

**UNITED**



**NATIONS**

**INTRODUCTION**  
**TO THE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT OF**  
**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
**ON THE**  
**WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION**  
**16 June 1959-15 June 1960**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**OFFICIAL RECORDS : FIFTEENTH SESSION**  
**SUPPLEMENT No. IA (A/4390/Add.1)**



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*New York, 1960*

### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

# Introduction

## I

On 1 January 1960 the former Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration became independent. For the first time a territory previously under United Nations trusteeship became an independent State by itself, thus giving full effect to the objective stated in Article 76 b of the Charter that the United Nations shall "promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence . . .".

The event which thus marked the first day of 1960 has been followed by the accession to independence by many more African States, among them two additional Trust Territories, the Togolese Republic and the Republic of Somalia. By the time the General Assembly meets, fourteen African States will have been recommended by the Security Council for admission as new Members of the United Nations. It can confidently be expected that the Federation of Nigeria will apply for membership soon after the opening of the General Assembly; the admission of all these new States would bring the number of African States Members of the United Nations from ten at the end of 1959 to twenty-five at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly.

Another new Member has also been recommended for admission; I have in mind Cyprus, the independence of which has brought to an end a long-standing conflict considered at several sessions of the General Assembly.

It is not only the development into independence and into membership in the United Nations of a great number of African States which, for the Organization, characterizes the year 1960, so symbolically inaugurated by the independence of an African Trust Territory. The developments in the Republic of the Congo have engaged the United Nations in the greatest single task which it has had to handle by its own means and on its own conditions.

In these circumstances it may be appropriate for this Introduction to the Annual Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly to give attention, in the first place, to the problem of Africa and its importance for the international community.

Historically, Africa is not a unit. While North Africa and parts of East and West Africa have significant traditional links to the Mediterranean, to Islam or even to Southern Asia, West, East and Central Africa south of the Sahara have received a significant impact from different European colonial administrations, varying in length and intensity, linking them, however tenuously, to institutions of a few European countries. The southern part of the continent has a development of its own, which finds but few parallels in the rest of Africa.

Not only have these diverse influences in Africa's past relations with the outside world led to divisions on

the continent, but the manner and form in which colonial rule has been exercised have tended to accentuate these divisions. There are great differences between the evolution in areas formerly under British control and those formerly under French control, and there are even greater differences between these areas and the territories which were administered by Belgium. This applies to language, to certain traditions established, to legal ideas transmitted, and particularly to the ways in which political development for these territories was conceived and advanced.

The differences thus superimposed by recent history are reinforced by underlying diversities of race and national history. In these respects, Africa is much less homogeneous than South or South-East Asia, not to speak of Europe or Latin America. There are not only basic differences between the Arabs and Berbers living in the northern part of the continent and Africans south of the Sahara, but among the latter the impact of the environment, and of the great distances and difficulties of communication, has tended to create populations with very distinct differences in attitude and approach which are deeper and wider than tribal differences existing in other parts of the continent.

Finally, in Africa the first beginnings can now be seen of those conflicts between ideologies and interests which split the world. Africa is still, in comparison with other areas, a virgin territory which many have found reason to believe can or should be won for their aims and interests.

It is in the face of all this that the United Nations has, in the great task which it is facing in the Congo, appealed to "African solidarity within the framework of the United Nations". As the developments have shown, this is not a mere phrase; it applies to something which has become a reality. It is my firm conviction that the African States cannot render themselves and their peoples a greater service than to foster this solidarity. Likewise, I am convinced that the United Nations cannot render its new African Member States and the whole community of nations in Africa a greater service than to assist them, within the framework of their own efforts, to mould their new national and regional life, now that they enter the community of nations, in ways that will give Africa its rightful place on the international scene.

It is for the African States themselves to define the elements which establish the basis for African solidarity. It is also for them to find and define the aims which this regional community should pursue. But, also, for one not belonging to the region, it is possible, in the light of experiences, especially as they have evolved during the Congo crisis, to give some general indications.

There are negative elements in the picture, only too natural in the light of history. I have in mind the strong

anti-colonialism which has created a marked resistance against any suspected attempt to interfere or to impose from outside a will foreign to the will of the peoples. There are, of course, also elements of racism, just as understandable in the light of experience, which, however, are strongly rejected by forward-looking, responsible leaders. It is a mistake to see in any of these reactions a hostility in principle against peoples of other races or regions. Expressed in positive terms, as it should be, the attitude is one of willingness to co-operate with the rest of the world and one of eagerness to integrate into the rest of the world, combined, however, with a firm rejection of any attempts by others to turn the efforts of the African States to achieve this co-operation and integration into subjection, be it political, economic or ideological.

