Partners in peace? The UN, regional organizations, and peace-keeping*

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Living in the shadow of the United Nations and paralysed by the superpowers for much of the post-World War II period, few regional organizations have lived a celebrated life. Few issues proved as divisive and contentious at the drafting of the United Nations Charter as the UN’s future relationship to regional organizations.1 If some at San Francisco believed that the future global organization might be assisted by several regional pillars, the ‘Wilsonian tendency to identify regionalism with war-breeding competitive alliances survived’, and most who were present at the creation were determined to ensure that the future global organization had seniority and superiority over any present or future regional organization.2 Although Chapter VIII of the UN Charter did stake out a potential role for regional organizations, including the possibility that they might prevent conflicts from being referred to the Security Council, the language adopted reflected the contentious and unresolved nature of the proceedings: ‘The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlements of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council.’ The subsequent forty-five years suggests that the UN found only limited use for regional organizations.3

That no lasting and well-defined relationship ever emerged between the UN and regional organizations can also be attributed to superpower conflict that both paralysed the UN and viewed regional organizations as an extension of the Cold War. Although some regional organizations made important contributions to

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regional security and occasionally fulfilled the spirit of Chapter VIII, any trend toward regionalism at the outset of the post-World War II period was largely engulfed by the centrifugal forces of the Cold War; indeed, many of the regional organizations that emerged after World War II, for instance, NATO the WTO, METO, ANZUS, were creatures of the Cold War contest and not created to fulfil the promise of Chapter VIII. Stunted and then ignored, regional organizations were frequently little more than bystanders to unfolding international events.4

Notwithstanding this rather ignoble past, the centrifugal nature of post-Cold War politics has encouraged regionalism and, hence, a reconsideration of regional security organizations. Specifically, the end of the Cold War has brought new life to the United Nations, renewed promise to regional organizations, and new thoughts concerning how regionalism and globalism might be paired to advance international order. Recognizing that the two could work together to fulfil a shared goal of Pacific dispute settlement and global justice, Boutros-Ghali wrote in An Agenda for Peace that the future security order should realize the promise of Chapter VIII because ‘regional action’ could foster security and ‘contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus, and democratization in international affairs.’ 5 More recently, the office of the Secretary-General has observed:

In view of the enormously increased demand for international action it would seem timely now to reach a better common understanding of where the comparative advantage lies between the universal and regional organizations and how to optimize the contribution of each to joint efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security.6

Although thus far the record of success is spotty and varied, the UN has teamed up with regional organizations in Cambodia (with ASEAN), in Bosnia (with NATO), in Haiti and El Salvador (with the OAS), in Liberia (with ECOWAS), in Burundi and Rwanda (with the OAU).7 Indeed, more than ever regional organizations and the United Nations appear to be working toward similar goals: officials of both the United Nations and regional organizations speak of the need to create security communities.8

This essay explores the emerging post-Cold War relationship between the UN and regional organizations within the evolving nature of the UN’s peace operations. Peace operations, moreover, offer a useful vehicle for exploring the long-standing debate in international relations theory over whether regionalism or globalism represents a better mechanism for Pacific dispute settlement.9 In contrast to a pronounced tendency by some scholars and practitioners to treat these as

7 See ibid., for a review of past partnerships between the UN and regional organizations.
9 See Claude, Swords into Plowshares, pp. 102–13, for a discussion of the merits and demerits of each approach.
incompatible approaches, Chapter VIII and recent discussions concerning the architecture of peace operations suggest a possible functional division of labour between regional organizations and the UN. To explore this possibility, I proceed in the following manner. The first section outlines the UN’s emerging role in the post-Cold War order, with a focus on the three distinct phases of the UN’s peace operations: peacemaking, peace-keeping, and peace-building. The second section discusses the determinants of regional organizations’ relative strength, competence, and willingness to assist the UN’s peace operations. Despite the recent pronouncements of a possible division of labour, there are various tensions that accompany this partnership, including one that is quite familiar to students of international relations and alliance politics: arms versus autonomy. I conclude with some observations on the enduring dialogue on the relationship between regionalism and globalism in security affairs.

The UN in the new world order

To better understand the potential nexus between the United Nations and regional organizations requires exploring the UN’s present and projected role in confronting threats to international peace and security. I want to make two claims. First, although the UN is ostensibly a global organization, in fact it is an organization that is dedicated to Third World and North–South issues. As Anthony Parsons observes, the UN, far from maintaining a global jurisdiction, is generally ‘preoccupied with the problems of the newly independent majority, namely the dangerous disputes in the so-called Third World’. On few occasions has the UN involved itself in East–West or Euro–Atlantic relations; its primary jurisdiction has been North–South relations and the Third World, notably decolonization and development. This southerly focus is as true today as it was during the UN’s first forty years; in this respect, while the end of the Cold War unleashed a new round of UN activism, this activism continues to be directed at the same locale.

The second, more involved, claim is that there has been a decided shift in the UN’s security activities since the end of the Cold War that reflects an important development in the prevailing belief among member states concerning what best fosters international order. Whereas once the UN was solely concerned with establishing and reinforcing the principle of juridical sovereignty—that states recognize each other’s existence and honour the principle of non-interference—there is increased conviction that empirical sovereignty—states having some degree of legitimacy and control over their society and within their borders—enables states to uphold the norms of international society, juridical sovereignty, and international order. Simply put, the UN reflects the growing conviction that in order for states to be at peace with their neighbours they must be at peace with themselves. Below I elaborate on these points.

During the Cold War the UN’s security agenda concerned the Third World in general and decolonization in particular. From the beginning the UN indicated that it would be actively concerned with decolonization because of its normative imperatives and security implications. Articles XI, XII, and XIII explicitly recognized that decolonization was a peace and security issue; indeed, over time the ‘conviction . . . spread that the continued existence of any dependency by itself created a threat to peace and security’. 13 In short, a principal purpose of the UN was to facilitate the transition from the era of empires to the era of sovereignty; to globalize and universalize sovereignty as the basis of relations among states and as the basis of international order.

An underlying fear, however, was that because many of the newly independent territories that were decolonizing in the name of self-determination contained, in essence, ‘multiple selves’, their governments might attempt to create a ‘whole personality’ through territorial adjustment. UN officials, who were intent on ensuring that independence should not lead to challenges to juridical sovereignty and border conflicts, were joined by many Third World leaders who embraced juridical sovereignty as a means for preserving their security. The UN, frequently at the request of Third World leaders, increasingly echoed the view that considerations of empirical sovereignty should not be used to delay decolonization, that decolonization should not lead to territorial adjustments, and that decolonized states must accept juridical sovereignty. 14

The newly established Third World regional organizations also stressed that decolonization should not create challenges to the juridical sovereignty of the newly independent states. Exemplars were the League of Arab States and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), organizations representing regions marked by the existence of sub-national and transnational pressures to revise their territorial boundaries. Despite the presence of pan-Arabism and the demand for political unification, Arab leaders expressed a strong preference for the territorial division. 15 The OAU Charter (Article II) highlights the principles of juridical sovereignty and territorial integrity as defining features of the organization and regional order. In short, regional organizations and the UN reflected the belief that juridical sovereignty represented an important basis of international order.

