International Crisis Group
WORKING TO PREVENT CONFLICT WORLDWIDE

FIFTEEN YEARS ON THE FRONT LINES

1995–2010

The ruins of Sarajevo's National Library following the Bosnian Serb bombardment of the Bosnian capital, May 1993. REUTERS/DANILO KRSTANOVIC

Preface

When I became the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in 1996, the UN had just launched a radical and daring new initiative in conflict management: personal criminal responsibility for war crimes. It of course had very little idea how to do it.

This is when I first discovered the International Crisis Group.

For anyone working on the Balkans at that time, Crisis Group was the first port of call for a sophisticated, impartial and pragmatic understanding of the inner workings of a conflict, the political minefields, and the opportunities for positive action. In just a few years, the organisation would go on to earn that reputation for its work in most of the world's serious conflict zones.

Crisis Group is now in its 15th year of operation. In institutional terms this adolescent period is not as rebellious as it is in other life cycles. In fact, it is for us *la force de l'âge*, as we have established our methodology, secured a steady stream of funding and developed a reputation that gives us access both to information sources and to advocacy targets.

This publication tells our story. Some of the characters depicted in it are older in reality than they appear in the pictures. We've included some of their memories, because we are, above all, the total sum of their talents. We set out to make the world a better place. The ultimate destination is elusive, but better is a relative term.

We look to the future with the same sense of excitement as existed 15 years ago. Conflict prevention and resolution are increasingly complex. The protagonists are no longer exclusively state entities: indeed, in many cases the erosion of the state and the absence of any semblance of rule of law form the very incubator of lethal armed conflict. Influential actors operate in a growing number of regional and sub-regional political institutions. Victims of conflict are no longer willing to settle for peace without justice. Women are seeking a seat at the table.

Crisis Group will continue to thrive in this complex environment, and its influence will grow. Working on the ground, close to all but indebted to none, it will remain true to the vision that made it the splendid organisation that it is today.

LOUISE ARBOUR
President and CEO, International Crisis Group

Cover photos: A Serb protestor confronts French NATO peacekeeping troops during clashes in the ethnically divided city of Mitrovica, Kosovo, 17 March 2008. REUTERS/OLEG POPOV. – Chaos following a bomb explosion, Peshawar, Pakistan, 5 December 2008. REUTERS/ALI IMAM.

CONTENTS

FROM A PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW

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Left: Board meeting at Lancaster House, London, April 2002.

15 Years Covering the Frontlines

The International Crisis Group is today generally regarded as the world's leading source of information, analysis and policy advice on preventing and resolving deadly conflict. Time and again, Crisis Group reporting and advocacy have given local and international promoters of peace, human rights and democracy cause to believe in the possibility of reducing – if not eliminating – mass violence.

From modest beginnings in 1995 – two people in a London office and a tiny field staff in the Balkans – Crisis Group has grown into an organisation employing over 126 fulltime staff from some 49 different nationalities, speaking 49 different languages and working across five continents in over 60 areas of actual or potential conflict and from six major advocacy centres. With an annual budget in 2010 of over US$15 million – with a diverse funder base of governments, foundations, individuals and corporations – Crisis Group produces over 80 reports and briefing papers annually, together with its monthly *CrisisWatch* bulletins, and circulates them directly to some 26,000 specifically targeted recipients and over 130,000 online subscribers. Staff and Board members publish over 200 commentary articles in major newspapers each year, and in the same time frame, over two million visitors come to Crisis Group's website.

TEUN VOETEN

US soldier at observation post in the Korengal Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan, June 2007.

COMMISSION INTER-ARMÉE

Crisis Group is unencumbered by ideology, competing national interests or private gain, owing allegiance first and foremost to the facts on the ground. It aims to use all political and diplomatic tools available to further its mission of conflict prevention and resolution, starting with accurate, informed reporting in the field and ending by delivering that information and analysis in the form of policy prescriptions to national, regional and international decision-makers.

In one sense, Crisis Group's work can be thought of as short-circuiting traditional lines of communication to policymakers. The information-gathering apparatus of a government defence or foreign ministry, or a large international organisation, can often be a cumbersome, pyramid structure of authority and responsibility. If someone working at an embassy in country X learns some critical bit of knowledge, he can tell that to his ambassador, the ambassador can send it back home to the ministry of foreign affairs, where it will be digested by desk officers and senior staff until, maybe, it gets kicked up to a deputy minister or the foreign minister herself. While clearly this is a simplified description of such structures, which are inevitably more sophisticated in most countries, the underlying point remains valid: in a long chain of people, the potential for key information to be lost, delayed, forgotten or misrepresented only increases the longer that chain is.

Crisis Group provides information to mid- and top-level decision-makers by directing that from-the-ground data directly to them. The organisation has a large number of field-based analysts gathering information, and it hands that knowledge and analysis to all levels of government and international organisations in published reports, commentary and online outputs, as well as in one-on-one meetings, particularly critical at the highest levels of decision-making. In short, Crisis Group cuts out the middle men in the information chain, and this leads to better informed policies.

Over its 15-year history, there have been innumerable cases of this approach bearing fruit, contributing to debate and pressure if not always sufficiently responsive action. Of course, the organisation often comes to blunt assessments that are, at minimum, unpopular and at the extremes, dangerously

Crisis Group analyst Mohamed Jalloh in discussion with Lt-Colonel Mamadou Landho Barry, head of Guinean Inter-army Committee charged with elaborating a plan for restructuring the army, February 2010.

controversial. Analysts in all Crisis Group's program areas – Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East – have at one time or another suffered legal intimidation, arrest, detention and even death threats. But through the commitment of its staff, the unrelenting support of its Board of top-level international figures, and the consistent backing of its diverse funders, Crisis Group has weathered moments of personal tragedy and the growing pains familiar to any institution as the organisation has emerged as a global player.

These pages are intended to look back candidly at the decade and a half of Crisis Group's existence. Interspersed with the core text are memories and observations from those most closely involved in the organisation's development. This short history will examine both the successes and the disappointments Crisis Group has had over the years.

What this organisation has learned from its experience does not condense easily into a few pages. Trying to clearly identify some achievements is made difficult by the very nature of our work: when the aim is to prevent something from happening – in this case, conflict – how do you know when you've succeeded? This is further complicated by the fact that in most situations, Crisis Group is hardly the only voice urging action in a particular direction. The organisation tries to mark accomplishments honestly, but it can hardly claim credit for every leaf that falls.

It seems at least safe to say that Crisis Group has been an important part of a key global trend over the last 15 years. Contrary to popular wisdom, there is some good news about the state of conflict around the world: armed conflict appears to be generally on the decline. According to the Human Security Report, published by Professor Andrew Mack and his team based at the School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, both the number of conflicts and the casualties of conflict have been declining over the last two decades or so. There are, of course, many reasons for this welcome development. The UN, the international financial institutions and donor governments are all getting better at prevention and resolution. But NGOs such as the International Crisis Group are also playing an essential role in providing those decision-makers and others with timely and reliable information addressing the root causes of conflict and offering practical solutions to it. That is a trend Crisis Group hopes it can continue to be a part of in the next 15 years as well.

MORT ABRAMOWITZ

A Founding Voice

ICG WAS A NEW IDEA. When we were creating the organisation, many colleagues, including a few of my trustees at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a number of NGOs, were sceptical and thought we were somewhat off our rockers. They argued it would have no influence or be unable to raise money.

We believed the idea was valid, but I confess to some concern over whether we could put together an essentially international organisation and keep it funded. I felt that we would be doing exceedingly well if we were able to operate in six or seven countries with a maximum annual budget of $8m. Clearly I thought small: ICG has gone beyond my wildest expectations.

ICG has been blessed with its Board and its chairmen. I will always be grateful to our first chairman and the first members of our Board, who gave the organisation a credibility it had not yet earned. George Soros was in from the beginning, and he truly jump-started the organisation with a large grant to monitor the implementation of the Dayton Accords. Despite its small size, I knew in 1997 that ICG had arrived on the world scene when General Wesley Clark, then NATO Supreme Commander and now ICG Board member, tracked me down in Macedonia to complain about one of ICG's Bosnia reports. I listened politely, disguising my great satisfaction.

Two people were absolutely instrumental in creating the worldwide organisation that we have today. We were fortunate that Gareth Evans was unemployed as a senior Australian opposition leader. His assumption of the presidency was coupled with a $2.5 million grant from George Soros which gave Gareth the ability to vastly expand the organisation. George's generous funding has continued over the years and that is another tribute to the organisation. Getting someone so able and so internationally well known as Louise Arbour to run ICG is a tribute to Gareth's achievement.

I am also pleased to say that ICG's methodology since its beginning has stood the test of time: on the ground analysis to get the foot in the door, prescription to offer a way out of trouble, and focused advocacy to try to get somnolent, unwilling democracies to do the right thing.

One final reflection: I think the staff has been the greatest ingredient for ICG's impressive output. They have shown themselves supremely able, totally dedicated to the mission, and capable of getting the necessary work done often under very tough circumstances. Many serve in difficult countries without the benefits that foreign diplomats get. They just get on with it in a style of, "have laptop, will travel". Many are underpaid. But they continue to sign up year after year, because they think the work is important, they are given great freedom in their work, and they believe strongly in the purpose of the organisation. Perhaps they could show a little less certainty about their conclusions and a little more concreteness about some of their recommendations, but really, we could not ask for more from them.

Mort Abramowitz is a member of the Executive Committee of Crisis Group's Board and former US Assistant Secretary of State and Ambassador to Turkey.

Mort Abramowitz and Crisis Group Balkans analyst Anna Husarska in Pale, September 1996, seen next to a torn poster of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić.

CHARLES RADCLIFFE

New Employee at a New Organisation

IT'S EASY TO FORGET now quite how experimental the whole enterprise felt in the early years. None of us really knew whether a small, independent organisation of this kind could produce the sort of material that could help reshape foreign policy decisions, still less whether ICG would generate sufficient influence to get its ideas taken seriously.

It's fair to say there was a certain gap between ambition and day-to-day reality at the beginning. The founding prospectus made great claims about how ICG would mobilise the world in response to man-made crises and ensure the mistakes of Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda were never again repeated. The reality was three people – later five – in a slightly quaint two-roomed office near Victoria Station in London. But however daunting the odds, it was great fun. Nicholas Hinton, ICG's first president, had an energy and good cheer that were contagious. It may have been unclear at times if we were going to achieve those lofty goals, but morale rarely flagged.

Among the memories that stand out are the early gatherings of the Board. The ICG Board – with so many wise and storied men and women from around the world – has to be one of the greatest boards anywhere. However daunting the task or inadequate the resources, those early Board meetings made us all feel as if this was an organisation capable of great things. There was always an inner core of activists on the Board who invested themselves heavily and provided invaluable support to the staff, and without whom the organisation would have never gained altitude. At a personal level, getting to know many of those founding Board members – people like Mort Abramowitz, Steve Solarz, William Shawcross, Thorvald Stoltenberg, Pär Stenbäck, George Mitchell and Barbara McDougall – as well as many great people who joined later on was undoubtedly one of the most enriching aspects of working for the organisation.

The field trips also stand out, especially the early ones to countries where the organisation was still trying to invent a role for itself. When we first went to Bosnia in January 1996 the Dayton Peace Accords had just been signed, ending a war that had killed more than 100,000 people. The country was held together with sticky tape and the international community was pouring in troops and money in an effort to consolidate the fragile peace. Nobody invited ICG, but we showed up with a team that included a brilliant young journalist, Samantha Power, who went on to win the Pulitzer Prize for a book on genocide and is now a senior adviser to President Obama, and the maverick journalist Anna Husarska, whose columns today regularly feature in *The New York Times, The Washington Post* and *New Republic*. We immediately saw a gap for a credible, independent monitoring mechanism to gauge the extent to which the parties to the conflict and international partners were living up to their obligations under the peace agreement. Quick-footed, candid and immune to political intimidation, ICG was perfectly suited for the job and I think it was at that moment I realised ICG wasn't just a good idea but also a practical one.

It's sometimes easy to forget that ICG very nearly failed in the late 1990s. Eighteen months or so after its launch, the organization had developed a basic operating approach and had some modest, early success in Sierra Leone and Bosnia. We'd gone from three staff to five to twenty-five and the organisation was already generating some attention from policymakers in the US and Europe and attracting growing media interest. But we had also come up against an invisible barrier. Funding became stuck at around $2–3 million a year, which was holding back the kind of expansion needed to achieve more visible impact. Mort Abramowitz was worrying at the time that we had enough money to get things going on a small scale but not to break through – maybe "just enough to fail" I remember him saying at one point. No one was more keenly aware of the risk of failure than Nicholas Hinton, who worked tirelessly to keep the fledgling organisation moving forward.

