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WEAPONS of MASS DESTRUCTION, TERRORISM, GLOBAL SECURITY

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Which are the threats to global security?

A high level panel appointed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan has argued in its recent report on '**a more secure world'** that global security must mean more than the security of states against armed attacks. It must mean also security of people against oppression, civil war, hunger, global disease and environmental disasters. I agree with this view and I agree that the UN has a role play to help provide such security. Examples are easy to find.

After the tsunami catastrophe **better warning** systems are now discussed regionally and globally. We also discuss how the strong global will to help can be more effectively **coordinated.** One conclusion emerging is that **the UN** and its various organizations, which the world community's has created as their common instruments, are best placed to bring about global cooperation with the recipient countries, better preparation and coordination of international help.

To take another example, t**errorism** raise grave questions about security and we find that many types of global cooperative action to prevent terrorism are best worked out through the UN.

Which are the greatest threats against security?

It has been asserted that **weapons of mass destruction (**WMD) falling into the hands of **'rogue states' or terrorists** are **the greatest threats** facing the world. Being the Chairman of an international Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction and hoping to present a report early next year, I, for one, certainly recognize the relevance of these threats and the acute need to counter them. However, we need also to keep our feet on the ground. For most people in the world the priority security issues are hunger, poverty, disease and civil strife.

Personally I am as concerned about the long term **global environmental threats** to man's security, notably **global warming**, as I am about the short and medium term threats posed by WMDs – whether in the hands of non-state actors or governments. Nevertheless, the WMDs are the problems I shall focus on today – and they are substantial. Let me first put them in a **historical perspective.**

Wars are no longer likely to be waged for the grabbing of territory

Gas was used in the first World War and nuclear bombs in the Second. For the long term I am optimistic that there will be no world wars and that the still vast arsenals of nuclear weapons will not be used. Why? When we look back in history we can see that **quests for territory** have been one of the main causes of war. We can also see that i**deological or religious aims** have been behind many other armed campaigns.

I think these two main causes of armed conflicts between states are disappearing. Whether we want it or not the gradual **global integration** that is being brought about by the technical, economic, and information evolution is **gluing us together**. The increased interdependence and proximity will push relations between blocs and continents **toward peace.**

I admit there is some uncertainty. We can see today some unease between the US, long dominant in **As**ia and **China** as the fast rising economic giant of the region – with India two steps behind. The Taiwan issue is not without danger.

It has taken the world's countries long to get to this high level of interdependence.

UN collective security system was inoperative during the Cold War

The UN Charter of 1945 sought to provide a system for **collective security.** In cases of any threats to the peace or breaches of the peace the **Security Council** was authorized by the Charter to intervene – if need be with military force – to stop aggression and restore peace. In the practical political world it was unable to do so.

During the many years of the **Cold War** the **Communist camp** sought to expand territorially in the name of ideology and any collective security actions of the UN could be prevented by a Soviet **veto**. The West developed the policy of **containment** and states had to find their **security** through the right to **individual or collective self-defense**, through alliances – like NATO – or neutrality.

We should note, however, that even during the Cold War some agreements were made in the fields of **arms control and disarmament**: the Partial Test Ban Treaty prevented nuclear testing in the atmosphere and reduced radioactive fallout. The **Non Proliferation Treaty** provided a dual bargain under which non-nuclear weapon states committed themselves to remain without these weapons and the nuclear weapon states committed themselves to negotiate toward disarmament. **Biological weapons** were not believed useful and a convention prohibited production and possession of these weapons. Many bilateral arms control agreements were made between the US and the USSR. The second strike capability which both the US and he USSR retained led to what was called **MAD** – or mutually assured destruction. It gave them good reasons not to attack each other.

The end of Communism brought détente and a new security situation

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Communism the threats have reduced in most parts of the world and the **security against military attacks** has increased drastically. There is continued **détente** between all big powers. There are no significant territorial or ideological conflicts between them providing incentives for military action. In Europe the role of the military forces is no longer seen to be territorial defense but readiness for peace keeping.

