

# *The United Nations Secretariat during the Terms of Kurt Waldheim*

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**Abstract:** *The United Nations Secretary-General is one of the most important figures on the international scene, as he is the main administrator of the biggest organization whose purpose is to preserve international peace and security. Given the importance of the United Nations, the Secretary-General holds an important role in offering a direction of the organization, a direction which can differ from one Secretary to another. The Secretary's view over the UN has an influence over the Secretariat as well, the body being shaped in accordance with the administrator's view.*

*During the Cold War, especially, this position was very challenging as the Secretary had to both follow his prerogatives as they were stated in the UN Charter and given by the UN bodies but to also juggle the interests of the two superpowers. In this context, he needed to have a smart approach to the international crises and make the UN relevant in the challenges of international order.*

*The present paper's purpose is to analyse the Secretariat of the UN and the role of the Secretary-General in handling the international crises of the Cold War, with a case study on the term of Kurt Waldheim, who was the head of the UN from 1972 to 1981. The focus will be placed on the way the UN body is working, how each Secretary until Waldheim had an influence over the shape of the Secretariat, what was the life of Kurt Waldheim, how he was named the head of the UN, and what were the main actions taken by him during his terms.*

**Keywords:** *The United Nations, UN Secretary-General, UN Secretariat, Kurt Waldheim.*

**Rezumat:** Secretarul General al ONU este una dintre cele mai importante figuri de pe scena internațională, fiind administrator celei mai mari organizații, al cărei scop este de a menține pacea și securitatea

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internațională. Având în vedere importanța Organizației Națiunilor Unite, Secretarul General are un rol important în oferirea unei direcții organizației, o direcție care poate diferi de la un Secretar la altul. Punctul de vedere al Secretarului asupra ONU are, de asemenea, o influență asupra Secretariatului, organismul fiind modelat în conformitate cu punctul de vedere al administratorului său.

În timpul Războiului Rece, această poziție a fost una foarte dificilă, deoarece Secretarul a trebuit să-și urmeze prerogativele, așa cum au fost enunțate în Carta ONU și date de organisme ONU, dar și să jongleze cu interesele celor două superputeri. În acest context, el a trebuit să aibă o abordare inteligentă asupra crizelor internaționale și să facă ONU relevantă în provocările adresate ordinii internaționale. Scopul articolului de față este de a analiza Secretariatul ONU și rolul Secretarului General în gestionarea crizelor internaționale ale Războiului Rece, cu un studiu de caz pe mandatul lui Kurt Waldheim, care a fost administratorul ONU din 1972 până în 1981. Accentul va fi pus pe modul în care funcționează organismul ONU, modul în care fiecare secretar până la Waldheim a avut o influență asupra formei secretariatului, care a fost viața lui Kurt Waldheim, cum a fost numit șeful ONU și care au fost principalele acțiuni întreprinse de el în timpul celor două mandate.

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Organizația Națiunilor Unite, Secretarul-General al ONU, Secretariatul ONU, Kurt Waldheim*

## Introduction

Secretary-General of the United Nations is considered the highest position a career diplomat can aspire to achieve during his lifetime. It is a crucial function that compresses several responsibilities, such as those of “diplomat, lawyer, civil servant, and chief executive”.<sup>1</sup>

It was considered, in time, one of the most challenging jobs in the world but also a rewarding one because it offers the holder a critical tribune to speak on the issues affecting humanity and even to contribute to decisions in the direction of solving them.

Since the establishment of the U.N., the Secretary-General has been seen - according to the provision of its Charter - as its primary administrative head who, through his leadership, should give direction to the international organization. Despite the inscribed leadership of the Secretary-General, the beginning of the Cold War affected the provision. Thus, he became obsolete, and the U.N. was used by the superpowers, the United States, and the Soviet Union, for their interest. In this context, all the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/the-role-of-the-secretary-general> (accessed 12 July 2022).

Secretary-General could do was to take a passive stance on international issues. In this respect, in the early years of its establishment, the organization came to be in control of the Western powers, the most notorious example being the Western intervention in the Korean War following a set of U.N. resolutions.

Despite these events, the U.N. Secretaries-General sought to seize the prerogatives of the UN Charter to expand their portfolio. The leadership of Trygve Lie (1945-1953), U Thant (1961-1971), and, above all, Dag Hammarskjöld (1953-1961) made the Secretary-General an essential actor on the international scene. If under the mandate of the former, the Secretariat developed from an administrative point of view, the U.N. peacekeeping mechanisms were laid under the latter's mandate, which allowed the organization to intervene in conflicts between states to protect world peace. U Thant's mandate was a continuation of Hammarskjöld, who took over his predecessor's portfolios on the go and directed the organization's attention to economic and social issues when the international context did not allow it.

The end of U Thant's mandate and his refusal to continue leading the organization led to a race to take over the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations, eventually with two possible elections, that of Finnish Max Jakobson or Austrian Kurt Waldheim. Both diplomats were exponents of the two neutral stances during the Cold War, the so-called Finlandization represented by Jakobson, and Austrian neutrality represented by Waldheim. In the end, after an important period of campaigns on both sides, the second was proposed by the Security Council for office. The General Assembly confirmed it in December 1970.

Kurt Waldheim's arrival at the U.N. took place at a time of relative quietness between superpowers, that of the *Détente* between the two blocs when the economic, technological, and functionalist lines were accommodated for each benefit. However, the crises of the 1970s put on the international agenda the importance of the U.N., and Kurt Waldheim's mandates witnessed several important events, such as the Yom Kippur War, the end of the Vietnam War, and the 1970's economic crisis, the beginning of the Lebanese crisis. In this tense context, Kurt Waldheim's leadership sought to fulfill the mandates offered by the Security Council and to take an independent position to impose its vision on resolving crises.

This article aims to examine the UN Secretariat-General and, in particular, Kurt Waldheim's two terms as Secretary-General. In this respect, in the first part, we will analyze the prerogatives of this function under the UN Charter and review the evolution of the body before Waldheim's mandate. In the second part, we will present Waldheim's life, including that of his Nazi past, and we will look at how he got to the head of the U.N.

through a combination of memoir analysis and fact check. Subsequently, we will touch upon his main achievements of his mandates. Finally, the main conclusions reached by the article and future possibilities for analysis of the subject will be presented.