Reactions from the outside have been mixed. There are those who try to maintain what history has already judged. There are those who try to put in place of the past new and more subtle forms of predominance and influence. There are, on the other hand, also those for whom independence is an end in itself, irrespective of whether or not, in the form in which it can be offered, it serves the best interest of the people. There are, finally, those who, using these various reactions and counter-reactions, try to manipulate them for their own ends.

The attitude of the United Nations in this situation seems to me to be clear; it follows from the aims of the Charter. The Organization must further and support policies aiming at independence, not only in the constitutional sense but in every sense of the word, protecting the possibilities of the African peoples to choose their own way without undue influences being exercised and without attempts to abuse the situation. This must be true in all fields—the political, the economic, as well as the ideological—if independence is to have a real meaning. Working for these purposes, the United Nations can build on the confidence of the best and most responsible elements of all the countries of the continent. As a universal organization neutral in the big Power struggles over ideology and influence in the world, subordinated to the common will of the Member Governments and free from any aspirations of its own to power and influence over any group or nation, the United Nations can render service which can be received without suspicion and which can be absorbed without influencing the free choice of the peoples.

These possibilities of the United Nations create a corresponding responsibility. If the Organization is willing and able to face its duties, it will have given the new nations of Africa the framework of which they are in need during the first and sensitive years of independence. It will also be helping the African world, in solidarity, to determine its own political personality in the setting of universality as represented by the United Nations. If it faces these tasks and succeeds in them, it will make a vitally necessary contribution to international peace and to a more stable world.

In spite of all the divisions mentioned, African solidarity is a fact. Its growth is something that rightly should be hailed by other regions and by all nations, whatever the legacy of past relationships and whatever immediate political aims may seem to be countered by the growth of such solidarity.

The African States have realized that to grow into independence means to grow into interdependence. But to grow into interdependence means also to assume in-

ternational responsibility and such international responsibility must be based on national responsibility. The contribution made from independent Member States in Africa to the Congo operation has shown that African solidarity within the framework of the United Nations can build on a strong sense of national responsibility, radiating into the international sphere and creating the interdependence in which independence can yield its most rewarding results.

## II

The African developments are putting the United Nations to a test both as regards the functions of its parliamentary institutions and as regards the efficiency and strength of its executive capacity.

The considerable increase in the membership of the United Nations stemming from a region with short independent experience in international politics has led to doubts regarding the possibility of the General Assembly and its committees to work expeditiously and in a way which truly reflects considered world opinion. In this context the question of the voting system has again been raised.

In previous reports to the General Assembly I have touched on this problem, indicating as my conviction that there is no practical alternative in keeping with the basic tenets of the Charter to the present system of equal votes for all sovereign Member States. Naturally it may be said that the irrationality of such a system is demonstrated when a new voting balance can be achieved through a sudden expansion of the number of Members by some 20 per cent. However, this fails to take into account realities to which reference has likewise been made in previous reports.

The General Assembly is a body which reflects in its decisions on major questions the results of long and careful negotiations and consideration. During this process, common lines are elaborated and compromises reached which give to the decisions the character of a confirmation of a negotiated approach rather than of a solution achieved through the mechanics of voting. Furthermore, the background of the decisions of the General Assembly, which, of course, anyway have the character of recommendations, should be analysed in order to arrive at a true evaluation of their significance. A voting victory or a voting defeat may be of short-lived significance. What is regarded as responsible world opinion as reflected in the voting and in the debates is in many respects more important than any formally registered result.

There is in the views expressed in favour of weighted voting an implied lack of confidence in the seriousness and responsibility with which newly independent States are likely to take their stands. Such a lack of confidence is not warranted by the history of the United Nations and must be rejected as contrary to facts. Neither size, nor wealth, nor age is historically to be regarded as a guarantee for the quality of the international policy pursued by any nation.

It is my conviction that the addition of a great number of new Member States will widen the perspectives, enrich the debate and bring the United Nations closer to present-day realities. I also believe that this development will exercise a sound influence in the direction of

a democratization of proceedings by lessening the influence of firm groupings with firm engagements.

