Deciding to Prevent Violent Conflict: Early Warning and Decision-making within the United Nations

Prepared for the International Studies Association Conference

Chicago 2007

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February 22, 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Forged through the fires of two world wars, the League of Nations was reborn in 1945 as the United Nations (UN). The preamble gave the new international organization a clear vision: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow (…)." Article 1 of the Charter requires the organization "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace." In sum, the spirit of prevention was pronounced at the very genesis of the UN. Still, some sixty years on the organization is struggling to fulfill the vision that brought it to life.

One of the first milestones for conflict prevention was The Agenda for Peace in 1992, which presented concrete recommendations to reform the UN into a more proactive body for preventing the escalation of violent conflict. In 2000, the Brahimi report encouraged additional reforms to prevent war. The UN Secretary-General's 2001 Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict outlined a clear agenda to instill a "culture of prevention" within the UN. In 2003, the General Assembly further called on the Secretary-General to "strengthen the capacity of the United Nations for early warning, collection of information and analysis."[i] Another important milestone is the 2004 report presented by UN Secretary-General's High Panel on Peace and Security, which recommended the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission to prevent countries under stress from sliding towards state collapse. In 2005, the Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) partnered with the UN Department for Political Affairs (DPA) to organize an international conference on civil society and conflict prevention. The progress report of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Armed Conflict was publicized in July 2006.

Yet fourteen years after the first milestone, the UN continues to struggle with this challenge although recent reform efforts continue to highlight the potential of the UN as a multilateral forum for prevention. The numerous proposals for reform demonstrate both the necessity and challenge that the UN faces in acting preventively. This paper asks whether the UN can systematically act preventively. To this end, we examine the UN's capacity to produce accurate early warning and the capacity of these early warnings to feed into decision-making structures that are expected to take preventive measures. We suggest that systematic early warning has had little success in the UN structure because it has never managed to navigate the UN's decision-making processes.

Can early warning systems be retuned to more closely sound out the politics of decision-making structures? Can such systems be geared towards the UN's early response structures? There are invariably two answers to this question: yes and no. In the case of the latter, early warning systems tend to translate what is substantially a political problem into technical studies driven by some hubris and coupled with the UN's lofty ideals which raise unrealistic expectations. These early warning systems are generally developed by academics largely removed from the decision-making processes of the UN. They myopically assume a UN run by technocrats. This may explain why "early warning systems of various colors and flavors have been proffered to decision makers for over twenty years […] yet their impact on the decision-making process has been somewhere between miniscule and nonexistent."[ii] Is the quest for more sophisticated UN early warning systems no more than quixotic academic reverie? There is no question that current early warning systems leave much to be desired in terms of basic methodological design but the purpose of this article is to argue that these systems can be rethought to foster greater

accountability and advocacy for early response. This important shift does require that we step out of our conventional mode of thinking about early warning.

This paper asks whether the configuration and functioning of bureaucratic decision-making structures can explain why early warning does not lead to early action. Is early and preventive action against the nature of how decisions are made in bureaucracies? Do the moral demands for action fall on deaf ears when unaccompanied by pressures that push decision-makers to make difficult but necessary decisions? Early warning inevitably calls on decision-makers to make choices about the allocation of limited resources. The decision-maker addresses a potential political problem such as armed conflict first and foremost as a technical or logistical problem. This necessarily distracts their attention from the political nature of the problem, which is more difficult to address. Can a financially strained, risk adverse bureaucracy even consider another approach? Is a systematic approach to preventing deadly conflict ever possible, or will we have to rely on the unclear, immeasurable bargaining process that describes most bureaucratic decision-making—bargaining that may have very serious consequence?

The paper is structured as follows: We first highlight the traditional arguments put forward to explain the warning-response gap. We suggest the problem is first and foremost structural. Next we identify the limitations of early warning and ask what types of decisions constitute early response. We review the development of formal early warning systems operationalized at the UN and their underlying methodologies. We then analyze the UN's formal decision-making structures and work "backwards" from decision to early warning. This approach provides more insights into the source of the warning-response gap. Next we draw on decision-making theories to reinforce our observations regarding the challenges that these structures face. Can early warning systems help to address these challenges? We suggest the answer is yes if early warning is retooled to foster greater accountability and advocacy for more effective and timely response.

Early Warning for What?

Disaster early warning systems exist to warn for tsunamis, hurricanes and floods for example. Likewise conflict early warning systems can be developed to help warn for civil war, state failure and inter-state conflict. "Few people would disagree with the concept of early warning: to obtain knowledge and, what is more, to use that knowledge to assist in the mitigation of conflict. In this sense, early warning is an irrefutable necessity."[iii] Conflict early warning thus lies at the heart of operational conflict prevention. Operational prevention seeks to contain or reverse the escalation of violent conflict by using the tools of preventive diplomacy, economic sanctions and/or incentives, and/or military force;[iv] early warning is said to be a prerequisite for operational prevention.[v] In contrast, structural prevention seeks to reduce "the risk of violent conflict in countries or regions by transforming social, economic, cultural, or political sources of conflict."[vi]

According to a contemporary definition, "early warning is the act of alerting a recognized authority (such as the UN Security Council) to a new (or renewed) threat to peace at a sufficiently early stage."[vii] A more general definition describes early warning as the proactive engagement in the early stages of a potential conflict or crisis, to prevent or at least mitigate violent and deadly conflict. "As in preventive medicine, the ultimate goal is not to create fewer clients (sick patients) but to work toward diminishing the need for curative approaches (such as relief for humanitarian emergencies)."[viii] We maintain that the success of early warning should not be measured by accurate warnings but rather by the prevention of armed conflict. Indeed, as

the sociologist Auguste Comte concluded over 200 years ago, "knowing to predict, predict to prevent."

The Early Warning-Response Gap

The warning-response gap typically lies on both sides of the equation. The early warning side, for instance, is often labeled as lacking credibility, while failure to respond is often associated with the lack of political will. In this section, we briefly highlight and evaluate the arguments put forward in the early warning literature. We suggest that the warning-response divide is in fact structural. This means that the conventional issues identified in the literature are largely symptoms rather than causes. We first address limitations on the early warning end and then on the response side. In the section following this one, we consider the UN's early warning systems in light of the arguments presented here.

Talk of early warning often causes concern to Member States. They fear that early warning systems can be used as instruments to collect intelligence. This argument, while repeated across the literature and within the UN is misplaced. Early warning systems are no more covert or less regulated than the public media. To be sure, 96 percent of all so-called "intelligence" is based on open sources, and open sources are abundantly available which means they can't possibly be labeled as intelligence since the information is available to the general public.[ix] Obviously, this means that early warning is wholly distinct from intelligence gathering. Only four percent of intelligence comes from covert sources of intelligence services and such information is certainly not shared within a multilateral forum such as the UN.[x] In fact there are several precedents that demonstrate that Member States no longer view early warning as intelligence gathering or encroaching on state sovereignty.[xi]

Other arguments for the warning-response gap on the early warning side of the equation include competing methodologies developed by academics. Such competition leads to overly quantitative and sophisticated systems that decision-makers hesitate to trust which has the unintended effect of fueling more sophisticated systems—academics respond to the hesitation by redoubling their efforts to develop an early warning system that will finally remove any doubt over accuracy and reliability. As early warning systems become more sophisticated, however, academics are often unaware of "the practical constraint that purely statistically based warning systems are unlikely to be accepted in the qualitative oriented policy community."[xii] Such sophisticated systems are "truly a proverbial 'black box' to decision-makers."[xiii] At the heart of this dilemma lies the "the very large and very real analytical gap that exists between academics and practitioners on early warning techniques and methodologies."[xiv]

Both scholars and practitioners often maintain that early warning is not the problem. The information is always there and simply not reacted to. Information, however, is not the same as analysis, and analysis does not automatically imply response. The exchange of information, let alone analysis, is a persistent problem at the UN where the communication fault lines run some thirty-eight floors down at the UN Secretariat building. This is in part due to the lack of effective knowledge management. "As is well known to most, many opportunities for early warning and the prevention of violent conflict are missed because of the UN's inability to effectively collate and analyze the information managed in different corners of the organization."[xv]

Turning to the early response side, political will is often cited as the main culprit responsible late (or no) response. This term, however, is often used as catchword—one that is more descriptive than analytical. Some scholars suggest that the "expression be banned from political discourse"

unless it is "subjected to analysis, and, for purposes of action, to pressures and mobilization.[xvi] To this end, we define political will as the willingness to use political clout to push for action. Lack of political will is symptomatic of numerous underlying pressures that are often personal, professional and political.

Lack of capacity is often blamed to explain lack of response. We maintain that such arguments partly reflect a lack of political will. Some argue that the best that an early warning system can do is provide "decision makers with information about where they may wish to allocate resources. It should not be expected to do more."[xvii] This gap is between early warning and organization of early response capacity—a political process. "Whereas the first gap might call for a simple 'adjustment of aspirations' toward a more 'realistic' level, the second one is more challenging as it aims at improving 'practice' toward aspirations."[xviii]

The allocation of resources determines in part whether an agency has the necessary capacity to respond. The gap between expectations and capacity is one that continues to plague the warning-response gap because it is political. "Conflict is an all too predictable result of these fundamental deficiencies."[xix] Knowing the specifics of what is possible in terms of preventive action can redress this gap. This serves to "better inform the framing of policy recommendations-recommendations that should be both user-friendly and directed toward mobilizing political commitment for rapid, comprehensive responses."[xx]

THE PROBLEM WITH EARLY WARNING

Do the gaps articulated above fully account for the persistent disconnect between warning and response? Are they symptoms rather than underlying causes? To be affective, an early warning system must be able to "provide the user and thus the early warning office a probability or confidence assessment of the alert; and, when generating an alert, needs to be able to 'say' something to the effect that 'When we have seen a situation like this in the past, 88% of the time a conflict has erupted within 12 months.'"[xxi] In fact, anything less is unlikely to compel a decision-maker to act. An early warning system must "gain the confidence of analysts as well as decision makers, and it must outperform them. To accomplish that, it must have a very high 'batting average' in identifying pre-conflict situations."[xxii] No early warning system within or outside the UN system provides this type of alert.