### 1. The long road to efficiency: the position of Secretary-General from the UN Charter to active actions

The Secretariat-General of the United Nations is the sixth principal body responsible for bureaucratic and administrative matters relating to the functioning of the international organization.<sup>2</sup>

According to the UN Charter, the duties and functions to be performed by the Secretariat are contained in Chapter XV, Articles 97 to 101.<sup>3</sup> Thus, under Rule 97, the Secretariat is composed of the Secretary-General and the members of his team that the structure would need. The Security Council recommends the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, and the General Assembly will vote for his inauguration. Moreover, the same article states that the Secretary-General is the 'administrative head of the organization'.

Article 98 provides for the duties of the Secretary-General, namely, to exercise this function in other U.N. bodies such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. A special duty of the Secretary is to submit a general report on the organisation's work at the end of each year. A final report was presented by the current Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, at the 76th U.N. General Assembly.<sup>4</sup>

Article 99 is of particular importance to the functioning of the U.N. as an international actor because it empowers the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Security Council any issue that could affect international peace and security. As has been demonstrated over time, this article was invoked by the U.N. Secretary-General during the Cold War to force superpowers to discuss crises that could affect global stability.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the article was of particular importance for the peacekeeping mechanism.<sup>6</sup> If we are to follow the theory of constructivism, this article

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<sup>2</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations. Volume 1: United Nations*, The Gale Group, 2004, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>4</sup> <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3940328?ln=en> (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>5</sup> A concrete example in this sense is the use of Article 99 by Dag Hammarskjöld in regards to the Congo crisis of 1960. See Norrie MacQueen, *The United Nations, Peace Operations and the Cold War*, Routledge, London, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Leon Gordenker, *The U.N. Secretary General and the Maintenance of Peace*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1967.

was important because it set out a way in which the U.N. could self-examine issues that threatened global security and urged Council member states to discuss the issue.

Further, the first paragraph of Article 100 of the Charter stipulated that the Secretary-General and his team should not be influenced or instructed by the organization's member states and should refrain from any action that would jeopardize their status as representatives of the international organization. Moreover, the following paragraph provided that the Member States should refrain from such actions. All this comes as an attempt to prevent the monopolization and manipulation of the international organization in pursuing the interests of a state or group of states. Although this was stipulated in the Charter, the practice of the early years of the Cold War showed that the organization partially served the interests of Western powers, mainly if we refer to the authorization of American intervention on the Korean peninsula in 1950.

The last article directly referring to the Secretariat's functioning and the Secretary-General's functions is article 101, composed of three paragraphs. The first of these refers to the fact that the Secretary-General's team is determined by him, with the agreement of the General Assembly. The second one required that a part of the Secretary's team be made mandatory integrated within the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and, based on the needs, the other U.N. bodies. The third paragraph provided the bases on which recruitments within the Secretariat were to be made. Thus, the chosen team had to ensure "the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity" in their service performance. Also of particular importance was the principle based on which the team was to be recruited, given the geographical representation of the Member States.

Since the UN Charter did not specify the duration of the Secretary-General's term of office or how the Security Council elects him, the first General Assembly in 1946 voted on these matters. In this regard, it has been concluded that the Security Council will decide in private and secretly vote on the future Secretary-General of the United Nations, given that the position must not be subject to public debate. The 1946 General Assembly also stipulated that the Secretary-General was elected for five years with the possibility of re-election. The five permanent members of the U.N. also agreed that the Secretary-General should not be a citizen of their state.<sup>7</sup>

Since its establishment and until now, the Secretariat has undergone several changes to enable it to function well and manage the

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<sup>7</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations. Volume 1: United Nations*, The Gale Group, 2004, p. 46.

problems facing humanity. As of July 2021, this U.N. body consisted of 28 departments and offices specializing in a number of issues, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), and many others.<sup>8</sup> In his work, the current U.N. Secretary-General is assisted by no less than 44 people, who perform the functions of: Deputy Secretary General, Amina J. Mohammed, head of Cabinet (Earle Courtenay Rattray), Under-Secretary-General on various issues such as Politics (Volker Türk), Economic and Social Affairs (Liu Zhenmin), Peace Operations (Jean-Pierre François Renaud Lacroix) and others.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the Charter, this continuous change of Secretariat was requested by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Thus, during the Cold War, there were reforms of the Secretariat in 1947, 1953-56; 1964-66; 1974-77, and 1985-86,<sup>10</sup> so reforms by each Secretary-General: Trygve Lie, Dag Hammarskjöld, U Thant, Kurt Waldheim, and Javier Perez de Cuellar. Therefore, it can be estimated that each had a different view of what the Secretariat and his team should look like, but what remained constant is that each of the four emphasized the importance of the body as the main arm of the organization. Eloquent in this regard is Dag Hammarskjöld's opinion: '*...The U.N. is what the nation states make of it, but within the limits set by the action and cooperation of governments, much depends on what the Secretariat does.*' Continuing the argument, Hammarskjöld believed the Secretariat had the opportunity to have creativity, to come up with ideas and initiatives in the performance of its functions, but also to influence the positions and actions of the states by presenting factual data<sup>11</sup> for these reasons he was considered a visionary of this body. From this idea, we can also draw the intentions that the Secretary-General had regarding the functioning of the Secretariat. Given the importance of Hammarskjöld for putting the peacekeeping mechanism into operation, we can only point out that he succeeded in fulfilling what he declared in the sense that he implemented the mechanism and is active today.

As regards the importance of the Secretary-General, over time, his role has been ever-expanding, especially since the articles of the Charter were ambiguous and did not give him an extensive initial range of action. Nevertheless, it was precisely on this lack of policy coherence that the Secretaries-General were able to develop their role in the early years of the Cold War, mainly based on Article 98, which allowed them to perform

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/un\\_system\\_chart.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/un_system_chart.pdf) (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/senior-management-group> (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>10</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.46.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 49.

“other functions as they will be indebted to him by these bodies (the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council).”<sup>12</sup> Given the article, we can argue that the Secretary-General has succeeded in convincing the other U.N. bodies, indirectly the member states – because they vote to take action to increase its prerogatives.