However, the widened membership does create certain practical problems. It may tend to lengthen debates, and it may make the General Assembly proceedings seem too cumbersome in cases where speed and efficiency are of the essence. For that reason, the development directs attention again to the possibilities for improving the methods applied in the parliamentary institutions of the Organization. Thus, I feel that Member Nations may wish to consider a greater role for the General Committee, so that it can assume a wider responsibility for the conduct of the work of the General Assembly and eventually ease the burden of the Assembly and its substantive committees.

If and when the question of Charter revision comes up for consideration, the evolution of the General Assembly also is likely to add weight to the question of the role, composition and procedures of the Security Council.

During the Suez and Hungary crises, a development took place through which increased responsibilities were temporarily transferred from the Security Council to the General Assembly. Since it is difficult for the General Assembly to act expeditiously if it is required to engage in detailed consideration of complicated legal and technical problems, the Assembly found that the most adequate way to meet the challenges which it had to face was to entrust the Secretary-General with wide executive tasks on the basis of mandates of a general nature.

Especially in the Suez crisis, when all the executive work was entrusted to the Secretary-General, this put the Secretariat to a severe test. However, it proved possible, in close interplay between the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, assisted by the Advisory Committee appointed by the General Assembly, to work smoothly and swiftly towards a speedy achievement of the established aims. The value and possibilities of the Secretariat as an executive organ were thus proved, a fact which has in significant ways influenced later developments.

Without going into detail, I wish to recall that in the Lebanon crisis the General Assembly came into the picture only at a very late stage, while executive action in the earlier phases of the crisis was guided by the Security Council, which for the purpose availed itself of the services of the Secretary-General. Likewise, the first part of the Laos crisis was entirely in the hands of the Security Council.

This year has seen a further return of the Security Council to its central role as the organ of the United Nations which carries primary responsibility for peace and security. Thus, the question of South Africa and especially the question of the Congo have been major tasks with which the Council has been exclusively seized. The reason for this return to the Security Council from the General Assembly is, naturally, that both these questions have been of a nature which has to a degree placed them outside the conflicts of today between the main power blocs. The shift of the emphasis back from the General Assembly to the Security Council has, however, not led to a change of working methods, as the Council, following the recent procedures of the Assembly, has used the services of the Secretariat and the Secretary-General as its main executive agent.

The Congo crisis has put the Secretariat under the heaviest strain which it has ever had to face. The organization of a sizable military force under very difficult geographical and physical conditions, the creation of the necessary administrative framework for the military operation, and the development of a far-reaching civilian programme to meet the most urgent needs of the country's economy have proved possible only thanks to the unstinting willingness of all Secretariat members to assume added burdens and the availability of a great number of people of a sufficiently general background to take up new assignments, sometimes far beyond and far different from their normal professional work. I wish on this point to pay a tribute to all those members of the Secretariat who have made the Congo operation possible.

The activities entrusted to the Secretariat by the Security Council in the case of the Congo have been widespread and have required an unusual combination of elements which normally would have required a much bigger and more specialized machinery than the one of which the United Nations disposes. The interplay between parliamentary operations in the United Nations, political action, diplomatic negotiation, military operations and administrative measures has been subtle and exacting. To the extent that it may be said to have worked and to have led to the desired results, it bears witness of a flexibility in the organization of the work of the United Nations which is encouraging for the future.

Naturally, however, the experiences have demonstrated also weaknesses in the organization of the Secretariat. It does not dispose of a sufficient number of highly qualified senior officials for all the tasks that now have to be met—in spite of the feeling sometimes voiced that the Organization is "top-heavy". There is, generally speaking, within the Secretariat not enough of a diplomatic tradition or staff with training in political and diplomatic field activities to meet the needs which have developed over the years. And it is, finally, a considerable weakness that the Secretariat has not in its ranks a highly qualified military expertise which is able, on a current basis, to maintain a state of preparedness for the kind of situation which the Organization has suddenly had to face. It is, of course, not my intention that in these various respects the Secretariat should be normally organized so as to be able to meet without difficulty or added strain a crisis of the Congo type. What I have in mind is only that it is desirable to have within the Secretariat a nucleus which can be switched over to the present type of task with full knowledge of the requirements and proper preparation, while leaving the normal work of the Organization intact because of the availability of sufficient second-line reserves.

