

THE FOURTH DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD LECTURE

# Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century

*Kofi Annan*

Uppsala 2001

*This is the text of the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture given by Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, at Uppsala University on 6 September 2001.*

*The fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture was arranged in the context of a series of events in commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld 40 years after his death. It was organised by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University in cooperation with the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the support of Nordea and the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation.*

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# PREFACE

When Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, ascended the rostrum of the Main Hall of Uppsala University on 6 September 2001, he was met with loud applause and cheers from the audience. Two thousand people had filled the hall to capacity, after queuing for much of the afternoon. Almost as many people outside the building – though disappointed that there were no seats left for them – had been the first to greet Kofi Annan enthusiastically when he arrived after the short walk from the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. Both spontaneous welcomes were a strong and moving demonstration of support for the Secretary-General, the ideas he stands for, and the United Nations as the world's leading multilateralist forum.

In the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture – jointly organised by Uppsala University and the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation – Kofi Annan opened up an ingenious imaginary conversation with Hammarskjöld, drawing comparisons between the global political situation of around 1960 and the present. Under the title 'Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century', he addressed several crucial issues for the United Nations, reflecting on the progress made, as well as the disappointments experienced, and drawing attention to both similarities and differences between the challenges confronting the UN during Hammarskjöld's era and those that face it now in the new century.

As his framework for the lecture, Kofi Annan used Hammarskjöld's 'Introduction' to his final Annual Report to the UN, presented in August 1961. In this, Hammarskjöld expressed the conviction that the United Nations must be a 'dynamic instrument' for change in the world rather than a form of 'static conference machinery'.

Hammarskjöld drew on four main principles in the UN Charter to show clearly that an essentially restricted concept of the UN's role was incompatible with its fundamental aims, namely equal political rights; equal economic opportunities; justice based on international law; and the prohibition of the use of armed force (save in the common interest). These principles were

important in the context of the Cold War and, as Kofi Annan emphasised, are every bit as relevant today; yet ‘industrialised countries remain reluctant to see the United Nations act on Hammarskjöld’s second principle’ and some governments are ‘equally loath to see it actively promote respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all’. He went on to sum up this part of his lecture by stating that ‘the United Nations will fail in its duty to the world’s peoples, who are the ultimate source of its authority, if it allows itself to be reduced to a mere “static conference” whether on economic and social rights or on civil and political ones’.

In the conclusion to his lecture, Kofi Annan suggested that the greatest difference between the political environment of four decades ago and that of today, and probably the most difficult for Dag Hammarskjöld to relate to had he been present, is ‘the sheer complexity of a world in which individuals and groups of all kinds are constantly interacting – across frontiers and across oceans, economically, socially and culturally – without expecting or receiving any permission, let alone assistance, from their national governments’. To achieve the aims of the UN Charter in the 21st century it will be necessary, Kofi Annan argued, to involve not just governments but all the different actors, such as civil society organisations, private companies, universities and think tanks, foundations and creative individuals – ‘to listen to them, to guide them, and to urge them on’.

It was extremely gratifying to the organisers of the Dag Hammarskjöld Lectures that the present Secretary-General of the United Nations visited Uppsala and delivered the fourth lecture in September 2001, commemorating Dag Hammarskjöld’s untimely death four decades ago. Interestingly, Kofi Annan has served the United Nations for almost all of the intervening years: he joined the Organisation in 1962 at the age of 24, only one year after the tragic accident at Ndola. It is evident from his lecture that Dag Hammarskjöld’s legacy was an important inspiration for Kofi Annan’s generation at the UN and still influences the discussions held and decisions taken today. Kofi Annan began his service to the UN in the World Health Organization in Geneva and subsequently moved to the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. Later, he returned to Geneva to work in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, before moving to the UN Headquarters in New York, where he held the posts of Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General in several important departments. On 1 January 1997 he began his first term as Secretary-General,

an appointment that was extended by the General Assembly in June 2001, with a second five-year period beginning in January 2002.

Only a month after delivering the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture, Kofi Annan was nominated to receive, jointly with the Organisation he leads, the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in December 2001. The nomination carries a special significance in this context both because Kofi Annan and Dag Hammarskjöld (posthumously) are the only Secretaries-General who have been awarded the Peace Prize and because the themes discussed in the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture have taken on even greater importance in the darker international atmosphere following 11 September – a point implicitly recognised by the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture was jointly instituted in 1998 by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The guidelines for the selection process state that ‘the privilege of delivering the Lecture is offered to a person who has promoted, in action and spirit, the values that inspired Dag Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General of the United Nations and generally in his life: compassion, humanism and commitment to international solidarity and cooperation’. Kofi Annan fulfils these criteria to a remarkably high degree.

When the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture was instituted, Uppsala University also commissioned an artist to create a special Dag Hammarskjöld Medal, to be awarded to the person delivering the lecture. Recipients of the medal so far have been: Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Brian Urquhart, the former UN Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs; Joseph Rotblat, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and the founder of the Pugwash Movement; and, most recently, Kofi Annan.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University are proud to publish the text of Kofi Annan’s lecture, to which – on the suggestion of the Secretary-General – Dag Hammarskjöld’s ‘Introduction’ to his Annual Report to the UN for 1960 is appended.

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*Chairperson*  
*Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation*

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Photo: Mikael Wallerstedt

*Kofi Annan  
delivering the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture  
Uppsala University Main Hall*

# DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD AND THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

*By Kofi Annan*

**A**s Secretary-General of the United Nations, I have to give many speeches, and even quite a few lectures. But I can think of no invitation to speak that is a greater honour, or a greater challenge, than this one.

It will not surprise you to hear that Dag Hammarskjöld is a figure of great importance for me – as he must be for any Secretary-General. His life and his death, his words and his action, have done more to shape public expectations of the office, and indeed of the Organization, than those of any other man or woman in its history.

His wisdom and his modesty, his unimpeachable integrity and single-minded devotion to duty, have set a standard for all servants of the international community – and especially, of course for his successors – which is simply impossible to live up to. There can be no better rule of thumb for a Secretary-General, as he approaches each new challenge or crisis, than to ask himself, ‘how would Hammarskjöld have handled this?’.

If that is true for any Secretary-General, how much more so for one of my generation, who came of age during the years when Hammarskjöld personified the United Nations, and began my own career in the UN system within a year of his death.

And how much more true, also, for one who has the special relationship that I do with this, his home country!

So you see, it is quite a solemn thing for me to give this lecture, especially so close to the 40th anniversary of Hammarskjöld's death. And I feel all the more solemn about it coming here, as I do, directly from the part of Africa where he met that death – and where, 40 years later, the United Nations is again struggling to help restore unity and peace to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I can tell you that the Congolese have never forgotten Dag Hammarskjöld. Four days ago, during my visit to the Congo, I met with the parties involved in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Their spokesman began the meeting by telling me how much they appreciated the late Secretary-General's dedication, and the fact that he gave his life for peace in their country. And he asked us to pay tribute to Hammarskjöld's memory by observing a minute of silence. I found it very moving that people could feel like that about him after 40 years.