Among the actions to extend the role of the Secretary-General was the inclusion of the aspect of the management of peacekeeping operations. It happened first during the Cold War, when the Security Council, through the operations mandates, offered the Secretary the opportunity to manage the activity of the missions. Later evolved formally, after the Cold War, with the creation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 1992,<sup>13</sup> today in the form of the Department of Peace Operations.<sup>14</sup> As a result, the role played by the U.N. Secretary-General in international crises has depended heavily on his ability to maneuver other bodies to give it greater importance or not, mainly the Security Council. This premise was to be naturally assumed, because it was this body that proposed the investment of the Secretary-General by the General Assembly, and thus, he should have been assured of their cooperation. However, the Secretary-General had to juggle the positions and visions of the members of the Council as well as the provisions of the Charter to exercise his mandate.<sup>15</sup> During the Cold War, but also after, it mattered a lot to maintain a close relationship with the permanent members of the Security Council to support him in his actions. Revealing in this regard is the vision of Javier Perez de Cuellar (1982-1991), who said that the Secretaries-General should avoid two extremes in the exercise of their mandate: an overly free interpretation of the UN Charter leading to succumbing, vanity, and incoherence; an overly strict interpretation of the Charter and its articles leading to modesty, to a sense of self-sufficiency and desire to avoid controversy.<sup>16</sup> Thus, according to his suggestions, the Secretary-General was to be a well-balanced man, with great patience, who, through his “good offices” would seek a settlement of the parties to the conflict.

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.globalgovernance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GGI-Factsheet-History-of-UN-Peacekeeping\\_October2012.pdf](https://www.globalgovernance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GGI-Factsheet-History-of-UN-Peacekeeping_October2012.pdf) (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>14</sup> <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/departement-of-peace-operations> (accessed 29 May 2022).

<sup>15</sup> There was only one case in which the Secretary-General, in the person of Boutros Boutros Ghali, was no longer supported for another mandate by a member state, in this case the United States. For more details, see <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/boutros-ghali-refuses-to-with-draw-as-us-casts-its-veto-on-second-term-1.107964>

<sup>16</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.50.

The above explained the legal framework within which the Secretaries-General may carry out the functions assigned to them—mentioning the articles of the Charter and the Secretariat's developments over time aimed at presenting how this expansion took place. In the following, we will focus on the evolutionary internships of the Secretariat in the years prior to Kurt Waldheim's mandate.

## **2. The evolution of the Secretariat and the role of the Secretary-General until Kurt Waldheim (1945-1970)**

The first Secretary-General of the United Nations was Trygve Lie, elected by the Security Council, and especially by the two superpowers. He was not a very well-known figure, and was proposed in the context that the position of President of the General Assembly was considered to be more important.<sup>17</sup> Although it was thought that he would assume a passive mandate, Lie took positions as early as 1946 on the issues facing the international scene, as was the case with the Greek Civil War, recommending the formation of a team to investigate the border problems of Greece. During his tenure, Lie sought to overcome the organisation's blocks caused by the polarisation of the system, promoting the U.N. as a means of cooperation between the two camps. Lie's statements and actions regarding international crises - such as the one in Iran - and his struggle to offer the Secretary-General the chance to make his position known in the General Assembly and in the Security Council have led to the establishment of the norms and powers of communication of this entity. Edward Newman argues that Lie's actions made the U.N. Secretariat an actor on the international scene, thanks to his public statements about international crises, thus becoming a world-renowned entity rather than an opaque entity in the shadows as the League of Nations Secretariat used to be. These strong positions on international crises, and especially the situation of the war in Korea, prompted members of the Security Council, to strongly criticize the Secretary-General, who had to resign as head of the body in 1953.<sup>18</sup> In order to seek a more passive and less influential administrator of the organisation, members of the Council agreed to elect the Swedish Dag Hammarskjöld as head of the organisation. Despite expectations, he turned out to be the person who further strengthened the functions of the Secretary-General, as will be shown.

The first serious reform of the Secretariat took place during the time of Hammarskjöld, who campaigned to extend the prerogatives of the U.N.

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<sup>17</sup> Leon Gordenker, *The U.N. Secretary-General and Secretariat*, Routledge, London, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> Edward Newman, *The U.N. Secretary-General from the Cold War to the New Era*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1998, pp. 37-39.

body. In the investment in his second term of office, Hammarskjold presented to the General Assembly his vision for the Secretary-General to make use of the organisation's entire mechanism and its "good offices" to have a more decisive involvement in the crises to the international peace and security. He also argued that in the event of a void of authority in the management of world peace caused by the lack of application of the Charter and traditional diplomacy, the Secretary-General is responsible for filling this void without being influenced by anyone in this regard.<sup>19</sup> In interpreting this, we can argue Hammarskjold's intention to give a more decisive role to the Secretary in the management of peace and security when the U.N. mechanism does not work. Given Dag Hammarskjold's subsequent actions, such as forcing the U.N. intervention in Lebanon in 1958,<sup>20</sup> we can understand his desire and motivation to prevent the loss of human lives and the stubbornness with which he fought for the ideals of peace.<sup>21</sup>

During Dag Hammarskjold's term of office, the Secretariat has come to see several relevant changes to its functioning, reforms that have made both this body and the prerogatives of the Secretary-General more critical in the direction of the mission with which the organization was entrusted. Assuming the mandate from Trygve Lie in 1953, after his resignation, which sought in his senior years to lay the groundwork for the selection of Secretariat members and the funding of this U.N. body, Hammarskjold wanted to extend the prerogatives in several directions.<sup>22</sup>

Following the follow-up to the U.N.'s *economic and social role*, the organization under Dag Hammarskjold has come to have several institutions that have taken a role in this sphere, primarily due to the need to develop mechanisms to support the new U.N. member states. Thus, prior to Hammarskjold's mandate, institutions such as the **Expanded Program of Technical Assistance** (1950) were inaugurated. This program would be extended by establishing a **Special Technical Support Fund** (1958). Later, new institutions were installed, such as the **Technical**

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<sup>19</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.50., p. 53.

<sup>20</sup> For more details on this U.N. intervention and the authorization of the peacekeeping mission, see Alan James, *Peacekeeping in International Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1990 pp. 284-289.