In the fields of arms control and disarmament the global détente brought several welcome results, above all the conclusion of the Convention prohibiting for all states the production and possession of **Chemical Weapons Convention, the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty** and the expectation that agreement would be reached to stop all production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium for more nuclear weapons **(FMCT): the so called 'cut off'.**

The most important **joint UN action** made possible by the climate of détente was, of course, the authorization given to the broad alliance created by President Bush the elder to intervene in 1991 to **stop Iraq's naked aggression against and occupation of Kuwait.**

The discoveries in Iraq in 1991 undermined the confidence in the NPT

Through the UN authorized intervention in Iraq we discovered what détente, cooperation and the notion of collective security could achieve. However, through the **IAEA inspectors,** who went into Iraq after the cease- fire the world also discovered that Iraq, a state which was a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and had thus committed itself not to acquire nuclear weapons had, in fact, an advanced program for the enrichment of uranium and for the production of nuclear weapons. Later, UNSCOM inspectors brought evidence also of a significant program for biological weapons and even of the testing of B-weapons.

These discoveries could not but **shake the confidence in the reliability of the NPT and the safeguards** verification system, which was meant to deter and detect cheating. When in the same period already the earliest IAEA inspectors in North Korea concluded that the **DPRK** had not declared all the plutonium it had produced, the question was inevitably asked whether the NPT was like a big Swiss cheese full of holes. Was the world being lulled into **false sense of security** by the treaty regimes and the verification? What further unpleasant surprises might there be? Work started to bring about a drastic strengthening of the IAEA safeguards inspections and these efforts that led in 1997 to the adoption of new protocols for much more effective inspection.

Nevertheless, the events seem to have weakened the US dedication to and reliance on global arms control agreements and given rise to ideas about a policy of more active unilateral **counter-proliferation**. The concept was not

– and is not – terribly well defined but it certainly comprised options of special armed operations to stop the development of nuclear weapons capabilities. The Israeli bombing raid destroying the **OSIRAK** reactor in Iraq in 1981 is the example that comes to mind.

The many years during which Saddam Hussein was able to play **cat and mouse** with UN inspectors presumably further **eroded the US confidence** that international economic sanctions and inspection would bring credible assurance about the absence of any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Before 9/11 2001 neither the US nor any other members of the Security Council suspected that there was any Iraqi **nuclear threat** in the foreseeable future. Although there were suspicions that Saddam retained some biological or chemical weapons and missiles, Saddam was, as it was said, "**kept in his box".** Even so, to the US, as the rapidly growing only military superpower, Saddam Hussein must have appeared as an intolerable **defiance**. The temptation to go from containing him to replacing him was there. Regime change was desired but there was **no clear reason for war -- no casus belli**.

How did the non-existent WMDs become the casus belli?

We now know that in all likelihood Iraq destroyed most weapons of mass destruction in the summer of 1991. Yet, Iraq behaved as if it might still have prohibited weapons. Regardless of what might have been the reason for this behaviour in the 1990s – I shall not go into them -- in 2002 the US and the rest of the world **suspected** that the Iraqi conduct was linked to the existence of hidden WMDs.

These suspicions were fed nourishment by Iraqi defectors, who wished to see US military intervention – not UN inspection. Their messages and contrived information were warmly received by groups in Washington, which were eager to use arms to and secure a US friendly regime in Iraq. The arguments in favour of armed action varied: to some it was important that the stationing of US troops in Iraq could be less problematic than in Saudi Arabia and could be useful as a pressure on Iran. Moreover, the oil reserves of Iraq were the second largest in the region and important for future US imports.

Lack of plausible casus belli against IRAQ

While the US armed action against Afghanistan had been justified by the Taliban regime's hosting the authors of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 solid justifications for an armed attack on Iraq were not easily found. The allegations about Iraqi links to terrorists and about the existence illegal WMD programs never had much substance. However, where the evidence was weak it was spun into virtual reality and intelligence organizations gave the war- bent political leaders in the US and the UK what they looked for if not explicitly asked for. Too often intelligence abandoned its proper role as coldly seeking, coldly investigating and coldly analyzing information. Today they probably regret it. Who will believe them next time they cry wolf?

