



Ford Foundation records, International Affairs Program, Office Files of Sir Brian Urquhart

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	12
Arrangement	12
Administrative Information	13
Collection Inventory	14
Chronological Correspondence	14
Meetings	15
Speaking Engagements	16
Subject Files	17
Writing Projects	17
Regional Files	18
Miscellaneous Correspondence	18
United Nations Studies	19

Summary Information

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[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment One: International Activities of the Ford Foundation: An Overview

The Foundation's aspiration to become a national and international philanthropy for the advancement of human welfare was first formally expressed in the seminal 1949 report of the Gaither Study Committee, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (RAC Library, call letters 361.7 GAI), which was commissioned by the Board of Trustees to chart the Foundation's future. Foundation Trustees launched Ford's international grantmaking activities in 1950 when they approved the committee's report and its embrace of peace, democracy, and freedom. Since then, the Foundation has tackled these goals using a variety of strategies and responding to changing contexts, from the Cold War to the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and beyond.

Toward the Foundation's aspiration#al goal, "the establishment of peace", its international activities have comprised a wide range of conceptual approaches and focus areas. These include international affairs, international studies, international understanding, arms control and disarmament, international law, international economic concerns, and overseas development in nearly every region of the world. Three distinct periods emerge for the international grantmaking defined by external contextual changes and

internal changes in Foundation leadership and structures: the expansion era of 1950-1965; the transition and restructuring years of 1966-1988; and the post-1989 shift away from Cold War dichotomies. During each of the distinct historical periods the consistent objectives were: 1) to ensure freedom and democracy in developed countries; 2) to foster education and international understanding in all countries; and 3) to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of less developed countries.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Sketch - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

The Ford Foundation's expansion era (1950-1965) began when the Gaither Study Committee Report placed "peace" as the area of top priority for the Foundation and set the Ford Foundation on a global course. Board Chair Henry Ford II writing in the 1951 Annual Report of the Foundation, identified "the danger of war" as the "the prime threat to human welfare today." Under the leadership of the three Ford Foundation presidents in this period-- Paul Hoffman, H. Rowan Gaither and Henry Heald--and several key trustees, notably the two seriatim chairs, John J. McCloy and Julius A. Stratton, the Foundation programs were largely informed by the post-World War II desire to avoid nuclear war and promote greater understanding among the world's peoples, strengthening of the United Nations, and enhancing both private and public American participation in world affairs. The strong board presence of university presidents and former leaders of postwar reconstruction efforts in Europe also helped to inform Ford's approach to building the field of peace and international security in the United States and encouraged extensive overseas activities.

For example, the first three presidents of the expanded Foundation ranged from government and business leadership experience to academic and nonprofit: Paul Hoffman (at Ford, 1950-1953) ran the Marshall Plan in Europe; H. Rowan Gaither Staffer (1948-1953), President (1953-1956) and Trustee (1956-1958) had MIT and Rand experience; Henry Heald, former president, Illinois Institute of Technology and New York University, President (1956-1966). The trustees also ran the leadership gamut from government and nonprofits to academic: Trustee John J. McCloy (from 1953; chair, 1959-1965) was assistant Secretary of War during World War II and chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations; and Trustee Julius A. Stratton (Trustee from 1955; chair, 1966-1970) was president of MIT.

When Ford became an international foundation in 1950, it had a small staff and operated through separate funds. The expansive period in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in a large number of field offices, which increased Ford's global footprint. Support focused on a mix of US university-based programs for research and training; think-tanks for policy-oriented meetings and policy research; and action projects specifically in less developed countries. The Foundation's focus on peace, freedom, and democracy played out against the Cold War backdrop for scientific and military competition between the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

Under President Hoffman, the Foundation's work was organized by the areas identified in the Gaither Committee Report: Area One, the Establishment of Peace; Area Two, The Strengthening of Democracy;

Area Three, The Strengthening of the Economy; Area Four, Education in a Democratic Society; and Area Five, Individual Behavior and Human Relations.

