

# **A Small State at the Big Table; New Zealand, Multilateralism and the UN Security Council**

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E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga iwi; tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa; in New Zealand Māori, I extend to all peoples and to all voices, greetings, greetings, greetings to all.

It is an honour to deliver this annual lecture, commemorating the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – the ANZACs – at Gallipoli in the Dardanelles in April 1915; a lecture in which I'm asked to capture the essential elements of the ANZAC spirit, in war, in peace, in everyday life.

1914; 2014; the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of World War I – "the war", supposedly, "to end all wars"<sup>2</sup>. As the third day of August approaches, the books, the articles, the commentaries and, indeed, the analogies, already abound. And attention to that date will, of course, have much validity. The declarations of war made that day triggered destruction of countless lives and, ultimately, empires; probably even the events that arguably gave us World War II and the Cold War.

New Zealand was there, from that 3<sup>rd</sup> day of August, right through to Versailles; and the historian, John Keegan, has written that "New Zealanders' settler independence and skills with rifle and spade [won] them a reputation as the best soldiers in the world during the 20<sup>th</sup> century"<sup>3</sup>.

In this and the Second World War, New Zealand sent more soldiers overseas, *per capita*, than any other country except Russia. By the end of that "Great War", one in

every five males had enlisted<sup>4</sup>, and one in every three between 20 and 40 had been killed or wounded. Imagine the impact on a population of just one million?

Not far from my home, there's a small village, inhabited, since 1863, by settlers from Bohemia. Its war memorial shows the impact on a tiny community; with many family names repeated on both World War columns. It was thus in many, many places.

The chapel at my high school stands as a memorial to former students who fought in that war; its stained-glass windows are dedicated to those who fell. If my boyhood attention was diverted from the sermon, I'd look up at two side-by-side windows and wonder why the phrase "*And in their death*", beneath the first, was completed under the second with "*They were not divided*". Those two boys were neighbours; they went to school together; they were best friends; and, on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1916, at the Somme, both were killed by the same shell. *And in their death they were not divided*!"

## **ANZAC Day**

There are many such stories; all a consequence of the war declared on 3 August 1914. But, for New Zealanders, Australians – and for many Turks - the more significant anniversary falls eight months later, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, the date in 1915 when, with British and other troops, the ANZACs were landed at Gallipoli. "The aim was to strike across the peninsula and destroy the Turkish naval defences in the Dardanelles, leaving the channel open for the Royal Navy to sail through to Constantinople and knock Turkey out of the war in one stroke"<sup>5</sup>.

It was the wrong beach; instead of gently rising terrain, they were at the foot of a steep cliff, facing brave Turkish defence. "Uncharted currents" were blamed; but that's been described<sup>6</sup> as "a cover-up for command mistakes", with claims the fatal error resulted from poor leadership and use of outdated charts. It was all meant to

be over in eight daylight hours; instead, it lasted eight months; the eventual withdrawal was the only successful aspect, achieved without any further loss of life.

Mustafa Kemal, a commander at Gallipoli and, as Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, wrote these words<sup>7</sup> -

You, the mothers who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are at peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

If successful, the campaign might have hastened the war's end. German Admiral Tirpitz wrote, in his diary, that, "should the Dardanelles fall, the World War has been decided against us"<sup>8</sup>. But it achieved none of its objectives, and 33,000 Allied and 86,000 Turks died. New Zealand's casualties were greater than the numbers who served, because the wounded were patched up and sent back again and again, to fight, often to die.

Gallipoli was a military failure (for which Winston Churchill took the political blame); but the word ANZAC now stands, in the words of one historian, "for reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship and endurance"<sup>9</sup>; and that's what New Zealanders and Australians remember, each year, marking April the 25<sup>th</sup> as ANZAC Day.

Today, Gallipoli is a Turkish national park. Although Britain suffered greater losses, it's Australians and New Zealanders who visit it as a shrine – many of them, young backpackers who arrive, often after hours on a bus, to be where their great-grandfathers fought, and where many died. Even those with no family link treat Gallipoli with reverence. In the early dawn, they walk, often in tears, to places, which, for others, are just words on a map: Lone Pine, Hill 971, Chunuk Bair.

Before Gallipoli, Australia and New Zealand were seen - indeed, largely saw themselves - as British colonies; but, today, both believe that it was in the mud and blood of Gallipoli that they became nations which, since that time, have increasingly made their own way in the world, notably in foreign policy; Australia, perhaps more global; New Zealand, definitely more forward leaning and independent. Likewise, Turkey regards Gallipoli as a defining moment in its modern history.

So, it's ANZAC Day when New Zealanders and Australians remember those who served, and acknowledge their countries' proud emergence - perhaps the most solemn day in both countries.

### **Pursuing Peace**

But we are very aware that it's not just our Armed Forces who protect us; there are other places and other ways to pursue peace; which makes this an appropriate occasion to talk about New Zealand's determination to win a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and to tell what New Zealand would do to make a difference, if it is elected.

We've served on the Council only three times since 1945; most recently in 1993-1994; and, this October, three countries in our geographic group<sup>10</sup>, Spain, Turkey and New Zealand, will vie for two seats for the 2015-2016 term. Spain was last on the Council in 2005-2006, Turkey in 2009-2010; both are good friends; both are strong opponents.