Two points are worth highlighting. First, the attempt to globalize juridical sovereignty and to advance decolonization sat comfortably together: each held that discussions of the ‘self’ are non-essential, constitute an unwarranted interference in domestic affairs, and are an obstacle to decolonization and international stability. Second, the norm of juridical sovereignty is generally consistent with the realist paradigm and balance-of-power perspectives that dominated the thinking of Western policy-makers: both juridical sovereignty and balance-of-power formulations largely bracket considerations of empirical sovereignty and internal politics.

14 Perhaps the most famous statement was the 1960 UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Article 6 stated: Any attempt aimed at the partial or whole disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the UN.
To be sure, realists would automatically insist on the importance of reinforcing any sort of normative arrangement with military force; yet when considering the requirements of a stable international order, both realism and an emphasis on juridical sovereignty converge around the importance of territorial restraint and turning a blind eye to domestic politics. In general, realists, advocates of decolonization, and those interested in building global and regional institutions founded on the norm of sovereignty supported the view that some semblance of international order could be fostered through territorial restraint and ignoring the domestic. Peace-keeping forces and military observer missions were designed with an eye to territorial restraint and juridical sovereignty. Although peace-keeping is seen as an invention of the Cold War and superpower conflict, it was originally designed to ensure that decolonization and juridical sovereignty moved in tandem. According to Sir Brian Urquhart:

Peace-keeping, not mentioned in the UN Charter, was originally developed during the post-war decolonization period as a means of filling the power vacuums caused by decolonization, and of reducing the friction and temperature, so that an effort could be made to negotiate a permanent settlement of post-colonial conflict situations.16

The first military observer missions were deployed to Kashmir and Jerusalem in 1947; in both cases the UN intended to reduce the likelihood of severe territorial challenges that emerged from the decolonization process and the establishment of juridical sovereignty.17 In general, the UN and peace-keeping operations reflected a systemic view to international security, that stability was premised on territorial restraint and juridical sovereignty.

If the hallmark of the Cold War order was a focus on the systemic determinants of international security, a striking feature of the post-Cold War period is that many state officials are emphasizing how the domestic realm affects international order. Part of this increased interest in empirical sovereignty is driven by the growing awareness that Third World states face greater threats from their own societies than they do from their neighbours. Although policy-makers were not oblivious to these domestic challenges during the Cold War, there was a decided tendency to downplay them, whether because of a realist imagery that assumed that external threats were primary, the tendency to assume that foreign elements frequently were the origin of domestic instability, or the fear that promoting political reconciliation might undermine a strategic ally. Although there were disintegrating and failing states throughout the Cold War, the lack of empirical sovereignty that has haunted many Third World states since independence has become particularly daunting and overwhelming in the last few years.

As these Third World (internal) security dilemmas become more numerous and visible, and with greater consequences for local populations and regional stability, there is increased pressure on the international community to intervene to stop the

17 It was inevitable that the Cold War would become injected into the politics of decolonization, and peace-keeping forces became a highly useful instrument for encouraging juridical sovereignty and territorial integrity, and defusing potential superpower conflict. Peace-keeping, in effect, served the multiple function of limiting superpower conflict, increasing territorial restraint, and encouraging decolonization and juridical sovereignty.
haemorrhaging. In other words, internal conflicts challenge not only a cosmopolitan sensibility but regional stability as well. For instance, the explosion of ethnic violence and genocide in Rwanda in April 1994 and the subsequent refugee flow threatened to destabilize its neighbours. Opponents of the state will frequently establish military bases and take refuge over the border, which increases the prospect of inter-state conflict; the civil war in Liberia has produced this very outcome, threatened regional stability, and, therefore, attracted international attention and concern.\(^\text{18}\) The post-Soviet states provide daily testimony to the relationship between ethnic conflict and regional stability.

The recognition that internal rather than inter-state conflict is becoming more dramatic and alarming parallels a cognitive shift among many policy-makers concerning how to build a peace system. With the well-worn models of security politics that dominated their textbooks in the Cold War being abandoned, perhaps the most striking feature of the post-Cold War security dialogue is that few policy-makers or scholars are openly advocating a return to the balance-of-power and alliance politics of past years: most are struggling with new arrangements to govern the peace and maintain the security order. If the emerging multilateral view is that states have common interests, largely driven by increasing interdependence, which require joint action to obtain their common goals,\(^\text{19}\) a complementary approach enjoins that the task of building a non-realist security system rests squarely on creating states with domestic order. Many leaders are openly stating that a stable international order is contingent on states having a stable domestic order. In other words, the shift from deterrence to assurance begins by emphasizing the institutional arrangements that might be constructed to minimize suspicions and fears and realize joint gains, and ends with the idea that the best assurance is for states to exhibit some modicum of domestic stability. After being overshadowed by juridical sovereignty through much of the Cold War, domestic and international order are now more tightly coupled in the minds of government officials.\(^\text{20}\)

The UN reflects, and is a principal vehicle for defining, this emerging view that empirical sovereignty is consequential for international order. Perhaps most prominent is an expanded definition of security. While Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* repeatedly elevates juridical sovereignty as the constitutive principle of international relations, it also claims that states are able to uphold juridical sovereignty only after they contain empirical sovereignty.\(^\text{21}\) If once the Security Council limited its definition of 'threats to international peace and security' to inter-state conflict, it is now adopting a more expansive conception that suggests that empirical sovereignty is linked to international order.

The UN’s second-generation peace-keeping operations are a direct extension of the renewed concern for empirical sovereignty on the part of the international


\(^{20}\) Clinton’s policy of enlargement is perhaps the clearest policy statement of the relationship between the two. See Anthony Lake, ‘From Containment to Enlargement’, *Dispatch*, 4, 39 (1993); and Morton Halperin, ‘Guaranteeing Democracy’, *Foreign Policy*, 91 (Summer 1993), pp. 105–22.

\(^{21}\) Also see Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace: One Year Later*, *Orbis*, (Summer 1993), p. 329; and ‘The Democratization of International Relations’, *Global Governance*, 1 (January 1995).
community. Two features of these second-generation operations deserve mention. First, they concern internal security and domestic order. If most peace-keeping operations prior to 1988 concerned the transition from decolonization to juridical sovereignty, nearly all since then concern the transition from civil war to civil society, reflecting a shift in the conceptualization of how best to encourage a stable peace system and the proper means to bring it about.

Second, in An Agenda for Peace Boutros-Ghali outlines the UN's future involvement in security affairs and suggests that peace operations have three phases, corresponding to progressive shifts in the possible life-cycle of a conflict. Peace-making attempts to develop mechanisms to stop conflict before it occurs, or at least before it turns violent. A variety of tasks fall under the rubric of peacemaking, including: preventive deployment, the ability to pre-position forces prior to the actual outbreak of hostilities; preventive diplomacy, which increases the ability of outside parties to anticipate and respond to emerging problem areas before they become a crisis; encouraging the Secretary-General to make greater use of his institutional role in identifying possible threats to international peace and security; developing various institutions and think-tanks that can assist the Secretary-General in both identifying and responding to these emerging threats; and developing early warning indicators.