Program differentiation began in the Gaither era. When he began in 1953, he introduced the following programs, with international work under nearly all of them: International Programs, Public Affairs Programs, Program in Economic Development and Administration (mainly U.S. based), Education Program, The TV-Radio Workshop, and Behavioral Sciences Program. In 1954, the Foundation gave prominence to the international work explicitly through changing the program names and separating international affairs and overseas development. The 1954 program names were: The Advancement of Education, Education for Democracy, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas, Economic Development and Administration, the Behavioral Sciences, and Overseas Development. In 1955, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas became Increasing International Understanding. In 1956, the last year of the Gaither presidency, the program roster read: Education in the United States, The Behavioral Sciences, Public Affairs, Hospital Aid (only in the U.S.), Economic Development and Administration, International Understanding, and Overseas Development. Names changed but the program focus often remained the same.

President Heald maintained the areas of international interest of Hoffman and Gaither. The International Affairs program housed the programs based in the United States, Europe and Japan, with a few activities linking American and developing countries institutions. The Overseas Training and Research Program took over the efforts to increase American understanding of international issues. From 1957-1959, an International Legal Studies program, run from New York, helped build law programs in developing countries. Starting in 1959, the Overseas Development program comprised all the regional and country offices. In fiscal year 1964, Heald convinced the trustees to add a new focus on population, with grants both in the United States and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Summary - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

With the ever-increasing budget and trustee willingness to invade capital, presidents Hoffman, Gaither and Heald oversaw vast growth in the Foundation's international activities in the United States, other developed countries and developing countries. Activities crossed disciplines, institutions, and national boundaries, although few crossed intra-foundation boundaries. Under the three presidents, Foundation staff in various domestic and international offices from New York interacted with the regional and country offices headed by representatives. Usually in this period, however, these offices in fact worked more closely with local governments than with New York staff, reinforcing the commitment to locally led social and economic development in less-developed countries.

The shared values of this early period reflected as much the continuing competition between the Communist and capitalist worlds as the concerns about maintaining peace. The Cold War provided the contextual continuity for grantmaking on the core themes of increasing American understanding of the

rest of the world, building and strengthening connections not only with European and Asian democracies but also with Eastern European countries, the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Sketch - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

In the 1960s, the Ford Foundation Trustees began to rethink the role of the Foundation in the context of the era's dramatic political and cultural changes. For instance, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act created a domestic policy context in which the Foundation could more deeply engage with issues of rights and social justice. Events overseas starting in the late 1960s would extend the rights agenda to international affairs and development operations at the Foundation -- all advanced by the leadership of McGeorge Bundy (president, 1966-1979).

McGeorge Bundy was appointed president in 1966, following a significant career in national security and academic administration. During World War II, he worked with the Army's intelligence division, and in the early post-war years was a political analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations. Even without a postgraduate degree, at the age of thirty-four he became dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Harvard University. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed Bundy to be Special Assistant to the President for National Security - a position he held for five years under both Kennedy and Johnson. Those significant years saw the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the beginnings of the Vietnam War.

When Bundy arrived at the Foundation, he initiated a restructuring that modeled government departments rather than the academic ones President Henry Heald had established in the 1950s. At the same time, he had to contend with serious financial constraints due to Ford's overspending in the prior periods and to economic downturns in the global economy. The Board of Trustees mandated an annual spending of over \$100 million.

These economic constraints meant that Foundation programs had to be more selective across the range of its programs. Nonetheless, international activities remained prominent with the new president and trustees. President Bundy and key trustees such as Eugene Black (1960-1968, former head of the World Bank) and Robert S. McNamara (1968-1986, former U.S. Secretary of Defense and then head of the World Bank, 1968-1981) reflected a commitment to the international activities. Bundy also added to the board in 1972 the first trustee from a developing country, the Indonesian activist and scholar, Dr. Soedjakmoto, the former Ambassador to the United States from his country and then Special Adviser on Social and Cultural Affairs to the Chairman of Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency.

