

2

No Development without Peace: Laying the Political and Security Foundations

BRUCE JONES

In November 2012 a newly formed rebel movement, known as Seleka, began fighting in the northern and central regions of the Central African Republic (CAR), quickly scoring victories and holding territory. In March 2013 they overran the capital, Bangui, and seized power, suspending the constitution and dissolving parliament. By August 2013 the UN secretary general was warning that CAR had suffered a total breakdown of law and order.¹ In October 2013 the UN Security Council approved the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping mission to reinforce an existing African Union mission on the ground.

Characteristically slow to arrive, the UN forces were not yet on the ground when new rounds of fighting broke out in November 2013. Unlike the fighting a year earlier, this round pitted Seleka versus anti-Seleka militias and had a distinctly sectarian tinge, with rival Muslim and Christian militias targeting civilians. By December several hundred people had been reported killed, but this was probably a serious underestimate, as access to the countryside was sharply limited. In December, France deployed troops into CAR to help quell the fighting, and the U.S. Air Force began airlifting Rwandan and other troops into CAR to reinforce the African Union mission.

1. For an account of the unfolding of violent rebellion in the Central African Republic in late 2013, see International Crisis Group (2013a).

This was neither CAR's first bout of violence nor the first time international peacekeeping forces had been deployed into the country to quell violence of one form or another. Indeed, the timeline of CAR since independence is a sad tale of coups, countercoups, dissolved parliaments, French forces, and UN/AU/EU forces, interspersed with very brief bouts of semi-stability. In the 1970s CAR was led—to use a euphemistic term—by the notorious Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who ruled the country he renamed the Central African Empire like a character out of a William Boyd novel, replete with rumors that he fed his political opponents to crocodiles.² Unlike many other African states, its territory was not the site of a cold war-era proxy battle, but it was mired in low-level violence through much of that period. Then, as the cold war refocused international priorities, CAR like many other African states came under intense pressure from France and other donor governments to form political parties and hold elections. Moderately free elections were held in 1993, ending twelve years of military rule. The winner of those elections, Ange-Felix Patassa, was re-elected in 1999. International development actors began efforts at reform. But things began to erode. A coup attempt against President Patassa was suppressed in 2001 in part through the assistance of Libyan and Chadian troops. But then Patassa was ousted in 2003 by forces loyal to former army chief of staff Francois Bozize, and the situation descended back into violent instability.

A new chance for peace came in 2007, when the government and a series of rebel groups signed a peace accord. The UN authorized a peacekeeping force to help implement the peace agreement. Peace talks continued with holdout rebel forces, and concluded in December 2008. A reasonably stable peace held among the internal forces. The UN established a Peacebuilding Office—which straddles traditional political engagement and traditional development action—and CAR came onto the agenda of the UN's Peacebuilding Commission.

But CAR is not lucky in its neighborhood, and in February 2009 Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army rebels entered into CAR. French troops helped chase out the LRA, later with help from the African Union. The situation continued to be one of low-level instability in parallel with halting efforts to restore parliament, renew the constitution, and hold new elections. Still, by May 2010 the Security Council (also preoccupied with fights on many fronts) judged the situation to be stable enough to withdraw the UN force. The Peacebuilding Office stayed on (UN 2012). In January 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections were held, under the UN's watch, and Bozize won another term. In August 2012 the last holdout rebel force signed the peace agreement with the government.³

2. For an account of the self-styled Emperor Bokassa's brutal rule, see Titley (1997).

3. For an account of the effort to establish some degree of political stability, see International Crisis Group (2013b).

All this held for exactly six months. Throughout this period, the international development community continued to press for and monitor progress against the Millennium Development Goals, reporting regularly on improvement. It is hard to know how to react to those reports. The earlier reports reflect the norm of the time and make for slightly Orwellian reading—in the introductory chapter to the 2004 report a mere paragraph refers to political crises, all but ignoring sustained violence in the country (Republique Centrafricaine 2004). By 2010 reality had begun to penetrate even UN political correctness, and the report does focus on the violence, the peace process, and the challenge of governance (Republique Centrafricaine 2010).