The period of UN and IAEA inspections in Iraq was not welcomed by all in Washington. Vice President Cheney said simply that inspection was worse than useless and he told Dr. ElBaradei (of the IAEA) and myself that the US would not hesitate to "discredit" the inspections "in favour of disarmament".

While on the one hand US authorities were helpful to the inspection organizations the governmental leadership must have found it irritating and inconvenient that independent professional international inspections found 'no smoking guns.' Indeed, it appears that some in the US leadership had become so convinced of their own arguments about WMDs that they believed the inspectors were lying and arranged to have me bugged. I only wish that once they were at this they had listened better to what I said…

The US chose to ignore that UN inspections did not confirm US allegations and that we even expressed skepticism against some intelligence information, which we were able to check – including some that Secretary of State Colin Powell presented to the Security Council. However, other members of the Security Council did not ignore what we said. They concluded that the inspections worked and should continue. What was the hurry? Tremendous pressure was exerted on these members of the Council to support armed action. We should appreciate that they stood fast. What would the world have thought of the Council today if it had authorized the war in March 2003? For that matter, what would the world have thought of

international inspection, if we had endorsed the intelligence that claimed the existence of WMDs?

The unleashing of the war. The lack of justifications

The official **legal justification** of the war has been that Iraq had violated a number of resolutions of the Security Council and that action was taken to "uphold the authority of the Council". However, it seems strange that individual members of the Council could have the right to uphold an authority that the majority does not want to exercise. If the US, UK and Spain had such an authority to intervene presumably Russia, China, France and Germany could have taken action – different action. It seems evident to me that it was for he Council as a whole to decide and that the Council was ignored.

The main **political justification** of the war was that Iraq had illegally retained **weapons of mass destruction** and that these constituted a threat to the US, the UK and the world. However, the closer we got to the day of unleashing the armed action the weaker the less credible the evidence looked. A contract between Iraq and Niger for the import of uranium oxide and mentioned by President Bush in his state of the Union message, was shown to have been a forgery…

If inspections had continued for another few months we would have been able to inspect all sites suspected by intelligence organizations and – as there were no weapons – we would have found them empty and so reported to the Security Council and to those who had given us the tips. **The war might not have been waged.** In such case Saddam would probably have remained in power. Perhaps he would have been like a Castro – a dictator to his own people but no great danger to his neighbours or the world.

However, the war was unleashed. The **collective security system** of the UN was ignored and a counter-proliferation action was undertaken **to identify and eliminate WMDs -- which did not exist.** The Iraq Survey Group (ISG), which was established by the CIA in the summer of 2003 to look for the weapons has recently made it known that no weapons can be found and that it makes no further efforts.

It is hard to resist the **reflection** that the war and the ISG operation was a **very costly** way of **concluding that there were no WMDs.** The UN

inspections cost some 80 million US dollars for a year and involved some 200-300 people. The cost of the war was high in terms of dead and wounded and damage of property. It required hundreds of thousands of men and hundreds of billions of dollars.

Another reflection is that it should now be natural for the US, which took over the role of the inspectors, to report to the Security Council that WMDs cannot be found and probably do not exist. Resolution 687 (1991), which has not been suspender, stated that the elimination of WMDs in Iraq constituted a first step toward the establishment of a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East. The need for such a zone has not diminished. However, the political timing must be right. The concept will not be seriously discussed in a period of high tension or conflict. The current contacts between Israel and Palestine might bring us a climate in which a zone free of WMDs or, more generally, a zone of security, can be discussed. Admittedly, the further development of the nuclear issue relating to Iran has an important impact. Should there be no arrangement under which Iran voluntarily suspended enrichment activities without time limit the prospects for progress toward a zone free of WMDs would be negatively affected.

A third reflection: It is welcome that the **elections** just held were much more successful than many had feared. An early declaration by the United States that it intends to withdraw all military forces and does not have the ambition to seek **military bases** in Iraq would strengthen confidence that the establishment of an independent, peaceful and democratic government and not the establishment of military bases was the main aim of the war and occupation.