To create economies of scale, Bundy unified US-based international and overseas activities under one division: the International Division (using the name for the first time). That division comprised Resources for Development (area studies, languages, and exchanges), Population, International Relations, Planning and Evaluation, and the country programs. David Bell, an economist and the first

administrator of the US Agency for International Development (1962-1966), was named vice president and served in that capacity until the end of Bundy presidency.

In 1966, Bundy terminated the long-standing internationally oriented but domestically based International Training and Research Program. Several large domestic programs -- including support of centers of international studies - were phased out in the 1970s. Instead, Ford launched under its international affairs efforts a focused but robust program in security and arms control. Over Bundy's tenure, the overseas offices were reduced from twenty in 1966 to twelve in 1979, when he retired.

The Foundation increasingly turned its attention to different set of international issues including human rights and working in repressive societies, such as South Africa. The military coups in Latin America during the late 1960s and early 1970s led the Foundation to initiate in 1976 a human rights program housed in Vice President Bell's office.

In 1979, Franklin Thomas was named president of the Ford Foundation (1979-1996). In contrast to Bundy's international and defense policy background, Franklin Thomas brought to the Ford Foundation his experience in law, housing, and community development. Prior to joining the Foundation, Thomas, a lawyer, was a Foundation trustee. He chaired the Rockefeller Foundation-funded Study Commission on U.S. Policy towards South Africa and led the Ford-funded Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation in New York from its beginning in 1966 until he left in 1979. Earlier, he had been deputy police commissioner of NYC.

In the first decade of Thomas' tenure, the international work was still framed using the post-war East-West dichotomy. Several trustees brought to the board active engagement in international issues: Donald F. McHenry (trustee over the period 1981-1993) had served as ambassador to the U.N. and was active in the anti-apartheid movement; and General Olusegun Obasanjo (trustee over the period 1987-1999) had been Nigerian head of state from 1976-1979, and was then president of the African leadership Forum. Along with McNamara and Soedjakmoto, Rodrigo Botero, an internationally renowned economist from Colombia and former Colombian Minister of Finance and Credit from 1974 to 1976, remained on the board over the period 1978-1989.

During the early years of the Thomas presidency, the scope and strategies of the Foundation's activities were also influenced by economic and global pressures, leading to reduced assets and further financial stringencies. Thomas' board-mandated reductions resulted, for example, the firing of twenty senior staff at the same time. To achieve more effective and efficient programs, Thomas had a vision of Ford as one foundation, linking the domestic and overseas activities under new program themes: Urban Poverty, Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Social Justice, Governance and Public Policy, Education and Culture, and International Affairs.

The restructured Foundation comprised two programmatic divisions led by vice presidents: U.S. and International Affairs Programs (USIAP) headed by Susan Berresford; and Developing Countries Program (DCP), headed by William Carmichael. Berresford had been at the Foundation since 1970, coming from the U.S. Manpower Career Development Agency. She served in the National Affairs area, first as program assistant and then program officer (1972-1980), becoming head of women's programs in 1980. The main international efforts under USIAP were housed in Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Governance, and International Affairs. The other programs - Urban Poverty, Education and Culture,

and Program-Related Investments - also addressed a scattering of international issues related to their main themes.

Carmichael had joined the Foundation in 1968 as Representative in Brazil. In July 1971, he was named Head of the Office of Latin America and the Caribbean, and in September of 1977, he became Head of the Middle East and Africa Office. The DCP program was responsible for all the Field Offices: Andean and the Southern Cone, Brazil, Mexico and Central America, Bangladesh, India, Southeast Asia, West Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Middle East and North Africa.

When the Foundation initiated a Human Rights and Governance program (HR&G) in 1981, it was the first instance of a Ford program explicitly entitled "human rights," despite the fact that human rights grantmaking that had started officially in 1976. International Affairs remained separate from HR&G. In 1987, however, the Board conceptually linked three programs, creating a Trustee committee called Human Rights, Governance, and International Affairs, which existed until 1992. Operationally, however, the programs relating to these fields did not often work together.

International governance remained a commitment under Thomas. The Foundation, for example, had a long-established relationship with the United Nations: from 1951 until 1988, the United Nations received ninety grants from the Foundation (it received another 198 over the period 1989-2009).