I have mentioned the need for some strengthening of the Secretariat on the military side. This, in the light of recent experience, would be my reply, as regards actions by the United Nations, to those who have found in the Congo developments new reasons for the organization of a standing United Nations force. As I have already clarified my views on this problem in earlier reports to the General Assembly, I have no reason to go into the matter in any detail here. It should, however, be stressed that the Congo experience has strengthened my conviction that the organization of a standing United Nations force would represent an unnecessary and impractical measure, especially in view of the fact that every new situation and crisis which the Organization

will have to face is likely to present new problems as to the best adjustment of the composition of a force, its equipment, its training and its organization.

It is an entirely different matter if Governments, in a position and willing to do so, would maintain a state of preparedness so as to be able to meet possible demands from the United Nations. And it is also an entirely different matter, for the Organization itself, to have a state of preparedness with considerable flexibility and in the hands of a qualified staff which quickly and smoothly can adjust their plans to new situations and assist the Secretary-General in the crucially important first stages of the execution of a decision by the main organs to set up a United Nations force, whatever its type or task.

The value of such preparedness can be seen from the fact that the organization of the United Nations Force in the Congo was considerably facilitated by the fact that it was possible for the Secretary-General to draw on the experience of the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza and on the conclusions regarding various questions of principle and law which had been reached on the basis of that experience. The Congo operation being far more complicated and far bigger than the Gaza operation, it is likely that it will lead to a new series of valuable experiences which should be fully utilized by the United Nations, by appropriate informal planning within the administration.

### III

On various points the preceding observations have touched upon the ideological conflicts and the conflicts of power which divide our world of today.

There is no reason to elaborate here the way in which these major conflicts have influenced proceedings within the United Nations and even the constitutional pattern which has developed in practice. One word may, however, be said about the possibilities of substantive action by the United Nations in a split world.

Fundamental though the differences splitting our world are, the areas which are not committed in the major conflicts are still considerable. Whether the countries concerned call themselves non-committed, neutral, neutralist or something else, they have all found it not to be in harmony with their role and interests in world politics to tie their policies, in a general sense, to any one of the blocs or to any specific line of action supported by one of the sides in the major conflict. The reasons for such attitudes vary. That, however, is less important in this special context than the fact that conflicts arising within the non-committed areas offer opportunities for solutions which avoid an aggravation of big Power differences and can remain uninfluenced by them. There is thus a field within which international conflicts may be faced and solved with such harmony between the power blocs as was anticipated as a condition for Security Council action in San Francisco. Agreement may be achieved because of a mutual interest among the big Powers to avoid having a regional or local conflict drawn into the sphere of bloc politics.

With its constitution and structure, it is extremely difficult for the United Nations to exercise an influence on problems which are clearly and definitely within the

orbit of present day conflicts between power blocs. If a specific conflict is within that orbit, it can be assumed that the Security Council is rendered inactive, and it may be feared that even positions taken by the General Assembly would follow lines strongly influenced by considerations only indirectly related to the concrete difficulty under consideration. Whatever the attitude of the General Assembly and the Security Council, it is in such cases also practically impossible for the Secretary-General to operate effectively with the means put at his disposal, short of risking seriously to impair the usefulness of his office for the Organization in all the other cases for which the services of the United Nations Secretariat are needed.

This clearly defines the main field of useful activity of the United Nations in its efforts to prevent conflicts or to solve conflicts. Those efforts must aim at keeping newly arising conflicts outside the sphere of bloc differences. Further, in the case of conflicts on the margin of, or inside, the sphere of bloc differences, the United Nations should seek to bring such conflicts out of this sphere through solutions aiming, in the first instance, at their strict localization. In doing so, the Organization and its agents have to lay down a policy line, but this will then not be for one party against another, but for the general purpose of avoiding an extension or achieving a reduction of the area into which the bloc conflicts penetrate.

Experience indicates that the preventive diplomacy, to which the efforts of the United Nations must thus to a large extent be directed, is of special significance in cases where the original conflict may be said either to be the result of, or to imply risks for, the creation of a power vacuum between the main blocs. Preventive action in such cases must in the first place aim at filling the vacuum so that it will not provoke action from any of the major parties, the initiative for which might be taken for preventive purposes but might in turn lead to counter-action from the other side. The ways in which a vacuum can be filled by the United Nations so as to forestall such initiatives differ from case to case, but they have this in common: temporarily, and pending the filling of a vacuum by normal means, the United Nations enters the picture on the basis of its non-commitment to any power bloc, so as to provide to the extent possible a guarantee in relation to all parties against initiatives from others.