<sup>21</sup> In the biography dedicated to Dag Hammarskjold by Roger Lipsey, the author analyses the feelings and thoughts of the Secretary-General when he was forced to make some of the most important decisions on world security based on Hammarskjold's notes in *Markings* (Dag Hammarskjold, *Markings*, Knopf, 1964). His research made Dag Hammarskjold's person all the more mythical to the international postwar system as he was dedicated to the Stoicism philosophies and practices of medieval philosophers. For more details see Roger Lipsey, *Hammarskjold: A life*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2013,

<sup>22</sup> Charles Winchmore, "The Secretariat: Retrospect and Prospect", in *International Organization*, vol. 19, nr. 3 (June 1965), p. 623.

**Assistance Board, The Bureau of Technical Assistance Operations, and Office of Special Fund Operations.** Also in 1958, Hammarskjold persuaded the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly to introduce an **OPEX programme** whereby U.N. experts would be appointed to administrative rather than technical positions.<sup>23</sup> All this had implications for the functioning of the Secretariat, which, being equipped with these institutions, went beyond the drafting of research and materials, to the operationalization of a development integration plan.<sup>24</sup>

As regards the extension of prerogatives to the *military area* of the Secretariat, well defined by the Charter in Chapter VII, Charles Winchmore pointed out that in addition to the development of the peacekeeping mechanism, there was also a **United Nations Field Service** dealing with this sphere. Thus, this service was established in 1949 at the request of the Secretary-General based on Article 97, who in turn had responded to the request of the U.N. Mediator in Palestine for sending a group of 50 soldiers to assist observers in the implementation of the 1948 Armistices. The Special Committee of the General Assembly agreed to this request, and during that time, the United Nations Field Service was of particular importance for the authorization of new peacekeeping operations.<sup>25</sup>

Dag Hammarskjold's mandate helped to play an influential role in *political issues* affecting international relations. Due to the organization's structure, which does not provide direct communication and intermediation between the delegations of the Member States, the Secretariat and the Secretary-General, through its "good offices", have become intermediaries for communication and consultations between delegations. From these positions, Andrew Cordier argued, the Secretary-General had the opportunity to take some positions on the political issues facing the international scene and, through intermediation, to decide with the delegates the approaches to be taken by the U.N. On this basis, the Secretary-General was included in policy formulations on international issues, thus becoming truly the "administrative head of the organization".<sup>26</sup> During his term of office, Hammarskjold sought to increase the prerogatives of this post. It succeeded by taking a direction on the role that the Secretariat should play and disseminating these prerogatives to his

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<sup>23</sup> Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations. Volume I: The Years of Western Domination, 1945 – 1955*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 1982, p. 357.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Winchmore, "The Secretariat: Retrospect and Prospect", pp. 629-631.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 632-633.

<sup>26</sup> Andrew Cordier, "The Role of the Secretary-General" in Richard N. Swift (ed.), *Annual Review of United Nations Affairs, 1960-1961*, Oceana Publications, New York, 1962, pp. 1-14, *apud* Charles Winchmore, *op. cit.*, p. 635.

subordinates. He also created three central departments, including Political Relations with the Security Council and other offices on other issues. He is also the one who created the post of Sub-Secretary of Special Political Affairs, being adopted and implemented in June 1961. Based on these premises, Hammarskjöld had the opportunity to involve the body in a multitude of international issues.<sup>27</sup> Evan Luard argued that, in addition to Dag Hammarskjöld's qualities and the ability to develop the Secretariat and the prerogatives of the Secretary-General, he also enjoyed the support of U.N. member states. In this respect, given the tenacity with which it carried out the problems assigned to him during his term of office, there was the expression 'Leave it to Dag', and thus many of the States agreed that the Secretary-General should take a more critical role in international matters than he was generally assigned by the UN Charter.<sup>28</sup>

Despite Hammarskjöld's developed visions of the role this U.N. body was supposed to play, some of them failed to be implemented because the Secretary-General ended tragically in a plane crash in September 1961,<sup>29</sup> being followed at the head of the U.N. by U Thant (1961-1971). U Thant election as head of the UN was not without serious discussions between the superpowers, especially concerning the Soviet proposal to change this body.<sup>30</sup> Appointed provisionally in November 1961, U Thant assured the permanent members that he would consult with his Sub-Secretaries on his future actions and in carrying out the mandates provided by the Security Council and the General Assembly. Finally, he chose a total of eight advisors who had or assumed the mandate of Sub-Secretary Generals, each of the three groups present in the organisation at the time, the two camps and the non-aligned.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Edward Newman, *The U.N. Secretary-General from the Cold War to the New Era*, pp. 39-49.

<sup>28</sup> Evan Luard, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

<sup>29</sup> Concerning the death of Dag Hammarskjöld, there is a whole mystery. According to the report of the U.N. Special Committee on investigating the causes of death of the Secretary-General, three scenarios were presented: aircraft failure, pilot error or intentional downing of the aeroplane either from the ground or from the air by another aeroplane. To this day the exact cause of Dag Hammarskjöld's death has not been established. For more details on this controversial episode see Susan Williams, *Who killed Hammarskjöld? The U.N., the Cold War and White Supremacy in Africa*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> At the 1960 General Assembly, Nikita Khrushchev proposed that the position of the Secretary-General be assumed by a troika to make representatives of the three groups present in the U.N. at the time: the Western group, the socialist group, and the non-aligned group. The proposal did not pass, and as a result, U Thant was elected on the basis of the consensus of members of the Security Council. For more about the discussions between the death of Dag Hammarskjöld and the election of the new Secretary-General see Norrie MacQueen, *Peacekeeping and the International System*, Routledge, London, 2006, pp. 86-89

<sup>31</sup> Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations. Volume II: The Age of Decolonization, 1955 - 1965*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 1989, pp. 207 - 212.