In these early years of the Thomas presidency, dramatic changes were occurring in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Under President Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership since 1985, the USSR was opening up to the international community, the rule of law in society was taking prominence there, and press freedoms were spreading. The foundation developed new programs in the region, drawing on the \$60 million already spent to promote human rights and free expression and increase Western understanding of developments there.

Given the continuing economic constraints facing the Foundation and rising debt in developing countries, the Foundation shifted support under DCP to smaller scale community-based initiatives in the field offices. Thomas was also charged by the Board to increase the diversity of grantees, especially to favor populations "most affected" by the problems of concern to the Ford Foundation. The Foundation built on earlier efforts and sharpened its focus on women's issues throughout the world, including shifting the focus of the population program to women's reproductive health and child survival.

In the 1980s, Carmichael and others, with strong support from Thomas and the board, continued the 1970s' support of South African grantees for training large numbers of black lawyers and litigating sensitive cases in the South African legal system. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of discrimination in South Africa, the Foundation not only advanced the rule of law, but also strengthened civic organizations, women's groups, and educational institutions. Further, it supported a number of activist organizations in the United States that were energetically advocating US governmental sanctions against South Africa and for private disinvestment. The Foundation also played a role in shaping US policy on apartheid through the role Thomas played from 1985 to 1987 chairing the US Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa.

The Foundation's overseas staff also sought to improve the economic situation in poor, marginalized communities through targeted loan programs particularly to women head of households, beginning with the innovative work in Bangladesh of Professor Mohammed Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank. The results led the way to establish the field of microfinance with the aim of empowering women living

in poverty conditions, such as through a microfinance network in Latin America starting 1980 and a global lending program for women starting in 1987.

Thomas encouraged staff to share results at worldwide meetings. During those meetings, Ford staff in the country offices and in New York tried to follow the mandate to work as “one foundation.” The persistent challenge toward meeting that goal, however, was that initiatives emerging from the New York-based programs, or indeed any program developed in one country, were not always adaptable, relevant or acceptable in other countries or regions. It remained a challenge to develop a unified program, despite the commitment at the highest level of foundation leadership.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Summary - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

During this era, the Foundation’s earlier interest in business and the economy evolved into a commitment to improving conditions for people living on the margins of society. The Ford Foundation promoted advancements in women's rights around the globe and introduced micro-lending into grantmaking. At the same time, the economic issues that were shaping program strategies also affected the Foundation's assets. Severe cuts resulted in a significant restructuring of country programs and reduced budgets across all programs.

Even with the cuts in country offices, in the 1970s Ford grantees in developing countries received approximately 80% of the International Division budget. The remaining fifth went to Population, Development Studies, and International Affairs. Although representing a much smaller piece, the International Security and Arms Control program from 1973 was the Foundation’s most concerted effort to make meaningful inroads in disarmament and nuclear issues - those challenges most directly linked to the Foundation's historic concern for peace. By 1979, the Ford Foundation was the biggest funder of arms control as a field, both in the U.S. and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 4. Period Sketch - The Post-1989 Shift Away from Cold War Dichotomies

Between 1989 and 1991, dramatic changes in the external international conditions created a significantly different context for Ford Foundation’s international activities both in the United States and overseas. In November, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell. In February 1990, in South Africa, Nelson Mandela was released from prison. In December 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved. As a consequence, the Cold War was over,

Western Europe no longer had a special strategic role in the Foundation, and program-related activities in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union multiplied. The Foundation not only continued the earlier efforts to fund leadership in the region; from 1990-1994, Ford also spent \$1 million on the training of newly-elected parliamentarians in Eastern Europe and the former USSR. By 1993, half of the funds for grantmaking related to the former Soviet bloc were going to in-country individuals and institutions.

In 1989, Thomas also instituted a major restructuring of the Foundation to fulfill his vision of "One Foundation." All programs were put into one division led by Vice President Susan Berresford. Carmichael joined the Institute of International Education to run a program on Soviet and Eastern European Affairs and then higher education in South Africa. All the Foundation grant programs - domestic and international - reported to Berresford: Africa and the Middle East (AME, formerly MEA), Asia (ASIA), Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC/OLAC), Human Rights and Governance (HRG), Education and Culture (EC), Program-Related Investments (PRI), and International Affairs (IA).

