

ACRONYMS

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Name in Full</i>
ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
CANZ	Canada, Australia, New Zealand
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEB	Chief Executives Board
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund, later Central Emergency Response Fund
CITO	Chief Information Technology Officer
CPR	Crisis Prevention and Recovery
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DAW	Division for Advancement of Women
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EPTA	Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance
ERM	Enterprise Risk Management
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning System
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
G4	Group of Four (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan)
G13	Group of Thirteen (Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom).
G77	Group of 77 & China
GA	General Assembly
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HLP	High-level Panel
HLCF	High-level Committee on Programme
HLCM	High-level Committee on Management
HRC	Human Rights Council
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
IAAS	Independent Audit Advisory Committee
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMIS	Integrated Management Information System
INTOSAI	International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions
IT	Information Technology
JCC	Joint Coordinating Committee of the G77 & China and NAM
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
L27	Global Leaders Forum
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NAM	Non-aligned Movement
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
OHRM	Office of Human Resources Management
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
OSAGI	Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women
P5	Permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, Russian Federation, United States, United Kingdom)
PGA	President of the General Assembly
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RBB	Results-Based Budgeting
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC	Resident Coordinator
S5	Small Five (Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore, Switzerland)
SEA	Investigation Task Force for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SDB	Sustainable Development Board
SG	Secretary-General
TCC	Troop contributing countries
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UNA-USA	United Nations Association of the United States of America
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WFP	World Food Programme
WFM	World Federalist Movement
WSOD	World Summit Outcome Document
WTO	World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

by Estelle Perry*

“We have not yet achieved the sweeping and fundamental reforms that I and many others believe is required. Sharp differences, some of them substantive and legitimate, have played their part in preventing that . . .”

-Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his address to
the World Summit on 15 September 2005

Much has changed since the creation of the United Nations system in 1945. Not only has the membership in the UN rapidly increased since then, but the tasks it undertakes and the crises it struggles to resolve peacefully have also multiplied. Over the years since its founding, many attempts have been made to modernize the system. While some improvements have been made, these have not met the needs posed by a world in constant flux.

Several events brought the reform effort front and center: First, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, determined to alleviate the suffering of those living in extreme poverty throughout the world, presented a comprehensive set of reform recommendations designed to bring this about to the High Level Millennium Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2000, which succeeded in putting the Millennium Development Goals and UN reform on the world’s agenda. Subsequently, despair for the very survival of the United Nations set in when the United States and a small number of coalition partners, against the Security Council’s wishes, invaded Iraq and the oil-for-food scandal hit the headlines. But by 2005 despair gave way to determination to strengthen the UN system as the world’s leaders recognized that more than ever a stronger international system was vitally needed if the UN was to remain relevant.

Consequently, in September 2005, after intensive debates between Member States, the largest group of world leaders ever assembled approved the principles contained in the 2005 *World Summit Outcome Document* (WSOD), which was then ratified by the General Assembly. But as so often happens, working out the details proved difficult. This publication reviews the debates that took place as delegates attempted to turn the principles they had previously adopted (and some they have since contended they never endorsed) into concrete reforms. The chapters in this publication cover some of the reform proposals that can be found in Section V of the WSOD under the heading “*Strengthening the United Nations.*” These include: reform of the Security Council, revitalization of the General Assembly, achieving System-wide Coherence, Secretariat and Management reform, and the establishment of the Human Rights Council (See Appendix I). The Center’s paper summarizes the positions put forth by various groups of Member States that coalesced around common positions, or spoke for pre-existing regional alliances on changes that have been made or are being considered in regard to these five areas.

The first chapter of this publication, written by Jonas von Freiesleben, the Center’s Senior Research Analyst, describes past and current efforts to reform the membership composition of the Security Council as well as its working methods. Under discussion for more than 15 years, reforming the Security Council has proven to be one of the most divisive of all reform proposals.

In chapter two, Lydia Swart, the Executive Director of the Center, explores attempts to revitalize the General Assembly. Many Member States contend that the debate on this issue, which has gone on

for over 16 years, is suffering from some of the same problems it is trying to resolve: repetitive debates, equally repetitive and often non-substantive resolutions, and the lack of mechanisms to track implementation of mandates. Tensions over the larger power struggle between the General Assembly and the Security Council also underlie this debate.

In chapter three, Jonas von Freiesleben looks at the efforts to improve the system-wide coherence of the operational activities of the UN to increase cooperation, coordination and efficiency across the UN System. Differing views, especially in regard to priorities and resource allocations, coupled with mistrust between blocs of States, however, have hampered progress.

In chapter four, Irene Martinetti, Director of Programs for the World Federation of United Nations Associations, reviews proposed Secretariat and management reforms encompassing such issues as accountability, results-based budgeting, effective oversight, internal controls, human resource management and the review of all mandates older than five years to determine if they are duplicative, have been fully or effectively implemented, or could be discontinued.

In the final chapter, Nana Yeboah, a Research Analyst at the Center, traces the reasons for the abolition of the Human Rights Commission. She goes on to compare the make-up, provisions, strengths and weaknesses of the recently established Human Rights Council compared to its predecessor and evaluates the Council's prospects for greater acceptance and success in the years ahead.

The current debates unveil a common thread running through many of the positions taken by different Member States and the blocs to which many belong, centering on the relative powers of the Security Council, General Assembly and Secretariat. Overcoming suspicions between the groups based on fears that they will lose rather than gain additional power if some of the reform proposals are approved has complicated efforts to reach agreement on many issues. After identifying the varying Member States' positions as well as the reasons behind them and noting whatever progress has been made, the authors analyze the prospects for reaching agreement on the issues under debate by the Fifth Committee and the working groups established by the General Assembly President as they continue to try to find workable compromises.

While the Center for UN Reform Education supports strengthening the UN System, it does not take positions on particular reform recommendations. The intent of the authors of the five chapters included in this paper is to convey the views and factual material they have garnered from interviews with key players and experts, observation and reviewing UN documents; any other views or perspectives they express are solely theirs and not the Center's. The main reason for this publication at this time is to give Non-Governmental Organizations affiliated or associated with the UN, as well as civil society in general, sufficient background information to understand, follow and - to the extent possible - participate in the General Assembly's reform debates during the current session. The Center encourages interested organizations to take part in the debates in order to bring new perspectives to the dialogue. If this publication also proves useful to delegates and UN officials, we consider that a welcome, added bonus.

This publication can be read on its own or interactively with the Center's website www.centerforunreform.org, which features updates, links to official documents, and additional information on the reform processes.

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