The Fundamental Dilemmas of the United Nations:

Challenges for the New UN in the 21st Century

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<Abstract>

In recent years, the advancement of globalization has developed a limited capacity of one state to deal with extremely diverse and complex problems, making it inevitable and necessary for states to cooperate with other states or non-state actors in resolving issues. Inspired by this fact of current international relations, there is a growing movement, especially among liberalists, toward regarding the UN as a world government, which exists above all the nation states and possesses the ability to deal with issues of the world community at an international level. This paper analyzes the raison d'etre of the United Nations and its possibility of functioning as a world government.

Introduction

The United Nations (UN), successor of the League of Nations, was established in 1945 under the premise of building a comprehensive organization not only in terms of its membership, but also in terms of the breadth of its competencies. Some six decades later, the UN is now the only universal international organization in the world. The number of its participants has expanded from only 50 countries at the time of its foundation, to 192 of 194 independent nations. Since its inception, the UN has been dealing with a wide range of problems confronting the international community, from the maintenance of world peace to the preservation of cultural and natural sites. The UN provides a forum for its member states, who seek resolutions and balance for conflicting interests of various nations.

In recent years, however, the swift advancement of globalization has led to a limited capacity of one individual nation-state to tackle extremely diverse and complex problems. This made it inevitable and necessary for states to cooperate with other states or non-state actors in resolving issues. This fact led to a growing movement, especially among liberals and idealists, toward regarding the UN as a world government, which exists above all the nation-states and possesses this ability to deal with issues of the world community at an international level. The UN supposedly denies an aspiration for such a role. Yet, the truth lies in their own publications. For instance, acknowledging the increasing diversification of issues, the United Nations Human Development Report of 1994 states:

> Mankind's problems can no longer be solved by national governments. What is needed is a World Government. This can best be achieved by strengthening the United Nations Systems. In some cases, this would mean changing the role of UN agencies from advice-giving to implementation. Thus, the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) would

become the World Ministry of Agriculture, UNIDO (United Nations Industrialized

Development Organization) would become the World Ministry of Industry, and the ILO

(International Labor Organization) the World Ministry of Social Affairs. (1994, 88)

However, the term world government used here has somewhat of a different connotation

compared to a government for a sovereign nation. As David Kay, a Senior Fellow at the Potomac

Institute for Policy Studies, describes in his book *The Changing United Nations*, "[The position

of the UN in the world is] similar but not analogous to that of national governments within

states" (1977, 59). It does not refer to a government of a sovereign state, but rather, indicates a

supranational organization that effectively organizes its member states and acts only in

accordance with global needs and consensus. Given this, the expectations of the international

community for the UN as the world government can be broadly divided into four categories:

    1. Enhancing international peace and security with legitimate binding authority;

    2. Establishing effective and peaceful means for settling international issues;

    3. Providing comprehensive aid to undeveloped and developing countries and;

    4. Serving as a central figure in balancing the conflicting interests of its member states in

      order to fulfill these goals.

By assessing its past performance, however, it is difficult to conclude that the UN is

successfully meeting these expectations. The breakout of the Cold War made it virtually

impossible for the UN to be effectively engaged in its core task of maintaining international

peace and security. While promoting international peace and human rights as one of its main

goals, the UN is often accused of being ineffective in settling conflicts, preventing genocide, and

other crimes against humanity. For instance, its primary decision-making body, the Security

Council was largely criticized for its failure of preventing the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The

ineffective performance of the UN, especially in crisis prevention, caused great frustration,

contributing to the growing image of impotent UN among its opponents. As David Kopel

criticizes: "waiting for the United Nations to act is often just as futile as waiting for Godot, and

hundreds of thousands or millions of people die while waiting" (Kopel, Gallant, & Eisen, 2006,

102).

