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The Role of the United Nations in Fighting Terrorism

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Terrorism is not a simple challenge, and the classic definitions of terrorism sharply understate the true range of problems the UN faces. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "terror" as "a state of intense fear," and "terrorism" as the "systematic use of terror, especially as a means of coercion." From a more practical point of view, it goes on to define "terror" as "violence (such as bombing) committed by groups in order to intimidate a population or government into granting their demands, e.g. insurrection and revolutionary terror." Many counterterrorism experts use similar definitions to refer to acts that emphasize the psychological effect of the act, rather than casualties, or physical damage.

The Narrow and Broad Challenges of Terrorism

From the viewpoint of humanity and international organizations, however, such definitions fall short of defining the problem and the true task at hand.

First, terrorist attacks may or may not be designed to create fear. Many have far more direct political and economic motives; they are designed to intimidate and not to create fear. The attacker sees others as acts of morally justified vengeance. There is no doubt that the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were designed to influence the behavior of the US, the Western world, the Arab world, and the Islamic world, but while provoking fear was certainly a motive, it was secondary to achieving political objectives and vengeance.

Second, terrorism is not simply the province of individuals and groups; it is also committed by states. In many cases, repression by governments is both violent and systematic. Such actions do, of course, have psychological effects, but they concentrate on repressing dissent and compelling the desired behavior, and not on producing fear itself. The long, brutal, civil wars in Angola, Algeria, and the Sudan are cases in point. In such cases, both governments and their

opponents have often ruthlessly attacked civilians. The primary goals have been political and economic power, and control over given areas, and once again, fear has been a secondary motive.

Brutal attacks on civilians and non-combatants may be conducted by states and extremist groups for a wide range of purposes, including political and economic motives that have little to do with fear. "Narcoterrorism," for example, is rarely concerned with fear and deeply concerned with profit.

Terrorism and Warfare

More importantly, there is no meaningful dividing line between terrorism and war. Military planners often use the term "asymmetric warfare" to describe conflicts in which the different sides use radically asymmetric methods – usually with equally different perceptions of the world, values, and objectives. In most such wars, they become asymmetric because one side has a decisive advantage in using conventional military force and the other responds by using a different means. This different response can take the form of attacks on civilians, government facilities, key economic targets, and information systems.

Many modern wars are not declared in the traditional sense, and many involve movements which attack states in ways where there is no clear dividing line between extremist acts of violence, efforts to overthrow a government, or acts of war. At the lowest levels of conflict, the asymmetric methods that attackers use can include such new forms of war as "cyberterrorism." At the highest level of conflict, states, terrorist groups, or individuals can try to overcome an opponent's conventional military capabilities by using the most horrible weapons known to man, such as covert attacks with biological or nuclear weapons.

To put this issue in further perspective, methods of attack like cyberterrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction may be new, but conflicts that involve systematic attacks on civilians are not. Studies by the US Department of Defense report that there have been roughly 25-35 international and civil wars going on somewhere in the world every day of every year since the end of World War II.

We do not count the human costs of such conflicts in talking about international terrorism, but virtually every such conflict has involved a series of state or insurgent attacks on civilians. In most cases, the number of dead and wounded cannot be estimated in more than the most approximate way. In far too many cases, any effort to win through terrorism and psychological warfare has had secondary effects compared to poverty, disease, and starvation.

The UN Response to the Narrower Definition of Terrorism

The United Nations has long reacted to the threats included in the narrower definition of terrorism, and it is only natural that the UN took new action after the events of September 11, 2001. The Security Council adopted three important resolutions, 1368, 1373 and 1377 after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. These resolutions affirmed the right of self-defense, found terrorism to be a threat to international peace and security, and stressed the accountability of the supporter as well as the perpetrator of terrorist acts. They obliged member states to limit the ability of terrorists and terrorist organizations to operate internationally by freezing assets of terrorist-affiliated persons and organizations and denying them safe haven, among other things. They also set forth a Ministerial Declaration on International Terrorism.