During his tenure, U Thant continued what Dag Hammarskjold had begun and, on the basis already laid, the new Secretary-General assumed the U.N.'s involvement in several international issues without making any material changes to the body. Thus, he authorised peacekeeping operations in West New Guinea (1962), Yemen (1963), Cyprus (1964), the Dominican Republic (1965) and Bangladesh (1965). He also involved the U.N. in other matters, even without informing the Council or the General Assembly about his actions, such as the mission in Sabah and Sarawak (1963).<sup>32</sup> During his second term, U Thant had to witness international events of particular importance, such as the outbreak of the 6-Day War, the Vietnam War, and the Soviet Union's intervention in Czechoslovakia. However, his influence over them were close to none. As a result, in the face of these international crises, the Secretary-General has not had the same openness as the Security Council to authorize and manage peacekeeping operations. In the case of the 6-Day War, this was no longer possible because Gamal Abdel Nasser withdrew his agreement to allow the UNEF to remain in Egypt, while for the other two international crises, both the United States and the Soviet Union did not agree that their interests would be debated within the U.N. As a result, a discrepancy in support from members of the Security Council regarding the management of international crises can be observed. Edward Newman argued that this was due to the degrading importance of the organisation at the international level, but also to the fact that U Thant's mandates were restricted in comparison with Hammarskjold. These resulted in that the Secretary-General did not make the same contribution to the international crises as his predecessor. Instead, U Thant directed his mandate to other areas, such as those of economic and social problems, which he considered possible to have more disastrous impacts than political problems.<sup>33</sup>

The start of Hammarskjold's extensive powers continued during the first years of U Thant's term, but after 1965 the so-called "Latent Period" described by Harry Wiseman<sup>34</sup> occurred. During this period, there was a downward trend, whereby the Secretary-General's services were not used so much. He had to continue working in other areas, such as the economic and social zone, or manage the already authorized peace operations.

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 215.

<sup>33</sup> Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-52.

<sup>34</sup> Harry Wiseman, *The United Nations and international peacekeeping: a comparative analysis*, in "United Nations Institute for Training and Research", 1987, apud A.B. Fetherstone, *Towards a Theory of U.N. Peacekeeping*, Palgrave MacMillan, Londra, 1994, p. 16.

Although he had the support of members of the Security Council, U Thant decided to end his term of office at the end of 1971 on illness, and elections would be held for his office. Taking advantage of the fact that he was Austria's permanent representative to the UN, Kurt Waldheim took the opportunity. He ran for the position, succeeded in being elected, and took office in 1972.

### 3. Kurt Waldheim and his tenure as U.N. Secretary General (1972-1981)

Kurt Waldheim was the fourth Secretary-General of the United Nations. He took office in 1972 after U Thant completed his second term and refused to continue as head of the organization. In the following, we will present the life, person, and overall work of Kurt Waldheim at the head of the Secretariat. These would be done in order to have an overview of what he has done during his terms in of office, followed by an examination of his actions during the international crises.

Kurt Waldheim was born on 21 December 1918 in Sankt Andra-Wordern,<sup>35</sup> near Vienna, to the family of an Austrian of Czech origin who had changed his name from Waclawik to Waldheim,<sup>36</sup> the latter being a Catholic, inspector of Roman Catholic schools and a socialist Christian activist.<sup>37</sup> Waldheim's life and **birth location are important** for the type of personality and leadership he adopted, in the sense that they later influenced his perceptions of what should happen to problems affecting the world. Waldheim was born in an Austria in search of its own identity after renouncing its monarchy in World War I. In addition to economic, political and social problems, the Austrian state at that time also faced the assertion of extreme movements that further shook the interwar establishment. Thus, Vienna witnessed the affirmation of the Nazi party and a nationalist militia, Heimwehr, of a turbulent political period since the end of the parliamentary regime in 1933, an attempted coup by the Nazis, the assassination of Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dolfuss, the national debate on the future of Austria alongside Germany or Anschluss, and the German intervention in 1938.<sup>38</sup> As a result, the events that Waldheim witnessed during this period were some of the motivations for pursuing a career in diplomacy and politics, as he confessed: *'If I were to analyze the reasons, I am convinced that the main motivation for pursuing a career in*

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 5 June 2022).

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 5 June 2022).

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt\\_Waldheim](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim) (accessed 5 June 2022).

<sup>38</sup> For more details see David Clay Large, *Between Two Fires: Europe's Path in the 1930s*, W.W. Norton & Company, London 1991, pp. 59-101 and Julius Braunthal, *The Tragedy of Austria*, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1948, available at <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.203942/page/n5/mode/2up> (accessed 5 June 2022).

*diplomacy and politics was given by the circumstances and events of the era in which I reached maturity*'.<sup>39</sup> This quote is of particular importance because it shows the interest Waldheim had in pursuing a career in both spheres. Therefore, we can assume that his argument for having a high-ranking career was to prevent the scenarios of the interwar period from happening again and to prevent the suffering of innocent people.

In this context, the young Waldheim attended formal studies in Austria until 1936, when he decided to do military service, enrolled in the cavalry, and left the army shortly after. The next few years were tense and, like the first years of his life, decisive for his future. In 1937 he enrolled at the University of Vienna, where he studied law and the Consular Academy, but attended only one year because, in 1938, the Nazis came to power in Austria. Because of his father actions, who campaigned against the rise of the Nazis and who was forcibly retired in 1938, Waldheim was forced to give up on his studies. Taking advantage of the emerging context and probably believing that no other solution exists to fulfill his ambitions, Waldheim enrolled in the National Socialist Student League and later enlisted in the Wehrmacht. Because he aligned with Nazism, Waldheim had the opportunity to return to Vienna, where he completed his consular program, and was subsequently sent on a reconnaissance mission to France in 1940. With the start of Operation Barbarossa in June 1941, Waldheim was displaced on the Eastern Front. After few months in this part of the war, he suffered an injury at his right leg after a grenade exploded next to him and was forced to be withdrawn for medical reasons.<sup>40</sup>

In his memoirs, Waldheim's view on his military service in the German army proved to be an excruciating one, forced to do it, the explosion of a grenade close to him and the wound to his leg being the way out of the front.<sup>41</sup> In his memoirs, Waldheim recounts how he made a formal request to allow him to return to Vienna and continue his law and consular studies in order to obtain his master's degree.<sup>42</sup>

However, the episode Waldheim recounts in his memoirs turns out to be false, given that subsequent analyses of his Nazi past showed that he was not allowed to return to Vienna but continued his work on the front, this time in the Balkans. Archival research has shown that Waldheim was assigned to the Balkan E Army where he became an intelligence officer and

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<sup>39</sup> Kurt Waldheim, *In the Eye of the Storm*, Adler&Adler Publisher, Bethesda, 1986, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Michael T. Kuchinsky, "An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim" in Kent J. Kille (ed.), *The U.N. Secretary-General and Moral Authority. Ethics and Religion in International Leadership*, Georgetown University Press, Washington D.C., 2007, pp. 187-193.