In Zambia, too – which, as you know, was where he actually died – Hammarskjöld's death is commemorated annually. The Zambian government, together with your own and with the United Nations system, has launched a 'living memorial', which includes a programme to educate young Africans as 'messengers of peace', as well as a Centre for Peace, Good Governance and Human Rights. There could be no better way to commemorate him than by promoting these ideals, which he held so dear.

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If Dag Hammarskjöld were to walk through that door now, and ask me what are the main problems the United Nations is dealing with today, I



could easily answer in a way that would make him think nothing much had changed.

I could talk to him not only about the Congo, but about the Middle East, or Cyprus, or the relations between India and Pakistan, and it would all seem very familiar.

But I could also tell him things that he would find very unfamiliar – though some would surprise him less than others, and some would gratify him more than others.

He would probably be relieved, but not surprised, to hear that China is now represented at the United Nations by the government that actually governs the vast majority of Chinese people.

It would surprise him much more to learn that the Soviet Union no longer exists. But he could only be pleased to find that there is no longer an unbridgeable ideological difference between the permanent members of the Security Council.

He might be struck by the number of conflicts the United Nations is dealing with today that are within, rather than between, States – though the experience of the Congo would have prepared him for this – and also by the number of regional organisations that have developed as partners of the UN in different parts of the world.

I feel sure, in any case, that he would be pleased to see the way United Nations peacekeeping has developed, from the model that he and Lester Pearson so brilliantly improvised in 1956 to something much more diverse and complex, which is often more accurately described as ‘peace building’.

And I imagine he would be equally impressed by the wide range of issues that the United Nations is now called upon to face outside the traditional security arena – from climate change to HIV/AIDS.

He would be gratified, and perhaps not all that surprised, to hear that human rights and democracy are now generally accepted as world norms – though he might well be distressed to see how far, in many countries, the practice still falls short of the rhetoric.

He would definitely be distressed to learn that, within the last decade, genocide had again disfigured the face of humanity – and that well over a billion people today are living in extreme poverty. I think he would see preventing the recurrence of the former, and putting an end to the latter, as the most urgent tasks confronting us in this new century.

He would no doubt be impressed by the speed and intensity of modern communications, and momentarily confused by talk of faxes and sat-phones – let alone e-mails and the Internet. But I'm sure he would be quick to grasp the advantages and disadvantages of all these innovations, both for civilisation as a whole and for the conduct of diplomacy in particular.

What is clear is that his core ideas remain highly relevant in this new international context. The challenge for us is to see how they can be adapted to take account of it.

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One idea which inspired all his words and actions as Secretary-General was his belief that the United Nations had to be a 'dynamic instrument', through which its Members would collectively 'develop forms of executive action'.

During his time in office he became increasingly sensitive to the fact that some Member States did not share this vision, but regarded the United Nations as only 'a static conference machinery for resolving conflicts of interests and ideologies with a view to peaceful coexistence'.

In the Introduction to his last Annual Report – a magisterial work, which reads almost as if he was consciously writing his political testament

– Hammarskjöld argued that those who regarded the Organization in this way were not paying adequate attention to certain essential principles of the Charter.

He showed that the Charter clearly implies the existence of ‘an international community, for which the Organization is an instrument and an expression’. The overriding purpose of this community was to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and to do this it had to follow certain key principles.

These were:

- First, ‘equal political rights’ – which encompassed both the ‘sovereign equality’ of all Member States, in Article 2 of the Charter, and ‘respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’, in Article 1.
- Second, ‘equal economic opportunities’ – spelt out in Article 55 as the promotion of ‘higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development’, as well as ‘solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems’.
- Third, ‘justice’ – by which he meant that the international community must be ‘based on law ... with a judicial procedure through which law and justice could be made to apply’.
- And finally the prohibition of the use of armed force, ‘save in the common interest’.

These principles, Hammarskjöld argued, are incompatible with the idea of the United Nations as merely a conference or debating chamber – as indeed is the authority the Charter gives to its principal organs, and particularly to the Security Council, which clearly has both legislative and executive powers.

The context in which he put forward these arguments was, of course, the Cold War, and particularly the Soviet campaign against him during the Congo crisis of 1960–61.

That campaign is happily long past. But we still face, from time to time, attempts by Member States to reduce the United Nations to a ‘conference mechanism’.

Those attempts no longer come systematically from one particular ideological camp. Instead, they tend to vary according to the subject under discussion.

Broadly speaking, industrialised countries remain reluctant to see the United Nations act on Hammarskjöld’s second principle – the promotion of ‘equal economic opportunities’. And the governments of some other countries are equally loath to see it actively promote ‘respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all’.

In both cases, I believe the Secretary-General has no choice. He has to follow in the footsteps of Hammarskjöld, upholding the right and duty of the United Nations to pursue the aims laid down for it by the Charter.

Of course there is always a need for negotiation and discussion on the appropriate forms of action. But the United Nations will fail in its duty to the world’s peoples, who are the ultimate source of its authority, if it allows itself to be reduced to a mere ‘static conference’, whether on economic and social rights or on civil and political ones.

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The same applies to Hammarskjöld’s exalted view of the ‘international civil servant’, which he also pursued in that last annual report, and in a lecture given that same summer at Oxford University.

His argument here was that the people charged with carrying out the executive functions of the United Nations could not be neutral in relation to the principles of the Charter. Nor could they be regarded, or allowed to regard themselves, as nominees or representatives of their own nations. They had to represent the international community as a whole.

Here too, Hammarskjöld based his argument on a very careful reading of the Charter itself – in this case Articles 100 and 101.

Article 100 forbids the Secretary-General or any of his staff either to seek or to receive instructions from States. And Article 101 prescribes ‘the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity’ as ‘the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff’.

Once again, Hammarskjöld was arguing in the context of the Cold War, in which first one side and then the other had tried to insist on the right to be represented, within the Secretariat, by people who were loyal to its political or ideological point of view.

Again, the context has changed, and I am glad to say that States today, while extremely keen to see their nationals appointed to senior positions, no longer seek – or at least, not in the same way – to exercise political control over them, once appointed.

But the principle of an independent international civil service, to which Hammarskjöld was so attached, remains as important as ever. Each successive Secretary-General must be vigilant in defending it, even if, on occasion, changing times require us to depart from the letter of his views, in order to preserve the spirit.

To give just one example: Hammarskjöld insisted that the bulk of United Nations staff should have permanent appointments and expect to spend their whole career with the Organization.