The UN Response to "9/11"

Security Council Resolution 1373 is a good example of such UN action. It requires all states to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts, including freezing funds and other financial assets. The resolution also obliges all states to improve border security, clamp down on the recruitment of terrorists, intensify information sharing and law enforcement cooperation in the international campaign against terrorism, and deny terrorists and their supporters any assistance or safe haven.

The Security Council has established a Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) to oversee implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373, and much more is involved than word and good intentions. Member states sent these reports to the CTC in December 2001 stating the steps they are taking to fight terrorism. These reports included progress in seven critical areas: legislation, financial asset controls, customs, immigration, extradition, law enforcement and arms traffic.

The General Assembly adopted two antiterrorism resolutions that condemned the "heinous acts of terrorism" in Washington, Pennsylvania, and New York. The General Assembly continued its work on the negotiation of international terrorism conventions. Secretary General Kofi Annan repeatedly condemned terrorism acts, as in a speech he delivered on 12 September: "All nations of the world must be united in their solidarity with the victims of terrorism, and in their determination to take action, both against the terrorists themselves and against all those who give them any kind of shelter, assistance or encouragement."

The various agencies of the UN also took new actions. Agencies like the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted resolutions committing members to take measures to limit terrorists' ability to act. The International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA), which is affiliated with the UN, adopted a

resolution addressing measures to protect against acts of nuclear terrorism. It is developing a program to coordinate assistance to member states in an effort to improve security of nuclear facilities and of nuclear and radioactive materials.

All of these actions, however, follow up on long-standing UN efforts to fight terrorism. The three resolutions passed after "9/11" augmented nine other Security Council and multilateral resolutions. The first of these multilateral resolutions dates back to the Tokyo convention of 1963, which dealt with the suppression of unlawful seizure of aircraft that was signed in December 1970. These international efforts to deal with the threat of hijacking began nearly four decades before the attack on the World Trade Center.

Other measures have included a convention to protect diplomats from terrorism signed in 1973, one on taking hostages signed in 1979, and one to suppress terrorist bombings signed in 1997. The Security Council passed resolutions 1267 and 1333 in 1999 and 2000, (respectively) which imposed targeted or "smart" sanctions against the Taliban in Afghanistan. It acted years before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

UN Action versus National Resistance

The UN does face many critical problems in transforming its resolutions, and the efforts of its agencies, into effective actions. Far too often international reality is very different from international rhetoric and UN resolutions. The world is deeply divided over who is a terrorist and what actions are really terrorism. Some nations use their support of violent extremists as a political weapon; others legitimately support movements and causes that use terrorist methods in asymmetric warfare. Some states seek to use counterterrorism to win political leverage, and defeat their enemies by labeling them as "terrorists."

Furthermore, the UN cannot resolve every debate over who is a terrorist and what is terrorism. There will always be those who will claim that some acts of violence against states and civilians are justified, and that another man's terrorist is their freedom fighter. There will always be those who claim that there is a universal standard for defining terrorism – which consists of the actions of their enemy – and that the UN should act on the principle that, "one man's terrorist is another man's terrorist."

The UN cannot act effectively against terrorism, the use of terrorist and extremist groups as state proxies, or asymmetric warfare in the many cases where there is no international consensus on action.

Other national sensitivities are involved. Nations are far more willing to try to deal with international terrorism than politically sensitive internal security threats and state terrorism. Internal security is the crown jewel of state secrets, and few nations are fully open in exchanging data on terrorism when the security of their regime is directly involved.

As is the case with every other challenge the UN faces, however, these problems do not mean that the United Nations can give up. The UN must continue to evolve a better and more workable international approach to terrorism. The UN has also shown over a period of decades that there are many areas of international activity where the UN can expand its functions without having to face many of the problems created by the divisions between nations and their sensitivity to internal security issues.

Two areas that the UN has already begun to address are of particular importance:

- First, lasting, and well-institutionalized efforts will be needed in counter-terrorism, law enforcement and related activities like customs, coast guard and port control, to

the extent the divisions between nations make these possible. The fact that we live in an imperfect world is scarcely a reason not to make it better.