In January 1997, Nicholas and I were on a mission to Bosnia to visit ICG's field team in Sarajevo. In those days there were still few direct flights into the Bosnian capital so the Sarajevo office had sent a car and driver to pick us up from Split on the Croatian coast and take us the last 200 km or so. Less than half an hour into the journey, as we were still travelling along the coast road, Nicholas suffered a massive heart attack. We raced to the nearest cottage hospital, but he was already dead on arrival. He had literally died in my arms.

Nicholas's death marked the beginning of a difficult period. His loss was deeply felt by everyone who knew him. He was a workhorse with a rare level of drive and determination, but he also had great personal warmth and a delightfully mischievous sense of humour. In the days following his death, amidst the shock and sorrow, I know I wasn't alone in feeling a strong sense of responsibility to do whatever was needed to see that this part of his legacy – this small, fragile, eccentric, but also daring and wonderful organisation – would survive and, one day, thrive.

Charles joined ICG as Policy Coordinator shortly after its creation in August 1995 and stayed for eleven years, leaving as Vice President.

Page 8: Charles Radcliffe, 1997. Below, clockwise from left: Princess Diana with Crisis Group Balkans staffers Chris Bennett and Anna Husarska, 9 August 1997; Former Crisis Group President Nicholas Hinton and Bosnia staffer in Mostar, April 1996; Bosnia Project Director Hrair Balian at his desk in the Sarajevo office, 1997; Crisis Group analyst, and later Board member, Samantha Power and Mort Abramowitz, Sarajevo, September 1996.

"A Golden Stick with Which to Beat Us"

In January 1993, Mort Abramowitz, who had formerly served in many top-level US government roles and was then President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Mark Malloch Brown, then World Bank Vice President for External Affairs and later Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, were seated next to each other on a flight out of war-torn Sarajevo. Those were dark days for that city, as the international community continued to dither in the face of Europe's worst bloodshed since World War II. The two men debated why it had been so difficult for the international system to effectively respond to Bosnia and other conflicts. An idea was hatched: to create an independent organisation that would serve as the world's eyes and ears on the ground in countries in conflict while pressing for immediate action. The concept of the International Crisis Group was born.

Later that year, Abramowitz established a small team to move the idea forward. It was then that Fred Cuny, an American engineer and veteran aid worker, became involved. He was credited with spearheading a remarkable effort during the Bosnian war to provide besieged Sarajevo with clean water by building a purification plant in an abandoned mountainside tunnel. Initially, Crisis Group field teams were to be composed of experts from peacekeeping, relief operations, engineering, logistics and medicine. Abramowitz and Cuny felt that Crisis Group would give the international community a unique tool: a private organisation with the expertise and stature to comprehensively address complex emergencies.

REUTERS/DAMIR SAGOLJ

GEORGE SOROS

Supporting Crisis Group from the Beginning

IN JANUARY 1993, when I asked Mort Abramowitz, Mark Malloch Brown and others to tell me how my foundation could help the people of war-ravaged Bosnia, I never expected a long-lasting institution to emerge from the mission. We were all focused on very immediate concerns: the siege of Sarajevo and the daily disaster unfolding in all its horror before us. When they returned from that city, they of course offered some excellent recommendations for assisting Bosnia in its hour of need, but they also had a bigger idea.

The core problem, they convinced me, was not just Bosnia at this moment but the wider failure of the international community to deal effectively with all the Bosnias around the world as they arise. Rwanda the following year drove the point home: governments and other international actors simply could not, or would not, stop the worst crimes against human decency around the world. "Never again" may have been a mantra for some, but it didn't seem to be an actionable policy for anyone.

I was happy to offer the seed money to get them started investigating the possibilities for a new organisation, and I was even more pleased that I wasn't the only one who believed in this idea enough to put financial resources toward it. When governments in the Nordic countries made their pledges of support very early on, I could see this was going to become a reality. I've been a proud supporter of Crisis Group ever since.

The organisation has been through some tough times. In the early years, its very existence was touch-and-go at several points. We were lucky to have Gareth Evans whip a stumbling mule into a racehorse in the early years of the last decade, and with Louise Arbour now in charge, I have every confidence that Crisis Group will maintain its excellent reputation in the years to come.

George Soros is a member of the Executive Committee of Crisis Group's Board, and the Founder of the Open Society Institute.

STEPHEN DE BROYER

STEPHEN SOLARZ

Transforming an Idea into Reality

WHEN MORT ABRAMOWITZ and Mark Malloch Brown returned from their trip to Sarajevo in 1993, they concluded that what was needed was a trans-national non-governmental organisation to mobilise a more meaningful response to genocide and crimes against humanity, not only in the Balkans but elsewhere around the world as well. The massive loss of life in Somalia and the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 only confirmed this need.

It was not clear, however, whether the creation of such an organisation was a viable proposition or merely an idealistic aspiration. Mort Abramowitz asked me to help answer this question by making an assessment of the financial and political prospects of such an endeavour. I travelled to Europe and Asia, as well as Washington and New York, meeting with representatives of governments, foundations, multi-national organisations, as well as several key NGOs.

We wanted to know: would it be possible to raise the kind of resources that would be needed to finance it? How responsive would governments be to the policy recommendations the new group would be advancing? How would existing NGOs feel about a new entry into the field of conflict resolution that would focus on advocacy rather than on the delivery of goods and services to afflicted populations?

The first foreign leader with whom I met, Martti Ahtisaari, had just been elected President of Finland a month earlier. When I explained to Martti what we had in mind, he immediately and graciously offered to provide $100,000 in funding from Finland. I received a comparably enthusiastic response from Gareth Evans, then Foreign Minister of Australia, who indicated his government would be prepared to provide up to $500,000 in multi-year funding if we decided to move ahead. At the time these pledges were made, neither Martti nor Gareth had any idea that several years later the former would become the Chairman of our Board and the latter our President.

Another European statesman with whom I met, Pär Stenbäck, former Foreign Minister of Finland, was then General Secretary of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Pär was also very encouraging about the need and prospects for such an organisation – and he also got involved as a long-serving Board member.

While some NGO leaders were sceptical about the value of what we had in mind, others were more supportive. Bernard Kouchner, who had founded *Medecins Sans Frontières* and later became Foreign Minister of France, was especially encouraging and agreed to become one of the original members of the Board once ICG was established.

Not all of my interlocutors were as supportive as Ahtisaari, Evans, Stenbäck, and Kouchner. Some were discouraging and others were disappointing. At least one minister was appalled at the idea his government would help support an outside group of experts offering policy direction.

By the end of my travels around the world over eight months, however, I had come to the conclusion that there was sufficient sympathy and support for the project to justify going ahead with it. The rest, as they say, is history.

Stephen Solarz is a former US Congressman and long-time Crisis Group Board member.

The discussions brought some sharp-elbowed debates about whether the organisation should be an operational outfit or a stand-back advocate for action by others. Cuny hoped Crisis Group could monitor the effectiveness of specific humanitarian relief efforts and play a direct coordinating role in aid delivery. The dispute was protracted, and the proposal developed during 1994 incorporated elements of both advocacy and operations.

On 17 November 1994, Abramowitz's Carnegie Endowment publicly announced "a concerted effort to consider the launching of a new International Crisis Group" with three main functions: assessment, advice and advocacy. George Soros's Open Society Institute awarded $200,000 to finance continued planning activities. Over the latter half of 1994, former US Congressman Stephen Solarz travelled to over twenty countries to discuss the proposed organisation and raise funds. He sometimes received a frosty reception. As one senior European foreign minister complained, "What you are trying to do is to get us to give you a golden stick with which to beat us over the head, in order to get us to do what we've already decided we do not want to".

Yet, it was impossible to look at events in Bosnia, Somalia and elsewhere and not come to the conclusion that governments and international institutions had failed, and that there had to be more effective responses. As Solarz observed, "If I had any doubts about whether there was a need for a group like this, the failure of the international community to respond in any meaningful way whatsoever to the agony of Rwanda, at a time when hundreds of thousands were being systematically slaughtered, eliminated those hesitations".

REUTERS/JEREMIAH KAMAU

Page 10: A Bosnian Muslim woman hugs the coffin of her relative before a mass funeral in the town of Brčko for the victims of a 1992 massacre by Serb forces after their bodies were discovered in a mass grave, 16 June 2007. – Above: Rwandan refugees fleeing the genocide cross the border to Tanzania, 30 May 1994.

MARK MALLOCH BROWN

Flight out of Sarajevo

I THINK IT may have been Mort's helmet that made me embrace the idea of ICG. We were sitting in the back of a military Hercules flying out of Sarajevo, and Mort was bursting out of the regulation flak jacket and a too small tin hat. I had to urgently distract myself to suppress my laughter. He looked like Michael Dukakis in the tank. I had to look somewhere else and talk about something else!

Our trip and the lobbying we had done before to move reluctant governments in Europe and the US had persuaded us that two things moved them: embarrassment (and unarmed civilians being shelled from the hills around the city by ruthless militia provided plenty of that with the right media promptings) and well developed solutions that they could embrace to get them out of the hole they were in.

So we talked intently about the need to put on a long-term footing what we had tried to do to raise the siege of Sarajevo: strong advocacy on behalf of victims accompanied by first class analysis of what the policy options were that might tempt governments out of their caution and enable them to engage around realisable solutions. At that time too, we foresaw laying out strategic aid plans as our friend and partner Fred Cuny was so brilliantly doing in Sarajevo. He was to die tragically in Chechnya before ICG was launched and with him went this particular plank of our vision.

What remained though was an extraordinary organisation that has become an astonishing voice, force and analyst for the world's vulnerable: their champion, their diplomat and our conscience. The idea came from under the tin helmet but those of us who could help operationalise Mort's vision are proud to have been on the ride.

Mark Malloch Brown is a former member of Crisis Group's Board and former head of the UN Development Programme, UN Deputy-Secretary General, and UK Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN.

Left to right: Lionel Rosenblatt, then head of Refugees International, Mort Abramowitz and Mark Malloch Brown, at Sarajevo airport moments before coming up with the concept of Crisis Group, January 1993.

London, and a Tragic Setback

In January 1995, Abramowitz put together a meeting in London for members of the Steering Committee and a large cast of other international luminaries – including former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, the founder of *Medecins Sans Frontières* and future French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, Indian industrialist Ratan Tata, former Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan MacEachen, and future Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo – to consider the case for a new organisation. Dutch Foreign Minister Peter Kooijmans commented on the plan before them: "I was thrilled because the draft in my opinion was absolutely mad, wild and bold".

I WAS THRILLED BECAUSE THE DRAFT IN MY OPINION WAS ABSOLUTELY MAD, WILD AND BOLD.

PETER KOOIJMANS

There was a general sense among the gathering that a new independent organisation could combine sound field assessments and political wisdom to help initiate viable solutions to major conflicts. Many Steering Committee members recommended focusing primarily on analysis and advocacy rather than coordinating humanitarian assistance efforts. While this decision left Cuny unhappy, the meeting generated a great deal of enthusiasm. The focus of the International Crisis Group, it was agreed, would be on assessment, advice and advocacy. It would try to determine the forces driving conflicts and persuade the international community to take effective action.

In many respects the new Group was unique for what it was not: it was not designed to deliver humanitarian assistance; it was not a mediating body; it was not a human rights organisation, and it was not adverse to recommending international military intervention to end conflicts.

The proposal foresaw an annual budget of $8 million and 75 full-time staff: plans that were wildly ambitious in the immediate term. Most of those present in London agreed to become Board members, and George Soros pledged further seed funding. Crisis Group suffered many of the usual difficulties and hassles in its early days: raising money, hiring staff and establishing communications systems for anticipated far-flung operations. Between February and July 1995, it formally registered as a non-profit organisation and secured tax-exempt status in the United States. Among the first governments to give financial support to Crisis Group in the crucial years 1995 to 1996 were the Nordic ones, thanks in large part to the hard work of early Board members Pär Stenbäck and Thorvald Stoltenberg, the former foreign ministers of Finland and Norway respectively.

REUTERS/TOBIAS SCHWARZ

Crisis Group Board members Thorvald Stoltenberg and Pär Stenbäck.