That may have been appropriate in his time. It is less so now that the role of the United Nations has expanded, and more than half of our employees are serving in missions in the field. This is a development which Hammarskjöld would surely have welcomed, since it reflects a transition from the ‘static conference’ model to the ‘dynamic instrument’ model which he so strongly believed in.

But what is clear is that his ideal of the United Nations as an expression of the international community, whose staff carry out decisions taken by States collectively rather than bending to the will of any one of them, is just as relevant in our times as in his.

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And that, of course, has very important implications for the role of the Secretary-General himself.

Hammarskjöld pointed out that Article 99 of the Charter – which allows the Secretary-General, on his own initiative, to bring matters to the Security Council’s attention when in his view they may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security – makes him clearly a political rather than a purely administrative official.

In practice, successive Secretaries-General, including Hammarskjöld, have invoked this article very sparingly. I myself have never yet found it necessary to do so. But the fact that the Secretary-General has this power crucially affects the way he is treated by the Security Council, and by the Member States in general.

Few people now question the responsibility of the Secretary-General to act politically, or to make public pronouncements on political issues.

In fact, the boot today is if anything on the other foot: I find myself called on to make official statements on almost everything that happens in the world, from royal marriages to the possibility of human cloning!

I do my best to satisfy this demand with due respect for the decisions of the Security Council and General Assembly. But those bodies would find it very strange if on each occasion I sought their approval before opening my mouth!

Their members can, and do, take exception to some of my statements – and thank goodness they do. There must be freedom of speech for governments, as well as for international officials! But they do not question my right to make such statements, according to my own understanding of the purposes and principles of the United Nations as set out in the Charter.

No doubt Dag Hammarskjöld would also disagree with some of the specific positions I have taken. But I suspect he would envy me the discretion I enjoy in deciding what to say. And I have no doubt he would strongly endorse the principle that the Secretary-General must strive to make himself an authentic and independent voice of the international community.

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What he might not have foreseen is the way our concept of that community has developed in recent years. In his time it was essentially a community of separate nations or peoples, who for all practical purposes were represented by States.

So if we go back to the things about today's world that we would have to explain to him, if he unexpectedly joined us now, probably the most difficult for him to adjust to would be the sheer complexity of a world in which individuals and groups of all kinds are constantly interacting – across frontiers and across oceans, economically, socially and culturally –

without expecting or receiving any permission, let alone assistance, from their national governments.

He might well find it difficult to identify the precise role, in such a world, of a body like the United Nations, whose Charter presupposes the division of the world into sovereign and equal States, and in which the peoples of the world are represented essentially by their governments.

He might find that difficult – and if so, he would not be alone! But I am convinced he would relish the challenge. And I am sure he would not stray from his fundamental conviction that the essential task of the United Nations is to protect the weak against the strong.

In the long term, the vitality and viability of the Organization depend on its ability to perform that task, by adapting itself to changing realities. That, I believe, is the biggest test it faces in the new century.

How would Hammarskjöld approach that task?

First of all he would insist, quite correctly, that States are still the main holders of political authority in the world, and are likely to remain so. Indeed, the more democratic they become – the more genuinely representative of, and accountable to, their peoples – the greater also will be their political legitimacy. And therefore it is entirely proper, as well as inevitable, that they will remain the political masters of the United Nations.

He would also insist, I am sure, on the continuing responsibility of States to maintain international order – and, indeed, on their collective responsibility, which their leaders solemnly recognised in last year’s Millennium Declaration, ‘to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level’.



And he might well say that, with a few honourable exceptions, the more fortunate countries in this world are not living up to that responsibility, so long as they do not fulfil their longstanding commitments to much higher levels of development assistance, to much more generous debt relief, and to duty- and quota-free access for exports from the least developed countries.

But then he would also see that his own lifetime coincided, in most countries, with the high watermark of State control over the lives of citizens. And he would see that States today generally tax and spend a smaller proportion of their citizens' wealth than they did 40 years ago.

From this he might well conclude that we should not rely exclusively on State action to achieve our objectives on the international level, either.

A great deal, he would think, is likely to depend on non-State actors in the system – private companies, voluntary agencies or pressure groups, philanthropic foundations, universities and think tanks, and, of course, creative individuals.

And that thought would surely feed into his reflection on the role of the United Nations.

Can it confine itself, in the 21st century, to the role of coordinating action by States? Or should it reach out further?

Is it not obliged, in order to fulfil the purposes of the Charter, to form partnerships with all these different actors? To listen to them, to guide them, and to urge them on?

Above all, to provide a framework of shared values and understanding, within which their free and voluntary efforts can interact, and reinforce each other, instead of getting in each other's way?

Perhaps it is presumptuous of me to suggest that this would be part of Hammarskjöld's vision of the role of the United Nations in the 21st century – because it is, of course, my own vision.

No doubt if he were alive today he would offer us something nobler and more profound.

But I like to think, Ladies and Gentlemen, that what I have just described would find some place in it.



Photo: Mikael Wallerstedt

*Kofi Annan laying a wreath  
at the grave of Dag Hammarskjöld  
Uppsala Cemetery*



# THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

*Introduction, 17 August 1961*

This turned out to be the last of Hammarskjöld's annual statements on the role and future of the United Nations given in his introductions to the Secretary-General's Annual Reports to the General Assembly. As in his Oxford University lecture on 30 May 1961, he pointed out to Member governments that they were confronted with a choice between two views of the United Nations—either a “static conference machinery” or a “dynamic instrument” of evolution toward more effective forms of international cooperation. This last introduction was Hammarskjöld's definitive statement of the reasons, as he saw them, why the second alternative should be pursued. After dictating it he took the draft to Cordier with the remark, “I don't see what I can write after this one.” Though completed on August 17, it was not distributed to delegations and released to the press until August 24. (The text of the Introduction is taken from Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote, *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, Volume V, Dag Hammarskjöld 1960-1961*, New York, 1975)

## I

Debates and events during the year since the publication of the last report to the General Assembly have brought to the fore different concepts of the United Nations, the character of the Organization, its authority, and its structure.

On the one side, it has in various ways become clear that certain Members conceive of the Organization as a static conference machinery for resolving conflicts of interests and ideologies with a view to peaceful coexistence, within the Charter, to be served by a Secretariat which is to be regarded not as fully internationalized but as representing within its ranks those very interests and ideologies.

Other Members have made it clear that they conceive of the Organization primarily as a dynamic instrument of governments through which they, jointly and for the same purpose, should seek such reconciliation but through which they should also try to develop forms of executive action, undertaken on behalf of all Members, and aiming at forestalling conflicts and resolving them, once they have arisen, by appropriate diplomatic or political means, in a spirit of objectivity and in implementation of the principles and purposes of the Charter.

Naturally, the latter concept takes as its starting point the conference concept, but it regards it only as a starting point, envisaging the possibility of continued growth to increasingly effective forms of active international cooperation, adapted to experience, and served by a Secretariat of which it is required that, whatever the background and the views of its individual members, their actions be guided solely by the principles of the Charter, the decisions of the main organs, and the interests of the Organization itself.