The crux is that social behavior is complex and "there is something about the complexity of human experience that suggests that a different kind of knowledge will also always be needed, the quality called by the ancient Greeks *metis*, or practical wisdom, the practitioner's knowledge."[xxiii] Early warning systems provide technical knowledge that can help inform, but not replace, practical knowledge. "To have significance operationally, analysis cannot simply be factual (e.g., monitoring availability of weapons or listing the key actors), but also has to address the issue of perception (e.g., perceived needs, values, symbols)."[xxiv]

Does the "technicalization" of practical knowledge affect early response? We submit that early warning systems run the risk of translating a political problem into a lower common "technical" denominator more easily addressed with the tools of structural development. Recall that operational prevention, as defined by the Carnegie Commission, seeks to contain or reverse the escalation of violent conflict by using the tools of preventive diplomacy, economic sanctions and/or incentives, and/or military force while structural prevention aims to reduce "the risk of

violent conflict in countries or regions by transforming social, economic, cultural, or political sources of conflict."[xxv] Early warning systems have traditionally been called on to support operational prevention where the actors involved include accomplished diplomats, individual Member States and the Security Council.

It is highly unlikely, however, that these actors draw on any formal UN early warning system when a political crisis develops into armed violence. Rather, these actors typically draw on their own professional network of contacts and on the information available to them from their own Ministries and allies, i.e., Member States. Furthermore, we contend that the UN's early warning systems do not provide the type of real-time analysis required to help guide operational prevention in the first place since these early warning systems tend to remove the politics from the more technical early warning analysis. This presents a disjunction between warning and response since all conflict prevention processes are in fact political.[xxvi] To be sure, "the framework for response is inherently political, and the task of advocacy for such response cannot be separated from the analytical tasks of warning."[xxvii]

Yet this separation is what drives the underlying structural predicament that characterizes the warning-response symptoms at the UN. Contrary to conventional belief, this gap "cannot be resolved by appeals to principles, analysis of causal relations, or the formation of partnerships. All prevention is political."[xxviii] Who the early warning analysis is intended for is therefore a critical question. While early warning systems are traditionally meant to support decision-making in operational prevention, the systems may be more appropriate for structural development.

Turning from theory to practice, we trace the development of early warning systems and decision-making structures within the UN and then consider any linkages that might exist between them. In the section that follows, we briefly review the UN's experience with early warning systems.

ATTEMPTS TO ADDRESS WARNING-RESPONSE GAP

How has the UN navigated the disconnect between early warning and timely action? In the next section we trace the origins of early warning at the UN and analyze the early warning systems developed since the end of the Cold War and the methodologies that inform them.

Early Warning Evolution

The UN's formal early warning systems have included the Office for the Research and Collection of Information (ORCI), the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS), OCHA's Early Warning Unit and the new Inter-Agency led Humanitarian Early Warning System Website (HEWSweb). The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate whether and how these systems contribute to more effective early warning and decision-making.

Enter the UN

The unanticipated events of the Yum Kippur war in 1973 and that of the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982 provoked a series of debates over the lack of early warning for armed conflict. The incident over the Falklands had taken the UN completely by surprise and it is said "no map of the islands

was available in the Secretariat when the invasion began."[xxix] This incident prompted the UN to consider (for the first time) a formal mechanism for preventive diplomacy.

As the Cold War thawed and Global Warming began to replace the headlines, early warning became more commonly associated with disaster early warning and humanitarian actions than with Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). At the same time, political scientists in leading academic institutions began modifying old Cold War models to understand the onset of civil wars and internal conflicts. This renewed activity and interest among academics in predicting the future spurred the field conflict early warning.

This impetus led to the establishment of the Office for the Research and Collection of Information (ORCI) in 1987.[xxx] The ensuing financial crisis that started in 1995 meant the new office had to be staffed from existing UN personnel in other departments and agencies. This "organizational reform movement" driven by budgetary concerns was a critical factor in the subsequent reorganization effort of the UN.[xxxi]

ORCI attempted to "develop an early warning system under the mandate to assess global trends and to prepare country, regional, sub-regional and issue-related profiles."[xxxii] ORCI was encouraged to establish links to the outside academic community to keep abreast of the latest research advances such as in early warning.[xxxiii] The system's global database consisted primarily of country profiles meant to inform the Secretary-General on potential conflicts that might endanger international peace and security. However, the database did not make use of economic indicators and the sizeable number of indicators already in the database "did not permit for comprehensive coverage, mainly because of the limited availability of data."[xxxiv] In addition, ORCI's mandate limited its staff to open and public sources of information and "there was no effective system of early action to respond to the early warning signals."[xxxv]

Exit ORCI

Although some attribute the breakdown of ORCI's early warning capacity to numerous factors including the "lack of systemic research, its role within the UN system and the high expectations of the system,"[xxxvi] others point to inter-personal conflicts within and between ORCI and the Secretary General's office.[xxxvii] UN professionals formerly with ORCI maintain that personal clashes and internal infighting explain why ORCI was unable to deliver. They describe a work environment in which ORCI staff competed with each other to secure promotions and ensure their own career development.[xxxviii] "Unblocking bureaucratic obstinacies and rivalries and streamlining overcomplicated administrative procedures is therefore one of the major challenges with which preventive diplomacy and its early warning instruments have to cope."[xxxix]

The fact that ORCI's staff was borrowed from other UN Agencies because of financial constraints rather than ability further compounded the problem.[xl] The office's "rather ambitious goals" from a technical standpoint was also noted as a problem.[xli] More importantly, perhaps, were the "continued misgivings among some senior UN officials about using ORCI advice and services."[xlii] These factors created a gulf between early warning and response.

In 1992, Boutros-Boutros Ghali closed ORCI because he did not, allegedly, need the services provided by the Office. Instead, Ghali established the UN's Department of Political Affairs (DPA), institutionally modeled along Cairo's Foreign Ministry. It was Ghali who decided to have early warning analysis "remain 'decentralized', 'ad hoc', and a 'desk-level-exercise.'"[xliii] With ORCI's

decommission, "the UN lost whatever capacity it had to analyze political early warning information when it disbanded the Office for Research and Collection of Information."[xliv]

Briefly DPKO

The Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had, during one brief period, an analytical capacity of the type needed for early warning. Initially staffed in 1994 with just one US intelligence officer and later with only four officers (from each of the permanent five members of the Security Council save for China), the Information and Research (I&R) Unit of the Situation Center had "the greatest 'reach' in terms of information gathering and analysis because these four officers were 'connected' to national intelligence systems, having been seconded from them."[xlv] The officers were not restricted to peacekeeping operations and regularly provided assistance to other departments and the Office of the Secretary-General. They produced "important information/intelligence reports which [went] well beyond the scope of regular UN reports."[xlvi] These reports evaluated motivations of parties, provided threat assessments and other forecasts. They also included information on arms flows and other covert assistance from States.

"Unfortunately, the I&R unit was dissolved after the General Assembly, at the urging of a group of countries from the developing world, required the UN Secretariat to discontinue the use of gratis officers, who were mostly from the developed world which alone could pay their salaries."[xlvii] Needless to say, this was a major setback in efforts to equip the UN system with an analytical capability for early warning.

Enter OCHA

While ORCI and I&R were decommissioned, academics continued to pursue more sophisticated systems. A year after ORCI was taken off-line, OCHA's predecessor, the UN Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), spearheaded the development of a Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS). Incorporating a multitude of indicators and information sources (statistical and textual), the system was set up to monitor deteriorating situations in over 100 countries.[xlviii] Indicators were defined to cover the range of social, economic, political, human rights[xlix] and ecological factors and root causes that generally lead to complex humanitarian emergencies.

A sophisticated computer-assisted system (CAS) was said to retrieve reports from other early warning systems such as those operated by the FAO and WFP.[l] A "subjective filter" was formulated to short list countries of concern, which would then be monitored more closely using media reports or through additional contact with field offices.[li] Thus varying stages of conflict intensity were apparently used to decide which countries required closer monitoring.

In 1998, OCHA was said to have adopted an approach that "falls somewhere between the academic and the practical—it keeps abreast of the latest developments in the academic fields related to early warning but recognizes that as part of the United Nations it must feed into a decision-making process driven by practical (and often political) considerations."[lii] However, deficits in staffing posed serious constraints. While HEWS had significant computerized capacity, the system only involved three or four professionals.[liii]

Deficits in staffing constrained the system's performance, which may explain why "the system [had] yet to produce a single 'early warning' of armed conflict" a year after being operational.[liv] The system may also have been sidelined by OCHA's new information portal, ReliefWeb.[lv]

"HEWS was disbanded [in 1999] and, OCHA began to re-evaluate its role in the field of early warning—briefly considering a search for key indicators."[lvi]

Several years and UN resolutions later, OCHA was assigned the responsibility and mandate to provide early warning information.[lvii] OCHA's website indicates that the Office's Early Warning Unit "identifies, monitors and analyzes trends and developments that may push states/regions toward a humanitarian crisis and, possibly, toward failure."[lviii] The Unit only monitors those countries in which OCHA does not have field presence. In the next section, we analyze the Unit's methodology to assess whether the resulting analyses are geared towards the UN's formal decision-making structures reviewed above.

