



A BRIEF REFLECTION ON PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL IN THE UN CHARTER

The role of the Secretary General has always been key to achieving the purposes of the organization. The UN Charter outlines functions and prerogatives that have often evolved in the practice of the organization throughout the decades. Although not expressly mentioned by the UN Charter, Secretary-General's good offices and preventive diplomacy action have represented one of the main instruments of the Secretary General to mediate or prevent conflicts between member states. In the history of the Organization, this practice has been consolidated in the early decades, and evolved through time, providing in certain cases an effective and efficient solution to potential disputes, such as in the case of Bahrain, briefly analyzed in this paper. However, the practice has never been expressly "codified" by the UN Charter. More recent times have witnessed a decrease in the potential effectiveness of the Secretary General's role to mediate conflicts and to pursue preventive diplomacy efficiently. This has often been the case due to the unclear relation that the Charter attributes to the Secretary General and the Security Council when it comes to the exercise of good offices. This paper intends to provide a brief, non-exhaustive, though critical reflection on the historical evolution and an analysis of the legal framework of the Secretary General's good offices. It also intends to shed light on the relation between the good offices and preventive diplomacy, the relation between the Secretary General and the Security Council and the problems connected to a non-reformed UN architecture in the current international scenario.