This by no means implies that the issues the international community faces today are

unsolvable. Rather, it is more appropriate to assume that the problem lies in its structure, and that

the UN itself is too fundamentally flawed to function as a world government. First and foremost,

the UN was not initially designed to function as a world government; therefore, it is irrational to

expect the UN to fill this sort of role. The founders (i.e., the victorious Allied powers) created

the UN in order to hold international security issues under their surveillance, but not to establish

a world government with comprehensive abilities. Second, often criticized as a relic of World

War II, the UN system has not been able to break away from the power relationship constructed

as a result of World War II. The organization's structure still clearly reflects the circumstances of

its founding, which has become anachronistic and therefore, needs to be reformed. As long as the

power of veto remains in the hands of the permanent members of the Security Council (i.e., the

victorious powers of World War II), efficient and effective decision-making will remain almost

impossible. Third, the principle of national sovereignty, one of the core principles of the UN,

inevitably hinders the smooth and cohesive operation of the United Nations and undermines

cooperation between the member states. This principle deprives the UN of binding authority and

makes it ineffective in solving controversial issues. Lastly, there is a worldwide tendency to

disrespect the UN and a lack of commitment from its member states. Some member states,

particularly the United States in recent years, tend to regard the UN as incompetent and

important decisions have been often made outside of UN jurisdiction. The primary arguments of this essay will be focused on the flaws of the United Nations in acting as a world government. It also seeks possible solutions for these problems, which would allow the UN to function more efficiently and coherently in accordance with the needs of the international community.

Historical Background

Before discussing these flaws, we need to briefly look back at the history of the UN's foundation, which will give us a better understanding of how and when these structural flaws were generated. The League of Nations, founded at the end of the First World War, was defunct for many years due to the inadequate normative provisions, lack of authority, as well as its failure in preventing the outbreak of World War II. The United Nations was created as a successor to the League of Nations under the strong leadership of the victorious Allied powers of World War II (particularly, the United States, Britain, and Soviet Union). Although the UN was designed as a comprehensive organization which would deal with all sorts of issues, its founders envisioned its primary goals as the following:

1. Promotion of international peace and security by keeping world order;

2. Protection of human rights and enhancement of international law;

3. Further economic development of the world community, including comprehensive aids for under developing countries. (Garies & Varwick, 2005, 57)

No two issues have beleaguered and divided the international community more than the issues of peace and security. Although the UN Charter proposes these as equally important goals, it is undeniable that the founders (i.e., the victorious Allied powers) were more concerned about security issues than the other two after two devastating worldwide wars. The lessons emerging

from the fate of the League of Nations, which failed due to its significant lack of enforcement power, was an important point of contact. The victorious Allied powers, acknowledging themselves as watchdogs of international security, created the Security Council, which accepts "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security" (Article 23). Article 42 states that every issue related to security has to be dealt with by this council, which has the right to enforce measures "by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security" (UN Charter, 1945). "The assumption was," as Donald Altschiller explains, "Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States, allies against Nazi Germany, would continue to act together in the Security Council" (1993, 195). These countries positioned themselves as permanent members in the Council. This guarantees their ability to exert their influence over security issues at the international level, unlike nonpermanent members, which are elected for a two-year term from among the member states. The ultimate intention of the founders was, therefore, not to create a world government, but to hold international security issues under their surveillance, "by arranging for a Security Council in which the five 'Big Powers' of the time would act in concert" (Altschiller, 1993, 195). Although the creation of the Security Council was based on a consensus among the permanent members, it also reflected a realistic acceptance of the fact by smaller states that "the UN could not undertake enforcement action against its strongest members or without their concurrence" (Karns & Mingst, 2004, 111). Most importantly, the founders crafted the right of veto and vested this capacity only in the permanent members so as to crystallize their international positions and influence over security issues. As controversial it has been, this veto power became one of the major impediments that undermined the UN capability and, to some degree, made it an undemocratic organization.

Although usually referred to as veto power or the right of veto, the word "veto" itself is not stated in the UN Charter. Instead, it is implied. According to Article 27, which rules the decision making process of the Security Council, decisions related to "procedural matters" can be made by nine affirmative votes out of fifteen members (a simple majority), whereas actions of "all other matters" (i.e., non-procedural matters, such as a resolution authorizing the use of collective force) can only be passed by nine affirmative votes including the consenting votes of all the permanent members (a limited majority) (UN Charter, 1945). In other words, affirmative votes of all five permanent members—the United Kingdom, the People's Republic of China, France, Russia, and the United States—have to be included in the nine pro votes in order for bills on non-procedural matters to be approved. This means that each permanent member is granted great authority that can override resolutions of the Security Council even if all the other members of the council approve. Since this gives them such a great authority, with which they can protect their vital interests, the establishment of veto power was crucial interest of the permanent members at the founding conference of the UN in San Francisco in 1945. Especially for the United States, it was "an absolute condition" to join the UN (Eban, 1995, 42). Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States would have joined the UN without veto power. Some countries were concerned about the excessively strong authority that could be abused for the sake of national interests, and not for world good.