### **Dangerous Times**

The international community has entered the most dangerous time since the end of the Cold War; dangers magnified by different types of conflict which have appeared at the same time, and which increasingly include major powers pursuing foreign political and security interests in assertive ways.

Deadly wars continue in Africa; there is civil conflict in the Arab world; in East Asia, old border disputes between powerful states have re-energised in new and increasingly bitter ways; nuclear proliferation destabilises several regions; and insurgencies and terrorism, often driven by extremist ideologies, are expanding in many places. Today's world faces new geopolitical challenges, often presenting alongside their previous forms: intra-state rather than inter-state conflicts, new forms of terrorism, trans-national crime, piracy, human rights violations, climate change, disarmament, and lack of economic development. In recent weeks, we've seen a Cold War-like face-off between Russia and the US and EU over Ukraine. And the critical issue of permanent peace in the Middle East remains unresolved.

The world of 2014 is not the one that fought two global wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; it's not the world of the Cold War; it's not even a Post-Cold War world; it's now a globalising world, influenced by a single super-power and the growing, multi-polar presence of Brazil, India and China – and by a “Little Cold War” between the US and EU and Russia.

And all that is further magnified by a coincidence of economic stresses that inhibit responses which might manage those dangers. Fiscal constraints since the Global Financial Crisis severely limit the scope for financial solutions which might improve security and disincentivise action that promotes instability. Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have absorbed massive economic and military capacity, and have fed public and political weariness.

And global institutions, such as the UN – its Security Council in particular – remain less effective than might be. Essentially, the UN's structures are much as when they were conceived in the last months of World War II. Apart from some “tinkering”, they haven't been updated to address modern challenges; or to accommodate the

geopolitical realities of emerging powers, such as India or Brazil, or Germany and Japan who were, in 1945, on the wrong side of history.

And finally, New Zealand shares with Australia and others a special responsibility for stability and security in the Pacific; where we play a low-key leadership role; and where we've recently concluded lengthy commitments to the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste.

### **New Zealand's approach to foreign policy**

Beyond our Pacific responsibilities, however, for a small state, our foreign policy is remarkably global, forward-leaning and independent; and its key policy settings are broadly supported by all our major political parties – which means our foreign policy is consistent, from government-to-government, and isn't subject to sudden swings.

Traditionally, New Zealand regarded geography as its enemy; we were far from our major markets; but that same geography now has us on the Asia-Pacific rim - a major strategic advantage in a globalising world; suddenly we're "on the doorstep" of countries with whom we enjoy strong political, economic and trade relations and interests. As that change has unfolded, it's been argued that, "by challenging traditional symbols of power in the international system, such as geography and size, globalisation has created new possibilities for New Zealand to promote its core values and interests externally"; and that "vigorous leadership, an acceptance of the essentials of economic liberalisation, and a strong commitment to multilateralism seem to be at the heart of New Zealand's efforts to maximise its external sovereignty"<sup>11</sup>.

Ours' is the world's 8<sup>th</sup> oldest democracy<sup>12</sup>, with a reputation for fair, democratic representation of all interests, for political and constitutional stability, and a consistent, bipartisan foreign policy – confirmed last year when

our Parliament unanimously passed a resolution supporting our Council candidature. New Zealand places a fundamental value on democracy, human rights and the rule of law; it is committed to regional and global peace and security, and to free trade and sustainable development, all of which go hand-in-hand (you can't have security and prosperity without sustainable development and trade can drive that development<sup>13</sup> – global, empirical evidence confirms that “there is no development without security, and no security without development. And we’ve long been committed to international cooperation - to strong bilateral and regional relationships, to long-term sharing, and to working with others on regional and global issues; and to multilateralism.

### **Why multilateralism?**

For small states, a multilateral, rules-based system upholds the Rule of Law, facilitates our trade and prosperity and the free passage of goods by sea and air; it’s rules provide a level playing field. The UN system allows us to participate in global discussions directly relevant to our interests – and the experience of the past 69 years confirms we are more likely to advance those interests by multilateral participation than by pursuing narrow self-interest.

No country is further away from that which tears and tramples at the rest of the world, but New Zealand has a reputation as a global citizen with a global perspective and sense of responsibility; a country which participates, meaningfully, in multilateral institutions, with a reputation as a UN member state that’s principled, independent, innovative and trustworthy.

That reputation even predates the UN; in the 1930s, at the League of Nations, we were recognised as the most consistent anti-appeaser – sometimes, a very lonely voice. The memoir<sup>14</sup> of one of our League ambassadors recounts how New Zealand was one of only two members to support Abyssinia; particularly, how we opposed

what he described as “the wretched Hoare-Laval proposals” for Abyssinia. And, at the 1937 London Imperial [Empire] Conference, New Zealand “would have nothing to do with ... [the Munich] appeasement” (he called it the “foul abandonment of Czechoslovakia”); getting no support from others, and earning public ridicule from Lady Astor and the London *Times*. Mocked and unsupported we may have been, but we walked on the right side of history.

And so it continued: In 1945, New Zealand went to the San Francisco conference which created the UN, and it comes to the UN today, without any deep, historical interests in most of the world’s conflict regions; usually without any role in its grievances. That means that, if we do return to the Security Council table, we’ll do so encumbered by the baggage of past or present relationships; not bound by group positions; with no need to line up with, reflect or support one bloc or another. We aren't bound to the lowest common denominators which can sometimes dictate bloc or alliance positions. Just as when we were last on the Council, we'd play an active role, beholden to nothing except the UN Charter and our own sense of fair play.