Peace-keeping and peace-enforcement constitute the second phase of peace operations. Peace-keeping can be defined as UN field operations that operate under the UN's command and control, using force to the minimum extent necessary, and with the consent of the parties concerned, to assist in the implementation of agreements reached between governments or parties that have been engaged in conflict. Peace-enforcement is the threat or use of force in the pursuit of mandated objectives in response to an ongoing or potential conflict. Simply put, if peace-keeping's hallmark is the principle of consent, peace-enforcement operates absent such principles. The irony is that while peace-keeping is not mentioned in the Charter and peace-enforcement comes under the heading of Chapter VII operations, in fact peace-enforcement has become the controversial feature of UN peace operations as the UN has become involved in (and a party to) internal wars and humanitarian crises. The third category is peace-building, which involves a myriad of activities that are designed to facilitate the transition from civil war to civil society, including: economic reconstruction; election engineering; the demobilization of militaries and irregular forces; de-mining; and the retraining of police forces.

In general, there has been a profound shift in the definition of 'threats to international peace and security' and a striking attempt by the United Nations to gather the resources, instruments, and tools required to confront this expanded definition. If once constricted by the Cold War and the norm of sovereignty, the United Nations has become more heavily involved in security politics and the domestic sources of international conflict.


Regional security organizations and peace operations

Two developments have created a greater interest in establishing a link between regional organizations and the UN in peace operations. First, as the UN attempts to develop the skills and the competence required to fulfil this robust peace operations agenda, it finds that there are more security challenges than it can manage or afford; therefore, the UN is looking for burden-sharing arrangements to lighten the load. Second, whereas during the Cold War most regional organizations were imprinted by superpower competition, since its demise and the retreat of the superpowers many regional organizations are capitalizing on the power vacuum, first and foremost, to create new mechanisms to foster regional security and order, if not 'zones of peace', and secondarily, to fulfil the spirit of Chapter VIII.

Before proceeding to consider the prospects of a possible partnership between regional organizations and the UN, however, I want to briefly consider the concept of regional security organizations. To begin, that the definition of a region is notoriously slippery is accurately observed by Karl Deutsch's famous quip:

For the political scientist the definition of a region is considerably more difficult than the definition of a rose was to Gertrude Stein. We cannot simply say, 'A region is a region is a region.'

The difficulty of determining the boundaries of a region stems from the understanding that regions are not only natural artefacts objectively derived from geographical contiguity but are products of social and political forces. That is, identity and geography frequently combine to determine the boundaries of a region.

The same conceptual issues that haunt the attempt by scholars to define precisely the boundaries of a region also plague the effort by regional organizations. The common assumption, of course, is that regional organizations derive from regions, which, in turn, are born of geography. In other words, geographical proximity generates common interests that derive from a common culture, economic circumstances, and security concerns. According to the Organization of American States (OAS), regional organizations are:

based on the principle of proximity. Affinity, which gives rise to a culture of participation, shared historical experience, closeness and thorough knowledge of the particular circumstances of each region, enable the regional organizations to participate with a better prospect of success in the solution of regional problems.

Although the OAS is suggesting that proximity defines regions, and regions define the scope of regional organizations, it also hints that determining who is inside and


26 S/25996, p. 11.
who is outside the region is as much a product of ideational forces as it is of propinquity.

That regional organizations are shaped not only by geographical but also by ideational and socio-political considerations is evident as many debate who is eligible for membership.27 It is particularly evident in post-Cold War Europe where systemic changes have unleashed a debate over the boundaries of the region, which is, in effect, a debate over the identity and definition of a European state; these debates are particularly visible as the standing European organizations consider who among the East European and post-Soviet states is a legitimate candidate for membership. The principal regional organization of the Middle East, the League of Arab States, is based not on geographical factors alone, for Israel, Turkey, and Iran are excluded from membership because they are not Arab. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is another regional organization that is based on identity rather than geography.

Relatedly, not all regional organizations are created equal in terms of organizational mission and function. Because regional organizations may be forged around economic interests, cultural associations, or mutual security concerns, they will not always be coterminous with each other or with geography. In fact, in An Agenda for Peace, Boutros-Ghali recognizes that Chapter VIII (para. 61) deliberately leaves open and flexible what constitutes a regional organization, as it ‘could include treaty-based organizations, organizations for mutual security and defense, those established for regional development or for cooperation on a particular topic or function, or groups created to deal with a specific issue of current concern’.28

Notwithstanding these myriad conceptual and definitional issues, I define regional security organizations as those organizations that have as a definitional attribute a geographical component and have as their specific organizational charge the production of security through cooperative means and the defence against threats to peace and security.29 For the purpose of discerning the potential partnership between regional security organizations and the United Nations, I limit my

27 See Emanuel Adler, 'Imagined (Security) Communities' (unpublished MS, 1994) for a discussion of cognitive regions, regions that are defined by shared identity. A greater sensitivity to the relationship between identity and boundaries highlights the concept of ‘liminal states’, states that are ‘betwixt and between’ existing regions, and, accordingly, marked by ambiguity, ambivalence, and contradiction. Turkey, for instance, straddles regions not because of its spatial position but rather because of ideational characteristics; it is frequently referred to as a ‘bridge’ between East and West, between ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ societies. The attempt to define the boundaries of the region frequently leans on ideational, rather than geographic, features. See Ann Norton, Reflections on Political Identity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

28 Gareth Evans, Cooperating for Peace (St Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1993), p. 29. The numerous ‘Friends’ group that emerge around specific UN peace-keeping operations might also be considered quasi-regional organizations. The recognition that an unwieldy UN membership would lead to collective action problems and lack of focus and attention on a specific operation led to the creation of ‘Friends’ groups that meet regularly and pressure the local parties. These groups have become nearly institutionalized features of all peace-keeping operations since the end of the Cold War.

