferation*
- *Responsibility to Protect*

### Prospects for UN Renewal

Conference participants from 24 member states and all regions expressed their optimism that the process of UN renewal (and September's Millennium Review Summit, in particular) will produce significant outcomes and contribute to development, security, and human rights for the world's peoples. But participants cautioned that time is short. Moreover, renewal will need to continue after the September summit. And the stakes are high because a renewed United Nations is important to the well-being of future generations.

- There was unanimous appreciation for the high quality of General Assembly President Jean Ping's Draft Outcome Document as a starting point for consultations. Participants saw it as a foundation that member states can build upon. They agreed that the document coming from the heads of state in September should contain commitments that are "bold, but achievable." The leaders must show their publics that they can work together to modernize international forums and instruments and tackle problems more effectively.
- There are high expectations for the Outcome Document. There is a widespread view that on issues of critical importance (terrorism, human rights, development, and management reform, to name a few), the document needs to be stronger and/or more specific. That said, several par-

---

ticipants urged the GA president to protect the good material in the document by closing off debate on paragraphs where there is agreement.

- One danger cited by several attendees was that reform of the UN Security Council could overshadow the larger reform effort. While an important part of the overall undertaking, participants urged member states to keep differences over the composition of the Security Council from “poisoning the atmosphere of renewal.”

## Human Rights Council

- Participants noted the significant progress on the proposed Human Rights Council since its introduction in the secretary-general’s report. For many, reform of the human rights machinery is the linchpin of UN renewal efforts. Driving this initiative is a wide recognition that the existing Human Rights Commission is a black mark on the organization as a whole, and therefore must be scrapped and replaced. The language in the Draft Outcome Document is seen as a solid start, balancing the interests of the various groupings. Now there is a need to build on the draft and give further detail to the constitution, mandate, and responsibilities.
- The mandate of the council must be clearer to secure support among the member states. Most participants focused on a handful of objectives that the new council should fulfill: monitoring adherence to international human rights law, standard-setting, and advocating for human rights.
- To more effectively “monitor a country’s adherence to international human rights law,” a majority argued that the council should be equipped with a peer-review mechanism that would systematically review the human rights performance of *all* member states. It was agreed that the members of the new council themselves should be among the first countries scrutinized. Such a provision, along with the election by a two-thirds majority of the GA, was seen as a key safeguard against governments with poor human rights records gaining seats on the council.
- A majority of participants felt that the council should eventually become a principal organ of the United Nations, though not immediately. It was seen as politically impossible for the Outcome Document

---

...the members of  
the new [Human  
Rights] council  
themselves should  
be among the first  
countries  
scrutinized.

---

to call for the council to be a main UN body, never mind the years it would take to amend the Charter.

- On council size, participant views ranged from a smaller body of 20-30 members to the status quo of around 50 members to support for a universal body. One participant said the largest UN bodies are the least effective, and another argued that a smaller body would bring greater collegiality. One of the contested issues is that of criteria for election to the council, though most participants could accept criteria as long as they were framed positively—i.e., for candidates to know what would be expected of them.

### Terrorism

- Participants said that unless the September summit takes significant steps on terrorism, the process of UN renewal could be widely seen as a failure. This is a section of the document that merits attention from all member states. While participants applauded the president's draft, many felt that the language does not yet adequately represent the urgency of the problem.
- Participants argued strongly that the United Nations should unequivocally condemn terrorism. Agreement on a definition of *terrorism* would send a strong signal. While most participants agree that they are closer to agreement than ever, consensus is not yet in hand. Even so, there is broad recognition that an unambiguous definition would have clear moral force, help lay the basis for a comprehensive convention, and put the United Nations at the center of the fight against terrorism.
- There was a spirited debate on what if any mention should be made of the "root causes" of terrorism, such as poverty, economic and social injustice, or foreign occupation (all of which are currently mentioned in the text). While several suggestions were made to strike the references, it will be politically impractical (if not impossible) for certain constituencies to sign on if no mention of "root causes" is made.
- There were many calls for streamlining the antiterrorism mechanisms in the United Nations. Participants were concerned that the elements of the United Nations (including the Security Council) that deal with terrorism do not neatly fit together. Such rationalization will be especially important to boost the organization's capacity-building role.

---

...it will be  
politically impractical  
(if not impossible)  
for certain  
constituencies to sign  
on if no mention of  
"root causes" is  
made.

---

## Development

- Participants saw the development section as the strongest piece of the Draft Outcome Document. At earlier points, many developing countries had used the lack of focus on development as an argument against the entire process. Several participants stated that the strength of the development section has given the whole document significant momentum.
- To further improve the development section, the text should be given more of a “people focus” as opposed to the prevalent dry “technocratic” language. In that vein, participants felt that the draft lost some of the emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals contained in the secretary-general’s report and the Sachs report before it. Many participants pressed for an emphasis on fulfilling past commitments and pledges as well as details of a monitoring mechanism to measure donor performance.
- Participants argued for stronger emphasis on establishing timetables for increases in official development assistance—recognizing that the target of 0.7 percent of gross national income is voluntary—and highlighting that certain donors have already met that target. Participants also expressed an interest in innovative potential sources of financing, such as the United Kingdom’s International Finance Facility and the French proposal for a levy on airline fuel, although the lack of consensus in this area was acknowledged. The Outcome Document should also emphasize the importance of a truly development-friendly Doha round of WTO trade talks.
- Suggested additions to the text included greater encouragement of South-South cooperation—such as valuable technical assistance and expertise from middle-income developing countries not yet able to provide financial assistance. It was also argued that the special needs of small-island developing states, Africa, and least developed countries should be spelled out in greater detail.
- The idea of a renewed covenant between rich and poor countries was seen as very important. Conference participants said the document should emphasize rich and poor countries’ *shared* responsibility in eliminating extreme poverty and laying the foundations for equitable development.

---

...the strength of the development section has given the whole document significant momentum.

---

...the serious flaws in the management and accountability structure of the United Nations... reflect very badly on both the UN bureaucracy as well as member states.

---

## Secretariat and Management Reforms

- Participants—almost to a person—agreed that this was the section of the document needing the most improvement, which reflects a larger lack of focus and constructive debate on management among member states. Several participants lamented the “business-as-usual” tone and formulaic language. Conference participants in fact convened themselves in an ad hoc drafting session in Switzerland to come up with proposals to remedy this section’s inadequacies.
- There was explicit acknowledgement that the serious flaws in the management and accountability structure of the United Nations that have allowed the Oil-for-Food and sexual abuse scandals to fester reflect very badly on both the UN bureaucracy as well as member states. Participants expressed a tough-minded resolve that inadequacies in management must be fixed; the Outcome Document must convey this sentiment clearly and unambiguously.
- Perhaps most striking was this section’s near-exclusive focus on the Secretariat. Meaningful management reforms must include the Secretariat, but extend far beyond to the member states themselves. Participants urged the GA president to include language that recognizes that member states have contributed to the United Nations’ management woes. One way to drive this home would be to reaffirm language from the UN Charter (Article 100.2) about noninterference of states in Secretariat affairs.
- Participants attributed the sometimes rocky relationship between the Secretariat and the member states to a fundamental lack of trust. This in turn can be traced to a number of dysfunctions: poor communication between the Secretariat and the member states; the lack of engagement by most ambassadors in the organization’s day-to-day work; and the member states’ frustration with the technical, time-consuming aspects of budget and programmatic work.
- There was consensus that the paragraph condemning sexual exploitation and abuse should be tougher, sharper, and more prominent. Participants suggested that the Outcome Document include a sentence on the United Nations’ zero-tolerance policy on abuse. Critical to this is an appropriate division of labor between the Secretariat and the member states. The United Nations is not a sovereign body, lacking laws, courts, or prisons

---

and can do little to punish those guilty of abuse beyond discharging them from UN service. Member nations need to accept and discharge their responsibility to try and punish perpetrators who are their citizens. There was broad agreement that ways must be found for victim restitution. However, the mechanism for this needs more development.