### **New Zealand’s independence**

In short: New Zealand has the political – and the economic – independence to form, sustain and then act on its own judgment on the great issues of the day. In its relatively recent past, New Zealand has seen off threats of trade sanctions, at the time of the Rainbow Warrior affair. And we learned to live with long-term political sanctions, as with the nuclear ships dispute with the US – not least our exclusion from the ANZUS Treaty - “the dissolution of a military alliance is a rare event in world politics<sup>15</sup>”.

To stay with that last example for a moment: We’ve differed from the US on many issues; we played a leading role in negotiating the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which the US hasn’t ratified; we strongly support the International Criminal Court (ICC), established to prosecute mass atrocity crimes, which, again,

the US hasn't ratified<sup>16</sup>; we were key players in establishing the world's second Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the South Pacific<sup>17</sup>, which the US opposed; contrary to the wishes of all nuclear powers, we've long called for a world free of nuclear weapons<sup>18</sup>; and we are a member of the New Agenda Coalition<sup>19</sup>, which seeks nuclear disarmament, and of a De-Alerting Group which wants to decrease the operational readiness of nuclear weapons<sup>20</sup>. Those are just examples; I could cite similar differences with the other major powers; but equally, I could cite many more examples of working together with the US and with other partners of all sizes, from all blocs, and from all regions.

*New Zealand doesn't march to the beat of anyone's drum.* It pursues a foreign policy which, while often supportive of others, such as the US and the EU, still has its own distinctive, independent voice. It's an eclectic mix, which sets us apart from the rest: part Asia-Pacific (particularly Pacific), part European heritage (but less so, over time), part small state (an increasingly loud voice), part our unique multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, Asia-Pacific society, and part innovative, bridge-building, pragmatic - all mixed into our own, distinctive and independent voice. And it reflects that national character of "settler independence" of which John Keegan wrote; of a willingness to speak out, to be an active player in world affairs (sometimes, even to stand in harm's way); of understanding that remoteness doesn't protect us from global events.

Today, New Zealand has no political alliances; we aren't a member of the G8, G20, G77, the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), the EU or NATO; we have many friends; we are like-minded and work with others on many issues<sup>21</sup>; but we are not "G-Anything"; and that leaves us free to speak up on crucial issues.

We are, for example, not the same as our neighbour, Australia; we often work together, but we have distinct and different foreign policies, and often different multilateral priorities; we have no alliance with the US (or anyone else); and we differ strongly on many Middle East issues. Australia is a member of the

G20, and understandably sees itself as a key regional player, even as having global influence; whereas, New Zealand is a small state which acts much more independently, but also accords with small state values and perspectives, prioritising a rules-based system and seeking outcomes through dialogue and cooperation.

When we differ with others, we discuss those differences respectfully (for example, with the US on nuclear issues, or China on human rights); our message is that we will meet with you, we will talk with you, we will trade with you, we will work with you – but we will bring our values with us. And history has shown that, because of that independence, New Zealand would not be deterred from playing an active role as a member of the Security Council; as was so, 20 years ago, almost to this very day, when we stared-down most of the P5 who did not want to respond to the Rwandan genocide. New Zealand's foreign policy history has been one of cooperation when that's required, but, above all, of willingness to speak out and act independently when history demands; even if that means opposing a major power –

- We've consistently championed decolonisation and self-determination, first at the League of Nations, then in San Francisco and at the UN, played an active role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, then in practice in our region, despite the displeasure of colonial powers.
- We actively opposed nuclear-weapons testing in the Pacific, despite the displeasure of those who tested.
- We led opposition to drift-net fishing in the Pacific, despite opposition from Northern Hemisphere fishing nations.
- We excluded nuclear armed and powered ships, provoking a long period of political and military estrangement from the US.

- And, as a member of the Security Council in 1993-1994, we took leading roles on many issues, including Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Burundi, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mozambique and Cambodia; territorial disputes between Cameroon and Nigeria, and Yemen and Saudi Arabia; we supported Kuwait on borders and prisoners of war; we urged greater Council transparency; we initiated regular briefings for non-members; and pushed to allow them to provide input to informal Council discussions.

We promoted better Council access for Troop Contributing Countries, and for those on the Council agenda (as with Cambodia in 1993).

New Zealand was willing to lead on many issues – even if it meant opposing the Council’s five Permanent members.

- We've always supported disarmament measures; to control small arms and light weapons, and land-mines and cluster munitions; and, with others, we've taken leadership roles in efforts to address nuclear weapons; and in last year's Arms Trade Treaty.
- And we've taken consistent, balanced and engaged positions on the Middle East Peace Process – most recently, voting in favour of the General Assembly resolution on the status of Palestine.

## **Small states**

Small states (defined by the World Bank as those with populations less than 10 million) make up the majority of UN member states – about 115 out of 193. New Zealand, with 4.5 million<sup>22</sup> people, sits fair in the middle of that group; giving us networks with other small states, who tend to operate at a different level of trust

and understanding than is sometimes so for large powers, or those with special interests or historical baggage.