DALLAS MORNING NEWS/JUDY WALGREN

But April 1995 brought devastating news: Fred Cuny, who had contributed so much to the concept, and was widely seen as a natural to assume the post of director of operations, was killed in Chechnya. Mort Abramowitz observed, “Fred was one of those few people whom you think often about when they are gone, who spent as much time in Iraq or in Bosnia helping one person as a multitude. He helped frame the concepts behind ICG and its field-based operating style, although he was disappointed that the organisation decided not to also monitor the aid providers as originally planned. I do not like to speak for the dead, but I feel Fred would be pleased with ICG”. Cuny’s death was a great loss. His boldness of vision, however, lived on.

Fred Cuny, photographed in Somalia in 1992.

Open for Business: West Africa

In 1995, former US Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell was elected Crisis Group’s first Chairman and Nicholas Hinton was appointed its first President. Hinton had run Save the Children UK for ten years and expanded its operating budget seven-fold during that period. As he once declared, the best way to get things done was to “wear a dark suit and think radical thoughts”.

WEAR A DARK SUIT AND THINK RADICAL THOUGHTS.

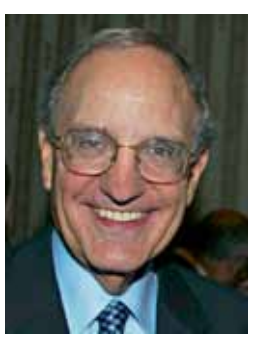
NICHOLAS HINTON

Hinton took up the post in July, and in early September 1995 Crisis Group opened for business in London. Charles Radcliffe was brought on board as the organisation’s Policy Coordinator. Sierra Leone was selected for the first field project, and the first deployment consisted of sending a former Save the Children worker, David Shearer (now a senior UN official who until recently ran UN operations in Iraq), to Sierra Leone with no visa and a wad of dollars stuffed in his socks. The early reporting was for internal purposes only and produced recommendations for Board members to raise in meetings and correspondence with senior officials in donor governments.

Crisis Group held its first Board meeting in New York in October 1995, at which the preliminary findings from the Sierra Leone mission were considered. Much discussion focused on fundraising and a provisional budget of around $2.5 million was approved. Over the next year, the organisation grew quickly. Colourful and hard-hitting, the trenchant Crisis Group analysis quickly won international attention.

The first push was to rally international support for Sierra Leone’s elections: Crisis Group media advocacy helped raise $10 million for the election. In the aftermath of the polls, Crisis Group helped create and fund the Campaign for Good Governance that included training workshops for public officials and a civic education program. Many within the organisation felt this foray into programming was a distraction from the core mission, though there was at least one notable long-term benefit: Zainab Bangura, the leader of a women’s organisation Crisis Group had helped to establish back then, went on to become a prominent, passionate spokesperson for her country and today, in 2010, serves as Sierra Leone’s Foreign Minister.

REUTERS/CORINNE DUFKA



Residents of Freetown march in a rally for peace, Sierra Leone 8 June 1997. – Crisis Group’s first Chairman George Mitchell.

Cutting Teeth: The Balkans

In February 1996, Crisis Group established its first field presence in the Balkans, financed by a $1 million contribution from George Soros following the signing of the December 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. Until then, the organisation had been operating largely hand-to-mouth, and the Bosnia program essentially defined its early years. Within a month of the program's start-up, Crisis Group had deployed a team of experts in Bosnia and published its first reports on the situation, largely focusing on measuring and stimulating progress in implementing Dayton.

Crisis Group worked diligently to focus the world's attention on building peace. Its work in Bosnia was also brought to a wider audience in the *New Republic* magazine, which carried a regular feature by a new recruit in Sarajevo, Anna Husarska. Crisis Group's office there quickly became the first port of call for most journalists arriving in-country.

In August 1996, Crisis Group issued a report calling for Bosnia's elections, scheduled for October 1996, to be postponed. Although none of the requisite conditions for a free ballot had been met, the international community was determined to move ahead. The report was immediately seized upon by the international media, which had already grown sceptical of attempts by Western governments to spin the faltering peace process in Bosnia as a success. Needless to say, Crisis Group's assessment was deeply unpopular among Western officials. That report marked the beginning of a more daring, outspoken approach to analysis and advocacy, the moment when the organisation realised that not only was it OK to rock the boat, but sometimes that was the best way to contribute to change. It also showed for the first time the importance of media outreach in shaping policy debate.

Although unable to delay national elections, Crisis Group's warnings were prescient. Bosnian and international officials were embarrassed when the election proved deeply flawed and bolstered hardline nationalists. Mort Abramowitz observed of Crisis Group's effort, "We fought hard and we lost", but the organisation made a distinct impression. Reuters noted, "The International Crisis Group earned widespread respect when it helped unveil mass scale manipulation in refugee voter registration", and the organisation worked closely with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to improve subsequent elections.

By the end of 1996, Crisis Group had begun working on a variety of other issues, from the risk of genocide in Burundi to possibilities for a democratic transition in Nigeria. In May, a group of Board members made the case for preventive action in Burundi with the UN Security Council, an early example of concerted high-level international advocacy. The Board organisation began to attract its first substantial donations to support operating costs, including from a number of government sources. In short, 1996 was the year Crisis Group began to make its mark.

Ethnic Albanian men wave the red and black Albanian flag at Serbs on the other side of the bridge in the ethnically divided city of Mitrovica, Kosovo, while French soldiers look on, 10 September 1999.

REUTERS/HAZIR REKA

Expansion in Africa … but Momentum Stalls

In January 1997, Crisis Group President Nicholas Hinton collapsed and died as the result of a massive heart attack while visiting a field team in the Balkans. A *Daily Telegraph* obituary noted of Hinton, "He led by example and was particularly adept at using the powerful to help the impotent". Following on the heels of Cuny's death, this new tragedy plunged Crisis Group into an organisational crisis.

Mort Abramowitz stepped in as acting president, and a presidential search committee was immediately convened. The Board appointed Belgian senator and former *Medecins Sans Frontières* International Secretary-General Alain Destexhe the next president. The decision was made to close the London office and shift the headquarters to Brussels, partly to demonstrate that Crisis Group was genuinely international, not just Anglo-American, in character. The transition to a new president, the office move and staff turnover all cost the organisation momentum during the first part of 1997, accentuated when operations in Sierra Leone were suspended as the security situation rapidly deteriorated.

However, by autumn 1997, Crisis Group established a new project in Central Africa and expanded operations into Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. The Balkans continued to be the highest profile effort. During 1998, Crisis Group developed widely praised proposals for building trust between rival ethnic groups in the disputed Brčko corridor in northern Bosnia, and most of these measures were subsequently adopted by the Brčko Arbitration Panel. *The Economist* noted in 1998, "It takes the International Crisis Group to raise such troublesome issues because the other foreign groups that brave the world's trouble spots are generally biased toward discretion".

Crisis Group sounded the alarm weeks before ethnic violence exploded in Kosovo in March 1998 with a book-length survey, *Kosovo Spring,* which made clear the province was headed for disaster. The report quickly became the most widely read Crisis Group publication produced to that point.

From 1996 to 1999, Crisis Group's full-time staff averaged around 20, and its budget hovered around $2 million annually (with an additional $1 million from the European Commission in 1999 to 2000 for a specially staffed one-off project on Kosovo war crimes documentation). In 1998 and 1999, operations continued to diversify, with presence reduced in Bosnia but extended elsewhere in the Balkans and Central Africa, with additional forays into Algeria and Cambodia. Output grew quickly, with many more reports produced than in the past. A small advocacy office was opened in Washington DC in the hope of effectively engaging the US government.

ALAIN DÉLÉTROZ

Fabienne Hara with UN peacekeepers on the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia, 2002.

FABIENNE HARA

Early Field Work in Africa

I ARRIVED AT Crisis Group in January 1998 to help set up the Central Africa Program. Initially, I worked in Burundi, but in 1999, I began receiving death threats from some Burundi parties and had to relocate to Nairobi.

During this time, I was also working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I arrived in the region just before the Second Congo War, which broke out in August 1998, involving nine countries and also known as Africa's World War. I closely followed the military preparations by all the countries and started reporting on the war as soon as it broke out.

After the publication of the first two reports on the DR Congo, I began to gain access to all the key players in the region. Just to give one example: when Congolese President Laurent Kabila was assassinated in January 2001, I got a call from one of my key intelligence contacts in the region – eight hours before the news broke in the press.

I also came to know Laurent's son, Joseph Kabila, who took over as president following his father's death. Regular access to the Kabilas and other leading Congolese politicians resulted in a number of authoritative reports on the country.

I recruited new staff to run the Nairobi office in the summer of 2000, when I moved to Brussels to become the Africa Director. After François Grignon and the team arrived, we published a book-length report called *Scramble for the Congo*, which earned us enormous respect from donors but also, most importantly, the Africans.

Altogether, I must have written and edited more than 40 Central Africa reports between 1998 and 2003, and the beauty of this adventure is that the work contributed to peace processes that produced real results. Considering the level of violence that I saw in this region, I don't think I would have kept my mental sanity if it had turned out otherwise.

Fabienne, now Vice-President (Multilateral Affairs), first joined Crisis Group in 1998. She left to work for the UN in 2003 and rejoined in 2008.

The Board's decision to open a Central Africa project in January 1998 marked an important shift. Its first report on Burundi really put Crisis Group on the map in Africa because it was the first public call to lift regional sanctions on that country – a policy which came to fruition about a year later. Directing the project, Fabienne Hara enjoyed excellent access to key decision-makers throughout the region, including the President of Burundi, who would call her in for three-hour sessions to discuss the peace process. Crisis Group staff continued to advise the peace mediation team, and their analysis was a focal point for discussions by all key players in the conflict including the rebels in the bush.

Still, toward the end of the decade, the momentum of the organisation as a whole seemed to have stalled. In October 1999, Destexhe resigned to devote himself more fully to his political career. Donor concern was becoming evident, and this period could easily have marked the beginning of the end for Crisis Group. Fred Cuny had been killed in Chechnya, Nicholas Hinton had died of a heart attack in Croatia and Destexhe's presidency had been brief. The fact that Crisis Group survived was testament to the energy and drive of its staff, the inherent merit of its work and the continued labours of senior Board members, led by Mort Abramowitz. After a swift selection process, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans was invited to take on the role of President. Former Finnish President – and future Nobel Peace Prize laureate – Martti Ahtisaari was elected Chairman. In both cases, the appointments were effective from the beginning of 2000.

REUTERS/PETER ANDREWS

Rebels march through Lumumbashi during the First Congo War which overthrew President Mobutu Sésé Seko and brought Laurent-Désiré Kabila to power, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 12 April 1997.

A New Era

Gareth Evans was hard-charging and hands-on. He had been personally involved in a number of high-profile international diplomatic initiatives, including the successful efforts to forge a Cambodian peace accord. As a former foreign minister, Evans had a distinct view of Crisis Group's added value, arguing that the organisation could operate in effect "as a private foreign office, doing things that well-focused and well-resourced governments ought to be doing but often do not." To the surprise of field analysts, Evans demanded to read, clear and often rewrite every report produced, ensuring much-intensified quality control.

From 2000 onward, Crisis Group began to make a meaningful impact in locations beyond the Balkans and Central Africa. A process of rapid expansion began which led over the next five years to it more than quintupling in staff size and budget, and developing a profile among policymakers to match. Evans and the Board had agreed in 2000 that Crisis Group needed to have a larger critical mass and multi-continent reach if it was to have real visibility and impact with policymakers, and this decision has shaped its trajectory ever since. A crucial stimulus for the new era, without which no such momentum could have been generated, was an extraordinarily generous $2.5 million matching grant made by George Soros in 2000 that primed the pump for Crisis Group to go global (his Open Society Institute continues to give $2 million annually).

During 2000 and the first half of 2001, new projects were established in West Africa, Southern Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia and the Andes; new advocacy offices were opened in New York and Paris; and the Washington office expanded. The pace of advocacy picked up dramatically across the board, with more high-level contacts and more media work.

This was also a period in which some important lessons were learned. In mid-August 2000, Crisis Group issued a report on Serbia declaring that most analysts felt "Milosevic will be able to stay in power indefinitely", and advocating a boycott by the Serbian opposition of the forthcoming federal elections. This call was dead wrong – the previously fractious Serbian opposition rapidly united, won the election and took power after large street protests – and Crisis Group's reputation took a deserved hammering. The post-mortem was clear: the field work was two months old and had not been updated. Crisis Group failed because it had strayed from its core methods, and Evans and others in the organisation took the wake-up call to heart.