The impact of the IRAQ invasion on the collective security system of the UN

From the viewpoint of the collective security system of the UN Charter, the extent to which the United States has claimed that it is free to take armed action is **worrisome**. Article 51 of the UN Charter recognizes a right of self-defense "when an armed attack occurs". However, the US has explained that in the era of weapons of mass destruction, long range missiles and terrorist groups, it feels at liberty to take armed action in **'anticipatory self-defense'** not only where it deems an attack **"imminent**" but also where it sees a **"a growing threat".** What is a 'growing danger?'

Considering the surprise terror attacks on the United States in 2001 **all governments** would probably maintain that they would see it as their duty to their own populations to take action – if need be even unilateral armed action – to seek to **prevent** a terror attack that they **learnt was coming**. They would not ask for a "permission slip" from the Security Council.

There are, however, two crucial problems with the claim of a right to such **anticipatory self-defense**:

- Before an attack has taken place, the knowledge about it is likely to depend upon **intelligence.** The Iraq affair does not give much confidence about national intelligence as a reliable basis. Where it turns out that the basis is erroneous, then what is meant to be anticipatory self-defense may become a totally unjustified attack.
- Although **"imminence"** may be a severe time requirement, "a **growing threat"** would be an unacceptably lax criterion.

It has been suggested that an effort should be made to **reformulate article 51** of the Charter to give some room for preemptive action. The high level panel that has recently reported to Kofi Annan rejects the suggestion. It warns that any widening of the right to self defense will be open to abuse by all states.

I agree with this view and find it more likely that an answer to the question when unilaterally decided self-defense is acceptable to the world community will slowly emerge through precedents. In each case the position of the Security Council will prove important. It will also be important, as Kofi Annan has noted, that the Security Council actively consider and monitor threats posed by possible weapons of mass destruction, giving all members the feeling that the issue is taken seriously and that there is a readiness to take joint action, where there is convincing evidence of a threat that is significant and near in time. Such evidence did not exist in March 2003.

Will the new US security agenda continue to consider the Security Council irrelevant when it does not support the US? Will the US continue to deemphasize reliance on and cooperation through formal treaty alliances and instruments and agreements? It is too early to know. It is difficult to understand the disdain – not to say the contempt – which the US has shown the UN. I do not see why the US could not loyally proceed in conformity with common multilateral regimes, including the UN, and only retain the

factual power, which it has, to go it alone when it perceives and extreme interest to do so.

Where are we going next? I shall first discuss the WMD threats linked to terrorist groups and thereafter the threats from WMDs in the hands of states.

*How is the world to meet the threats and actions **of terrorist groups?***

The first point to make, I think, is that terrorists do not live on clouds but must have their feet on the territory of states. It is important that the international community upholds the principle that **each government is obliged to ensure that its territory is not used** as a base for attacks on other states. It is legally correct and practically and politically sound. If there is a failure in this duty, then the world will endorse forcible intervention – as it did with the Taliban government in Afghanistan.

Second, broad international efforts must contine to ensure the **safe keeping of nuclear and other dangerous material** and equipment everywhere in the world to reduce the availability of such material and equipment. If the Pakistan government had exercised better control of its nuclear sector, Mr. Khan's shop for nuclear weapon designs and centrifuges would not have been in its dangerous business.

A resolution by the Security Council – Res. 1540 (2004) – urges more cooperation between states and more action by states to prevent proliferation of WMDs. A new interesting feature is that it demands of states not only to take specific action but also to adopt legislation prohibiting non-state actors from acquiring or producing WMDs.

Third, what is mostly needed immediately is intensified **international cooperation** in the day-to-day field work of the national intelligence, police and financial institutions of states to trace persons, resources, weapons and dangerous material.

The manner in which the world fights terrorism is important. To be sure, the motives of terrorists vary and many will be muddled. However, if reasonable non-armed measures can be taken, which reduce incentives to terrorism, they should be on the agenda. Brutal or illegal response measures are likely to breed further terrorism and attract civilian support for it.

States and WMDs

Even though there is some concern that terrorist groups might get hold of and employ **nuclear** weapons, the concern is much more acute regarding **nuclear weapons in the hands of states.** The attempted violations by the NPT-parties **DPRK,** Iraq and Libya come to mind and also the suspected but denied violation by **Iran,** which is also a party to the NPT.

