

THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE POST COLD WAR ERA

V10-PDF14960 | 2016-01-04 | 46 Pages | Size 1,720 KB

*The United Nations faced unprecedented opportunities and heightened expectations when the Cold War ended in 1998-90. But by the time of its fiftieth anniversary in 1995, the mood had shifted. Peacekeepers were bogged down in Bosnia and Somalia. Iraq continued to test the UNs resolve to enforce arms control inspections. In much of the world, the gap between the haves and the have-nots was increasing. The Earth Summit failed to halt environmental degradation. A new financial crisis loomed with the United States first among those owing money to the UN. Everyone agreed that reform was needed, yet the political will to effect change was absent. In this second edition of their popular book, *The United Nations in the Post-Cold War Era*, Karen Mingst and Margaret Karns have undertaken major revisions along with thorough updating. A new opening chapter provides an overview of the UNs evolving role in world politics, along with introducing three core dilemmas -- the tensions between sovereignty and its erosion, between demands for global governance and the weakness of UN institutions, and between the need for leadership and the diffusion of power. The authors explore these dilemmas in the context of the UNs experience in maintaining peace, promoting stability, environmental sustainability, and human rights. Mingst and Karns retain two distinctive features of the books first edition: the consideration of various actors roles in the UN system, from major powers to small states, coalitions, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and a series of case studies probing the politics and processes of UN action. These include the women in development agenda, the campaign against apartheid, indigenous peoples, the Iraqi arms inspection regime, the convention banning land mines, and UN operations in Vietnam.*

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