In his 2012 book, *Fairness and Freedom: A History of Two Open Societies: New Zealand and the United States*<sup>23</sup>, Pulitzer Prize winner David Hackett Fischer studied two countries with much in common, but many differences. Both came from the same colonial base; both are long-standing democracies, with mixed-enterprise economies, pluralist cultures and concern for human rights and the rule of law. But they were founded at different times, and with contrasting purposes – one in the “First British Empire”, the other in a very differently motivated “Second Empire”; America developed on its frontier, New Zealand in its bush. Fischer compared our “parallel processes of nation-building and immigration, women's rights and racial wrongs, reform causes and conservative responses, war-fighting and peace-making, and global engagement in our own time”; and concluded that “living free” is “America's Polaris”, whereas “fairness and natural justice are New Zealand's Southern Cross”.

### **A Southern Cross of Fairness and Natural Justice**

As a diverse, multi-cultural society, fairness and tolerance are our national touchstones, and drive much of our foreign policy; so we’d take that “Southern Cross [of] fairness and natural justice” to the Council table, seeking fairer balance in its deliberations, and working for better outcomes.

We'd bring, for example, the perspectives of countries that must host peace-keeping operations – voices all too often marginalised in the process of negotiating multi-dimensional peacekeeping mandates. They are entitled to a fairer input to those decisions.

The Council could also improve the resulting peace-keeping process if, in situations not covered by the Peace Building Commission, it established (preferably from the

earliest stage of an operation), a peace-building configuration of its own, in partnership with the host state and relevant UN agencies such as UNDP, thus enhancing UN engagement on the multi-faceted issues confronting almost every UN operation.

The right to a "fair go" will also influence New Zealand's approach to procedural fairness; such as who should be invited to speak – for example , host countries and Troop Contributing Countries - when they might speak, even in what order.

And fairness also means achieving a better understanding of what's happening in the field; listening both to states and non-governmental actors who can shed real light on a situation; it means working harder to get first-hand information from Missions in the field, and to exploring innovative fact-finding mechanisms.

The Security Council has often paid lip service - and often only in the abstract - to the principle of more effective interaction with regional organisations. Regional actors usually have an in-depth knowledge of a local problem, and long-standing relationships with key stake-holders, often sharing linguistic, cultural and historical ties – all crucial for generating the trust and engagement required for successful mediation, and for building and sustaining peace.

Based on our own, practical experience in addressing regional security issues in places like Bougainville, Solomon Islands and, most recently, Timor-Leste, New Zealand attaches great importance to strong and effective regional organisations, recognising their competitive advantage through proximity, in-depth knowledge, commitment and local accountability. They have a deep understanding of local context and local security problems; so it's important that the Security Council supports or supplements their efforts for regional security.

## **The UN Security Council and regional organisations**

We are particularly aware of African concerns that the Council doesn't do enough to respond to the expectations of the African Union and its regional organisations. Sometimes, the Security Council overshadows and effectively marginalises those local institutions; in other cases, it's often too passive or doesn't respond in a timely manner.

It's not enough for the Council to adopt statements of good intentions towards regional organisations. What's needed is a practical willingness to extend its capacity to build real partnerships with regions; which requires that, the Council be perceptive and flexible in its responses.

Sometimes, effective cooperation and partnership will require political action of a preventive kind; occasionally it means strong deterrent measures; it may even require use of the Council's unique capacity to provide financial, logistical or military support to assist regional efforts; and sometimes it will require deployment of a full-scale UN operation.

New Zealand would like to see a focus, by both the Security Council and regional organisations, on building practical partnerships at a much earlier stage of an emerging problem. They should be working together on conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution. A real partnership with regional organisations could also reduce the incoherence that sometime bedevils conflict prevention, leaving unnecessary overlap between UN, bilateral and regional actors.

To achieve this, the Council must make a cultural step-change. It could make greater use of formats such as its *Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention in Africa*, which could help forge the type of partnership we advocate; but, for that to be a real partnership, the Council's working methods must also adapt to allow more meaningful engagement by regional and sub-regional organisations.

## **Active conflict prevention**

Overall, New Zealand is convinced that, only through active conflict prevention under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, and effective engagement with regional organisations under Chapter VIII, can we hope to reduce the demand for hugely expensive peacekeeping operations; and, above all, can we hope to address the enormous human, social, environmental and financial costs of armed conflict.

Too often, regional organisations are left with a sense of unfulfilled promise; so, New Zealand will push for better Council working methods, and for much greater engagement with these critical partners in dealing with the dangerous conflicts afflicting their regions.

In short: The Security Council must listen to, and then it must act in concert with regional organisations. New Zealand's April 1994 position on Rwanda was, for example, all-the-better informed about the reality of what was happening, after listening to the countries of the region, and to other stakeholders with a presence on the ground.

### **Fairness in practice**

And fairness should also ensure that all 15 of its members – permanent and elected – more equally share the load in chairing its subordinate bodies, and should reduce the P5 monopoly of procedural leadership on important issues.

New Zealand knows that many states, particularly its friends among small island developing states, see climate change as an existential threat, which, in addition to extreme weather events, impacts on food, freshwater and energy, threatens the viability of some communities, even raising questions about relocation; by any measure, a threat to international security. We know climate change can only be addressed by a global agreement on mitigation measures, and by adaption to help vulnerable states; and that the UNFCCC framework is the right place for such

discussions; but climate change is also a security issue, which must be addressed by the Security Council; and fairness demands that those who ask to be heard on that critical issue should be given that opportunity.