Crisis Group President Gareth Evans at a press conference, Seoul, South Korea, 26 August 2004.

By contrast, another Balkans report later in 2000 underscored the best of Crisis Group's approach. After years of Western officials claiming that it was simply too difficult to apprehend the large numbers of indicted war criminals still at large in Bosnia, Crisis Group issued a report that told a different story, and shamed the international community into action. It identified individuals across Republika Srpska, many of whom had been either vetted by the UN police mission or by the OSCE, who were alleged to have committed war crimes but were still playing prominent roles in their communities. The report led to a number of police and politicians being removed or withdrawing from political life.

Crisis Group President Gareth Evans, South Asia Project Director Samina Ahmed and Board member Martti Ahtisaari at the London Board meeting, 2002.

From 11 September through Iraq

The attacks in the US on 11 September 2001 made clear that terrorism organised and protected in states like Afghanistan and elsewhere posed a tremendous danger. As Crisis Group had long argued, the connection between failed states, unresolved grievances and the interests of modern nations were too alarming to ignore. As the international community searched for answers about extremism and conflict, Crisis Group was uniquely positioned. A major influx of funding allowed Crisis Group to open a new field office in Islamabad to cover both Pakistan and Afghanistan, building on the creative work of the existing Central Asia program based in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, major new projects were launched in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa and Kashmir.

AS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SEARCHED FOR ANSWERS TO EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT, CRISIS GROUP WAS UNIQUELY POSITIONED.

The regional Middle East office was headquartered in Amman, with analysts covering a range of issues in Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and the Gulf countries. The decision to tackle these issues, not least the Arab-Israeli conflict, was fraught with some uncertainty both in terms of Crisis Group's likely added value and in terms of maintaining Board unity, but has generally been vindicated by the widely recognised quality and timeliness of the organisation's reporting and advocacy. As Gareth Evans said at the time, "We know that we can no longer treat with erratic neglect the problems of the Arab and Islamic world or ignore those problems except when oil supplies appear threatened".

Crisis Group's analysis of Islamist extremism in places where it already had established a significant presence, such as Indonesia, North Africa, Central Asia and the Balkans, as well as the Middle East, comprised some of its most valuable contributions. *The New York Times* in 2004 noted of one report on the terrorist organisation Jemaah Islamiyah, primarily authored by then Indonesia Project Director Sidney Jones, "American, Australian and Asian intelligence and police officials are in general agreement that she has done a better job of understanding and analyzing the organization than have their own agencies". A report published early in 2005, *Understanding Islamism*, became a major reference source on the many varieties of both Sunni and Shiite Islamic activism and the policy implications of the West failing to understand that diversity.

But also during this period, Crisis Group dedicated much effort to drawing international policymaking attention to important issues that were not related to the newly popular obsessions with Islamist terrorism. Three examples show how diversified and influential the organisation had become.

First, in 2002, Crisis Group produced a book-length report on Sudan – *God, Oil and Country* – the result of intensive field work, carried out despite the fact that its Africa co-director at the time had been declared "an enemy of the

SIDNEY JONES

Tracking Terrorists in Indonesia

IN LATE 2001, South East Asia was gripped by rumours that al-Qaeda had established an affiliate across the region known as Jemaah Islamiyah, with an Indonesian cleric named Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as its head. Malaysia and Singapore had discovered a network of JI cells in their countries after JI proposals for a series of attacks surfaced in Afghanistan. Ba'asyir's name might have been little-known at the time, but I knew very well who he was. In the mid-1980s, while working for Amnesty International, I had compiled extensive documentation on all the radical Muslims arrested on charges of subversion for allegedly trying to establish an Islamic state, and Ba'asyir was one of them. We were convinced that many had just been arrested for peaceful expression of their views, but we were never quite sure about Ba'asyir and never designated him a prisoner of conscience. I hadn't thought about him in almost 20 years.

I had just agreed to join Crisis Group but was still in New York, preparing to move back to Jakarta. As I was clearing out my apartment, I came upon an old carton that turned out to be full of old Amnesty-era material – including the 1983 trial documents of Ba'asyir. I asked my new employers if they would be interested in a paper on the antecedents of Jemaah Islamiyah based on these documents. They said yes and I went to work. One of the first things I did on arriving in Jakarta was to go down and see some of Ba'asyir's followers whose release I had campaigned for two decades earlier. They greeted me like a long-lost friend and introduced me to Ba'asyir, believing that I would once again take up their cause. The Crisis Group paper on the "Ngruki network" (named after his school near Solo, Central Java) came out two months before the 2002 Bali bombing and became a reference thereafter.

It burned my bridges to the Ba'asyir group, but it opened the door to collaboration with others who had been collecting material for several years on other bombings that they believed were linked – and that collaboration started the series of reports that has made Crisis Group widely regarded as one of the most credible sources on terrorism in the region.

Sidney, now Senior Adviser, has been with Crisis Group since 2002.

Sidney Jones on the back of a motorbike, Jakarta, December 2008.

ANDREW STROEHLEIN

state" by Sudan. The report envisaged a peace process with a self-determination referendum for the south at its heart, and was widely viewed as the most thorough and systematic treatment of Sudan's civil war to date, mapping a well-reasoned negotiating path. The book detailed many of the trends and deliberations of that period, which were ultimately reflected in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's long north-south civil war.

Second, in late 2003, Crisis Group provided – through Middle East Program Director Robert Malley – substantial support to the independent Israeli and Palestinian framers of the Geneva Initiative, a plan which resembled closely Crisis Group's earlier "endgame" proposals for Arab-Israeli peace published in mid-2002 (produced, interestingly, with unexpectedly strong consensus on the Board). The organisation helped sponsor an opinion poll that revealed broad support for the proposed plan among Israelis and Palestinians, and arranged for 58 former heads of state and government, foreign ministers and heads of major international agencies to sign a statement of support. Then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair praised Crisis Group efforts in August 2002, observing, "I welcome your initiative in putting these reports together and getting them out into the public domain. Your reports have gone a lot further in spelling out in a greater level of detail what a settlement could look like. That is something that I doubt any government could have done at this stage... I believe your work has real value".

Third, after the release of a March 2004 Crisis Group report on Uzbekistan and sustained activity in Washington, including serving as a driving force behind key pieces of legislation and presenting testimony to Congress, Crisis Group was a leading voice in the successful campaign for the US to cut aid to Uzbekistan because of serious human rights abuses.

But the most dominant issue in international affairs of this period, and arguably the one most complicating the future work of organisations like Crisis Group that offer solutions based on international action, was clearly Iraq. The UN Security Council showdown over the planned 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq generated the most intense controversy within Crisis Group in its history to that point – with a multi-party and multi-national Board and Executive Committee reflecting exactly the same divisions evident at the time throughout the international community.

THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL SHOWDOWN OVER THE PLANNED US-LED INVASION OF IRAQ GENERATED THE MOST INTENSE CONTROVERSY WITHIN CRISIS GROUP IN ITS HISTORY TO THAT POINT.

In the event, Crisis Group advocated neither for nor against going to war, but it analysed the pros and cons of the different arguments proposed, subsequently producing – to the extent possible given security and other constraints on effective field work – a series of highly-regarded analyses of the serious problems which emerged in the war's aftermath. Such high-level deadlocks on policy recommendations have been extremely rare within Crisis Group, no mean accomplishment given the nature of its work.

Above: Middle East & North Africa Program Director Robert Malley addresses a Crisis Group Board meeting. – Pages 28–29: Female government soldiers on guard during heavy fighting between the army and rebels in Ganta, Liberia, 23 June 2003. TEUN VOETEN

TIMELINE

1993 **January** In a plane flying out of war-ravaged Sarajevo, a conversation between Mort Abramowitz and Mark Malloch Brown strikes the initial spark.

1995 **January** After more than a year's preparatory work, nearly 40 international figures meet as a Steering Committee to support creation of International Crisis Group.

April "Master of disaster" Fred Cuny, expected to be first head of Crisis Group operations, murdered while on humanitarian mission in Chechnya.

July–October Senator George Mitchell appointed Chairman and Nicholas Hinton first full-time President. First office in London, first field mission dispatched to Sierra Leone, and first Board meeting in New York, authoring target budget of $2.5 million.

1996 **February** First field mission established in the Balkans, financed by $1 million contribution from George Soros following December 1995 Dayton Peace Accords.

May First significant Board advocacy effort made, sounding alarm on Burundi with UN Security Council.

August Publication of *Why the Bosnian Elections Must be Postponed* sends ripples through international community and earns Crisis Group its first major public attention.

1997 **January** Nicholas Hinton dies suddenly, succeeded by Belgian Senator Alain Destexhe; headquarters move from London to Brussels. Washington DC advocacy office is opened.

1998 **March** *Kosovo Spring* sounds the alarm and becomes most widely-read publication to that point.

1998-99 Major focus remains Balkans, but small new projects established in Central Africa, Algeria and Cambodia, and report output increases. Overall growth momentum falters. Alain Destexhe resigns to pursue political career.

2000 Former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans appointed President in January and former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari becomes Chairman. Crisis Group "goes global", opening advocacy offices in New York and Paris, and new projects across Africa and Asia.

2001 *After Milosevic* addresses unresolved problems in Balkans. New York advocacy office opened alongside UN. After 9/11, Crisis Group embarks on major series of new terrorism-related reports around world. By year end, annual expenditure has grown to $6.7 million and staff size to 75.

2002 *God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan* published. First reports from the Colombia/Andes project and the new Middle East project. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan describes Crisis Group as a "global voice of conscience, and a genuine force for peace".

2003 **June** Crisis Group raises alarm over Darfur with *Sudan's Other Wars*. Output from projects across four continents grows dramatically, with 100 reports and briefings published; by year end, annual expenditure $10 million, and staff size 90.

2004 More attention devoted to outreach and advocacy, with Darfur becoming organisation's largest-ever campaign. Crisis Group leads calls for international action to stop atrocities, and its campaign webpage becomes one of the most visited sites about Darfur online. By year's end, budgeted expenditure $11.96 million and staff size 110.

February Reporting on Jemaah Islamiyah extremist group by Indonesia project, led by Sidney Jones, is praised as better than anything available from intelligence agencies.

2005 Downscaling of operations in the Balkans. New project opened in Haiti.

September Responsibility to Protect principle unanimously adopted by heads of state and government at the UN World Summit following drive by Evans.

2006 Crisis Group launches major advocacy initiative on Israel/Palestine including publication in major newspapers of statement of support signed by 135 respected former global leaders.

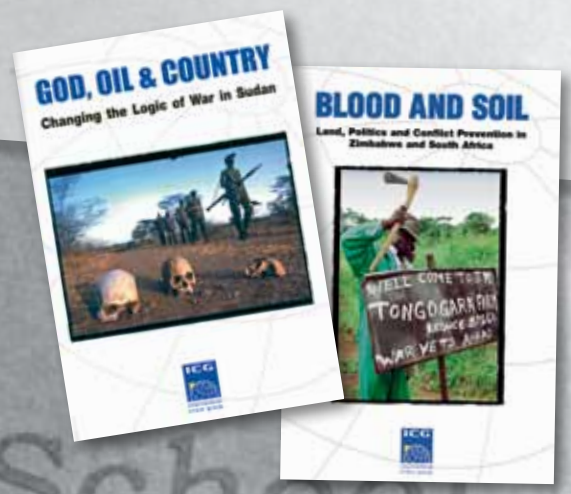
2007 Liaison office opens in Beijing, making Crisis Group one of first foreign policy NGOs to establish presence in China. Crisis Group also scores major success in Pakistan, persuading international community to withdraw support for military.

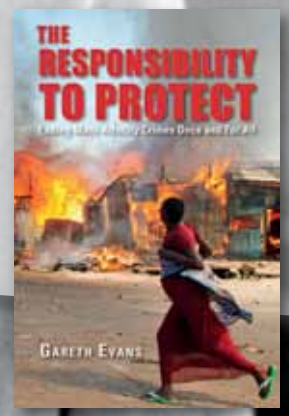
2008 **February** Kosovo declares independence based on plan of former Crisis Group Chairman and later Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ahtisaari, strongly reflecting organisation's recommendations.

Evans announces his intention to stand down as Crisis Group President following a decade of leadership. Crisis Group annual budget reaches $15 million.