- Second, there are far fewer national barriers to a UN approach to improving the security of international transportation, movement of hazardous material, protection of high-risk facilities, and critical infrastructure security. The UN can pursue the creation of common security standards for air, road, rail, and maritime traffic, airport security, port security, security for containers ports and shipments, energy, and hazardous material shipments. It can recommended global standards for the protection of key commuter facilities like subways, critical infrastructure facilities like nuclear power plants, plants producing or storing large amounts of hazardous materials, and key public facilities and government buildings, and provide technical advice.

The UN and the Broader Challenge of Terrorism

The UN's most important role may well lie in the role it can play in dealing with the broader definition of terrorism, and the need to protect civilians against all acts of extremist violence and asymmetric warfare, including the use of weapons of mass destruction. The UN has long played such a role through its human rights and arms control activities, and through a wide range of multilateral conventions such as the Vienna convention on the physical protection of nuclear material in March 1980.

At a broader level, the UN has long made efforts to eliminate the misunderstandings between cultures through organizations like UNESCO, and efforts to address the causes of terrorism by fighting world poverty. It has indirectly addressed some of the most dangerous

emerging threats, such as biological terrorism, through the activities of organizations like the World Health Organization.

I would like today, however, to focus on the future challenges the UN faces and not its successes. There are four major areas where the UN must reshape its role, actions, and priorities to deal with the broader threat of terrorism and asymmetric warfare.

Redefining Human Rights to Cover Terrorism and State Violence

To begin with, the UN needs to restructure its approach to human rights. One part of this effort should be for the UN to reexamine the laws of war. Secondly, the UN should rethink its approach to war crimes. Thirdly, it should restructure its approach to human rights. And finally, the UN should reexamine the issue of how nations are dealing with immigration, refugees, and international labor mobility in the light of the new threat from terrorism.

At present, the laws of war focus largely on conventional conflicts between states, just as the laws affecting terrorism tend to focus on international acts of relatively low levels of violence. Most modern conflicts, however, are asymmetric. State terrorism is often difficult to distinguish from state counterterrorism. Insurgents and violent extremists do not act as prisoners of war, and may go on fighting long after their movement surrenders or is destroyed. The level of violence involved is itself an issue, and the actions justified in dealing with a credible threat of using weapons of mass destruction may be very different from those justified in dealing with lower levels of terrorism. The UN needs to rethink the impact of all these issues.

Today, there is often a sharp gap between the efforts of governments to suppress violence and the efforts of human rights groups to protect political freedom and the rights of opposition movements.

- On the one hand, state-driven counterterrorism efforts tend to label all violent non-state opposition as terrorist. By such standards, there are no freedom fighters, only extremists who can be treated as criminals.

- On the other hand, some human rights movements focus far too much on criticizing the actions states take against opposition movements and far too little on the levels of violence or threat of violence posed by those opposition groups and movements and the growing threat of terrorism and covert warfare.

Far too often, no objective effort is made to evaluate the overall level of violence, the relative role of states versus private organizations in using violence against the opposition and innocent civilians, and to evaluate the justification each side has for using this violence. At present, the international community attempts to impose two opposing sets of poorly defined international norms.

The UN cannot arbitrate every internal structure or international source of violence. It can, however, restructure both it's reporting on terrorism and on human rights to examine the overall patterns of violence involved. It can look beyond the immediate actors involved to provide much better estimates of the civilian casualties, the broader causes of such violence, and their economic and social costs. It can encourage NGO's to be less parochial in taking either a "counterterrorism" or "human rights" approach, and it can encourage member states to look beyond the forms of international terrorism that most threaten them today and examine the overall level of global violence and future risks.

The events of "9/11" have also dramatized another major problem within the international community. It is all too clear that legal and illegal immigration present unique

problems in terms of counterterrorism and law enforcement, but that the massive levels of human migration are inevitable.

Today, immigration is still seen largely as a national problem, and not as a global economic and security problem. Few industrialized nations have attempted to fully analyze the trade-offs between the need for additional labor to compensate for their aging work force, the cultural impact on their society, and the need to preserve human rights and tolerate cultural diversity. No real standards exist to protect both the immigrant and restrict the movement of the terrorist.