Ultimately, however, New Zealand acknowledges the reality that the work of the United Nations Security Council is about the country situations on its agenda - the issues that really matter to real people, on the ground. Thematic discussions, such as those on Children in Armed Conflict, on Women Peace and Security, on Council Working Methods, and on the Rule of Law, have real value, and will have our strong support, promotion and participation. But those discussions haven't always translated into active engagement in the country situations on the Council's agenda; too often, the Council fails to live up to the high standards it sets itself in its own thematic statements. We must combine those themes with the Council's established practices, and with some innovative thinking, to focus on the plight of civilians in South Sudan, on security threats in West Africa and the Sahel, on Syrians caught in vicious cross-fire, and on the effectiveness of the UN mandate in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

New Zealanders are inherently constructive and practical; we know that, despite the Council's powers, it also has real limitations. So we won't be a Don Quixote, tilting at imagined or unreachable windmills; nor will we put rhetoric ahead of substantive action. But we also know that Council members have a high responsibility to the UN Charter and to the UN membership, to the wider global population and, above all, to those whose lives are daily at risk from much that threatens international peace and security. Council members are not elected to warm a seat, or out of some sense of entitlement, or to repeat group positions at the Council table; they must listen, they must consider, they must sometimes think laterally, they must decide, and then they must act.

### **A Good, Informed and Sympathetic Listener**

During its last Council term, New Zealand was known as a good, informed and sympathetic listener – we listened in respect of Rwanda, for example. We know that, when electing Council members, many UN members are guided by what a country brings by way of clear thinking, shorn of partisanship; and by knowledge that the best contributions don't always come from speaking out publicly - having a well-trained ear and eye, and knowing when to use our voice, is a good formula for effective Council membership. We'll seek out, consult with and listen to those whose faces are pressed against the Council window.

### **Commitments to Fairness, Independence, Balance**

So New Zealand would bring to the Council values which are part of our culture, and which underpin much of what we do, domestically and internationally: our commitment to fairness, independence and balance; our UN reputation as a constructive partner, with a collaborative working style, focused on outcomes; and a commitment to strong advocacy for small states.

Balance and fairness do not mean passivity or inaction; and nowhere in the current list of global dangers is the need for both balance and active engagement more acute than in the Middle East. New Zealand has, over many years, devoted much capacity and energy to a balanced engagement with Israel and Palestine, to a strong commitment to regional peacekeeping (dating back to 1949), and to quiet, balanced work, such as de-mining in the Occupied Territories; all activities that support peace and promote the peace process. New Zealand will bring that spirit, and the respect inherent in its relationships with the parties, not just to that particular peace process and any subsequent missions that might be required, but to all the work of the UN Security Council.

If New Zealand is elected to the Council, it will obviously be a voice for the UN's 115 small states, and would also represent the concerns of the Pacific (which has, historically, been under-represented on the Council); but, above all, New Zealand

must – and would - represent all 193 UN member states – regardless of size, region, grouping or bloc, culture, ethnicity or religion.

## **Six messages**

We bring no baggage in that regard; indeed, as a multicultural, multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan small state, we're well placed to represent "the whole". So, our six messages about Security Council membership are simple and clear –

1. We'd bring a fresh perspective to the Council, drawing on our distinctive, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, Asia-Pacific identity.
2. We have an independent and consistent foreign policy ("what you see is what you get"); a record of working to solve problems with partners from all regions; and of seeking practical, constructive results.
3. We are committed to fairness and balance; we'll be a listener; we'll come to issues with an open mind; we'll speak that mind without fear or favour (if necessary, speaking truth to power); and will seek for all states to be heard, regardless of size or allegiance.
4. New Zealand is a natural peace-builder; we advocate conflict prevention, and we understand the need to address root causes of conflict, not least the link between security and development.
5. As a founder-member of the UN, New Zealand has been an active and effective contributor, listening, working and adding value where we can; and is committed to the international rule of law.

6. And, as a small state, New Zealand will be an advocate for small states.

### **Small States – and Big States**

There's sometimes a natural tension between large and small states. Indeed, if the Great Powers had their way in 1945, the United Nations Charter would have been very different from today's document. Their original draft was deeply disappointing to those who'd held fast since September 1939; and who'd paid a full price in blood and treasure; it wasn't just the Great Powers who'd defeated fascism - it was also us, and others like us. And so it was that, at the 1945 San Francisco conference, even at their moment of triumph, the Great Powers were challenged by their smaller friends. We pushed for more emphasis on human rights, for self-determination and, less successfully, opposed the P5 veto; and the past 69 years have shown we were right on all those issues.

And that San Francisco story of small countries standing up to the Great Powers has been repeated through nearly seven decades of conflict and catastrophe, peace and prosperity. Small countries, not least New Zealand, left their mark on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which explicitly applied socio-economic rights to people under colonial rule, and was crucial to decolonisation in the 1950s and beyond. And we continue all that today, because we still need a strong and effective UN, particularly a Security Council which deals with crucial issues of international peace and security, but also reflects today's realities – not those of 1945. The advocacy of small states can be disproportionately important; particularly when it comes from a sound political, social and economic base.

But why should anyone pay attention to small states? When it comes to geopolitical reality do they really have any significant role?