2009 **July** Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour assumes presidency of Crisis Group.

November First board meeting in Africa held in Dar es Salaam.





Darfur: Cause and Conundrum

The heated internal debate over Iraq also demonstrated that, by 2003, Crisis Group's influence had become something worth fighting for. The organisation, now with over 90 staff covering some 40 crisis- or conflict-affected parts of the world had in fact become a foreign policy actor in its own right.

That year, Crisis Group also launched a new publication, *CrisisWatch*, a monthly bulletin providing short, sharp updates on conflicts and potential conflicts around the world. It has over the years become one of the organisation's most valued products: top US diplomat Richard Holbrooke, for example, has praised it as, "superbly designed – sheer genius by your team. Nothing I saw in government was as good as this".

2003 also saw the start of a steep rise in the organisation's media footprint. From an already impressive 2,000 annual mentions of Crisis Group in media outlets around the world in 2002, the organisation broke through 5,000 by 2006. In 2002 and 2003, staff and Board members published over 60 commentary articles annually in major newspapers, but by 2007, the number was over the 200 mark. The figures painted a clear picture: the world's media valued Crisis Group's analysis and advice.

But what most defined the organisation in 2003 and the years immediately following was the crisis in Sudan's western region of Darfur. The situation itself was the type of man-made disaster Crisis Group had been created to address, and indeed, when the Sudanese government reacted to insurgency in Darfur by supporting proxy militias who carried out mass violence and atrocities against the civilian population, Crisis Group was the first major international organisation to sound the alarm, in June 2003.

DAVID SNYDER

Darfur refugee in Touloum camp, Eastern Chad, July 2004.

François Grignon in Nairobi, 2000.

FRANÇOIS GRIGNON

The Dangers of Crisis Group's Work

IN AUGUST 2000, I was in Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on a Crisis Group mission. I spent three weeks there and collected a lot of good information for our next report, but much of it was quite sensitive. As I was passing through customs and immigration at the airport on my way out, I was naturally hassled for the usual bribe. When they searched my research papers, however, the guards found something they obviously didn't like. They arrested me and sent me to the Agence Nationale de Renseignement (ANR), the government's dreaded intelligence agency. I was put in a cell with twenty other prisoners. Some of them were snitches planted by the ANR to trick a confession out of me. Luckily, I had been briefed by a Congolese human rights activist beforehand, so I knew enough not to fall for it.

The real inmates were all in detention without trial and represented a mixed bag of President Laurent Kabila's victims: human rights activists from rebel controlled areas, people whose land a member of the establishment was after, and businessmen who had refused to share the proceeds of their work or luck in diamond mining. We all slept on the floor, shared food and clean water. It was my first real taste of Congolese generosity, which I will never forget.

The most desperate case was a Ugandan trader who had come to Kinshasa to collect money from his debtors, and had been jailed just because he was Ugandan at the start of the Second Congo War in 1998. He had already been there for two years with no communication with his family. Levi, our Ugandan colleague at the time managed to let them know he was alive and relatively well. He was later released and safely transferred to Kampala.

My wife immediately alerted the French Embassy in Nairobi, and together with Crisis Group staff, there followed a fairly intensive but discreet mobilisation of support. It was a bit tricky, because at the time, the Minister for Finance would have foreigners abusively arrested for tax fraud or some other false pretence, and then demand hundreds of thousands of dollars in ransom from their companies or families.

The most difficult thing in detention is doing nothing and trying to stop thinking about all the nasty stuff that could happen to you. You need to remain calm, cool headed, and confident that your family and colleagues are doing everything they can to get you out. You also need to try and stay healthy, so that you don't die of diarrhoea or malaria before you are released.

After three days in custody, I was told I'd be released soon. Unfortunately, the head of state security who had the authority to officially release me, was in Lubumbashi with Kabila all week and only returned several days later.

Finally, after a week, I was released. We had a little ceremony with the head of the security services and the French Ambassador, during which we all agreed that all this was a regrettable "malentendu". I spent the Saturday at the French ambassador's residence and flew back on the Sunday, thinking I would never return to this awful country. But less than nine months later I was back, and I am still hooked.

François first joined Crisis Group in 2000 as Central Africa Project Director. He left in 2004 but rejoined in 2006 as Director of the Africa Program.

Darfur quickly became a key focus of work not only in Africa but worldwide: the scale of the destruction demanded reallocating Crisis Group's internal resources and drawing in additional funding to meet new needs in 2004 and 2005, as hundreds of thousands were dying of conflict-related causes and some two and a half million were displaced. Throughout this period, Crisis Group remained the "go-to" group for analysis of the unfolding situation.

Internally, however, the organisation was divided over advocacy strategy. Some thought that getting international action of the type Crisis Group was calling for required public pressure, particularly in the US. The logic was that – given Iraq, Afghanistan and many other perceived national security policy priorities in Washington at the time – the Administration would not pay Darfur much attention without the general public pushing them to do so. A number of staff thus engaged in mass mobilisation efforts in the US of a kind Crisis Group had never done before. Crisis Group joined forces with other organisations, including networks of grass-roots activists, to form a coalition of NGOs aiming to push Darfur up the US political agenda. This effort was successful in that regard – Darfur certainly captured US public attention – but, as other staff would point out, this type of approach had drawbacks as well.

Crisis Group had developed a reputation for serious policy analysis and high-level advocacy that many felt did not sit well with activities designed to generate grass roots mobilisation, important though such efforts can be. Some in the organisation who were conducting extensive on-the-ground research saw their work as undermined by this approach, and felt these popular actions were a distraction to sober discussion in top-level meetings with policymakers. Another problem was simply the direction of the effort: Crisis Group was focusing on changing minds in Washington, but it was never clear that the US alone could change events on the ground in Darfur.

So, divisions developed internally. Some argued Crisis Group was helping to lead a highly visible campaign that was successful in getting the message out to the general public in the US. Others said this was simply not the role the organisation should be playing.

Internal tensions over Crisis Group's identity and priorities were successfully managed, however, as Crisis Group worked with the US-based Center for American Progress in late 2006 to give birth to a new grassroots campaign aiming to prevent genocide and other mass atrocities: the Enough Project. In 2007, Crisis Group and Enough decided it would be more effective for Enough to become an independent operation so that each entity could focus on its strength: Crisis Group on field-based policy analysis and high-level advocacy worldwide; Enough on grassroots efforts in the US.

The stresses of those years put a strain on Crisis Group's Africa program, which went through three directors in as many years. After 2007, however, the program began to enjoy some stability under Director François Grignon, who returned to the organisation after having left to work for the UN in the Democratic Republic of the Congo following his earlier Crisis Group position of Central Africa Project Director in 2004.

Well Beyond the Balkans

By the middle of the decade, the International Crisis Group's Board was under new governance. Chris Patten – former European Commissioner for External Relations and former Governor of Hong Kong – signed on in 2004. Thomas Pickering – former US Ambassador to the UN, Russia, India, Israel, Jordan, El Salvador and Nigeria – joined him as Co-Chair in 2006.

Together, they oversaw an organisation whose priorities were hugely different from what they had been even just five years before. The Africa Program continued to expand, but the later arrivals of the Asia Program and the Middle East Program were now more or less equals in terms of report output. Crisis Group's Europe Program had been moving inevitably in a different direction, however. Peace was taking root in the Balkans, albeit shakily and slowly in some places, and the Europe program had been gradually withdrawing resources from that region as a result.

On the one hand, downscaling in the Balkans was psychologically difficult for an organisation that had come to prominence there. But on the other hand, it was also reassuring to see matters move in a more positive direction, hopefully, at least in part, a validation of Crisis Group's work. It reaffirmed the core mission of conflict resolution, reminding everyone that peace could result when the right policies were instituted and implemented. As Crisis Group formally ended its field presence in Croatia and Macedonia at the end of 2004, national newspapers marked the news with prominent headlines. In both countries, Crisis Group's departure was taken as a favourable sign that the nation was moving ahead and leaving conflict behind.

STEPHEN DE BROYER

Crisis Group Co-Chairs Thomas Pickering and Chris Patten at the Brussels Board meeting, November 2006.

HELEN BREWER

Longest-serving Staffer

How did you come to work at Crisis Group?
I started as an accountant in mid-June 1999, and I am probably the only person who joined completely by accident. I answered an anonymous job advert which didn't even mention the name of the organisation. Not that that would have made much difference to me as I'd never heard of it before then.

What was Crisis Group like in 1999?
We were a tiny office of just seven people working out of a small townhouse in central Brussels. We were only working in the Balkans and Africa at that point. The offices in the Middle East, Asia and Latin America came later.

Six months after I arrived, Gareth Evans came on board, and everything changed. I'd accepted the job expecting to work for a nice quiet NGO and combine it with having a family. But after Gareth started, it was a question of racing to keep up with him.

He was very driven, and he had a very clear idea of what he wanted the organisation to be and how it was to be run. He was involved in all aspects of the work we did. He was a perfectionist, and his drive to improve the quality of everything Crisis Group did pervaded the whole organisation, whether you worked in support or in the field.

What has been the biggest change since you've been here?
The non-stop growth of the organisation over the last ten years has been phenomenal. There's never been a dull moment. It's been an extraordinary organisation to work for and I feel very privileged to have beeen part of it.

JACKSON MAHMBO

Helen Brewer at the Board meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, November 2009.

Why have you stayed so long?
I've never even had the chance to think about leaving! Anyway, where would I go where I could work with such an extraordinary group of people who are dedicated to something so very worthwhile.

Helen, now Vice-President (Finance and Administration), has been with Crisis Group since 1999.

The organisation maintained field staff in Belgrade, Pristina and Sarajevo, and the Kosovo status question in particular remained a central issue of its advocacy. But the program's momentum was quite obviously headed elsewhere as Crisis Group's reporting in Europe was expanding its work into new parts of the continent – in short, "moving eastward". For many years, both Board and staff discussed reporting on the North Caucasus, but apart from one report on Dagestan, in June 2008, Crisis Group has always found itself unable to operate effectively on the ground due to extreme security concerns. By 2003, Crisis Group had set up an office in the South Caucasus just in time to explain the consequences and risks of the Georgian "Rose Revolution" and later the sources of the three unresolved conflicts affecting Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Crisis Group also published a series of reports on Islam in western Europe in 2006–2007, examining a variety of pending policy decisions affecting identity and integration for the expanding Muslim segment of the population in several EU member states. Crisis Group further produced three reports on Moldova from 2003 to 2006, which was helpful in moving forward relations between the central government and the breakaway region of Transdniestria.

Over the coming years, however, Turkey and Cyprus became a major focus of the Europe Program. The long-standing conflict on the divided island between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots weighed heavily over Turkey's talks on accession to the European Union. With Cyprus a member state of the EU as of 2004, and troops from NATO-member Turkey still in the northern half of the island, the inter-relationships were many. Crisis Group's field-based work in Turkey and Cyprus started in March 2007, an opportune moment. In the latter half of the decade, as EU enlargement fatigue increasingly kindled Turkish frustration, a new international peace effort needed all the guidance and support it could muster. Crisis Group hired Hugh Pope, a renowned author and foreign correspondent with 25 years of experience at top international news outlets including many years in Turkey, as the inaugural director of the new Turkey/Cyprus Project.

ANDREW STROEHLEIN

Barricade on the Green Line in Nicosia, Cyprus, separating Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides of the city, June 2003.

Long-term Influence

Elsewhere in the organisation, 2005 brought a number of highlights. Along with Crisis Group's work in Darfur, the Africa Program concentrated on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Northern Uganda – together the "big three" African conflicts, as measured by continuing high war-related death rates. In 2006, in the DR Congo, Crisis Group conducted a major advocacy campaign with the UN and donor governments highlighting the importance of reforming the security sector and helping to draft US legislation for increased financial assistance.

In Somalia, the Group played a central role in causing regional governments to step back from a rushed deployment of a highly controversial peacekeeping force in 2005, which almost certainly would have resulted in an explosive new civil war. In Liberia, Crisis Group's repeated calls for international revenue controls as critical for the post-conflict peace-building transition were largely adopted by the international community and the transitional government. Interestingly, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a former Crisis Group Board member, became President of Liberia at the beginning of 2006.

In Central Asia, Crisis Group played a key role in the Kyrgyzstan government's resistance of pressure from Uzbekistan to forcibly return the hundreds of refugees who had fled the May 2005 massacre in Andijan. The Group's advocacy was critical both in getting strong language into a US Congressional bill conditioning aid to Uzbekistan, and in pushing the EU to impose targeted sanctions on Tashkent.