The first concept can refer to history and to the traditions of national policies of the past. The second can point to the needs of the present and of the future in a world of ever-closer international interdependence where nations have at their disposal armaments of hitherto unknown destructive strength. The first one is firmly anchored in the time-honoured philosophy of sovereign national states in armed competition of which the most that may be expected in the international field is that they achieve a peaceful coexistence. The second one envisages possibilities of intergovernmental action overriding such a philosophy, and opens the road towards more developed and increasingly effective forms of constructive international cooperation.

It is clearly for the governments, Members of the Organization, and for these governments only, to make their choice and decide on the direction in which they wish the Organization to develop. However, it may be appropriate to study these two concepts in terms of the purposes of the Organization as laid down in the Charter and, in this context, also to consider the character and the significance of the decisions of the Organization as well as its structure.

## II

The purposes and principles of the Charter are set out in its Preamble and further developed in a series of articles, including some which may seem to be primarily of a procedural or administrative nature. Together, these parts of the Charter lay down some basic rules of international ethics by which all Member states have committed themselves to be guided. To a large extent, the rules reflect standards accepted as binding for life within states. Thus, they appear, in the main, as a projection into the international arena and the international community of purposes and principles already accepted as being of national validity. In this sense, the Charter takes a first step in the direction of an organized international community, and this independently of the organs set up for international cooperation. Due to different traditions, the state of social development and the character of national institutions, wide variations naturally exist as to the application in national life of the principles reflected in the Charter, but it is not too difficult to recognize the common elements behind those differences. It

is therefore not surprising that such principles of national application could be transposed into an agreed basis also for international behaviour and cooperation.

In the Preamble to the Charter, Member nations have reaffirmed their faith “in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small,” a principle which also has found many other expressions, in the Charter.

Thus, it restates the basic democratic principle of equal political rights, independently of the position of the individual or of the Member country in respect of its strength, as determined by territory, population, or wealth. The words just quoted must, however, be considered as going further and imply an endorsement as well of a right to equal economic opportunities.

It is in the light of the first principle that the Charter has established a system of equal votes, expressing “the sovereign equality of all its Members,” and has committed the Organization to the furtherance of self-determination, self-government, and independence. On the same basis, the Charter requires universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all “without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.”

It is in the light of the latter principle—or, perhaps, the latter aspect of the same basic principle—that the Charter, in Article 55, has committed the Members to the promotion of higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development as well as to solutions of international economic and related problems. The pledge of all Members to take joint and separate action, in cooperation with the Organization, for the achievement of these purposes has been the basis for the far-reaching economic and technical assistance channelled through or administered by the Organization, and may rightly be considered as the basic obligation reflected also in such economic and technical assistance as Member governments have been giving, on a bilateral basis, outside the framework of the Organization.

It would seem that those who regard the Organization as a conference machinery, “neutral” in relation to the direction of policies on a national or international basis and serving solely as an instrument for the solution of conflicts by reconciliation, do not pay adequate attention to those essential principles of the Charter to which reference has just been made. The terms of the Charter are explicit as regards the equal political rights of nations as well as of individuals and, although this second principle may be considered only as implicit in the terms of the Charter, they are clear also as regards the demand for equal economic opportunities for all individuals and nations. So as to avoid any misunderstanding, the Charter directly states that the basic democratic principles are applicable to nations “large and small” and to individuals without distinction “as to race, sex, language and religion,” qualifications that obviously could be extended to cover other criteria such as, for example, those of an ideological character

which have been used or may be used as a basis for political or economic discrimination.

In the practical work of the Organization these basic principles have been of special significance in relation to countries under colonial rule or in other ways under foreign domination. The General Assembly has translated the principles into action intended to establish through self-determination a free and independent life as sovereign states for peoples who have expressed in democratic forms their wish for such a status. Decisive action has in many cases been taken by Member governments, and then the United Nations has had only to lend its support to their efforts. In other cases, the main responsibility has fallen on the Organization itself. The resolution on colonialism, adopted by the General Assembly at its fifteenth session, may be regarded as a comprehensive restatement in elaborated form of the principle laid down in the Charter. Results of developments so far have been reflected in the birth of a great number of new national states and a revolutionary widening of the membership of the Organization.

The demand for equal economic opportunities has, likewise, been and remains—of special significance in relation to those very countries which have more recently entered the international arena as new states. This is natural in view of the fact that, mostly, they have been in an unfavourable economic position, which is reflected in a much lower per capita income, rate of capital supply, and degree of technical development, while their political independence and sovereignty require a fair measure of economic stability and economic possibilities in order to gain substance and full viability.

In working for the translation into practical realities in international life of the democratic principles which are basic to the Charter, the Organization has thus assumed a most active role and it has done so with success, demonstrating both the need and the possibilities for such action.

Further, in the Preamble to the Charter it is stated to be a principle and purpose of the Organization “to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained.” In these words—to which, naturally, counterparts may be found in other parts of the Charter—it gives expression to another basic democratic principle, that of the rule of law. In order to promote this principle, the Charter established the International Court of Justice, but the principle permeates the approach of the Charter to international problems far beyond the sphere of competence of the Court. As in national life, the principle of justice—which obviously implies also the principle of objectivity and equity in the consideration of all matters before the General Assembly or the Security Council—must be considered as applicable without distinction or discrimination, with one measure and one standard valid for the strong as well as for the weak.



Thus, the demand of the Charter for a rule of law aims at the substitution of right for might and makes of the Organization the natural protector of rights which countries, without it, might find it more difficult to assert and to get respected.

The principle of justice can be regarded as flowing naturally from the principles of equal political rights and equal economic opportunities, but it has an independent life and carries, of itself, the world community as far in the direction of an organized international system as the two first-mentioned principles. It has deep roots in the history of the efforts of man to eliminate from international life the anarchy which he had already much earlier overcome on the national level, deeper indeed than the political and economic principles which, as is well known, were much later to get full acceptance also in national life. Long before the United Nations and long before even the League of Nations, governments were working towards a rule of justice in international life through which they hoped to establish an international community based on law, without parliamentary or executive organs, but with a judicial procedure through which law and justice could be made to apply.

The Charter states and develops the three principles mentioned here as a means to an end: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." This adds emphasis to the concept, clearly implied in the Charter, of an international community for which the Organization is an instrument and an expression and in which anarchic tendencies in international life are to be curbed by the introduction of a system of equal political rights, equal economic opportunities, and the rule of law. However, the Charter goes one step further, drawing a logical conclusion both from the ultimate aim of the Organization and from the three principles. Thus, it outlaws the use of armed force "save in the common interest." Obviously, the Charter cannot, on the one side, establish a rule of law and the principle of equal rights for "nations large and small," and, on the other hand, permit the use of armed force for national ends, contrary to those principles and, therefore, not "in the common interest." Were nations, under the Charter, to be allowed, by the use of their military strength, to achieve ends contrary to the principle of the equality of Members and the principle of justice, it would obviously deprive those very principles of all substance and significance. One practical expression of this approach, which may be mentioned here, is that the organs of the United Nations have consistently maintained that the use of force, contrary to the Charter as interpreted by those organs, cannot be permitted to yield results which can be accepted as valid by the Organization and as establishing new rights.