The analysis of the underlying economic realities is largely unchanged, and the statistics are grim. In 2013 CAR occupied the 180th spot on the UN's Human Development Index. In the 1990s, by measures like child mortality and women dying in childbirth, CAR was moving in reverse. Take child mortality (one of the more reliably monitored indicators, even in situations of instability): having declined from 212 per 1,000 in 1988 to 157 in 1995, the situation had deteriorated, with child deaths per 1,000 rising to 194 by 2000. The 2010 account of progress on the MDGs is sobering. Of the twelve goals or subgoals against which progress is measured, the government and the UN team writing the 2010 report assigned a mark of "probable" that CAR would meet *one* of them—from a base of 74 percent in 2003, the proportion of the country without access to potable water had declined to 65 percent, meaning that it was within the realm of the possible that it would hit the MDG target of 40 percent by 2015. But the assessment of "probable" here is a heartily optimistic one and, given recent events, likely now out of reach. Two other targets were judged to be "possible"—enrollment of children in primary school and prevalence of malaria. On the other nine targets, the CAR UN team gave a clear, frank assessment of the likelihood of hitting the MDGs by 2015: "impossible" (Republique Centrafricaine 2010).

Joseph Stalin is commonly reported to have once quipped that "one death is a tragedy; one million is a statistic."⁴ In the global scheme of development and progress against poverty, the acute, crushing, and frequently violent poverty of CAR's 4 million people may only be a minor part of the statistics, but it's also a tragedy. And it's a tragedy that's being replicated, at greater or lesser degrees of intensity, in a further thirty-plus countries that currently host roughly a third

4. There's no written record of this; but McCollough's biography of Truman cites a biography of Stalin by Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, who in turn refers to an exchange between Churchill and Stalin in the famous Tehran conference. According to McCollough, the more precise rendering is, "When one man dies it is a tragedy, when thousands die it's statistics." See McCollough (1992).

of the world's poorest people.⁵ While poverty is declining in many places, the poor are increasingly clustered in others. As stable low-income countries make progress, and middle-income countries improve their rates of poverty reduction, the world's absolute poor will be increasingly concentrated in fragile states. Under more than one scenario, by 2025, 60–70 percent of the global poor will be located in forty-five fragile states (Edward and Sumner 2013; Chandy and Gertz 2011). Even if progress in middle-income countries slows, still by 2015 roughly half of the world's absolute poor will live in fragile states.⁶

The Challenge Ahead

To say that the situation in CAR poses a challenge for the international development project is an understatement. Quite apart from a weak economic base and appalling human development conditions, CAR exhibits a series of features any one of which would complicate development: abusive leadership, poor governance, weak institutions, repeated violence, subregional conflict, and cross-border violence. The fact is, though, that these features are common across the world's so-called fragile states (still a poorly defined, categorically confused term).⁷

The development project, at least at the official level, relies on globalist language and universal standards. In the UN debate about what will replace the Millennium Development Goals when that project reaches an end in 2015, the concept of universal goals will be taken even farther forward—despite ongoing negotiations on just about every aspect of what those goals should cover (or whether there should even be goals). The one thing every government at the UN seems to agree on is that the normative framework for post-2015 should have universality as its starting point. There are good moral and political reasons for that. But the concept of universality clouds a basic reality, which is that the development challenge is rapidly diverging into two fundamentally different projects. In large swathes of the previously poor world, reasonable governance, sustained growth during much of the past decade, and steady declines in poverty mean that many low-income or low middle-income countries now face challenges that have primarily to do with economic and fiscal strategy, global economic governance, national resource mobilization

5. Exactly what percentage of the world's absolute poor live in conflict-affected states is debated, with estimates ranging as high as 70 percent if the statistic includes the poor living in conflict-affected subnational areas of middle-income countries, especially India.

6. Depends on definition and boundaries of list; for OECD figures used here, see DAC (2012).

7. For a discussion of the terminological and categorical confusion that applies to the concept of fragility, see in particular Patrick (2011). Simply put, any category that includes both North Korea and Central African Republic is self-evidently flawed.

and allocation, targeting investments in human development, and managing energy growth under conditions of mounting climate pressure. In these states, the emerging concept of actually eradicating extreme poverty in a generation is an ambitious but conceptually achievable—and powerfully ennobling—goal. In another set of states, beset by weak institutions and recurrent violence, it's an abstraction.

This book focuses on poverty eradication, and that involves a necessary focus on the second set of states—for lack of a better term, the world's fragile states, where weak institutions, recurrent violence, regional insecurity, acute poverty, and severe human underdevelopment intersect. And this chapter in turn focuses on one particular subset of the challenges, and one of the most difficult: restoring some form of peaceful political process and some degree of stability as foundations for broader development. Over the long term, as more and more research shows us, it is stable political institutions that are foundational to economic development (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009; Fukuyama 2004). But the pathway to effective political institutions can be long, tortured, and fraught with risks of relapse into conflict or war.