It may well be impossible to develop anything approaching a common international strategy to dealing with immigration, human rights, and security, but the UN must try. It already is all to clear that purely national series of efforts is unlikely to meet either security or human needs and is likely to exacerbate tensions between "north" and "south" and between the West and the Islamic world.

The Challenge of a "Clash Within Civilizations"

The second major areas that the UN must come to grips with are the international effects of the "clash <u>within</u> civilizations." Let me note, that I have chosen the phrase "clash *within* civilizations" very carefully. To talk about a "clash between civilizations" is to ignore the true patterns of violence in the world and the fact that most such violence is local. In fact, focusing on the "clash between civilizations" is ethnocentric to the point of xenophobia.

Any realistic analysis of global violence and the effects of terrorism would show that the world is not dealing with a clash between civilizations, but rather with the global spillover of a series of clashes within civilizations, regions, and nations. Regardless of the region of the world,

virtually <u>all</u> casualties to state and organized civil violence occur either within a given country, as a struggle between a movement and a state, or as a result of the struggle between two states. Terrorism and violence are heavily regionalized, and even when this violence grows out of ethnic and religious tension, it is not a clash between civilizations but rather a clash between local factions.

In most cases, international terrorism is a side effect of this clash within nations, within regions, and within civilizations. Terrorism and extremism usually become international when a given side is losing in its own nation or region, and then seeks to broaden the conflict in order to find allies, strengthen its position, or dramatize its cause. International terrorism and asymmetric warfare become ways those involved in local and regional adversaries can lever international intervention, and capture the attention of the world media. They sometimes are a way in which states can divert or export their internal threats and extremist causes to other areas.

This does not mean, however, that some terrorists, extremists, and states do not attempt to create broad conflicts between cultures, ideologies, and religions and do not make a deliberate effort to create a true clash of civilizations. In the 19th century, many advocates of violence wrapped themselves in their flag. In the 20th century, they wrapped themselves in their ideology. In this century, they wrap themselves in their religion.

The UN cannot not ignore these efforts and the fact that a combination of regional problems and violence, and religious ideologues, could create a <u>true</u> "clash of civilizations" between the Islamic and Christian worlds. The UN needs to expand and focus its cultural efforts to bridge the gap between the West and the Islamic and Arab world. It also needs to rethink its counterterrorism, public diplomacy, public information, and foreign aid policies to ensure that extremists can divide the world.

In the process, the UN must shape its peacekeeping and nation-building activities so that they too do as much as possible to bridge the gap between religions and cultures. It needs to strengthen such efforts in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan that will serve to be a key test case. Only an Afghan government that can both reduce the divisions between Afghans and open Afghanistan up to the modern world can both bring internal stability and ensure future development.

UN diplomacy and foreign aid can do a great deal to help in this regard. Its political actions and mediation can help reduce the rivalry between bordering states to influence Afghanistan, and risk the current conflict will ever be a preface to a "new Great Game." Broad UN efforts like economic and humanitarian aid can reassure the Afghans, the region, the Middle East, and other Islamic states that the West does not see Islam as an enemy.

The Challenge of Poverty

The third major area that the UN must address is the broader causes of terrorism, and the key causes are poverty and overpopulation. The UN has long made efforts to address the problem of poverty and the need for new forms of foreign aid. The scale of the problem continues to increase, however, and this will have inevitable consequences in terms of international violence. Even if one could ignore all of the cultural and political tensions that divide the world, sheer demographics almost ensure that new terrorist and asymmetric threats will continue to evolve deep into the 21st Century.

In 1940 -- roughly the year that I was born -- the world had about 2.3 billion people. In 1950, at the time of the Korean War, that number had risen to 2.6 billion. Today, the figure is 6.2 billion – nearly three times the population when I was born. By 2050, even conservative estimates put that figure at 9.1 billion.