The special need and the special possibilities for what I here call preventive United Nations diplomacy have been demonstrated in several recent cases, such as Suez and Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan, Laos and the Congo.

A study of the records of the conflicts to which I have just referred shows how it has been possible to use the means and methods of the United Nations for the purposes I have indicated. In all cases, whatever the immediate reason for the United Nations initiative, the Organization has moved so as to forestall developments which might draw the specific conflict, openly or actively, into the sphere of power bloc differences. It has done so by introducing itself into the picture, sometimes with very modest means, sometimes in strength, so as to eliminate a political, economic and social, or military vacuum.

The view expressed here as to the special possibilities and responsibilities of the Organization in situations of a vacuum has reached an unusually clear expression in the case of the Congo. There, the main argument pre-



sented for United Nations intervention was the breakdown of law and order, the rejection of the attempt to maintain order by foreign troops, and the introduction of the United Nations Force so as to create the basis for the withdrawal of the foreign troops and for the forestalling of initiatives to introduce any other foreign troops into the territory with the obvious risks for widening international conflict which would ensue.

Whether the Congo operation is characterized as a case of preventive diplomacy, or as a move in order to fill a vacuum and to forestall the international risks created by the development of such a vacuum, or as a policy aimed at the localization of a conflict with potentially wide international repercussions, is not essential. Whatever the description, the political reality remains. It is a policy which is justified by the wish of the international community to avoid this important area being split by bloc conflicts. It is a policy rendered possible by the fact that both blocs have an interest in avoiding such an extension of the area of conflict because of the threatening consequences, were the localization of the conflict to fail.

Those who look with impatience at present day efforts by the United Nations to resolve major international problems are inclined to neglect, or to misread, the significance of the efforts which can be made by the United Nations in the field of practical politics in order to guide the international community in a direction of growing stability. They see the incapacity of the United Nations to resolve the major bloc conflicts as an argument against the very form of international co-operation which the Organization represents. In doing so, they forget what the Organization has achieved and can achieve, through its activities regarding conflicts which are initially only on the margin of, or outside, the bloc conflicts, but which, unless solved or localized, might widen the bloc conflicts and seriously aggravate them. Thus the Organization in fact also exercises a most important, though indirect, influence on the conflicts between the power blocs by preventing the widening of the geographical and political area covered by these conflicts and by providing for solutions whenever the interests of all parties in a localization of conflict can be mobilized in favour of its efforts.

The Organization in this way also makes a significant contribution in the direction of an ultimate solution of the differences between the power blocs, as it is obvious that it is a condition for an improvement in the situation that the area to which those differences apply, as a minimum requirement, is not permitted to expand and, so far as possible, is reduced.

It is with this background that the initiative for United Nations intervention in the Congo conflict was taken under Article 99 of the Charter, for the first time applied fully, according to its letter and in the spirit in which it must have been drafted. It is also in this light that one has to view the fact that not only the first but also the subsequent decisions in the Security Council regarding the Congo have been taken by votes in which the power bloc conflicts have not been reflected.

These observations are of special interest when we turn to the consideration of questions regarding which the power bloc interests openly clash. I have in mind especially disarmament. In general terms, it is not surprising that, in the case of problems so deeply related to the security of many nations and to the predominant powers within the different blocs, negotiations have presented extraordinary difficulties. On the other hand, it

is also evident that there is a latitude within which a shared interest in avoiding an aggravation of the situation overrides the specific security interests of any one party and within which, for that reason, agreement may be possible.

*De facto*, we have seen such an agreement developing in the field of nuclear tests. I believe that there are also other questions within the field of disarmament regarding which success is possible for new efforts to reach agreement, on at least so much of a common *de facto* policy as is indicated by the mutual interest to avoid a widening of the substantive basis for the present day race towards a world crisis. Approached in this way, disarmament seems to offer important possibilities, still incompletely explored, of a gradual reduction of the area in which clashing security interests so far have rendered formal agreement impossible.