This is not the right occasion to discuss how small states – particularly small states can often grow their external relationships (for example, through Free Trade Agreements<sup>24</sup>), with the ability to adapt and make policy changes in response to global challenges; whereas larger countries sometimes struggle to adapt to a new and rapidly changing world. But, in the UN context, small states are also crucial to the UN's universality and to its legitimacy; they, too, must be allowed to contribute at the Council table - and history has shown them to be among the most insightful members.

### **Why Seek UNSC Membership?**

Even so, why does a small country like New Zealand seek membership of a necessary but imperfect Security Council, dominated by five permanent members, with poor working methods – and where (one might speculate) we'd have little chance to influence events? Is a two-year Council seat worth all the effort?; surely there are other, potentially less polarising ways to seek influence?

To answer that, let me take you back exactly 20 years, to April 1994, when extremists in Rwanda perpetrated one of the worst genocides of recent history. As a non-permanent Council member, New Zealand tried to persuade the Security Council to deploy additional UN forces to Rwanda – because if ever an atrocity required that the UN “reaffirm [its] faith in fundamental human rights” and act to “maintain international peace and security”, as declared in its Charter, this was it. We pressed for the UN peacekeeping mission in Rwanda to be strengthened, and for the Council to declare this atrocity to be a genocide – and, as Council President in April 1994, we even threatened a public debate to shame others into agreement. But, largely because of the unwillingness of some of the five permanent members, those efforts were unsuccessful, and 800,000 people were butchered – many with jungle knives.

Although the Council eventually did act, the UN failed Rwanda in April 1994, just as it failed Srebrinica and others; it left undone those things it ought to have done.

That genocide was the end-point of the failure of the Rwandan state; only the international community could have stopped it; today, only the international community can ensure such grievous mistakes aren't repeated.

And that genocide might have been prevented by multilateral action, which confirms the UN's capacity to prevent such atrocities; but also shows that, while noble in ideal, its institutions are still fallible and demand reform. Too often, those institutions have stood aside while a government couldn't or wouldn't prevent the slaughter of its own people; inaction that was at its worst during the Cold War, when it was ideological and political; and at its most pathetic after the Cold War, when it reflected inertia and a failure to understand how the world had fundamentally changed.

A New Zealand historian once said that,<sup>25</sup> "If we wish to present ourselves as New Zealanders, then we must be able to listen to our own voices, and trace our own footsteps". Our voice for action in Rwanda was principled and independent (something still acknowledged today by many African states) – and our footsteps walked on us the right side of history.

**So, if you really want to know what we'd do as a member of the UN Security Council, don't just listen to our promises for the future, look to what we did in the past;** because, in this context, past performance really is a strong measure of future promise. But we can't be limited to lessons from the past; there is much to be learned from today's events – lessons from the delayed action over the crisis in Mali might, for example, have better informed later Council action in the Central African Republic.

Small states can be real contributors; they can be independent; they can be innovative; they can demonstrate integrity; and that's why New Zealand will seek a

Security Council seat for the 2015-2016 term; again, to be a distinctive, independent voice on a Council which needs just that. The Security Council is the high-table of international relations (when it speaks, governments, combatants, media and civil society, must all listen); indeed, to adopt an oft-used phrase, "if you're not at [that] table, you'll be on the menu". As we saw in 2011 in respect of Libya, the Council is an extraordinarily powerful instrument; and, as we've seen until very recently in respect of Syria, Council inaction only emphasises what happens when that extraordinary power is not used – when the task is "left undone".

So history tells us what might be expected of New Zealand if it's again elected to the UN Security Council; but, looking forward is equally important to determining contemporary relevance.

I've already explained why New Zealand strongly believes in greater use of the Council's preventive role under Chapter VI; and we take every opportunity to urge that use. Preventive initiatives are less costly, in blood and treasure, than peacekeeping or peace enforcement under Chapter VII.

We also urge the Council's greater use of early warning briefings, with a practical focus on emerging issues, thereby facilitating early and effective responses in supporting or leading mediation and conflict prevention. Having been warned, however, the Council must be prepared to act; and sometimes even early warning is not enough. Finding the political will to act is equally critical – so the Council must be commended for its prompt December action in South Sudan – deploying more forces in a response so very different from that in respect of Rwanda 20 years earlier. But it's still worth reflecting how much the protection needs of civilians in the Central African Republic and Mali might have been better achieved if the Council had sent missions to those countries much earlier in the evolution of their conflicts. Article 99 of the Charter also asks the Secretary General to bring emerging threats to the Council's attention – that, too, should be used more often.

And, while it mightn't necessarily arise in the context of Security Council membership, there is probably a longer-term need to develop alternative courses of action when international peace and security is obviously threatened, but a P5 veto has blocked action by the Security Council.

### **Women, Peace and Security**

Many will question the sustainability of any peace in which half the population has no role. The Council's Resolution 1325 of October 2000 highlighted the role of women in achieving peace and security – a recognition of women, not as victims (although that's all too often the case), but as genuine stakeholders. It's important that plans for transition of peace-keeping missions address the negative impact of armed violence on women, and draw on gender expertise, with enhanced roles for women in peace discussions (as both principals and mediators). New Zealand's experience, in its own region and beyond, shows that involving women doesn't just pay lip-service to principles of democracy or human rights; it builds trust in post-conflict situations; it's a solid basis for peacebuilding; and it helps establish accountability.