REUTERS/HO OLD

REUTERS/ KENA BETANCUR

In Nepal, Crisis Group was relentless in generating international opposition to the royal coup and understanding of the country's long conflict with the Maoist insurgents, publishing no fewer than seven reports on Nepal in 2005. In Indonesia, Crisis Group's work on radical Islamism consistently remained required reading for donors, the diplomatic community, and security and intelligence agencies inside and outside the country. In 2006, Crisis Group also produced a landmark report on countering the insurgency in Afghanistan that got significant attention at NATO.

Crisis Group's work in Latin America notched up a notable success at this time as well. In Colombia, the organisation's policy recommendations to the Administration of President Álvaro Uribe were reflected in various policy changes, including some concerning the reintegration of ex-combatants. They were also critical in permitting changes in US law to focus more funds on strengthening democratic institutions, protecting human rights and promoting rural development and law enforcement rather than aerial fumigation of coca cultivation.

After the forced ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004, Crisis Group opened a project in Haiti designed to help the country avoid further civil conflict. Crisis Group reporting was a foundation for Security Council analysis of the UN's new peacekeeping mandate and for donor assessment of security sector reform. With the election of President René Préval in 2006, Crisis Group analysis and recommendations were valued elements in international electoral support and post-election reconstruction strategies.

The period saw several achievements by the Middle East Program but also one disappointment. Crisis Group scored key advocacy successes with Iraq in 2005 and 2006, for example. The organisation's 2005 warning that the rushed and non-inclusive constitutional process could hasten the country's violent breakup without a last-ditch effort to bring Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis together helped spur the US to broker a crucial pre-election compro-

Left: US marine stands guard in war-ravaged Mogadishu, Somalia, 3 April 1993. – Above: Members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) wait in line after surrendering their weapons in Alvarado, Colombia, 7 March 2006.

JOOST HILTERMANN

Kurdistan and Me

ODD THOUGH IT may sound, I feel somehow privileged to have investigated a genocide. It was an honour to be able to help bring to the world's attention the Iraqi regime's use of chemical weapons and mass murder against its own citizens. And, although nothing was further from my mind at the time (1992–1994), this research and resulting publications on the horrors faced by the Kurds – a comprehensive report by Human Rights Watch on the counterinsurgency Anfal campaign and my own book on Iraq's use of gas during the Iran-Iraq war, including in Halabja – have helped me, and Crisis Group, enormously in our post-2003 work.

Past traumas inform the Kurdistan regional government's strategy today – a strategy that puts it in direct, although so far political, confrontation with the federal government in Baghdad. Failure to understand the Kurds' motives and acknowledge their history could only lead to worse problems down the road. In Iraq today, many people would rather forget, remain silent, or even deny and blame the victim. This lays the foundation for renewed conflict.

This is not to say that Kurdish leaders necessarily have taken the wisest course to prevent a return to the horrors of the past. They and Crisis Group have been in open disagreement over their quest to incorporate Kirkuk into their autonomous region. In our view, there is a difference between the legitimate quest for justice by reversing, to the extent possible, past abuses and compensating the victims, and the leadership's territorial designs, which lack a firm historical and legal basis and are vigorously contested by Kirkuk's other ethnic groups. For the sake of forging a peaceful and durable solution to Kirkuk's status, the goal should be to steer all sides away from zero-sum ethnic nationalism and promote diversity and inclusiveness at all levels of society and governance.

Disagreement has not led to a breakdown in relations. On the contrary: by publicly recognising what drives Kurdish leaders, representing their perspective accurately and fairly in our reports, and viewing them as equal partners in the joint Iraqi enterprise to rebuild their country, we have earned their trust. Through continuous engagement, this will hopefully contribute to finding peaceful solutions to the deep and complex issues dividing Iraq's Arabs and Kurds. If it does, it will demonstrate that a human-rights-infused consciousness is a strong organisational basis for efforts to prevent violent conflict.

Joost, Deputy Director of the Middle East & North Africa Program, has been with Crisis Group since 2002.

ANDREW STROEHLEIN

Joost Hiltermann being interviewed in Montenegro, 2005.

mise. In 2006, Crisis Group's back-to-back reports on the Iraqi insurgency and the growing sectarian conflict generated huge international attention and significantly shaped the debate over how to prevent and prepare for civil war. The December report presenting an alternative to the Iraq Study Group's recommendations helped inform the Washington policy discussion on prospects in Iraq.

Concerning Iran, the organisation developed in 2006 a realistic plan for moving the nuclear negotiations forward, encouraging debate on new containment scenarios and receiving considerable attention in the run up to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) decision to refer the issue to the UN Security Council.

PUBLICATION IN MAJOR NEWSPAPERS OF A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT SIGNED BY 135 RESPECTED FORMER GLOBAL LEADERS

But there were mixed results for one 2006 effort regarding Israel/Palestine. In that year, Crisis Group successfully launched a global multi-track advocacy initiative to generate new political momentum for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It received extensive international media coverage following the publication in major newspapers of a statement of support signed by 135 respected former global leaders. Unfortunately, this huge advocacy push moved the parties very little. Perhaps the timing was not right given the political leadership in the key capitals, but then, sadly, no timing seems to bode well for Arab-Israeli peace.

2007 brought a number of achievements. A liaison office was opened in Beijing, enabling Crisis Group to become one of the first foreign policy NGOs to establish a presence in China. Staff on the ground in Beijing have engaged in meaningful dialogue with the foreign policy community, giving Crisis Group unique strength globally in interpreting Chinese policy developments as the nation becomes an increasingly vital international player.

Throughout this period, the organisation enjoyed a central role in helping reshape the international policy debate on Pakistan, especially with immediate public responses to drastic deteriorations at year end, resulting in shifts in US funding policies and in worldwide perceptions of President Pervez Musharraf. It was a long-term effort, to be sure. Led by South Asia Project Director Samina Ahmed, based in Islamabad, Crisis Group had been pointing out the international folly of siding with, and supporting, the military dictator since the early part of the decade. The organisation's reporting also focused attention on militant indoctrination in Pakistani madrasas, as well as the links between Musharraf's military and violent jihadists. By 2007, Musharraf's strongest international supporter, the US, was beginning to withdraw its backing. By 2008, civilian rule had returned to the country, though after nine years of military dominance, the challenges ahead were many.

Key figures in the Bush Administration who were central to US policy toward Pakistan have been very clear about the influence of Crisis Group. Richard Armitage, US Deputy Secretary of State from 2001 to 2005, noted, "During my time as Deputy Secretary I don't think I ever failed to have Crisis Group in whenever they were in Washington because I needed another set of eyes on the target, and they gave it to me. I don't think there's any other group globally that has the global presence – the global reach – that it has. Crisis Group forced me to get out of my usual thought patterns, to get out of my usual comfort zone… listening to a new set of voices and seeing through a new set of eyes".

The year 2007 was also notable for Crisis Group's continuing efforts to try to help break the nuclear policy impasse with Iran, arguing for acceptance of a new and more defensible red line involving "delayed limited enrichment with maximum safeguards" – a position that then largely found acceptance in Europe, though not in the US. In the same month, Crisis Group also rang alarm bells over the immediate danger of renewed war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, shortly after which the UN Security Council convened and urged the parties to refrain from violence.

Crisis Group also chalked up a major success back in its birthplace, the Balkans. In February 2008, Kosovo declared independence, working closely with international partners along the guidelines set out in the plan of former Crisis Group Chairman Martti Ahtisaari. Crisis Group's intense and sustained advocacy of conditional independence for Kosovo had come to fruition, with the organisation's recommendations strongly reflected both in the Ahtisaari Plan and in EU policy.

Transitions

The last two years of the decade were marked by a series of transitions both internally at Crisis Group and externally in the environment in which it works.

The global financial crisis that kicked off in autumn 2008 was a serious shock to the organisation, with all of Crisis Group's key sources of funding hit hard by the market crash and the recession that followed. Governments dependent on tax revenues, foundations working from endowments, private individuals and corporate donors all felt the pinch, and it was clear almost at once that the organisation's budget would have to be trimmed to fall into line with revised projected revenues. In the event, Crisis Group was forced to cut back by about ten per cent, and though this was small in comparison to the belt-tightening at other NGOs, it still affected programs to some extent. A few staff were let go, and some empty posts were left unfilled, with the result that reporting in some programs suffered a dip.

The timing of the crash could hardly have been less fortunate. Earlier in 2008, Crisis Group had launched a capital endowment fund to provide long-term financial stability to the organisation and complement regular income. The original target was to raise $50 million for the Securing the Future fund, and more than $18 million was invested right at the start thanks to extraordinary commitments by George Soros, Frank Giustra, and the MacArthur Foundation. Fortunately, the fund's capital has remained intact and was not eroded by the plummeting market. In fact, by 2010, its value had reached $26 million.

But due to the unprecedented financial climate after autumn 2008 and the unstable outlook for the following years, Crisis Group fundraising efforts had to quickly refocus on maintaining full operational capacity rather than the Securing the Future fund. There is no question this has been a setback, though as the economic situation improves, Crisis Group will again actively seek to find investment in the capital fund.

The global financial crisis also had another, less obvious, effect on Crisis Group, one that expanded its influence in a significant way. The international economic meltdown rapidly accelerated a trend in the world's information environment: the shrinking and collapse of major traditional news media outlets in most parts of the world. With the news-gathering capacity of major newspapers and network TV giants shrinking, particularly abroad, NGOs like Crisis Group were increasingly finding themselves filling the gaps.

SAMINA AHMED

Changing Minds

Samina Ahmed observes elections in Lahore, 2005.

WE OPENED OUR Islamabad and Kabul offices just months after September 11, when all policy in Western capitals, particularly Washington, was dominated by counter-terrorism concerns. Policy toward Pakistan had just undergone a radical shift: while the military regime of Pervez Musharraf had been the subject of US sanctions and almost universal disapproval by its Western allies previously, after that fateful day, the General was perceived as a valuable partner in the fight against violent extremism.

In our advocacy, I repeatedly warned that the military was running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. It was supporting the mullahs and Pakistan-based jihadis operating in and around Afghanistan, even as it claimed to be combating violent extremists. Instead of putting all their eggs in the military's basket, the US and other Western democracies would, we stressed, be far better served by supporting a democratic transition in a country where the vast majority of citizens overwhelmingly supported moderate democratic parties.

This message was initially greeted with disbelief. I was told the mullahs would be the main beneficiaries if free and fair elections were held. Since the military was also the only institution capable of countering these violent forces, why would the US change its policy? The reaction in other Western capitals, particularly London, was no different: Musharraf was everyone's hero.

The first shift came in the US Congress. Our advocacy, based on a series of detailed reports on jihadi madrasas, led to the beginning of a rethink on how best to use US assistance to counter Islamist extremism. The US decision to fund public education was then reflected in the assistance polices of European donors.

Constant engagement with key Congressional committees and with the EU did not, however, translate into a change in perceptions toward the military regime until the insurgency escalated in Afghanistan, with Pakistan-based Afghan extremists and their Pakistani partners targeting Western troops and the Afghan government. Terror attacks and plots in Europe from Pakistan-based jihadis also gradually changed outside attitudes. While our advocacy was taken more seriously at this point, there was still a general reluctance to expand US and European engagement beyond the relationship with the military until 2007, when the Pakistani people took to the streets against the military dictatorship. After the mullahs were routed in the 2008 general elections and the moderate parties swept the polls, one US Congressman told me at a briefing: "It isn't often that I get to sit next to someone who's proved right in their lifetime".

The US policy shift became even more evident in the Obama Administration's support for a partnership with the Pakistani people, rather than chiefly with the military. Congress has now allocated billions of dollars in assistance for democratisation, good governance and development. Crisis Group advocacy for capacity-building of civilian law-enforcement agencies and police is also reflected in US and EU assistance policies. Change wasn't quick, but persistence paid off.

Samina, South Asia Project Director based in Islamabad, has been with Crisis Group since 2001.

Of course, Crisis Group has never aspired to become a news agency, but as old news sources fell away, the organisation has been increasingly seen as a primary source of information, and it has been evolving to meet the reality of the new information landscape. While maintaining its strong profile in the remaining international sections and commentary pages of traditional media, Crisis Group expanded its online operations significantly, adding interactive presentations, blogs and podcasts. By the end of the decade, over 130,000 people were subscribed to Crisis Group's email newsletters, and the website was enjoying some 200,000 visitors every month, with the organisation's growing use of social networking tools like Facebook and Twitter playing a leading role in attracting them.