There is no contradiction between this application to the disarmament problem of the philosophy and practices successfully tried by the United Nations in specific conflicts and the view that there can be no solution to the disarmament problem short of the acceptance of total disarmament under satisfactory control by both sides. The pragmatic approach and the, so to say, global one are not at variance, for it is obvious that efforts to avoid a widening of the field of conflict and to reduce the area in which concrete agreement for the moment is impossible should at all events be integrated into a wider, more far-reaching plan under which the security interests of the parties can be balanced out against each other in ways that will make it possible for the parties to reach the ideal target of total disarmament.

It is certainly not productive to approach the disarmament problem solely on a pragmatic basis, without integration of the steps taken into a plan ultimately aiming at full disarmament. Likewise, however, it seems unrealistic to approach the total problem oblivious of the fact that all political experience and all previous negotiation show that the road to progress lies in the direction of efforts to contain and reduce the area of disagreement by mobilizing such common interests as may exist and as may override other and special interests tending in the opposite direction.

The Members of the General Assembly will excuse me for presenting these general observations on a problem to which the Assembly has devoted so much attention. I have done so only because it seems to me that the experiences from other political fields in which the United Nations has acted with success have a bearing also on a field like this one where, so far, the Organization has failed to achieve results.

#### IV

The responsibilities and possibilities of the Organization in the exercise of preventive diplomacy apply also to the economic sphere. Far less dramatic in their impact as the economic activities must be, they are of decisive long-term significance for the welfare of the international community. In the end, the United Nations is likely to be judged not so much by the criterion of how successfully it has overcome this or that crisis as by the significance of its total contribution towards building the kind of world community in which such crises will no longer be inevitable.

This aim, naturally, cannot be reached overnight, nor can it be considerably furthered by any institutional or constitutional reforms of the United Nations. It cannot even be achieved by the political resolution of the conflicts which today divide the major Powers. Essential though such a political resolution would be, it would not by itself ensure stability and peace in the face of the dangerous economic and social vacuum created and maintained by the enormous gap which separates countries at different stages of development.

In the enduring task of bridging the gulf between countries, all Member nations, whether developed or under-developed, whether in the East or the West, have a common interest. This common interest is recognized by everyone. It is clearly stated in the Charter of the United Nations, in which countries pledge themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization to promote "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development". It is reflected in all of the debates of the Economic and Social Council as well as of the General Assembly on the relevant items. It has borne fruit in a host of activities within the United Nations and its sister institutions. And yet, in considering the rate of progress that has been made in relation to the task that remains to be achieved, it is difficult to escape a feeling of disappointment.

It is true that the mere recognition of the community of interest in the economic development of under-developed countries itself represents a major step forward. And the expressions of common interest in economic development are no lip service. The achievements of the United Nations family in the economic and social field, as generously supported by Member Governments, demonstrates their seriousness. However, it must, in the context of a newly emerging Africa, be registered, in a spirit of candid realism, that the rate of achievement is not at all commensurate with the needs.

The coincidence of interest in the economic field stems from the economic interdependence of the world community. The degree of interdependence has been increasing rapidly, partly as the inevitable outcome of an accelerating rate of advance in science and technology, partly owing to the emergence of the countries of the continents of Asia and of Africa to independence and full participation in the affairs of the world at large, but, to a significant degree, also as a result of economic forces making for a growing integration of the world community.

For the first time in history, the concept of a world economy has come to take on a significant meaning not only for the student of economics but also for the statesman and the layman.

Unfortunately, this growing interdependence has recently been reflected much less in efforts and activities within the United Nations than outside it. The United Nations can welcome regional arrangements among neighbouring or like-minded countries; as long as such arrangements are so designed as to reinforce rather than to supplant the common effort towards establishing conditions of economic and social progress, they have an important role to play. A real danger arises, however, when such regional arrangements are so envisaged as to make them fall within the sphere of bloc conflict. In that case, efforts which properly should embody and be supported by a common interest may instead lead to a weakening of the uniting force of that

interest and aggravate the split. This, obviously, is the reverse of the major purpose and function of the United Nations in its efforts to provide for a growing measure of political stability.

Just as it is clearly within the interests of the entire world community to prevent the widening of the area of conflict in cases of political crises, so it must be in the interests of all constantly to seek to widen rather than to restrict the area of coincidence of economic interest within the United Nations. Unless this is done, the entire world, and not just one or the other side, is bound to lose. As I noted in my statement to the Economic and Social Council at its thirtieth session, "the United Nations Organization remains the only universal agency in which countries with widely differing political institutions and at different stages of economic development may exchange views, share their problems and experiences, probe each other's reactions to policies of mutual interest, and initiate collective action".