- Many participants felt that the secretary-general and the member states should codify a new compact, with commitments to greater trust, cooperation, and collaboration. Under such a compact, the secretary-general would be given greater authorities in exchange for taking specific steps to increase transparency and accountability. A key first step will be for the secretary-general to develop a comprehensive management plan that boosts accountability and transparency within the Secretariat, a thorough review of the budget and human resources rules under which the Secretariat labors, and an urgent review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Questions have also been raised about potential unintended consequences of a one-time staff buy-out, and participants emphasized that this measure can be calibrated to achieve its intended aims.
- The secretary-general's comprehensive management plan was seen as urgent enough that it should be produced by the end of 2005. There was also support for an internal-external review—as one component of the larger plan—to be led by a distinguished former official with significant public sector experience. He or she would be supported by experts and, to strengthen the link to member states, work with a panel of government ministers. Such a mechanism would lend greater weight and support to any proposed reforms.

### Disarmament and Nonproliferation

- Participants expressed their deep, near-universal disappointment with the lack of progress on disarmament and nonproliferation—exemplified most dramatically by the recent failure of the NPT Review Conference. If the member states continue to deal with these issues in a business-as-usual manner, one participant worried that nuclear states will refuse to disarm, that proliferators will keep proliferating, and that it will be only a matter of time before nonstate actors acquire WMD.
- It was the consensus of the group that whatever ends up in the Outcome Document must (1) underscore the importance of disarmament and

---

If the member states  
continue to deal  
with these issues in  
a business-as-usual  
manner...it will be  
only a matter of  
time before nonstate  
actors acquire  
WMD.



---

...throughout all of the recent debates on this issue, the three pillars of the NPT have gone largely unchallenged, and should be enhanced in the future.

---

nonproliferation; (2) reaffirm the international community's dedication to the goals laid out in the NPT; (3) express sincere and grave disappointment with the multilateral debate on nonproliferation; and (4) commit to improvements on a range of issues, from the NPT to small arms and light weapons to landmines.

- As one participant stated, throughout all of the recent debates on this issue, the three pillars of the NPT (disarmament by nuclear weapon states, access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and non-acquisition by nonnuclear states) have gone largely unchallenged, and should be enhanced in the future. Member states need to break out of the mutual recrimination over lack of progress on disarmament and nonproliferation and redouble efforts to find compromises that would advance progress on both.
- Participants felt that the text should be strengthened by going further on two important issues as well as adding a third: small arms, landmines, and shipment of nuclear waste, respectively. On small arms and light weapons, while the current text calls for the negotiation of new conventions on the marking and tracing of weapons and on illegal arms brokering, it omits reference to arms embargoes—which the Security Council uses to cut flows to particular conflicts and which need to be monitored and enforced more effectively.
- On the issue of landmines, there was consensus that the document should urge member states to sign up to the Ottawa Protocol (if they have not already) and provide greater technical assistance to landmine-affected countries especially for de-mining efforts. Participants also expressed the concern, particularly of coastal and island states, over lax controls on the shipping and dumping of nuclear waste.

### Responsibility to Protect

- There was agreement that the section on Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was an impressive demonstration of the kind of consensus-building that can take place at the United Nations when member states work together toward a common interest.
- Central to the compromise on R2P is the emphasis given to the idea that it represents a continuum of responsibilities and options. The text (paragraph 72) reaffirms the primacy of sovereign governments as the



---

guarantor and provider of protection for their people. The international community's role, in the first instance, is to encourage and assist states to exercise this responsibility. If peaceful means of protecting citizens from genocide, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity prove insufficient, the resort to forceful means remains an option. Participants welcomed the document's confirmation of a high threshold—i.e., genocide or ethnic cleansing—for forceful intervention.

- Notwithstanding the emerging consensus behind R2P, participants welcomed the caveat in paragraph 74 that the concept remains under consideration, and that further debate in the General Assembly must take place in the future. Meanwhile, as the legal issues surrounding R2P are sorted out, participants recognized that much of the current impetus behind this idea is moral rather than legal.
- The text recognizes the need for collective action not only through the UN Security Council but also “as appropriate, in cooperation with regional organizations.” While participants heralded the role of regional and subregional organizations in protecting civilians, they differed on their effectiveness. A few participants wondered if involvement of regional organizations might provide an excuse for the Security Council to delay taking decisive action. Others were concerned that regional powers with a specific interest in the country in question could also hamper quick action.

---

The international community's role... is to encourage and assist states to exercise this responsibility.



Front Row: (left to right) Laxanachantorn **Laohaphan**, Jean **Ping**, Richard H. **Stanley**, Louise **Fréchette**, Christopher Fitzherbert **Hackett**

Second Row: Roman **Kirn**, Nana **Effah-Apenteng**, Iftekhhar Ahmed **Chowdhury**, Valeriy P. **Kuchinsky**, Ali **Hachani**, John Cecil **Dauth**

Third Row: Augustine P. **Mahiga**, Johanna **Mendelson-Forman**, Ricardo Alberto **Arias**, Rastam Mohd Isa, Shirin R. **Tahir-Kheli**

Fourth Row: Robert C. **Orr**, Richard **Ryan**, Heraldo **Muñoz**, Jeffrey G. **Martin**, Milan **Vaishnav**

Fifth Row: Tommo **Monthe**, Riaz Hussain **Khokhar**, Shin Kak-soo, Christian **Wenaweser**

Sixth Row: Ellen Margrethe **Løj**, Dumisani S. **Kumalo**, Edward C. **Luck**, Sameh Hassan **Shoukry**

Seventh Row: Sha Zukang, Shinichi **Kitaoka**, Parfait **Onanga-Anyanga**, Zeid Ra'ad Zeid **Al-Hussein**, David **Shorr**

---

## Participant List

### Chair

**Richard H. Stanley**, President, The Stanley Foundation

### Rapporteur

**Milan Vaishnav**, Research Assistant, Center for Global Development

---

## Participants

**Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein**, Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations

**Ricardo Alberto Arias**, Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

**Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury**, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations

**John Cecil Dauth**, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

**Nana Effah-Apenteng**, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations

**Louise Fréchette**, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

**Ali Hachani**, Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations

**Christopher Fitzherbert Hackett**, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations

**Riaz Hussain Khokhar**, Former Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan

**Roman Kirn**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations

**Shinichi Kitaoka**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

**Valeriy P. Kuchinsky**, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

**Dumisani S. Kumalo**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations

**Laxanachantorn Laohaphan**, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations



*Rapporteur, Milan Vaishnav*

*This report was prepared by Milan Vaishnav, research assistant at the Center for Global Development, who served as rapporteur for this conference. This report reflects his interpretation of the discussion and has been neither reviewed nor approved by participants.*

---

**Ellen Margrethe Løj**, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

**Edward C. Luck**, Professor and Director, Center on International Organization, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

**Augustine P. Mahiga**, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations

**Jeffrey G. Martin**, Executive Vice President and Director of Programs, The Stanley Foundation

**Johanna Mendelson-Forman**, Senior Program Officer, Peace, Security and Human Rights, United Nations Foundation

**Tommo Monthe**, Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly, United Nations

**Heraldo Muñoz**, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations

**Parfait Onanga-Anyanga**, Chef de Cabinet to the President of the General Assembly, Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, United Nations

**Robert C. Orr**, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning, United Nations

**Jean Ping**, President of the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly

**Rastam Mohd Isa**, Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations

**Richard Ryan**, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

**Sha Zukang**, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva

---

**Shin Kak-soo**, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations

**David Shorr**, Interim Director, Policy Analysis and Dialogue, The Stanley Foundation

**Sameh Hassan Shoukry**, Assistant Minister and Chef de Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt

**Shirin R. Tahir-Kheli**, Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State on United Nations Reform

**Christian Wenaweser**, Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the United Nations

**The Stanley Foundation Staff**

**Betty J. Anders**, Corporate Secretary and Assistant to the Chair and President

**Susan R. Moore**, Conference Management Assistant

Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only. Participants attended as individuals rather than as representatives of their governments or organizations.

