Executive Summary

The Joint NUPI-Uppsala Project on transition management and international commitment

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In May 2005 the Swedish and Norwegian Ministries of Foreign Affairs jointly commissioned a discussion paper on UN Reform from the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and Uppsala University. The purpose of the discussion paper was to explore ideas of reform that could be submitted to the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes. The initiative has resulted in two separate contributions focusing on an integrated problematique from different angles. The NUPI discussion paper on transition management (I) is written by Anja Kaspersen in co-operation with a group of NUPI researchers headed by Espen Barth Eide. The discussion paper on attention and commitment (II) has been worked out at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research of Uppsala University by Carina Staibano and Peter Wallensteen. The central theme of both papers is how the international community at large and the UN system more specifically can manage the transitions from war to peace in a more coherent and lasting way.

Managing transitions from conflict to peace has become a primary responsibility of the United Nations in the 21st century. More often than not the UN has come under international scrutiny for failing to achieve tangible or lasting results in rectifying conflict situations. If the UN is to improve its record and adapt its institutional structure to respond more effectively to regional crises, it will necessarily have to reconsider the way it addresses the synergy between development and security in conflict areas. Conceptually the UN has come a long way, yet, operationally it still lags behind. There is a need to improve the UN's responses at the institutional and intergovernmental as well as regional levels.

Moreover, maintaining international attention and commitment to particular conflict situations requires an active monitoring of ongoing situations, bridging of gaps between short-term and long-term measures and a particular regard for the more problematic situations, including state failures. Member states' commitment to work and contribute in a concerted way to peace-building and conflict preventive activities is imperative. To do this, member states need strong, action orientated mechanisms where they can come together and discuss possible actions. These efforts need to be supported and encouraged by the UN organization. One idea to do this through is to furnish member state with relevant analysis and systematized information.

In both discussion papers existing means of management, analysis and capacities within the UN system and at the intergovernmental level are scrutinized. From these observations sets of recommendations are drawn, and organized as follows:

Paper I (Kaspersen & Eide)

In the contribution on **transition management** the suggestions are organized under eight headings:

1) *Create a comprehensive transition roadmap*.
2) *Initiate a systemic review* of the United Nations structure and hierarchy of guidance including:
    a. *Propose a comprehensive review of the current division of labor between DPKO and DPA*.
    b. Propose a *comprehensive review of DPA's Electoral Assistance Division* with the intention of changing the Division into a Directorate or Office.
    c. Propose a *mapping exercise of existing mechanisms for coordination* within the UN system (including the potential role of ECOSOC and a subsidiary Security Council organ).
    d. Propose the *establishment of "group of friends" on critical areas of importance*, (i.e. DDR in New York to identify partners and funding).
3) Assess the feasibility of *expanding the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations into a subsidiary Council "clearinghouse"*.
4) Propose a *wider debate on the potential role of regional organisations in transition management*.
5) Recommend that an *analysis be conducted on the strategic cultures of the security and development segments*, of national and international institutions responsible for planning and implementation and the interplay between them.
6) Launch the idea of an *in depth analysis of the unintended consequences of peacekeeping and peace-building activities in the field*.
7) Encourage the United Nations system, IFI's and donor countries to *review the potential of establishing a Transitional Budget Line* and assess the feasibility of institutionalizing a funding window for transition in the regular budget of the UN, alternatively in the format of a trust fund. .
8) Initiatives as the UNDP/DPA Program on Building National Capacity for Conflict Prevention should be welcomed.

Paper II (Wallensteen & Staibano)

On issues of attention and commitment, three major proposals are put forward:

1) *Sharpen the role of ECOSOC.* Two tasks are envisaged: pursue the necessary elections and the annual reporting from the specialized UN agencies, and give ECOSOC a task in keeping international attention on particular conflict situations. This would free resources and time within ECOSOC to deal with peace-building in a more effective way.

2) *Establish new mechanisms under the Security Council*, as subsidiary organs. Such organs can contribute to maintain the specific situation on the international agenda by including contacts with donors, organizations and other actors. It is

argued that a valuable model, in a limited version, is the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which now has both a political/diplomatic Plenary and a Bureau of support and expert staff, integrated in the same committee.

3) *A central analysis capacity at the UN level* would be an effective tool to bridge the attention gap by conveying relevant information on present and looming conflict situations to member states. In addition, such an analysis unit could strengthen the UN's capacity to formulate strategies and increase coordination and cooperation between different departments (DPA, DPKO, to name but a few).