



58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference

Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal

United Nations, New York
7-9 September 2005

Story Idea 5

Voices for Renewal: Human Rights Council – Humanitarian Intervention

Humanitarian intervention is an issue that is raised frequently at the United Nations. The controversy surrounding humanitarian intervention lies in the tension between two of the major values of the Charter of the United Nations: ensuring respect for fundamental human rights and respect of sovereignty of states and non-intervention in internal affairs. However, in some cases of severe and en masse violation of human rights, the Security Council took action – as it considered the situation to be a threat to international peace and security – and decided on the use of force to put an end to a humanitarian catastrophe. These cases included intervention in Somalia, Haiti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire and Kosovo.

The Security Council is the only organ of the United Nations to decide on the use of force to maintain international peace and security. While human rights violations often trigger internal disputes, violations alone are not always considered to be a threat to international peace and security. In order to prevent violations against human rights the Commission on Human Rights was established. The effectiveness of this organ is continuously questioned and undermined by its declining credibility and professionalism as states use their membership to protect themselves against criticism.

For these reasons, the Secretary-General in his report *In larger freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All*, proposed that a smaller Human Rights Council replace the existing Commission on Human Rights. The Council, with more authority to investigate violations and to enforce compliance with the Declaration of Human Rights, could play a crucial role in early-warning systems and conflict prevention. This in the long run, if proved to be an effective tool for the international community, could contribute to the decreased reliance on the authorization of a humanitarian intervention by the Security Council.

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During the 58th DPI/NGO Conference, the following speakers will share their experiences, expertise and views on the United Nations reform in general and more specifically on human rights as the driving force behind peace, security and development.

Jan Egeland, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Shirin Ebadi, Founder and Former President, National Association in Support of Children's Rights; President, Human Rights Defence Centre, Iran

Fatou Bensouda, Deputy Prosecutor, International Criminal Court (ICC)

Gareth Evans, President and Chief Executive, International Crisis Group (ICG)

Johan Løvald, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations; General Assembly Facilitator

Bill Pace, Executive Director, World Federalist Movement (WFM)

Jan Eliasson, President-Elect, Sixtieth Session of the General Assembly

Renate Bloem, President, Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO)

During the three days, a number of midday interactive workshops organized by NGOs will also discuss the renewal of the United Nations, including human rights and humanitarian issues:

Shulamith Koenig, Founding President, and Minar Pimple, Executive Director, People's Decade for Human Rights Education

Temidayo Isreal-Abdulai, Founder, General Action against the Violation of Human and Children's Rights

Valdo Bonfim, Children and Youth Forum 21

Charlotte Bunch, Founder and Executive Director, Center for Women's Global Leadership

Ngozi Uti, Executive Director, Centre for Women's Studies and Intervention, Abuja, Nigeria

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Useful Links:

58th DPI/NGO Conference www.unngodpiconference.org

In Larger Freedom www.un.org/largerfreedom

Millennium Campaign www.millenniumcampaign.org

The 2005 World Summit: An Overview www.un.org/ga/documents/overview2005summit.pdf

High-Level Plenary Meeting of the GA – Draft Outcome Document www.un.org/ga/59/hlpm_rev.2.pdf

Commission on Human Rights <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/2/chr.htm>

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights <http://www.ohchr.org>

UN reform <http://www.un.org/reform>

International Criminal Court: <http://www.icc-cpi.int>