The change in South Africa opened up many new opportunities to work in partnership with a range of South Africa partners to promote and sustain the transition to democracy. The Foundation supported women's groups working on law, development and reproductive rights. It contributed, for example, to the groups working on the Women's Chatter in South Africa, resulting in the adoption in 1994 of the first constitution anywhere that specifically included sections on women's rights.

During the 1990s, the promising political changes in African countries and elsewhere provided a positive perspective to counteract the continuing economic constraints facing the Foundation and the rising debt in developing countries. Both to reinforce local democratic initiatives and to address its economic challenges, the Foundation's field offices across Africa and the developing world shifted their support toward the promotion of smaller scale community-based initiatives.

Thomas supported work on arts and culture, not as a goal in itself, but, instead, as a means for promoting social justice, education, and human rights, both in the United States and in developing countries. At the same time, while reducing support for cultural institutions in the United States, such institutions received support overseas to preserve and celebrate national and local cultural heritages. While in South Africa, for example, the Foundation provided support for Johannesburg anti-apartheid theatre groups, in West Africa it funded for nearly two decades a program to preserve and make accessible cultural heritage by expand the training of museum leaders and strengthening museum exhibit and outreach capabilities.

In the early 1990s, the Foundation through its India office helped establish an independent foundation to enhance sustainability in the arts community. Ford envisioned new opportunities for cultural institution to rely on local resources focus on new forms of creativity and encourage young artists, in particular. Similar to the Indian effort, the Ford office in Egypt in 1993 provided support for an arts-focused foundation.

When Susan Berresford became president in 1996, with a strong commitment to globalization as well as concern for the uncertainty it created, she reorganized the Foundation in to three large program themes that would inform grantmaking in the United States and developing countries: Assets with a focus on poverty, Peace and Social Justice on rights issues, and Education, Media, Arts and Culture to pull together related endeavors. She also created a separate communications program. Each program was led by a vice president. Berresford strongly reinforced the institutional and grantmaking goal of affirmative action, an organizational goal that had been initiated in the Bundy era.

She maintained significant support, domestically and internationally for women's issues. She endorsed and encouraged the worldwide meetings staff members and grantees to continue to hold joint meetings in order to create a greater sense of partnership and shared purpose. The more promising international situation enabled the Ford Foundation in 1996 to open an office in Russia (Moscow) and in Vietnam (Hanoi). Berresford encouraged the development of local and regional peace and security programs in developing countries. A regional security, peace, and cooperation program in India, for instance, focused on the work of civil society groups as an increasingly prominent regional interest in South Asia.

In this period, the Foundation gave renewed the prominence of arts and culture in the US and maintained the commitment in developing countries. By 2000, funding levels for the Education, Media, Arts and Culture division were approaching parity with the other two, Assets and Peace and Justice.

Berresford also encouraged each of the programs to hold worldwide meeting to promote cross-program and cross-national collaboration in fields such as human rights, income generation, cultural preservation, and building capacity in the arts and arts management. One persistent question of such initiatives. Toward that end, and building on the earlier experiences in India and Egypt, Berresford worked closely with her senior vice president, Barry Gaberman and other staff to establish new foundations at the local and national levels, particularly in developing countries. Gaberman had been at the foundation since 1973, starting as assistant to the representative in Indonesia. After serving in a number of different positions, by 1984, under Thomas, he served as deputy vice president in the U.S. and International Affairs program. After the 1989, Thomas and Berresford appointed him deputy vice president. 1996, Berresford appointed him senior vice president.

