


COURIER

Provoking Thought and Encouraging Dialogue on World Affairs

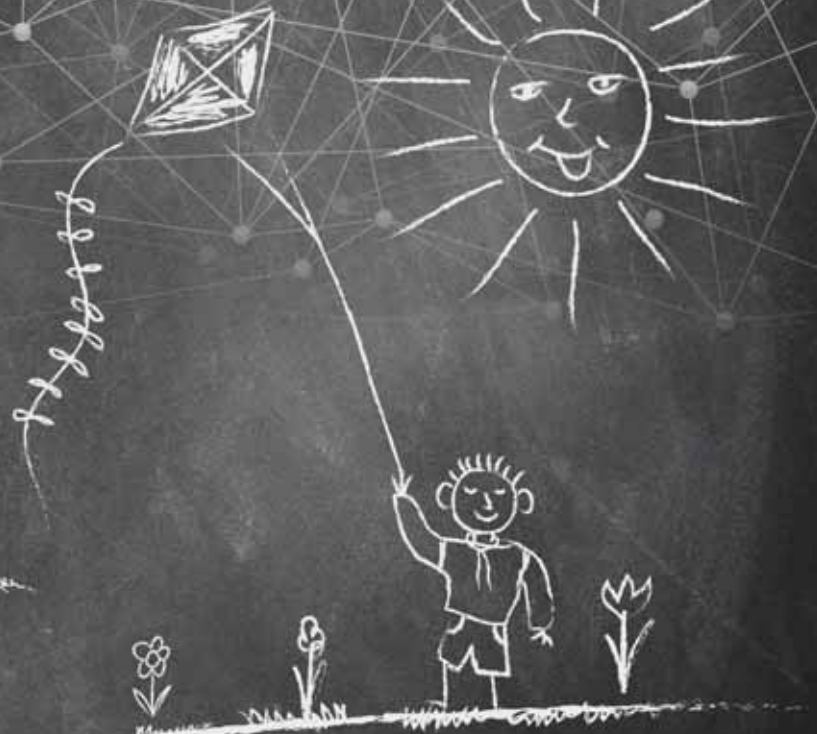
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We need to think of the future and the planet we are going to leave to our children and their children.

—Kofi Annan

INNOVATION



INSIDE: Women Champion Climate Summit | Nuclear Policy Dives into Blockchain | Boy Scouts Keep Peace in CAR
Business Could Strengthen Resilience in Iraq | Kofi Annan's Life Beyond Borders

Innovative Ideas for Global Challenges

"It takes wisdom, courage, and strength to recognize the inevitability of change, to adjust to it, and to grasp opportunities. A keen sense of timing and a willingness to innovate are needed."

Our founder, C. Maxwell Stanley, wrote those words in 1979—the same year of the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, world events that triggered inevitable, and continuing, change. He was describing the need for new thinking to confront that context and the threats of violent conflict, nuclear weapons, and environmental neglect that challenged the world then, and now.

This issue of *Courier* explores innovators and innovative ideas that embody Max's charge:

The countries that are the least responsible for climate change but also the most vulnerable to its effects are leading the rest of the world toward ambitious and revolutionary solutions to limit global warming. An influential and respected group of women are championing the movement.

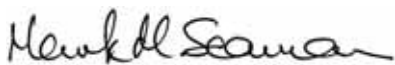
Blockchain technology holds promise for a wide-ranging set of applications. Could it be used to safeguard the location of nuclear material and enhance trust among nations that possess it?

Civil society organizations like the Boy Scouts are changing the way peace might be made possible amid violence in the Central African Republic. And the private sector may be able to do more than we realize to build resilience to violent conflict in Iraq.

Finally, Kofi Annan is remembered as an innovator who, as secretary-general of the United Nations, challenged the world: "[I]f humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on [state] sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica—to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?" His challenge eventually led to the Responsibility to Protect doctrine, which, while imperfect, is often characterized as a revolutionary approach to genocide and mass violence prevention.

I invite you to read more about these innovators and innovative ideas in the pages that follow, and to share your thoughts with us.

Max Stanley pressed the need to think creatively about the use of our resources and intellect in pursuit of a secure peace, and the Stanley Foundation continues to advocate impact-driven action in accordance with that legacy. As Max observed and we continue to believe, "The latent capability to effectively manage critical world issues exists; the challenge is to use it."



Mark M. Seaman, Editor and Director of Communications



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A young girl looks on at the United Nations as dignitaries gather for a ceremony before formally signing onto the Paris Agreement on climate change. On November 22, 2018, the Climate Vulnerable Forum is holding the first zero-carbon, online gathering of heads of state to highlight enhanced commitments to the 1.5°C target. The summit also will emphasize the role women are playing in climate action. (UNDP/Freya Morales)

Leading by Example

The Most Climate Vulnerable Countries and the
Women Who Champion Their Commitment

By Francie Williamson

H

igh tide is coming too close for comfort in the Marshall Islands these days. In Ethiopia, drought threatens the livelihoods (and lives) of millions. In the Philippines, increasingly strong typhoons are blasting ashore, leaving death and destruction in their wake.

All three nations are part of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), a group of 48 countries formed in 2009 that advocates for ambitious climate action. The organization's efforts were key to the adoption of the 2015 Paris Agreement, which set a target to limit global temperature increases to just 1.5°C above preindustrial levels.

A recent study by scientists from all over the world, commissioned by the UN-affiliated Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirmed that there is still time to limit warming to 1.5°C—but not much. And to remain below the limit, a vast global effort is necessary.

The 1.5°C target is especially critical to CVF members. Models have shown that warming that exceeds that limit would be catastrophic to inhabitants of these countries, and for some, their survival is at stake. For example, according to an IPCC report, as well as the 2016 Low Carbon Monitor report by the CVF and the United Nations Development Programme, several island countries, such as the Maldives, Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and the Marshall Islands, would become uninhabitable if temperatures rose much past 1.5°C. Coral reefs would disappear. Crops such as wheat and rice, critical to the economies and health of the citizens of states such as Vietnam, Pakistan, and Morocco, would be at risk.

In September 2018, at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, CVF members highlighted the actions they

are taking to limit warming to 1.5°C. For instance, Costa Rica announced an aggressive plan to eliminate gasoline and diesel from transportation by 2021. And in October, at New York City's Climate Week, the Marshall Islands unveiled its strategy to get to net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

On November 22, the CVF will hold an online summit to highlight enhanced commitments to the 1.5°C target, with the most climate vulnerable countries pushing for even more-ambitious action. Outcomes will partly inspire national commitments made at the 24th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24), which takes place in early December in Katowice, Poland. And the momentum from



Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine, chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, speaks at a graduation in June 2018. Heine named several women leaders “summit champions” to highlight the role of women in climate action. (Principle Pictures/Beth Murphy)



A woman carries her baby on her shoulder as they wade along a flooded highway in Santa Rosa in the northern Philippines province of Nueva Ecija on October 19, 2015, after it was hit by Typhoon Koppu. Increasingly strong typhoons have been hitting the Philippines in the past few years. Typhoon Haiyan left thousands of people dead and more than four million homeless. The Philippines is a member of the Climate Vulnerable Forum. (Reuters/Erik De Castro)

that event will culminate in the UN secretary-general's Climate Summit in New York in September 2019.

As the IPCC report made clear, time is running out to meet the 1.5°C goal, and these convenings aim to keep the pressure on governments to do more.

The Role of Women

Not only is the CVF summit the first zero-carbon, online gathering of heads of state, but it also emphasizes the role women are playing in climate action. According to UN statistics, 80 percent of those displaced by climate change are women, owing to the disproportionate rate of poverty along gender lines. Their role as the traditional providers of food and fuel leaves them even more vulnerable to the effects of flooding and drought.



A girl takes part in a graduation ceremony in June 2018, in the Marshall Islands. (Principle Pictures/Beth Murphy)

Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine, who is leading the summit, said women "have proven to be the most effective agents of change."

"The reality of gender and climate is that women are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change but are far less likely to be in power to cope because they have fewer resources such as power and access to finance and technology," according to Heine. "A multitude of structural barriers means they are far less likely to take up positions of political power and decision making. The woman's role in government is critical. Women are key activists protecting vital common resources and at the forefront of developing local climate solutions respecting and incorporating local knowledge."

Because of this, Heine named several women leaders "summit champions." Filmmaker Beth Murphy of Principle Films and the GroundTruth Project, who has been working with the Stanley Foundation to draw attention to the CVF and encourage participation in the Summit, talked with several of the women champions on September 14 at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, seeking their perspective on how women can uniquely help accelerate action on climate change.

"Women and girls are socialized to care," said one of the champions, Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Oxfam International. "To take care of others. To take care of community. That comes in, in times of crisis, because you're

not thinking just of yourself. You've been raised to care for others. That's why it's so important that boys are also nurtured in the same way. Climate change—like all crises—is an opportunity for gender roles to be questioned and to shift. It shouldn't have to be a woman's burden."

Rachel Kyte, chief executive officer (CEO) of Sustainable Energy for All and CVF summit champion cochair, agreed that women still play "the preponderance of the role of caregiving to elders and to children."

"It's visceral. This is my daughter's life. This is my son's life. And we will do everything we can to help each other to get this done," Kyte said.