### **Protection of Civilians**

There is also a need for wider attention to protection of civilians; the Council has made many generic statements on the issue, but New Zealand believes that the real challenge is to find ways to mainstream those thematic statements into the real-life situations on the Council's agenda. We must identify the gaps between the Council's statements and its actual practice, and determine how to close those gaps. Those who sit at the Council table must not function in the abstract; they must be focused on protecting real people in real conflict situations – and on achieving real results. All that's critical because, when protection of civilians fails, all too often it's accompanied by mass atrocity crimes; in which situations, the Council must be more willing to ensure accountability for breaches of international humanitarian and

human rights law – and, having acted, it must then follow up by monitoring the subsequent legal processes.

## **Lessons of History**

Any one of the issues that presently confront us – Syria, Central African Republic, Mali, Ukraine and others – could require full-time attention; collectively, they'd put the world to the test, as it hasn't been tested since the end of the Cold War. And, if we are put to that test, much of our response will depend on how well we understand developing events.

I spoke earlier of the lessons of history. We now know we didn't fully appreciate the implications the Soviet collapse, the end of the Cold War, and the flow-on effects, often far beyond the obvious theatres - the break-up of Yugoslavia and diminished support for parts of Africa. The Rwandan genocide, the Srebrenica massacre and other atrocities, all occurred in a post-Cold War context, when some regimes and blocs were struggling for legitimacy – indeed, when some states and blocs were disintegrating. The international community celebrated what it saw as the "end of history" – but only when the machetes came out in Rwanda, and Srebrenica burned, did we focus on the consequences of the political, economic, social and cultural declines that came with the end of the Cold War. And so, if, as some believe, these things happen in 20 to 25 year cycles, it would be far better if, next time, we really understood what's happening, why it's happening and what it means - we need to learn and apply the lessons of history.

When asked what was most likely to blow governments off course, former British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, is said to have replied, "Events, dear boy, events"<sup>26</sup>. Economic "events" of August 2008 (Lehman Brothers and all that) caught governments and regulators by surprise; but at least they quickly understood, and then they acted. The fall of the Berlin Wall was equally a surprise; but it took all the months and years that followed to understand what it really meant, and how we

should respond. We may still be suffering from that failure to understand: The Ukrainian crisis unfolded before our eyes – but few, it seems, foresaw its development, let alone its rapid dénouement.

The so-called Arab Spring is well upon us; Syria slides further out of control; there's largely unknown leadership in North Korea; all beyond our control; “events, dear boy”, all of them.

Michael Green and Steven Schrage, of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, have written that<sup>27</sup> –

It is no mere coincidence that the last great global economic downturn was followed by the most destructive war in human history. In the 1930s, economic desperation helped fuel autocratic regimes and protectionism in a downward economic-security debt spiral that engulfed the world in conflict ... [The 1930s responses] which failed to stop the drift toward deeper depression and world war, should be a cautionary tale for leaders heading to [current global summits]<sup>28</sup>.

The lessons of history, indeed.

The United Nations resulted from the lessons of history - the "most destructive war in human history", the worst-ever global depression, massive human rights violations, and the League of Nations' failure to prevent all that happening. All that ultimately gave us a United Nations whose primary purpose was, as Douglas MacArthur put it at the surrender ceremony on the deck of the battleship Missouri - so elegantly, so simply – “that peace be now restored to the world”.

Some would define that peace simply as the “absence of war”; but real peace is much more than that – it’s “accompanied by an unavoidable set of values”<sup>29</sup>, including “freedom from tyranny and freedom from fear” - to which I’d add secure access to safe food and water, freedom from poverty, freedom from preventable disease, the freedom to learn, and the freedom to choose political leaders; that's

real peace. And, that peace challenge still confronts us - made all the more acute and pressing, all the more urgent, by Middle East issues, the Arab Spring, economic concerns, and events in Africa, North Korea, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

One often encounters scepticism about the readiness, willingness and ability of the UN to deal with such issues. But those sceptics should be reminded that the UN was created to meet challenges that were, in the past, so overwhelming that some only saw solutions in autarkic economic responses, or in war and destruction; and that dealing with such issues by better, more peaceful means was never going to be easy.

I had to think about all this when, for a class speech, a nine-year-old, asked me "what was the best thing about being appointed as New Zealand's [Ambassador to] the UN?" I told her that the UN's "purpose was to ensure peace for everyone". "It hasn't been perfect", I said, "but it's done a lot of good - and it's meant that, unlike our fathers and grandfathers, I and others like me didn't have to fight in another world war". It's not the UN, alone, that's delivered that period of global peace (the longest since the Congress of Vienna of 1815); European unity has been crucial, as has Asian economic development; but the UN has played a critical, central role.

I began with a Māori greeting; and have always held in awe the ability of Māori orators to capture whole ideas in a single metaphoric phrase: "He nui maunga e kore e taea te whakaneke, he nui ngaru moana ma te ihu o te waka e wahi"; a great mountain cannot be moved, but a giant wave can be broken by the canoe's prow. Although the challenges facing our world might seem overwhelming, they can be overcome - because the giant wave of those problems can still be broken by the prow of a well-navigated and well-crewed canoe; and New Zealand is determined to be one of those who paddle that canoe.

