Evaluation is not an easy thing. You have to be more than rational; more than anything else. It requires the best. Even the best is not sufficient. No act can be analyzed without going into its context. The same context is never repeated. The same circumstances can be imagined but cannot be recreated or reproduced. The same frame of mind cannot be recreated. The post-analysis of any action is bound to be biased, partial and incomplete. Any analysis of the post-action must consider the inherent limitations, exigencies and constraints. Any organization which is not financially independent is bound to overlook mistakes and at times adhere to nepotism for its existence. It is nothing but natural. And hence, UN cannot be an exception. The motives behind the formation of the UN were to appease haves and superpowers. It is very much evident from the concept of veto power and the composition of the security council. They have remained the main financers and promoters of UN. Considering these inherent limitations, the UN has performed reasonably well. The UN successfully managed to avoid the third world war during the cold war period. The UN has been a highly adaptable institution, one that has evolved in response to changing times. Today, it is struggling hard to cope with the new world order of unipolarism and globalization.

The genesis of UN failure at significant point lies in the fact that it is still dominated by the P-5 and proper democratization and expansion of the organization has yet to take place. The world body has failed to reflect the democratic aspiration of the world. Without being democratic itself, it talks of democratization of the world.
Rise of the United Nations

1. First and foremost it has prevented the occurrence of any further world wars.
2. Instrumental in the maintenance of international ‘balance of power’.
3. Significant role in disarming the world and making it nuclear free. Various treaty negotiations like ‘Partial Test Ban Treaty’ and ‘Nuclear non-proliferation treaty’ have been signed under UN umbrella.
4. Demise of colonialism and imperialism on one hand and apartheid on the other had UN sanctions behind them.
6. Despite crippled by Bretton Woods Institutions, UN has played limited but effective role on economic matters. Supported the North-South dialogue and aspired for emergence of new international economic order.
7. Agencies of UN, like WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO have keenly participated in the transformation of the international social sector.
8. Peace keeping operations, peaceful resolution of disputes and refugee concerns had always been on the list of core issues.
9. Since 1945, the UN has been credited with negotiating 172 peaceful settlements that have ended regional conflicts.
10. The world body was also instrumental in institutionalization of international laws and world legal frame work.
11. Passage of various conventions and declarations on child, women, climate, etc, highlights the extra-political affairs of the otherwise political world body.
12. It has successfully controlled the situation in Serbia, Yugoslavia and Balkan areas.
Failure of the United Nations

1. UN opinion on Hungary and Czechoslovakia were ignored by the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1950s.
2. Israel had been taking unilateral action through decades in its geographical vicinity and the issue of middle-east remains far from its settlement. The role of UN has been completely undermined by the United States of America. Further, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was failed to assist the LAF in taking steps towards the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani river of an free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL deployed in this area. UN Security Council resolution 1701 had aimed of disarming the Hezbollah guerilla organization in Lebanon.
3. No emphatic role in crisis of worst kinds like the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam crisis etc.
4. UN was nowhere in the picture when the NATO rained bombs over former Yugoslavia.
5. Uni-polarity and unilateralism has shaken the relevance of the world body. Unilateral action in Iraq was bereft of UN sanction.
6. It has failed to generate a universal consensus to protect the deteriorating world climate.
7. Number of nuclear powers in the world has kept on increasing.
8. Could not control the horizontal expansion and proliferation of weapons and arms.
9. Financial dependence on the industrialized nations has at times deviated UN from neutrality and impartiality.
10. The disarmament treaties have failed to make the world free from nuclear weapons and the expected results of FMCT, NPT, START, etc could not be seen as a watershed in the realm of continued race for weapons of mass destruction.
11. The UN was totally exposed in the case of US invasion on Iraq in name for the search weapon of mass destruction. The United Nations has failed to solve crisis in Somalia, Sudan and many African countries and has left them into mess. By and large, United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) II was a failure. It failed to address the root of the problems in Somalia, failed to disarm or capture Aidid, and made no progress in restructuring the government. The Haskanita massacre in Sudan still marks the memory and symbolizes the failure of the UN mission. In Sudan, over 2 million people got killed and UN did nothing significant to protect them. The UN has admitted that peacekeepers were wrong to stay in barracks during recent fighting between northern and southern Sudan in which hundreds of people died and caused tens of thousands to flee.
12. UN has accepted the fact that U.N. peacekeepers in Rwanda stood by as Hutu slaughtered some 800,000 Tutsi. In Bosnia, the UN declared safe areas for Muslims but did
nothing to secure them, letting the Serbs slaughter thousands in Srebrenica.

13. The Security Council couldn’t agree on any criticism for North Korea’s unprovoked attack on South Korea’s Yeonpyeong Island on November 23, 2010, its second in less than a year.

These limitations and outmoded performances clearly indicate for complete rejuvenation and restructuring of the United Nations. A new funding system along with restructured Security Council is the need of the hour. The incessant violation of human and democratic rights have shown that the world body needs better orientation and approach towards dealing the challenges of 21st century world. If UN continues to handle sensitive issues such an inept manner then it is bound to create a recipe for war.

(Vivek S. Raj)