

ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

A Report Contributing to the Concept of
Comprehensive International Security

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On the origin of this report

This report is an outgrowth of the international symposium, 'Towards a comprehensive system of international security', held in Moscow from 28 November to 1 December 1988 under the co-sponsorship of four organizations: (a) the USSR Academy of Sciences (Moscow); (b) the International Peace Research Institute Oslo; (c) the United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi); and (d) the Ecoforum for Peace (Sofia). The symposium was financed by the PRIO/UNEP Programme on 'Military activities and the human environment'.

The symposium brought together 34 scientists, scholars, and diplomats from 12 countries (North and South, East and West), most of whom presented plenary papers aimed at defining one component or another of comprehensive international security (and several of which are scheduled to appear in the *Bulletin of Peace Proposals* [Oslo]). This report presents the main lessons of that symposium – with particular emphasis on environmental security – as perceived by four of the participants, one from each of the co-sponsoring organizations, acting in their private capacities:

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Any findings, opinions, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the other symposium participants or of the four co-sponsoring organizations.

Executive summary

- The concept of common security is especially valid where environmental security is concerned. The present practice of 'react-and-correct' with reference to such serious problems as burgeoning environmental pollution, losses in biological species diversity, global warming, soil erosion and desertification, stratospheric ozone depletion, and tropical deforestation must be replaced by a policy of 'foresee-and-prevent'. Problems of environmental security cannot be solved within national boundaries.

- Environmental degradation may be cause as well as consequence of armed conflict. Often, it exacerbates conflicts originating for other than environmental reasons, especially so in the Third World. Hence, cooperation for environmental security is important not only in itself: properly organized, it is a way of mollifying hostilities, building confidence, and facilitating conflict resolution.

- New opportunities have arisen for the shifting of political attention and material resources from the military domain to the environmental domain. This is applicable to East and West, North and South. The importance of military factors can be diminished both by reducing arms and by strengthening confidence through cooperation in environmental and other nonmilitary areas. Thus, the significance of joint environmental actions extends far beyond the environmental domain itself.

- International cooperation is required in the development and dissemination of technology, in economic relations, and in the management of environmental resources. Environmental problems must be included in the programmes of intergovernmental agencies and transnational corporations. Such inclusions may require revisions in the mandates of agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the United Nations International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and the United Nations Environment Programme.

- At the regional level, the notion of ecogeographical regions is a useful one in demarcating areas within which environmental interdependencies may be confined and within which natural resources can be taken to be relatively homogeneous. A variety of jointly financed and run environment-related enterprises would be appropriate, including research, data collection and storage, monitoring, early-warning systems, and sustainable-development programmes.

- At the global level, cooperation must be directed at preventing global environmental degradation, managing the global commons, preventing and managing global risks, and monitoring and coordinating regional cooperation.

- The United Nations system has an important role to play in achieving environmental security. One or more of the following options might well be pursued to enhance its effectiveness: the role of the Security Council could be appropriately expanded, as could that of the Economic and Social Council or of the International Court of Justice (the World Court); the Trusteeship Council could be converted into an Environmental Security Council or a new one could be created; and the Environment Programme could be strengthened.

- Environmental security must be recognized as an inseparable component of comprehensive international security, the upholding of which has to be a shared responsibility of the entire international community. Moreover, states must recognize their joint responsibility for the protection of the common heritage of humankind. And they must recognize the absolute necessity of development strategies based on sustainability.

Preface

Discussions on environment-related threats to global security have begun to assume a prominent place in the debate of governments – at international summit meetings, in the United Nations General Assembly, and in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. There is a growing awareness that concerted international action is necessary if complex global environmental problems are to be addressed effectively. Indeed, isolated and uncoordinated national action can, at worst, be counterproductive. Today, the international community appears anxious to chart a plan of action which can enjoy broad consensus and lend itself to solving problems at both regional and global levels.

It is with the aim of achieving broad consensus and an action orientation that the United Nations Environment Programme initiated a series of consultations on the subject. In February 1988, the Executive Director convened an *ad hoc* group of experts to advise on actions to be taken with respect to environmental security (see UNEP, 1988, in the Bibliography). The symposium on which this report is based was a logical follow-up to that meeting, having been organized primarily to explore the interrelationship between environmental security and comprehensive international security.

