

# COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

*Hans Corell\**

Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter does not preclude regional organizations from taking regional actions in the maintenance of international peace and security. As long as such regional actions are taken consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, regional organizations can play a pivotal role in the peaceful settlement of regional disputes. Enforcement measures must however be authorized first by the Security Council.

The Security Council should utilize regional organizations or arrangements either in response to requests made to states or by the Security Council itself. Furthermore, the use of regional arrangements can strengthen the role of the Security Council and help maintain peace and security effectively.

The Charter of the United Nations does not provide a specific definition and character for the regional organizations. This flexible nature of the Charter in dealing with the roles of regional organizations permits various organizations to work for international peace and security regardless of their different organizational objectives.

Gradual attraction towards the role of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security is in an ascending mode. In its Resolution 49/57 of December 9, 1994, the General Assembly approved the Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements or Agencies in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security, and was convinced that its adoption would contribute towards strengthening the role and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations and of the regional arrangements or agencies in this regard.

Regional organizations and arrangements can play an important role in providing personnel and materials. Confidence of the parties can be enhanced by allowing the role of well-known regional organizations to play a part in conflict resolutions. The use of regional organizations is important not only to the peace-keeping operations, but also for preventive diplomacy, establishment of military and civil personnel and fact finders

---

\* Under-Secretary General, for Legal Affairs, the Legal Counsel, United Nations.

when carried out in coordination with the United Nations. Among others, the following organizations are currently in cooperation with the United Nations to further peace and security. These include the Organization of the American States (OAS); Organization of African Unity (OAU); Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); European Union (EU); North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC); and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

In August, 1994, the Secretary-General met with the heads of several regional organizations to strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In his "An Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General recommended a greater role for regional organizations in peace-related activities. The Secretary-General further emphasized the joint action, not only as a matter of decentralization, delegation, and cooperation with United Nations, but also as a means of promoting consensus, and democratization in international affairs.