But without question, the most important transition for Crisis Group at this time was the change at the top: Gareth Evans leaving as President and Louise Arbour coming in. Though the Board only started the formal selection process for the new President in late 2008, with Arbour selected a few months later, the organisation had been preparing for the handover since January 2008 – that is, a full year and a half before Arbour assumed the role in July 2009.

A gradual approach was necessary in part because Evans had become such an integral part of the machinery at all levels of Crisis Group that if he had tried to disentangle himself too quickly, it would have put unmanageable strains on nearly every section of the establishment. Evans's attention to detail in policy creation and organisational development were on a scale that few could ever imagine – apart from those who have worked with him. "Workaholic" and "micro-manager" are descriptions that seem invented for him, and indeed it was clearly thanks to his unstoppable dedication and near super-human physical and intellectual stamina that Crisis Group developed in ten years from an organisation covering two project areas with a $2 million budget, to a global policy player with five multi-project programs on a budget of $15 million.

EVANS HAD BECOME SUCH AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MACHINERY OF CRISIS GROUP THAT IF HE HAD TRIED TO DISENTANGLE HIMSELF TOO QUICKLY, IT WOULD HAVE CAUSED UNIMAGINABLE STRAINS...

Realising that his 16-hour-a-day, 7-days-a-week lifestyle might not suit whomever would become the next leader of Crisis Group, Evans took steps to slowly remove himself from some of the more detailed aspects of day-to-day running of the organisation. Two deputy presidents were appointed, one for policy and one for operations, and they gradually took on more and more responsibility, all in preparation for a new leader who would eventually come on board.

This is not to say that Evans was in anyway slowing his frenetic pace. As he released some of the reins at Crisis Group, he dug deeply into new projects. One was a book on the Responsibility to Protect, the international principle that he had helped to develop early in the decade and which was in many ways a guiding standard for Crisis Group throughout his tenure. It declares that sovereign states retain the primary responsibility to protect their own people from mass violence and atrocity crimes, and when a state fails to meet that responsibility (either through incapacity or ill-will), then that responsibility shifts to the international community – and the international community can exercise this responsibility by a graduated series of measures which could ultimately include, if it is absolutely necessary, military force.

Evans had been a driving force behind this idea throughout the decade, first as Co-Chair of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001) and then a member of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004). It was an idea that was not easy to get across after the debacle of the Iraq invasion and occupation, being attacked as "interventionist" and much else, but Evans persevered, arguing again and again in speech after speech and commentary after commentary that state sovereignty was not a licence for mass murder. When the Responsibility to Protect principle, or "R2P", was unanimously adopted by heads of state and government at the UN World Summit in September 2005, it was in large part due to Gareth Evans's tireless efforts. That drive continued with his 2008 book, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All*.

Evans was becoming in part a victim of his own, and the organisation's, success, with more requests for media interviews, speaking engagements and other commitments than he could possibly accept. Though he had to decline in many instances, he could hardly pass up certain opportunities, like working on top-level panels that were setting the agenda for international relations. In addition to his R2P work, Evans was also involved in a formidable number of other top-level teams: the Blix Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction (2006), the Zedillo Commission of Eminent Persons on the Role of the IAEA to 2020 and Beyond (2008), and the UN Secretary-

REUTERS/NIR ELIAS

North Korean soldier stands guard at army installation on the bank of Yalu River at the border with China, 20 October 2006.

FRANK GIUSTRA

Investor in Peace

How and why did you get involved with Crisis Group?
I first became involved in 2005 after I met Crisis Group's then President Gareth Evans at the Clinton Global Initiative. I was immediately impressed by his incredible energy and experience and shortly after had the opportunity to attend their next Board meeting in Kiev. I wasn't disappointed. After meeting their distinguished Board and staff, it was very clear that Crisis Group had found both the right individuals and methodology to transform what it sees on the ground into actionable advice. It is able to influence decision-makers who matter. And to me, that is a winning combination.

Where do you see Crisis Group in your philanthropic plan?
My foundation, the Radcliffe Foundation, was built on the premise of enhancing understanding and empowering people. It focuses on areas including economic development, health, education and disaster relief. I consider that investing in conflict prevention pays dividends. Peace is a foundation on which to build prosperity. Without it, it would be nearly impossible to accomplish all of the other things I'd like to in terms of education, health and sustainable growth. It's with this in mind that I give so much time and support to Crisis Group.

You've done a tremendous amount to help raise Crisis Group's profile within the business community. What do you say to others when describing the organisation?
Doing business around the world, we've all seen how vital security and stability are. We also know how important it is to get the right people in place, asking the right questions and setting out strategy. Crisis Group is unique and fills an important niche. It has zeroed in on its mission and stuck with it. And it pulls together some of the brightest and most engaging minds from around the world to tackle some of the most complex issues of our time. In involving yourself with the organisation, you are supporting these efforts and at the same time you're going to learn and benefit greatly from the people you will meet in the process.

You've now been involved with Crisis Group for almost five years. Where do you think Crisis Group will be in the next five years?
Unfortunately, there is still no shortage of work for Crisis Group. I believe it will continue to act as a global voice and authority, and I see it continuing to go from strength to strength. I have no doubt that Crisis Group will only enhance its global scope, depth and impact in the years ahead.

Frank Giustra is a member of the Executive Committee of Crisis Group's Board, and President and Chief Executive Officer of Fiore Financial.

General's Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention. In June 2008, he was appointed to co-chair (with former Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi) the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, an issue long dear to his heart, whose report, *Eliminating Nuclear Threats: A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers*, was published in December 2009.

And though slowly disengaging from some aspects of Crisis Group's work, Evans still put in far more than his fair share of hours as the organisation's president – attending fundraising events, engaging in policy debates, delivering keynote speeches and travelling for advocacy meetings.

Inevitably, however, as he gradually pulled back from some aspects of the daily routine, a few difficult organisational issues began to emerge. In many ways, these were management matters familiar to any group going through its teenage years and losing a father figure: staff turnover increased, salaries slipped in comparison with international standards, and tensions were increasing between "field" and "advocacy" staff over priorities and policy recommendations. These strains remained for the most part invisible from the outside: Crisis Group's output of reports remained steady, both in terms of quantity and quality, maintaining the organisation's high reputation for field-based analysis and policy recommendations.

There were areas in 2008 where Crisis Group reporting and advocacy acted as early warning. The Group predicted that a war was virtually imminent between Georgia and Russia two months before the outbreak of fighting. Twelve days after it began, Crisis Group published a comprehensive analysis including how the war would affect US/EU-Russian relations, EU conflict response and NATO enlargement.

After a field mission later in 2008 to Ukraine and Crimea, however, it concluded that the common perception that Russia would next incite violence there was off target.

MELISSA HAW

Louise Arbour and Gareth Evans in discussion at Crisis Group Board meeting in Paris 2008.

JONATHAN ALPEYRIE

Russian troops move south into Georgian territory, August 2008.

Crisis Group played a critical role in shifting the international debate on Burma/Myanmar after Cyclone Nargis in 2008, successfully urging modification or reversal of counterproductive aid and trade policies. The organisation's on-the-ground coverage of Zimbabwe's post-election crisis offered practical options and a steady flow of information to key actors, much of which was taken on board. Crisis Group's detailed analysis of coca production in the Andean region and counter-drug policies in the US and Europe fed into a new US-Colombian integrated strategy. And the organisation's guidance to policymakers on the Kirkuk issue in Iraq helped influence the UN mission there to adopt it as its top priority. The July 2008 report on Afghanistan, *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words?*, which provided insight from the ground into how the Taliban sought to project itself, was widely praised as one of the best open source primers on the diverse movement.

Louise Arbour Takes the Helm

There could be no finer testament to the reputation the International Crisis Group had built up over the years than the fact that the organisation could attract talent on the level of Louise Arbour to take over as President. Arbour came with decades of practical experience in international affairs, having held many high-profile posts in her distinguished career.

From 2004 to 2008, she served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the highest office mandated by the international community to promote and protect human rights. During her tenure, she expanded considerably the resources of her office and focused her efforts on developing the Office's field operations, travelling extensively in support of local efforts to improve human rights protection. Before this, she had been a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. From 1996 to 1999, she served as the Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. In these roles, she drove a significant expansion of both Tribunals' activities. Using secret indictments for the first time, she broke the logjam that had prevented arrests of indictees by NATO in Bosnia and led the Tribunal to issue the first ever war crimes indictment by an international court of a serving head of state, President Slobodan Milošević. In Rwanda, dozens were located and arrested in a single operation in Nairobi, and the Court in Arusha sprung into action.

AFP/SEYLLOU

Guinean soldiers on patrol as the military junta continued to crackdown on opposition, days after more than 160 demonstrators were massacred, Conakry, 2 October 2009.

ALAIN DÉLÉTROZ

European Influence

What is advocacy?
The principal pillar of our advocacy is the analysis coming from the field in the form of reports. But reports are usually used by mid-level officials. If we want policies to be implemented then we have to have discussions with high level officials such as foreign ministers to influence their policy decisions.

There are three basic elements to advocacy meetings. First, the quality of our reports and the precision of our recommendations. Second, the way we present ourselves when going into meetings. We have to show that our colleagues on the ground know exactly what is going on and that we, here, speak the "EU language" and know what the EU and member states are debating and could realistically be asked to do on a particular issue. Third, the politicians need to be reminded, particularly when they don't want to act, that we have a lot of resonance in the media.

What makes EU advocacy different?
Doing advocacy in the EU is more complicated because every EU member state has its distinct foreign policy and own interests. To be efficient, one has to discuss our reports with the Commission, the Secretariat of the Council, the European Parliament, but also with the rotating presidency and with the member states that are engaged on a particular issue and ready to put their political weight in the balance. So in order to get a decision in Brussels, we have to deal with a highly complex political system, that requires also convincing directly some of the member states, in their own capital city, and often through their media. We have to understand what is going on in all major capitals in order to make our voice heard.

Why do you keep doing it?
Because I see that we are able sometimes to trigger action and, at the end of the day, save lives on the ground, in situations when the political system in Europe would have liked to look in another direction. But in this job, one could be disheartened so often, when you see the lack of will to act from our governments when they could make a difference. Politics, after all, is about real interests, and preventing local conflicts, in spite of all the public declarations of our politicians, is often far below on their real ladder of priorities.

What is an example of successful advocacy?
There have been times when we have contributed to pushing the EU into sending military and civilian missions that have helped prevent killings. Member states were divided on independence for Kosovo and hence about the EULEX mission they had to send there. But we advocated in favor of that mission at the level of heads of governments. And even the five EU member states that do not recognise Kosovo independence finally agreed to send the EU mission to that new country.

Alain, Vice President (Europe), has been with Crisis Group since 2001.

Vice President (Europe) Alain Délétroz (left) meets with Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu,12 March 2010.

LAWRENCE SHEETS

Toughest First Day on the Job

I was due to start with Crisis Group on 9 August 2008. But no sooner did I step off my flight to Tbilisi on 7 August than serious fighting broke out in South Ossetia, and Russian tanks were heading towards Georgia. My first day on the job was supposed to be just learning the ropes around the office and getting through a bit of paperwork. Instead, I was covering a major war.

As a journalist, I had already reported on many conflicts, from the Caucasus and in Afghanistan, but even with that experience, I felt lucky to have my colleagues Medea Turashvili, Dato Chochia and our Azerbaijan analyst, Tabib Huseynov, with me. Together with colleagues in Brussels, Washington and New York, we conducted almost non-stop research and interviews over two weeks to produce a 30-odd page report in the middle of the developing conflict.

After that initial mad rush, I roamed the country trying to get access to areas which had not received much attention by international news coverage and policy makers. The most important of these was the Russian-controlled "buffer zone" manned by Russian Federation troops outside South Ossetia, but still within Georgia "proper". The Russians had consistently denied access to UN agencies, journalists, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organisations.

In September, I managed to gain access to the zone, somewhat by chance. I was driving, and my passenger was a female guest from another country whom the Russian soldiers found intriguing. We had also picked up a local villager who lived in the buffer zone. It was early evening and shortly before the post closed. The soldiers were in a fairly good mood and, given my command of the Russian language, the odd set of passengers I had with me, the beat-up nature of the car we were driving, and the time of our visit, they probably thought we couldn't be anybody important.