The present report is organized into a number of sections. In addition to an Executive Summary, this Preface, and a Select Bibliography, these are: (I) The key issues; (II) The concept of comprehensive international security; (III) Environmental security as a component of comprehensive international security; (IV) Environmental security in its regional and global dimensions; and (V) Strategies for achieving environmental security.

I. The key issues

Fifteen years after the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), the threat to global environmental security has not lessened. The scope and extent of the human ability to destabilize exosystems is now so great that the very survival of humankind can be placed in jeopardy. Actual manifestations of such destabilization include the losses in biological species diversity, global warming, soil erosion and desertification, stratospheric ozone depletion, and tropical deforestation. Increasing levels of insecurity and instability within and among countries have stemmed from environmental stress and degradation, caused by disruption of the environment through armed conflict, excess pollution, and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Environmental degradation is inducing more and more people to move from one area to another or from one country to another in search of an adequate level of existence. This phenomenon has been aggravated by dramatic increases in both human and livestock populations, stretching the carrying capacity of the global ecosystem (the biosphere) to the breaking point. The term 'environmental refugees' has been used to describe the migrating people.

Current systems of economic planning and methods of production have not been conducive to promoting environmental security largely because they are not aimed at achieving sustainable development. Costly productive processes and environmentally unsound agricultural systems, exemplified by dramatic increases in the use of chemical fertilizers and profligacy in the use of non-renewable sources of energy, have added to the dangers facing ecosystems.

Some of these issues have been addressed through normative instruments, such as international treaties. The national legislation of many countries has also addressed such problems. However, the gap between words and deeds persists. Many international environmental laws are framed in the nature of recommendations. Compliance remains elusive, and there is as yet no proper means of measuring effectiveness. Those who pollute or use natural resources wastefully may not be immediately affected, whereas others far distant may be hard hit. The problem is further complicated by the fact that environmental abuse can remain unnoticed and undetected until the repercussions resurface long after the event. Then it may be too late.

To avoid environmental deterioration, the current practice of 'react-and-correct' must be replaced by a policy of 'foresee-and-prevent'.

International organizations established to coordinate and catalyze ac-

tion in the area of environmental security are weak, understaffed, and poorly funded. Although the United Nations Environment Programme has done a great deal in preparing various action plans to promote and enhance environmental security, the decisions of its Governing Council have not been effectively implemented. In addition to structural deficiencies, its budget and secretariat have been too small to create a sufficient impact.

The concept of 'common security' developed by the Independent Commission on Security and Disarmament Issues holds that no country can increase its security by means that diminish the security of other countries (see Palme, *et al.*, 1982, in the Bibliography). This concept is especially valid where environmental security is concerned. Yet, suspicions based on political and ideological differences persist. Such differences continue to influence the level and extent of international cooperation in environmental security – as exemplified by the lack of consensus to date in the debates in the United Nations General Assembly on matters related to environmental security.

Nevertheless, problems of environmental security cannot be solved within national boundaries, because ecogeographical regions often cut across national borders. Therefore, there is a continuing need for international and interregional cooperation that must be able to transcend the rights of sovereignty now vested in states. The principle of shared responsibility for the protection of the common heritage of humankind has yet to be fully accepted.

Deterioration in environmental security is not always the result of malicious intent: it may be caused by lack of knowledge. The limited exchange of information and the lack of appropriate training, education, and awareness have militated against the promotion of environmental security.

II. The concept of comprehensive international security

The traditional objectives of national security policies are twofold: (*a*) to preserve the territorial integrity of the state; and (*b*) to maintain the preferred form of government. The means have been political and military.

In the nuclear age, the major powers cannot achieve security through military competition with each other. They must now seek security together, in cooperation. National policies of unilateral advantage must yield to international endeavors for common gain. All security considerations center on the notions of predictability and of control (i.e., the ability to take corrective action). Both predictability and control can be enhanced substantially through international cooperation.

The concept of common security was introduced in the early 1980s in response to deep and widespread concerns about military threats to human survival. Environmental threats to human survival – increasingly emphasized since 1985, once superpower relations took a turn for the better – also require common action across conflict boundaries. Many thresholds of life-support systems have been crossed in recent years, and systems out of equilibrium behave in unpredictable and potentially damaging ways. The establishment of predictability is thus of high priority. Moreover, seriously disturbed ecosystems require restoration, and preventive measures must be taken before irreversible thresholds have been crossed. Knowledge may be limited, but to wait and see is an irresponsible attitude, whether in the politico-military domain or in the environmental domain. The establishment of control is thus also of high priority.