As the twentieth century came to a close, the economic conditions of the 1970s and 1980s that had resulted in so much global debt, with special impact on the developing world, were slowly turning around. Many countries were experiencing economic growth and burgeoning democratic initiatives. Not only was the global economic situation improving but the Foundation's assets were also growing. Consequently, the Foundation was in a strong position to bring attention to long-standing issues holding back developing countries. The grants programs addressed the pressing need both for advanced training of young- to mid-career adults living in marginalized and disadvantaged conditions along the equally, and for strengthening and building sustainability of universities across sub-Saharan Africa, along with enhancing broadband access for improved internet communications, promoting women in higher education, and strengthening postgraduate education.

Reacting to the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the Foundation provided immediate relief to affected local institutions in the United States. The Foundation also helped launch support a fund at the Institute of International Education to support scholars at risk in countries in conflict and under terrorist threats, especially in, but not limited to, the Middle East.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 4. Period Summary - The Post-1989 Shift Away from Cold War Dichotomies

Franklin Thomas's presidency, lasting until his retirement in 1995, was defined by a commitment to connect the Foundation's US and international activities around a few key themes. These themes were addressed through grants that created private sector partnerships, enhanced support for local community groups, and enlarged initiatives to promote human rights, with special attention to women's rights. Throughout Thomas's tenure, Ford staff reinforced his special commitment to bolstering marginalized communities and broadening access to the law and educational opportunity. The Ford Foundation led the way in building the fields of international security studies, arms control, human rights, and governance. Moreover, in this period, Ford was innovative in drawing together the fields of international cooperation and human rights into one program.

Susan Berresford in her tenure as president from 1996-1997 continued and expanded the activities she helped initiate under Thomas. She and her colleagues increased support for the arts and established a variety of major international collaborative efforts implementing the concept of one foundation. Ford staff in this period drew on the Foundation's time-tested grantmaking strategies (supporting individuals and new institutions as needed), while concentrating on under-addressed issues and underserved populations. With Berresford's encouragement, Foundation staff explicitly took into account the new global context, increasing opportunities for inclusion of disadvantaged populations in all of their activities.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

Contains correspondence, meeting records, documentation of writing and regional projects, speaking engagements and events, and united nations studies.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Arranged in 8 series by file type.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

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Conditions Governing Access note

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Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Ford Foundation archive was deposited at RAC in 2011. Ford Foundation records, correspondence, reports, program files and officers papers were transferred to, and accessioned by, RAC beginning in 2011. Accessions continue as necessary.

Processing Information

Level 1 Minimal Processing has been conducted to establish basic intellectual and physical control of the material and assess immediate preservation and conservation needs. Material remains as received, in original folders and storage boxes.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Chronological Correspondence, 1986-1995

Title/Description	Instances
Chrons, Feb-Mar 1986	box 1
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1986	box 1
Chrons, Jun-Sep 1986	box 1
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1986	box 1
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1987	box 1
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1987	box 1
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1987	box 1
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1987	box 1
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1988	box 1
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1988	box 1
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1988	box 1
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1988	box 1
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1989	box 1
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1989	box 1
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1989	box 1
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1989	box 1
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1990	box 2
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1990	box 2
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1990	box 2
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1990	box 2
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1991	box 2
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1991	box 2
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1991	box 2
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1991	box 2
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1992	box 2

Chrons, Apr-Jun 1992	box 2
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1992	box 2
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1992	box 2
Chrons, Jan-Feb 1993	box 2
Chrons, Mar 1993	box 2
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1993	box 2
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1993	box 2
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1993	box 2
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1994	box 3
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1994	box 3
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1994	box 3
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1994	box 3
Chrons, Jan-Mar 1995	box 3
Chrons, Apr-Jun 1995	box 3
Chrons, Jul-Sep 1995	box 3
Chrons, Oct-Dec 1995	box 3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Meetings, 1986-1995

Title/Description	Instances
Palme Commission -- New Delhi, 1986	box 4
Palme Commission, 1986-1993	box 4
UNA/UN Panel, 1986-1987	box 4
Olaf Palme's Funeral -- Stockholm, Mar 15-16, 1986	box 4
Ditchley, Mar 21-23, 1986	box 4
Ralphe Bunche Conference, May 5-6, 1986	box 4
UNA Panel, May 9-10, 1986	box 4
UNIFIL Workshop -- Oslo, Jul 1-4, 1986	box 4
Keswick/Strathclyde, May 19-21, 1987	box 4
Honorary Degree -- Keele University, Jun 29-Jul 3, 1987	box 4
UNA Panel Lunch, Sep 16, 1987	box 4
BBC Radio Program, Sep 1987	box 4