The Unit

In 2003, OCHA's Early Warning Unit[lix] adopted an "indicator-template" approach to early warning since it was suggested that senior policy makers would more easily understand structured and formalized analysis that is based on templates. [lx] By using this approach, "the bureaucratic machinery can be sparked into a process that develops holistic, politically realistic preventive strategies." The Unit considered several "clusters" in their early warning analyses including socio-economic conditions (mainly structural) and public discourse. For each of these, a series of underlying yes-or-no questions were formulated to assess change over time.

A total of 121 underlying questions figured in the template. In 2003, the Unit produced 25 reports based more or less on the above structure.[lxi] The reports featured policy recommendations and were shared with OCHA's Senior Management, the UN's Framework Team, and OCHA's desk and field officers. They were also circulated among external experts (professors, NGOs, etc.) for feedback/accuracy. However, the Early Warning Unit was generally not permitted to draw on OCHA's field personnel when drafting the reports. This was due to Member State misplaced sensitivities with information collection and intelligence. Permissible information was restricted to monitoring mainstream media.

Transition

OCHA produced fewer reports in 2005 due to limited resources and the amount required to collect relevant information, which came at the expense of adding value to this information through analysis. At present, the Unit targets its reports more on countries/regions/cases where OCHA analysts see an actual need for such reports. An emphasis has also been placed on improving the quality reporting, rather than emphasizing quantity. Towards this end, a "transition" format was developed. This approach identified "Main Humanitarian Issues" and includes three sections: "description of situation," "what is being done" and "recommendations to OCHA on further action." The Unit also became involved in Scenario Building. This has a very specific purpose: to build a scenario for the region (planning scenario, and worst case scenario for contingency planning purposes), in order to lay a basis on which the Humanitarian Coordinator and the whole inter-agency team could build a long-term work plan.

Until recently, the Unit was officially designated as OCHA's Early Warning and Contingency Planning Unit. However, in 2004, Senior Management decided that Contingency Planning functions should reside with OCHA's Coordination and Response Division (CRD) given that this organ coordinates activities in countries in which OCHA has field representation. Since the Unit only monitored countries in which OCHA was not present, contingency planning was not deemed part of early warning. "Of course, contingency planning is exactly in the middle between early warning and response, so it was never a clear cut case. However, we continue to cooperate

very closely with the contingency planning focal point at CRD to make sure early warning information gets translated into contingency planning."[lxii]

Re-Enter HEWS

In 2005 HEWS was reborn as HEWSweb, to establish a common platform for humanitarian early warnings and forecasts for natural hazards and socio-political developments worldwide. "The main objective of HEWSweb is to bring together and make accessible in a simple manner the most credible early warning information available at the global level from multiple specialized institutions."[lxiii] The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group (IASC-WG) on Preparedness and Contingency Planning coordinates the project's development. The WG is composed of the UN's 8 operational organizations and 9 Standing Invitee Organizations and is co-chaired by WFP and UNICEF.[lxiv]

While HEWSweb presently monitors and "forecasts" natural hazards, the system is also expected to monitor and forecast socio-political developments worldwide. To this end, the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group (WG) on Preparedness and Contingency Planning has developed a practical reporting format based on a four color-coded risk level framework—red, orange, yellow, white—with associated priority levels—priority 1, 2, 3 and countries on watch.[lxv] These risk levels are based on the following indicators: (1) Threat to life/livelihood; (2) Likely scale/impact; (3) Imminence; (4) Likely population movements; (5) Regional implications; and (6) Likelihood.

This approach is used to draft the IASC-WG's quarterly "Early Warning-Early Action Reports" which are used to enhance inter-agency early warning and preparedness and to meet the demands of potentially new humanitarian crises or dramatic changes in existing ones. Risk levels for each country are compared with the previous quarter's risk levels to reflect recent trends. The reports are aimed explicitly at highlighting those crises for which additional inter-agency action is deemed necessary within the coming 6 months timeframe based on assessments and judgments provided by staff of IASC member agencies at field and headquarter levels.[lxvi]

The reports are circulated in Excel format and comprise three sections. The first section entitled "Highlights" identifies global emergencies and situations of concern. "Summary," the second section, provides a snapshot of countries/situations of concern, harzard type, and trends. The most recent Early Warning–Early Action Reports include a new section—namely a checklist of "Minimum Preparedness Actions" to directly link situations/countries of concern to actual preparedness actions on the ground.

Summary

The evolution of conflict early warning systems at the UN has followed a noticeable trend. At the outset, both ORCI and the original HEWS were ambitious efforts to develop sophisticated systems for early warning. OCHA's Early Warning Unit also developed a comprehensive template with over one hundred underlying questions or indicators. The DPKO's Information and Research Unit had access to the national intelligence channels of four permanent Members of the Security Council.

Interestingly however, this trend towards increasingly sophisticated early warning methodologies and systems is shifting into reverse. OCHA recently simplified their country assessment templates and entertained more field-based scenario building exercises. At the same time, the IASC Working Group (WG) on Preparedness and Contingency Planning has outlined a simple

approach based on just six indicators to monitor countries at risk. In November 2005, the Working Group added a "Minimum Preparedness Actions" (MPAs) component to their methodology in order to identify the minimum steps required to prevent risk escalation.

While some may argue that, "none of the bodies tasked with early warning have a sufficient analytical capacity," we believe that IASC WG leading the new HEWSweb system may be headed in the right direction.[lxvii] While the system's "good enough analysis" approach may limit the reliability of secure predictions, they nevertheless provide decision-makers with an at-a-glance understanding of basic conflict trends in the near to medium term.[lxviii] More importantly, the introduction of MPAs provides a different way to think about early warning—less as a tool to predict and more as a means to inform decision-makers while bringing in more accountability and transparency. This, we suggest, should help pave the way for a parallel development of Minimum *Preventive* Actions.

This section critically analyzed the "supply side" of early warning at the UN. In the next section we consider the "demand side", the link between early warning and response. Do the UN's formal early warning systems as described above inform decision-making within the UN system? Are early warning methodologies geared towards the realities of existing decision-making structures?

DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS

In this section, we analyze three decision-making structures that have been created within the UN Secretariat to bridge the early warning-response gap – The Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS), The Framework Team, and The Policy Committee. They are each an iteration of the same objective - to bring the different UN Agencies together to share information and develop strategies for preventing the escalation of conflict in pre- or post-conflict environments. These three decision-making organs are located in the participant subsystem aspect of the United Nations. The Security Council and the General Assembly constitute the representative subsystem aspect of the United Nations, as they are made up of member states.

The United Nations is both a representative sub-system and a participant subsystem. "In a representative subsystem the international bureaucracy is the instrument of its member states. In a participant subsystem, the international organization is a more pluralistic arena with many actors, state and non-state, in which the actual outcome cannot simply be predicted by pointing at the interests of the most powerful member states."[lxix] Both the representative and the participant sub-system hold decision-making power. The relative power of the decision-making institutions within the participant sub-system hits at the heart of the most controversial debates within UN reform – the degree of power that the UN Secretariat can possess and the sovereignty of the member states.

The distinction between the participatory and representative aspects of the United Nations decision-making structure is particularly important in relation to early warning. While the participant subsystem (the ECPS, Framework Team, and Policy Committee) can support information sharing, analysis and strategy development, the fundamental responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security lies with the representative subsystem (The Security Council). Nonetheless, the Security Council is often reluctant to discuss early warnings, and put them on

the official agenda, because they might be seen as a threat to the sovereignty of its member states. In the past few years, however, the Security Council has gradually been more willing to discuss early warning and conflict prevention during informal discussion. In sum, decision-making within the United Nations is made up of the unsystematic interactions between the representative and participatory components of the system, driven by political, strategic and personal alliances and agendas.

Below, we examine the structure of three decision-making entities in the participant sub-system, and their capacity to recommend early responses. When discussing early response we will refer to the three types of prevention outlined in the report of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, and further developed by Barnett Rubin:

1. *systemic prevention* promotes policies that counteract ways that global institutions promote or facilitate violence;

2. *structural prevention* reduces the risk of violent conflict in countries or regions by transforming social, economic, cultural, or political sources of conflict; and

3. *operational prevention* seeks to contain or reverse escalation sparked by leadership strategies or crises that act as accelerators or triggers of violence.[lxx]

Early warning most often seeks to predict triggers and accelerators of violence, and thus the appropriate early response is most often considered to be a form of *operational prevention*.

The Security Council and the UN Secretary-General are the only UN decision-making organs that have the capacity to mandate operational prevention. The Secretary General has numerous tools for preventive diplomacy, while the Security Council can mandate economic sanctions and incentives and the use of military force. Below these more visible preventive measures, the other UN Agencies, Departments, Funds, and Offices can use their own collective and individual resources for structural prevention and/or low-level operational prevention (conditionality, low-level diplomacy, joint advocacy, etc…). When done in collaboration with UN Member States, each of these preventive efforts is strengthened tenfold.

Even though the Security Council has the greatest capacity to mandate operational prevention, it is not an ideal target for direct early warning.[lxxi] The Security Council is influenced primarily by the separate issues on the agenda of its member states and by recommendations from the Secretary General. The Security Council is much more likely to respond to active lobbying and advocacy than to systematic early warning. As a result, we analyze three Secretariat-based decision-making bodies (Executive Committee on Peace and Security, The Framework Team, and The Policy Committee), which are each different iterations of the same need/hope – to fill the warning-response gap, and enable the UN to have an effective, coherent and timely approach to its ever-expanding peace and security agenda. The analysis of these three participatory sub-system decision-making structures focuses on three aspects of each structure: 1) leadership; 2) breadth of membership; and 3) decision-making.

