



INTERACTION COUNCIL

High-Level Expert Group Meeting

Chairman's Report on the High-level Expert Group Meeting

Unilateralism and Collective Responsibility

Chaired by The Rt. Honorable Malcolm Fraser

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Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation
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1. Events of the last two years – responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and continuing unrest in Palestine and Israel – force the international community to examine the way in which conflicts should be managed. These crises should lead to a renewed international consensus that multilateral solutions based on international law not only frequently offer the only legal solution and are therefore morally preferable to individual action, but also create the opportunity for effective policy. The InterAction Council supports a multilateral system which is robust, rather than rhetorical.
2. The world today is faced with numerous endemic problems which can only be seriously addressed through sustained and intensive international cooperation. There are many examples of such issues: poverty and the growing disparity between rich and poor; climate change, with its concomitant economic and cultural impacts; population explosion in much of the developing world and aging of the workforce in the industrialized states; international migration, both of refugees from conflict and of workers in search of economic opportunity. None of these issues can be resolved through force; none can be solved by one state acting alone; all demand the immediate attention and active international cooperation.
3. The development of the European Union, by overcoming traditional enmities and forging a cooperative framework for future relations, has demonstrated the moral and ethical authority that derives from decisions taken collectively. Even a well-meaning policy, if mandated by one state acting alone, cannot command the same broad support in the international community which could be garnered by engaging others in the decision-making process. Military power may sometimes be an element in the preservation of international order, but not all problems are susceptible to a military solution. Indeed, resort to armed force outside of a legal, multilateral framework weakens the moral authority needed to combat the many problems that call for non-military responses.
4. Any discussion of multilateralism necessarily requires an analysis of the place of the United States. America's approach to international affairs was dramatically affected by September 11th, and the international community must remember the special role that event played in re-shaping America's view of the world. Even in this new environment, the United States has itself demonstrated a willingness to work multilaterally on many issues, including efforts to resolve the tension with North Korea, and the New Economic Program for African Development for genuine partnership with African governments to create development opportunities and to combat AIDS.
5. The American administration's recent involvement in efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute merits particular commendation and support. The United States, however, cannot resolve this longstanding conflict alone. The involvement of the Quartet (the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations) deserves international support, and implementing the Roadmap will require the closer cooperation of the Quartet with other significant actors in the region. Any program for peace between Israelis and Palestinians must entail bilateral guarantees of security, possibly monitored by

credible military forces acceptable to both sides. An even-handed approach, leading to the ultimate application of UN Resolutions 242 and 373, should make possible the realization of two viable states.

6. America's global influence derives not just from military power. America has always regarded itself as a nation apart, and has a foreign policy tradition of offering an open door to economic and political refugees, the support for the liberation of colonies in the post-war era, and the Marshall Plan for the rebuilding of Europe. Unilateral action, whether military, economic, or environmental, has the capacity to damage America's own vital strategic interests by diminishing its stock of international good will, and lending credence to other states' fears and frustrations.
7. Unilateralism damages the international system, and once the damage has begun, no one can tell where it will end. Such acts also create bad precedents for future crises. Multilateral rules constrain the freedom of action of all participating nations, but also increase international security.
8. Terrorism is a domain requiring international cooperation and a multilateral approach, especially as concerns intelligence sharing and police cooperation. The InterAction Council welcomes the recent Evian Summit decision to establish a Counterterrorist Action Group, and calls for more urgent action. Military responses alone can never end the threat of terrorism. Some terrorism may have its origins purely in hatred of the West, because of its power and freedom; some may have its root causes in poverty, political disempowerment, and fundamentalist extremism. In most cases, however, terrorism has specific objectives; terrorists in Bali, Chechnya, Northern Ireland and Palestine are driven by separate and distinct goals. These issues, again, can only be effectively dealt with through a multilateral framework. The effort to combat terrorism should not entail the unilateral abrogation of international law, or the erosion of domestic civil liberties.
9. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and particularly nuclear weapons, is one of the most pressing threats to the international community, made doubly dangerous by the possibility of terrorist use of such weapons. Strengthening non-proliferation regimes and stepping up counter-terrorism are increasingly interlinked, and demand a coherent multilateral approach. The five declared nuclear powers can share a leadership role on this issue, but participation and engagement by all states is vital. As part of the non-proliferation program, the nuclear powers must uphold their own responsibilities under Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, requiring nuclear states to move toward eventual nuclear disarmament. The United States, Russia, China, South Korea and Japan must, in particular, work together to address the challenges posed by the North Korean situation.
10. Multilateral action necessarily demands an organizational framework. The United Nations, in particular, is and should remain the primary venue for cooperation and coordination between nations, though regional forums have an important role to play in this regard as well. The United Nations is an imperfect institution, and many ideas for institutional reform have been mooted.

Institutions, however, reflect the capacity of their members to work together. No state can expect that its policies will be accepted at all times by the community of nations. The UN's achievements are the result of the dedication of its major members, and its failures are due to lack of support by member states. Institutional changes in the United Nations are very unlikely to occur even in the medium term – the urgent and central task of today's leaders must be to work effectively with the organizations that exist and the tools at hand. The vital role of the Security Council remains central to today's international framework, and represents the best hope for a peaceful and law-based world.

11. In the final analysis, it is the power and knowledge of the citizens, and the capacity of their leaders to maintain their trust, that upholds the rule of law and preserves liberty.

List of Participants

InterAction Council Members

1. H. E. Chancellor Helmut **Schmidt**, Honorary Chairman (Germany)
2. H. E. Prime Minister Malcolm **Fraser**, Co-chairman (Australia)
3. H. E. Prime Minister Kiichi **Miyazawa**, Co-chairman (Japan)
4. H. E. Prime Minister Evgeny M. **Primakov**, Organizing Chairman (Russia)
5. H. E. President Oscar **Arias** (Costa Rica)
6. H. E. President Bacharuddin Jusuf **Habibie** (Indonesia)
7. H. E. President Jerry John **Rawlings** (Ghana)

High-level Experts

8. Dr. Walid A. **Al-Turk**, Member of the Board of Directors, World Affairs Council (Jordan)
9. Prof. Thomas **Axworthy**, Executive Director, Historica Foundation (Canada)
10. Baroness **Jay**, Chairman of the Overseas Development Institute, London (U. K.)
11. Mr. Jean André **François-Poncet**, Economist, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (France)
12. Prof. Kirk O. **Hanson**, Santa Clara University - California (U. S. A.)
13. Prof. Nagao **Hyodo**, Tokyo Keizai University (Japan)
14. Mr. S. **Karaganov**, Deputy Director, Institute of Europe, Academy of Sciences (Russia)
15. Ambassador V. **Lukov**, Ambassador at Large (Russia)
16. Mr. Robert S. **McNamara**, former President, World Bank (U. S. A.)
17. Mr. Georgy **Petrov**, Vice President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Russia
18. Mr. Fritz **Stern**, Emeritus Professor, Columbia University (U. S. A.)