Laura Tuck, vice president for sustainable development at the World Bank and another of the champions, noted that there are "bad outcomes" when women are excluded from decision making and planning.

"If you can bring them into leadership, you start to get better outcomes, you start to get more responsiveness and collaboration," Tuck said. "I think by recognizing a group of women leaders who have substantial experience and leadership, we can build toward better solutions."

Another champion, Naoko Ishii, CEO of Global Environment Facility, agreed. "President Heine gave us good reasons

for this coalition: Women are the ones on the frontlines. Women get things done."

The Power of the Poorest

Tuck highlighted that Heine recognizes "that the poor are disproportionately affected by climate change and women make up a disproportionate share of the poor."

Tuck added that she has worked in development for almost 40 years "and some of the poorest countries' hard-fought gains for development over the past decade are slipping through our fingers due to the effects of climate change."

"The mission of the World Bank is to fight poverty, and we cannot fight poverty without fighting climate change," Tuck said. "Some of the analytical work we have done showed that a hundred million more people could slip into poverty in 2030 if we don't [act]. We have studies that show the most vulnerable economies could lose 6 percent GDP over the next few decades from the impacts of climate change."

But what is exciting is that those from developing nations, like the Marshall Islands, are showing they can get things done when it comes to climate action, according to Byanyima. "The people who are facing the brunt of climate change are not lying down waiting for solutions from others. They are leading, they are acting. The world is seeing a pendulum shift."



Discussing the upcoming Climate Vulnerable Forum summit during a panel in September at the Global Climate Action Summit are Rachel Kyte (from left), CEO of Sustainable Energy for All and CVF summit champion cochair; Christiana Figueres, former executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; Laura Tuck, vice president for sustainable development at the World Bank; Naoko Ishii, CEO of Global Environment Facility; Jennifer Morgan, executive director of Greenpeace International; and Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Oxfam International. The women, who are "champions" for the CVF summit, are pushing for increased climate ambition during the November online meeting. (Principle Pictures/Beth Murphy)



In 2016, Raja Shahwan, 40, became an active member of the Women Local Committees in Gaza, Palestine, which helps women participate in local governance and community activities. Palestine is a member of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which is holding a virtual summit and highlighting the importance of women in climate action. "The people who are facing the brunt of climate change are not lying down waiting for solutions from others," said Winnie Byanyima, a summit champion and executive director of Oxfam International. "They are leading, they are acting. The world is seeing a pendulum shift." (UN Women/Ezz Zannoun)

"Climate leadership is moving away from those who caused the problem—the rich powerful countries. Those facing the impacts are saying, 'We can't wait. We are stepping up, we're going to mitigate, we're going to lead, and you others follow us,'" Byanyima noted.

Hopes for the Summit

Kyte said her role as a champion is to help the CVF leaders "show up on the 21st and 22nd of November and say, 'We're committed.'"

"There's going to be a raising of ambition. Don't just believe what we say, watch what we do," Kyte challenged. "This is what leadership looks like. And our job as champions is to help them bring everybody else in line."

Ishii pointed out that the summit champions also are trying to create awareness and a sense of urgency.

"Having it all virtual has never been done, so it makes us a little nervous. But we are committed to making it a success, and I think it will pave the way for other new ideas because it is innovative," Ishii said.

Jennifer Morgan, executive director of Greenpeace International, shared her hope that the summit and the women leaders "can help bring what climate change really means to people into the hearts of leaders around the world."

"This isn't some political game domestically about which interest gets what. The actions of leaders around the globe are going to determine the future of these places and these people," Morgan said. "And that's what this summit is all about. It's a call for urgency. It's a call for action. Yes, there are things happening, but it's just not enough. It's not fast enough. It's not big enough."

But Heine assured that she, and her country, are up to the challenge.

"We hope to inspire the world about what each of us can do to combat climate change," she said. "For the most vulnerable countries, this is really an opportunity for us to have a voice. It's an opportunity for us to show the world how committed we are to fighting climate change. It's important for other countries to show solidarity with vulnerable countries. It's important for us to know that they hear us, that they are with us."



The Stanley Foundation's work on climate change policy examines and advocates for safe pathways that limit global warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels. The foundation champions the efforts of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), a group of states least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions yet most impacted by climate change. The ambitious climate action taken by the CVF inspires national governments and substate actors around the world to increase their own climate commitments.



Nuclear Policy Takes a Deep Dive Into Blockchain

Technology Could Ease Information Sharing
Among Distrustful Parties

By Morgen Peck



ast year, in a phone conversation about the costs and benefits of blockchain architecture, a source said to me with slight exasperation in his voice, “You know, you don’t need a blockchain to build a swimming pool.” It was meant to be a facetious commentary on the state of the industry. That was spring 2017, and blockchains, or at least the word *blockchain*, were being slapped on everything.

IBM and Maersk had just built their own blockchain to track international shipments. JP Morgan was deep in a project to issue financial instruments on a blockchain. Before you knew it Disney, Ford Motor Company, Toyota, Anheuser Busch, and even Kodak (yes, the company that makes your film) claimed to be squeezing magic from the blockchain. In blogs and think pieces, writers predicted that blockchain technology would transform artificial intelligence, health care, publishing, and the electrical grid.

Much less, however, was being written about what a blockchain is and how it works. The fact is that blockchain technology is not a magic bullet. Rather, it achieves one very specific thing: coordinating the sharing of data between mistrustful parties in the absence of a central authority. Now that we have this “trust machine,” as some have called it, people are naturally looking for places to apply it, and they are narrowing in on those systems where trust has traditionally been an issue.

For this reason, *blockchain* has recently become a buzzword in the realm of nuclear policy. “No one trusts each other in nuclear diplomacy,” says Cindy Vestergaard, director of the Nuclear Safeguards Program at the Stimson Center, a policy research group in Washington, DC. “This is, of course, why we have the treaties that we have.”

We have treaties, export laws, and international agencies that safeguard the activity of states in possession of nuclear

material. And soon we may have blockchains. But first come the proposals, of which there are many.

Meghna Bal, the strategy and operations officer at Consensys, an incubator for blockchain applications, wants to see a consortium ledger put in place to monitor inventory in uranium mines. “It would overcome a lot of issues,” says Bal. “Currently it takes anywhere from one to 30 days for stakeholders to report if something’s gone missing. You would have real time reporting, which I think would be hugely ameliorative.”

Others have mused about whether blockchain technologies, if used to track international shipments with a network of ubiquitous sensors, might strengthen the enforcement of nuclear export laws. “We can imagine a scenario or some point in the future when you have so many systems that are blockchain enabled that they’re able to layer and piggyback off each other,” says Aaron Arnold, a research fellow at Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Then, “some of these processes may be mitigated by blockchain.”

Just this spring, Antonio Guterres, secretary-general of the United Nations, named nuclear safeguard reporting, a function of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as a potential application for blockchain technology.

However, given the complexity of this new tool, many researchers are beginning their explorations with a dive into the fundamentals, defining what blockchain technology is and what features it has to offer.

“One of the biggest challenges with blockchains is trying to explain to people what it actually is,” says Arnold.

Often the best way to start is at the beginning.

Bitcoin: The First Trust Machine

In 2009, bitcoin, the world’s first peer-to-peer digital currency, demonstrated a novel way to take the trust we place in the humans who manage our currency system and replace it with computer systems. Bitcoin established a single repository of financial transactions and entrusted its curation to a distributed network of computers, removing governments and traditional payment processors from the picture. The architecture that facilitates this collective is known as a blockchain.

As it is used in bitcoin, a blockchain provides one very specific capability: it allows a group of mistrustful members to collectively build an indelible dataset and to agree on the ordering of the entries. Each addition, once accepted, cannot be removed, nor can its place in the dataset ever be altered without throwing up a red flag for everyone else to see.

This invulnerability to tampering is the primary benefit of a blockchain. It is what makes it revolutionary in the world of computer science. But there are other attractive features as well.