The Executive Committee on Peace and Security

The Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) was one of four thematic committees established by the Secretary-General in 1997 as part of the UN reform process. The other three committees focus on humanitarian affairs, development cooperation and economic and social affairs. In establishing these committees the Secretary-General sought to "sharpen the contribution that each unit makes to the overall objectives of the Organization by reducing

duplication of efforts and facilitating greater complementarity and coherence."[lxxii] The purpose of these committees is to try and bring together the various UN Agencies and Departments to address issues of collective concern and pool resources. They are instruments of joint "policy development, decision-making and management."[lxxiii]

Leadership

The Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) is a peer-led, consensus-based decision-making body. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) chairs and convenes the meetings, but does not have greater decision-making authority than the other agencies or departments represented. The ECPS meets twice a month to discuss three to four country situations. All members can table items for consideration. Nonetheless, many agencies have been reluctant to table their "issues" because the ECPS is chaired by DPA.

Membership

There are currently 21 members of the ECPS, ranging from the Under-Secretary-Generals for Disarmament Affairs and Peacekeeping to the UN Children's Fund and the Special Advisor on Gender Issues. The broad membership, which has doubled since its creation, reflects the number of agencies and departments that consider their work to be relevant to peace and security. This may also reflect the refocusing over the past ten years of the UN's work on it's primary mandate: "the maintenance of international peace and security."[lxxiv]

Decision-making

The ECPS was designed to support integrated decision-making on crosscutting issues, but as the Brahimi report points out, it has "not become the decision-making body that the 1997 reforms envisioned, which its participants acknowledge."[lxxv] This is partially due to the broad membership and consensus-based structure of the ECPS, which has weakened its capacity to make timely decisions in response to early warnings. The members of the ECPS consider their work to include all three types of prevention - systemic, operational and structural prevention. As a result, decisions come down to the lowest common denominator, which entails "drafting ambitious reports" that help to frame the policy agenda.[lxxvi] Some of the reports and strategies that have resulted from the work of the ECPS or its subsidiary bodies include those that establish a strategy for rule of law programming, protection of children in armed conflict, a particular war-torn country (e.g., Sudan), and the exploration of an approach to anti-terrorism. The subsidiary body of the ECPS that most often discusses current country situations and possible preventive operational measures is the informal decision making body, The Framework Team for Coordination (discussed below).

According to Collene Duggan, "country specific or region specific situations are usually brought before the ECPS only once approximate 'triggering' conflict factors have come into play. In other words, the situations have moved well beyond the early warning stage and prospects for preventive bloodshed and [when] loss of life are reduced."[lxxvii] This demonstrates the low capacity of the ECPS to support operational prevention, although the "ambitious reports" may enable more coherent structural prevention approaches. The ECPS does not provide policy options either, although there are examples where they put issues up for the Secretary-General to consider. UN staff comment that these recommendations are often watered down by "consensus" by the time they reached the Secretary-General.[lxxviii]

In an effort to strengthen the ECPS's early response capacity, the Brahimi report recommended that the "The Secretary-General and the members of ECPS need a professional system in the

Secretariat for accumulating knowledge about conflict situations, distributing that knowledge efficiently to a wide user base, generating policy analyses and formulating long-term strategies. That system does not exist at present. The Panel proposes that it be created as the ECPS Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, or EISAS."[lxxix] This idea was killed relatively quickly by the UN member states that felt that EISAS would be monopolized by the six member states that have the strongest intelligence systems. As was discussed above, all of the attempts within the UN to consolidate information on issues of peace and security have been disempowered or disembodied because of Member States' perceived threat to their sovereignty, or fear of the monopolization of early warning by a few Member States.

UN Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action—The Framework Team

The Framework Team was established in 1995 to "better coordinate planning and operational activities among the humanitarian, peacekeeping and political sectors of the Secretariat in regards to peacekeeping missions."[lxxx] By 2000, the Framework Team had evolved to focus on early warning and preventive action among eleven UN departments, programs, offices and agencies.[lxxxi] It was designed to enable senior managers from each of the participating organizations to jointly review and analyze "countries/situations of concern" that had the potential to escalate into violent conflict. It was scheduled to meet once a month.

Process

The original Framework Team (FT) process was designed to have four steps toward decision-making.[lxxxii] First, a 'country/situation of concern' would be nominated by any participating organization. Second, the Framework Team would conduct a preliminary review of the situation. Each agency would ask for input from their field office on the situation. Third, if the situation was deemed urgent and no one else was addressing it, the Team would request that a Country/Situation review meeting be called. Fourth, at the Country/Situation Review Meeting the agencies determined and recommended a range of coordination and preventive measures, where appropriate. In certain cases, in which the crises had reached a level requiring high-level political consideration and possibly intervention, the Framework Team would refer the country to the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Assistance.

The Framework Team has evolved considerably over the years and is still in the process of identifying the most effective working methods for the generation of early response. What distinguishes the Framework Team is its voluntary and informal nature (its mandate is not defined by member states in any resolution). The Framework Team has insisted on maintaining its flexibility and informality by not establishing Terms of Reference as such but "guidelines" for its operation.

An independent evaluation in 2004 noted that the Framework Team would benefit from restructuring and strengthening to facilitate additional strategic analysis, follow-up and liaison with the Country Teams. Following the evaluation, steps have been taken to implement several of the recommendations. The changes include three main elements: 1) the strengthening of the Framework Team secretariat, 2) the establishment of an Expert Reference Group consisting of 10-12 members with substantive expertise and experience with regard to conflict prevention, and 3) expanded use of informal 'inter-departmental working groups' for all countries where the Framework Team has made a decision to provide sustained support for prevention programmes

on the ground. These new elements are currently being implemented and it is expected that they will enhance the Framework Team's effectiveness in generating preventive initiatives on the ground in selected countries in close collaboration with the UN Country Teams.

Membership and Leadership

Currently, the Framework Team is composed of 23 member organizations.[lxxxiii] The chairmanship of the Framework Team rotates between the agencies. The Team acts as a "catalyst," drawing "attention to early warning signs" and instigating "action to diffuse tensions."[lxxxiv] In that sense, the FT seeks to function as a "'gearbox' between the field and Headquarters, channeling early warning information and suggestions on preventive and preemptive measures to the appropriate forum and decision-making bodies, engaging in dialogue with the UN representatives, and, in select cases where appropriate, mobilizing support for concrete prevention programmes on the ground."[lxxxv]

Through its ongoing restructuring the Framework Team aims to enhance its performance as a "catalyst" and a "gearbox", which has been subject to mixed opinion in the past. A key role envisioned for its new Expert Reference Group is thus to strengthen dialogue with and support to Resident Coordinators and Country Teams in addressing brewing conflict situations through joint programming. Also, the Expert Reference Group is supposed to lend its thematic expertise to the inter-departmental working groups consisting of country experts/desk officer dealing with a particular country. The larger Framework Team will continue to meet at senior level but less frequently (quarterly) in order to review and endorse country-specific strategies developed by the inter-departmental working groups with the assistance of the Expert Reference Group.

Like the ECPS, the broad membership of the Framework Team is also both a strength and weakness. The expansion from 10 to 23 members demonstrates, yet again, that the vast majority of UN Agencies consider conflict prevention to be part of their mandate. It is also one of the only fora where this broad a membership can openly discuss sensitive peace and security issues that are of common concern. On the other hand, the large membership means that the agenda may not be driven by the most urgent policy issue, or even the most explosive conflict, but rather by each agency's priorities. UN staff say that it is difficult to "create incisive analysis because each agency wants their point represented."[lxxxvi] They also say that it makes it very difficult to prioritize countries/situations because each agency considers their priority to be the most important. For example, UNICEF may consider HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa to be a central structural prevention issue, whereas the Department of Political Affairs considers the peace process in Afghanistan to be at the top of the operational prevention priority list. The problem is that both agencies are correct – they are both structural and operational prevention. In the end, staff say, it comes down to the internal politics that play out between the members of the bureaucracy.

Decision-making

In the selection of country cases the Framework Team considers a set of agreed criteria as a first 'filter'. The first criteria deals with the country situation and looks at whether it is a case for "upstream", early conflict prevention, thus allowing for at least six months lead time before further deterioration. A second criteria concerns the UN institutional situation and reviews whether the UN in already involved from a conflict prevention point of view (with a view to avoiding overlapping as well as gaps) and whether the UN country team in place is in need of additional support and is in a position to implement a resulting preventative strategy in

collaboration with the host government. Finally, the Framework Team looks at the timing of ongoing activities and whether it is an appropriate moment for preventive action.

As indicated under the second and third criteria, the existence of 'entry points' in a given country is key for selection. In other words, the selection of EW cases for FT involvement is not only based on the objective analysis projecting the outbreak of crisis, but also requires the presence of people to engage and collaborate with on the ground and realistic assessments of timing, available resources and political viability.

The assessment of the Framework Team's decision-making performance is mixed. It has not fulfilled its creators' vision of becoming a coordination body that would enable the various UN organizations to share early warning information and agree on a coherent strategy for prevention. Rather, the FT seems to have served the purpose of improving interdepartmental contacts and enabling collaboration between agencies on issues of common interest. Some participants say that the informal nature of the FT is both its strength and its weakness. Because it is informal, people are able to speak more freely about issues that are sensitive to member states. Agencies are able to share information and analysis in a way that might otherwise not be possible. On the positive side, this has lead to joint conflict prevention initiatives between DPA and UNDP, warnings about the potential escalation of conflict in Central Asia and the insurgency in Nepal, and the agreement by the Secretary-General to send an envoy to the Central African Republic. In Ghana and Guyana, discussions in the Framework Team spurred the conceptualization and implementation of conflict prevention programmes, which have been highlighted as success stories by several colleagues. On the other hand, this informality also means that attending FT meetings is not high on Agencies' priority list. Agencies rarely send high-level staff that have the most accurate information and the authority to make decisions. There is also no accountability for following up on any commitments or decisions made in the meetings, and thus little incentive for implementing any decisions made. These are some of the issues that the ongoing restructuring of the Framework Team seeks to address.