Much of this population growth has occurred in productive and stable nations. In broad terms, the world is a much better and wealthier place, and more nations develop than fail. At the same time, however, the World Bank calculates that at least one-third of the world's countries, with 30-40% of the entire population of the world, living below the poverty line.

Some 40% of the world's population lives in economies where the average per capita income is less than $800. We are talking about a total of 2.4 billion people out of 6.2 billion in the world. Under these conditions, it is almost inevitable that cultural, religious, and ethnic differences interact with massive social changes like hyperurbanization and sharp national and regional differences in wealth to produce continuing threats.

There are gross imbalances in economic development within regions. For example, the World Bank estimates that the entire Middle East and all of Africa experienced no real growth per capita income in the two decades between 1980 and the year 2000. The citizens of the US are part of a small number of high-income countries that have an average per capita income of some $26,000 a year. In contrast, South Asia has an average income of $440, Africa $490, East Asia $1,010, and the Middle East $2,160.

While much of the world will improve over the coming decades, at least 600 million to one billion people will be born into dire poverty between 2000 and 2015. At least three billion people will live in poverty by 2015. This total will be more than 500 million people higher than today. Unfortunately, it is the poorest states that generally have the highest birth rates, and US Census Bureau projections make it all too clear that these basic trends may not change by 2050 unless the international community takes far more effective action than it has taken in the past.

More will be involved than poverty. Many -- if not most -- of the world's poor will be socially dispossessed, unemployed, and driven into over-crowded and hyperurbanized cities. The

number of such urban poor doubled from 390 million in 1980 to 760 million in 2000, and nearly

22% of all the people in the world's poorest cities now live in cities of over one million. This

figure may reach 30% by 2015.

Many cultures and societies will be under continuous shock. At the same time, vast

improvements in global communications already ensure that virtually all of these people are all

too well aware of the growing gap between their poverty and wealth of the industrialized world.

They will be all too aware of the wealth of other states, and how much they have or have not

done to help them.

There are no magic answers here. The UN cannot work miracles, and it is a grim reality

that foreign aid is virtually always wasted on nations whose governments and economies are not

organized to help themselves. Even humanitarian assistance sometimes solves today's tragedies

at the cost of making tomorrow's tragedies worse in states with rapidly growing populations.

States with failed governments and failed economies will continue to fail their people.

No organization, however, is better suited to address the causes of violence and bridge

the gap between rich and poor states than the UN. No other organization can do more to catalyze

a systematic effort to encourage poor states to reform, and wealthy states to help. No effort to

fight global or local terrorism can succeed in the long run if the UN does not act to deal with the

sources of violence.

The Challenge of Technology

Finally, a UN strategy to deal with terrorism and asymmetric warfare must look far beyond

the immediate tactical challenges of dealing with Al Qaida and the Taliban. It must consider

several major ongoing changes in technology that pose emerging threats far more serious than the world has had to deal with in the past:

- **The first such change is the growing threat of biological terrorism and asymmetric warfare.**

  Advances in biotechnology, advanced food processing, and pharmaceuticals are steadily increasing the ease with which both terrorists and states can manufacture lethal biological agents and do so all over the world. At the same time, a broader process of proliferation is increasing the threat from other weapons of mass destruction.

  The Anthrax attacks on the US, and the recent outbreak of Hoof and Mouth Disease in the UK, have already shown us that we do not fully understand the effects and risks of relatively well-known biological agents. We have little practical experience with militarized agents and none with deliberate large-scale attacks with infectious diseases and efficient militarized strains and agents. In many cases, our current methods of detection, disease control, and treatment may be ineffective, and this is particularly true if the attack uses a mixture of different agents and is spaced and sequentially timed to deceive or disrupt effective response.

  The full impact of the proliferation of genetic engineering may be a decade or half-decade away, but the once esoteric equipment needed to make dry, storable biological weapons which have the lethality of nuclear weapons has already proliferated through much of the world.

  At the same time, nature is also an enemy. Progressively more lethal strains of diseases are already emerging throughout mush of the developing world. The World Health Organization

and the CIA both warned of a continuing threat to the West from natural causes long before Anthrax was used in a terrorist attack in the US.