<sup>41</sup> Details on his memoirs from the frontline in Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 18.

translator and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Meanwhile, he had the opportunity to return to Vienna and finish his doctoral studies.<sup>43</sup>

Later, after becoming President of Austria in 1986, accusations of his Nazi activity surfaced and tarnished his international image at the time. Thus, an extensive research on his life was carried out. The results proved that between 1941 and 1945 Waldheim was displaced in the Balkans under the command of General Löhr. Here, he was close and knew about the atrocities that had been practiced by his commander, who ordered more than 40,000 Jews from Thessaloniki to be deported to Auschwitz but had no direct involvement in committing them. Different from his commander, who was sentenced and executed in 1947 following the Nuremberg trial, Waldheim managed to surrender to the British in 1945 in southern Austria at Carinthia. He confessed to the British that he fled from the command of General Löhr, who headed the D corps of the Wehrmacht at the time and was not tried for his Nazi actions.<sup>44</sup>

After surrendering to Allied forces, Waldheim entered the Austrian diplomatic corps in 1945. As regards to the beginnings of his diplomatic career, he confessed that:

'I was still young enough to want to help to create a world in which oppression and injustice and all the corresponding social ills would no longer be tolerated, one in which my country might regain an honorable place and play a useful role again'.<sup>45</sup>

As a result, after a while in the Vienna Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he came to work at the Austrian Embassy in Paris between 1948 and 1951. Then, from 1951 to 1955, he became the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff department in Vienna. Waldheim later led Austria's delegation to the United Nations in 1955 to serve as Vienna's ambassador to Canada between 1956 and 1960. From 1964 to 1968 and 1970-1971 he was the permanent representative of Austria to the U.N., and from 1968 to 1970 he occupied the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

His political ambitions led Waldheim to run for president of the Austrian Republic in 1971, but he lost the election. Returning to New York as Austria's Permanent Representative to the U.N., he continued his ambitions to hold even higher positions and thus began to consider the idea of serving as Secretary-General of the U.N., who was expected to be

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<sup>43</sup> James Daniel Ryan, *The United Nations Under Kurt Waldheim, 1972-1981*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, MD, USA, 2001, pp. 10-12.

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt\\_Waldheim](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim) (accessed 6 June 2022).

<sup>45</sup> Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, p. 21

released following U Thant's withdrawal. Although he was initially not directly interested in this position, in his memoirs he stated that "for any diplomat of the world, the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations is the highest goal of a diplomatic career".<sup>46</sup> Thus, he began his efforts to gain support for his candidacy, also launching a book on Austria's foreign policy and how its example can "show the way for new approaches towards the goal that we all pursue: international peace, justice, and prosperity".<sup>47</sup>

In the race for the position of Secretary-General of the U.N. was There was also Max Jakobson of Finland, but unlike Kurt Waldheim, he took a different approach to this position. He favored broader prerogatives for the Secretary-General, and his interventionist attitude reminded him of Hammarskjöld. Waldheim, instead, preferred a cooler, moderate approach by which the Secretary-General would have a manager role to manage crises based on those transmitted to him by the Security Council. This was also due to Waldheim's ambition to climb the hierarchical ladder in diplomacy and politics and not to disturb his eventual electors. In his race for the U.N. leadership, he courted the Great Powers, as well as smaller states, out of the need to ensure that he would be elected, this process was also based on the relations he established when he was Austria's Permanent Representative to the UN.<sup>48</sup> Finally, after sustained efforts by himself and the government of Vienna, Kurt Waldheim was elected Secretary-General by the Security Council and the General Assembly in December 1971 and assumed office in January 1972.<sup>49</sup>

After two terms as the head of the UN, Waldheim was eager to go for a third term, and four of the five permanent members of the Council agreed to this continuation of the mandate. This was especially to the fact that his managerial style did not pose any problem to the interests of the superpowers. Despite this openness and prospects for Waldheim to become the first Secretary-General with three mandates, the People's Republic of China opposed Waldheim's re-election as the head of the U.N., possibly out of the desire to elect a person at the head of the U.N. from among third-world states.<sup>50</sup>

Left without an office in New York, Kurt Waldheim returned to Vienna and ran for Austria's presidency on 8 June 1986. Despite this

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 36.

<sup>47</sup> Kurt Waldheim, *The Austrian Example*, Verlag Fritz Molden, Vienna, 1971, p. 205 *apud* Michael T. Kuchinsky, „An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim”, p. 196.

<sup>48</sup> Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38.

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 6 June 2022).

<sup>50</sup> Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p. 125

reputable success, weeks before the election, a weekly newspaper, *Profil*, released an article detailing that there were omissions about Waldheim's actions between 1938 and 1945 and that his memoirs in his autobiography (*In the Eye of the Storm*) about the actions after the injury on the Eastern Front were false. As a result, a panel of historical experts was formed to investigate Waldheim's actions in the Balkans and concluded that he knew about the crimes committed by the Nazis but did not participate in their commission. Despite this result, he was still isolated on the international scene after the *Waldheim Affair*. He did not visit any European state or the United States, where a ban on his entry into the U.S. was imposed. It is argued that Waldheim's international isolation has been pursued as a result of his actions as Secretary-General to favor second and third-world states at the expense of superpowers.<sup>51</sup> Despite these arguments, we can take the view that the measures taken against Waldheim were more because he lied in memoirs about his actions and thus tarnished the image of the Secretary-General's portfolio, the communities decimated by the Nazis, Jews and Serbs, Austria and, including, the conception of a modern Europe.<sup>52</sup> Following a gray mandate in 1992, Waldheim refused to run for president of Austria and retired, later dying in 2007 at the age of 88.

#### 4. Kurt Waldheim's managerial style

In a persistent analysis of the mandates of several Secretaries-General, Kent Kille made a series of typologies labeling how they headed their mandates. He stopped at the mandates of Dag Hammarskjold, Kurt Waldheim, and Kofi Annan. If, in Dag Hammarskjold's case, Kille described him as a visionary, given the specific way he led the organization and his idealism on multilateral diplomacy, Kurt Waldheim was seen as a manager, while Kofi Annan as a strategist.