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- <sup>1</sup> The views in this address are mine alone and are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Government or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. I express my appreciation to the many colleagues and friends who contributed ideas, knowledge, text and, above all, wisdom for this address; including (but not limited to) my colleagues at the New Zealand Mission to the United Nations in New York, Al Gillespie, Colin Keating, and Marcy and Denis McLay. However, any errors or omissions remain my responsibility alone.
- <sup>2</sup> The description "The war to end all wars" was used by many WW1 contemporaries, but is generally attributed to US President Woodrow Wilson – even though it appears he may only have used the phrase just once.
- <sup>3</sup> John Keegan; *The First World War*; 1998; Random House.
- <sup>4</sup> *Remember the world as well as the war*; www.britishcouncil.org.
- <sup>5</sup> Official History of the Wellington Pipes and Drums.
- <sup>6</sup> Dr Tom Frame; *The Shores of Gallipoli*. Frame says that cross-checking the charts that were used in 1915 with modern, computer-generated versions shows that the originals were more than 40 years out of date and were out by 450 metres.
- <sup>7</sup> Mustafa Kamal *aka* Atatürk; 1934
- <sup>8</sup> *The First World War, Second Edition: A Complete History*; Martin Gilbert; pub Macmillan.
- <sup>9</sup> *Pilgrimage: A Traveller's Guide to Australia's Battlefields*; Garrie Hutchinson; pub Black Inc; quoting Charles Bean, Australian war correspondent, sometimes described as "the creator of the Anzac legend".
- <sup>10</sup> Western European and Other States Group – WEOG.
- <sup>11</sup> Robert G Patman; *Globalisation, Sovereignty, and the Transformation of New Zealand Foreign Policy*; Centre for Strategic Studies: New Zealand Victoria University of Wellington; 2005.
- <sup>12</sup> New Zealand's national Parliament first met in 1853, and has continued to govern the country, uninterrupted, since that time.,
- <sup>13</sup> According to the WTO's July 2013 World Trade Report, between 1980 and 2011 developing economies raised their share in world exports from 34 percent to 47 percent and their share in world imports from 29 percent to 42 percent, and since 1980, world trade has grown on average nearly twice as fast as world production.
- <sup>14</sup> *Mr Ambassador: Memoirs of Sir Carl Berendsen*; Hugh Templeton; Victoria University Press.
- <sup>15</sup> *New Zealand and the Demise of ANZUS: Alliance Politics and Small-Power Idealism*; Daniel Mulhall; Irish Studies in International Affairs, Vol 2 No 3 (1987).]
- <sup>16</sup> That failure to ratify is despite the US' proud history, at Nuremberg and elsewhere, in developing the jurisprudence on which the ICC is based.
- <sup>17</sup> The 1985 Treaty of Rarotonga established the world's second Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the South Pacific.
- <sup>18</sup> Lest that sound naive and unrealistic, it's very similar to the 2008 vision outlined by Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, William Perry and George Shultz, Republicans and Democrats together, when they wrote that "the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is like the top of a very tall mountain. From the vantage point of our troubled world today, we can't even see the top of the mountain, and it is tempting and easy to say we can't get there from here. But the risks from continuing to go down the mountain or standing pat are too real to ignore. We must chart a course to higher ground where the mountaintop becomes more visible".
- <sup>19</sup> The New Agenda Coalition was established in Dublin, Ireland, in June 1998; it comprises Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden, and seeks an international consensus to make progress on nuclear disarmament.
- <sup>20</sup> The international security climate has greatly improved since the end of the Cold War, not least in the reduced number of nuclear weapons, but too many of those weapons that remain are still at alert levels disproportionate to today's strategic setting. Two decades after the Cold War, many of its doctrinal aspects remain; notably, those high alert levels.
- <sup>21</sup> At the UN, Canada, Australia and New Zealand often combine as CANZ to negotiate and speak on issues where they are like-minded (but, unlike larger blocs, with no requirement

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or expectation that they will always be like-minded); sometimes also joined by Japan and the US as JUSCANZ.

<sup>22</sup> As at 30 March 2014, Statistics New Zealand officially estimated New Zealand's population at 4,522,659.

<sup>23</sup> *Fairness and Freedom: A History of Two Open Societies: New Zealand and the United States*; David Hackett Fischer; Oxford University Press; January 2012.]

<sup>24</sup> New Zealand, for example, has, or is party to, free-trade agreements with Australia (1983), Singapore (2001 and 2005), Thailand (2005), Brunei (2005), Chile (2005), China (2008), Malaysia (2009) and Hong Kong (2011); and is currently negotiating bilateral and multilateral agreements with at least 12 other countries and blocs. It is also depository for the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), which is currently negotiating a possible wider membership.

<sup>25</sup> Michael King; *A Moment in Time* (2007 documentary film based on a 1994 interview) New Zealand on Screen, available at <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/michael-king-a-moment-in-time-2007>.

<sup>26</sup> The credibility of this quotation is open to question – it is even suggested that, although it was thoroughly typical, Macmillan never actually said it; but, in my view, it's far too good a line to be ignored – so it's quoted accordingly!

<sup>27</sup> *It's Not Just the Economy, Stupid: Asia's Strategic Dangers from the Financial Crisis*; Michael J. Green (Senior Advisor and Japan Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)) and Steven P. Schrage (CSIS Scholl Chair in International Business).

<sup>28</sup> Green and Schrage also identified the risk of protectionism; with domestic demands similar to those that prompted the notorious Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1932, which many see as a key reason for war finally spreading to Asia and the Pacific in December 1941.

<sup>29</sup> *Our society must be equal to the threats ahead*; Liam Fox MP; the Spectator, 1 April 2009.