A National Intelligence Council study, issued in January 2000, warned that twenty well-known diseases--including tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and cholera--have reemerged or spread geographically since 1973, often in more virulent and drug-resistant forms. Furthermore, at least 30 previously unknown disease agents have been identified since 1973, including HIV, Ebola, Hepatitis C, and Nipah virus, for which no cures are available.

As Britain and Taiwan have learned at immense cost, biotechnology can attack agriculture as well. Even moderate outbreaks of natural disease can easily cost billions of dollars and have a powerful political and social impact.

The UN needs to fundamentally rethink its approach to the Biological Weapons Convention so that it takes full account of these emerging threats, and to fully account for the risk of terrorist and proxy attacks using biological weapons. It needs to fundamentally rethink its approach to world health so that it is prepared for the use of such weapons and does not rely on banning the unbannable.

The UN needs to help member states rethink internal security planning, public health, response, and defense efforts to deal with the broad range of CBRN threats. There may well be a need for integrated response plans that can rush capabilities from one country to another, and deal with any kind of outbreak of human and agricultural disease. Efforts to stockpile vaccines and antibiotics develop common travel and quarantine procedures; develop common warning and public health approaches could prove critical in treating and containing an emergency. Cost-effectiveness would also be a critical issue.

- **The second such change is the related threat of chemical and nuclear terrorism and asymmetric warfare.**

The UN needs to take a new look at related forms of terrorism and asymmetric warfare. There are other threats from chemical and nuclear weapons. While so-called "fourth generation" chemical weapons remain so secret that governments will not talk about them even in broad terms, some developing nations already are developing them, and doing so in ways that are not covered by chemical weapons. At some point in the next two decades, they too will be common knowledge.

No major advances are taking place in the ease with which fissile material can be manufactured, but there is still the issue of the Russian stockpile, and the emergence of new risks like Pakistan. Moreover, every other aspect of nuclear weapons manufacturing is becoming more commercially available from triggering devices to the ability to make and test high explosive lenses.

These emerging threats will interact with changes in international transport and trade. Long-range ballistic missiles, and the steady commercialization of the technology for cruise missiles and drones, are a threat in itself. So, however, is commercial shipping. Any shipping container can be equipped with GPS to explode just before it goes through customs. Most shipping containers are never really inspected, and no commercial screening device can as yet reliably detect a biological agent – and even amounts less than 100 kilograms can produce massive amounts of damage. Once again, UN agencies need to examine what can be done over time to set new international standards for protection, detection, and prevention.

More generally, much of the UN debate over the CW, ABM Treaty, BWC, and CTTBT have avoided coming to grips in detail with the threat of asymmetric attacks and terrorism, and has

a heritage of focusing on large-scale war fighting between the military forces of states. The same has been true of the debate over export controls. A comprehensive review of how to change arms control agreements and export controls – one looking at the changes in all aspects of CBRN technology and delivery options – is needed to develop a more effective UN strategy.

- **Third, advances in conventional technology and weapons add to the threat.**

  As the recent US Quadrennial Defense Review has warned, terrorists and states are acquiring access to a wide range of more conventional technologies that can be used to support asymmetric warfare and terrorism. These include secure communications, satellite phone systems, satellite imagery, highly effective anti-ship missiles and advanced mines, GPS location and triggering devices, advanced manportable surface-to-air missiles, robotic crop dusters and UAVs, and a host of other systems.

  Steady advances in the global dissemination of these technologies are changing the technological map of terrorism and asymmetric warfare. The UN effort to deal with conventional arms transfers has become dated. It needs to be reshaped to consider the new systems that can be used for terrorism and asymmetric warfare.

- **Fourth, advances in information systems, and the steady integration of world trading and financial systems, are steadily increasing vulnerability to cyberterrorism and cyberwarfare.**

  Constant attacks by crackers and cybercriminals have already become routine, but states and terrorist groups have the potential to use such technology to do far more damage. No one has to attack a nation or physical target directly and visibly as was done in attacking the World

Trade Center and the Pentagon. Indirect attacks on information systems can be just as damaging to an economy, government, and the social order.