Environmental security should be equitable for states, cultures, and generations. Environmental conscience, search for common gains, and multilateral cooperation should replace attitudes and policies of confrontation. The removal of confrontation between states is an important precondition for the removal of confrontation between humankind and the natural environment.

Economic issues can also be phrased in terms of security, including predictability and control. For example, developing countries consider the international economic system a threat to their national security because it locks them into positions of economic disadvantage, making them extremely vulnerable to changing conditions in the international market. Social issues – including the humanitarian ones – can be similarly phrased in terms of security, but more readily at the level of groups or

individuals. Indeed, it is the individual human being who is the irreducible unit of accounting to which security policies must respond.

In short, it is clear that politico-military, environmental, economic, and social problems are all interconnected. Thus, it makes good sense to include all of them in the concept of comprehensive international security. However, the primary security issues – those upon which the very survival of humankind depends – are the politico-military and the environmental ones.

The interconnections between politico-military and environmental security are multiple. Especially in the Third World, environmental degradation may be the cause of armed conflict; it may be the consequence of armed conflict, subsequently leading to conflict escalation; and it may exacerbate conflicts originating for other reasons. Conversely, policies that ensure sustainable development of natural resources and preservation of a healthy habitat may remove sources of conflict. Furthermore, international cooperation to alleviate environmental degradation may mollify hostilities, build confidence, and facilitate conflict resolution.

Finally, politico-military and environmental security are linked in terms of opportunity costs. Political attention and material resources spent on the military sector could be used to strengthen environmental security. This applies to East and West as well as to the Third World. Recently, the rapprochement between the superpowers has begun to reduce the role of military factors in international affairs. To allay fears and enhance stability, both sides have been emphasizing the importance of cutting back on offensive capabilities. At the same time, environmental issues are coming increasingly to the fore. There would seem to be new opportunities for shifting attention and resources from the military sector to the environmental sector.

The threat of nuclear war is the ultimate threat to the human environment. The Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues urged that nuclear deterrence yield to the political management and resolution of conflict, and to cooperative endeavors to solve common problems (see Palme, *et al.*, 1982, in the Bibliography). Deterrence by threat of retaliation is not merely something which has worked in the past and that may not work in the future. It has a plethora of negative effects on international relations; and throughout most of the post-World War II period, arms build-up has been its twin brother. Deterrence is a state of affairs that needs to be transcended.

Deterrence could be gradually transcended in a variety of ways: (a) by

the further elaboration of confidence- and security-building measures, in both the military and civilian sectors; *(b)* by the adoption of less offensive military postures; and *(c)* by arms control and reduction. High deterrence postures tend to inhibit international cooperation, whereas arms limitations tend to facilitate it. Conversely, cooperation in nonmilitary fields may enhance confidence and security and facilitate arms control and disarmament, depending on how it is organized. Therefore, it is important to move along several tracks simultaneously, so as to obtain positive feedback among them.

A shift in the international political agenda is envisaged, in which military factors are moved down the scale of importance and nonmilitary factors up. In the context of comprehensive international security, the significance of environmental security extends far beyond the environmental sector itself. In its interactions with other components of security policy, the pursuit of environmental security could become a major agent of change in international affairs, promoting an international order more compatible with human needs.

III. Environmental security as a component of comprehensive international security

The manipulation of the biosphere by humankind has reached a dangerous stage. This has to do not only with expanding human and livestock populations, and with rising human aspirations in terms of material welfare, but also with the patterns of economic and technological development, the latter especially in the industrialized countries. The result is a pattern of resource utilization unsustainable by the life-support systems and ecological processes underlying economic activities in the various regions of the world and in the globe as a whole.

The widespread destruction of ecosystems and the consequent losses in biological species diversity testify to the unsustainability of current human actions. Such actions form the dangerous obverse of the otherwise benevolent coin of economic and technological progress, and they call for coordinated management among the various states and regions of the world. Environmental security is directly related to economic security in cases where countries, for economic reasons, consider themselves forced to resort to the over-exploitation of natural resources whether within state territories, shared among states, or in the global commons. Without a sustainable natural resource base to which the various nations and peoples of the earth can have equitable access, economic and even military safety will remain problematic.