---

## Opening Remarks

by Richard H. Stanley

Welcome to the Stanley Foundation's 40th annual conference on the United Nations of the Next Decade on the subject "Toward 'Larger Freedom.'" The first of these conferences was held in California immediately following the 20th anniversary commemorative session of the General Assembly. Participants then included a number of the original signers of the UN Charter.



*Richard H. Stanley, President  
The Stanley Foundation*

Today, as we convene here in Vitznau on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the United Nations, we are in the midst of an ambitious UN revitalization effort that began nearly two years ago. We are here to add our constructive thinking to this process and are fortunate that our participants include many who have a central role in it. We intend that our exploration of several difficult issues will help build agreement and support for the bold and ambitious actions needed to equip the international system to deal with the threats and challenges of the 21st century. With only three months remaining until the summit meeting at the United Nations in September, our task is urgent. It is also critically important if our children and grandchildren are to be able to live in "larger freedom."

It will be helpful for us to keep in mind the history that has brought us to this point—both the recent process leading to the ideas and proposals before us and the larger sweep of history since the founding of the United Nations in 1945.

Regarding the former, the Stanley Foundation has contributed to the current revitalization process ever since Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change.

In 2004 the Stanley Foundation held six conferences in support of the work of the high-level panel, some cosponsored with the United Nations Foundation, often including members and staff of the panel itself. As the panel, the UN Millennium Project, and the secretary-general released their reports, the revitalization responsibility shifted to the governments that make up the United Nations to enact the changes needed.

Accordingly, we shifted our efforts from collecting ideas toward supporting the work of the General Assembly president and his facilitators in

---

building political consensus for a successful outcome. The Draft Outcome Document is now before us, and this is our fourth meeting on these issues so far this year.

The agenda for UN change is often called *reform*, but I don't find that term helpful. *Reform* sounds like a matter of tinkering with the organizational chart—an abstract and bureaucratic exercise, as if the problem with the United Nations lies in the structure. But the issues before us are anything but bureaucratic; they are extremely concrete in their effect on people and compelling in their urgency. From the moment this process was launched in late 2003, the emphasis has been on confronting the urgent threats and challenges of our time. The working premise has been that the system we inherited from the World War II era is in urgent need of updating. Therefore, I prefer to think in terms of a process of *renewal*. It has as much and perhaps more to do with how the nations of the world work together in and around international institutions as it has to do with the institutions themselves.

In his report, the secretary-general emphasized the tangible results we must deliver saying, “Our guiding light must be the needs and hopes of peoples everywhere...the purposes [of the UN Charter] must be advanced in the lives of individual men and women.” This emphasis on ordinary citizens does not in any way downplay the role of governments. Just a few paragraphs later, he stressed that:

Sovereign States are the basic and indispensable building blocks of the international system. It is their job to guarantee the rights of their citizens; to protect them from crime, violence, and aggression; and to provide the framework of freedom under law in which individuals can prosper and society develop.

I remind us of these fundamental principles because it is all too easy to lose track of our highest purposes in the inevitable wrangling over specific proposals and their details. Indeed, this is the greatest danger to the UN renewal process. For every change that is proposed, there will be parties with a stake in the status quo. Some member states will resist change of any kind, throwing up roadblocks merely because they can.

This dynamic is especially prevalent in the halls of the United Nations in New York, where lowest-common-denominator politics are often the

---

“Our guiding light must be the needs and hopes of peoples everywhere....”



---

Pursuit of narrow  
self-interest will  
bring fleeting  
political gain at the  
cost of real progress.

---

norm. That is why the injection of political leadership and will from governments in capitals—of which we have several representatives here—will be especially important.

The high-level panel gave its own answer to this problem. It urged a comprehensive conception of security, making clear the need for governments to work together in order to gain any measure of safety for their people and indeed their own stability. In other words, attempts to break off pieces of the security agenda will undermine security. Pursuit of narrow self-interest will bring fleeting political gain at the cost of real progress. As the panel put it, “Stated baldly, without mutual recognition of threats there can be no collective security. Self-help will rule, mistrust will predominate, and cooperation for long-term mutual gain will elude us.”

Negotiations over the outcome of the September summit thus reflect a microcosm of the security challenges of our contemporary world. So what is it reasonable to expect from this political process? Some of the terms that are bandied around—*package*, *grand bargain*—have themselves become controversial. At one level, there are good reasons to reject these terms. The grand bargain notion of the Global North and the Global South swapping support for their respective agendas is both overly simplistic and downplays the common interests of Northern and Southern governments while overemphasizing their different priorities.

That said, we shouldn’t expect governments to ignore their interests. One challenge is to define these interests in a long-term context. A second is to recognize the commonality of interests and needs of people from all nations. Still another is to avoid crude horse-trading and yet assemble an outcome that is broadly appealing. Maybe the best way to describe it is that the Outcome Document should be both a “something *for* everyone” and “something *from* everyone” proposition. All parties will need to see provisions that address their most keenly felt needs, and the parties should also expect to make concessions to meet the needs of others.

We must also avoid the chronic reductionism that often pervades international negotiations. If one compares the Draft Outcome Document with the specific recommendations of three prior reports that are the foundation for it, one sees some degree of a softening of recommendations, a shift toward more aspirational language, and a delegation of execution to future actions and other groups. Does this reflect what is politically possible? Is it

---

the best we can do? Or can we find and apply more political will? The severity of our situation demands bold and ambitious actions. Can we summon the will to offer and implement them? Can we reinforce and strengthen the Outcome Document and build momentum toward its implementation?

Let me review a few of the major issues that we will be addressing here in Vitznau. We will encourage you, the participants in our discussion, to outline the contours of possible agreements on these issues. But I offer a few observations regarding how each of them typifies the political and security challenges at hand.

The proposal for a new Human Rights Council is a most important element of the secretary-general's report. Rarely do policymakers talk about scrapping an intergovernmental body, but if ever there was a body that cried out for dismantling, it is the Human Rights Commission. The commission is an apt symbol of the often dysfunctional politics of the United Nations. The success of human rights-abusing governments in using seats on the commission to deflect pressure for improvement in their own practices is surely one of the most cynical games in international politics. And it has greatly damaged the credibility of the United Nations. Just last week the Stanley Foundation and the UN Foundation convened a luncheon discussion on this subject in New York, chaired by our fellow conference participant Ambassador Ricardo Arias of Panama. Our discussion here can draw from that session.

The proposals on terrorism highlight a number of the particular strengths of the United Nations. The United Nations' universal membership offers a unique role in the development of evolving international norms as well as codification of the norms into binding treaties. The secretary-general has proposed that the world unite against terrorism, defined as attacks on civilian population regardless of any associated political aims. In addition, it has proposed replacing the 12 existing international treaties with a comprehensive convention on terrorism.

Actions on terrorism draw on one of the United Nations' strengths—providing channels for intergovernmental coordination on such problems as financing networks and transborder issues. And the United Nations can also play a role in building the capacity of governments to counter terrorism.

---

The United Nations' universal membership offers a unique role in the development of evolving international norms....

---

The recent deadlock in the NPT Review Conference has chilled expectations for progress on WMD, nonproliferation, and disarmament.