It was this recognition of the growing area of coincidence of economic interest which was at the basis of my proposal and of the Council's decision that it hold its thirtieth session at the Ministerial level in order to undertake, at the beginning of a new decade, a broad examination of the direction to be taken by the United Nations to meet the challenge of both national and collective responsibility for economic growth and development.

At its thirteenth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1316 (XIII) calling upon Member States to undertake a review of accomplishments to date and to chart their future courses of co-operative action for the purpose of giving further impetus to the economic development of the less developed countries. At the national level also, many countries, both developed and under-developed, have found it useful to establish long-term plans for economic growth as guide-lines for economic policy, and others have established national commissions on economic and social goals and policies.

In the light of these events, and in the light of the changes that have taken place in the national economic and political landscape since the Charter was first signed, it was my belief that the Economic and Social Council might usefully explore the question of the desirability and feasibility of some United Nations undertaking to chart the future course of co-operative action to implement the economic and social objectives of the Charter.

A common stand has not yet been reached on the possibility or advisability of harmonizing and co-ordinating national economic policies. Even the idea of regular and systematic consultation with a view to achieving fuller knowledge of the facts and the issues is new. In view of the very modest and very recent progress in harmonization of national economic policies, even within regional groupings of like-minded countries, it is not surprising that no consensus on the possibility or desirability of harmonizing or co-ordinating national economic policies within the framework of the United Nations should as yet exist.

And yet, though the objective is not within immediate reach, and though I do not wish to underestimate the obstacles, the importance of a harmonization of national economic development policies within the United Nations must be stressed. Even though the session at the Ministerial level did not produce the results

that some may have hoped, it did represent a beginning. It did lead to a useful exchange of views. It did provide an opportunity for contacts between Ministers in charge of economic questions, some of whom have only limited alternative possibilities of making such direct contacts. It did lead to at least one important step looking towards better co-ordination in the future of policies of economic projections. Thus, this meeting, with its achievements—and its shortcomings—may be regarded as opening the door to new efforts to explore and utilize for common ends the wide area of common economic interests, at the same time as it demonstrates the difficulties we encounter and the early stage of evolution at which we still find ourselves.

Until now, the economic analyses undertaken by the Secretariat and consequently the debates within the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly have been concerned essentially with past and present trends. Now, with the programme of work in economic projections initiated by the Council, we may hope that, as we succeed in ascertaining the constituent elements of policies of economic growth, the Organization will be able to make an important contribution towards widening the bounds of the area of coincidence of interest within the United Nations, thus helping to harmonize decisions of Governments in the field of national policy and in the promotion of rapid and stable economic development for all.

## V

In the Introduction to my Report to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session I discussed the role of the United Nations. In that context I said:

“The work of today within and for the United Nations is a work through which the basis may be laid for increasingly satisfactory forms of international co-operation and for a future international system of law and order, for which the world is not yet ripe.”

I continued:

“It has so often been said that the world of today is one which requires organized international co-operation on a basis of universality that one repeats it with hesitation. However, there are reasons to do so. It still seems sometimes to be forgotten that—whatever views may be held about the United Nations as an institution—the principle of organized international co-operation on a basis of universality which is at present reflected in this Organization is one which has emerged from bitter experiences and should now be considered as firmly established.”

In the previous parts of this Introduction I have tried to outline my views on some specific problems arising for the Organization at the present juncture, which may well, in the perspective of history, come to be regarded as a turning point. Especially, I have wished to draw the attention of the Members to the scope for possible diplomatic and political action by the Organization in a split world and to the desirability of the widening of that scope by patient and persistent action, using as the lever the community of interests which is created by the desire of everybody to limit the area of conflict, to reduce the risk of conflicts and to create a basis for joint action for solution, or at least localization, of conflicts.

Recent developments—reflected in a revolutionary technical evolution of arms for destruction, in the entry of new major regions of the world in full strength into international politics and in new and world-wide economic interdependence—have given to the Organization, and what it represents as an instrument in the hands of Member Governments, greatly increased responsibilities, but also increased usefulness.