How should the world community tackle these questions?

It is **Iran and North Korea (DPRK)** that today make us hold our breath and that raise a host of difficult questions and fears of domino effects should either acquire nuclear weapons. Both countries have acted in disregard of their safeguards obligation. **The DPRK**, which has renounced the NPT, has claimed that it is ready to deter foreign attacks by developing a nuclear weapon capacity but it has also declared that it is ready to "scrap" such capacity, if some conditions are fulfilled, including guarantees about security from attack**.**

Iran has declared that its intention is only to use its legal right under the NPT to enrich uranium in order to make fuel for its own power reactors. It has also signaled that while it cannot accept being deprived of this right it might consider voluntarily suspending some activities, including enrichment, if the quid pro quo was sufficient.

In both cases a number of states are at the present time seeking solutions **through negotiations**. This is welcome. The **war** that was waged **in Iraq is not a model** that many want to see followed.

In my view, solutions for the DPRK and IRAN must aim at ensuring that both states **renounce** all nuclear activities through which bomb grade material could be produced and that they accept **comprehensive verification. The minimum** in that regard would be full acceptance of the additional safeguards agreements of the IAEA. To induce them to make such commitments will require some attractive quid pro quo.

As regards the **DPRK** I submit it might be wise to make the **economic part** of the package attractive by constructing it in a way that would help the country to **gradually exit** from the system that has brought it to misery and starvation. China would be the model.

The economic part of a longer term agreement with **Iran** will need to cover trade and investment relations, perhaps support for WTO membership. If Iran is to forego the investments it has made in infrastructure for an indigenous production of enriched uranium for use in power reactors a multilateral assurance of supply of uranium fuel at market prices must evidently be given and seems, indeed, to be on the table.

It is my belief that both in the case of Iran and the case of the DPRK some **guarantees may need to be given about security** against attacks from the outside.

The diplomatic game is still on – which is better than seeing it off. Newspaper speculations about the bombing of Iranian installations and about Iranian retaliation are added features in the game. Let us hope that all sides feel the seriousness of the situation.

Concluding remarks: the way forward

I confess I see dangers on the road traveled in the last few years by the US administration. Further exploration of **new types of American nuclear weapons** will not, I think, induce others to disarm and to renounce weapons options that are technically open to them. There may be **more weapons** and conflicts rather than less on this road. A further development of the shield against incoming missiles might well set off countermeasures by China and Russia.

By contrast, a **resumption** of the kind of leadership that the US used to exercise in the arms control and **disarmament fields** would, I think, be greeted with **enthusiasm** by the whole world and could lead **all** away from WMDs and toward greater security. The US used to be a lead wolf – not a lone wolf. I shall suggest some actions that I think would lead out of the current stalemate:

- More attention should be devoted to solving the political, **security** and social **problems** that almost invariably underlie the development or acquisition of WMDs; this is true for Iran and the DPRK.
- US ratification of a comprehensive **test ban** treaty would be likely to have a positive domino effect, including China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Israel. It would make the development of new types of nuclear weapons much more difficult. Continued non-ratification could have high costs.
- The conclusion of a verified **cut off** of the production of fissionable material for weapons combined with agreements on reductions in the number of weapons would gradually reduce the deadly arsenals.
- A greater reliance on independent and professional **international inspection** with broad rights to access on the ground and with some intelligence supplied by national authorities, would give governments, governing boards and the Security Council unbiased assessments. UNMOVIC, which I headed, might be given further functions by the Security Council in the Council's proposed stronger engagement to counter WMDs. For instance, as a subsidiary and advisory body of the Council perhaps it could perform **challenge inspections** in the fields of biological weapons and missiles, where no inspection mechanisms exist.
- As someone who has been responsible for the operation of verification and inspection, may I conclude by saying that in foreign affairs, as in medicine, you cannot have successful operations unless you make correct diagnoses. You need to apply critical thinking to get these diagnoses. If you do not but instead create a virtual reality that reality may collide with the reality on the ground. This, in my view, is what happened in Iraq.