Carter Center Mediation, Nov 4-5, 1987	box 4
Carter Center -- Middle East Conference, Nov 16-18, 1987	box 4
South Africa/Carter Center, Mar 30-31, 1988	box 4
Ditchley, Jun 17-19, 1988	box 4
BBC, Jun 20, 1988	box 4
Brioni, Jul 17-22, 1988	box 4
Martin Wight Memorial Lecture -- London -- Chatham House, Sep 27, 1988	box 4
Berlin-Leiden, Nov 20-22, 1988	box 4
Oslo, Dec 11-16, 1988	box 4
Stockholm, Jan 10-11, 1989	box 4
San Diego, Feb 1-2, 1989	box 4
York University -- Toronto, Mar 2, 1989	box 4
Middle East Development Conference, Mar 23-26, 1989	box 4
John Bright Lecture -- London, Mar 28, 1989	box 4
Ditchley, May 5-7, 1989	box 4
IPA -- Briarcliff Manor, Sep 19, 1989	box 4
Copenhagen -- Lund, Oct 15-18, 1989	box 4
IEWSS -- Frankfurt, Oct 19-21, 1989	box 4
International Affairs Program -- Cairo/Jerusalem, Oct 23-27, 1989	box 4
Study Group -- Gorbachev/UN Reform -- Franck: NYU Law School, Jan-Apr 1990	box 4
IEWSS Annual Conference -- Stockholm, Jun 7-9, 1990	box 4
Fletcher School Symposium -- Defining a New World Order, 1993	box 4
Birenbaum -- Reinventing the United Nations, 1995	box 4
Pearson Center, Apr 24-25, 1995	box 4
Keystone, 1995	box 4
Quebec, Apr 6-7, 1995	box 4
Canada -- Rapid Deployment, 1995	box 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Speaking Engagements, 1986-1995

Title/Description	Instances
Engagements Fulfilled, 1986	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1987	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1988	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1989	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1990	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1991	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1992	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1993	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1994	box 5
Engagements Fulfilled, 1995	box 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Subject Files, 1987-1995

Title/Description	Instances
Aborted BBC Project, 1989	box 5
Ralph Bunche Film (1/3), 1992-1993	box 5
Ralph Bunche Film (2/3), 1993-1995	box 5
Ralph Bunche Film (3/3), 1993	box 5
Disaster Relief, 1987	box 5
Iran-Iraq War Project, 1987-1989	box 5
Otunnu Project, 1987	box 5
Secretary General Good Offices, 1993	box 5
TV Projects, 1989-1995	box 5
United Nations TV Project, 1994	box 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Writing Projects

Title/Description	Instances
Articles, Reviews, Op-Ed Pieces, Lectures, 1986-1989	box 6
Articles, Reviews, Op-Ed Pieces, Reviews, Pamphlets (1/2), 1990-1995	box 6

Articles, Reviews, Quotes, Prefaces, Introductions, etc. (2/2), 1990-1995	box 6
Bunche Materials -- Ford Foundation -- Box Sheets, 1990	box 6
Leadership Study -- Distribution, 1990	box 6
Leadership Study -- Report Release, 1991	box 6
Leadership Study -- "A World in Need of Leadership", 1991	box 6
Leadership Studies -- Leadership -- Ambassador's Meeting, Nov 20, 1990	box 7
Leadership Studies -- Preliminary Letter, Jan 26, 1990	box 7
Leadership Studies -- Responses to 1/26/90 Letter, 1990	box 7
Leadership Studies -- Questionnaires/Responses, 1990	box 7
Leadership Studies -- Leadership Project, 1990	box 7
Leadership Studies -- Miscellaneous, 1990	box 7
Leadership Project Meeting -- Uppsala -- New York -- Agenda and Attendance, 1989-1990	box 7
Leadership Project Meeting -- Uppsala -- New York -- 4/24 Meeting, Apr 24, 1990	box 7
United Nations -- Emergencies Project -- Correspondence, 1991	box 7
United Nations Secretariat Reorganization Project, 1991	box 7