---

On development, the United Nations has established important principles and goals in recent years—the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) approved at the 2000 summit and the Monterrey Consensus in 2002.

The report of the Millennium Development Project, *Investing in Development*, offers a practical program of action and points the way forward. Essentially, it says that the world should follow through on the MDGs and the Monterrey Consensus. It calls for both developing and developed countries to draw up national plans to achieve the goals, many benchmarked for the year 2015, and back those plans with the resources that will hire the teachers; provide books, lunches, and immunizations to the students; and build the roads that will make families and countries more economically viable. It also calls for a successful conclusion of the Doha Round of trade talks to lower the barriers that prevent many developing countries from connecting to, and benefiting from, the global trade system.

Of course, the poverty reduction agenda extends beyond the United Nations itself to the broader international system. But the UN renewal process can make important contributions. It can create new mechanisms to track progress on the MDGs as well as fulfillment of pledged aid levels by donors. It can elaborate on the conceptual and policy link between development and the 21st-century collective security agenda. And it can help to build better links with the international financial institutions and to encourage national policy integration, particularly between finance and foreign ministries.

The Draft Outcome Document proposes that the secretary-general be given sufficient authority and flexibility to carry out his management responsibility and leadership and makes several excellent recommendations to accomplish this. A significant effort is needed to discard old and dated mandates and rules and step back from micromanagement. How can we build support to do this? How can the Secretariat be modernized to handle 21st-century needs?

The recent deadlock in the NPT Review Conference has chilled expectations for progress on WMD, nonproliferation, and disarmament. How can the political confrontation over interpretations of the treaty's provision on nuclear disarmament be resolved? We all recognize that far too much of the world's resources are devoted to armed conflict and military

---

expenditures. Even a modest reduction would free large amounts of resources for more constructive purposes. What can be done to reinvigorate the disarmament and nonproliferation process? How can we, as the Draft Outcome Document recommends, advance general and complete disarmament?

The proposal for international recognition of the norm of “Responsibility to Protect” carries some baggage from the human rights debate, and perhaps our discussions can help clarify some key distinctions. There is a lingering concern that such a norm might permit or encourage member states to invade other states because of their human rights records.

Two important points often get lost in the debate. First, any forceful intervention is truly a last resort. To begin with, the state in question is responsible for protecting the rights of its citizens; outside intervention only arises if the local government proves unwilling or unable to provide this protection. In most cases, outside intervention is restricted to political and civilian measures, with the world community fulfilling its responsibility to prevent the escalation of violent conflict. Second, it is only in the case of mass violence that the question of forceful intervention arises. In other words, the option of military invasion only arises in cases of the worst atrocities—genocide or ethnic cleansing.

In the September 2003 General Assembly speech in which he unveiled the high-level panel, the secretary-general famously said, “We have come to a fork in the road...no less decisive than 1945 itself.” Indeed, it is instructive to reflect back to the negotiation of the Charter for lessons that apply to the current UN renewal effort. President Truman’s address to those present in San Francisco for the June 26, 1945, signing of the Charter seems directly applicable to us here today.

Truman’s description of collective security emphasizes the same need for compromise and cooperation of which I spoke earlier. He said, “If any nation would keep security for itself, it must be ready and willing to share security with all. That is the price which each nation will have to pay for world peace. Unless we are all willing to pay that price, no organization for world peace can accomplish its purpose.”

Truman acknowledged the messy negotiations and complex issues that the San Francisco delegates had to work through. He credited them with

---

Indeed, it is  
instructive to reflect  
back to the  
negotiation of the  
Charter for lessons  
that apply to  
the current UN  
renewal effort.

---

keeping their “minds firmly on the main objective...in spite of the many differences and distractions.” Truman predicted that “history will honor” the delegates.

And rightly so. The United Nations has endured and adapted and, whatever its flaws, delivered numerous important agreements, set up useful mechanisms like UNICEF and UNHCR, advanced norms, and most important, provided a forum where the nations of the world could work together for a secure peace with freedom and justice.

---

The United Nations  
has endured and  
adapted and...  
delivered numerous  
important  
agreements....

My wish for everyone involved in the current effort is that history will be similarly kind to our efforts in the 60th year of the United Nations. I hope that in 2065 our grandchildren will look back on this moment and say that you and our political leaders rose to the occasion. Perhaps our discussions here in Vitznau can make some modest contribution toward that end.



---

*The pictures throughout this publication depict several elements of the United Nations of the Next Decade Conference. The conference features informal roundtable discussion sessions, ample opportunity for individual conversations, and social events in a relaxed setting. Together these elements stimulate thinking and develop relationships that enhance understanding.*

---

## Conference Report

The Stanley Foundation's 40th annual United Nations of the Next Decade Conference is the culmination of a foundation effort to support the current push for UN renewal launched in late 2003 when the secretary-general's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change was formed. Last year the Stanley Foundation worked to collect ideas from a range of experts on concrete proposals for UN renewal, many of which wound up in the high-level panel's report.<sup>1</sup>

The conference in Switzerland, entitled "Toward 'Larger Freedom,'" represented part of a larger foundation effort to support the work of the General Assembly president and his facilitators in building political consensus for a successful UN summit when world leaders meet in September. The conference theme borrows the title of the March 2005 report of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, *In Larger Freedom*, which set the agenda for the overall renewal effort.<sup>2</sup>

It was fortuitous then that the conference opened just days before the General Assembly met to debate the Draft Outcome Document issued by GA President Jean Ping. The Draft Outcome Document represents an initial draft of what will ultimately become the UN Millennium Review Declaration, a program of action to be signed by 191 heads of state in New York this September. The eventual strength of this declaration will determine whether the member states of the United Nations will join together to renew and equip the organization for the challenges of the 21st century or simply allow the status quo to continue—letting the United Nations' relevance wither and gradually eroding the existing system of multilateral cooperation.

It was in this context that the Stanley Foundation convened a distinguished group of participants, including the president of the General Assembly, senior Secretariat officials, a group of United Nations' permanent representatives (including several of the president's facilitators), and

---

The Draft Outcome Document represents an initial draft of what will ultimately become the UN Millennium Review Declaration....

---

<sup>1</sup>See High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004), *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*.

<sup>2</sup>Report of the secretary-general of the United Nations (2005), *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*.



---

noted UN experts to discuss the Draft Outcome Document and the key elements of a stronger, more effective and more legitimate United Nations of the next decade—and century.

In addition to addressing the overall prospects for UN renewal and the basic principles for the negotiations in the run-up to September, the discussions in Vitznau were organized around six key sections of the Draft Outcome Document: the establishment of a Human Rights Council to replace the defunct Human Rights Commission, multilateral efforts to combat terrorism, initiatives to boost the development prospects of the world's poorest citizens, reforms to modernize the Secretariat and UN management, bolstering the existing disarmament and nonproliferation regime, and consideration of the Responsibility to Protect as a guide for action in response to genocide and ethnic cleansing.

### Prospects for United Nations Renewal

Participants began their deliberations in Switzerland by taking the pulse of the renewal process to date, reflecting on the reactions of member states to the Draft Outcome Document thus far, and discussing the prospects for a successful Millennium Review Summit in September.

Conference participants from 24 member states and all regions of the world expressed their optimism that the process of UN renewal (and September's Millennium Review Summit, in particular) will produce significant outcomes and contribute to development, security, and human rights for the world's peoples. Despite this sense of optimism, however, several participants cautioned that time is short between now and September and that the document is not yet as forthright or decisive as it must ultimately become. There was wide agreement that the months of July and August leading into the summit would be "crunch time" for tough decisions and compromises, but that momentum for meaningful renewal had reached a point of irreversibility.