This chapter makes the following basic arguments. First, that there's an interim step between the narrow business of postconflict stabilization and the more ambitious business of building effective institutions—that is, forging political settlements, or pacts, between elites, pacts that can maintain some degree of stability even in the absence of robust institutions. Second, that there's reasonable evidence to suggest that a major determinant of whether political settlements will hold or relapse into violence is how inclusive they are—an issue we need to understand with greater granularity. Third, then, when it comes to the longer term job of building credible political and security institutions, international efforts are in their infancy. For all the flaws of the development practice, there is a body of technical expertise on the practice of building economic, financial, and social institutions. But when it comes to the political and security institutions on which those ultimately must rest, the international system faces a major void.

In making these arguments, I infer that if there is no progress in levels of acute violence and poor governance in fragile states, there will be sharp limits on progress either in economic growth or poverty reduction (though some progress against human development indicators could be possible). Of course, some states with limited conflict have been able to make some progress against development goals; but large-scale conflict is a major drag both on growth and on achieving development objectives (World Bank 2011). It is clear that at some level weak governance and recurrent exposure to violence is a challenge for development. It does *not* follow, however, that it is necessarily a challenge for development agencies, either those of governments or the multilateral system.

None of these, as yet, can credibly be argued to be well suited to the job of helping states navigate a long and frequently violent process of forging more resilient or responsive political and security institutions. And many development actors have semirecognized this: they acknowledge that the growing concentration of the world's poor in fragile and conflict-affected states means that the global development project can no longer ignore the question of violence and political governance; they also acknowledge that "partners" should take on the tough part of that challenge, namely political governance and security institutions.

Here's the problem: there are no partners. The plain fact of the matter is, there is no part of the international system, with rare and highly limited exceptions, that's actually geared to this challenge. The international political and security architecture has done a better job than it's often credited for in helping to reduce levels of outright war. But there's almost no part of that architecture that's geared to the challenge of helping states engage in political development or the articulation of credible and sustainable security institutions, or the instruments or attitudes of the rule of law. And so if the broad notion that the international system should not abandon people to states of protracted poverty and insecurity is to be sustained, we need new answers to the question of not only how international systems can help with the challenge of fragile states but also about who these actors are.

And Yet, Peace Happens: The International System for Responding to Conflict

The November 2013 return to violence in CAR, which happened while the international human rights community was starting to gear up for the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, generated many comparisons between the CAR violence and that earlier brutal event. Many in the activist community argued or intimated that the UN and the international community had largely failed to learn the lessons of Rwanda and that international efforts to contain or mitigate violence against civilians still fell far short of what is needed (Goldberg 2014).⁸ There were disturbing echoes in the brutality of the violence and the hateful rhetoric that accompanied it. And in one of those moments when history laughs at us, CAR joined the UN Security Council in January 2014, just as Rwanda had been in on the UNSC twenty years earlier, when the UN was avoiding a debate over how to respond to warnings there of impending genocide.⁹

8. Also see Savita Pawnday, Twitter post, January 14, 2014, 12:59 p.m. (https://twitter.com/savita_pawnday).

9. On the question of how much progress the UN has or has not made in dealing with genocide, see Elliasson (2014).

While no serious analyst would question the notion that more could be done to improve the international response to conflict or to improve the protection of civilians against internal violence, the notion that little or nothing has improved since Rwanda is facile. That's true even in CAR, bad as things are. In Rwanda, a UN peacekeeping presence already on the ground when genocidal violence broke out *withdrew* in the face of the fighting, which began in April 1994. Genocide had engulfed the entire country before a French military contingent deployed into western Rwanda in a late and limited bid to halt the killings. In CAR it was a matter of days, not months, before a French military contingent was deployed in to help stabilize the situation. In Rwanda, the U.S. military refused to have its equipment used by potential African troop contributors to a UN force; in CAR, the U.S. air force is flying African troop contributors in to rapidly reinforce an African Union mission there (Roulo 2013). No less than six international missions have been deployed to CAR over the past half decade to help quell the fighting, and as I draft this, the European Union looks set to deploy a force to prevent further deterioration. In Rwanda roughly 800,000 people were killed in the genocide; in CAR, international estimates so far are of roughly 1,000 people killed (*BBC News* 2013). The real number is surely higher, but it does not begin to approach the scale of Rwanda.

And this is characteristic of broader trends. For the past twenty-five years, national, international, and regional actors (in that order of importance) have applied themselves to the challenge of bringing long-running civil wars to an end. The UN Security Council did so extensively; since the end of the cold war, the UNSC has acted in more than sixty cases to authorize mediators, peacekeepers, observers, and police to help national actors bring civil wars to an end. Alongside this, the UN Secretariat and UN agencies as well as the World Bank, NGOs, and Western aid donors deployed a legion of disarmament teams, humanitarian teams, and postconflict reconstruction teams to aid the effort. Regional organizations and later NATO also added their capacities (Jones 2007).

