CHAPTER 1
EARLY WARNINGS AND EARLY ACTION BY BYSTANDERS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Human Rights Standards

Since the Shoah (Holocaust), the cry of "NEVER AGAIN" is heard all over the world and said to be for many political leaders a guideline in their political behavior. The Genocide Convention was adopted in 1948 and many human rights standards have been adopted and are supervised in many ways on a treaty basis; these human rights instruments are called the "International Bill of Rights." 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After the Cold War, an optimistic view dominated situations in which any aggression could be deterred or stopped because the original U.N. collective security system could be invoked. The ideas revived of cooperation in maintaining international peace and security and with respect for human rights from 1945 in San Francisco. The United Nations was established just before the more antagonistic interests of the Soviet Union and the United States, the main allied powers in World War II, became clear and also just before the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 1945 the original aim and spirit of the United Nations was made clear in the conference during which the Charter of the United Nations was adopted, and it is that spirit in another timeframe that received an important revival in 1990. For example, in 1990 the day the Iraqis crossed the border of Kuwait, the Security Council decided in Resolution 660 the very same day on August 2, 1990, to qualify the situation as a breach of the peace. Since then the SC could impose its will on Iraq by taking mandatory decisions under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter. Consequently the United Nations demanded the Iraqi withdrawal and used all means at its disposal—diplomatic and economic sanctions and military invasion—to successfully obtain U.N. Doc. S/RES/660 (1990).

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