Participants agreed that the document signed by the heads of state in September should contain commitments that are "bold, but achievable" and that the leaders must show their publics that they can work together to modernize international forums and instruments and tackle problems more effectively. Despite the understandable focus on the September summit itself, several attendees reminded the group that renewal will need to continue well after the September summit. While the success of

---

...the document signed by the heads of state in September should contain commitments that are "bold, but achievable"....



---

the summit is everyone's number one priority, the success of one summit will not be enough to settle the question of the United Nations' relevance—particularly with skeptical publics—once and for all. In the words of one participant, “We need to keep in mind that September is not an event in itself but the opening salvo in a process that we hope will reinvigorate multilateralism.” As such, the stakes are high because a renewed United Nations is important to the well-being of future generations.

There was unanimous appreciation for the high quality of General Assembly President Jean Ping's Draft Outcome Document as a starting point for consultations and deliberations. Participants saw it as a strong and stable foundation upon which member states can build in the weeks ahead. Perhaps most encouraging to participants was the growing acceptance of key renewal proposals by previously reluctant members of the G-77 and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). One participant characterized NAM's current thinking by stating that the draft “may not be the best document we could have, but it is the most realistic document we can aspire to.”

Participants expressed high expectations for the Outcome Document. These expectations are tempered, though, by an acknowledgment that on issues of critical importance (terrorism, human rights, development, and management reform, to name a few) the document still needs to be stronger and more specific. That said, several participants urged the GA president to protect the good material already in the document, and avoid further reductionism, by closing off debate on paragraphs where there is general agreement and focusing on issues of greatest contention. This “ring-fencing” approach would allow member states to move past stale debates where there is actually agreement and focus on thorny issues that are still contentious.

Looking toward September's summit, participants identified two obstacles that could easily derail the renewal process. The first is the deep concern that debates over UN Security Council expansion could overshadow the larger renewal effort. While clearly an integral part of the overall undertaking, differences over the composition of the Security Council must be kept from “poisoning the atmosphere of renewal.” Participants agreed that a weak statement on Security Council expansion could sink the overall renewal process, but at the same time warned against allowing a single issue to hijack the overall agenda.

---

“We need to keep  
in mind that  
September is not an  
event in itself but  
the opening salvo....

---

Some participants lamented that the discussion thus far has been dominated by questions of form, rather than substance.

---

The second danger most commonly cited is the inability of countries and of UN leadership to manage the inflated expectations of the general public and some member states. “This is a case of evolution, rather than revolution,” argued one attendee; those involved in the process of renewal must be more humble in their expectations and convey this message to the citizens of the world. Bridging the communications divide between New York and representatives of the media and civil society was cited as an urgent priority. Where the high-level leadership on managing expectations would emerge from, however, was not immediately obvious to the assembled participants.

### Human Rights Council

For many, reform of the human rights machinery is a linchpin of UN renewal efforts. “We simply cannot show up in September and say that our human rights machinery is fine,” said one participant, “when everybody knows nothing could be further from the truth.” Driving this initiative is a wide recognition that the existing Human Rights Commission is a black mark on the organization as a whole, and therefore must be scrapped and replaced.

Participants noted the significant progress on the proposed Human Rights Council since its introduction in the secretary-general’s report. According to one participant, the progress achieved on human rights alone should be enough to counter the chronic pessimism of UN reform skeptics. The language in the Draft Outcome Document is seen as a solid start, balancing the interests of the various regional groupings. Now there is a need to build on the draft and give further detail to the constitution, mandate, and responsibilities of the proposed council.

Some participants lamented that the discussion thus far has been dominated by questions of form, rather than substance. One participant, arguing for a better balance of these two, urged participants to keep in mind a couple of substantive concerns when debate resumes in the General Assembly. First, the purpose of the council (or whatever body ultimately replaces the Human Rights Commission) must be to assure the protection of fundamental human rights and to monitor adherence to basic human rights standards. On this, there can be no disagreement.

Second, any new institutional body must address the concerns of many member states regarding the “politicization” of human rights. Of course



the perception that the existing commission is politicized is very much in the eye of the beholder; the two sides of the debate accuse each other of being the politicizers. For some, politicization stems from the election of states with poor human rights records to sit on the commission, causing credibility problems for the commission and the United Nations as a whole. But for other states, there is excessive naming and shaming (often in the form of country-specific resolutions) and not enough quiet dialogue and capacity-building. Either way, the debate highlights a wider problem of posturing and political gamesmanship that must be overcome if the United Nations is to become more effective.

To more effectively monitor a country's adherence to international human rights law, a majority argued that the council should be equipped with a peer-review mechanism that would systematically review the human rights performance of *all* member states. Such a mechanism would avoid the concerns of selectivity, double standards, and politicization that have hamstrung the Human Rights Commission. It was agreed that the members of the new council themselves should be among the first countries scrutinized. Such a provision, along with the election by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly, was seen as a key safeguard against governments with poor human rights records gaining seats on the council.

A majority of participants felt that the council should eventually become a principal organ of the United Nations, though not immediately. It was seen as politically unfeasible for the Outcome Document to call for the council to be a main UN body, never mind the years it would take to amend the Charter. However, not all participants accepted this two-stage approach. One participant argued passionately that to defer the new

---

...the council should  
be equipped with a  
peer-review  
mechanism that  
would systematically  
review the human  
rights performance  
of *all* member  
states.

---

...many felt that the language on terrorism does not yet adequately reflect the urgency of the problem.

---

council's principal organ status would be "to relegate the council to obscurity in our lifetimes." A few other participants wondered aloud what it would say about international commitment to human rights if it were the only one of the three pillars of the United Nations (security and development being the other two) not warranting a principal organ in the organization. "What we have is a gap between the rhetoric and reality of elevating human rights," explained one participant. "Relegating human rights to a subsidiary body would leave us with two pillars and a stub."

On council size, participant views ranged from a smaller body of 20-30 members to the status quo of around 50 members to support for a universal body. One participant said the largest UN bodies are the least effective, and another argued that a smaller body would bring greater collegiality ("There is an inverse relationship between size and effectiveness of UN bodies," said one participant). One of the most hotly contested issues is that of criteria for election to the council, though most participants could accept criteria as long as they were framed positively—i.e., for candidates to know what would be expected of them. Some attendees worried that developed countries might use a selective application of eligibility criteria to exclude the participation of certain developing countries. On the other hand, several participants felt that a high quality of representation on the council would be critical to ensuring that a new body is, in the words of one participant, "more than just a barely warmed over Human Rights Commission."

### Terrorism

Participants agreed that unless the September summit takes significant steps on terrorism, the process of UN renewal could be widely interpreted as a failure. There was a common sentiment that this is a section of the document that merits serious attention from all member states. While participants applauded the difficult compromises achieved by the GA president in his latest draft, many felt that the language on terrorism does not yet adequately reflect the urgency of the problem. In several places, participants felt that the language had been too watered down and did not bind the member states to concrete actions. For example, participants pointed out equivocal hedges in the text such as "commit to endorse" or "strive to include" rather than simply "endorse" or "include."

Participants argued passionately that the United Nations should unequivocally condemn terrorism. Agreement on a definition of *terrorism* would send a strong signal that combating terrorism is a top priority for the

---

United Nations and for its member states. While most participants concur that they are closer to agreement than ever, consensus is not quite in hand. Several participants lamented the fact that the paragraph supposedly defining terrorism fails to mention the words *terrorism* or *definition*. Even so, there is broad recognition that an unambiguous definition would have clear moral force, help lay the basis for a comprehensive convention, and put the United Nations at the center of the fight against terrorism. “We need a definition that is clear, straightforward, and free from ambiguity,” stated one member of the group. “The UN must be clear about terrorism. The current definition is just more beating around the bush.”

There was a spirited debate on what if any mention should be made of the “root causes” of terrorism, such as poverty, economic and social injustice, or foreign occupation (all of which are currently mentioned in the text). While several suggestions were made to strike the references, it will be politically impractical (if not impossible) for certain constituencies to sign on if no mention of “root causes” is made.