The UN: A Relic of World War II

Veto Power

Veto power in the Security Council was, not surprisingly, doomed to be abused. The right of veto, the nature of which is largely intertwined with national interests, has caused critical dissonance in the Security Council, making it an inefficient decision-making body. For example, during the Cold War, the antagonistic relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union was brought into the Security Council, and veto power was overused by both the U.S. and the USSR at every opportunity. Table I shows the record of vetoes in the Security Council. From 1946 to 1965, for instance, during the period in which the Cold War intensified the most, the number of vetoes by the Soviet Union amounted to106 (Global Policy Forum, 2006). The Soviet Union used veto power not only to block action on many peace and security issues but also to block admission of Western-supported new members and nominees for secretary-general. On the other hand, the United States did not exercise its veto until the 1970s, reflecting its predominant status in the international community. However, after using its first veto power regarding a crisis in Rhodesia in 1970, the U.S. has become by far the most frequent user of the veto, most of which were against resolutions criticizing Israel. Since only one negative vote from any permanent members can nullify a resolution altogether, the right of veto has often been exploited for protecting national interests whenever the resolution contains the possibility of affecting the vital interests of one of the permanent members.

Table I   Vetoes in the Security Council, 1946-2007

Period	China[a]	France	Britain	U.S.	USSR/ Russia	Total
1946-1955	1	2			80	83
1956-1965		2	3		26	31
1966-1975	2	2	10	12	7	33
1976-1985		9	11	34	6	60
1985-1996		3	8	24	2	37
1996-2007	3			12	2	17
Total	6	18	32	82	123	261

Source: Global Policy Forum, 2008
Notes: a. Between 1946 and 1971, the Chinese seat on the Security Council was occupied by the Republic of China (Taiwan).

One of the examples of this is the stance of the United States on issues related to Israel. It is widely known that the United States hesitates to take a firm stance against Israel due to various complicated factors including the large American Jewish population and their tremendous influence on national politics. At the same time, security interests contribute to the pro-Israel posture of the United States. Given the antagonistic relationship between the United States and certain Arab countries, it seems that the United States expects Israel to play the role of watchdog in the Middle East. This is reflected in U.S. government's effort in trying to forge an amicable relationship with Israel. The United States, therefore, has almost always supported Israel at any cost even though Israel, since its formation, has often taken actions that perpetuate worldwide criticism. This should be not surprising that this stance of the U.S. government is also reflected in the Security Council. The veto power has been abused by the United States to shield Israel from international censor and sanctions, which contradicted world consensus, yet protected U.S. national interests. In recent years, this tendency has accelerated. In total, twenty vetoes have been

cast by the permanent members since 1990, of which fifteen were invoked by the United States (Global Policy Forum, 2008). Given the fact that eleven out of the fifteen cases were directly related to Israel (most of them were condemnations), it is enough to conclude that the United States has exploited its veto power for American national interests, not for world good.

This example clearly illustrates that it would be almost impossible for the UN to play a role as the world expects so long as it is constrained by the right of veto, or national interests. As Kay states, "In the present climate of international politics, one cannot realistically expect the UN to solve issues in which the vital interests of one or more of the major powers are involved" (1977, 5). In other words, since the permanent members are able to push their national interests with an ultimate form, i.e., repealing a resolution through veto, it is extremely difficult to reach a solution by building consensus. Although the United States and the Soviet Union were used as examples, it must be noted that this kind of pursuit of national interests over world benefit could be taken by any permanent member vested with veto powers. The veto power has always been controversial among small states and middle powers. The increased activities of the Security Council in the 1990s highlighted this problem even more, leading to a great dissatisfaction among many members, who push strongly for reform in the council's membership in order that it reflect "the world of the twenty-first century, not the world of 1945" (Karns & Mingst, 2004, 111). Moreover, problems in the UN are not limited to the Security Council. Besides the Security Council and the right of veto, some evidence elsewhere in the UN and its charter indicates the historical anachronism prevailing in the UN system.