In some accounts the Framework Team's "major weakness is that of the UN. Especially because so many UN agencies have their own budgets, and because most field operations are funded by donors through voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General lacks authority to coordinate the agencies."[lxxxvii] As a result, the authority of the FT, which was created by the Secretariat without a mandate from the General Assembly/member states, is in question. It is worth remembering that the Team was initially constituted of a few key individuals who met informally and take personal decisions to move on a particular issue. As awareness of the FT increased, more agencies wanted to play an active role and this had the effect of limiting the Team's ability to act. In order to address the risk of dilution of expertise and ability to act, the emerging new structure, which entails the establishment of an Expert Reference Group and inter-departmental working groups for specific countries, is envisioned to concentrate the expertise and knowledge in smaller and more focused groups.

In yet other accounts the lack of direct member states interference is in fact the strength of the Framework Team. While the Framework Team is exempt from direct member states interference, an increasing number of member states are in fact providing funding for enhancing the Framework Team. In addition, three key Framework Team member departments/agencies have pledged financial support to the Framework Team, thereby demonstrating the commitment among key departments/agencies to enhance the work of the Framework Team.

The Secretary-General's Policy Committee

The Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, states that "Although the United Nations has some early-warning and analysis capacity scattered among different agencies and departments, the Secretary-General has not been able to establish any properly-resourced unit able to integrate inputs from these offices into early-warning reports and strategy options for purposes of decision-making."[lxxxviii] To "create a coherent capacity for developing strategic options" the High-level Panel recommended that the position of Deputy Secretary-General for Peace and Security be established.[lxxxix] The panel said that the creation of this position would greatly help the Secretary-General to manage the enormous increase in his workload in the area of peace and security since the 1990s. To this end, the Deputy Secretary-General would "assist the Secretary-General in systematically overseeing the work of the United Nations system in the area of peace and security, with the aim of formulating integrated strategies and ensuring concerted action."[xc] This new Deputy Secretary-General would not duplicate or replace other agencies, but would seek to "integrate inputs from the various departments and agencies and prepare early-warning reports and strategy options for decision by the Secretary-General."[xci] In other words, it would attempt to do what the ECPS and The Framework Team were intended to do, but have not been able to accomplish.

The proposal for the Deputy Secretary-General never made it past the High-Level Panel report. Many UN Member State remain reluctant to give the Secretary-General more power and resources in the area of peace and security because they see greater Secretariat power in this area as a potential threat to their sovereignty. As a result, in his March 2005 report, *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*, the Secretary-General reported that instead of the appointment of a second Deputy Secretary-General he had decided to create "a cabinet-style decision-making mechanism (with stronger executive powers than the present Senior Management Group) to improve both policy and management."[xcii] He said that through this mechanism, he expected to "ensure more focused, orderly and accountable decision-making."[xciii] This recommendation led to the establishment of the Policy Committee in May 2005.

Membership

The Secretary-General's Policy Committee is modeled on Brent Scowcroft's concept of the US National Security Council – an executive council that could put forward multiple, potentially dissenting ideas that would enable the Executive to make informed decisions in the area of peace and security.[xciv]   The ten members of the Policy Committee include the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Chief of Staff, Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Administrator of the UN Development Program, Representative of UN Department of Public Information, High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Under Secretary-General for Legal Affairs.

Process

The countries, issues and situations discussed in the Policy Committee meetings are proposed by the members of the Committee, circulated to the members 2-3 months ahead of time, and then adapted by the Deputy Secretary General. Once there is agreement on which countries, issues and situations will be discussed, a lead agency prepares a report. Each report presents the issues and the contrasting opinions of the different Committee members as well as the different policy options, something that the ECPS and Framework Team reports/discussions were rarely able to effectively do. The problem remains that many of the members of the Policy Committee do not

have sufficient time to read the reports prior to the meeting, leading the discussion to slide back toward the average knowledge base on the issue. Nonetheless, once the Committee meets and the Secretary-General takes a decision on the policy options that he wants to recommend, he then submits these options to the Security Council for decision, where appropriate. Although the Secretary-General does not often invoke Article 99 when presenting recommendations to the Security Council, it remains the basis for much of his work in this area.[xcv]

Leadership

The Policy Committee has corrected the problem of peer leadership, which is one factor that prevents the ECPS and the Framework Team from directly addressing urgent peace and security issues. With both the ECPS and the Framework Team, the participants were unable to discuss differing opinions because there was always the impression of preference being given to the issues that were relevant to the committee/team chairman. Additionally, it was very difficult to discuss complex, sensitive issues among a group of more than twenty participants who may, or may not, have relevant expertise. In addition, unlike the ECPS and the Framework Team, the Policy Committee always makes decisions on the situations discussed.

Decision-making

Although the Policy Committee has only been in existence for a few months, it seems to enable the Secretary-General with a forum to discuss the different Agencies' competing arguments on an issue of importance to peace and security and to make informed policy decisions. The question remains as to whether or not the Policy Committee is an effective instrument for making early response decisions, particularly for operational prevention. It primarily focuses on countries, issues or situations that are already on the table, or are unavoidable in terms of their potential for the escalation of violent conflict. The sense is that there are already so many countries, issues and situations that are on the peace and security agenda, that all that the Secretariat can manage is what is already on its plate. It is not eager for new issues to put on the agenda, unless they demand unquestionable urgent attention.

In relation to the Policy Committee, the commonly held principle that "the earlier you act, the more preventive options you have" may not apply. True prevention may not be an option. The Policy Committee may only be able to address a country once violent conflict has already broken out and the countries are on the agenda. As we will discuss below, there are few rewards in bureaucracies for taking the risks that early warning demands. The Policy Committee plays an important role in monitoring the Secretariat's peace and security agenda and in overcoming bureaucratic turf battles, but it does not seem to have surmounted the enormous bureaucratic barriers to taking the risks that early warning demands.

UNDERSTANDING WHY AND HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

The challenges faced by the UN's decision-makers are not theirs alone, but are present in most bureaucracies and international organizations. Below, we use decision-making theory to better understand these challenges, and to pave the way for early warning and response that is geared toward the decision-maker's reality.

The Principal-Agent Dilemma: Politics v. Norms

The first challenge faced by decision-makers within international organizations is negotiating the principal-agent dilemma. The UN is primarily responsible to its member states, or the *principals*.

At the same time, the international organization, as the *agent*, was created to uphold common principles, rights and norms that were outlined by the member states in its constitutive document (UN Charter) and further developed in its subsequent Resolutions. International bureaucrats may therefore find themselves pulled in numerous directions. On the one hand, they are likely to be risk adverse - unwilling to step beyond the baseline of normative or political maneuver that the member states permit.[xcvi] On the other hand, the constitutive norms and principles of the international organization help to push the baseline forward of what is acceptable to individual member states. The increasing permission that the UN has been given to encroach on member state's sovereignty in the name of peace and security is a demonstration of this shift.

Reinalda and Verbeek state that there is an inevitable permanent tension in international organizations between the member states and the institutions that they create. To accomplish the tasks that the member states delegate to it, the international organization is granted some "freedom to maneuver."[xcvii] They suggest that the policy discretion of the international organization is rooted in at least four aspects of the principal-agent relationship. First is the formal delegation of authority by the member states to the international organization. Second, is the fact that the international organization (agent) faces many different principals (member states), which can provide the agent with more power through coalition building. Third, the international organization can have the freedom to address problematic issues that states wish to avoid taking a stance on. Fourth, international organizations can derive autonomy based on their technical expertise. This is very often the case for the various UN Agencies, including the IMF and World Bank, whom the member states rely on for technical support and advice.

Early warning and response often falls between the gap of the principal-agent dilemma. First, the argument for systematic early warning is fundamentally a normative argument, seeking to uphold the founding principles of the United Nations – "to save succeeding generations from the [xcviii]scourge of war" and "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights."[xcix] Only secondarily is early warning concerned with collective security, since many member states remain unconvinced that violence in a remote part of the world will affect their national security. Second, early response demands that someone generate the political will of member states. Even though the member states might have signed and ratified the UN Charter, as well as many human rights treaties, they may not be willing to allocate their limited resources to something that they do not see to be in their interest, even if it may uphold the norms that they have committed to protect. Third, early response is the result of coalition building, and the international organization serves as the place where coalitions among principals and agents can be built. The constitutive norms of the international organization, and advocacy from various constituencies, will encourage the member states to intervene to support and protect these norms. In the words of Reinalda and Verbeek, it may therefore be more appropriate to think of decision-making within international organizations as "the product of a majority of like-minded actors prepared to ignore other loyalties they might have."[c] According to Barnett Rubin, conflict prevention is more akin to "building a political movement" not "merely identifying causes and testing policy instruments."[ci] The upside is that the early warning or conflict prevention movement has grounding in the constitutive principles of the United Nations.

Vertical Bureaucratic Structure: Who dominates?

To close the gap between warning and response, it is essential to understand bureaucratic structure and how it affects the decisions made, or not made. Jerel Rosati, in his paper

"Developing a Systematic Decision-Making Framework: Bureaucratic Politics in Perspective," describes three levels at which decisions are made in a bureaucracy:[cii]

1. The more critical the issue, the more likely it is that the "*Presidential Dominance*" structure of decision-making will occur.
2. The less critical the issue, the more likely it is that the "*Local Dominance*" structure of decision-making will occur.
3. The "*Bureaucratic Dominance*" structure of decision-making occurs when an issue is of moderate importance – not critical enough to attract the involvement of the President, but important enough to involve a number of individuals and organizations.