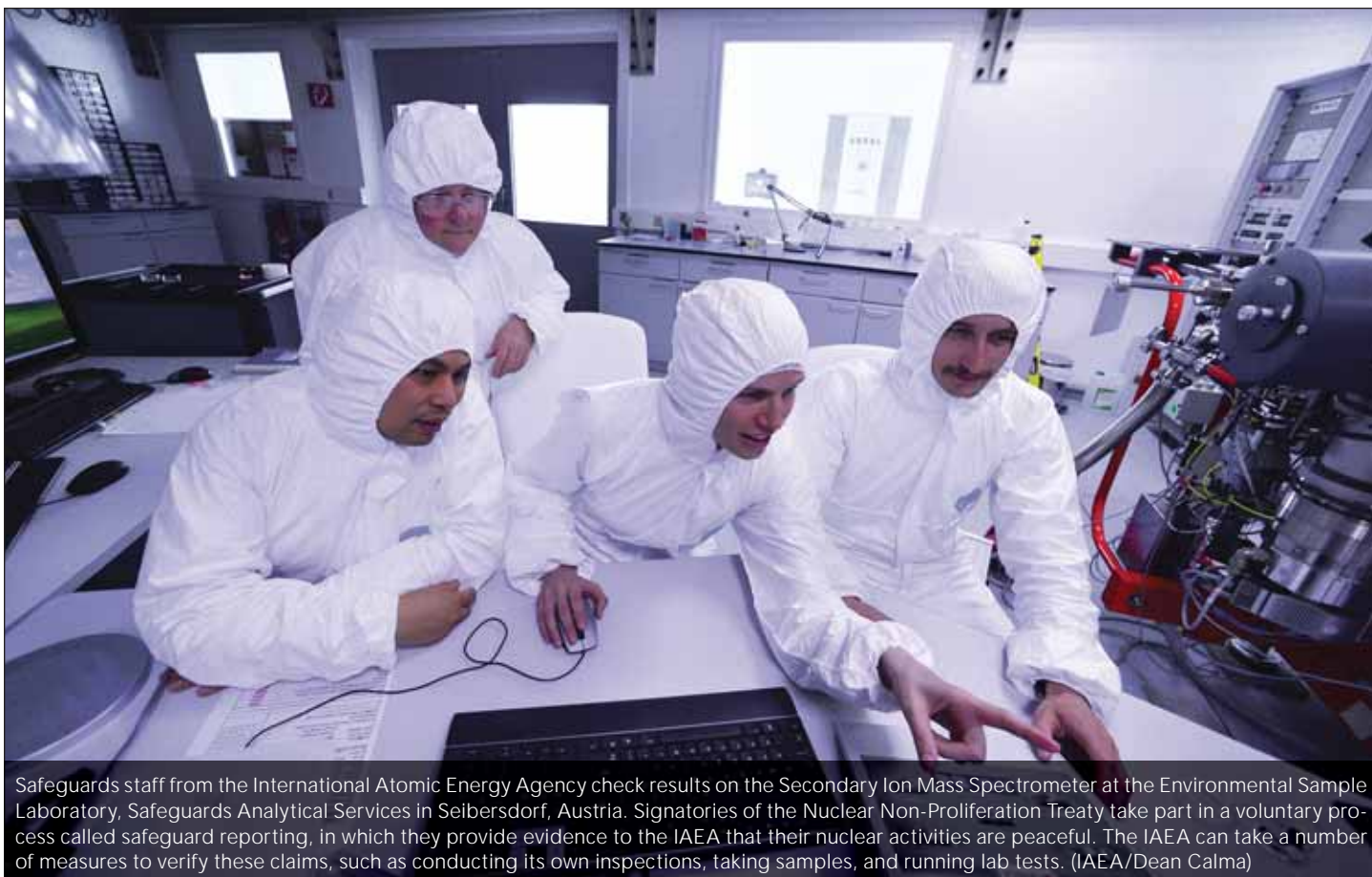
Blockchains are spread widely within a network, making the records remarkably difficult to eradicate. And as the network grows, copies of the blockchain only proliferate. Entries on a blockchain are also cryptographically signed in a way that verifies the author. To masquerade as someone else on a blockchain, you would have to possess a digital key specific to that person. Finally, a blockchain is not only a place to put data, it is also a way to enforce rules on that data. In bitcoin, the rules follow a logic pertaining to currency (you can only spend what you’ve got, for example). But depending on the application being built, you could imagine a blockchain enforcing many other types of rules.

Any application of blockchain implemented for nuclear safeguards would only vaguely resemble bitcoin.

When most people in the field of nuclear nonproliferation refer to blockchain these days, what they’re really talking about is a variant called distributed ledger technology. Referred to as DLT, it has split the technology like a prism, and there are now people trying to collect the various hues into a proper taxonomy. “The technology is growing and differentiating,” says Vestergaard.

Among those people is Sarah Frazar, a policy and training specialist at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, a US Department of Energy national laboratory based in Richland, Washington. In a paper published last spring, Frazar explains that the DLT iteration most likely to be of use to the nuclear safeguard community is a version called a consortium ledger.





Safeguards staff from the International Atomic Energy Agency check results on the Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometer at the Environmental Sample Laboratory, Safeguards Analytical Services in Seibersdorf, Austria. Signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty take part in a voluntary process called safeguard reporting, in which they provide evidence to the IAEA that their nuclear activities are peaceful. The IAEA can take a number of measures to verify these claims, such as conducting its own inspections, taking samples, and running lab tests. (IAEA/Dean Calma)

Unlike bitcoin, which allows anyone to hold a copy of the ledger and make new entries, a consortium ledger has a limited set of participants. Entries are still tamperproof, both in their content and their order. Contributions are still linked inextricably to specific users. However, fewer copies of the ledger get distributed.

A consortium ledger also has one big advantage: no one outside the system can see in. Privacy can be further enhanced with cryptographic techniques that selectively shield entries, a feature that could perhaps be leveraged to meet the confidentiality demands of individual member states.

Taking the Trust Out of Safeguard Reporting

In her paper, Frazar outlined a few areas in which distributed ledger technology might make an impact. Safeguard reporting, her specialty, stood out as one candidate.

Safeguard reporting is the term for the process by which signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty provide evidence that their nuclear activities are peaceful to the IAEA. States provide information about their nuclear programs in accordance with a bilateral agreement with the IAEA. These agreements include measures the IAEA can take to verify state claims, for instance by conducting its own inspections, taking samples, and running lab tests. If

it encounters violations, the IAEA reports them to its Board of Governors. It also notifies member states in an annual report of any complications it encountered in the reporting process and any roadblocks thrown in its way.

At first glance, the safeguard reporting process has many of the ingredients of a system burdened by trust, the kind that might benefit from a distributed ledger. Are there multiple mistrustful participants? Check. Do they all need to contribute data? Check. And in the current architecture, is there one single central authority managing these relationships? Big-time check.

Frazar stresses that although the implicit goal of a technology like blockchain is to eradicate central authorities, replacing the IAEA should not be the goal. "You really cannot remove the IAEA from the discussion," she says.

But could part of the IAEA verification process instead be managed and monitored by a distributed system? For instance, could information that traditionally ends up in the annual safeguard implementation reports, details about when inspections took place and what they found, instead get automatically entered into a blockchain system and broadcast to those who have a right to know?

"There's trust in the safeguards system. But that trust has to be continually reinforced through safeguard verification," says Frazar. "That trust comes through transparency, but you can't have full transparency."

Distributed ledgers, fundamentally, are a way to share data. That is their strength. But here, they inevitably bump up against the need to protect sensitive information. The bilateral member agreements that states sign with the IAEA outline the level of confidentiality they will be afforded in these reports. Therefore, these agreements will greatly impact the extent to which blockchains can be implemented.

"What is a sufficient amount of data that one could make transparent that could increase IAEA confidence in knowing where material is located at any time without increasing security concerns, without violating safeguard confidentiality or proprietary information? We don't know. This is what we're trying to find out," says Frazar.

Is It Really Better Than the Alternative?

While much attention has been given to the benefits of blockchain technologies, it's important to note the downsides as well—the complexity, the inevitable waste that comes with redundancy.

Another important point that often gets overlooked is that many of the touted features of a blockchain or DLT can be found elsewhere. Cryptographic guarantees of authorship and secure data-sharing protocols have been around for a long time, for instance. The only unique benefit of a DLT is that it allows mistrustful parties to share in the creation of a document with the knowledge that it will never be inappropriately altered. Using it to solve any other problem is likely a waste of resources.

"Why use a blockchain solution when there are other types of information technologies and IT security systems that could probably do the exact same thing if not better and more cheaply, and with less confusion?" says Arnold of the Belfer Center, who was recently awarded a grant to study the applicability of blockchain technology to export control.

Arnold's point seems to guide Frazar as she looks for applications. "We're saying let the problem drive the solution. Take a very close look at the problem you're trying to solve. And then, once you've got a problem, then start thinking about how you're going to start socializing the solution... with the member states. And that's just a very, very long process," she says.

Even if blockchains are shown to be superior to what the IAEA already uses in its safeguard reporting process, it's also an open question whether member states will have the appetite for a technological upgrade. Such a process would be voluntary and, frankly, against the observed nature of the IAEA and member states.

The IAEA "barely has adopted digital technology, forget online technology. They're happy when someone shows up with a thumb drive," says Jonathan Tame, the chief strategy officer at Whitespace Solutions, a computer software company in Fairfax, Virginia. He says the organizations involved in safeguard reporting may simply not be able to manage such a massive upgrade. "You're not talking about replacing a fax machine with email and going one step up. You're talking about going from the early days of digital technology to the latest and greatest, which isn't even proven yet. You're asking a lot."

But that discussion is a long way off. Blockchain explorers in the nuclear policy community are still at the early stages, defining the complex set of costs and benefits that comes with distributed ledger technology.

We've been told that blockchain will change the world, that it will deliver a new and better Internet, and that it will redistribute power in every institution that embraces it. But what have we seen so far? Last year, at the height of the hype, Long Island Iced Tea Corp. changed its name to Long Blockchain. Overnight, shares in the company rose by over 200 percent. We know the word *blockchain* alone can change the world. Ever so slowly, we are finding out if the technology itself can do the same.



Morgen Peck is a freelance writer based in New York City. Her work has appeared in Wired, Scientific American, and IEEE Spectrum.