Enemy State Clauses and Disproportionate Distribution of Power

First, Articles 53, 77, and 107 of the UN Charter clearly demonstrate that the UN is based largely on the national power of the countries at the end of World War II. These articles, often referred to as 'enemy states clause,' define certain countries, including Germany, Japan, Italy and other Axis powers, as "enemy states," and sets them apart as exceptions of the principle of collective security (UN Charter, 1945). Although Article 53 does not explicitly name these countries, it contains enough implication by stating enemy states "applies to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter" (UN Charter, 1945). Japan, one of the seven nations labeled as enemy by the former Allied powers during World War II, has been calling for removal of this clause from the Charter, denouncing such articles as "anachronistic" (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007).

Second, the UN is often criticized because some of the permanent members in the Security Council have disproportionately strong voices when compared to their actual national power in the present international community. Since the end of World War II, the structure of the world has dramatically changed. Accordingly, this has had a great impact on the power relationships in the international community. If the founders had an idea that the permanent members in the Security Council should reflect the actual power relationships of the world, the status quo is hardly satisfactory as the distribution of national power has changed drastically since 1945.

Although it is difficult to perfectly measure one nation's capability, since that capability inevitably changes depending on the criteria, economic indicators are one of the most commonly used in measuring national power. For instance, the issue of financial contributions to the UN is often cited as an example of this disproportionate share of power among the member states. The

UN relies on assessed and voluntary contributions from its member states for its funds. Though it is not stated in the UN Charter, by convention, the amount assessed to the UN is mainly determined by each country's solvency, based on its economic power (i.e., factors such as Gross National Income, population and level of national debt are considered when calculating).

Table II and III show the top five contributors and the permanent members' contribution to the UN regular budget. In the fiscal year of 2006, the top five contributors were: the United States, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, with China (2.05%) and the Russian Federation (1.10%) ranking 9th and 16th , respectively, (United Nations Association of the United States of America, 2008). In considering these figures, it should be noted that the Japanese share of expenses (roughly 20%) far exceeds the sum of four of the permanent members' share (roughly 15%), all except the United States.

Table II.   Top Five Contributors to the UN Regular Budget (2006).

Nation	Assessed Percentage	Amount in US Dollars
United States	22.00	$423,464,855
Japan	19.47	$374,727,900
Germany	8.66	$147,825,532
United Kingdom	6.13	$104,563,268
France	6.03	$102,907,868

Source: United Nations Association of the United States of America, 2006

Table III　　Contributions to the UN Regular Budget from the Permanent Members of the
　　　　　　Security Council (2006)

Nation	Assessed Percentage	Amount in US Dollars
China	2.05	$35,036,460
France	6.03	$102,907,868
United Kingdom	6.13	$104,563,268
Russia	1.10	$18,772,580
United States	22.00	$423,464,855

Source: United Nations Association of the United States of America, 2006

Also, ironically, if the share of Japan and Germany, not permanent members but defined

as "enemy states" in the UN Charter, is combined, it accounts for roughly 28% of the whole

share. Some argue that the amount of cost burden is not directly connected to the qualification

for permanent membership. Yet, given that financial contributions to the U.N. are based on the

nation's economic power, it is inconceivable that Japan and Germany, which have the second

and third biggest economies in the world, are excluded from the permanent members.

These facts—the right of veto, the enemy states clause, and the disproportionate

distribution of power—are the major targets of critics who argue that the UN is a anachronistic

relic of World War II. Moreover, some agencies of the UN, especially the Security Council, lack

legitimacy and democratic structure. The right of veto, granted only to certain countries, and thus

the most undemocratic system among all, inevitably makes emergency decision-making difficult

and the whole council ineffective.