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Regional Files

Title/Description	Instances
Africa, 1991-1993	box 7
Cambodia, 1989-1992	box 7
Impact of East-West Tensions on the Third World, 1986-1987	box 7
Middle East (1/2), 1986-1991	box 7
Middle East (2/2), 1989-1995	box 7

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1986-1995

Title/Description	Instances
Ford Foundation -- General (1/2), 1986-1994	box 8

Ford Foundation -- General (2/2), 1986-1995	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1987	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1987	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1988	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1988	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1989	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1989	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1990	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1990	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1991	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1991	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1992	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1992	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1993	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1993	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1994	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1994	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jan-Jun 1995	box 8
Miscellaneous, Jul-Dec 1995	box 8

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

United Nations Studies, 1986-1995

Title/Description	Instances
United Nations Current File, 1986-1992	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Iran-Iraq War Conference -- Dinner, Apr 21-22, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Iran-Iraq War Conference -- Notes and Follow-up, Apr 21-22, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Iran-Iraq War Conference -- Agenda and [illegible], Apr 21-22, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Iran-Iraq War Conference -- Invitations and Replies, Apr 21-22, 1987	box 9

Ambassadors Meeting -- Lebanese Hostage Meeting I -- Proceedings and Follow-up, Jul 15, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Lebanese Hostage Meeting I -- Invitations and Acceptances, Jul 15, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Lebanese Hostage Meeting II -- Papers, Dec 7, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Lebanese Hostage Meeting II -- Notes, Dec 7, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Lebanese Hostage Meeting II -- Invite Letter and Follow-up`, Dec 7, 1987	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Cambodia and the United Nations -- Invitations and Acceptances, Jul 11, 1989	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Cambodia and the United Nations -- Agenda and Attendance, Jul 11, 1989	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Cambodia and the United Nations -- Pike Paper, Jul 11, 1989	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Cambodia and the United Nations -- Cambodia Notes, Jul 11, 1989	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Multilateral Challenges, Nov 20, 1989	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Maintenance of International Peace and Security -- More Ad Hoc Measures or a System?, May 30, 1990	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Prevention and Limitation of Conflict Through Multilateral Means, Jun 5, 1990	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Global Environmental Change and the Evolution of the United Nations System, Jul 11, 1990	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- Leadership for the Future I, Nov 20, 1990	box 9
United Nations Ford Foundation Grants, 1991-1993	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- United Nations Leadership for the Future II, Jan 30, 1991	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- United Nations Leadership for the Future III, Mar 14, 1991	box 9
Ambassadors Meeting -- The Gulf Crisis -- The Security Council and the Future, May 9, 1991	box 10
Advisory Group on United Nations Financing, 1992	box 10
United Nations System Study, 1992-1995	box 10
Strengthening United Nations Capacity for Preventative Diplomacy, Peace-making and Peacekeeping, Apr 7, 1992	box 10
United Nations Financing Group First Meeting, Sep 16, 1992	box 10

United Nations Financing Group Second Meeting, Oct 30, 1992	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Congress -- Volker Mailing, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Press Articles on Report, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Meeting, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Background Papers, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Costs of Project, 1993	box 10
Peace-Keeping Training, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence -- UN, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence -- Advisory Group, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence -- Volcker and Ogata, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Frank Thomas Memoranda and Talking Points, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence -- Other, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Correspondence -- Financing Project Office Memoranda, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Group Comments on Final Report, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Transmittal/Response/Requests, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group -- Requests for Report, 1993	box 10
United Nations Financing Advisory Group Third Meeting, Jan 25, 1993	box 11
Ambassadors Meeting -- United Nations Financing Repair, May 6, 1993	box 11
Yale Group -- United Nation's Next Fifty Years, 1994-1995	box 11
United Nations Volunteer Force, 1995	box 11

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)