In particular, developing countries feel strongly that the text should single out poverty reduction as a way of undermining the appeal of terrorism, citing the many underdeveloped states where poverty has often given rise to acts of terrorism. There have been equally passionate calls for inclusion of “foreign occupation”—particularly among those developing countries who side with the Palestinians in that conflict. On both counts, resistance from the developed world has been strong. Developed countries, while acknowledging the links between poverty and terrorism, hesitate to further extend the rationale for large increases in development assistance. Meanwhile, opposition to a reference of “foreign occupation” is rooted in historical support for Israel and has gained new resonance from the ongoing war in Iraq. One participant, arguing for keeping the reference in the text, encouraged participants to view the language on root causes “not as an excuse for engaging in terrorist acts but as a demonstration of the willingness of the international community to deprive terrorists of reasons to act in such a shameful way.”

In terms of the United Nations’ coordination of intergovernmental response to combat terrorism, there were many calls for streamlining the antiterrorism mechanisms within the organization. Participants were concerned that the elements of the United Nations (including the Security Council) that deal with terrorism do not neatly fit together. Such rationalization will be

---

“We need a definition that is clear, straightforward, and free from ambiguity.”

---

especially important to boost the organization's capacity-building role. At present, some participants felt that the knee-jerk response on terrorism within the United Nations was to refer anything and everything to the Counterterrorism Committee (CTC) of the Security Council rather than a larger, more holistic institutional approach.

One area that has not garnered enough attention is enhancing governmental capacity, especially in developing countries, to counter terrorism. While dozens of developing countries are drafting and implementing legislation to fight terrorism (as mandated by the UN Security Council), several participants urged the developed nations to recognize and encourage these efforts, and to provide greater capacity-building assistance. As it stands right now, developing countries have no robust source of multilateral capacity-building assistance they can tap.

Several participants pointed out the glaring absence of any reference to the secretary-general's March 2005 Madrid speech in which he outlined a global, multilateral strategy for combating terrorism. Several attendees suggested, at the least, a reference to five Ds of Annan's comprehensive strategy (see box below). Including such a reference, it was argued, would acknowledge the thinking that has taken place so far and would give the terrorism section more impact and greater clarity, spelling out exactly what the United Nations could do. Not all participants agreed with the inclusion of the Madrid strategy for fear that it would unnecessarily inject further controversy into this already highly sensitive section. "Let us remember that the secretary-general's strategy was not totally accepted by member states," remarked one participant. "To include prominent reference to it is no panacea."

#### The Five Ds of a Global Strategy for Fighting Terrorism

- Dissuade disaffected groups from choosing terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals.
- Deny terrorists the means to carry out their attacks.
- Deter states from supporting terrorists.
- Develop state capacity to prevent terrorism.
- Defend human rights in the struggle against terrorism.

---

...developing countries have no robust source of multilateral capacity-building assistance they can tap.



---

## Development

Participants saw the development section as the strongest of the Draft Outcome Document. At earlier points, many developing countries had used the lack of focus on development as an argument against the entire process. Several participants stated that the strength of the development section has given the whole document significant momentum and “taken the wind out of the sails” of the obstructionists’ case.

To further improve the development section, the text should be given more of a “people focus” as opposed to the prevalent dry “technocratic” language. In that vein, participants felt that the draft lost some of the emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) contained in the secretary-general’s report and the Millennium Project report before it.<sup>3</sup> Many participants pressed for an emphasis on fulfilling past commitments and pledges as well as details of a monitoring mechanism to measure donor performance.

While almost all participants hoped the document would signify a renewed commitment to achieve the MDGs by 2015, two concerns were raised about a narrow MDG focus. First, a few participants argued that a renewed attention to the MDGs should not detract from the need for continuing investments in development in middle-income countries or what some refer to as the “lower middle class.” Echoing this sentiment, one participant called the MDGs “the Intensive Care Unit” for countries before the real treatment commences. Second, participants’ views reflect the larger debate that is taking place within the development community between an emphasis on meeting people’s basic needs versus building state capacity by strengthening key state institutions. Rather than choosing one over the other, participants agreed that these two approaches must be pursued simultaneously so that basic needs are met in a way that is ultimately sustainable.

Participants argued for establishing timetables for increases in official development assistance—recognizing that the target of 0.7 percent of gross national income is voluntary—and highlighting the fact that certain donors have already met that target. Participants also expressed an interest in innovative potential sources of financing, such as the United Kingdom’s

---

...the draft lost  
some of the  
emphasis on the  
Millennium  
Development Goals  
contained in the  
secretary-general’s  
report and the  
Millennium Project  
report before it.

---

<sup>3</sup>UN Millennium Project (2005), *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*.



---

...the document should emphasize rich and poor countries' *shared* responsibility in eliminating extreme poverty and laying the foundations for equitable development.

---

International Finance Facility and the French proposal for a levy on airline fuel, although the lack of consensus in this area was acknowledged. The Bush administration's refusal to commit itself to the 0.7 percent target was seen as an obstacle in rallying global support for the aid goal. Similarly, the United States has reacted coolly to both the international financing facility and the French taxation plan, which American conservatives reject out of hand as something akin to "world government." Nevertheless, participants cited a strong determination to continue discussions on innovative sources of financing, and believed that several proposed schemes could be implemented without America's explicit participation.

Beyond language on the increased quantity of aid, many felt that there should be a big push on improving the *quality* of aid; in this respect, specific mention could be made of the Paris Declaration of donor harmonization and coordination. The Outcome Document should also emphasize the importance of a truly development-friendly Doha round of WTO trade talks.

Suggested additions to the text included the greater encouragement of South-South cooperation—such as valuable technical assistance and expertise from middle-income developing countries not yet able to provide financial assistance. It was also argued that the special needs of small-island developing states, Africa, and least developed countries should be spelled out in greater detail. In addition, a few participants took issue with the fact that there was no mention made in the text of UN development institutions, namely the UN Development Programme (UNDP)—though this can be justified on the grounds that despite the excellent work of UNDP and other agencies, they represent a small piece of the development picture when compared with bilateral aid, the international financial institutions, trade, private flows, etc. On the other hand, there was some concern that the language in some sections was too detailed for a statement by world leaders; language on purchasing anti-malarial bed nets, for instance, was singled out for removal.

The idea of a renewed covenant between rich and poor countries was seen as central. Conference participants said the document should emphasize rich and poor countries' *shared* responsibility in eliminating extreme poverty and laying the foundations for equitable development. In particular, in addition to new commitments of aid, debt relief, and greater trade liberalization, developed countries should also take positive actions

---

on the “home front.” These actions include passing and enforcing legislation that criminalizes the bribery of foreign officials, implementing a zero-tolerance policy on abuse and corruption perpetrated by contractors operating in developing countries, and so on.

### Secretariat and Management Reform

Participants, almost to a person, agreed that this was the section of the document needing the most improvement, which reflects a larger lack of focus and constructive debate on management among member states. Participants acknowledged that this section had received the least attention of all in the debates in the General Assembly and among member states. Several participants lamented the “business-as-usual” tone and formulaic language; at present, they view the language as insufficiently infused with the imperative of a new “culture of accountability.” One participant commented that the current language reads as if “we merely jotted down what we thought we should do and say, and then threw in the towel.” A group of conference participants, in fact, convened themselves in an ad hoc drafting session to come up with proposals to remedy this section’s inadequacies.

There was explicit recognition that the systemic flaws in the United Nations’ management structure that have allowed the recent scandals to fester reflect badly not just on the UN bureaucracy but also on member states. Participants expressed a tough-minded resolve that inadequacies in management must be fixed and that the Outcome Document must convey this sentiment clearly and unambiguously.