Doctrine of National Sovereignty

The right of veto, as discussed above, is one of the major impediments to building up consensus in a process of problem solving. In the UN system, however, even if consensus building is accomplished and it reaches an adoption as a resolution, it by no means guarantees an effective implementation of the resolution. Although numerous factors are involved, it is indisputable that the lack of UN's enforcing authority is derived from the doctrine of national sovereignty. The doctrine of national sovereignty, as stated under Article 1 of the UN Charter, is one of the most important principles of the UN. Article 2 enshrines that, "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state" (UN Charter, 1945). In other words, states do not recognize any higher governing authority and therefore, the UN is not authorized to interfere in domestic affairs in essence (Clause 4 of Article 2).

This doctrine, however, explicitly conflicts with some of the big goals the UN holds, such as promoting obedience to international law and the protection of human rights. Hence, not surprisingly, actions of the UN are inevitably constrained by this principle. However, with the lessons from the unsuccessful League of Nations, the founders were well aware of this contradiction, and made a key exception to this principle: the Security Council. The Charter sustains an exception of sovereignty-supreme principle only when the Security Council recognizes "the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression" (Article 39). Despite the Charter's emphasis on longstanding norm of nonintervention in the domestic affairs of states, it provides this key exception for enforcement action. Yet, deciding whether the problem falls in international or domestic jurisdiction often involves subjectivity. Human rights, for example, can be seen as a matter of domestic jurisdiction, but at the same time,

the Preamble and Article 1 of the UN Charter both contain references to human rights and obligate states to show "respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples" (UN Charter, 1945). Because of this jurisdictional ambiguity, the sovereignty-supreme principle is often abused politically, and some of the UN actions have been extremely controversial. For instance, if the definition of interference in domestic affairs is to intervene in a decision-making process of a certain nation-state from outside, various UN activities, such as humanitarian support and the provision of official development assistance, can be also considered intervention. In fact, most countries do not regard these UN activities (such as, humanitarian or developmental aid) as interference in domestic affairs. On the other hand, they denounce UN intervention as a violation of the principle of self-determination only when it comes to controversial political issues (e.g., human rights infringement or oppressive governance).

The doctrine of national sovereignty is one of the prime factors contributing to the lack of decisive power in the UN. As Kay argues, "Normally, the UN can merely propose solutions and recommend that national governments take particular actions" (1977, 60). Although pressure from the international community that accompanies UN resolutions sometimes plays a significant role, in a theoretical sense, the international law and UN resolutions do not have any binding authority so long as the UN abides by the doctrine of national sovereignty. The only exceptions are resolutions authorized by the Security Council, which have legal binding force to which member states must submit to, as stated under Article 25 (UN Charter, 1945). However, the UN Charter does not require ratification of the member countries for complementing resolutions of the Security Council, and decisions by the Security Council directly bind the target

country without ratification or approval of the other member states. The resolutions, therefore, can be significantly influenced by the self-interests of the permanent members.

Lack of Commitment

What the doctrine of national sovereignty implies is that the UN was never intended to be a world government which acts independently by its discretion, and exists above all sovereign states. Rather, it is an international organization which is based on the principle of multilateral cooperation among the member states, and can only function by the consensus and commitment of them (Kay, 1977, 2). President Franklin D. Roosevelt clearly addresses what founders expected of the UN in this statement from 15 June 1944:

> We are not thinking of a suprestate with its own police forces and other paraphernalia of coercive power. We are seeking effective agreement and arrangements through which the nations would maintain, according to their capacities, adequate forces to meet the needs of preventing war and of making impossible deliberate preparations for war, and to have such forces available for joint action when necessary. (U.S. Department of State Bulletins, 1994, 552-3)

From this perspective, we can draw the conclusion that, given the existing structure of the UN, it is inevitable for the member states to prioritize their national interests over world good.