29 Still, not all regional security organizations are created equal in terms of the primary functions they play in the international and regional system. Muthiah Alagappa identifies three types of regional security organization: (1) to fulfill the spirit of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, and, therefore, to be a building-block for global order; (2) to foster the notion of collective self-defence vis-à-vis systemic threats as viewed by global powers; and (3) to encourage the security and welfare of the region through joint action. 'Regionalism and the Quest for Security: ASEAN and the Cambodian Conflict', Australian Journal of International Affairs, 47 (October 1993), pp. 189–209.
discussion to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union, the League of Arab States, NATO, the OAU, the OAS, the OIC, and the Association of South East Asian States (ASEAN). These are not only the most prominent organizations in dealing with regional security issues, but (with the exception of ASEAN) participated in a series of discussions with the Secretariat on the future relationship between the UN and regional organizations in peace operations.30

The view from regional organizations

Perhaps the best place to begin a consideration of the possible linkage between regional organizations and the UN is from the view from regional organizations. At the initiation of the Security Council, regional organizations were invited to present their thoughts on the future nexus between themselves and the United Nations on matters relating to international peace and security, with particular regard to peace-making, preventive diplomacy, fact-finding, confidence-building, and, where appropriate, peace-keeping.31 Two general variations can be drawn from their responses: the projected capacity and willingness to participate in peace operations; and that phase of peace operations to which they are likely to contribute. First, not all regional organizations are created equal and stand ready to assist the UN in peace operations. The various European organizations, including the CSCE and NATO, outlined how they could become more active in peace operations; the OAU, the OAS, and ASEAN were more measured in their responses; and the League of Arab States and the OIC were decidedly unassuming about their potential contribution.32

Not surprisingly, the readiness to assist the UN's peace operations activities appears to be a reflection of the regional organization's overall strength and cohesion of purpose. While many factors contribute to a regional organization's abilities, four, related, variables appear most critical to forging a consensus to act on identified threats to regional security.33 The first is shared interests. Almost by definition regional security organizations comprise those states that inhabit a geographical space and believe that their security is interdependent. That said, regional organizations are not immune from polarizing coalitions that reflect not consensus and shared interests but rather discord and competitive rivalries; the degree to which the region tends toward consensus rather than competition will positively affect the organization's effectiveness and ability to respond to identified threats.34

30 Meeting at the UN Secretariat on 1 August 1994. The Commonwealth, a regional organization that is based on a shared historical association and identity rather than geography, also participated in this meeting.
32 See Evans, Cooperating for Peace, pp. 30-2, for a similar analysis.
33 See Zacher, International Conflicts, for a complementary view that examines the importance and determinants of consensual arrangements for determining the prospects of a regional organization's intervention and success in regional conflicts.
34 On this point, see ibid., chap. 1.
Also associated with a desire to further shared security interests is economic interdependence. Earlier integration studies often assumed that regional coherence and political institutionalization were positively associated with the level of economic interdependence; indeed, increasing economic interdependence was hypothesized to ‘spill over’ into other domains, encouraging security cooperation if not actual political integration. In contrast to the regional organizations of the advanced industrialized countries, most Third World security organizations do not follow shared economic interests, nor are they coterminous with trading relationships. In fact, most Third World states are characterized by stronger economic ties to the advanced industrialized states than to their neighbours. Not only does this hinder their ability to form effective regional economic blocs, but, more to the point, it arguably represents a principal reason why few cohesive security organizations emerge in the first place. That Third World security institutions develop after cooperative arrangements have been forged in other functional areas is borne out in various instances. For instance, ASEAN developed primarily to accelerate economic cooperation in the region, and acquired a more defined security focus only after 1976 with the Treaty on Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia (Bali Treaty), which established some basic principles for organizing regional life. ECOWAS likewise originated as a trade association, and only later developed a security orientation with the Mutual Defence Assistance Protocol of 1981 (which, in turn, produced the ECOWAS monitoring group, otherwise known as ECOMOG, in 1990). Conversely, not only has the League of Arab States been unable to encourage any sustained regional economic cooperation partly because of the Arab states’ strong vertical linkages to the advanced industrialized economies, but it has essentially splintered into various sub-regional groupings, notably the Arab Maghreb Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council, that are reflective of linkages to the world economy. In general, economic interests and associations can be important progenitors of security cooperation.

The strength of the regional organization is also affected by the existence of a collective identity. While not all regional organizations represent states with a shared identity, those that do are arguably better positioned to realise the group’s goals. The social science literature has demonstrated how collective action problems that lead to the sub-optimal provision of collective goods and free-riding behaviour can be surmounted not only by incentives and sanctions but also by the presence of a shared identity. Because a shared identity increases both the actor’s willingness to contribute to the group’s goals and the prospect of diffuse reciprocity and a sense of trust, it will facilitate the development of more robust security institutions if not also the possibility of a regional security community.

Third, regional organizations will be stronger to the extent that there is agreement among the member states on the norms that are to govern stability and order. States can have very different understandings of what constitutes a threat and the means that should be used to confront the threat, and the degree of agreement on these two

37 Adler and Barnett, ‘Pluralistic Security Communities’.
fundamental features will shape the group’s cohesion. Indeed, this important feature of regional security organizations is frequently overlooked because of the tendency to limit analyses of security institutions to alliances—that is, security associations that arise because of an agreement on the nature of a threat, rather than regional organizations that generally emerge from a shared geographical space. The CSCE, for instance, has been quite active in promoting the view among its members that the rule of law at home is related to the rule of law abroad, and that democracy and political tolerance are essential for creating a stable and peaceful regional security order.

A brief comparison of the African and Middle Eastern state systems accents these points. The OAU states quickly agreed that they had a mutual interest in recognizing each other’s juridical sovereignty and territorial integrity, which, in effect, translated into a collective recognition that their principal threats derived from the domestic rather than the international system. African states faced both external and internal security threats, and by accepting juridical sovereignty they could limit external violence and concentrate on internal threats and the task of state-building. In contrast to the African case, Arab leaders held a decidedly more ambivalent relationship to both sovereignty and their inherited borders because of pan-Arabism. Far from uniformly embracing each other’s juridical sovereignty, at various times Arab leaders strove not only to modify their borders but to erase them altogether. Said otherwise, the threat in the Arab states system depended on whether Arab leaders defended the status quo and juridical sovereignty or championed pan-Arabism; consequently, King Hussein of Jordan, who defended the status quo, viewed Nasser of Egypt, the champion of pan-Arabism, as the threat. The failure by Arab leaders to agree on basic norms to govern their relations not only drove the definition of the threat but also undermined the effectiveness of the League of Arab States. Security organizations must have a basic agreement among their members concerning what constitutes the basic threat to the region, and the means that will be used to confront that threat; those regional organizations determined by geography alone are more susceptible to difficulties on this fundamental issue.

Fourth, regional security organizations also benefit from the presence of a hegemon or a select group of states that can provide leadership through moral and material resources. Although many scholarly analyses treat regional hegemons as threats to regional stability and as the primary source of security dilemmas, in fact they also can encourage group solidarity and cohesion in two principal ways. Most straightforward is the idea that hegemons can facilitate collective action and encourage solidarity by dispensing side payments and allowing free-riding behaviour, if not also by simply providing the desired good. Yet hegemons can also encourage group solidarity by marrying power with purpose, by projecting an image of the

38 See Kal Holsti, Peace and War (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Zacher, International Conflicts.
41 See David Myers, Regional Hegemons and Threat Perceptions (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991) for a regional and theoretical survey.
future and a vision of progress that attracts other states. This more benign view of hegemony is frequently employed to explain the U.S.A.’s historical legacy in fostering the post-World War II liberal order, NATO, and the European security community. In sum, the regional organization’s coherence and capacity to act are strengthened to the extent that it comprises states with shared interests, identities, and norms, and includes a select number of states that are willing to contribute the required resources; organizations that possess such qualities will be better able to contribute to the UN’s peace operations agenda.