---

...the current language reads as if “we merely jotted down what we thought we should do and say, and then threw in the towel.”



---

Meaningful  
management  
reforms must  
include the  
Secretariat, but  
extend to the  
member states  
themselves.

---

Perhaps most striking was this section's near-exclusive focus on the Secretariat. Meaningful management reforms must include the Secretariat, but extend to the member states themselves. Participants urged the GA president to include language that recognizes that member states have contributed to the United Nations' management woes. One way to drive this home would be to reaffirm language from the UN Charter (Article 100.2) about noninterference of states in Secretariat affairs.

Participants attributed the sometimes rocky relationship between the Secretariat and the member states to a fundamental lack of trust. This in turn can be traced to a number of dysfunctions: poor communication between the Secretariat and the member states; the lack of engagement by most ambassadors in the organization's day-to-day work; and the member states' frustration with the technical, time-consuming aspects of budget and programmatic work. One participant observed that approximately 40 permanent representatives in New York are truly engaged in the organizational work of the United Nations and that the goal for many of them is to block rather than spur needed action.

An oft-repeated example of these pathologies is what some termed the "abysmal" conduct of the Fifth Committee, which has primary responsibility for highly technical administrative and budgetary matters. Many attendees felt that the member states do not take the responsibilities of this committee seriously enough, a feeling that is exemplified by the fact that most permanent representatives send junior staff to attend committee meetings. And in a perverse twist, due to the mistrust that exists, member states use the Fifth Committee process to constrain the Secretariat—whom they view as otherwise unaccountable to the General Assembly. To complete the vicious circle, the Secretariat often operates in an increasingly risk-averse fashion for fear of retribution by member states in the Fifth Committee.

Another consequence of the lack of trust between member states and the Secretariat is what was described as member states' "dangerous" trend toward voluntary funding, which bypasses the regular UN budget process altogether. Member states, disillusioned with the management and finance procedures, have devoted larger percentages of their contributions to the United Nations through voluntary mechanisms in support of specific appeals and initiatives, thereby eviscerating core budgets and functions. One participant pointed out that the vast majority of UN work on human

---

rights and humanitarian issues is now funded out of voluntary budgets, making long-range strategic planning in these areas increasingly difficult.

There was consensus that the paragraph condemning sexual exploitation and abuse should be tougher, sharper, and more prominent. Participants suggested that the Outcome Document include a sentence on the United Nations' zero-tolerance policy on abuse, to the effect of: "We are committed to ensuring that where there are allegations of serious misconduct, there will be absolutely no impunity." Critical to this is an appropriate division of labor between the Secretariat and the member states. The United Nations is not a sovereign body; lacks laws, courts, and prisons; and can do little to punish those guilty of abuse beyond discharging them from UN service. Member nations need to accept and discharge their responsibility to try and punish perpetrators who are their citizens. There was broad agreement also that ways must be found for victim restitution. One participant explained that discussions for such a mechanism are under way, but that the idea needs further refinement and greater buy-in. "How is it that we talk about compensating those who have been abused in armed conflict all around the world, but do not say a word about helping the victims of our own abuse?" one participant asked rhetorically.

Many participants felt that the secretary-general and the member states should codify a new compact, with commitments to greater trust, cooperation, and collaboration. Under such an agreement, the secretary-general would be given greater authorities in exchange for taking specific steps to increase transparency and accountability. A key first step will be for the secretary-general to develop a comprehensive management plan that boosts accountability and transparency within the Secretariat, accompanied by a thorough review of the budget and human resources rules under which the Secretariat labors. There also needs to be an urgent review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Questions were also raised about the potential unintended consequences of a one-time staff buy-out, as proposed by the secretary-general. A few participants asked whether a blanket one-time buy-out could prompt the departure of good people with more lucrative opportunities outside the United Nations. In response, other participants emphasized that this measure can be tailored to achieve its intended aims and carried out in a targeted fashion to minimize unintended consequences.

---

...the vast majority  
of UN work on  
human rights and  
humanitarian issues  
is now funded out  
of voluntary  
budgets, making  
long-range strategic  
planning in these  
areas increasingly  
difficult.

---

If the member states continue to deal with these issues in a business-as-usual manner...nuclear states will refuse to disarm....



The secretary-general's comprehensive management plan was seen as urgent enough that it should be produced by the end of 2005. There was also support for an internal-external review (as one component of the larger plan) to be led by a distinguished former official with significant public sector experience. He or she would be supported by experts and, to strengthen the link to member states, work with a panel of government ministers. Such a mechanism would lend greater weight and support to any proposed reforms.

### Disarmament and Nonproliferation

Participants expressed their deep disappointment with the lack of progress on disarmament and nonproliferation—exemplified most dramatically by the recent failure of the NPT Review Conference. As one participant so dramatically put it: “This section demonstrates our collective stupidity and is nothing more than a script for eventual human annihilation.” If the member states continue to deal with these issues in a business-as-usual manner, one participant worried that nuclear states will refuse to disarm, that proliferators will keep proliferating, and that it will be only a matter of time before nonstate actors acquire WMD.

It was the consensus of the group that whatever ends up in the Outcome Document must (1) underscore the importance of both disarmament and nonproliferation; (2) reaffirm the international community's dedication to the goals laid out in the NPT; (3) express sincere and grave disappointment with the multilateral debate on nonproliferation; and (4) commit to improvements on a range of issues, from the NPT to small arms and light weapons to landmines.



---

As one participant stated, throughout all of the recent debates on this issue, the three pillars of the NPT (disarmament by nuclear weapon states, access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and non-acquisition by non-nuclear states) have gone largely unchallenged, and should be enhanced in the future. Member states need to break out of the mutual recrimination over lack of progress on disarmament and nonproliferation and redouble efforts to find compromises that would advance progress on both.

Participants believed that the apparent failure of the NPT is due to a limited number of spoiler states, but that there is agreement among most states that the NPT remains a crucial and irreplaceable instrument. “If the NPT collapses, the whole system of nonproliferation will collapse—and that will be a real disaster for the world,” argued one participant. Others, seconding this view, believed it was absolutely necessary that leaders reconfirmed the validity and integrity of the NPT in September.<sup>4</sup>

Participants felt that the disarmament section should be strengthened by going further on two other important issues and also adding a third: small arms, landmines, and shipment of nuclear waste respectively. On small arms and light weapons, while the current text calls for the negotiation of new conventions on the marking and tracing of weapons and on illegal arms brokering, it omits reference to arms embargoes—which the Security Council uses to cut flows to particular conflicts and which need to be monitored and enforced more effectively.

On the issue of landmines, there was consensus that the document should urge member states to sign up to the Ottawa Protocol (if they have not already) and provide greater technical assistance to landmine-affected countries especially for de-mining efforts. Participants also expressed the concern, particularly of coastal and island states, over lax controls on the shipping and dumping of nuclear waste.

Participants also engaged in a spirited discussion about the role (and usefulness) of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). A few participants

---

...the document  
should urge  
member states to  
sign up to the  
Ottawa Protocol  
and provide greater  
technical assistance  
to landmine-  
affected countries

---

<sup>4</sup>The *In Larger Freedom* report and Draft Outcome Document both point toward a set of measures to keep the NPT from crumbling completely, though these proposals were not discussed in detail in the Switzerland meeting. They include: continuation of the voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing, wider accession to the Additional Protocol on inspections, a moratorium on new nuclear fuel production facilities, and a guaranteed international supply of fissile fuels for civilian power reactors, and ultimately the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

---

If peaceful means of protecting citizens from genocide, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity prove insufficient, the resort to forceful action remains an option.