It used to be, in the conflict resolution literature, that there were two dominant narratives about how wars could end. One on the one hand, simply, one side could win: there was a substantial body of thought that argued that stable peace only came through one-sided victory (Luttwak 1999). Another scenario was that the parties to a conflict could reach what was known as a “mutually hurting stalemate,” and from this point of exhaustion—and having reached the conclusion that they could not win outright victory by military means—the parties would then be amenable to some form of mediated solution (Zartman 2000).

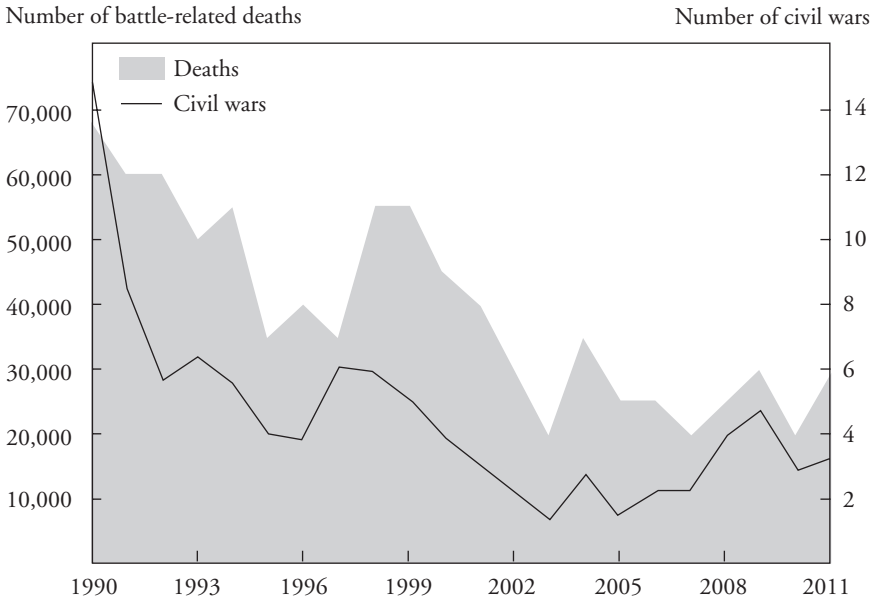
The explosion of international mediation efforts after the cold war created a third option. And the time that elapsed between when wars started and when wars ended began to shrink. Some civil wars in Africa had run more or less from

independence until the end of the cold war (for example in Mozambique and Angola) and only reached a negotiated outcome some thirty years after their start. But in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Bosnia, and elsewhere peace agreements were being reached within three to four years of the outbreak of violence.

Why should international mediation and peacekeeping succeed, even if only sometimes? If the earlier understanding was that a government or a rebel force had to reach the exhausting conclusion that they could not win outright victory by force alone before mediation had a chance to succeed, why, in the post-cold war era, have international mediators seemed to be able to bring parties to the table faster than cold war precedent would suggest? There's surprisingly little examination of this question, but we can reason the following. Mediators, having probed the parties' attitudes, gleaned some sense of their dynamics and potential red lines, and with a lot of trial and error can put on the table a package of power-sharing and wealth-sharing measures long before that package would be attainable through attrition and exhaustion. Once they do so, fighters are confronted by the following calculation: they can continue to fight, in the hope or estimate that they could secure an ultimate one-sided victory; but they also have to estimate the odds that they could continue to fight for years and either lose or, more likely, end up in some form of stalemate. Or they can short-circuit the effort and accept the package. The appeal of the mediators' package rises if also on offer is some form of international guarantee. Stedman (2002) among others stresses that "guarantees" from the international community are pretty thin. But in the case of a rebel leader looking at whether to accept a mediated deal, the willingness of the international system to deploy forces into the country to provide physical protection of elites, at least for a few years, may have its attractions. In other words, an international mediator may be able to offer a shorter route to the place that the parties would ultimately reach through exhaustion and stalemate. And there are demonstration effects: as more and more cases of mediation and peacekeeping are undertaken, the more it's believable for parties to a conflict that peacekeepers would indeed arrive, would indeed protect them, and would indeed stick around at least for a few years.