This form of asymmetric warfare is often a matter of personal skill, almost an art form. A small terrorist group may be as effective as a state, although sustained mass attacks remain an attractive form of state asymmetric warfare.

At the same time, direct physical attacks on key information, trading, and financial systems are also possible. Here, a combination of technology, engineering, and cost-considerations has acted to created more and more dependence on critical utilities, facilities that house critical communications gear and node in net works, and places where large numbers of skilled human beings interface with such systems. Wall Street and nuclear power plants are just two examples of such critical infrastructure.

Furthermore, the problem of insuring against all of the risks of terrorism and asymmetric warfare – and the future role of states in ensuring the viability of what has become a global insurance business – is becoming a challenge in itself. Insurance must deal with both information systems and virtually every form of major terrorist or state-driven asymmetric physical attack, and it is unclear that any one nation can afford to secure its national insurance industry against such risks.

These are threats that industrial states now give far more attention than developing states. The fact is, however, that attacks can come from any state or movement, and developing states are gradually moving towards a dependence on information systems and international infrastructure where far more people will be dependent on a given system and in nations where governments will have far fewer resources to protect them.

This is yet another area where the UN must look towards the future. A dedicated UN effort to deal with cyberwarfare, back by clear commercial standards for data protection, liability, recovery capability and other defense measures could be equally critical.

- **Fifth, advances in global transportation systems create yet another mix of vulnerabilities.**

Critical as information systems are, they are only part of the story. Global dependence on key transportation systems like jet aircraft, container vessels, and tankers may not involve the kinds of radical advances in technology discussed earlier, but it does involve the integration of much more mundane technologies into steadily more complex, economically important, and time sensitive economic sub-systems. This dependence is projected to grow steadily and do so indefinitely into the future. As we saw all too clearly on September 11th, however, virtually every major transportation system we depend on for international commerce can be transformed into a weapon. So can any interference in the growth and flow of such systems.

The UN needs to begin to examine the long-term aspects of this form of globalism. It needs to look at the international vulnerabilities that will emerge over the next five to ten years, and at medium look at ways to ensure that international transportation systems and infrastructure do not become too vulnerable. The most cost-effective systems in pure market terms will sometimes be the most fragile ones, the ones most difficult to substitute for and repair. There may well be a case where security and redundancy must be given higher international priority.

Beyond September 11th: The Future We Always Had to Face

This is a daunting set of challenges. Certainly, nothing about forging an effective UN response to terrorism and asymmetric warfare will be quick, cheap, or easy. Similarly, no one can predict with any certainty just how serious the future threats to the international community will be.

We all, however -- and especially Americans -- need to recognize that the world did not change on September 11th, and neither did the priorities for evolving and restructuring the UN response to terrorism. Instead, September 11th brought long-standing global problems home to Americans in the form of horrible and dramatic violence. Other nations and other peoples have suffered from such problems since long before the birth of the United Nations. Virtually every area where the UN needs to improve its response to terrorism today was just as much a priority on September 10th. If anything has changed, it is that the world have has had a clear warning about the shape of things to come and the new roles the UN must play.

There also is nothing new about the fact the world is changing, and not always for the better. The idea of an easy transition to a "new world order" or the "end of history" has always bordered on mindless intellectual infantilism. The best that any generation can do is to bequeath the next a better set of problems. The fact is that some level of terrorism and asymmetric warfare can never be eliminated, and the UN will have to deal with past, present, and future threats for as long as it exists.

The level of threat the UN must respond to in the future will, however, be heavily dependent on how well it responds over the next few years. At this point in time, new international action in the classic areas of counterterrorism, human rights, preventive diplomacy,

foreign aid, and arms control may well be able to deter the massive escalation of future threats, and sharply reduce every aspect of the political, human, and economic costs involved.

The fact that the need for such UN action will never end is scarcely a reason not to take it. It is also a near certainty, that if the UN is not a vital part of such action, and does not lead in many areas, the global war on terrorism will be lost. This is a tragedy the world, and every member nation, simply cannot afford.