In the Charter, the right to the use of force is somewhat more extensive than may seem to be the case from a superficial reading of the phrase "save in the common interest." Thus, apart from military action undertaken pursuant

to a decision of the Security Council for repression of aggression—that is, for upholding the basic Charter principles—the Charter opens the door to the use of armed force by a nation in exercise of its inherent right to resist armed attack. This is a point on which, both in theory and in practice, the development of international law is still at a very early stage. As is well known, no agreement has been reached on a definition of aggression, beyond that found in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, and the Organization has several times had to face situations in which, therefore, the rights and wrongs in a specific case of conflict have not been clarified. It would be a vitally important step forward if wider agreement could be reached regarding the criteria to be applied in order to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate use of force. History is only too rich in examples of armed aggression claimed as action in self-defence. How could it be otherwise, when most cases of armed conflict are so deeply rooted in a history of clashes of interests and rights, even if, up to the fatal moment of the first shot, those clashes have not involved recourse to the use of armed force?

In recognition of this situation and in the light of historical experience, the Charter makes yet another projection into international life of solutions to conflicts tested in national life, and establishes the final principle that the Organization shall “bring about by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.” This principle, as quoted here from Article 1 of the Charter, is further developed specifically in Article 33, which requires parties to any dispute, the consequence of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, to “seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.” It is in this sphere that the Security Council has had, and is likely to continue to have, its main significance, both directly as a forum before which any dispute threatening peace and security can be brought up for debate and as an organ which directly, or through appropriate agents, may assist the parties in finding a way out and, by preventive diplomacy, may forestall the outbreak of an armed conflict. It seems appropriate here to draw attention especially to the right of the Security Council under Article 40 to “call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable” for the prevention of any aggravation of a situation threatening peace and security, and to the obligation of Members to comply with a decision on such measures.

It is in the light of the approach to international coexistence in our world today, which is thus to be found in the Charter, that judgement has to be passed on the validity of the different conceptions of the Organization which

in recent times have become increasingly apparent. As already pointed out, the basic principles regarding the political equality of nations and their right to equal economic opportunities are difficult to reconcile with the view that the Organization is to be regarded only as a conference machinery for the solution, by debate and joint decisions, of conflicts of interest or ideology. It seems even more difficult to reconcile these principles with a view according to which equality among Members should be reflected in the establishment of a balance between power-blocs or other groupings of nations. The same difficulty is apparent as regards the principle of justice and the principle prohibiting the use of armed force. It is easier to apply the conference concept to the principle of prevention of conflict through negotiation, but also on this point the difficulties become considerable if it is recognized that such solutions as may be sought by the Organization should be solutions based on the rules of equality and justice.

### III

The General Assembly, the Security Council, and other collective organs of the United Nations have features in common with a standing international diplomatic conference, but their procedures go beyond the forms of such a conference and show aspects of a parliamentary or quasi-parliamentary character.

While decisions of a conference, in order to commit its participants, must be based on their subsequent acceptance of the decisions, the organs of the United Nations act on the basis of voting, with the decisions being adopted if supported by a majority. However, the decisions of the Assembly have, as regards Member States, only the character of recommendations (except for financial assessments and certain other types of organizational action) so that obligations like those arising out of an agreement, coming into force after a conference, do not normally flow from them. But although the decisions, legally, are only recommendations, they introduce an important element by expressing a majority consensus on the issue under consideration.

Naturally, such a formula leaves scope for a gradual development in practice of the weight of the decisions. To the extent that more respect, in fact, is shown to General Assembly recommendations by the Member states, they may come more and more close to being recognized as decisions having a binding effect on those concerned, particularly when they involve the application of the binding principles of the Charter and of international law.

Both those who regard a gradual increase in the weight of decisions of the General Assembly as necessary, if progress is to be registered in the direction of organized peaceful coexistence within the Charter, and those who oppose such a development, have to recognize that, with certain variations in individual cases, the practice still is very close to the restrictive Charter formula. Experience shows

that even countries which have voted for a certain decision may, later on, basing themselves on its character of merely being a recommendation, refuse to follow it or fail to support its implementation, financially or in other respects.

What has been said applies generally to the collective organs of the Organization, but, as is well known, the Charter has gone one step further beyond the conference concept, in the direction of the parliamentary concept, in the case of the Security Council. In Article 25, Member states of the United Nations have agreed to “accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter,” thus by agreement, making the decisions of the Council mandatory, except, of course, when such decisions take the form of “recommendations” within the terms of Chapter VI or certain other articles of the Charter. They have further, in Article 49, undertaken to “join in affording mutual assistance in carrying out the measures decided upon by the Security Council.”

This agreed mandatory nature of certain Security Council decisions might have led to a demand for unanimity in the Council, a unanimity which was the rule for the Council of the League of Nations. Even so, however, the arrangement would have gone beyond the conference principle with its requirement that no decision reached in an international organ should be binding on an individual Member short of his agreement. With the present arrangements, requiring a majority of seven and the concurring votes of the permanent members, a bridge between the traditional conference approach and a parliamentary approach is provided by the commitment in Article 25 to agree to the carrying out of the decisions in the Council which should be considered as giving the Council its authority by general delegation as indeed stated in Article 24, paragraph 1.

What clearly remains within the Council of the traditional conference and agreement pattern is the condition that its decisions of a nonprocedural character must be supported by the unanimous vote of the five permanent Members, thus avoiding for those members the risk of being bound by a decision of the Council which has not met with their agreement. It may be observed that this special position for the permanent members, apart from other reasons, has the justification that, without such a rule, the other Members of the Organization, in complying with a Security Council decision, might find themselves unwillingly drawn into a Big-Power conflict.

In spite of the delegated authority which the Council may be considered as exercising, and the condition that decisions must be agreed to by the permanent members, the experience of the Organization, as regards the implementation of Council decisions, is uneven and does not indicate full acceptance in practice of Article 25. In this case also, examples can be given of a tendency to regard decisions, even when taken under Chapter VII, as recommendations binding only to the extent that the party concerned has freely committed itself to carry them

out; there is here a clear dichotomy between the aims of the Charter and the general political practice at its present stage of development. Such cases refer not only to Members outside the Council, or, perhaps, Members inside the Council, who have not supported a specific decision, but also to Members within the Council who have cast their votes in favour of a decision but who later on are found to reserve for themselves at least a right to interpret the decision in ways which seem to be at variance with the intentions of the Council. The ambiguity of this situation emerges with special force in cases where such attitudes have been taken by permanent members of the Council, who are considered to shoulder the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security which is reflected in the special position they hold within the Council. Obviously, the problem whether the intended legal weight is given to decisions of the Security Council arises in practice not only in cases of noncompliance but also in cases of a refusal to shoulder the financial consequences of a decision of the Council.