In terms of early warning, only potential conflicts that are high priority will reach the level of the Secretary General's Policy Committee or the Security Council, *Presidential Dominance*. Within the UN, the priority of an issue is not necessarily determined by the potential for violent conflict, as those advocating for early warning and conflict prevention would hope, but rather by the political will of powerful member states and UN staff to push an issue onto the Secretary General's or Security Council's agenda. If these are the only two bodies that can call for operational prevention, then the goal of early warning should be to get an issue up to the presidential dominance level. Unfortunately, it is often only through disaster or extreme violence that an issue that is not a concern of key member states makes it up to this level.

Local Dominance within the UN system refers to the decision-making power that the local representatives wield when a country or issue is not a high priority for UN Headquarters. Conflict prevention is not impossible with issues/countries that are locally dominant. In some cases being off the radar may be beneficial. A great deal of quiet diplomacy, donor conditionality, and structural prevention can take place at the local level without the need for presidential dominance of an issue or country. The appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) delegates some degree of presidential dominance to the local level, yet it does not necessarily mean that additional resources for operational prevention will be granted by the Security Council. Operational prevention still depends on a strong vertical connection between the local and the presidential levels. It is important for early response advocates to carefully consider whether a bottom-up or a top-down response will be most effective (or likely).

Bureaucratic Dominance gives more power to the *agents* of the UN - its Agencies, Funds and Departments. It is also visible in most issues/countries brought before the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and The Framework Team. These countries are important, and thus not relegated to local dominance, but are not urgent enough to be on the agenda of the Security Council or the Secretary General. Although, it is possible that different aspects of the same country/issue could be dominant on all three levels simultaneously. For early warning and response, bureaucratic dominance offers two solutions. First, members of the bureaucracy can jointly advocate with the Secretary General and/or the Security Council for operational prevention. Second, the UN Agencies, Funds, and Departments can do more effective structural prevention. One example of more effective structural prevention would be to expand its notion of development and humanitarian assistance to support local coping mechanisms and livelihood so that violent conflict, if it broke out, would not be as destructive.

Horizontal Bureaucratic Structure: Negotiating a sub-optimal solution

While *Presidential*, *Local*, and *Bureaucratic* dominance describe the vertical levels of decision-making, the horizontal level is equally as important in understanding how decisions are made. As

the four propositions below demonstrate, the complex, consensus-based decision-making process often results in a sub-optimal decision. For early response, this means that even when there is the political will to respond, the competing perspectives may result in an imperfect response. Below we analyze this horizontal decision-making process with Jerel Rosati's framework of four common bureaucratic decision-making propositions.[ciii]

Proposition 1: For any single issue, the executive branch of the government is composed of numerous individuals and organizations, with various differences in goals and objectives… The divergent goals of the interested parties result in conflict over the issue [under discussion].[civ]
Proposition 1 reminds us that decision-making between the different sub-organizations of the UN (i.e., UN departments, programs, offices and agencies) will inevitably lead to conflicting opinions about which course of action is best. This dynamic is, in fact, more pronounced in the UN because there is no common budget and the presence of many sub-organizations with relatively equal decision-making weight. This dynamic is present at all three levels discussed above: in the UN Country Team at the Local level, the ECPS and Framework Team at the Bureaucratic level, and the Policy Committee at the Presidential level. Proposition 1 may explain why the different sub-organizations within the UN are reluctant to give too much authority to joint decision-making bodies, such as the ECPS and the Framework Team – they see this as inevitably watering down the action that they might have taken on their own.

Proposition 2: No preponderant individual or organization exists; the President, if involved, is merely one participant, although his influence may be the most powerful.[cv]
Proposition 2 reminds us that even when the Executive Officer is present, s/he will not overpower the representatives of the UN sub-organizations. Although s/he may wield more power, s/he relies on the loyalty and support of the representatives of all of the sub-organizations and must therefore take all of their opinions and approaches into account. Within the UN, this proposition becomes even more relevant because most UN sub-organizations are accountable to their own Executive Boards, in addition to the Security Council and the Secretary-General, and thus have their own power base outside of that of the Secretary-General. While the Policy Committee was created to help to overcome inter-agency rivalries, it does not do so by discounting them, but by taking all of the opinions of the Policy Committee members into account. Furthermore, decisions reached by the Secretary-General's Policy Committee are rarely final – they have to be taken to the Security Council and/or implemented by one of the UN sub-organizations, which may change both their form and content.

Proposition 3: The final decision is a "political resultant" – the outcome of bargaining and compromise among the various participants.[cvi]
Proposition 3 echoes much of the literature on multilateral negotiations, which says that the resulting decision will not necessarily be something that all participants are happy with, but it will be something that all participants can agree to. Decision-making in all of the UN decision-making structures discussed here lead to some type of political resultant, which Graham Allison defines as: "*resultants* in the sense that what happens is not chosen as a solution to a problem but rather results from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence; *political* in the sense that the activity from which decisions and actions emerge is best characterized as bargaining along regularized channels among individual members of the government."[cvii]

The patterns of behavior and relationships that form along the regularized bureaucratic channels allow the institution to manage the complex interests of all of the different stakeholders. The downside is that these channels are not transparent and they don't leave room for the injection

of new thoughts and ideas. The Secretary-General's Policy Committee, for example, is composed of his trusted inner circle. This creates greater efficiency, but may leave out important perspectives. Early warning could help to create more accountability for the violent conflicts that these convoluted decision-making channels do not respond to. Early response advocates, however, face a greater challenge of navigating this opaque system – a challenge that would certainly be aided by those on the inside who can see through the fog.

Proposition 4: A considerable gap usually exists between the formulated decision and its implementation. "What is done will be heavily influenced by the standard operating procedures and interests of the implementers."[cviii]
Proposition 4 refers to the lack of control that any decision-maker has over the implementation of his/her decision. Within the UN, this gap seems to widen because of the considerable distance, both literally and metaphorically, between New York and the "field". A decision made at headquarters leaves a great deal of interpretation for the staff charged with implementing the decision at the field level. In addition, even if there is agreement at the headquarters level, there can be considerable disagreement among representatives of the same agencies in the field, who are now charged with implementing this sub-optimal "political resultant," and who are likely to have very different interpretations of what is appropriate and reasonable. In terms of conflict prevention, Proposition 4 shows that even if decision-makers do decide to implement an early response, they have little assurance that the implementers will respond in the way that the decision-makers intended. This issue has been repeatedly faced by peacekeeping operations, where the staff on the ground were left to interpret and implement a vague (compromise) mandate in the way they deem best, often with limited resources in a dynamic and complex environment. As a result, most decisions have a large degree of *local dominance*, which underlines the large impact that field-based structures have on the effectiveness of conflict prevention efforts.

The Warning: How decision-makers process information

The reality of high-level decision-making in bureaucracies is illustrated by Irving and Janis' description of man "not as a cold fish but as a warm-blooded mammal, not as a rational calculator always ready to work out the best solution but as a reluctant decision maker – beset by conflict, doubts, and worry, struggling with incongruous longings, antipathies, and loyalties, and seeking relief by procrastinating, rationalizing, or denying responsibility for his own choices."[cix] Most cognitive decision-making literature echoes Irving and Janis' description, although the authors may disguise it in fancier language. We summarize a few important points below.

First, decision-makers do want to make difficult decisions and therefore take shortcuts to limit the options that they have to consider. Lori Gronich calls this *cognitive miserliness*, which she refers to as the tendency to "unconsciously use mental shortcuts to limit the cognitive energy expended in making judgments."[cx] This is done through "rules of thumb," or heuristics, which help decision makers:

1. summarize past experiences and provide an easy method to evaluate the present;
2. substitute simple rules of thumb or 'standard operating procedures' for complex information collection and circulation; and
3. save considerable mental activity and cognitive processing.[cxi]

For early warning and response, this presents a great challenge. Decision-makers will be reluctant to think critically or carefully about an emerging conflict and employ innovative preventive solutions.

Second, decision-makers who understand the complexity of the problem are less likely to choose complex responses. Lori Gronich argues that decision-makers are more likely to choose responses that they do not understand the complexity of over those that they do. Her counterintuitive argument is that the more knowledge that a decision-maker has, the more they will view the problem with complexity, and the more likely they are to go with a policy option that they understand less well, and thus requires less cognitive energy to compute.[cxii] While it would seem that decision-makers that are better informed would be more likely to make better decisions, Gronich's theory shows that their ability to understand complexity may lead them to delay their decision, or choose an option that they do not understand as well. For early warning, this means that understanding the complexity of an emerging conflict is not the solution – decision-makers may be most responsive to a highly simplified version of reality. There is no guarantee, however, that this highly simplified version will lead to an effective policy decision.

Third, decision-makers will procrastinate until the decision-making deadline arrives, if it ever does. According to Janis and Mann, the decision-maker's tension will be greater when s/he sees the outcome of the decision as having a direct impact on them or their values. Decision makers are, therefore, unlikely to act upon early warnings that are removed from his/her experiences or interests because they will not feel the tension that will encourage them to act. Additionally, the tendency of decision-makers to procrastinate and rationalize this procrastination will lead them to avoid reacting to early warnings until they no longer have a choice. In the words of Graham Allison, "deadlines force issues to the attention of incredibly busy players."[cxiii]

The problem in terms of early warning is that there are no deadlines for early response. Decision-makers may only perceive the urgency, or tension, once a conflict has already escalated into violence. In addition, there are no criteria for when and how to intervene to prevent the escalation of violence. As a result, decision-makers will avoid making a decision until it is no longer avoidable (i.e., due to media or advocacy, or the political will of a powerful member state or coalition of member states.)