The Stanley Foundation's nuclear policy programming examines the risks and opportunities for emerging technologies in strategic stability, nonproliferation, and disarmament. This includes efforts to support governance institutions as they consider how emerging technologies—such as distributed ledger technology—could make global nonproliferation efforts more efficient and effective.




Members of the evangelical Scouting group Les Flambeaux, who have been engaged to act as security at an event, stand outside Le Complexe Scolaire International Galaxy in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR), on August 12, 2018. Les Flambeaux and other youth Scouting organizations are frequently contracted to act as security at events in the capital. (Photo/Will Baxter)

Keeping Peace in the Central African Republic

There Are More Boy Scouts Than UN Peacekeepers in the CAR. Even in the Midst of a Civil War, the Scouts Are Arguably More Effective.

By Simon Allison in Bangui

Photos by Will Baxter



It is early September, and the humanitarian aid community in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), is fearing the worst. The Ebola outbreak in neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo is intensifying, and there is a chance the epidemic may jump the border into a remote area of the CAR, an area under the control of armed groups.

One Thursday morning, some jumbled information from there reaches the capital. There are people bleeding. Hemorrhaging. It might be Ebola.

The information needs to be verified. Is it true? And if so, is it Ebola?

As in most of the rest of the country, there is no government presence in the CAR's far east. Periodic violence means there are no international organizations either. There is no health system, no reliable communications network, no way to know whether the information is accurate without dispatching a helicopter loaded with heavily armed peacekeepers at much expense and great risk.

Actually, there is one other option. It's time to send in the Boy Scouts.

Toujours Prêt!

These days, five years into the civil war, calling the CAR a country is a bit of a stretch. There is a flag, sure, and a national anthem and borders, but what happens inside those borders is not regulated by anything resembling a traditional state. The government, propped up in Bangui by a phalanx of UN peacekeepers, controls only small swaths of territory around the capital and to the west. The rest of the country is divided between more than a dozen armed groups whose identities, allegiances, and territories are

constantly shifting—so much so that by the time peace talks are organized, some of the groups represented no longer exist and new ones have emerged that are not represented.

Sometimes it seems as if the armed groups themselves are not entirely sure what they are fighting about. Often the violence is cloaked in the language of religion—the good Christian soldiers waging war against the terrorists, or the persecuted Muslims protecting their ravaged minority—but more often than not the fighting is about control of increasingly scant resources, such as food and cattle.

Bangui is full of men in uniform. Peacekeepers in their distinctive light-blue helmets, soldiers in threadbare fatigues and red berets, the navy-clad gendarmerie. The rebels in the city, holed up mostly in the Muslim quarter, tend to keep a lower profile.

Also in uniform are members of the various branches of the Central African Boy Scouts movement. They look familiar, with their short-sleeve khaki shirts and shorts, long socks, and neatly tied neckerchiefs, and can often be spotted strolling in small groups along the capital's leafy streets. Look carefully and you can see the merit badges on their sleeves: for woodwork, for cooking, for navigating.

There are a lot of Scouts in the CAR—about 20,000, according to Scout leaders, but the conflict makes it difficult to be

precise about this or any other statistic (by contrast, there are 14,787 UN peacekeepers).

The Scouts are represented in all 16 provinces and in almost every church diocese. This makes the Scout movement larger in size and national footprint than any single armed group. Because of its rigid hierarchical structure, it has survived the onslaught of the civil war and is one of only a handful of national institutions—the Catholic Church is another—about which it is reasonable to assume that a decision made in Bangui can be implemented elsewhere in the country. The same cannot be said for any government ministry.

The resilience of the country's Scouts may be traced to the movement's long, albeit controversial, history in the region. After Sir Robert Baden-Powell founded the movement in 1908, imperial powers were quick to appreciate how influential it could be as a mechanism of control in their colonial outposts. Central Africa was a testing ground. According to historian Timothy Parsons writing in *Africa Today*:

In the 1920s, Baptist missionaries at Yakusu in the Belgian Congo tried to substitute Scouting for secret male initiation ceremonies, which they considered morally unacceptable, while Roman Catholic missionary educators sought to use the movement to train 'Christian knights,' who would assist them in converting the wider African population in the colony. Across the Congo River in Brazzaville, French authorities similarly expected Scouting to train a moral African elite that would exert a positive influence on the rest of colonial society.

Since the independence era, however, the Scout movement in the region has evolved into something more reflective of local values. This is especially true in the CAR.

"At the national level, we have contributed to the development of our country. We are warriors of peace," says Rony Yannick Bengai, the secretary general of the Catholic Scouts Association, by far the largest of the various Scout groups. Like so much else here, the movement is divided along religious lines: there are also the Evangelical Scouts, known as Les Flambeaux, and a dwindling group of Muslim Scouts.

Bengai became a Scout at age seven and has been involved with the Scouts in some form for 22 years. He's now 29. For him it has been a lifeline.

"Scouts taught me how to live in a community, to develop moral, intellectual, and physical capacity," he says.

Crucially, it kept him off the streets, out of the clutches of the armed groups and the drug dealers who prey on the CAR's large numbers of boys and young men, most of whom are jobless and unskilled. They have few other options.

Bengai, on the other hand, stands tall. Being a Scout has given him a place in society, a duty to discharge, and it is one that he takes seriously. "We are here to mediate between the belligerents, to make our country livable, to stop the violence."



Scouts engaged to act as security look on while Catholics gather to mark the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, on August 15, 2018, at the Notre Dame Cathedral in Bangui, CAR. "We are warriors of peace," says Rony Yannick Bengai, the secretary general of the Catholic Scouts Association. "We are here to mediate between the belligerents, to make our country livable, to stop the violence." (Photo/Will Baxter)



Ngoaporo Ghislain-Oxwold, a 17-year-old member of the Boy Scout organization Les Flambeaux, hangs up laundry August 13, 2018, at his home in Bangui, CAR. Members of the Scouts often learn to be responsible for household tasks like washing laundry, cooking, and cleaning—roles that would typically be delegated to women in the family in CAR. (Photo/Will Baxter)

He and his peers rattle off a list of accomplishments that makes it clear the Scout movement in this country is not just a recreational activity.

Some representative examples: when the UN Children's Fund wanted to roll out a nationwide vaccination program, it was the Boy Scouts who knocked on village doors to tell skeptical citizens that the doctors were coming and they could be trusted. When nervous villagers need to go to a hospital in a distant town, they can request a Scout to accompany them along unfamiliar roads and territory. When a Muslim community was held hostage in the forest near Boda in 2017, it was the Scouts who mediated with the armed groups holding them to secure their release. When Pope Francis came to visit in 2015, it was the Scouts who managed the delirious crowds that lined his route from the airport. And this year, when humanitarian aid workers received those jumbled reports about a potential Ebola outbreak in a remote, treacherous part of the country, it was the Scouts who were consulted as the first line of inquiry. Scouts were already there, of course. Fortunately for all concerned, there was no sign of the deadly virus.

Abdelwadid Gakara, a leader in the Muslim Scouts Association, invokes Baden-Powell's famous maxim to explain the outsized contribution of the CAR's Scout

movement. "Our saying is, *Toujours prêt!* [Be prepared!]. Anything can happen." He adds, "Everything we do is to transmit the message of peace. A good Scout is someone who is on good terms with everyone."

If only it were that simple.

'No Choice but to Fight'

Ngoaporo Ghislain-Oxwold, 17, and Boy-Fini Mikael, 18, are friends. At first they were not sure about this Scouts business—it looked like hard work and not especially cool. But slowly they came around as more and more of their friends joined, and everyone seemed to be having a great time.

"We used to stay in the neighborhood and do nothing. Then our friends who were Scouts were going every Saturday. They said it was really interesting, really fun. They did activities. Singing, dancing. Sometimes there were shows," says Ghislain-Oxwold, speaking in the rain falling outside the Bangui basketball stadium, where his troop is involved in a talent show designed to showcase the best of the city's singing and dancing.

Ghislain-Oxwold, a student at Bangui's only functional university, found that his academic career turned around after he became a Scout. "Since I became a new member, I saw

the blessing of God. It's thanks to the grace of the Scouts that I passed my last exam."

In the Scout movement's rigid, pseudomilitary hierarchy, the two friends are explorers, the entry-level rank, but have set their sights on moving up the ladder soon. They have already attended the mandatory two-week initiation camp, at which they learned basic survival skills, such as how to find shelter and start a fire.

They are also taught several skills traditionally considered to be "girls' work": laundry, washing up, and cooking. It seems to be working. Later, at Ghislain-Oxwold's house, he neatly hangs his family's clothes on the washing line.

Not all their friends are Scouts. Others have joined armed groups, and the attraction is much the same. Like Scouts, armed groups provide a powerful sense of purpose and belonging. Even their training camps are not dissimilar in terms of the type of skills taught to new recruits, with one major exception: the Scouts don't teach their members how to handle weapons.

For all its militaristic trappings, the Scout movement in the CAR and around the world is explicitly pacifist, a legacy of the disgust Baden-Powell felt toward the atrocities



Ali Ousman, coordinator of the Muslim civil society coalition, speaks to visitors on August 12, 2018, in the PK5 neighborhood of Bangui, CAR. (Photo/Will Baxter)

committed during World War I. In the context of a civil war, however, preaching pacifism can be a revolutionary act, and it's not always popular.