These observations—which have been limited to a reminder of the Charter rules and a factual reminder also of the experiences in practice—point to a situation which in any evaluation of the United Nations must be given the most serious consideration by Members. For the judgement on the various concepts of the United Nations which are put forward, it is one thing to note what the Charter stipulates; it is an entirely different but ultimately more important question as to what the situation is in practice and what, in fact, is the weight given to decisions of the Organization when they go beyond the conference pattern of agreement.

For those who maintain the conference concept of the Organization, it is natural to side-step the mandatory nature of decisions by the Security Council. For those who take a different view, it is equally natural and essential to work for a full and general acceptance of the Charter rules. Were those to be right who hold that the Charter on the points discussed here, and, maybe, also as regards the five basic principles discussed in the first part of this introduction, is ahead of our time and the political possibilities which it offers, such a view still would not seem to justify the conclusion that the clear approach of the Charter should be abandoned. Rather, it would indicate that Member nations jointly should increase their efforts to make political realities gradually come closer to the pattern established by the Charter.

In the light of such considerations, the significance of the outcome of every single conflict on which the Organization has to take a stand, and the weight given to its decisions in such a conflict stand out very clearly. A failure to gain respect for decisions or actions of the Organization within the terms of the Charter is often called a failure for the Organization. It would seem more correct to regard it as a failure of the world community, through its Member nations and in particular those most directly concerned, to cooperate in order,

step by step, to make the Charter a living reality in practical political action as it is already in law.

Were such cooperation, for which the responsibility naturally rests with each single Member as well as with all Members collectively, not to come about, and were the respect for the obligations flowing from Article 25 of the Charter, to be allowed to diminish, this would spell the end of the possibilities of the Organization to grow into what the Charter indicates as the clear intention of the founders, as also of all hopes to see the Organization grow into an increasingly effective instrument, with increasing respect for recommendations of the General Assembly as well.

What this would mean for the value of the Organization as protector of the aims, principles, and rights it was set up to further and safeguard, is obvious. The effort through the Organization to find a way by which the world community might, step by step, grow into organized international cooperation within the Charter, must either progress or recede. Those whose reactions to the work of the Organization hamper its development or reduce its possibilities of effective action, may have to shoulder the responsibility for a return to a state of affairs which governments had already found too dangerous after the First World War.

#### IV

The growth of the United Nations out of the historic conference pattern—which, as observed earlier in this introduction, at all events naturally remains the starting point in all efforts of the Organization—is clearly reflected in what, in the light of experience, may seem to be a lack of balance in the Charter. While great attention is given to the principles and purposes, and considerable space is devoted to an elaboration of what may be called the parliamentary aspects of the Organization, little is said about executive arrangements. This does not mean that the Charter in any way closes the door to such arrangements or to executive action, but only that, at the stage of international thinking crystallized in the Charter, the conference approach still was predominant, and that the needs for executive action, if the new Organization was to live up to expectations and to its obligations under the Charter, had not yet attracted the attention they were to receive in response to later developments.

The key clause on the executive side may be considered to be Article 24 in which it is said that “in order to assure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.” On that basis the Security Council is given the right, under Article 29, to establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions, the right under Article 40 to decide on so-called provisional measures, the right to use, for the purposes

of the Charter, under certain conditions, armed forces made available to the Council, the right under Article 48 to request from governments action on the Council's behalf, as well as the right to request of the Secretary-General to "perform such ... functions as are entrusted to him" by the Council.

The various clauses here briefly enumerated open a wide range of possibilities for executive action undertaken by, and under the aegis of, the Security Council. However, no specific machinery is set up for such action by the Council, apart from the Military Staff Committee, with planning responsibilities in the field of the possible use of armed force by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter. In fact, therefore, the executive functions and their form have been left largely to practice, and it is in the field of the practices of the Organization that cases may be found in the light of which it is now possible to evaluate the ways in which the Organization may develop its possibilities for diplomatic, political, or military intervention of an executive nature in the field.

The forms used for executive action by the Security Council—or when the Council has not been able to reach decisions, in some cases, by the General Assembly—are varied and are to be explained by an effort to adjust the measures to the needs of each single situation. However, some main types are recurrent. Subcommittees have been set up for fact-finding or negotiation on the spot. Missions have been placed in areas of conflict for the purpose of observation and local negotiation. Observer groups of a temporary nature have been sent out. And, finally, police forces under the aegis of the United Nations have been organized for the assistance of the governments concerned with a view to upholding the principles of the Charter. As these, or many of these, arrangements require centralized administrative measures, which cannot be performed by the Council or the General Assembly, Members have to a large extent used the possibility to request the Secretary-General to perform special functions by instructing him to take the necessary executive steps for implementation of the action decided upon. This has been done under Article 98, as quoted above, and has represented a development in practice of the duties of the Secretary-General under Article 97. The character of the mandates has, in many cases, been such that in carrying out his functions the Secretary-General has found himself forced also to interpret the decisions in the light of the Charter, United Nations precedents, and the aims and intentions expressed by the Members. When that has been the case, the Secretary-General has been under the obligation to seek guidance, to all possible extent, from the main organs; but when such guidance has not been forthcoming, developments have sometimes led to situations in which he has had to shoulder responsibility for certain limited political functions, which may be considered to be in line with the spirit of Article 99 but which legally have been based on decisions of the main organs themselves, under Article 98, and thus the exclusive responsibility of Member states acting through these

organs. Naturally, in carrying out such functions the Secretariat has remained fully subject to the decisions of the political bodies.

This whole development has lately become a matter of controversy, natural and, indeed, unavoidable in the light of differences of approach to the role of the Organization to which attention has been drawn earlier in this introduction. While the development is welcomed by Member nations which feel a need of growth as regards the possibilities of the Organization to engage in executive action in protection of the Charter principles, it is rejected by those who maintain the conference concept of the Organization. The different opinions expressed on the development are only superficially related to this or that specific action and the way in which it is considered to have been carried through. They are also only superficially related to the choice of means used for translating decisions into action. The discussion regarding the development of executive functions is basically one confronting the same fundamentally different concepts of the Organization and its place in international politics, which could be seen also in the different attitudes towards the legal weight of decisions of the Organization.

It is in this context that the principle embodied in Article 100 of the Charter is of decisive significance. This principle, which has a long history, establishes the international and independent character of the Secretariat. Thus, it is said that the Secretary-General and the staff of the Secretariat “shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the organization,” and that they “shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.” In the same Article, the Members of the United Nations undertake to respect “the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.”