The doctrine of national sovereignty has not only been undermining this decisive power, but also has abated its coherency. As Allphin Moore and Jerry Pubantz insist, "[The UN] acts effectively only by way of consensus;" lack of commitment from the member states towards the UN is the issue of critical importance (2004, 35). In addition to this, most importantly, the Cold War contributed to create an ineffective image of the UN and aggravated further disconnection

within the system. Right after the foundation of the UN, the growing antagonistic relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States finally came to the forefront of international politics, ushering the world into the advent of Cold War structure where the two super powers possessed far more influence on the world than that of the UN. In the Security Council, the two super powers repeatedly clashed with each other, making the UN an ineffective gigantic puppet. This inevitably generated the tendency of disrespect towards the UN among the member states. Consequently, the major powers tended to act and negotiate with the other countries outside the framework of the UN during this period (Cullen, 2004, 10). For instance, many significant treaties were concluded outside of the UN loop. According to Cullen, "All the major powers…were determined to ensure that their own vital interests would not be submitted to UN jurisdiction" (2004, 43). There was a pervasive perspective among member states that the UN, lacking decisive power and depreciated by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, was virtually powerless and did not deserve their commitment. This tendency has still lingered in the international community, even after the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. One of the cases in which the lack of member states' commitment toward the UN can be clearly seen is conflict in Kosovo in 1999 and the attacks against Iraq since 2003.

In 1999, Kosovo was in the middle of an ethnic conflict. Starting in 1991, the civil war in former Yugoslavia split the country. In the state of Kosovo, it spurred an independence movement by ethnic Albanian separatists, which developed into an armed clash with federal forces. Considering this as a critical issue, the UN sought a resolution to impose arms embargoes. However, the UN could not take a firm stance due to the fact that some member states were experiencing similar ethnic problems and were afraid that the nationalist movement in Kosovo would influence their own countries. While the UN was hesitating, on March 24th, 1999, the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) launched aerial attacks against Yugoslavia to

protect Kosovo in an excuse for brutal assaults in the conflict. This was the first time that the

NATO took direct military action and, most importantly, the military action was initiated based

on a solo judgment of NATO without a UN resolution. The implication of this NATO military

action being undertaken without UN sanction was the prevailing uncertainty about the UN

capability in crisis prevention (UN Press Release, 1999). The international community clearly

remembered the tragedy in Rwanda, in which the UN peace-keeping force could not effectively

contribute to dispute settlement. There was virtually no expectation for the UN to take a

leadership in the case of Kosovo. Moreover, constrained by its budget austerity, neither did the

UN have capability to arrange large-scaled peacekeeping unit at that time. Therefore, the

consensus of the West was to introduce NATO-led peacekeeping forces without relying on the

Security Council. In this series of operations, not only did the UN lose credibility for being

unable to take any specific leadership or action, but it also had to withdraw U.N. Preventive

Deployment Forces deployed in Macedonia as China exercised a veto, fearing the spreading

influence from conflict in Kosovo.

While NATO's intervention in Kosovo was as a result of agreement among western

nations, the invasion of Iraq of 2003 is often cited as an example of U.S. unilateralism and its

lack of commitment to the UN. Even though the U.S. played a central role in establishing the UN,

it disrespect for the UN in the last two decades has been one of the longstanding problems that

contributes to the ineffectiveness of the UN. When the United States relegated the legitimacy of

attacking Iraq to the United Nations, it failed to meet approval as there was no clear evidence to

justify the attack against Iraq for possessing weapons of mass destruction. Instead, many member

states, including the majority of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council

(including France, Germany, Russia, and China) called for a diplomatic settlement. The United States, nevertheless, declared war on Iraq, ignoring the resolution and international law as soon as the acquisition of consensus turned out to be impossible. In other words, it appeared that all the United States wanted was a justification of its pursuit of national interest, drawing upon the UN as an organization of world consensus. As John Agnew, a professor at the University of California, Los Angels, argues, "[T]he United States now has a government impatient with international ties and willing to exercise its military power in pursuit of its national interest without the backing of the international community" (2003, 873). These dogmatic U.S. foreign policies received censure and criticism from its supporting countries, such as France and Germany, which can possibly undermine relationships with these countries. There is no doubt that the United States possesses overwhelming power in almost all fields (e.g., politics, military, and economy) at the international level. However, if the United States continues to underestimate the importance of international cooperation at the UN by acting unilaterally, it will inevitably contribute to the proliferation of a disrespectful tendency towards the UN, which would further undermine the UN's capacity to maintain international peace and order.