Fourth, decision-makers will make short-term decisions in lieu of better longer-term decisions.
Janis and Mann state that "the more uncertainty there is about a long-term outcome, the greater the tendency to make a policy decision on the basis of its short-term acceptability within the organization."[cxiv] This presents a great challenge for early warning. While early warning seeks to make accurate predictions, it is not possible to predict the future and there is always some degree of uncertainty as to the outcome, whether or not a decision is made. This uncertainty, and the real possibility of several scenarios unfolding, discourages decision-makers from choosing the option that could have the best impact, resorting instead to less-risky, short-term solutions. In other words, the tendency is toward incremental decision making, which is "geared to alleviating concrete shortcomings in a present policy – putting out fires – rather than selecting the superior course of action."[cxv] This decision-making pattern is precisely what a culture of prevention seeks to change - a change that most decision-making literature suggests is extremely difficult.

ADAPTING EARLY WARNING TO UN DECISION-MAKING

Reforming political decision-making structures is a long-term process. While institutionally necessary, short-term solutions are equally important. In this respect, early warning may play an

even more important role than previously thought. Early warning systems and methodologies are certainly more easily modified than political decision-making structures at the UN. This final section asks whether the tool of early warning be forged to galvanize the UN's decision-making responsibilities?

The above analysis has led us to several key conclusions and many more research questions. The first conclusion is that early warning is relevant and useful in encouraging early response by *creating accountability for responses not taken*.[cxvi] It can serve as an objective external judge of the correlation between the degree of violence, or potential violence, and the degree of action. It can help to create incentives for policy makers to act on warnings, particularly if there is some measure of criteria for what these actions should look like.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning and OCHA have pioneered this approach by outlining Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) for humanitarian early response. Advanced planning for early response in complex emergencies is not a new practice for humanitarian agencies. Introducing MPAs when anticipating a humanitarian emergency adds an element of accountability to preparedness and the allocation of resources. Although much more complex, a similar minimum preparedness framework could be developed for conflict early response. To be sure, MPAs for conflict early response could serve as a standard for the resources, both political and material, that should be allocated prior to the escalation of violence and internal conflict. These criteria would also help to create the deadline that busy policy makers need to get an issue onto their agenda. Since HEWSweb has a mandate to both provide early warnings for natural disasters and political developments, including conflict early response MPAs side by side with humanitarian early response MPAs may be a logical next step.

Second, early warning can *give UN staff the incentive to take the risks that early response requires*, addressing part of the bureaucratic dysfunction. Systematic early warning analysis and response is unlikely without basic incentives at the professional level since "in a distributed system without a central authority it is much easier to ignore its small share of responsibility and to evade the risks of issuing early warnings."[cxvii] The current absence of transparency along the UN decision-making path to operational response produces few incentives for decision-makers to engage in "appropriate action."[cxviii] Early warning can redress this by providing quality analysis that decision-makers can fall back on to justify their actions, and the risks that these actions often demand. Early warning analysis can thus legitimize the position of a decision-maker and create accountability for those actions not taken.

Third, as the previous conclusions imply, *early warning is, essentially, an advocacy tool* that should be used to help create political will. Political will is only needed when something is not already a priority. "Individuals and organizations issuing early warning alerts and recommendations, from inside and outside the decision maker's organization or office, must be able to convince policymakers of the need and urgency for action. Sound early warning analysis and recommendations are strongest when married to a strategic effort and compelling arguments aimed at influencing policymakers."[cxix] Early warning thus becomes a process of creating a credible analysis, understanding and navigating the complex bureaucratic decision-making structure, creating coalitions/movements, and advocating for an early response–trying to make something a priority that is not already one, at least at the UN Headquarters. Minimum Preventive Actions and better categorizing of specific lessons learned can help improve the advocates chances of creating political will.

If early warning is seen as an advocacy tool, then the number of people and organizations capable of acting on an early warning greatly increases. Within the UN, the Members of The Framework Team, the ECPS, and other individual Agencies, Offices, or Funds could collectively or separately advocate for particular early responses. Member States can use early warning to advocate with other Member State for action. Outside of the UN, civil society can play a very important role at the domestic and international level in creating political will, and in implementing their own responses. Regional organizations can also serve as important initiators of warnings, which can then be used for advocacy, as well as employ their own early responses.

The fourth conclusion is that *if the UN ever wants to create a culture of prevention, it needs to strengthen its conflict analysis and preventive decision-making capacity.* The UN still does not conduct systematic early warning or conflict analysis at the headquarters or at the field level. Although many individuals have been trained by the UN System Staff College's in Early Warning and Preventive Measures course, the use of these skills depends on the willingness and capacity of each individual. If the UN wants to create a culture of prevention, it needs to create staff incentives and requirements for systematic early warning analysis. In addition, the UN needs to give the prevention mandate to a UN decision-making body. As Connie Peck has recommended, prevention will not become a reality until mechanisms are developed who's sole mandate is prevention.[cxx]

Finally, *early response is still perceived as invasive.* As one UN staff member said, "conflict prevention is like a colonoscopy – both intrusive and embarrassing."[cxxi] Perhaps, more effective early warning must be based on more realistic approaches to conflict prevention. More realistic approaches to conflict prevention must be founded in ideals and norms, but take into account the challenge that most individuals, organizations and countries face in attaining these norms. A concept of early warning and early response that is more suited to the reality of decision-making in an insecure world may, in fact, help to engender the security we are searching for.

Conflict prevention can and should be implemented by all relevant actors, within and beyond the UN – regional organizations, civil society, member states, and private enterprises according to their individual comparative advantage. Member States have shown to be less resistant to regional early warning systems situated within their own inter-governmental organizations. Indeed, "to the extent that the developing countries in particular have taken a more positive view of the UN prevention agenda, they have defined prevention as a series of action taken by the concerned Member State themselves to resolve or prevent violent tensions within their borders."[cxxii] This suggests that regional organizations might have an increasingly important role to play in both early warning, as already shown by the development of numerous regional early warning systems, and early response.

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ENDNOTES

i   See General Assembly Resolution 57/337.

ii   *Ibid.,* 122.

iii   http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/austin_handbook.pdf

iv   See "Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report," of *The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict* (The Carnegie Corporation of New York) p. xxi; and Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002) p. 132.

v   http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/austin_handbook.pdf

vi   Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), p. 131.

vii   Walter Dorn, "Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary General of Threats to Peace: Article 99 Revisited," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 1, From Rhetoric to Reality,* ed. Albrecht Schnable and David Carment (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 317.

viii   Ciru Mwaura and Schmeidl, Susanne, *Early Warning and Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa*, (Red Sea Press 2002), 85.

ix   Johan Truyens, "New Elements Facilitating Intelligence Analysis: OSINT as a Driving Force," in *Peacekeeping Intelligence: New Players, Extended Boundaries*, ed. David Carment (Carleton University, 2006).

x   Johan Truyens, "New Elements Facilitating Intelligence Analysis: OSINT as a Driving Force," in *Peacekeeping Intelligence: New Players, Extended Boundaries*, ed. David Carment Carleton University, 2006).

xi   See for example the case of the sub-regional inter-governmental Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism established by Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in East Africa.

xii   Philip Schrodt and Gerner, Deborah, "Cluster Analysis as an Early Warning Technique for the Middle East," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 106.

xiii   *Ibid.*

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xvi   Streeten (1995, 228)

xvii   Peter Brecke, "A Pattern Recognition Approach to Conflict Early Warning," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 130.

xviii   Luc van de Goor and Suzanne Verstegen, "Mainstreaming Conflict Prevention Policies of Third-Party Actors: Building an In-House Capacity for Preventive Action," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 2, From Rhetoric to Reality*, ed. David Carment and Albrecht Schnabel (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 139.

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xx   John Cockell, "Toward Response-Oriented Early Warning," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 232.

xxi   Peter Brecke, "A Pattern Recognition Approach to Conflict Early Warning," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 123.

xxii   Peter Brecke, "A Pattern Recognition Approach to Conflict Early Warning," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 123.

xxiii   Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 147-148.

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xxv   Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), p. 131.

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xxvii   Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 147-148.

xxviii Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 131.

xxix Connie Peck, *Sustainable Peace* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: 1998), 72.

xxx Tapio Kanninen and Chetan Kumar "The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the United Nations System," *in* ed. Ramcharan, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: Essays in Honor of Jim Sutterlin*." (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers: 2005), 49.

xxxi Tapio Kanninen and Chetan Kumar "The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the United Nations System," *in* ed. Ramcharan, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: Essays in Honor of Jim Sutterlin*." (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers: 2005), 49.

xxxii Van de Goor, Luc and Suzanne Verstegen (1999): "Conflict Prognosis: Bridging the Gap from Early Warning to Early Response, Part I." (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague: 1999), Annex I.