Ecological repercussions of economic activities know no frontiers in an administrative or political sense. They follow laws and interrelationships of a physical, chemical, or biological nature. Moreover, in terms of cause-and-effect relationships, the world market separates the sources and the receivers in many instances of environmental degradation, including a transfer of hazardous wastes from the developed to the developing world. At the same time, sources of degradation, such as production plants of transnational corporations, may shift location in response to economic and political stimuli that are relatively insensitive to the requirements of environmental safety. The upshot of all of this is that environmental problems are taking on international dimensions within the context of a single globe in which the technical, economic, and political possibilities to manage environmental impacts vary substantially from one part to another.

The economic activities just enumerated can exacerbate environmental insecurity regionally as well as globally, thereby adding to existing tensions or posing new ones. The achievement of sustainable utilization

of the natural resources of the earth has taken on international dimensions; and managing the utilization of these resources may well transcend national competencies. This then calls for international cooperation in fields such as the development and dissemination of technology, economic relations, and the management of natural resources. The nations of the world will have to learn to regard and manage their economic activities as taking place within nature – within one interdependent, fragile biosphere.

Technologies must be developed that are saving of natural resources and otherwise environmentally 'friendly'. A shift to renewable and less scarce nonrenewable natural resources is required so as to avoid the *culs-de-sac* of resource depletion and destruction of environmental capital. Much can be done, and is being done, to enhance the resource efficiency of national economies through sectoral efforts (e.g., energy-saving programmes, low-input agriculture), and these have already begun to ease some of the pressures on the environment. But more rapid advances in efficiency are needed, including rapid means, both commercial and non-commercial, for their global dissemination.

A restructuring of the patterns of international economic activity is needed so as to ensure national, regional, and even global sustainability. Such restructuring is necessary in order to reduce the environmental tensions to which human development would otherwise continue to lead in the coming decades, as was suggested by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (see Brundtland, *et al.*, 1987, in the Bibliography). The capability to deal with environmental protection and resource management at national and international levels must be developed and shared. This implies the need for improved codes of conduct for the guidance of transnational corporations and states.

International cooperation in the field of economics seems mandatory, as does the sensitization of the world market mechanism (and the multi-lateral institutions that govern it) to the environmental costs of economic activities. In many cases these developments have already begun (e.g., the environmental programmes of the World Bank, codes for transnational corporations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [Paris], treaties for resource exploitation and wildlife protection, regional technical and economic cooperation for environmental management, and the work undertaken in the framework of the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environ-

ment (CIDIE). But again, a more rapid pace is necessary.

As environmental problems take on international, regional, and even global dimensions, regulation becomes more difficult and compliance with treaties, regulations, and codes of conduct increases in significance. This is the more so, as there is a time lag between the instigation and the manifestation of environmental problems, so that incentives for the polluter or exploiter to act upon the likely need to take preventive action become weaker. As these delayed problems become more frequent and more threatening (e.g., the expected greenhouse effect), they could be said to put time bombs under future regional and global security.

The drafting and adoption of environment-protection treaties and other international cooperation are required, if a healthy and safe environment is to ensue. Loss of species and habitats is not merely a sign of some loss of biological richness (a concern most likely to be expressed in the wealthier fraction of the human population), but also implies a loss of genetic potential and thereby a reduction in the security of the biosphere. Nature conservation for humankind today and tomorrow, and for the sake of life itself, is the responsibility of the international community. And such responsibility must be distributed in an equitable fashion.

Transboundary and regional environmental problems have become a serious concern of states, which have the necessary function to protect their citizenry from whatever threatens its security. Environmental problems have become conspicuously interwoven in causes and effects of internal social unrest and international tensions.

Many changes in the global environment will affect everyone on the planet. For example, global climatic warming (with an attendant rise in sea level) would not only move shorelines (often heavily populated) inward, but would have a significant impact on the flow of all major river systems, on ocean fisheries, and on worldwide agricultural production. One result of these changes would be an increase in the numbers of environmental refugees. Or, another example: Ozone 'holes' in the stratosphere would lead to widespread increases in the incidence of skin cancers.

