

UN Reform: How

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No lack of vision

1992 Agenda 21

1995 Commission on Global Governance

1996 Nordic UN Reform Project

1997 Renewing the UN: A Programme
for Reform

1999 UNDP Human Development Report

2000 - 'We the Peoples: the role of the
UN in the 21st Century

- UN Millennium Declaration
- Panel on UN Peace Operations
(Brahimi)
- Swedish Initiative on financing
the UN

2002 - Helsinki Process established
- Strengthening the UN - an
agenda for future change

2003 Commission on Human Security
EU Communication

2004 - World Commission on Social
Dimensions of Adjustment
- Panel on UN Civil Society
Relations
- High level panel on threats,
challenges and change
- WEF Global Governance
Initiative
- Utstein Initiative

No lack of principles

- Respect for life
- Liberty
- Justice
- Equity
- Mutual respect
- Caring
- Integrity
- Solidarity
- Diversity
- Safety first
- Respect for human rights
- Equitable North-South representation
- Tripartism
- Greater subsidiarity
- Participation
- Dignity
- Sovereign equality of states
- Self-determination
- Tolerance
- Respect for nature
- Shared responsibility
- Human development
- Effective voice
- Challenge and competition
- Medium term predictability
- Flexibility
- Impartiality
- High returns, added value and low transactions costs
- Responsive to political analysis

No lack of ideas

- Track 1 and Track 2
- Expanded membership of Security Council
- Qualified Majority Voting
- Economic and Social Security Council
- New role for the Trusteeship Council
- Replenishment funding of UN agencies
- Creation of UN Development Group
- Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- More open appointment procedures
- Greater coordination, at headquarters and in the field (e.g. UNDAF)
- Better evaluation and oversight
- Harmonisation of procedures

But . . .

- ‘ . . . The system is not working as it should
- . . . We need to take a hard look at our institutions themselves
- . . . They may need radical reform.’

Kofi Annan - 8 September 2003



One way in: collective action theory

- Thin and thick rationality
- Public goods
- Managing common property
- Kin and Group selection
- Reciprocity and tit-for-tat
- Role and norm theories
- Social capital
- Six thinking hats

(Do read: Sarah Gillinson: 'Why cooperate? A multi-disciplinary study of collective action' ODI Working Paper 234, February 2004)



When does cooperation happen? Sixteen conditions, including . . .

- Individual and collective interests aligned
- High degree of trust
- Long time scale
- Parties relatively equal
- The powerful need cooperation
- Social norms foster cooperation
- Free-riding noticed in small group
- The costs of defection are high
- Selective incentives induce cooperation
- Cooperation wide-ranging

Some ways in

From easy to hard?

- Build social capital
- Keep the core group relatively small
- Take a long term perspective on cooperation (e.g. build institutions for cooperation)
- Choose a few issues which really matter and where something can be done
- Incentivise cooperation
- Think across issues
- Make sure the costs of defection are high

Practical suggestions

- Where is the Nordic and like-minded muscle?
- A trust fund for Kofi Annan to take on the barons
- New instruments to induce competition and test the Bank