UN Military Force and Collective Actions

One of the factors contributing to the lack of commitment to the UN, especially when it comes to security issues, is the fact that the UN does not have an official armed force. The UN possesses the ability to initiate collective security, as it Chapter VII states, "given the proper international environment, the entire global community can mobilize a collective response to aggression through the UN" (UN Charter, 1945). However, the fact that the UN does not have maintained official force makes effective implementation of collective security extremely

difficult (Altschiller, 1993, 39). The UN Security Force is a permanent international military force, which is deployed with the purpose of military enforcement measures (such as protection and repression of invasion) under the collective security system stated in the UN Charter. The UN Security Force has never been mobilized in the past (though the Korean War can be considered an exception, whether it strictly falls in the category of a UN collective action remains controversial). Consequently, sanctions or military actions authorized by the UN inevitably lack enforcing authority. UN forces are not precisely the UN Security Forces, but they are Peace Keeping Forces. Literally, Peace Keeping Forces refer to the troops engaged in UN peacekeeping activities, such as promoting the domestic restoration of civil order by serving as an intermediary of armistice. Though there is no specific description in the UN Charter, the legitimacy of PKF is recognized by the International Court of Justice, and the General Assembly approved them in GA resolution 1854 (UN). Specifically, PKF are subject to the direct presidency of the UN and alike the other Peace Keeping Operation (PKO) personnel. They operate under the following circumstances:

1. Agreement of countries interested in the conflict

2. Endorsement of the international community including the Security Council

3. Provision of soldiers by the member states (Altschiller,1993, 21)

According to a UN report in July, 2006, current UN peace keeping forces have 73,008 soldiers, contributed by 108 member states (UN Month Report, 2006). As outlined under Article 43, the UN must appear to its member states to volunteer military personnel, but PKOs are extremely costly and it is very hard to get cooperation of the member states. As Altschiller argues, "Financing the peacekeeping forces has been a longstanding problem for the UN, partly because member nations have tended to withhold portions of their annual dues for various

political reasons" (1993, 23). Moreover, the fact that PKOs need the consent of the interest

countries sometimes "results in significant delays in responding to urgent crises, reducing the

world body's credibility as a potential deterrent to world-be aggressors" (Altschiller, 1993, 47).

Considering these conditions, it is absolutely imperative, if the UN were to function as a world

government, that the UN possesses military forces for deterrence and binding authority. Given

the current situation of the world in which many of people are suffering from unceasing conflict,

an effective UN Security Force is needed for enforcement and peacekeeping purposes

(Altschiller, 1993, 26).

Plans for the reform

Since its foundation, the UN has suffered from some fundamental flaws as an

international governmental organization that deals with various issues that the international

community is confronting. These flaws include the legacy of World War II steadfastly remaining

in its structure, veto power vested only within the permanent members of the Security Council,

the doctrine of national sovereignty in the UN Charter, the lack of martial force and binding

authority, and the lack of commitment to the UN among the member states. The UN is now

facing great difficulty in dealing with diverse and complex issues in the twenty-first century.

Almost everyone agrees that the UN needs some kind of reform, but there are sharp

disputes among member states over what kind of reform is needed and for what purpose.

Developed nations ask for more efficiency and productivity from the UN's staff and reduction in

programs and activities while maintaining their power within the system. On the other hand, the

developing nations want greater political and economic equity through redistribution of power

within the system (Karns & Mingst, 2004, 133). Either way, radical revision of the UN system is

indispensable and urgent for the UN to function as a leading world organization which can effectively govern sovereign nations and efficiently work on problem solving.

On September 23, 2003, UN Secretary General Kofi Anan proposed the establishment of the Secretary General's High-level Panel in his general speech before the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Hannay Lord, a member of the British Diplomatic Service, who has served as Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the UN, calls it "the single most far-reaching official review of the UN's role" (2005, 76). The Panel, composed of 16 experts from all over the world, was designed for reforming the UN system in order to promote its effectiveness. The objectives of the far-reaching reform range from issues related to poverty and environmental contamination to security issues such as terrorism and interstate conflicts. The most noteworthy reform proposals are the ones related to the Security Council, PKOs, and the UN Charter.