A second noteworthy feature of the response by regional organizations to the Security Council’s query was that Third World regional organizations were most comfortable limiting their activities to the earliest phases of the peace operations process, and only the European security organizations, namely NATO and the CSCE, expressed an active interest in peace-keeping. In short, except for the European organizations that had a prior experience with collective military activities and possess a fairly cohesive and powerful membership, regional organizations suggested that their activism would wane as the process moved from peacemaking to peace-keeping to peace-building.

Part of the reason for this stance is that regional organizations view themselves as having a comparative advantage over the United Nations at the earliest stage of the peace operations process (a view that is supported by Chapter VIII). Regional actors and organizations may have a greater appreciation of the history, culture, and other regionally specific factors that are likely to influence the conflict resolution process; possess a greater connection to and knowledge of the primary participants in the conflict; view extra-regional institutions as suspicious and illegitimate; and give greater attention and more urgent consideration to these conflicts than global institutions that have ‘broader agendas, competing priorities, and numerous distractions’.

Recognizing their possible contribution to peacemaking, many regional security organizations are actively considering ways to develop tools for peacemaking that encourage a greater sense of trust among the region’s inhabitants. The CSCE has established envoys and contact groups for nearly all the major centres of tension in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Moreover, in January 1994 the CSCE hosted a seminar on Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy; at that seminar US Ambassador John Kornblum proposed the development of early warning indicators that would be consistent with new definitions of security, regular consultations on issues of concern, and a high commissioner for national minorities. ASEAN, encouraged by its success in facilitating a resolution to the Cambodian conflict, is explicitly borrowing from the efforts of the CSCE to develop its own set of mechanisms and workshops. The OAU adopted the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution in Cairo, in June 1993, which stresses preventive diplomacy, fact-finding, and the use of good offices, and has special representatives to many of the major centres of conflict. In general, nearly all

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regional security organizations are developing instruments to encourage pacific dispute settlement.

The institutional literature suggests some additional reasons why regional organizations might have an advantage over the UN in the area of peacemaking. Institutions, whether at the global or the regional level, can encourage cooperative behaviour by clarifying norms, rules, and principles, defining a range of acceptable behaviour, and altering (or creating greater certainty in) a state’s expectations of another state’s behaviour. In this way, institutions create mutual expectations and stable and predictable outcomes, and thereby encourage actors to have greater trust in each other and the future. Institutions, in other words, lengthen the shadow of the future and escape the classic competitive trap fostered by the prisoner’s dilemma, and in this way play a critical role in peacemaking. Yet when considering these important functions of security institutions in preventing conflict escalation, bigger is not always better; it is generally accepted that actors are less likely to engage in behaviours that breed suspicion and discourage cooperative outcomes when the group size is more limited, because of the higher probability that non-cooperative behaviour and defection from agreements will be detected.45 This is, of course, a standard rationale for constructing a regional security organization.46

Regional organizations enhance peacemaking not only by providing a forum for effective interest articulation but also by creating and instilling a collective identity.47 Social roles and identities are never created in a vacuum, but are formed in relation to others; it is in the process of interacting and participating within an institutional context that the actor has an identity.48 Institutions, then, are a locus for socialization, a place where norms and values are transferred from one actor to another and new identities and beliefs are formed.49 To the extent that institutions create a shared identity they are likely to encourage pacific dispute settlement.50 This is a core feature of the CSCE, which frequently presents its activities as ‘deepening a sense of community’. ASEAN ‘has gradually fostered a family feeling of togetherness and shared interests among a group of states that had very little in common to begin with. At a deeper level, ASEAN has afforded the member states a vehicle to identify with the region.’51 Therefore, perhaps one of the more interesting roles for regional organizations in peacemaking is their ability to encourage a sense of regional identity, to further the community-building process.

Regional organizations are less active in peace-keeping and peace-enforcement, for four principal reasons. First, while the UN Charter does not prohibit regional organizations from undertaking peace-keeping operations (after all, it does not even

46 On the issue of the size of regional organizations, see Taylor, ‘Regionalism’.
50 Adler and Barnett, ‘Pluralistic Security Communities’.
mention them), Article 53 stipulates that no regional organization can engage in enforcement action unless authorized by the Security Council. Second, while the UN can levy fees to pay for its peace-keeping operations, regional organizations do not have this capacity, and, therefore, are usually forced to rely on voluntary contributions (or a hegemon). Third, the UN's recent record in peace-keeping has undoubtedly sent a strong message to regional organizations to proceed with caution.

Fourth, regional organizations may be reluctant to undertake peace-keeping that pertains to internal, rather than inter-state, conflict, for fear of establishing a precedent that might 'subsequently justify intervention in their own countries'.

This suggests that the fear of infringement of sovereignty is possibly greater from regional neighbours than it is from a Security Council that is dominated by the great powers. This is particularly noticeable among many Third World security organizations that essentially forward sovereignty as an informal security institution. Consequently, while an emerging view is that domestic instability can generate regional instability, and many, including the OAU and ASEAN, are considering mechanisms to deal with their sources and consequences, they have not yet established the institutional mechanisms and normative arrangements, that exist, for instance, among the European countries. In general, while the OAS, the OAU, and ECOWAS have some limited peace-keeping experience, and the various European security institutions have been quite active in developing an enhanced peace-keeping ability, by and large regional organizations do not appear enthusiastic about jumping into the fray.

Peace-building, including demobilization, de-mining, police retraining, electoral assistance, economic reconstruction, and so on, requires tremendous financial resources and expertise, two ingredients notably lacking in most regional organizations. The one area in which regional organizations have contributed is electoral assistance: the CSCE is quite active in helping the new European democracies; the OAU has helped to monitor over twenty elections since 1990; and the OAS has provided election monitors throughout the region in its effort to promote domestic peace and regional security. Outside of these electoral activities, however, regional organizations have been relatively inactive in peace-building.

A division of labour?

That regional organizations seemingly prefer to restrict their activities to the earliest stages of peace operations is strikingly consistent with the apparent preference of Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. In An Agenda for Peace, he acknowledges the important role to be played by regional organizations in peace operations, yet notes that they might be best suited to handle conflict at its earliest and nascent stages,

52 MacFarlane and Weiss, 'United Nations', p. 28.
53 One proposal suggests how the UN's desire to have stand-by forces for either preventive deployment or actual peace-keeping duties might be best served by regional organization. Evans, Cooperating For Peace, p. 84. In a more recent article, Gareth Evans limits his discussion of the potential contribution by regional organizations to peace operations to preventive diplomacy. 'Cooperative Security and Intra-State Conflict', Foreign Policy, 96 (Fall 1994), pp. 3–20.
that is, peacemaking, and is effectively silent on their potential role in peace-keeping and peace-building. An additional year's experience did not change his attitude, as he again highlighted how regional organizations can contribute to peacemaking but had little to say of the other two phases of peace operations.\textsuperscript{54} If regional organizations express strong reservations concerning their involvement in peace operations beyond peacemaking, Boutros-Ghali is doing little to discourage this disposition.\textsuperscript{55}

This suggests something of a division of labour in peace operations between the UN and regional organizations: regional organizations are decreasingly active, and the UN is increasingly active, as peace operations shift from peacemaking to peace-keeping to peace-building. Regional organizations and the UN are good at different things, have expertise in different activities, and their strengths and weaknesses can complement each other. In an era of severe resource constraints and abundant security problems, the realization of Chapter VIII in the post-Cold War order suggests not just a partnership but also a functional division of labour.

