

High-Level Panel Report Launch Event 02 December 2004

Introduction by Moderator, Nicole Deller

The report of the high level panel on threats, challenges and change, entitled *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, proposes what has been called the most sweeping set of changes in the history of the UN.

The High Level Panel was formed by the Secretary-General in recognition of the changing face of global security threats in recent years. From terrorism and spread of weapons of mass destruction, to the question of how far the right of self defense should extend, Mr. Annan warned that the UN had come to a fork in the road. He foresaw that it would rise to the challenges of the new global security environment or risk irrelevance.

The Secretary-General appointed a panel of 16 distinguished men and women representing diverse regions of the world and areas of expertise. They were charged with the task of assessing today's global security threats and recommending the changes needed to meet these threats. The resulting report, released today, contains 101 recommendations and is the subject of our panel this evening. A central thesis of the report is that "in the twenty-first century, more than ever before, no State can stand wholly alone. Collective strategies, collective institutions and a sense of collective responsibility are indispensable."

Program

Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland provided an overview of the Report, describing some of the recommendations regarding economic and social threats and also the recommendations on institutional reform.

"The UN has not always been equitable in its response to threats... This inequity in response of course undermines the confidence in the legitimacy of the UN in many people's minds... [Unless] we are willing to take on board the needs and perceived threats of all, we cannot work together in a collective security system."

"Building a more secure world takes much more than a report or a summit, which we are expecting next year. It will take resources commensurate with the scale of the challenges ahead, commitments that are long term and sustained, and most of all it will take leadership from within states and between them. And of course it takes engagement from people like you to inspire those leaders to take their responsibility seriously."

Dr. Brundtland is member of the High-level panel, has served as Director-General of the World Health Organization. She served as Minister of Environment of Norway and was the youngest person and first woman ever to hold the office of Prime Minister of Norway.

Dr. Brundtland also served as chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development. The Commission, which is best known for developing the broad political concept of sustainable development, was the impetus for the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992.

Prior to her career in public life, Dr. Brundtland was a practicing physician in the Norwegian public health system. She holds an Md and a Masters in Public Health.

Gareth Evans, also a member of the High Level Panel, addressed issues of use of force, weapons of mass destruction, interstate and internal conflict.

“The key enterprise lying behind this whole panel exercise is to recover traction for cooperative internationalism... There is an unequivocal endorsement by the panel of what we describe as the emerging norm that there is a collective international responsibility to protect, exercisable by the Security Council, authorizing military intervention as a last resort in the event of genocide, other large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing or serious violations of humanitarian law, which sovereign governments have proved powerless or unwilling to prevent.”

“We are all in this together.”

Mr. Evans is President and Chief Executive of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG), an international nongovernmental organization. He served as a member of Australian Parliament for 21 years and then was one of Australia's longest serving Foreign Ministers.

He has written or edited eight books and among other panels, he was co-chair, of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which published its report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, in December 2001.

He holds first class honours degrees in Law from Melbourne University (BA, LLB(Hons)) and in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University (MA). Before entering parliament, Mr. Evans was an academic lawyer and a barrister.

Dr. Edward Luck, served as the discussant, placing the report in the context of other attempts at UN reform and providing insight into the US perspective.

“I do believe that [the report] really is a coherent and compelling vision, I think the whole idea of a global, comprehensive notion of collective security is long overdue and very much needed.”

“It seems to me that the value of this report, even though it’s much acclaimed at the moment, will actually be appreciated more over time. This may be a fine wine, which 2 years, 5 years, 10 years from now will still be giving real value and I think in many way we’ll see in a long-term perspective that this is a very important document for the [UN]’s future.”

Dr. Luck is Director of the Center on International Organization of the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. Among his many published works, he is co-editor and contributing author to *International Law and Organization: Closing the Compliance Gap* and author of *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International Organization*

He served as President and CEO of the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) and has played a key role in United Nations reform process including as staff director of the General Assembly's Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System.

He holds a BA from Dartmouth College, and several graduate degrees from Columbia University.