Ali Ousman is the coordinator of Bangui's main Muslim civil society coalition. He lives, as all the Muslims in the city do, in an area called Point Kilometre Cinq, or PK5, so named because it is exactly five kilometers from the city center. Most of the country's Muslim population has been squeezed into the boundaries of what is effectively a ghetto.



A Scout engaged to act as security sings during an event to mark the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, at the Notre Dame Cathedral in Bangui, CAR, August 15, 2018. The Scout movement in the CAR has, until recently, treated Scouting as a boys-only endeavor. But to be recognized by the international Scouting movement, girls must be allowed to participate, too. (Photo/Will Baxter)



Scouts perform a dance routine on August 11 during a youth event in Bangui, CAR. A Girl Scout troop of about 50 young women has been founded in Bangui. Girls in Bangui, and even more so in the rest of the country, have fewer options than boys for employment and recreation. (Photo/Will Baxter)

PK5 is a dangerous place. Several armed groups operate inside it, and there are periodic clashes between them and the supposedly Christian militias. UN peacekeepers warily watch the roads leading in and out but rarely dare to venture in. Most PK5 residents believe the only reason the Muslim population has not already been wiped out is because they are protected by armed groups.

The numbers are not on the Muslim community's side, says Ousman, who is sitting in a plastic chair outside his office on one of the neighborhood's main thoroughfares. "If we don't defend ourselves, we will be eliminated. They are a majority. They have more weapons than we do."

Since the beginning of the civil war, thousands of Muslims have been killed, many in targeted killings. Many more have fled to neighboring countries.

From Ousman's perspective, the boys who join the local armed groups are the real heroes. "Some youth are taking guns to defend PK5, the only place where Muslims are allowed to live in Bangui. The reason that pushed them to take weapons has not changed. If they didn't, they would be killed, their parents would be killed, the old people would be killed. They had no choice."

In contrast, the Boy Scouts, in their faintly ridiculous shorts and long socks, are choosing not to defend their community. "In reality, the Muslim Scouts don't do anything," Ousman says. He doesn't use the word *coward*, but he doesn't have to. He's made his point.

The Boys Club

Several years ago, the Boy Scouts of the CAR were suspended from the World Organization of the Scout Movement. They had not paid their fees. Negotiations are ongoing to rejoin the global body, which has been mightily impressed by the efforts of its Central African chapter.

There are obstacles to overcome before the CAR's Scouts are returned to the fold. The fees are still a problem. So is the fractured nature of the CAR's Scout movement: the Catholic Scouts, the Muslim Scouts, and Les Flambeaux should fall under a single umbrella. More serious still is that the Scout movement in the CAR has, until recently, treated Scouting as a boys-only endeavor. To participate internationally, the CAR needs Girl Scouts too.

"We are trying to tell people our movement is not for boys only," says Bengai.

He doesn't sound all that convinced himself. Nonetheless, a Girl Scout troop has been founded in Bangui, and about 50 young women have joined. Many of them are performing in a talent show. This is a welcome development, given that girls in Bangui, and even more so in the rest of the country, have fewer options than boys for employment and recreation.

"Young girls don't have the options that boys do," says Mounira Aliman, a young woman who represents the Islamic Youth Centre. "Especially for Muslim girls, we can't really leave our neighborhood. It's very important if they could include girl members in Scouts. Seeing all the girls today [at the talent show] is a sign of hope."

Rejoining the world Scouts would be an affirmation of the pivotal role the Boy Scouts have played in the CAR and would allow the movement to get more funding and partnerships to increase the scale of its work. An argument could be made that the Scouts should be receiving more funding anyway, given how valuable their work continues to be.

To really understand that value, and despite what critics like Ousman might say, imagine if the Scout movement did not exist in the CAR. Imagine that those 20,000 boys were not going on camping trips and earning merit badges and telling remote villages about vaccination drives. What would they be doing? What groups would they join instead? Imagine that those boys were wearing different uniforms, ones that came with guns and struck fear into the hearts of people.

Bengai puts it best: “The armed groups do war. The Scouts are an army for peace.”

In the context of the CAR’s collapsed state and ongoing civil war, the Scouts might just be the most effective army of them all.

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Will Baxter is a photographer and writer whose work focuses on conflict, climate change, and human rights. His work has appeared in Newsweek, Marie Claire, Der Spiegel, The Wall Street Journal, The Sunday Times, Al Jazeera, Internazionale, and other outlets.

Additional reporting by Amy Niang, senior lecturer in international relations at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Moussa Abdoulaye, a human rights advocate originally from CAR.

The Stanley Foundation’s media programming supports quality, in-depth, and timely reporting on topics related to the foundation’s three issue areas: climate change, nuclear weapons policy, and the prevention of mass violence and atrocities. This story originally ran in South Africa’s Mail & Guardian newspaper. It was written as part of Uncovering Security, a media skills development program run by the Stanley Foundation, Thomson Reuters Foundation, and the Gerda Henkel Stiftung. A follow-up examining the consequences of state collapse in the Central African Republic by Amy Niang will be published in the next edition of Courier.



(Left to right) Amy Niang, Moussa Abdoulaye, and Simon Allison speak with Scout leaders during a youth event in Bangui, CAR, on August 11, 2018. (Photo/Will Baxter)




An Iraqi man walks along the banks of the Shatt al-Arab waterway in Al-Faw, south of Basra, Iraq, on September 11, 2018. The waterway serves as a visual depiction of the slow-churning environmental and socioeconomic ills plaguing the region. (Reuters/Alaa al-Marjani)

The Potential of Private Enterprise

Strengthening Resilience in Southern Iraq

By Matthew Schweitzer



In August 2018, images circulated across Iraqi social media showing the southern city of Basra's famous Shatt al-Arab waterway flowing black with pollution. The ailing freshwater lifeline, which passes through the heart of Iraq's third-most-populous city and oil-producing nucleus, provided a striking visual depiction of the slow-churning environmental and socioeconomic ills plaguing southern Iraq today.

These challenges, coupled with Baghdad's decade-long inability to manage the effects of unemployment, displacement, and poverty on southern Iraqi communities, fueled widespread protests that roiled southern provinces throughout the summer and rattled the country's post-2003 political system. Demonstrations presaged looming violence in southern Iraq and compounded a sense of unraveling within what many observers had considered the country's most stable region. The Iraqi government had long taken southern Iraq for granted amid more-pressing security concerns. However, the May 2018 parliamentary elections, in which only approximately 14.4 percent of eligible Basrawi voters participated, pushed simmering anger at the region's decay into high gear. By October 2018, policymakers had few palatable options to avoid looming violence in the region.

Baghdad today faces a critical question: how to build communities resilient to the economically and politically driven instability threatening to upend southern Iraq. Of course, economic factors are not the sole drivers of conflict in southern Iraq. Yet they point to the deeper political and governance failures—chiefly rampant corruption, environmental decay, and insufficient service provision—motivating protesters and militants. The answer to these challenges may lie with young Iraqis eager to expand outside the country's increasingly bloated public sector. The south's mass protests, although dangerous, also point toward new

opportunities for restructuring southern Iraq's economic and social patterns.

Private enterprise, emerging as a possible solution for ballooning youth unemployment and economic malaise, offers an energized young population alternatives to the violent nonstate groups that have fostered conditions for current instability. For many Basrawis, the key to future resilience lies not amid Baghdad's stale political debates but rather in the hands of southerners eager to invest time, money, and relationships in their communities.

Threat of Violence

The protests that swept across southern and central Iraq in summer 2018 emerged partially as an outpouring of anger against Baghdad's failure to deliver on promises of economic revitalization and development in the period following the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). Since February, Iraqi politicians have pledged renewed support in the form of private investment and foreign capital flows to communities impacted by the four-year military campaign against ISIS. However, this summer's water shortage, which exacerbated a worsening public health emergency and agricultural collapse, highlighted what many demonstrators believed to be the hollowness of Baghdad's response to the south's interrelated challenges. In late July, one student protester in Basra city explained his decision to join the protest movement thus: "The government and the politicians



Iraqi protesters stand on a fire truck during an antigovernment demonstration on September 7, 2018, near the burnt building of the government office in Basra, Iraq. The protests that swept across southern and central Iraq in summer 2018 emerged partially as an outpouring of anger against Baghdad's failure to deliver on promises of economic revitalization and development. (Reuters/Alaa al-Marjani)

left us no choice but to revolt. The price of their inaction is rage. Perhaps if we shout, they'll listen."

His anger speaks to the drivers of instability threatening Iraq's oil-producing heartland. Nearly 15 years after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, southern Iraq remains without sufficient electricity, water, health care, education, or other basic services despite vast oil wealth and sustained foreign energy-sector investment. Ongoing economic challenges, including high unemployment and rising poverty, have narrowed focus among many southern communities on the deeper governance failures, fomenting increasingly vocal rejections of Baghdad's political actors. Critically, the Iraqi government's inability to draft legislation or policies that address such interrelated sources of instability—chiefly graft, corruption, and insufficient service provision—has pushed the region toward violence.