Notwithstanding the superficial appearance of an emerging division of labour and the expectation of overcoming the traditional regional/global divide, there is considerable tension between the UN and regional organizations over peace operations in general and peace-keeping in particular. Although tensions between the two might emerge from a myriad of sources—including the expected bureaucratic struggles and 'turf' battles, disputes over the proper means to pursue agreed-upon ends, and so on—thus far a principal source of tension is one that is quite familiar to students of international politics and alliance formation: the trade-off between arms and autonomy. Briefly, as states consider ways to increase their security, they have two stylized choices (or some combination thereof): internal mobilization, that is, mobilizing the required resources from within; or external balancing, that is, forging alliances. Both options have attendant benefits and costs. While alliances can bring the immediate rewards of greater security, they can also generate a loss of autonomy as the state now has an associate that might have distinct interests which must be included in future security decisions and actions. Internal balancing, while preserving the state's autonomy, can both fail to produce the state's desired output of security and generate substantial domestic political and economic costs as societal actors might extract a pound of flesh for their contribution to the state's security—assuming that the state has the capacity to extract these resources.\textsuperscript{56}

This latter issue, the capacity to extract, represents one important difference between international organizations and states in the area of military operations: whereas states have the power to extract from their societies, international organizations, lacking coercive authority, must rely on their members' quasi-voluntary compliance. This will be particularly so for the UN in peace enforcement and the more dangerous peace-keeping operations, for two related reasons. First, the UN has


\textsuperscript{55} Yet the recent UN staff paper, 'The United Nations, Regional, and Sub-Regional Organizations', hints at a growing role for regional organizations in peace-keeping operations.

a long-standing policy against allowing troop contributions from states that have a strategic interest in the outcome of the conflict. Said otherwise, while member states are more likely to contribute the means of military operations, that is, the men, money, and material for these dangerous operations, when they have a vested interest in the outcome, the UN’s policy of neutrality excludes the very states that are most likely to contribute. Second, because the UN is a universal organization, not all members will be as exercised about the Security Council’s identified ‘threat to peace and security’, and, therefore, potentially as interested in contributing the required resources. In short, the UN is susceptible to significant free-riding among its members. Regional organizations, though still dependent on their members’ quasi-voluntary compliance, have an advantage over the UN when attempting to mobilize the means of military operations: because they are more likely to have a stake in the outcome of the conflict they are more likely to contribute the required resources. That said, because both the UN and regional organizations have difficulty extracting the required resources from their members, they are seemingly poised to favour external alliances over internal mobilization.

The inability to extract the required resources from its members represents the motor force behind the UN’s interest in establishing a partnership with regional organizations. From 1991 to 1993 the number of UN soldiers escalated from around 10,000 to 80,000, and the peace-keeping budget exploded from around $1 billion to nearly $3.8 billion. This rapid expansion has severely overextended its organizational and financial resources, suggesting that the UN is involved in its own version of ‘imperial overstretch’. Although a consequence not of its own ambitions, but rather of the actions and whims of its member states, the UN’s overly ambitious security agenda has left it labouring under increasing resource constraints and searching for ‘burden-sharing’ possibilities with regional organizations.57 The importance of financial considerations in driving this possible partnership was acknowledged by Boutros-Ghali’s office in the following, understated, way: ‘The exponential growth in the cost of peace-keeping operations has been a factor in decisions of the Security Council to delegate the task of peace-keeping and peace-enforcement to groups of Member States rather than having the United Nations perform them.’ 56 Indeed, Boutros-Ghali divulged that a principal reason why he did not insist that the UN be more heavily involved in a Chapter VII operation in Haiti was because of the UN’s financial straits; therefore, he was willing to delegate responsibility to a lead country, that is, the United States.59 Not only is the UN looking for financial assistance, but

57 Another way to defray the financial cost is to levy a ‘user’s fee’ on those states that are supposedly the greatest beneficiaries of the UN’s activities. Simply put, those states who benefit most from these operations should pay a greater share of the cost. This type of financial arrangement began in Cyprus, with Turkey and Greece contributing disproportionately to UNFICYP’s annual cost, and became a feature of post-Cold War peace-keeping operations when Kuwait agreed to pay a greater percentage of UNIKOM. Consequently, as the UN’s coffers are depleted there is some discussion that regional organizations, whose members are supposedly the principal beneficiaries of the UN’s peace operations, should bear a heavier financial burden.

58 UN staff paper, ‘The United Nations, Regional, and Sub-Regional Organizations’, p. iv. Under-Secretary General Marrack Goulding was nearly prophetic in 1991 when he stated that he could imagine regional organizations and the UN forging ‘a kind of partnership in which, after the two organizations work out together what needs to be done, the regional organization would be the executing agency’. The Singapore Symposium, The Changing Role of the United Nations in Conflict Resolution and Peace-keeping; quoted from Rivlin, ‘Regional Arrangements’, p. 106.

59 Author interview with high-level State Department official, 2 August 1994.
it is also having a difficult time locating the required manpower, and this is particularly so for those operations that entail significant physical risks.

Regional organizations look to the UN for legitimacy and for active support (though largely material and financial, not in the form of manpower). Regional organizations seek legitimacy for their actions, and look to the UN because of its role as an agent of collective legitimization. Part of the reason that the UN serves this function is because it is endowed with tremendous legitimacy by the community of states. Thomas Franck and Inis Claude help us to understand why the UN is bequeathed collective legitimacy. Franck highlights how states seek to be viewed as legitimate by other states, to be understood as acting with a degree of moral authority and sanctioned purpose.60 States, Franck claims, not only are representatives of the political community that is contained within their borders, but also are embedded within an international community from which they derive their rights, obligations, and authority to act in legitimately sanctioned ways. ‘Nations, or those who govern them,’ he writes, ‘recognize that the obligation to comply is owed by them to the community of states as the reciprocal of that community’s validation of their nation’s statehood.’ 61 Legitimacy, therefore, is conferred by others when the state convincingly demonstrates that it abides by the community’s norms, by behaving in certain ways and not in others. Claude nicely supplements Franck’s argument by recognizing how states seek collective legitimization, and how the UN is the only organization that approximates universality and is handed the authority to distribute seals of approval and disapproval. No other organization rivals the UN in these crucial respects.62 Many regional organizations seek the authorization of the UN, and this is specifically demanded by the UN Charter in the area of peace-enforcement.