Kent Kille's analysis is helpful in this research because it gives us a paradigm through which we can better understand Kurt Waldheim's mandate as Secretary-General. Thus, he fits into the standards specific to the managerial style because the actions during his term of office and his work were characteristic of a manager, as many of those who knew him catalogued him. Kille divided Waldheim's work into several categories. Regarding the **agenda setting**, Waldheim fits into the organizational pattern because he did not want to present contradictory ideas or opinions in his reports, maintaining a non-critical discourse; concerning *finance*, he sought to manage expenditure without causing additional costs; he did not

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<sup>51</sup> [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt\\_Waldheim#Education\\_and\\_Family](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim#Education_and_Family) (accessed 6 June 2022).

<sup>52</sup> Michael T. Kuchinsky, "An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim", p. 195.

seek to restructure the Secretariat (as Hammarskjold tried) fundamentally, but made some changes at the head of the body in order to carry out its mandate. With regard to the *recruitment of staff for the Secretariat*, Waldheim agreed to increase it to allow each Member state to have representatives in the body. Related to the political positions adopted by Waldheim, he partially pursued the ideal route of the type of manager. This was done by *being present in meetings* (Article 98). He differed from the ideal pattern, however, because he appealed to Article 99 when he considered it necessary, an example being the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis. He also took *strategic positions* on certain international issues, but followed the positions of states, especially superpowers, and did not try to influence too much.

Waldheim's managerial style was also felt in the **peaceful resolution of conflicts**. Thus, different from the pattern, he initiated *several independent* actions in this regard, but did not leave the assigned mandate and tried to take actions accepted by all the Security Council member states. Regarding *the mandated* actions, Kurt Waldheim made the entire Secretariat mechanism available to the U.N. to carry out the assigned mandates, so he fits perfectly into the organizational pattern in this area. Concerning authorized peacekeeping missions, Kille thought that Waldheim had not been involved in defining the mandate of operations and that he had sought to fulfill the mandate provided.<sup>53</sup> Here, however, we can argue that although Waldheim did not get involved in this part, he nevertheless played an essential role in the way in which he viewed the operation, as will be shown later, having the opportunity to present his view over the form of the mission.

As will be shown in the following lines, Kent Kille's argument about Waldheim's managerial style may be supported by Waldheim's actions during his two terms and his involvement in various international episodes, but he had occasions where he assigned a more visionist role, bearing, however, the limits imposed by the Security Council.

##### 5. **First mandate as U.N. Secretary-General (1972-1976)**

Upon assuming his office, Kurt Waldheim "felt that there is a need for a new air at this level" and made a series of changes to the Secretariat. After the death of Ralph Bunche, Nobel Peace Prize winner for the actions and management of crises in the Middle East, Waldheim replaced him with the British Brian Urquhart. The latter was equally relevant to the U.N. during the Cold War and the peacekeeping mechanism, working close to Dag Hammarskjold in authorising operations during his term of office.

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<sup>53</sup> Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, pp. 123-153.

Waldheim also brought Canadian George Davidson as Under Secretary-General for Administration and Management. As Under Secretary-General for Business with the General Assembly, Waldheim appointed Bradford Morse and later William Buffum.<sup>54</sup>

In the first year of his term, Waldheim recalls that he focused heavily on establishing links with the new Chinese delegation, the People's Republic of China, and assisted them in their early moments within the organisation.<sup>55</sup> He also visited mainland China in August of the same year, where he met with several senior representatives of the Communist Party of Peking, all to show the support of the UN to the Chinese.<sup>56</sup> Aside from the Chinese issue, in March 1972, Waldheim dealt with situations affecting the regional stability of Africa and made a series of visits in South Africa and Namibia to manage the Namibian crisis.<sup>57</sup> Despite the given mandate, the context of the region and the interests of the superpowers did not allow the U.N. to play an important role in managing the situation,<sup>58</sup> and so Waldheim's visit was only of a protocol to fulfil the mandate given by the Security Council.<sup>59</sup> As Kille argued, he assumed a limited role in his actions and relied, prior to the action, on receiving a mandate to do so.<sup>60</sup>

In 1972 Waldheim visited the island of Cyprus and the *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus* to try to find a solution to the conflict between the Greek and Turkish communities.<sup>61</sup> Despite Waldheim's involvement in the Cypriot crisis, the situation was not possible to be resolved. The Secretary-General had to find a series of compromises to limit the escalation of conflicts. Although he visited the island in 1972 and tried to find a compromise in 1974 following the coup d'état in Athens, which brought a military junta to the head of the Greek state, Turkey intervened on the island on 20 July, citing the 1960 Treaty of Warranty allowing such intervention. In this tense context, Waldheim sought to contain the conflict and obtained an armistice on July 22, which he sought to strengthen by calling for the UNFICYP contributing states to supplement with troops. In his managerial style, Waldheim asked the Council for directives to manage the situation in

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<sup>54</sup> Kurt Waldheim, *In the Eye of the Storm*, pp. 47-51.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 51.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>57</sup> For a detailed analysis on the Namibian crisis and the U.N. intervention at the end of 1980s see Norrie MacQueen, *United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa Since 1960*, Routledge, New York, 2014, pp. 106-122.

<sup>58</sup> Edward Newman, *op.cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>59</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/309(1972), February 1972, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/309\(1972\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/309(1972)) (accessed 7 June 2022).

<sup>60</sup> Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, p. 146.

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 9 June 2022).