Despite this logic, the blunt fact is that much of international mediation and peacekeeping since the end of the cold war has failed. Over the past twenty years, mediation efforts have failed roughly three-quarters of the times that they've been tried. Peacekeeping operations fail—that is, the country reverts to violence—roughly half the time that missions are deployed (Fortna 2008). That's a lot. But the fact is that during the cold war, we fueled rather than fought civil wars. When you shift from adding to a problem to trying to help solve it, even a three-quarters failure rate actually represents one-quarter progress on where you were before. And so, slowly, as international mediation efforts continued and international peacekeepers continued to be deployed, at ever larger scale, the

Figure 2-1. *Battle-Related Deaths in Civil Wars, 1990–2011*



Source: Mack (2012).

number of civil wars that ended and stayed ended began to outstrip the number of new wars that started (Fortna 2008). The net effect of this was that the total number of civil wars in the world slowly but steadily declined. In the period from 1991 to 1992, there were twenty-one active major civil wars—fifty-one when minor wars are included. Minor wars are defined as having at least twenty-five battle deaths a year; major wars are defined as having a thousand battle deaths a year (Mack 2012; also see figure 2-1). By 2008 the number of major wars had fallen to the low single digits; of minor wars, the number had fallen from fifty-one to thirty-one (Mack 2010). Death tolls fell sharply as well, as did the number of countries at war: in 1992, 21 percent of the world’s countries were at war; in 2012, that percentage was down to 13 percent.¹⁰

The implications of all this for contemporary development can be understood in two distinct ways. First, civil wars themselves are not, at least not primarily, a development challenge. It matters to make this point, because when the issue

10. Did international peacekeeping actually contribute to this? The evidence suggests, yes. Increasingly the research literature on peacekeeping suggests that it played a substantial role in contributing to declining levels of violence. See Fortna (2008); Walter (2002); World Bank (2011).

of the relationship between conflict and development is raised, it's often stressed that the job of responding to conflict and war properly belongs with the Security Council and regional organizations, not the development community; and that is absolutely true. And when we look at the on-again, off-again international response to CAR, while I argue that the response is better, by a long measure, than that which occurred in Rwanda, it's clear that there's room for major improvement. Any case in which six or more peacekeeping operations have to be deployed in the course of a decade is a case in which international peacekeeping isn't getting the job done. So it's a reality that if the international security architecture doesn't continue to improve its efforts in helping bring wars to a stable end, that will sharply limit the prospects for development in states where violence recurs.

Second, despite its weaknesses, the continued operation and expansion of international conflict management efforts have contributed to the fact that a growing number of countries—in 2013, roughly twenty of them—have escaped the acute phase of civil war and managed to get through the early phase of post-conflict recovery. From Mozambique to Ethiopia to Bosnia to Timor-Leste to Rwanda and arguably to Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Angola, the acute violence of the recent past has receded. But these states face a new challenge. This has been described as “development under the shadow of violence” (Jones and Elgin-Cossart 2011). The most recent bout of fighting may have receded, but the threat of renewed war remains: distrust between parties lingers long after the fighting stops. Indeed, as civil wars in richer states have come to an end, among the poorer states the risk that they will experience new bouts of war is increasing. Of new civil wars in the early 2000s, 90 percent were in countries that had experienced a prior civil war (compared to 67 percent in the previous decade, 62 percent in the 1980s, and 57 percent in the 1970s; see World Bank 2011).

Why Does Peace Fail?

The large-scale ramping up of international efforts to mitigate internal violence has helped produce a steady decline in war. But the fact is, in places like CAR, such efforts often fail to sustain the peace. Why? To understand this phenomenon, it helps to turn for a moment to the broader debate about the causes of internal war.¹¹

11. For a brief moment after the end of the cold war, there was an effort to see whether the dynamics of internal war corresponded to the causal dynamics of international war; see Snyder and Jervis (1999). That effort shed some light on one aspect of causation—security dilemmas—but it also illustrated the limits of an approach that lumps internal wars with interstate wars. That's even more relevant to the present day, when interstate war is a slightly growing phenomenon, while internal wars continue to decline.

First, and critically, violence should not be assumed an irrational response: for many actors in many settings, violence is a rational choice of strategy (Tilly 1975, 2003, 2008; Weede and Muller 1998; Kaufmann 2005). Some in the economics profession think of violence and war as intrinsically irrational and look for explanations (Blattman and Miguel 2010; Burnham and Peterson 2014). The political science profession starts from a different logic. It is, for example, perfectly rational to adopt a violent posture if you believe that you or your identity group may be subject to violence by an opposing group; such calculations can be an important motivator for group violence (de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999).