Moreover, as the UN looks to regional organizations to help defray the costs of its operations, so too are regional organizations frequently interested in forging a partnership with the UN because of the supposed financial benefits.63 In addition to a desire to have its actions legitimated, Russia sought to link the CIS to the United Nations to subsidize its operations in the ‘near abroad’. If Third World states are willing to participate in peace-keeping operations for reasons other than the material benefits they accrue, they also have demonstrated that they are not anxious to participate if they are not reimbursed for their expenses. Consequently, they look to either the UN or another country to offset their outlays. As the OAU attempted to mobilize troop contributors for Rwanda in 1994, it frequently sought UN and US logistical and financial support.

In general, both regional organizations and the UN face an expanding security agenda, an inadequate resource base, and a difficult time extracting the required resources from their member states, and regional organizations also demonstrate an interest in receiving the UN’s blessing for their operations. Such dynamics lead both the UN and regional organizations to seek some sort of external alliance with the

61 Ibid., p. 196.
63 The UN also seeks the approval of and legitimacy granted by regional organizations. For instance, the OAS provided an important legitimization function for the UN’s involvement in El Salvador, and the League of Arab States’ approval of the UN’s various Security Council resolutions on Iraq proved essential to reversing Iraq’s invasion.
other. Indeed, while they might be understood as engaging in balancing behaviour against a shared threat, perhaps more accurate is that they are ‘bandwagoning’ to the extent that they seek an alliance because of the potential profits.64

Recognizing that the UN is mainly interested in establishing a partnership not out of principle but rather out of material necessity, and that regional organizations seek an alliance with the UN for both ideational and material purposes, provides some insight into the arms–autonomy trade-off. As the UN looks to regional organizations to assist in the implementation of its mandated security objectives, it finds that such a joint arrangement might very well come at a considerable loss of autonomy. This takes on a particular twist for the United Nations. The UN’s power derives primarily from its ability to persuade rather than its ability to coerce; that is, its normative power and legitimacy derive from the view that it is ‘above politics’ and is representative of the international community. The UN, accordingly, is highly protective of its autonomy and its good name. In this respect, regional organizations, especially those that are dominated by a single power, offer a mixed bag: while they might be better able to mobilize the required resources for their security activities, because they have a strategic interest in the security operations they are less likely to be perceived (or to act) as a neutral party. In short, the UN’s concern is that by consorting with a regional association it might be, in effect, legitimating the aspirations of a regional hegemon, hindering its goal of the peaceful settlement of disputes, tarnishing its image, and undermining its autonomy.

Thus far the UN has developed two mechanisms to ‘protect its name’ and to preserve its autonomy. First, it takes pains to ensure that it is viewed by local troops and civilians as independent of the regional organization. In Liberia, according to one UN official, UN observers maintained a separate identity, ate at different cafeterias, drove in different vehicles, and slept in different barracks.65 Second, the UN attempts to ensure that the regional organization maintains ‘UN standards’ of appropriate behaviour by placing monitors and observers alongside the peace-keeping troops of the regional organization. This was the UN’s proviso for ‘blessing’ the Russian troops in Georgia; roughly 135 UN monitors observe the 2,500 Russian peacekeepers to ensure that they maintain UN standards and observe strict neutrality. In general, the UN, though welcoming the possibility of sharing the heavy resource and organizational burden of its peace-keeping operations, is wary of legitimizing and being associated with regional organizations that are not under its control and might be a cover for the ambitions of a regional power.

The UN’s desire to locate the means of military operations while protecting its name has immediate implications for regional organizations. To begin, regional organizations have demonstrated a desire to seek UN authorization and legitimacy because of the anticipated material benefits that might accompany such moves. Yet because the UN is itself resource-poor, it is unlikely to be able to offer much financial assistance to regional organizations. Indeed, the Security Council refused to make either the CIS’s peace-keeping operation in Georgia or the authorization of the US invasion of Haiti (through the ‘all necessary means’ provision) assessed operations partly because it did not have the financial resources to do so. In fact, when regional organizations turn to the UN for assistance, the UN is likely to turn

64 Schweller, ‘Bandwagoning for Profit’.
65 Conversation with UN official, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 19 October 1993.
the request over to powerful member states. For instance, while ECOMOG took the lead in the operation in Liberia, the United States provided nearly $30 million in bilateral assistance to Senegal and other troop contributors to encourage and underwrite their participation.

As previously mentioned, the ability of regional organizations to receive UN material support and legitimation is likely to come at some cost to their autonomy. Before the Security Council authorized Russia’s role in Georgia or the US role in Haiti, it insisted that these lead countries act within the UN’s principles and norms of neutrality and permit the placement of observers to monitor their behaviour. This represents, if you will, a considerable restraint on the autonomy of regional organizations and lead countries that desire to gain the UN’s blessing and resources.

A more general concern of regional organizations is that a division of labour and specialization in peace-keeping operations will not translate into equality between themselves and the UN but rather into a loss of autonomy and dependence on the UN. The OAS, for instance, specifically rejected the concept of specialization because of the fear that such concepts only masked the dominance of the United Nations: ‘Cooperation between the OAS and the United Nations cannot be based on principles of hierarchy, for neither is dependent on or subordinate to the other. Nor must it be established on the basis of specialization, as both organizations are general in nature.’ 66 Although there is an established hierarchy in peace-enforcement operations (regional organizations require the UN’s blessing), by and large regional organizations are quite fearful of subordinating their activities to the UN. The fear, in other words, is that placing greater resources and prestige in the UN threatens to strip regional organizations of their post-Cold War autonomy, to relegate regional organizations to a lower rung on the security ladder. Regional organizations, in short, are concerned that the UN will become the ‘new superpower’.

The trade-offs between arms and autonomy have been particularly visible during peace-enforcement operations and in the area of command and control as the UN and its peace-keeping allies have done bureaucratic battle over the command and control of battlefield operations. Such battles reflect not only ‘turf’ wars and battles to preserve autonomy but also a tremendous divide between the UN and regional organizations on military culture and competing objectives. For instance, the highly publicized difficulties in Bosnia between NATO and UN Special Representative Akashi over when to authorize retaliatory action against the Bosnian Serbs reflect different military cultures, that is, the UN’s ‘peace-keeping’ sensibility that reflects a reluctance to use force; different objectives; and a different appraisal of the means that will best fulfil those objectives. Shared areas of operational jurisdiction are quite likely to result in tremendous tensions and clashes; such tensions, if Bosnia is any guide, might very well undermine the possible success of the operation if not place peace-keepers on the ground in greater danger than if there were a unified and hierarchal command and control.67