The first generation of pollution problems – the obvious visible, audible, and smelly ones – are still on the rise, particularly in developing countries. The second generation of pollution problems – the more subtle ones – are now also on the rise, particularly in developed countries. This second generation includes those arising from the emission of

carbon dioxide, chlorofluorocarbons, and other so-called greenhouse gases, which are not of acute local concern, but rather of long-term worldwide concern. Moreover, solid and liquid wastes, including toxic chemicals, are becoming an increasingly serious problem in many parts of the world, both directly and via export. In addition, industrial plants (e.g., chemical factories, power-producing plants), engineering works (e.g., dams), and transportation facilities (e.g., supertankers) have become increasingly prone to accidents, with the negative environmental consequences often having international significance. These risks suggest the need for establishing international mechanisms of risk management and emergency relief.

IV. Environmental security in its regional and global dimensions

The notion of sovereignty is difficult (if not impossible) to maintain within an ecological frame of reference. The very essence of ecology is based on the concept of interdependence rather than independence. Various environmental problems manifest themselves at the global level (e.g., climatic change, depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, losses in biological species diversity). Others are of continental or regional dimensions (e.g., atmospheric acidification, oceanic eutrophication, desertification, pollution of major river systems, mountain deforestation plus its lowland consequences). Some environmental problems pose a threat to global security, others to regional security. As a first approximation, it could be argued that environmental problems must be responded to at the spatial level at which they occur, whether inter-state or encompassing international commons.

At the regional level, the notion of ecogeographical regions is a useful one in demarcating areas within which environmental inter-dependencies may be confined and within which natural resources can be taken to be relatively homogeneous. If security is threatened within such a region as a consequence of the unsustainable use of the natural resources, or because of transboundary pollution, then concerted preventive actions might be appropriate and adequate. However, as *ad hoc* solutions may come too late, a plea must be made for preparing an inventory of potential environmental hot spots and for the structuring of continuing exchanges of information and perhaps even of joint management. The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine, the two international commissions for the environmental protection and sustainable utilization of the Baltic Sea, and the comparable mechanism for cooperation among most of the Mediterranean littoral states are examples of this. Similar structures could be envisaged for states in the Horn of Africa and other ecogeographical regions.

Even if the major source of insecurity in a region is a non-environmental one, cooperation on environmental issues of joint concern would be conducive to the building up of regional confidence, and thus to increased security. A variety of jointly financed and run environment-related enterprises would be feasible, including research, data collection and storage, monitoring, early-warning systems, and sustainable-development programmes. Especially in the context of developing countries, joint action could be linked to the notion of enhancing regional security

through an intensification of regional economic cooperation and trade. This could lead to more diversified patterns of economic development, to a spatial merging of the areas of resource exploitation, and to a clearer elucidation of the related economic and environmental costs and benefits. New mechanisms and institutions of regional environmental cooperation will have to be developed, on the basis of lessons learned from the existing ones.

At the global level, cooperation must be directed at: (a) preventing or solving global environmental degradation; (b) managing the global commons; (c) preventing and managing global risks; (d) monitoring and coordinating regional environmental cooperation in areas of actual or potential insecurity; and (e) collecting and exchanging information on schemes of regional environmental cooperation.

A variety of environment-related concepts and institutions will have to be discussed and accepted by the international community, among them: (a) principles of environmental security; (b) codes of conduct for states and other economic agents, (c) multilateral strategies and plans of action; (d) harmonized legal and economic instruments and incentives; (e) reinforced or even new institutions and organizations; and, especially, (f) additional or new sources of financing for these international endeavors.

The changes suggested above may well require revisions in the mandates of various key intergovernmental agencies, among them those concerned with: (a) renewable resources (e.g., the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations); (b) energy (e.g., the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency); (c) trade (e.g., the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade); (d) development (e.g., the World Bank); (e) social matters (e.g., the United Nations Economic and Social Council); and, of course, (f) environmental protection (e.g., the United Nations Environment Programme).

V. Strategies for achieving environmental security

One principal way of removing threats to environmental security involves international cooperation at the regional level. In order for such cooperation to be effective, changes in perception will be necessary. Such changes in perception imply: (a) a commitment to the peaceful settlement of environmental security problems, in accordance with the United Nations Charter (see Article XXXIII); (b) the avoidance of a confrontational posture; and (c) the separation of considerations of environmental security from considerations of ideology, giving priority to common human values.