Moreover, every subgroup is aware that every other subgroup is making similar calculations, and so risk avoidance may suggest moving first to pick up weapons and organize for self-defense, a move that will seem threatening to another group, causing them also to organize for war (Snyder and Jervis 1999; Walter 1997). History is replete with examples of wars that start as one group moves to defend themselves from a possible attack by the state or another group, causing the state or the opposing group in turn to move toward violence. This kind of “security dilemma” can contribute to the outbreak of war, including internal war, where the state is too weak to guarantee security or to suppress incipient rebellion (Walter 1999, 2002). Leaders may also start wars to improve their political position in a postwar settlement or to gain access to territory where natural resources can be looted. In taking such steps, leaders rarely risk violent death: it is foot soldiers, not generals or rebel commanders, who die in wars.

Second, in a given setting, any one of a number of factors can motivate political leaders or opportunists to pursue a violent strategy. Those factors can be political in basis: the exclusion of an ethnic or religious or territorial group from the trappings of power can create powerful motivations to challenge the existing order, including through violence (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Rothchild 1997; Hartzell and Rothchild 1997; Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild 2001). They can be security oriented: minority groups can fear, or actually experience, persecution or oppression and turn to arms to redress the situation (de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999; Walter 2004; Posen 1993). External security factors—including the threat of invasion and spillover factors like cross-border militants, equipment, resources, criminal networks, finances, and refugees—can also trigger violence (Brown 1996; Gomez and Christensen 2010; Gleditsch 2007; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Saleyhan and Gleditsch 2006; Saleyhan 2008; Collier and others 2003; Craft and Smaldone 2002). Motives can also be economic: if marginal groups are blocked from accessing a state’s budget and the private sector is limited and controlled, powerful economic incentives exist to challenge the existing order, and these are amplified when the state has significant natural resources (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Berdal and Malone 2000; Ross 2004; Humphreys

2005). The calculations and motivations that trigger war are usually internal, but they can be amplified, manipulated, supported, or restrained by regional and external dynamics (Fearon and Laitin 2004; Auty 2001; de Soysa 2000; Svensson 2000). A lot of recent quantitative scholarship has searched for single-variable explanations for war (rain, inequality, mountains, economic incentives), but efforts to find single-variable causes of internal war have not been broadly successful.

Third, weak institutions are unable to provide peaceful and durable resolution to these stress factors, and thus they create the conditions whereby violence is a rational choice for pursuing claims. The causal mechanism for this is clear: where political and accountability institutions are strong, challenges to the existing order can often be accommodated through political dialogue, legal action, nonviolent civil strife, or similar. But where institutions are weak, lack of confidence in the ability of institutions to resolve claims increases the incentives for violence, while a calculation that weak security services are unlikely to be able to repress opposition decreases the obstacles to rebellion. In a study for the World Bank, Fearon (2010b) found that weak financial, administrative, and coercive capacities are a better predictor of the onset of civil war and extreme violence than poverty or other economic measures—or than political grievances or ethnic inclusion. Weak institutions are the necessary condition, not the sufficient condition: a trigger is needed.

The research literature is weak on two additional factors that practitioners consistently find to be strongly relevant to war and peace dynamics: legitimacy and leadership. Legitimacy is a complex issue, poorly understood in the research literature on conflict and development, yet evidently important to the political dynamics of states. An important part of the research agenda on conflict and development is to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of legitimacy—including, vitally, non-Western forms of legitimacy, such as revolutionary legitimacy and embedded historical legitimacy (Jones and Chandran 2008)—and the way legitimacy plays into causes of conflict and of recovery. Leadership, too, is given weak treatment in the research literature, but few if any practitioner accounts of conflict dynamics do not give it a major role. A better understanding of leadership—and in particular of the kinds of social dynamics that facilitate certain forms of leadership—will matter a lot to better understandings of the business of forging stability after war.

The causes of any *specific* war emerge from this complex mix of motivations, regional/international dynamics, weak institutions, and leadership/legitimacy issues. In one way, this is an unsatisfying outcome: it would be far more reassuring to find a single cause to explain fragility and war. Common sense, though, tells us that phenomena as complex as war and fragility should have complex causes and that these should vary considerably from case to case—and that is

what the science increasingly tells us too.¹² If the onset of war is a fairly complex problem, the fact that wars continue, that they recur, that fragility is endemic—this is a rather simple problem. Simple analytically—but not at all simple to solve. It’s a story in three parts.

First, whatever set of factors engendered conflict in the first place is likely to remain and intensify with violence. If security fears triggered violence, the reality of conflict exacerbates and confirms those fears (Stedman 1996; Brown 1996; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Walter 1999; Snyder and Jervis 1999). If political or ethnic discrimination motivates violence, acts of war intensify a sense of difference and enmity (Horowitz 1985, 1998; Huntington 1997; Walter 1997; Kaufman 2006). If economic factors are to blame, they are likely to worsen—violence often provides opportunities for predatory entrepreneurship, and it can be hard to convince people that they can profit as much from peace as from predation, though they often can (Berdal and Malone 2000; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Herbst 2000).