---

wondered why the secretary-general completely ignored the CD in his report, given that its dysfunctionalities rival those of the Human Rights Commission. Participants were not of one mind, however, on the future role of the CD. While some believed the CD to be a “waste of intellectual and financial resources” and “perhaps the most unproductive body at the UN,” others argued that the “CD is in the same good or bad health as it has always been. It is only the minds and attitudes of member states that have changed.” Participants concluded the discussion by agreeing that the secretary-general likely did not comment on the reform of the CD because he rightly recognized how difficult it would be to bring about fundamental change in the body.

### Responsibility to Protect

There was agreement that the section on Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was an impressive demonstration of the kind of consensus-building that can take place at the United Nations when member states work together toward a common interest. While one participant suggested that member states’ perceptions of R2P still are all over the map, compromise over the past few months has been hard fought and the current formulation is largely acceptable to all parties.

Central to the compromise on R2P is the emphasis given to the idea that it represents a continuum of responsibilities and options—along which lie prevention, assistance, and protection. The text (paragraph 72) reaffirms the primacy of sovereign governments as the guarantor and provider of protection for their people. The international community’s role, in the first instance, is to encourage and assist states to exercise this responsibility. If peaceful means of protecting citizens from genocide, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity prove insufficient, the resort to forceful action remains an option.

While participants welcomed the document’s confirmation of a high threshold—i.e., genocide or ethnic cleansing—for forceful intervention, some still held concerns about who would ultimately exercise the responsibility to protect. In principle, the concept is accepted, but developing countries still harbor concerns regarding how it can be abused by great powers. Here, participants felt that the special advisor to the secretary-general for genocide prevention could play an important signaling role. The group felt that the stature of the special advisor has not been sufficient to date and that this office should be strengthened with a clearer



---

mandate, increased budget resources, and commitments of cooperation by the member states.

Notwithstanding the emerging consensus behind R2P, participants welcomed the caveat in paragraph 74 that the concept remains under consideration, and that further debate in the General Assembly must take place. While it is clear that this caveat is ultimately necessary to bring developed and developing countries on board, one participant questioned whether the section on R2P faithfully reflects our collective will or merely serves as a nice catch phrase, akin to the tragically fated “safe havens” in Bosnia. Meanwhile, as the legal issues surrounding R2P are sorted out, participants recognized that much of the current impetus behind this idea is moral rather than legal.

The text recognizes the need for collective action not only through the UN Security Council but also, “as appropriate, in cooperation with regional organizations.” While participants heralded the role of regional and subregional organizations in protecting civilians, they differed on their effectiveness. A few participants wondered if involvement of regional organizations might provide an excuse for the Security Council to delay taking decisive action. Others were concerned that regional powers with a specific interest in the country in question could also hamper quick action.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

The participants concluded their discussions in Vitznau by reflecting on the substantive discussions of the conference and thinking strategically about the key issues moving forward that must be resolved in order to have a successful summit in September.

There was consensus that significant progress has been made across the three pillars—development, security, and human rights—since the secretary-general’s “fork in the road” speech in the fall of 2003. While compromise has not always been easy, there is an expectation that the Outcome Document will contain “something for everyone, and something *from* everyone.”

As September’s summit draws near, participants emphasized that the final weeks of run-up are a dangerous and critical time. While participants agreed that there is increasing momentum behind reform, that momentum is quite fragile. In order to succeed, member states must redouble their

---

...regional powers  
with a specific  
interest in the  
country in question  
could also hamper  
quick action.

---

efforts to build a constituency within the United Nations that will push for meaningful reform—including, crucially, political leaders in capitals.

Participants singled out the latter half of July and early August as a crucial period where capital outreach will be particularly important in order to solidify national leadership. While it may be unfair to expect “another San Francisco” (where the UN Charter was negotiated and signed in 1945), there was consensus that with enough quiet diplomacy and difficult compromise the member states can assemble a package of meaningful steps on a wide range of threats and problems.

---

...a deal on Security Council reform would go a long way toward allaying negative public perceptions of the United Nations.

Participants urged the president of the General Assembly, the secretary-general, and the member states to exercise leadership in order to carry forward the process. It was emphasized that the process must continue to be open and transparent. Participants repeatedly congratulated the GA president and his facilitators for admirably adhering to these standards thus far. Once the final Outcome Document is complete, one participant suggested creating a high-level implementation monitoring mechanism to make sure that reform stays on track—perhaps led by a former head of state.

Attendees once again warned of the possible overshadowing effect the debates on the Security Council could have on the rest of the reform process as “things heat up” in capitals. One participant argued for a “psychological de-linking” of the Security Council from other reform issues, though several participants noted positively that a deal on Security Council reform would go a long way toward allaying negative public perceptions of the United Nations.

Member states dedicated to reform, irrespective of their own agendas, need to ensure a delicate balance between the many issues. It was suggested that this balance be further ingrained by an injection into the document of the kind of language contained in the high-level panel report which argued forcefully that the threats we face are inseparable and interlinked and can only be dealt with collectively and comprehensively.

---

## Chairman's Observations

The Vitznau meeting emerged as a rare opportunity to advance the major UN renewal effort now under way. Conference discussions were unusually focused and timely.

UN General Assembly President Jean Ping's Draft Outcome Document, which became available on June 3, 2005 (just two weeks before our conference), was the basis for our meeting and provided a clear focus for the discussions. The Draft Outcome Document builds upon prior UN renewal work and allowed participants to direct their attention to six of the more difficult issues. In each of these, participants exchanged ideas and developed significant findings and recommendations. Direct substantive engagement was enhanced because President Ping, members of his staff, and nine of the ten facilitators he appointed to assist him in this effort were among our participants.

Conference discussions dovetailed neatly within the tight preparation schedule for the September summit meeting of the General Assembly, providing timely dialogue and debate. On June 21-22 and again on June 30, the General Assembly met for informal consultations on the Draft Outcome Document. As our conference moved toward adjournment on June 22, the airwaves between Vitznau and UN missions in New York were filled with communication on matters that were to be included in national presentations to the General Assembly. Conference content contributed immediately to New York consultations. President Ping will release his revised Outcome Document in mid-July. I dare to believe that the Vitznau discussions are helping this process and will strengthen the final document.

The world urgently needs a renewed United Nations and renewed commitment to use it effectively. Both are essential if peoples and nations are to work respectfully across differences to create fair, just, and lasting solutions to the security threats and challenges of the twenty-first century. The September summit provides a unique milestone for renewal. It affords the opportunity to solidify consensus and commitment. It will provide the starting point for essential implementation and follow-through and will allow states to recognize that renewal must be a continuing process, not a one-time event.

Let us not miss this year's unique opportunity. Let us make the bold and ambitious changes needed to equip the international system to contribute toward a secure peace with freedom and justice for all.

---

The world urgently  
needs a renewed  
United Nations  
and renewed  
commitment to use  
it effectively.

---

## The Stanley Foundation

The Stanley Foundation brings fresh voices, original ideas, and lasting solutions to debates on global and regional problems. It is a nonpartisan, private operating foundation that focuses primarily on peace and security issues and advocates principled multilateralism. For us, *principled multilateralism* means working respectfully across differences to create fair, just, and lasting solutions.

The Stanley Foundation's work recognizes the essential roles of the policy community, media professionals, and the involved public in building sustainable peace. Much of our work aims at connecting people from different backgrounds, and that often produces clarifying insights and innovative solutions.

The foundation frequently works collaboratively with other organizations. It does not make grants.

Stanley Foundation reports, publications, programs, and a wealth of other information are instantly available on the Web at [www.stanleyfoundation.org](http://www.stanleyfoundation.org).

The Stanley Foundation  
209 Iowa Avenue  
Muscatine, IA 52761 USA  
563-264-1500  
563-264-0864 fax  
[info@stanleyfoundation.org](mailto:info@stanleyfoundation.org)