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xxxiv *Ibid.*

xxxv Connie Peck, *Sustainable Peace* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: 1998,) 73.

xxxvi See Schmeidl, Susanne and Howard Adelman (eds) "Early Warning and Early Response," (Columbia International Affairs Online, 1998).

xxxvii The following information is based on private interviews carried with former ORCI staff in April-May 2003.

xxxviii Maintaining a better relationship with ORCI's Director James Jonah and UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar was thought to improve career prospects. Any early warning reports sent from ORCI to the SG had to pass through a number of senior persons in the SG's Executive Office before it was communicated to the Secretary-General himself. Some of these individuals allegedly discarded early warning reports to maintain their status and importance within ORCI. Furthermore, staff in the SG's Executive Office would regularly delay early warning briefings.

xxxix Andreas Kholschuetter and Baechler, Guenther, "FAST: A Pilot Study for an Early Warning System for the Swiss Foreign Ministry," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 182.

xl Connie Peck, *Sustainable Peace* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: 1998, 74.

xli Tapio Kanninen and Chetan Kumar "The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the United Nations System," *in* ed. Ramcharan, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: Essays in Honor of Jim Sutterlin*." (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers: 2005), 50.

xlii Tapio Kanninen and Chetan Kumar "The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the United Nations System," *in* ed. Ramcharan, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: Essays in Honor of Jim Sutterlin*." (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers: 2005), 50.

xliii Van de Goor, Luc and Suzanne Verstegen (1999): "Conflict Prognosis: Bridging the Gap from Early Warning to Early Response, Part I." (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague: 1999), Annex I.

xliv Andrew Clapham "Human Rights," in in *The Prevention of Humanitarian Emergencies*. Nafziger, Wayne and Raimo Vayrynen eds. (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 12. "2003, 12 Clapham affirms that "from 1990 onwards efforts at processing early warning information were thwarted by lack of cooperation between UN agencies and the failure of political bodies to take any action on the few warnings that were issued" (Clapham 2002, 234).

xlv Walter Dorn, "Towards an Effective UN Early Warning System: A Review and Some Recommendations," in *Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary-General of Threats to the Peace: Article 99 Revisited*. Woodcock, Ted and Davis, David (ed.), (The Cornwallis Group V: Analysis for Crisis Response and Societal Reconstruction, Canadian Peacekeeping Press, NS, 2000), 327.

xlvi See: http://www.ciaonet.org/book/schmeidl/schmeidl14.html#txt34

xlvii Walter Dorn, "Towards an Effective UN Early Warning System: A Review and Some Recommendations," in *Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary-General of Threats to the Peace: Article 99 Revisited*. Woodcock, Ted and Davis, David (ed.), (The Cornwallis Group V: Analysis for Crisis Response and Societal Reconstruction, Canadian Peacekeeping Press, NS, 2000), 327.

xlviii Van de Goor, Luc and Suzanne Verstegen, "Conflict Prognosis: Bridging the Gap from Early Warning to Early Response, Part I." (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague: 1999), Annex I.

xlix "By using human security as a preliminary framework of reference for conflict analysis, causes of social conflict can be interpreted as potential threats to human security. (…) In short, human security provides a foundation for analysis" (Cockell: 2003, 125).

l Van de Goor, Luc and Suzanne Verstegen, "Conflict Prognosis: Bridging the Gap from Early Warning to Early Response, Part I." (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague: 1999), Annex I.

li *Ibid.*

lii Adeel Ahmed and Kassinis, Elizabeth Voulieris, "The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems*, ed. John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 210.

liii Walter Dorn, "Towards an Effective UN Early Warning System: A Review and Some Recommendations," in *Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary-General of Threats to the Peace: Article 99 Revisited*. Woodcock, Ted and Davis, David (ed.),

(The Cornwallis Group V: Analysis for Crisis Response and Societal Reconstruction, Canadian Peacekeeping Press, NS, 2000)

liv *Ibid.*

lv Sundara Vadlamudi, "Architecture for Early Warning at the U.N. Based on Human Security Indicators," (Monterrey Institute for International Studies 2003).

lvi See http://www.womenwarpeace.org/issues/prevention/docs/genderfw.pdf.

lvii General Assembly Resolution 57/337 (2003), and Security Council Resolution S/RES/1366 (2001).

lviii http://ochaonline.un.org/

lix Patrick Meier was an intern at the Early Warning Unit for a very brief period.

lx "Indicator models provide general information about factors that should be monitored, while case studies provide in-depth information about key personalities, issues, and events that are needed to gauge prospects for conflict resolution" (Mwuara and Schmeidl 2002, 83).

lxi However the format of these country reports was subsequently "loosened" to tailor the reports to individual needs.

lxii Interview with UN professional, Dec. 15, 2005

lxiii http://www.hewsweb.org/

lxiv http://www.hewsweb.org/

lxv Interviews with UN professionals, November 2005.

lxvi http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/news/newsdetails.asp?newsid=18

lxvii Walter Dorn, "Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary General of Threats to Peace: Article 99 Revisited," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 1, From Rhetoric to Reality,* ed. Albrecht Schnable and David Carment (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 338. Also extensive interview with Co-Chair of IASC WG

lxviii Luc van de Goor and Suzanne Verstegen, "Mainstreaming Conflict Prevention Policies of Third-Party Actors: Building an In-House Capacity for Preventive Action," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 2, From Rhetoric to Reality*, ed. David Carment and Albrecht Schnabel (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 142.

lxixlxix *Ibid.,* 15.

lxx Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep*, p. 133.

lxxi "Based in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, the UN Secretariat manages the administration of the UN as a whole, making the arrangements necessary to allow Member States to meet and do their work. The Secretary-General carries out two roles: as the chief administrative officer and as the world's senior diplomat who maintains close contact with government delegates and frequently speaks in debates. As an institutional mechanism, the Secretariat makes a direct input into many processes by issuing substantive reports, which are prepared by the appropriate department of the Secretariat."www.un.org

lxxii Report of the Secretary-General Addendum, "Establishment of the Post of Deputy Secretary-General," *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*, New York: United Nations, 7 October 1997 A/51/950).

lxxiii *Ibid.*

lxxiv Charter of the United Nations, Article 1 states that "The Purposes of the United Nations are: To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to 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;

lxxv The United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi Report)*, 55th Session of the General Assembly, Item 87, A/55/305–S/2000/809, 21 August 2000, p. 12.

lxxvi Interview with UN staff member, November 2004.

lxxvii Colleen Duggan, "UN Strategic and Operational Coordination: Mechanisms for Preventing and Managing Violent Conflict," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 1, From Rhetoric to Reality,* ed. Albrecht Schnable and David Carment (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 356.

lxxviii Ibid.

lxxix Brahimi Report, p. 12.

lxxx *Framework for UN Agency Coordination Process for Countries in Crisis*, United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, 7 February 2000, p. 1.

lxxxi DPA, OCHA, DPKO, UNDP, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNHCHR, WFP, FAO, WHO, World Bank.

lxxxii *Framework for UN Agency Coordination Process for Countries in Crisis*, United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, 7 February 2000, p. 1-2.

lxxxiii DDA, DESA, DPA, DPKO, FAO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, World Bank, IMF. DPI and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General participate as observers. UNEP and UNODC participate on a case-by-case basis.

lxxxiv See UN Department of Political Affairs webpage on peacemaking and peacebuilding found at http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/prev_dip/peacemaking.htm.

lxxxv *Ibid.*

lxxxvi Interviews at the UN in NYC in November 2005.

lxxxvii Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 199.

lxxxviii   High-level panel report, p. 37.

lxxxix *Ibid.*

xc   High-level panel report, p. 91.

xci   High-level panel report, p. 91.

xcii   Secretary-General, *In larger freedom: toward development, security and human rights for all* (New York: United Nations General Assembly, 21 March 2005) A/59/2005. p. 47.

xciii   *Ibid.*

xciv   The description of the policy committee came primarily from interviews conducted with UN Staff members in November 2005.

xcv   Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations states "The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security."

xcvi   Reinalda and Verbeek, p. 232.

xcvii   Reinalda and Verbeek, p. 231.

xcix   Preamble, Charter of the United Nations.

c   Reinalda and Verbeek, p. 236.

ci   Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: The Century Foundation/Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 37-38.

cii   Rosati, p. 249.

ciii   Rosati, Jerel A, "Developing a Systematic Decision-Making Framework: Bureaucratic Politics in Perspective," in *World Politics*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Jan., 1981) p. 236-238.

civ   Rosati p. 236-238.

cv   *Ibid.*

cvi   *Ibid.*

cvii   Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 1999) p. 295.

cviii   Rosati quoting Halperin, p. 238.

cix   Irving and Mann, p. 15.

cx   Lori Gronich, p. 10.

cxi   Kahneman and Tversky, p. 448.

cxii   Lori Helene Gronich, "The Cognitive Calculus of Decision: How Leaders Choose Policies of War and Peace," Center for Peace and Security Studies, Georgetown University, 2005, p. 10.

cxiii   Alison and Zelikow, p. 295.

cxiv   Janis and Mann, p. 26.

cxv   Janis and Mann, p. 33.

cxvi   Carlos Scaramella of the World Food Program developed the idea of using early warning as a tool for the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning to encourage all agencies to take the necessary minimum preparedness measures.

cxvii   Dorn 334

cxviii   "The reason why no action was taken also varies, ranging from loss of nerve to preoccupation with other crises elsewhere." William Zartman, *Cowardly Lions: Missed Opportunities to Prevent Deadly Conflict and State Collapse* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, Inc., 2005), 1.

cxix   Charles Dufresne and Schnabel, Albrecht, "Building UN Capacity Early Warning and Prevention," in *Conflict Prevention: Vol. 1, From Rhetoric to Reality,* ed. Albrecht Schnable and David Carment (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004), 380.

cxx   Connie Peck, (2001) "The Role of Regional Organizations," in Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, eds., *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict* (Washington, DC: USIP Press) pp. 561-583.

cxxi   Interview with former UN Official, November 2005.

cxxii   Tapio Kanninen and Chetan Kumar "The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention in the United Nations System," *in* ed. Ramcharan, *Conflict Prevention in Practice: Essays in Honor of Jim Sutterlin."* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers: 2005), 50.