In 2017, for example, profit from southern Iraqi oil production and export accounted for approximately 95 percent of the country's budget. By contrast, a UN World Food Programme survey concluded that southern Iraq's populations would likely suffer from "widespread and severe food insecurity" by late 2018, with youth unemployment and poverty rates hovering near 30 percent. A concurrent July 2018 Iraqi government study of salinity levels in Basra's Shatt al-Arab found

water "unsafe for consumption or use in other household tasks, such as washing of clothes." Unchecked environmental and economic decay has translated into dangerous instability as tribal militias and criminal gangs fill the government's void with bottled water, electricity, and employment.

Massive rural emigration into Basra's slums has aided these groups' recruitment efforts, leaving the Iraqi and provincial governments unable to effectively administer large swaths of urban territory and economic activity in the region. Graft manifested in logistical and economic networks, as contractors were obliged to purchase supplies like cement, steel, or piping from tribal organizations at two or three times the market price. Local infrastructure projects languished for want of sufficient funding to pay both legitimate and corruption-related costs.

For example, a recent investigation from Iraq's Integrity Commission found that 13 water desalination plants had been delivered to Basra since 2006 but were never put to use. According to sources in the Interior Ministry, the international donors had failed to pay Basrawi tribal organizations the necessary "fees" to install the equipment, prompting local administrators to loot parts and siphon installation funds to cover these demanded costs. One young protester concluded angrily: "How can we expect anyone to invest in our

city if our politicians and the militias put this funding into their own pockets? Of course, I am in the street now. I have a college degree, I am ready to work for my city. But in the face of such absurdity, what other option do I have?"

Between November 2017 and April 2018, southern Iraq averaged 12 to 14 significant protests (comprising more than 150 individuals each) per month, with large-scale demonstrations concentrated around Basra, Nasiriyah, Samawah, and Rumaitha. By July, the region was experiencing at least one protest each day, with several proving fatal after security forces used live rounds to disperse demonstrators. Meanwhile, tribal- and militia-related violence intensified. In February 2018, Baghdad deployed approximately 20,000 soldiers to address a surge in militant criminal activity. By June, rates of violence had surpassed January levels across the south.

Opening Iraq for Business

The current climate of violence undermines promises of privately funded development promulgated by Baghdad since 2017, threatening to spook the investors needed to jump-start regional development. As protest and criminal activity continue, the Iraqi government's chances of attracting sufficient foreign direct investment to lift the region from its economic malaise appear increasingly slim. Iraq's wealthy neighbors, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have shown interest in southern Iraq's investment potential. However, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi have both been quick to note that corruption, insecurity, and threats from Iran-aligned militant groups could prevent participation on significant projects.

Reconciling the need for widespread economic reform with the realities of southern Iraq's political environment is critical if the region's leadership hopes to reverse the past year's

troubling trend toward instability. Baghdad's original economic recovery and investment plan, which was outlined late last year through a series of ministerial workshops and white papers, sought to emphasize the country's swiftly improving business environment. In August 2017, the Iraqi Central Bank issued its first bond in over a decade in a bid to raise \$1 billion for reconstruction. Six months later, the National Investment Commission (NIC) published a list of 157 critical reconstruction and development projects, for which it sought \$100 billion in foreign direct investment.

These initiatives focused on massive infrastructure restoration and economic diversification efforts, including a new freight and passenger railway from Mosul to Basra and multibillion-dollar urban metro systems in Baghdad, Basra, and Karbala. Meanwhile, the NIC also planned for the creation of four specialized economic zones in Babylon (heavy industry), Diwaniya (agriculture and agrophosphates), Ninewa (fine machining), and Baghdad (advanced cyber, information, and renewable-energy technologies), modeled on similar administrative areas in the UAE.

In the uncertainty that followed the May 2018 parliamentary elections, however, little headway has been made toward initiating these projects. According to Basra University political scientist Sajad Hussein, these plans were simply too ambitious: "Politicians focused on prestige projects, such as a new sports stadium or metro systems, while armed gangs controlled our street corners and dictated local government spending." Instead, what southern cities like Basra needed were "local-level, dirty investments in sanitation infrastructure, road restoration, or electricity equipment that would remove the militias' control over essential services, networks of graft, and revenue streams." As Sajad notes, the NIC's proposals ultimately failed to provide this framework for building an economic and infrastructure system resilient against "criminal organizations that foment long-term violence and instability as a means of ensuring short-term financial gain."

Resilience Through Private Enterprise

Although mostly unsuccessful, Baghdad's efforts nevertheless helped to introduce discussions regarding the country's private and business sector potential. "It may simply be that the people of the south, through their own initiative and released potential, will prove the region's strength against violence," Sajad concluded. For Sajad and like-minded colleagues at Basra University, the summer's protests sparked a surprising sense of optimism. Whereas Baghdad's prestige-oriented reconstruction effort may have failed, demonstrations seemingly highlighted the emergence of a young population eager to strengthen communities



A worker walks past an oil well at the Sindbad oil field near the Iraqi-Iranian border in Basra, Iraq. Despite vast oil wealth and sustained foreign energy-sector investment, southern Iraq remains without basic services. (Reuters/Essam Al-Sudani)

against destabilizing elements that have fueled corruption, extortion, and violence. Promoting private enterprise and economic opportunity among this population could prove an effective way to support this goal. "Putting economic recovery in local hands means there is no more opportunity to wait," Sajad declares.

Focus on domestic private sector growth aims to mobilize Iraq's enormous, well-educated young population, encouraging the emergence of business incubators and collaboration spaces across the country. Approximately 60 percent of Iraqis are younger than 25, and the country has the 17th-fastest population growth rate globally; with an estimated 16.5 percent national unemployment rate (much higher for the under-25 population), the Iraqi economy has significant room for growth if reforms are sustained, partially demonstrated by a recent 11 percent increase in the country's stock market as investors anticipate reconstruction opportunities.

Basra's future resilience against looming violence will depend on whether young people can successfully build livelihoods outside the orbit of militant organizations. As southern men return from the battlefields against ISIS, the need for alternative sources of employment and economic stability has become increasingly pressing. Baghdad's traditional solution, offering public sector jobs en masse, cannot manage this rising demand. As one of Sajad's students explained, "I don't want to fight in a gang. I don't

want a meaningless salary. I am ready to use my mind and my energy, not a Kalashnikov."

However, the structural challenges facing young Iraqi entrepreneurs like him are significant. Rampant corruption hampers contract allocation and investor confidence that new business could turn a profit in the Iraqi market. Within Iraq's public-sector-dominated business environment, political power rests with those who can provide their ministries with the most lucrative government contracts. As a result, many business owners in Iraq note that it is impossible to operate without paying exorbitant bribes, often to tribal organizations and midlevel bureaucrats in charge of facilitating contract and permissions processes. While the large oil and gas firms that dominate Iraq's investment landscape can afford such costs, many smaller private sector investors are hard pressed to overcome these financial hurdles. To date, this system has encouraged megadevelopment projects that often go un- or half-finished while simultaneously sucking resources from smaller-scale enterprises that provide employment-boosting potential, such as manufacturing, local commerce, or retail.

Overcoming these obstacles to build a resilient southern Iraqi economy will require cooperation between government and private sectors. Baghdad can support youth engagement by enacting regulatory and banking-sector reforms, making it easier for Iraqis to acquire capital



Iraqis at the first coworking space for start-up entrepreneurs, called the Station, in Baghdad. The structural challenges facing young Iraqi entrepreneurs are significant. Business owners in Iraq note that it is impossible to operate without paying exorbitant bribes, often to tribal organizations and midlevel bureaucrats in charge of facilitating contract and permissions processes. (Getty Images/Scott Peterson)



Students attend class in the Nafit 1, a modern school built with the aid of a grant from Kuwait, in Basra, southeast of Baghdad. Approximately 60 percent of Iraqis are younger than 25, and the country has the 17th-fastest population growth rate globally; with an estimated 16.5 percent national unemployment rate (much higher for the under-25 population), the Iraqi economy has significant room for growth if reforms are sustained. (Reuters/Essam Al-Sudani)

domestically, build partnerships with foreign entities, and maneuver the country's overwhelming bureaucracy. For example, a nondiscrimination principle announced in a February 2018 NIC memo that provides a mechanism for domestic and foreign companies to raise business-related grievances will help link international capital to Iraqi talent. A new online reconstruction database introduced in early 2018 further reinforces investor confidence by addressing widespread corruption within Iraq's ministries. Meanwhile, a \$2 million United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) economic diversification effort scheduled to run through 2019 aims to match international management experts with specific Iraqi ministries in order to build internal asset recovery mechanisms, identify financial assets located outside Iraq, and, ultimately, reduce opportunities for graft. Encouragingly, just one year after launching this program, the UNDP reports a 5 percent reduction of financial waste within targeted Iraqi government offices.

Ultimately, privately fueled economic development alone cannot solve the region's interrelated economic, political, and environmental dilemmas. Resilience must instead emerge from cooperation between a reform-minded, flexible government and the investors such policymakers hope to attract. The Iraqi market holds incredible growth potential in terms of physical investment opportunities and human capital. It is the Iraqi government's responsibility to create an environment in which private investment, industry, and entrepreneurship can take root. Economic reforms focused on private sector development could reinvigorate the south's ailing regulatory frameworks, providing a safety valve against

looming violence and mobilizing an energetic young population eager to invest in the region's future. Troublingly, the Iraqi government has yet to fully embrace this crucial policy role. Instead, political actors have resorted to immediate bureaucratic solutions to the long-term sources of instability. As southern protests intensified in June and July, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced a plan to create 10,000 new public service and civil service jobs, ostensibly from thin air. Within days, southern ministries received more than 50,000 resumes from young applicants.