Second, whatever else has happened, at least two sizable portions of the population will have proven to one another that they are willing to use violence to deny the other their claims or demands or rights. Even once a cease-fire or peace agreement has been reached, rational analysis by the other side tells them that it’s possible—not certain, but *possible*—that their former opponents could at any point return to violence (Powell 2006; Posen 1993; Walter 1999; Fearon 1995). (And violence amplifies irrational views, often through acts of brutality that reinforce perceptions of ancient enmity and atavistic hatreds; see Kalyvas 2003.) Each side knows this about the other. The rational decision for both sides is thus to retain the option to return to violence—and in many cases, the rational decision is to take violent action preemptively (Kaufman 1996; Walter 1999, 2004; de Figueireda and Weingast 1999; Posen 1993). This “commitment gap” or “trust deficit” is a powerful explanation for why many cease-fires or peace agreements fail (Fortna 2004).

Third, whatever the quality of institutions before violence, they are likely to be worse after it. Institutions fail to maintain political relations. Security institutions fail to provide security and prey on the populace. Leaders and officials flee or are killed. Physical damage may also be extensive. Since weak institutions are a strong indicator of conflict onset, the deleterious effect of violence on institutions becomes a negative cycle (Walter 2010).

And just in case this wasn’t already complicated enough, a further factor in postconflict settings is organized crime. Protracted episodes of internal violence

12. There is a literature that looks to complex causes of war. Exemplars include Stedman (1996); Brown (1996); Fearon (1995). More recent quantitative literature includes Fearon and Laitin (2003); Vreeland (2008); Collier and Hoeffler (2009); Hegre, Ostby, and Raleigh (2009).

often create opportunities for armed groups to engage in illicit commercial activity, sometimes to fund rebellion, sometimes as a side activity (Muggah 2005). The end of violence and the elaboration of a political agreement that includes the leaders of a rebellion may not constitute sufficient incentive for them to end their illicit commercial activity, or subgroups that do not profit deeply from the settlement may break away. Moreover, weak but nevertheless semistable political settlements may create conditions conducive to organized crime—organized criminal groups may avoid all-out war but take advantage of weak security structures and fluid political conditions to penetrate postconflict settings—for example, as in Guinea-Bissau. (It should be stressed that evidence about organized crime is sharply limited and the knowledge base about the relationship between organized crime and conflict is in its infancy.)¹³

In short, once a country with weak institutions has gone down the route of internal violence, sustained exit is hard. The challenge is to create arrangements in which potential combatants see their interests in participating in stable, positive-sum arrangements, rather than returning to war for negative-sum gains. From a game-theoretic perspective, opponents in a civil war are in a form of single-iteration prisoners' dilemma game, for which there's no reward for cooperation; the challenge is to move them into a repeated prisoners' dilemma game, for which there is at least a potential reward for cooperation. And this, of course, is the function of institutions.

But you don't move from war to institutions overnight. Where institutions were strong before a war, it may be possible to move back into institutional arrangements with some form of power-sharing deal attached to them, or some set of international guarantees about inclusion. (That, in sum, is the story line of how war was ended in Bosnia.) But where institutions are very weak, as they are in many low-income states that have experienced violence, an interim step is needed (Prichett and de Weijer 2010). The interim step is structured political settlements.

In the Short Term: Political Settlements as a First Step

Over the long run, the most successful economic states have developed “open access” orders—that is, formal institutions that limit the role of informal agreements among elites in regulating the affairs of the state and that provide for rule-based access to administration for all (North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009). These institutions are not a guarantee of conflict avoidance: Yugoslavia had fairly developed institutions before the unraveling of the Soviet Union created

13. For a review of the literature, see Kavanagh (2011).

centrifugal forces stronger than the centripetal forces of the state institutions, ripping it apart with extreme violence. Stronger institutions, though, mean the ability to withstand stronger political, economic, and security pressures, or stresses, on the state, both internal and external.

Here, of course, we encounter a Catch-22, for when states have weak institutions and have experienced violence, they encounter a powerful trust deficit, and that trust deficit is a major obstacle to building institutions. But there are pathways out of fragility. States that have successfully exited violence and begun a process of development have often started with strong political settlements, or elite pacts (OECD 2011; Licklider 1995; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). These have sometimes taken the form of peace agreements; sometimes they are simply informal understandings between elites about the rules of the political game and the division of economic spoils (Walter 2004, 2009; Licklider 1995; Wagner 1993). They are, in short, informal protoinstitutions. They are, by definition, primarily about elites and thus dependent on elite relationships and only secondarily address the needs of broader populations.