Cyprus. However, the Soviet Union opposed a resolution extending the prerogatives of the operation and the Secretary-General. Faced with these bottlenecks, however, Waldheim played an important role and provided management of the situation, managing the situation on the ground and ending a series of local ceasefires between the fighting parties, a concrete example being the situation of UNFICYP troops at Nicosia airport. Finally, the situation was stabilized when in 1975, it was declared the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, recognized only by Turkey, and when the peacekeeping operation stabilized on the demarcation line between the two territories.<sup>62</sup>

The most essential involvement during his first term was in the Middle East regarding the situation arising from the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War in October 1973. In this tense context, Waldheim tried to take a role in managing the situation but followed his characteristic managerial style, through which he pursued the mandates offered by the Security Council. In this context, the Secretary-General mobilized observers from operations already authorized to oversee the provisional truce between the parties. Resolution 340<sup>63</sup> instructed the Secretary-General to devise a plan to organize the future peacekeeping operation to be mobilized in the area. Taking the opportunity, Waldheim had the opportunity to outline his vision of the form of UNEF II and, on 26 October 1973, gave a report outlining the main features of the operation.<sup>64</sup> His report was of particular importance for the peacekeeping mechanism as it contained some aspects that underpinned the future authorised missions, such as: the need of support from the Security Council; the cooperation of the parties involved with the mission; and the mission to function as an integrated military unit. On the basis of Waldheim's report, the Council adopted Resolution 341 of 27 October 1973 authorizing the disposition of the *United Nations Emergency Force II*,<sup>65</sup> which operated until 1978, when it was withdrawn following the conclusion of the Camp David Agreements.

Through these actions, Waldheim fulfilled the mandates the Security Council gave, but also made an important contribution to carrying out the authorised operations in the Middle East and peacekeeping as a whole. In addition to this contribution, between 1973 and 1974, Waldheim

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<sup>62</sup> Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-58.

<sup>63</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/340(1973), 25 October 1973 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/340\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/340(1973)) (accessed 8 June 2022).

<sup>64</sup> U.N. Security Council Document S/11052, 26 October 1973, available at <https://undocs.org/S/11052> (accessed 8 June 2022).

<sup>65</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/341(1973), 27 October 1973 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/341\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/341(1973)) (accessed 8 June 2022).

made a series of visits to the region to the capitals of the parties involved, such as the August 1973 tour to Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt and Jordan. Subsequently, in June 1974, he continued his visits to Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Jordan and Egypt, and in November 1974 he visited Syria, Israel and Egypt in order to perfect the authorization of the peacekeeping operations on the territory of these states.<sup>66</sup>

## 6. Second mandate as U.N. Secretary-General (1977-1981)

In December 1976 the Security Council and the General Assembly agreed to extend Kurt Waldheim's term as head of the international organization, despite opposition from third-world states.<sup>67</sup> Upon assuming his second term, Waldheim expressed his opinion on the Great Powers to renounce the spheres of influence and assume the fulfillment of the obligations of the UN Charter<sup>68</sup> related to the keeping of peace and the development of a prosperous world for all the citizens of the world.

The second mandate as Secretary-General of the United Nations witnessed a return to a tense situation at the international level. Thus, Kurt Waldheim sought to manage the situation in Lebanon that began in 1978, when Israel intervened in that state to attack the positions of the Free Palestine Organisation, which was re-established in the country. Following the Israeli intervention in March 1978, the Security Council adopted Resolution 425, asking the Secretary-General to come up with a 24-hour report on the implementation of the resolution.<sup>69</sup> To everyone's surprise, Waldheim was able to come up almost immediately with a report<sup>70</sup> on the implementation of the resolution.<sup>71</sup> As a result of the rapidity with which the Secretariat moved, the Security Council adopted Resolution 426 authorizing the *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon*, which was tasked with overseeing the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, re-establishing international peace and security, and ensuring the resettlement of Lebanese government control in the region.<sup>72</sup> Edward Newman pointed out that the resolution had many slippages and that the mandate was unclear. However, it was the merit of Waldheim and Urquhart because

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 8 June 2022).

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 8 June 2022).

<sup>68</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>69</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/425(1978), 19 March 1978, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/425\(1978\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/425(1978)) (accessed 9 June 2022).

<sup>70</sup> U.N. Security Council Document S/12611, 19 March 1978, available at <https://undocs.org/S/12611> (accessed 9 June 2022).

<sup>71</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>72</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/426(1978) 19 March 1978, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/426\(1978\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/426(1978)) (accessed 9 June 2022).

they were able to come up with a solution to manage the situation and carry out the mandate,<sup>73</sup> albeit with many difficulties, as proof that the operation is still active in the region today.

After this episode, Waldheim became involved in other international crises, this time without much success as in the Middle East. He made many visits to the Indo-Chinese region as the Vietnam War caused a wave of refugees and held a meeting in Geneva in June 1979 to help solve the problems. Also in May 1979, Waldheim continued its agenda in Cyprus and held a high-level meeting to restore inter-municipal discussions on the island's future, but they subsequently failed. The end of 1979 represented several challenges for the U.N. and the international scene. In this respect, the 1979 American hostage crisis in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan took place. With regard to these situations, Waldheim sought to manage the situations and try to resolve them,<sup>74</sup> even invoking Article 99 for the crisis in Iran, but did not succeed in doing so, especially as the interests of the two superpowers were involved.

Finally, Kurt Waldheim was forced to end his U.N. mandates at the end of 1981 because he did not receive support from China to extend the mandate for another five years. He was succeeded by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar from Peru, who later served as Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General in Afghanistan.

## Conclusions

The purpose of this article was to analyse the role of the Secretary-General of the U.N., focusing on Kurt Waldheim's mandates, and to present his major decisions regarding the international crises he faced during his holding of that portfolio. The text sought to observe how Kurt Waldheim applied the managerial leadership style in his actions to juggle between inciting superpowers and implementing his vision. Although criticized by many for his conciliatory stance on superpowers, Waldheim's mandates have been crowned with several successes, including the resolution of the Middle East conflict between Israel and Egypt. Moreover, his contribution to the peacekeeping mechanism made peacekeeping work more effectively during his term, as evidence of the success of UNEF II and the operation in Syria that prevented the resurgence of conflicts between Damascus and Jerusalem. Therefore, given his style, Kurt Waldheim was analyzed from two perspectives. A positive one was esteemed by the caution and the managerial way he collaborated with the superpowers to manage international crises and the safety and predictability she offered to

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<sup>73</sup> Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>74</sup> Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

the role of Secretary-General. Moreover, on the other hand, a negative, critical one accused Waldheim of a lack of initiative and inspiration in managing crises during his mandates.

Besides these conclusions, the subject matter analysis could be expanded and continued by comparing Kurt Waldheim's mandate with that of his predecessors or even his successor, Javier Perez de Cuellar. This could be done in order to assess to which degree his mandate was typical for a manager and if there were moments when he assumed to roles of visionary, to say so, or of a strategist.

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