The significance of the principle stated in Article 100 is a dual one. It envisages a Secretariat so organized and developed as to be able to serve as a neutral instrument for the Organization, were its main organs to wish to use the Secretariat in the way which has been mentioned above and for which Article 98 has opened possibilities. But in doing so, the principle also indicates an intention to use the Secretariat for such functions as would require that it have an exclusively international character.

In the traditional conference pattern, participants in a meeting are mostly serviced by a secretariat drawn from the same countries as the participants themselves, and constituting a mixed group regarding which there is no need to demand or maintain an exclusively international character. It is therefore natural that those who favour the conference approach to the United Nations tend to give to Article 100 another interpretation than the one which the text calls for,



especially in the light of its historical background and its background also in other clauses of the Charter.

There is no reason to go more deeply into this special problem here. Suffice it to say that, while the Organization, if regarded as a standing diplomatic conference, might well be serviced by a fully international Secretariat but does not need it, the other approach to the Organization and its role cannot be satisfied with anything less than a Secretariat of an exclusively international character, and thus cannot be reconciled with a secretariat composed on party lines and on the assumption that the interests represented in the main organs in this manner should be represented and advocated also within the Secretariat. Thus, again, the choice between conflicting views on the United Nations Secretariat is basically a choice between conflicting views on the Organization, its functions, and its future.

In order to avoid possible misunderstandings, it should be pointed out here that there is no contradiction at all between a demand for a truly international Secretariat and a demand, found in the Charter itself, for as wide a “geographical” distribution of posts within the Secretariat as possible. It is, indeed, necessary precisely in order to maintain the exclusively international character of the Secretariat, that it be so composed as to achieve a balanced distribution of posts on all levels among all regions. This, however, is clearly something entirely different from a balanced representation of trends or ideologies. In fact if a realistic representation of such trends is considered desirable, it can and should be achieved without any assumption of political representation within the ranks of the Secretariat, by a satisfactory distribution of posts based on geographical criteria.

The exclusively international character of the Secretariat is not tied to its composition, but to the spirit in which it works and to its insulation from outside influences as stated in Article 100. While it may be said that no man is neutral in the sense that he is without opinions or ideals, it is just as true that, in spite of this, a neutral Secretariat is possible. Anyone of integrity, not subjected to undue pressures, can, regardless of his own views, readily act in an “exclusively international” spirit and can be guided in his actions on behalf of the Organization solely by its interests and principles, and by the instructions of its organs.

## V

After this brief review of the principles of the Organization, of the character of its decisions and of its structure, especially as regards arrangements for executive action, presented only as a background for the consideration of what basic concepts and approaches should guide the development of the Organization,

it may be appropriate, in conclusion, to give attention to the activities of the Organization and their relevance to the current international situation.

For years the Organization has been a focal point for efforts to achieve disarmament. This may still be considered as the main standing item on the agenda of the General Assembly. However, in recent years these efforts of the Organization have been running parallel to other efforts which are either outside of it or only loosely tied to the work of the United Nations. This may be justified on the basis that a very limited number of countries hold key positions in the field of armaments, so that any effort on a universal basis and by voting, to reach a decision having practical force, would be ineffective, unless founded on a basic agreement between those few parties mostly concerned. Therefore, direct negotiations between those countries are an essential first step to the solution, through the United Nations, of the disarmament problem, and do not in any way derogate from the responsibilities or rights of the Organization.

The situation may serve as an example of a problem which has become increasingly important in the life of the Organization: the right way in which to balance the weight of the Big Powers and their security interests against the rights of the majority of Member nations. Such a majority naturally cannot expect the Big Powers, in questions of vital concern to them, with their superior military and economic strength, automatically to accept a majority verdict. On the other hand, the Big Powers cannot, as Members of the world community, and with their dependence on all other nations, set themselves above, or disregard the views of, the majority of nations. An effort to balance the Big Power element and the majority element is found in the Charter rules regarding the respective competence of the General Assembly and the Security Council and regarding the special position of the Big Powers within the Council. Other efforts to solve the same problem are reflected in the way in which the disarmament problem has been attacked in recent years. No fully satisfactory or definitive formula has been found, but it must be sought, and it is to be hoped that when the time comes for a Charter revision, agreement may be reached on a satisfactory solution.

What is true of the disarmament problem is, of course, true also of those more specific questions in which security interests of Big Powers are or may be directly involved, as for example the Berlin problem. The community of nations, represented in the United Nations, has a vital interest in a peaceful solution, based on justice, of any question which—like this one—unless brought to a satisfactory solution, might come to represent a threat to peace and security. However, the problem of the balance to be struck between the rights and obligations of the Big Powers and the rights and obligations of all other nations applies, in a very direct way, also to this problem which is now so seriously preoccupying the minds of all peoples and their leaders. The United Nations, with its wide membership, is not, and can, perhaps, not aspire to be a focal point in the debate on an issue such

as the Berlin question, or in the efforts to solve it, but the Organization cannot, for that reason, be considered as an outside party which has no right to make its voice heard should a situation develop which would threaten those very interests which the United Nations is to safeguard and for the defence of which it was intended to provide all Member nations with an instrument and a forum.

Reference has already been made in this introduction to the work of the Organization devoted to furthering self-determination, self-government, and independence for all peoples. In that context it was recalled that the General Assembly, at its last session, adopted a resolution regarding the colonial problem which elaborates the basic principles of the Charter in their application to this problem.

This is, likewise, a question which for years has been before the General Assembly and it is likely to remain a major item until a final result is achieved which reflects full implementation of the basic principles in the direction indicated by last year's resolution. Experience has shown that peaceful progress in that direction cannot be guaranteed solely by decisions of the General Assembly or the Security Council, within the framework of a conference pattern. Executive action is necessary, and neither the General Assembly nor the Security Council—which has had to deal with situations in which the liquidation of the colonial system has led to acute conflict—has abstained from such action in support of the lines upheld. As in the past, executive action by the Organization in the future will undoubtedly also be found necessary if it is to render the service expected from it under the terms of the Charter.

It is in conflicts relating to the development towards full self-government and independence that the Organization has faced its most complicated tasks in the executive field. It is also in the case of executive action in this context that different concepts of the Organization and of its decisions and structure have their most pointed expressions. As regards this specific aspect of the work of the United Nations, the front line has not been the usual one between different bloc interests, but more one between a great number of nations with aims natural especially for those which recently have been under colonial rule or under other forms of foreign domination, and a limited number of powers with other aims and predominant interests. This seems understandable if one takes into account that a majority of nations wishes to stand aside from the Big-Power conflicts, while power blocs or Big Powers tend to safeguard their positions and security by efforts to maintain or extend an influence over newly emerging areas. The United Nations easily becomes a focal point for such conflicting interests as the majority looks to the Organization for support in their policy of independence also in relation to such efforts, while power blocs or countries with other aims may see in the United Nations an obstacle in the way of their policies to the extent that the Organization provides the desired support. How this is reflected

in the attitude towards the development of the executive functions of the United Nations can be illustrated by numerous examples. It may be appropriate in this context to say in passing a word about the problem of the Congo and the activities of the United Nations in that country.