We drove the entire 20-kilometre length of the buffer zone and witnessed considerable destruction. We saw that most people had fled, and that Russian troops were making no effort to control the area. Instead, villagers told us about daily incursions of militia groups from South Ossetia and Chechnya who engaged in looting, killings, and general mayhem.

We got this information out to selected media outlets and via Crisis Group's normal advocacy channels. As a result, I believe we were able to put pressure on the Russian authorities to pull out of the zone and allow EU observers to begin patrols there. This was an important step in restoring some kind of calm to the area.

Lawrence, Caucasus Project Director, has been with Crisis Group since August 2008.

Her depth and breadth of professional experience were almost immediately put to the test at Crisis Group in several complex and high-profile crises. Congo, Somalia and Sudan continued to demand major attention in Africa in the second half of 2009. Guinea quickly joined them as a deeply troubling hot spot, after the security forces of the military junta massacred at least 160 participants in a peaceful demonstration in Conakry on 28 September.

It was not unexpected, however. As readers of Crisis Group's March 2009 report, *Guinea: The Transition Has Only Just Begun*, knew, the military junta that took control of the country after President Lansana Conté's death in December 2008 had tightened its grip on power, risking a violent showdown with the opposition. And the six reports on Guinea and its leadership succession dilemma that Crisis Group published in the three years prior to Conté's demise had reinforced that message: trouble was clearly brewing.

After the 28 September massacre, Arbour led Crisis Group in an all-out advocacy campaign to force the junta to move the country to democracy. Springing into action, West Africa Project staff produced the briefing *Guinea: Military Rule Must End* on 16 October 2009. In short order, Arbour met with leading figures, such as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnny Carson, and briefed the 27 ambassadors of the European Union's Political and Security Committee to drive home the message.

The Communications Unit worked with the international media to get them covering the story – not exactly an easy task, particularly with Anglophone outlets. Staff published numerous commentary articles in leading international newspapers, including Arbour's own pieces in the *International Herald Tribune* and *Le Monde* highlighting the danger of Guinea's instability and the risks it posed to West Africa. A new web page pulled all the organisation's material on Guinea together in one place and highlighted the next steps the international community needed to take.

YEMEN FOREIGN MINISTRY

Crisis Group President Louise Arbour in conversation with Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr al Qirbi, Sanaa, Yemen, 14 March 2010.

Business as Usual

Of course, Crisis Group in Louise Arbour's first six months was involved in many other situations as well. Most, like Guinea, were places where the organisation had been making an impact for years. The transition at the top in no way interrupted vital work, and 2009 brought successes that stretched across the two presidents' terms.

Just in Africa alone, the examples were numerous. In DR Congo, Crisis Group played an important role in encouraging the UN to shift away from its one-dimensional military policies in the Kivus. One result was a new emphasis on attaching conditions to UN support for the Congolese government's operations against Rwandan rebels. In Sudan, the organisation took an early lead in warning that the failure to ensure free and fair elections in 2010 or to plan for the likely secession by South Sudan in 2011 could result in the country's implosion. Crisis Group reporting on Zimbabwe, along with an advocacy campaign, helped move the international community away from a "wait-and-see" attitude toward cautious but vital support for the fledgling unity government as the country struggled toward democratic transformation. In Somalia, the organisation highlighted the need to change the international public debate from a one-dimensional concern over piracy off the coast to an approach addressing the roots of violent instability on land. Sadly, the state is as failed as ever. The Africa Program also branched out, developing its research capacity in Cameroon and Madagascar, and starting a new blog dealing with peace-building issues across the continent.

Asia in 2009 was dominated by Sri Lanka, where Crisis Group worked intensively to sustain international attention on the ongoing humanitarian crisis both before and after the civil war's bloody close in May. The Group's full-scale advocacy and media campaign highlighted the Government of Sri Lanka's failure to meet its legal obligations and political assurances regarding the treatment of hundreds of thousands of Tamil civilians first caught in the war zone and then arbitrarily detained in internment camps. It played a decisive role in getting strong language into subsequent policy at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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Recognising that government reform, strengthening the rule of law and providing public goods are necessary to sap support for the Taliban insurgency, the Obama Administration has adopted many of Crisis Group's long-standing recommendations on Afghanistan. Crisis Group's report on Afghanistan's flawed presidential election in 2009 led to international assistance for forthcoming parliamentary elections contingent on tangible electoral reform. But, in the face of growing enthusiasm for reconciliation, Crisis Group continues to warn that striking deals with the Taliban's leadership or trying to buy off its fighters will not work.

REUTERS

In Pakistan, Crisis Group's repeated calls for rapid humanitarian assistance to prevent radical groups from exploiting the country's ongoing instability were largely adopted by the international community. This capped a gradual policy shift in large part reflecting the organisation's years of reporting and advocacy efforts. Advocacy related to Pakistan's crisis of internally displaced persons in 2009 spurred the US to take the rare step of providing cash-based assistance to the displaced. Legislation bankrolling a long-term multi-billion aid package also reflected Crisis Group influence, including establishing minimum levels of assistance to train civilian police and prosecutors, and conditions on military aid.

Also in Asia, Crisis Group produced a number of reports looking at Chinese foreign policy in several areas, including energy and peacekeeping. Meanwhile, the organisation's Beijing staff have had excellent access to foreign ministry officials in their advocacy meetings.

Europe saw greater emphasis placed on Turkey, particularly as the peace process with Armenia made headway. The program repeatedly returned to the nexus of issues surrounding Turkey, the EU and Cyprus – the subject of Crisis Group's first-ever blog, starting in February 2009. In Bosnia, the Group continued to analyse the evolving role of the Office of the High Representative in assisting the country to transform into a self-sufficient functioning democracy.

In Latin America, the organisation played a part in ensuring the Colombian government made public its new controversial defence agreement with the US, thus helping to reduce tensions with Venezuela. Widespread violence and institutional instability in Guatemala prompted Crisis Group to start covering that country.

In Haiti, Crisis Group reporting in 2009 focused on factors underlying instability and conflict, including environmental exploitation and the absence of planning for natural disasters. These vulnerabilities were underlined by the tragic

A Sri Lankan policeman stands guard in front of displaced Tamils civilians at a camp in Vavuniya during the final days of the decades-long civil war, 4 April 2009.

Steadfast Supporters

Crisis Group has benefited immensely from a wide range of donors over the years, which today include 21 governments, 13 foundations, and a growing number of private individuals and companies. Concerning the private sector in particular, in 2002, Crisis Group created the Crisis Group Council, which has evolved into the twin arms of the President's Council and the International Advisory Council. Over the years, the Council has grown from a handful of enthusiastic individuals to approximately 50 members today, composed of both individual and corporate supporters.

It is a relationship that has proved mutually beneficial for Crisis Group and supporters alike. As leaders in their fields, Crisis Group Council members not only provide vital financial support for the organisation but also important insight into areas in which we work, and play a key role in helping Crisis Group expand its reach.

Many members are world leaders in business and philanthropy who are drawn to us because they understand that peaceful, stable countries make the best places to do business in the long term. They acknowledge that our in-depth, from-the-ground political analysis usefully complements their in-house expertise.

Members are invited to become closely involved with our work. They attend Crisis Group's biannual Board meetings, are frequently briefed by analysts and join in with "Crisis Calls" on particular themes. They have hosted policy discussions on issues from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe and have undertaken study trips to Nepal and Kenya to better familiarise themselves with Crisis Group's field activities. A number of members joined former Crisis Group President Gareth Evans and Co-Chair Thomas Pickering at the UN Policy Day, while others regularly attend meetings at the UN.

Crisis Group President Louise Arbour acknowledges the substantial debt Crisis Group owes to its most dedicated supporters. In the coming years, we look forward to the ongoing and generous support of our key government and foundation supporters. We also plan to expand the Council further, a move that is sure to benefit both Crisis Group and Council members.

ALEX KAMWERU

Members of the Crisis Group Council visit Kibera Girls Soccer Academy in Nairobi's largest slum, Kibera, the site of much post-election violence in 2007, November 2009.

earthquake of January 2010. As a result of this reporting, the UN, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and major donors have asked Crisis Group to advise on reconstruction principles and priorities in Haiti.

The Middle East & North Africa Program started the year addressing the war in Gaza, producing – as with the Guinea crisis – a quick yet considered analysis: *Ending the War in Gaza*, which was published on 5 January 2009, just two weeks after the start of major hostilities. In Iraq, Crisis Group's warning of the escalating Arab-Kurdish struggle in the north over territory and oil contributed to a new focus by the international community on the conflict between the federal government and the Kurdish regional government. Over the course of the year, Crisis Group also expanded its coverage of Yemen.

Arbour presented these Crisis Group successes and developments, as well as many others, at the organisation's very first Board meeting in Africa – in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in November 2009. The meeting was hugely symbolic for Crisis Group, and not just because of the location. With Gareth Evans having moved on to the Board and taking his place with other Board members around the table as Arbour delivered her President's Report, the transition at the top had very visibly been completed.

As she carefully described the organisation's work since the last Board meeting in the spring, what must have struck many in the room – including those who had been with Crisis Group for years, notably Mort Abramowitz, who was there at the beginning – was how smoothly the transition had gone. There may have been a change of leadership, and perhaps even a change in management style, but the underlying philosophy behind the organisation was continuing unabated. Crisis Group looks to the future with renewed energy and strength, proud of its 15 years of challenges and accomplishments.

Crisis Group's Enduring Strengths

LORD (CHRISTOPHER) PATTEN, CO-CHAIR

ONE OF CRISIS GROUP'S greatest strengths has been to persevere with policy lines even when they do not meet with immediate success. The organisation can play a long game when it has to, and it does so with considerable patience and skill. Sometimes getting a policy changed means first gradually turning the tide of international opinion. Crisis Group has managed this over the years on places like Pakistan, and the organisation continues to maintain a balanced and sensible approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict – where balance and sense are so often in short supply.

As the EU now enters a new phase in its external relations with the creation of new top-level foreign policy posts and a new diplomatic service, the resulting upheavals in the policymaking structures and personnel changes have the potential to end up in temporary distraction if not long-term dysfunction. Through these challenges, Crisis Group has been helping to push the EU to take on responsibility for crisis response and conflict management befitting the Union's immense financial engagement worldwide. This may be another long-term advocacy effort in which Crisis Group's perseverance will be necessary.

THOMAS R. PICKERING, CO-CHAIR

WHAT ALWAYS IMPRESSES me when I travel the world is the reputation that Crisis Group has managed to build up, and maintain, year after year and report after report. The people I meet with – whether politicians, diplomats, soldiers or journalists – are not only familiar with Crisis Group and its work, but they stop and take notice of what we have to say.

The organisation's reputation for accuracy and prescience holds true at all the different levels of Crisis Group. The analysts on the ground who are collecting the raw information are able to gain access to virtually all the people with whom they need to speak. Similarly, in capitals around the world, we have staff able to get the meetings they need to talk to policymakers at the highest levels in order to deliver our messages. Crisis Group doesn't necessarily make friends everywhere, but it does command the kind of respect that opens doors. That is the first step to getting the policy right, and that is something of which we can all be very proud.

Visitors admire Sarajevo's rebuilt National Library, nearly a decade after the end of the war which destroyed it, February 2004. REUTERS/DANILO KRSTANOVIC

International Crisis Group
WORKING TO PREVENT CONFLICT WORLDWIDE

"Crisis Group has been an excellent source of advice and inspiration to me, to the MDC and to all democratic forces in Zimbabwe and outside as we have faced enormous troubles and a difficult transition period over the last decade. The recommendations Crisis Group has made are based on the ground realities here in Zimbabwe, and that comes from having sharp, experienced analysts who understand the nature of the crisis, the nuances and have access to all key political actors. Often-times Crisis Group is able to say what many here are too afraid to say. That in itself breaks political logjams and helps move the transition process forward."
Morgan Tsvangirai, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, March 2010

"Crisis Group is a leader in promoting peaceful resolution to conflict by reframing policy debates through strong analysis and innovative recommendations. I fully support the work of Crisis Group and applaud its contributions to global peace and security."
Carl Bildt, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, January 2010

"There is no substitute for personal diplomacy which is a hallmark of the Crisis Group. You offer vision, especially in places that need it most, like the troubled Middle East. You are unafraid to dream and unafraid of speaking hard truths while still taking a measured approach toward inclusive security."
George H W Bush, former US President, October 2009

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Crisis Group also operates out of over 26 different locations in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America

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