However, for some observers, the overwhelming number of submissions signaled a potential source of optimism that Iraqi political actors would be wise to recognize. "The politicians face a simple choice," Sajad declares with a smile. "They must decide whether to feign helplessness or to harness the tireless optimism of the Iraqi people in building their country's peaceful and prosperous future."



Matthew Schweitzer is a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC, where he focuses on Iraq and Persian Gulf security. This article includes excerpts from his work that previously appeared in the Global Observatory and the Education for Peace in Iraq Center.

The Stanley Foundation's efforts in mass violence and atrocity prevention consider how all actors, including the private sector, can effectively engage and collaborate to promote societies resilient to violent conflict. The foundation's current work focuses on using evidence to inform policy action at national, regional, and global levels to create peace and prevent the worst forms of violence.



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (second from left) and his wife, Nane (left) visit the pediatric wing of the Zinder Hospital in Zinder, Niger, on August 23, 2005. (UN Photo/Evan Schneider)

A Life Beyond Borders

Former UN Secretary-General

Kofi Annan Remembered

By Francie Williamson

It may be too soon to define the legacy of Kofi Annan, who died August 18 at age 80. But the former secretary-general, who presided over the United Nations from 1997 to 2006, is being remembered as a warm, soft-spoken person who listened closely to those around him and led with an assured confidence.

"Kofi Annan was one of the highest profile and most widely admired secretaries-general to lead the United Nations," said Dr. Edward C. Luck, a professor at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs who was assistant secretary-general and special adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon from 2008 to 2012.

Annan, who was born and raised in Ghana and educated in the United States and Switzerland, was the first secretary-general who rose through the ranks of the United Nations to become its leader. Over the years, he worked for UN agencies including the World Health Organization, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

"He was a pivotal figure at UN headquarters" long before he was secretary-general, said Barbara Crossette of *The Nation*, who, as UN bureau chief of *The New York Times*, began covering Annan when he was head of the DPKO.

Dr. Robert Orr, dean of the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland and a former assistant UN secretary-general, also got to know Annan at the DPKO. Orr was working for the US government at the time.

"He was a natural problem solver and diplomat. A real go-to guy for issues that needed solving," Orr said. "He emanated preternatural calm. Even as crises broke around him, he

stayed calm and steered the ship, enabling others around him to focus on what they needed to do."

Although the United Nations was repeatedly a target for criticism, Orr said Annan weathered it with a quiet resolve. "Kofi was the UN and the UN was Kofi. Attacks on the UN were attacks on him, and he bore the weight of those attacks."

Early Steps on Reform

Annan became secretary-general in 1997, after the United States blocked Boutros Boutros-Ghali from a second term. (The Clinton administration blamed Boutros-Ghali for a failed peacekeeping operation in Somalia in 1993.)

"[Annan] took office at a point when the organization was deeply divided," Luck said. "His affable demeanor and ready smile were reassuring, and he had a calming influence, which was especially needed in relations with the US."

Luck added that Annan "knew the UN intimately from decades of service and was determined to reform its bureaucracy and intergovernmental machinery."

When Annan was elected secretary-general, Orr was working on UN affairs at the US National Security Council and took a lead on US policy toward UN reform.

"I got to see him as a leader on the hard, nonsexy, but extremely important issues of UN reform in this context," Orr said. "I came to work for him when he decided three years before the end of his tenure as SG that he wanted to build and leave behind a more robust strategic planning function in the secretary-general's office."

Stanley Foundation President Keith Porter, who first met Annan in 2005 when he interviewed him for a radio documentary, said that year's World Summit is perhaps the closest the United Nations ever came to large-scale reform. "That effort was mostly derailed by a handful of member states. But that shouldn't diminish some of the things that did come out of the 2005 World Summit." Porter said one of the most important things to come out of that summit was the adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). "Kofi Annan took that very seriously. It should be remembered as a highlight of his term," Porter said.

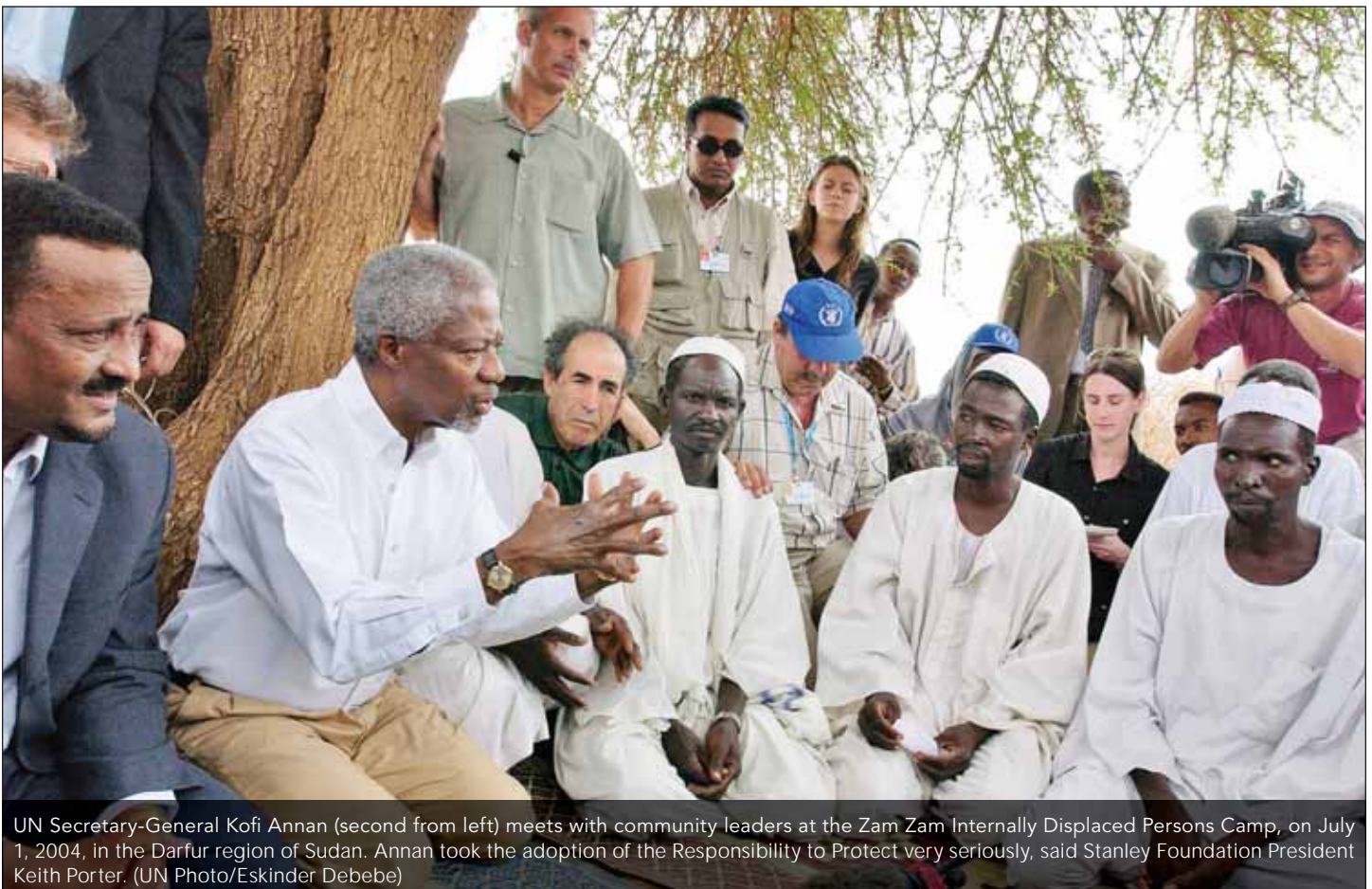
In 2005, Annan also released the report "In Larger Freedom," which found that development, security, and human rights must coexist and that the world had to take a holistic view of all three. Orr said this view "profoundly shaped how the world came to view the relationship between these agendas." The report, Orr added, "will provide a guiding light in this regard for years to come."



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan meets Keith Porter, now president of the Stanley Foundation, in 2005, when Porter interviewed him for a radio documentary. (Photo courtesy of Keith Porter)

Another initiative Annan launched was the Global Compact, which encourages businesses to adopt sustainable, socially just policies.

"In launching the Global Compact, he signaled his intention to bridge the long-held aversion to the private sector that was pervasive in the world body," Luck said. "Likewise, he constantly stressed the importance of civil society in the UN's work across the board. Both of these steps have laid the foundation for a much broader and more inclusive approach to conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peace-building," Luck said.



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (second from left) meets with community leaders at the Zam Zam Internally Displaced Persons Camp, on July 1, 2004, in the Darfur region of Sudan. Annan took the adoption of the Responsibility to Protect very seriously, said Stanley Foundation President Keith Porter. (UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe)

After September 11, Luck said, Annan moved quickly to formulate a counterterrorism strategy for the United Nations.