Different interests and powers outside Africa have seen in the Congo situation a possibility of developments with strong impact on their international position. They have therefore, naturally, held strong views on the direction in which they would like to see developments in the Congo turn and—with the lack of political traditions in the country and without the stability which political institutions can get only by being tested through experience—the doors have been opened for efforts to influence developments by supporting this or that faction or this or that personality. True to its principles, the United Nations has had to be guided in its operation solely by the interest of the Congolese people and by their right to decide freely for themselves, without any outside influences and with full knowledge of facts. Therefore, the Organization, throughout the first year of its work in the Congo, up to the point when Parliament reassembled and invested a new national government, has refused—what many may have wished—to permit the weight of its resources to be used in support of any faction so as thereby to prejudice in any way the outcome of a choice which belonged solely to the Congolese people. It has also had to pursue a line which, by safeguarding the free choice of the people, implied resistance against all efforts from outside to influence the outcome. In doing so, the Organization has been put in a position in which those within the country who felt disappointed in not getting the support of the Organization were led to suspect that others were in a more favoured position and, therefore, accused the Organization of partiality, and in which, further, such outside elements as tried to get or protect a foothold within the country, when meeting an obstacle in the United Nations, made similar accusations. If, as it is sincerely to be hoped, the recent national reconciliation, achieved by Parliament and its elected representatives of the people, provides a stable basis for a peaceful future in a fully independent and unified Congo, this would definitely confirm the correctness of the line pursued by the United Nations in the Congo. In fact, what was achieved by Parliament early in August may be said to have done so with sufficient clarity. It is a thankless and easily misunderstood role for the Organization to remain neutral in relation to a situation of domestic conflict and to provide active assistance only by protecting the rights and possibilities of the people to find their own way, but it remains the only manner in which the Organization can serve its proclaimed purpose of furthering the full independence of the people in the true and unqualified sense of the word.

The United Nations may be called upon again to assist in similar ways. Whatever mistakes in detail and on specific points critics may ascribe to the

Organization in the highly complicated situation in the Congo, it is to be hoped that they do not lead Members to revise the basic rules which guide the United Nations activities in such situations, as laid down in the first report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Congo question, which the Council, a year ago, found reason, unanimously, to commend.

Closely related to a policy aiming at self-government and independence for all is the question of economic and technical assistance, especially during the first years of independence of a new Member state. The United Nations and its agencies and affiliated organs have at their disposal only very modest means for the purpose, but a rich experience has been gathered and the personnel resources are not inconsiderable.

Last year the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had to consider proposals designed to open up new possibilities for the Organization to respond to the demands of Member governments facing all the problems of newly achieved independence. Naturally, the problems which are of special importance for such countries are basically the same as those which face all countries which have been left behind in economic development. Therefore, the urgent attention required by newly independent countries in this respect can in no way justify a discrimination in their favour against other countries with similar difficulties.

This year the General Assembly will have before it proposals initiated by the Scientific Advisory Committee and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council, for a conference under United Nations aegis, intended to provide possibilities for a breakthrough in the application of the technical achievements of present times to the problems of the economically less-developed countries. It is sincerely to be hoped that, in the interest of international cooperation and the acceleration of the economic progress of those countries, this proposal will meet with the approval of the General Assembly.

So far, the economic and technical activities of the United Nations have been less influenced by the conflict between different concepts of the role of the Organization than its activities in other fields. However, it is impossible to isolate the economic and technical problems from the general question discussed in this introduction. While receiving countries should have full freedom to take assistance from whatever source they find appropriate, they should not be barred, if they so wish, from getting all the assistance they need through United Nations channels or under United Nations aegis. The Organization is far from being able to meet all such demands, as donor nations continue to show a strong preference for bilateral approaches on a national or group basis. Again, the problem arises of the basic concept of the United Nations. With the conference approach to the work of the Organization a choice is made also in favour of bilateral assistance, while the alternative approach opens the door to a development under which international assistance, in implementation of the principle of equal economic

opportunities for all, would be channelled through the Organization or its related agencies to all the extent that this is desired by the recipient countries and is within the capacity of the Organization.

Basic to the United Nations approach to economic and technical assistance is the principle, under all circumstances, that, although the Organization has to follow its own rules and maintain its own independence, its services are exclusively designed to meet the wishes of the recipient government, without the possibility of any ulterior motives and free from the risk of any possible influence on the national or international policies of that government. Whatever development the executive activities of the Organization may show in the field, there should never be any suspicion that the world community would wish or, indeed, could ever wish to maintain for itself, through the United Nations, a position of power or control in a member country. Were political groups in a country really to believe in such a risk, the explanation would seem to be that, as had indeed happened in the case of governments of Member countries with long established independence, they may find it difficult to accept the judgement of the majority of the nations of the world as to what in a specific situation is necessary in order to safeguard international peace and security, when such a judgement appears to be in conflict with the immediate aims of the group. With growing respect for the decisions of the Organization and growing understanding of its principles, the risks for such misinterpretations should be eliminated.

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This introduction has limited itself to general observations on questions of principle, leaving all problems of detail to the report itself. This has seemed appropriate in view of the fact that the Organization has now reached a stage in its development where Member nations may find it timely to clarify their views on the direction in which they would like to see the future work of the Organization develop.

DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD  
Secretary-General

August 17, 1961

## UPPSALA UNIVERSITY

Uppsala University, founded in 1477, is the oldest and best-known university in Scandinavia. Famous scholars such as Rudbeck, Celsius and Linnaeus were professors at the university and from Uppsala the disciples of Linnaeus spread throughout the world. Seven Nobel Prize laureates have been professors at the university, among them Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, who was also the University's Pro-Chancellor and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930.

In the same year Dag Hammarskjöld completed his studies at Uppsala with a bachelor's degree in Law. He had begun his studies in 1923, received a BA in Romance Languages, Philosophy and Economics in 1925 and took a further post-graduate degree in Economics early in 1928.

In 1981, the Swedish Parliament established a Dag Hammarskjöld Chair of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University. The university's international studies library is also named after Dag Hammarskjöld.

## DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD FOUNDATION

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation was established in 1962 in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The purpose of the Foundation is to organise seminars, workshops and consultations on social, political, cultural and environmental issues facing the Third World and to publish and disseminate the results. The Foundation is an operating and not a grant-making body which carries out its work programme under its own auspices.

Over the years, the Foundation has organised about 170 seminars and workshops and produced over 120 publications of material arising from these events, among them the biannual journal *Development Dialogue*.

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