The document acknowledges that, "[The Security Council] has not always been equitable in its actions, nor has it acted consistently or effectively," which "has gravely damaged its credibility" (2003, para. 246). It claims, "[T]he challenge for any reform is to increase both the effectiveness and the credibility of the Security Council" (2003, para. 248). The Panel proposed the following two alternative reforms:

- Model A: provides six new permanent seats, with no veto created, and three two-year term non-permanent seats, dividing among the major regional areas

- Model B: provides for no permanent seats but creates a new category of eight four year renewable-term seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat, dividing among the major regional areas (2003, para. 252, 253)

Although the proposed plan insists that, "the institution of the veto has an anarchronistic character that is unsuitable for the institution in an increasingly democratic age," neither mode includes any modification of existing member states' veto power or expansion of it (2003, para. 256). Given the global consensus that veto power is an explicit impediment in the Security Council, no other excuse fully explains this halfway reform than to maintain national interests of the permanent members. Although the Panel states that the comprehensive reform of the Security Council should be completed by the year 2020, as long as the existing permanent members prioritize their national interests over world good and against the modification of veto, the reform of veto will never be implemented. So long as veto power, which should be regarded as a fundamental flaw, remains in the hands of the Security Council, the UN will never be able to function as expected.

In addition, the Panel proposes some revisions to the UN Charter since some articles are outdated and do not match the needs of the world any more. One of them is the revision of the enemy states clause, which is, as mentioned earlier, generally considered a relic of World War II. It states, "Article 53 and 107 (reference to enemy states) are out dated and should be revised," explaining that "[t]he Charter should reflect the hopes and aspirations of today, not the fears of 1945" (2003, para. 298).

The consolidation plan of UN forces is also considered in this revision, as it states, "advance military capacities should be encouraged…to place them at the disposal of the United Nations" (2003, para. 219). The use of these military forces is mainly constrained in peacekeeping operations (2003, para. 218). As Altschiller points out, "knowledge that the United Nations has such a capability (strong military force) will also enhance its ability to deter breaches of the peace, and so make actual enforcement or later peacekeeping less necessary"

(1993, 38). The establishment of independent and powerful military forces is imperative from the perspective of binding authority and deterrence. Equally, consolidating members' commitment to the UN is essential because it can act only in accordance with global consensus. Yet, at this point, the international community is not fully ready to realize it since accepting the consolidation of the UN's authority implies the forfeit of their national sovereignty to a large degree.

Conclusion

Even if these reform plans were completed, the UN would still have a long way to go in order to function as a world government of the sort that the international community expects. This is partly because the expectation is often too comprehensive and idealistic. It seems that people have tended to ask more of the UN and expect additional versatility from its performance in these decades, especially since the end of the Cold War. As we have seen, however, it is irrational to uphold this idea of UN versatility because the system of the UN is fundamentally flawed to function as a world government. As the former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once said, "The United Nations is not…a superstate, able to act outside the framework of decisions by its member governments. It is an instrument for negotiation… [it] can serve, but not substitute itself for the efforts of its member governments" (2004, qtd. Moore and Pubantz, 35-36).

However, as the theory of UN versatility is too idealistic, the idea of UN inutility is equally too extreme and short sighted. The UN has limited capabilities just as any other institution and it is irrational to judge this limitation as ineptness and incompetence on the part of the UN. Rather, considering its contribution to the world in numerous fields in the past sixty years, the UN is undoubtedly a necessary institution. However, given the emerging world order,

which is fraught with local and regional conflicts, growing health crisis, such as HIV/AIDS and increasing issues related to economic inequality, the UN must expand its functions. Admittedly, for solving all the great difficulties that the international community is confronted with, the current UN capability is never satisfactory. It might be that the tether of current UN capability is faithfully reflecting the fragmented modern international politics in which nations are not yet ready to give the UN the degree of sovereignty that is needed for the UN to function properly. Yet, the world should realize the underlying causes of longstanding human conflicts, including poverty, antagonism, racism, and economic inequality, and UN's potential to solve these problems as the only universal international organization in the world.

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