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Chapter I

Achieving peace and security

10. The setbacks to international peace and security in the past year were numerous, from the rise in tensions between India and Pakistan to the deterioration in the Middle East, and from the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 against the United States to the eruption of violence in Liberia. It is no exaggeration to say that, to many people, the world felt like a much more dangerous place this year than it has for many years. There are however millions of people around the world for whom it has long been dangerous: people who live in conditions of extreme insecurity and poverty, and for whom progress towards peace and prosperity did not advance this past year as much as it should have. The people of the occupied Palestinian territory, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere would be justified in asking what more the international community and their own Governments can and should be doing to help them advance towards peace.

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Conflict prevention and peacemaking

12. During the past year, the focus of implementation of the recommendations contained in my report of June 2001 on the prevention of armed conflict has been on securing greater cooperation with Governments, supporting subregional initiatives to promote peace and stability and encouraging the mainstreaming of conflict prevention into national development programmes. The development, humanitarian, human rights and political arms of the United Nations system will continue to work in concert for sustainable peace.

13. In the Middle East, an already tense situation was aggravated by a vicious circle of violence. Previously understood “red lines” were violated, with heavy loss of life on both sides. In March 2002, following a suicide bomb attack in the Israeli city of Netanya, the Israeli Defence Forces launched a massive operation in the West Bank, severely damaging the Palestinian security and civilian infrastructure, and provoking a humanitarian and human rights crisis. To address the situation, in April 2002 I proposed the establishment of a multinational force to help provide security for Israeli and Palestinian civilians, and to promote an environment conducive to the resumption of negotiations. While there is no consensus yet on such a force, its potential for generating momentum towards a peaceful solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been widely recognized by the international community.

14. The Israeli incursion into the Jenin refugee camp led to allegations of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. In response, I offered to send an impartial fact-finding team to compile an accurate account of what had occurred. The Security Council [resolution 1405 \(2002\)](#) unanimously accepted my offer. Accordingly, I assembled an appropriate team. In view of the fact that Israel’s subsequent concerns on this issue were fundamental in nature, I found it necessary to disband the team without its being able to visit the sites. In May 2002, the General Assembly requested me to submit a report on the events in Jenin and other Palestinian cities. That report was issued on 1 August 2002 ([A/ES-10/186](#)).

15. Amid these distressing circumstances, there were opportunities for progress towards a political settlement. In particular, the Security Council, in [resolution 1397 \(2002\)](#), affirmed a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, would live side by side within secure and recognized borders. The assistance of a third party is critical to help the parties emerge from the present cycle of destruction. To this end, I continue to maintain close and regular contacts with all concerned. I engaged in particular with the United States, the Russian Federation and the European Union, a group which has evolved into a new coordinating mechanism known as the Quartet.

16. At a meeting in Madrid in April 2002, the Quartet called for a three-pronged approach to comprehensively address security, economic and political concerns. In May 2002, in Washington, D.C., the Quartet announced its intention to work with the parties to hold an international peace conference focused on attaining the goal set out in resolution 1397 (2002). In July 2002, in New York, the Quartet reached an agreement on the goals identified in the statement of the President of the United States of 24 June 2002, namely, two democratic States living side by side in peace and security; a complete and lasting halt to violence and terrorism; an end to the occupation that began in 1967; a halt to settlements; reform of the Palestinian Authority’s security and civilian institutions; the holding of elections; and the conclusion of permanent settlement negotiations on the outstanding issues within a defined time frame, namely, three years. Representatives of the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia had their first meeting with the Quartet at that time.

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Peacekeeping and peace-building

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43. There were heightened tensions along the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon over the past year. In particular, there was a pronounced escalation in violent incidents across the line, both within and outside the Shab’a farms area, in March and April 2002. Although the situation stabilized in May 2002, the potential for deterioration remains significant. The Government of Lebanon has yet to take all the necessary steps to restore its authority throughout the south, where the activities of armed elements along the Blue Line keep the situation unstable. Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace have contributed to the tension. The Security Council has repeatedly called upon all parties concerned to respect fully the Blue Line, most recently in its [resolution 1391 \(2002\)](#). The functions of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continue to be largely those of an observer mission. Accordingly, the Force has continued with its reconfiguration exercise, which has entailed implementation of a plan to reduce its numbers.

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Delivering humanitarian assistance and the challenge of underfunded emergencies

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94. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) provides education, health, relief and social services as well as income-generation programmes to more than 4 million Palestine refugees. As at 31 May 2002, donor pledges amounted to \$254.5 million, leaving an estimated deficit of \$53 million. A decline in funding would jeopardize the quality and extent of health and education services provided by the Agency. The major escalation in violence since February 2002 has led to the destruction of civic infrastructure on a very large scale. Many Palestinians, including refugees, who depended on the public sector services provided by the Palestinian Authority, are now expected to look to the Agency for relief. It is estimated that this would require additional expenditure by the Agency of \$46 million in the West Bank alone. The Agency is preparing to issue a supplementary appeal to cover these additional emergency costs. In view of this situation, I appointed my Personal Humanitarian Envoy to undertake a mission to assess the nature and scale of the humanitarian crisis in the region.

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Conclusion

230. This annual report provides an overview of what the United Nations is doing to help solve pressing global problems, and to strengthen international cooperation. More detailed assessments of specific issues reviewed in this report are contained in my other reports to the legislative organs. Developments during the past year have affirmed the Organization's increasing relevance in world affairs; but a review of the work of the Organization is also a reminder that much still needs to be done to achieve the aims and goals of the Charter and the Millennium Declaration. In the coming year, let us take every opportunity to use the Organization in our common endeavour to achieve lasting peace and justice.