The Organization and its activities can be viewed on different levels. It provides Member Governments with a highly developed, continuously operating conference and negotiation machinery. However, to a growing extent it has provided them also with an effective executive organ for joint action. In this latter respect, the evolution has taken a course somewhat different from the one envisaged in San Francisco, but, as recent developments have shown, the departure as to methods is not considerable and the conformity as to aims is complete. Finally, the Organization is also the embodiment of an ideal and the symbol of an approach to international life which recognizes the common interest of all in the rejection of the use of force, in any form, as a means for settling international disputes and in adherence to the principles of law, justice, and human rights.

The Organization has often in the past been faced, and is likely in its continued work again and again to be faced, with situations in which a compromise with these last-mentioned principles might seem to facilitate the achievement of results in negotiations or to promise an easier success for the Organization in its executive efforts to resolve a problem. It is for the Members themselves to judge to what extent the Organization, in particular cases, has accepted such compromises and to what extent it has remained faithful to the principles and ideals which it embodies.

It is my firm conviction that any result bought at the price of a compromise with the principles and ideals of the Organization, either by yielding to force, by disregard of justice, by neglect of common interests or by contempt for human rights, is bought at too high a price. That is so because a compromise with its principles and purposes weakens the Organization in a way representing a definite loss for the future that cannot be balanced by any immediate advantage achieved.

The United Nations has increasingly become the main platform—and the main protector of the interests—of those many nations who feel themselves strong as members of the international family but who are weak in isolation. Thus, an increasing number of nations have come to look to the United Nations for leadership and support in ways somewhat different from those natural in the light of traditional international diplomacy. They look to the Organization as a spokesman and as an agent for principles which give them strength in an international concert in which other voices can mobilize all the weight of armed force, wealth, an historical role and that influence which is the other side of a special responsibility for peace and security. Therefore, a weakening of the Organization, resulting from an attempt to achieve results at the cost of principles, is a loss not only for the future but also immediately in respect of the significance of the Organization for the vast majority of nations and in respect of their confidence in the Organization on which its strength in our present day world ultimately depends.

There are in the Charter elements of a thinking which, I believe, belongs to an earlier period in the

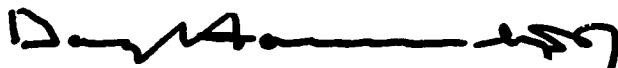
development of the world community. I have in mind especially the concept that the permanent members of the Security Council should not only, as is natural, be recognized as carrying special responsibility for peace and security, but that, further, these permanent members, working together, should represent a kind of "built-in" directing group for the world community as organized in the United Nations.

The fifteen years which have passed since the founding of the United Nations have witnessed a different development. In the first place, we have seen a split among the permanent members which, in fact, has created the major war risk of today and considerably hampered the development of the Organization. But, further, we have experienced a growth into independence of a majority of States of two great continents, with other interests, other traditions, and other concepts of international politics than those of the countries of Europe and the Americas. Who can deny that today the countries of Asia or the countries of Africa, acting in a common spirit, represent powerful elements in the international community, in their ways as important as any of the big Powers, although lacking in their military and economic potential?

The United Nations is an organic creation of the political situation facing our generation. At the same time, however, the international community has, so to say, come to political self-consciousness in the Organization and, therefore, can use it in a meaningful way in order to influence those very circumstances of which the Organization is a creation.

It is impossible for anyone to say where the international community is heading and how the United Nations will change in the further course of the evolution of international politics. But it can safely be said that international co-operation will become increasingly essential for the maintenance of peace, progress and international justice. It can also safely be said that if the United Nations firmly adheres to its principles and purposes, with flexibility and intelligent adjustment to needs as regards procedure, Members engaged in this co-operation will increasingly turn to the Organization for assistance. Therefore, they will find it increasingly necessary to maintain its strength as an instrument for the world community in their efforts to reduce those areas of major conflict where the Organization so far has been powerless, as well as in efforts to resolve problems, arising outside or on the margin of these areas, in a spirit reflecting the overriding common interest.

This concept of the role and of the future of the United Nations may go beyond the conventional thinking which sees in the Organization only, or mainly, a machinery for negotiation, but I am convinced of its realism and I am convinced also that the Organization and its Member nations would act rightly and wisely if they acted consistently with this concept in mind, even if temporarily it may seem to point out a road full of risks and of difficulties which they may doubt that the Organization is yet strong enough to overcome.



Dag HAMMARSKJÖLD  
*Secretary-General*

31 August 1960