66 S/25966, p. 11.
67 Responding to President Clinton’s suggestion that the UN become more active in peace-enforcement and battling the Bosnian Serbs, UNPROFOR Force Commander Michael Rose said, ‘If someone wants to fight a war here on moral or political grounds, fine, great, but count us [the UN] out. Hitting one tank is peacekeeping. Hitting infrastructure command and control, logistics, that is war, and I’m not going to fight a war with painted tanks.’ Roger Cohen, ‘U.N. General Opposes More Bosnia Force’, New York Times, 29 September 1994, p. A7.
Although it is perhaps expected that regional organizations and the UN might clash in the controversial area of peace-keeping, what of peacemaking, where both seem to agree that regional organizations have a comparative advantage? While regional organizations have worked ably to settle a host of regional and domestic conflicts, and the UN and regional organizations have combined forces relatively effectively in settling some regional conflicts (particularly noticeable in southern Africa), an automatic division of labour there is not. Regional organizations are not always interested in the regional conflict; because it is a regional issue does not mean that regional actors will be exercised about it or be capable of acting in concert. ‘In practice,’ writes Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, ‘issues are appropriate for regional action when regional states deem them to be so’. The League of Arab States and OIC have expressed only rhetorical interest in Somalia, a member of both organizations. Indeed, one reason for the UN’s activism in various conflicts is the very absence of effective regional organizations. In other words, there is something of an inverse relationship between where the security problems are located and the strength of these regional organizations; it is the absence of effective regional organizations that creates a need for the United Nations. In such circumstances, it will be difficult for the UN and regional organizations to share the security load.

Conversely, if some regional organizations are bored by regional conflicts, others are quite involved because they have a vested interest in the outcome. In this respect, regional organizations are not always the proper forum if only because they have a greater stake in the conflict, and, therefore, are less likely to be a neutral arbiter. For instance, although in Somalia the UN and the United States looked to regional actors and the OAU for an ‘African solution’, in fact these regional players were not trusted by many of the local warlords. Rumours swirled during the 1993 Yemeni civil war that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab states were backing southern Yemen’s secessionist drive, which effectively undermined any diplomatic efforts by the League of Arab States. Therefore, regional organizations are not always ideally suited to peacemaking. The UN, in this regard, possesses the decided advantage of distance and neutrality. Relatedly, because many states do not trust the local regional organization they look to the UN to internationalize the conflict; in other words, they use the UN as something of a balancing mechanism against regional aspirations. This is particularly prominent in the former Soviet Union where local combatants desire greater international participation as a way of bypassing the Russian-dominated CIS. If sometimes familiarity creates greater knowledge and awareness of the actors, history, and culture that can shape the conflict resolution process, it can also breed contempt, rivalry, and suspicion.

In sum, there has been considerable interest in establishing a greater partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations in peace operations. If in theory such enthusiasm is driven by an attempt to realize the promise of Chapter VIII, in practice it is being forced by the reality of limited resources and organizational weaknesses. In short, this emerging partnership is not unfolding by design, by any pre-strategic logic, but rather by default and happenstance. Moreover, while it is tempting to conclude that with some forethought and strategic planning a

68 Cooperating For Peace, p. 76.
69 Also, while the Charter (Article 33) encourages regional organizations to be first in line when dealing with regional security issues, this leaves the most intractable problems for the UN.
rational division of labour between regional organizations and the UN can be forged, in fact there are tremendous obstacles to be overcome: most regional organizations are too weak to assist peace operations, and there are frequently tremendous conflicting interests between them and the UN, many of which derive from the fact that both organizations seek additional resources from the other without reducing their own autonomy. Notwithstanding these tensions, the UN is likely to continue to look for ways to lessen its security portfolio by joining forces with regional organizations; and regional organizations are likely to seek the legitimacy and resources of the UN in peace operations in general and peace-keeping and peace-building in particular. Therefore, perhaps the relationship between the UN and regional organizations is not a ‘problem to be solved but rather a process to be managed’.70

Conclusion

That UN peace operations are becoming decentralized highlights the new regionalism in international politics. Immediately after the Cold War there were grand expectations that the UN would become a more forceful and effective body in resolving international disputes. Resource constraints, however, have forced the UN to entertain more fully a possible relationship with regional security organizations. Thus far this emerging association has produced not a working division of labour but rather conflicts and tensions, recalling the long-standing debate over whether regionalism or globalism is the preferred path to international order. If this debate is traditionally cast as ‘which best furthers the objective of international order?’, recent trends in international politics in general and peace operations in particular suggest the debate is not ‘global or regional?’ but rather about the relationship between the two.

If regionalism and globalism are offered as contending models of global governance, there is evidence that globalism can foster regionalism, and, likewise, regionalism can foster globalism. Regional organizations and the UN have converged around some basic principles to govern inter-state behaviour, and it is particularly striking that they both articulate a perception that there is a strong relationship between domestic and regional stability. Although the extent to which either the UN or regional organizations will become actively involved in the domestic sphere is still uncertain, it is noteworthy that many government officials are arguing that there is an important relationship between domestic and international order. To the extent that regional and global organizations are working toward a shared goal—a feature noticeably absent during the Cold War—their efforts can be mutually reinforcing and complementary.

Advocates of regionalism and globalism frequently proceed on the merits of scale; however, the discussion of peace operations suggests that ‘the suitability . . . depends in the first place upon the nature of the problem to be dealt with’.71 Some elements of a security issue might be handled effectively by regional organizations, others at

71 Ibid. p. 103.
70 Claude, Swords into Plowshares, p. 117.
the global level, and much will depend not only on the nature and context of the security issue, but more distinctly on the strength and capacity of the regional organization, and the great-power interests at stake. There is the decided possibility that the UN’s influence and monopoly over peace operations will be inversely related to the strength of the regional organization and the intensity of great-power interests. In either case, however, there are strong material interests on the part of both regional organizations and great powers to look to the UN system to assist in the expensive peace-building process. In the debate over whether regionalism or globalism is better suited to conflict resolution, it seems unwise to cling to a partisan position, and more realistic to recognize: it depends.

A return to regionalism might also mean the emergence of spheres of influence. The Secretary-General’s 24 July letter on Bosnia, which suggested that regardless of whether or not a peace agreement was reached the UN’s responsibilities exceeded its abilities; Russia’s leading role in Georgia; France’s in Rwanda; and that of the United States in Haiti suggest the importance not of regional organizations but rather of spheres of influence.72 As was so clearly the case during the Cold War, great powers challenge the autonomy and capacity of regional and global security organizations: they dominate global institutions and by definition have interests that extend across regions. Yet it remains to be seen whether this is a return to ‘spheres of influence’ in the classic sense. Specifically, it is possible that these spheres do not represent exclusive zones based on hierarchies, but rather a hybrid form of globalism and regionalism, where the UN delegates authority to regional actors or great powers with the intent if not the assurance that they carry out the UN-approved operation guided by norms and principles established collectively at the global level. This suggests that the UN can perform an important function in establishing and reinforcing common standards of behaviour that provide a layer of globalism over a breakaway regionalism or creeping spheres of influence.73 The emerging architecture of peace operations suggests that the real issue in not whether security management has a regional or global character but rather the relationship between the two.

73 On this issue, see Michael Barnett, ‘Creeping Spheres of Influence?’, unpublished MS, October 1994.