In order to achieve environmental security, it will be necessary to develop specific strategies with respect to: (a) education, training, and exchange of information; (b) international law; (c) ecogeographical regions; and (d) international institutions. Each of these areas is dealt with in turn.

Environmental security requires a strengthening of environmental education and training, and the free exchange of environmental information on a regular basis. Among other goals, environmental education should promote a common perception of environmental security, particularly among states that share natural resources. The International Environmental Education Programme, co-sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ought to be more widely relied upon to improve the curricula of schools, universities, and adult education programmes.

Environmental security requires a strengthening of international environmental law, which today is hampered by a lack of widespread acceptance and by a low level of compliance. This body of law could be further developed by a meeting of experts on the harmonious development of international environmental law (to follow up on a similar session held under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme in Montevideo in 1981). Such a meeting should lead to the establishment of a permanent committee of international environmental lawyers, which could begin its activities by preparing a declaration of principles on environmental security and by developing an international legal action plan.

Environmental security requires a strengthening of the notion that

ecogeographical regions are a primary unit of concern. International cooperation within an ecogeographical region offers a unique opportunity for addressing the problem of environmental security because many international environmental problems are essentially limited to a particular ecogeographical region. An important element here is the promotion of regional self-reliance across a broad range of security issues beyond the environmental one: politico-military, economic, and social. Existing regional development agencies and institutions must be encouraged to pay special attention to these issues.

Environmental security requires a strengthening of many of the existing international institutions. For example, the United Nations and its family of specialized agencies will have to be reinforced considerably to enable them to carry out their responsibilities at the global level, and stimulate appropriate local action. This is a task of concern to all countries, although the responsibility of the major powers in this regard is especially critical.

Various options are available to make the United Nations more effective in achieving global environmental security. One possibility is to expand the role of the United Nations Security Council to include relevant environmental matters (a change that would require the surmounting of a number of substantial political and some legal hurdles). A second possibility is to convert the United Nations Trusteeship Council into an Environmental Security Council (which would require amending the United Nations Charter). Although the Trusteeship Council has little to do, given the extremely low number of territories under its care, gaining the necessary support to amend the Charter would seem to be most difficult for a number of political reasons. A third possibility is to create a new United Nations Environmental Security Council (which would also require amending the United Nations Charter). Here again, the political obstacles to creating a major new organ of the United Nations appear to be almost insurmountable, at least for the present. Three further options deserve special mention.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council could play the leading role within the United Nations system in the achievement of global environmental security. It is already the principle organ of the United Nations for coordinating and promoting social and economic development, and it has the mandate to supervise the specialized agencies (see United Nations Charter, Article LV). The Council could be assigned the

special task of achieving environmental security, *inter alia*, through the creation of additional coordinating mechanisms such as a new Environmental Commission.

The United Nations International Court of Justice (the World Court) could readily play a more critical role within the United Nations system in the achievement of global environmental security. The Court already has within its mandate the means to deal with relevant issues (see its Statutes, Article XXVIII). The effectiveness of the Court to deal with these problems would be greatly strengthened if its judgements could be made applicable to all states.

The United Nations Environment Programme could be strengthened for the purpose of giving it the central role within the United Nations system in the achievement of global environmental security. Such strengthening might involve: (a) broadening the base of its Governing Council to include more than the 58 states of which it is now composed; (b) strengthening the office of its Executive Director (perhaps with a change of title to 'Commissioner of the Global Environment'); (c) giving it the right to raise questions to governments and transnational corporations; (d) giving it the right to establish inspection teams to investigate possible threats to environmental security; and (e) giving it the authority to enforce multilateral environmental protection treaties (e.g., those that might control the transfer and dumping of solid or liquid wastes including toxic chemicals).

In closing, it is important to stress that in developing a strategy for environmental security, a number of basic points must be recognized. First, environmental security must be recognized as an inseparable component of comprehensive international security. Second, the upholding of environmental security must be recognized as a shared responsibility of the entire international community, the attainment of which will require a balance among the rights, duties, and obligations of states. Among such obligations, states must recognize their joint responsibility for the protection of the common heritage of humankind. And third, states must recognize the absolute necessity of development strategies based on sustainability.

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