"He was a believer in the value of ideas and of upgrading UN doctrine to advance peace and curb conflict," Luck said.

Challenges at the Helm

Annan's leadership of the United Nations wasn't without its bumps.

"When I think back on his term as secretary-general, there were historic challenges, events that he had to react to and for which the moral leadership of the office came into question," Porter said.

The failure of the United Nations to stop genocide in the Balkans followed its failure to stop genocide in Rwanda. (The genocide in Rwanda took place while Annan led the DPKO.) But Annan owned up to these failures and spent the rest of his life expressing regret. With the adoption of R2P, Orr said, Annan "shifted the very lines of absolute sovereignty on which the foundations of the United Nations were built."

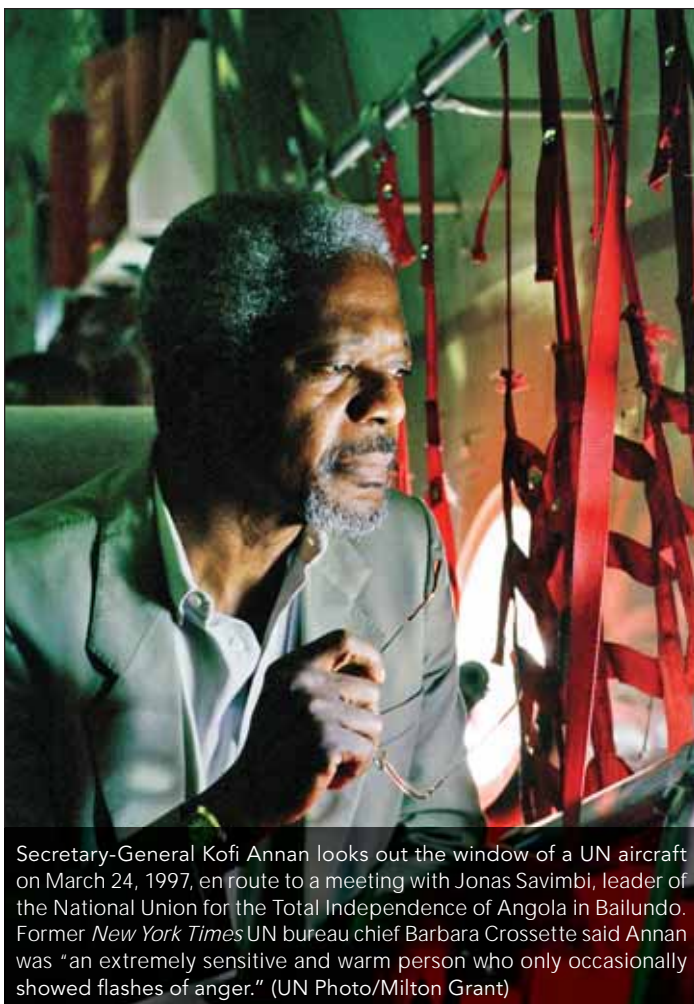
Crossette said Annan was also criticized for what became known as the Oil for Food Program in Iraq. Under the arrangement, Saddam Hussein's government, which was subject to tough UN sanctions after the invasion of Kuwait, was able to sell its oil to buy certain goods only for (ostensibly) humanitarian purposes.

"When it turned out to be a scandalous operation, with countries and companies cheating by cutting illegal secret deals with Iraq, Annan was severely criticized by Republicans in Congress and a lot of American media," Crossette said. But an investigation by former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker in 2005 cleared the United Nations of any wrongdoing.

Although he came to lead the United Nations thanks mainly to the United States, Annan did not have the easiest time with the Americans during his tenure, especially when it came to Iraq. "Personally, Annan's health suffered severely under the tension and some vicious opprobrium heaped on him in the US, almost to the point of a nervous breakdown," Crossette said.



US President George W. Bush listens to Secretary-General Kofi Annan during a luncheon for world leaders at the UN General Assembly in New York on September 12, 2002. Although he came to lead the United Nations thanks mainly to the United States, Annan did not have the easiest time with the Americans during his tenure. (Reuters/Win McNamee/stock.adobe.com)



Secretary-General Kofi Annan looks out the window of a UN aircraft on March 24, 1997, en route to a meeting with Jonas Savimbi, leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola in Bailundo. Former *New York Times* UN bureau chief Barbara Crossette said Annan was “an extremely sensitive and warm person who only occasionally showed flashes of anger.” (UN Photo/Milton Grant)

Annan's Leadership Style

Annan was “such an interesting mixture of this elder statesman and graceful diplomat who also had such a friendly welcoming demeanor,” Porter recalled. “He had this look and way of carrying himself of a wise elder who just embodied such a sense of gravitas. So I think it made it even more surprising when he would exude warmth and friendliness. I think he was very unusual in the fact that he had both of those personas and they coexisted so well together.”

Annan was “an extremely sensitive and warm person who only occasionally showed flashes of anger,” Crossette said. She recalled a time “he was under intense pressure, and he dressed down a British reporter who, in his words, was behaving ‘like a schoolboy’ by badgering him during a briefing,” Crossette said.

Orr said Annan's background in Africa helped ground him.

“Kofi knew exactly who he was and where he came from and used this understanding to develop his own distinctly African style of leadership to the world. He didn't shy away from his identity or his own history; rather he used it—authentically, openly,” Orr said. “One of his defining qualities as a leader that he brought with him from Africa, and the village tradition he saw growing up, was that he was the best listener-in-chief I have ever seen. He spoke softly and only when he needed to but would inevitably tip the balance or show the way with the utterance of only a few sentences.”

The fact that Annan built his career within the UN “provided him with a unique perspective on what it means to be a global citizen,” Porter said. “To spend so many years working as an international civil servant provides us with a role model for what it can mean to put humanity above borders.”

Thoughts on a Legacy

Annan will “be remembered more for uplifting words and intentions than for operational results,” Luck said. “In his efforts to curb conflict, three themes stood out. One was conflict prevention, which he consistently championed over reaction after the fact. The second was an emphasis on accountability, including by creating new instruments, such as ad hoc tribunals and the International Criminal Court. The third was a determination to make atrocity prevention a core objective of the world body. His 1998–99 speeches on the topic and his advocacy of R2P were critical to his legacy, as was his candid report on the massacre at Srebrenica.”

In 2003, Annan said the US-led invasion of Iraq that overthrew Saddam Hussein was counter to international law, causing outrage in Washington, according to Crossette.

Annan was roundly and unfairly criticized by some American experts and members of the press, according to Porter. “It seems particularly unfair, because he understood that it was a great failing of the institution that it couldn't stop that war from happening,” Porter said.

Crossette pointed out that “no UN secretary-general has the power to make the big decisions on war and peace.”

“When he was accused of failing, it was often because prominent Security Council members, usually the United States, blocked his moves,” she said.

Such moves weren't exclusive to Annan, either.

“Boutros-Ghali once told me that when the Balkans began to erupt, he asked for more than 30,000 peacekeepers. The US blocked that, as it later blocked any significant response to the Rwanda genocide,” Crossette said. “In the end, only about 7,000 peacekeepers went to Bosnia and Rwanda.”



Secretary-General Kofi Annan takes part in the pressing of noses, or hongi, with a Maori warrior on February 24, 2000, in Wellington, New Zealand, while his wife, Nane, watches. The hongi signifies the sharing of the life force and the breath of life, and is a form of greeting in Maori culture. Dr. Robert Orr, a former assistant UN secretary-general, said Annan “emanated preternatural calm.” (UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe)

“He fared much better in his first term than his second,” Luck added. “But he always pointed the way toward a more relevant and principled world body and to a better future.”

Annan used his knowledge of the UN organization to “remake it for a new age,” Orr said. “He injected an esprit de corps into the organization that remade its culture. The organization under his leadership attracted and retained the best and the brightest. Young people, women, and southern voices that had long been underrepresented in the organization found space to be heard. And he fostered a family feeling even in an organization the size of the United Nations.”

Crossette agreed. “His appointments were on the whole sound ones; he looked for real talent and was able to resist numerous pleas for political favors from governments, a bane of all secretaries-general. He created the position of deputy secretary-general at the UN to assist him in management and appointed a woman to fill it, Louise Fréchette, a Canadian diplomat and former deputy defense minister of Canada.”

In the end, Orr said, Annan will be remembered as a leader who “stood forward not when it was easy, but when it was hard. He spoke truth to power, even when he remained

under attack for doing so. And he endured the marathon on the big issues for the good of others—with stamina, patience, and grace.”

His demeanor cannot be separated entirely from his partnership with his wife, Nane, an elegant Swedish aristocrat and international lawyer in her own right. They were a very close pair who were much sought after by many leaders of various sectors in New York life, as well as by all the diplomatic missions surrounding the UN. They were gracious and outgoing together, but could communicate in an almost imperceptible exchange of glances. Nane, who was also a talented artist, had her own life but often used it to supplement his work, hosting lunches for prominent women or other important people passing through the UN.

—Barbara Crossette, who knew Kofi Annan as UN bureau chief for *The New York Times*.



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(Excerpted from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C)

