



Invisible Governance: International Secretariats in Global Politics

John Mathiason

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International public servants and their far-reaching secretariats receive little press attention when nation-states take the spotlight in significant international events, which is why author John Mathiason and others commonly refer to them as *invisible*. But secretariats activities are constantly shaping the course of history with inspectors determining whether uranium enrichment in Iran is for peaceful purposes, maintaining surveillance on a possible bird flu epidemic (the World Health Organization), raising alarms about starvation in Zimbabwe (the World Food Programme), or passing judgment on former heads of state and military officers in the Balkans (the United Nations war crimes tribunal).

Having served as a member of the United Nations Secretariat for 25 years, author John Mathiason offers a unique behind-the-scenes view, taking readers through of the life and duties of an international public servant. Through personal accounts and extensive knowledge of a variety of international organizations, Mathiason covers the implications of being an influential, but "invisible" entity. He charts the difficulties in documenting scope and accountability, the issues such as disarmament, human rights, and environmental protection that he encountered while serving at the secretariat and charts the history of these dynamic and expansive entities present in every crucial event of the past century.

By looking at the international public sector as an actor in its own right, *Invisible Governance* provides a new perspective on the workings of the international system and tools and approaches for ensuring that the system works effectively and with accountability.

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