The research provides preliminary evidence of the positive effects of power-sharing regimes on the duration of peace (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). But empirical evidence on the potential adverse effects of such agreements in ethnically divided societies, or when power is given to former armed groups, is still limited to case studies of varying rigor (Simonsen 2005; Samuels and von Ein-siedel 2004; Horowitz 1985; on the opposite side, López-Pintor 2006; see also Tull and Mehler 2005; De Zeeuw 2008). That political settlements matter is clear; but we are only beginning to know much about the *shape* of political settlements that do or don't endure. For all of the literature on the causes of war, there is a paucity of literature on successful recovery.¹⁴ This is unsurprising: it is only now that there is a generation of post-cold war cases of civil war that have ended conflict and sustained peace for more than a decade. This creates an important opportunity to shift the research focus.

One important element is the political settlement that follows a particular episode of conflict—that is, in essence, an agreement among elites about the allocation and distribution of power in the aftermath of violence. Scholarship shows that there's an important relationship between contested power-sharing arrangements and conflict relapse, and between elite pacts and stability (see Walter 2004, 2009; Licklider 1995; Wagner 1993; Hartzell and Hoddie 2007;

14. There is a broad literature on peace building; but little of it is methodologically rigorous in its treatment of causation. Important exceptions include Doyle and Sambanis (2000, 2006); Cousens and Kumar (2001); Oberschall (2007). There is good reason for the lack so far of rigorous treatment of successful exit: until recently, there was not a sufficient body of cases where enough time has elapsed to form confident judgments about continued stability.

Lindemann 2010). But what, exactly, is a political settlement? There are two quite distinct ways of thinking about political settlements. One approach is oriented toward informal, long-running dynamics between political actors, especially elites. Another is focused on specific, often formal renegotiations of political arrangements through power-sharing deals, constitutional conferences, peace agreements, and the like. Each approach has its merits in substantive terms.

In what follows, I take a “peace agreements plus” approach—in other words, a substantial focus of the analysis of political settlements is on peace agreements *and their implementation* (which sometimes differs substantially from paper agreements), but I use the term also to cover other discrete episodes of political renegotiation among elites. Power-sharing arrangements negotiated after limited episodes of political violence (as in Kenya in 2008 and Yemen in 2011) or after mass public demonstrations (as in Lebanon after the Cedar Revolution) share important characteristics with postwar settlements, as do leadership changes and shifts in the balance of power that follow political assassinations (as in Pakistan after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto) and the death of prominent leaders (as with the renegotiation of power distribution arrangements in South Sudan following the death of John Garang). The use of strategic appointments by government elites to bring in former opponents is particularly relevant to political settlements in cases of one-sided military victory (Rwanda, Nicaragua).

Others have focused on longer-running processes. Among the broadest definitions in use is that of the DfID: “the expression of a common understanding, usually forged between elites, about how power is organised and exercised” (UK 2010). That builds on a prior definition by Whaites, whose fuller discussion of the concept provides a useful grounding: “The structures of the state are determined by an underlying political settlement; ‘the forging of a common understanding, usually among elites, that their interests or beliefs are served by a particular way of organising political power.’ A political settlement may survive for centuries, but within that time decision-making power is likely to transfer among elite groups as individual governments come and go” (Whaites 2008).

This brings us to the second question: Is the settlement (and the question of how inclusive the settlement is) just about elites or also about wider social groupings? Here too there is a definitional debate, with some scholars and practitioners focusing on elites and others on wider state-society relations. A widely cited study that takes a more explicitly broad view of elite/social relations is that of Di John and Putzel (2009), whose definition also reflects a long historical process by which state-society relations are forged, challenged, and reformed, sometimes through violence: “The balance or distribution of power between contending social groups and classes, on which any state is based.” Similarly, Fritz and Rocha Menocal (2007) treat political settlements as “the

expression of a negotiated agreement . . . binding together state and society and providing the necessary legitimacy for those who govern over those who are ruled.” The distinction between narrow and broad concepts of political settlement is often elided.

Here it is important to note that the literature on political settlements relates to a wider literature on “elite pacts,” a literature that focuses on the relationships between elites after periods of turmoil. Weingast (1997) defines elite pacts as “agreements among competing (and often warring) elites that initiate a transition to democracy.” Higley and Burton (1998) refer to “elite settlements” as “sudden, deliberate, and lasting compromises of core disputes among political elites. . . . After settlements, elite persons and groups continue to be affiliated with conflicting parties, movements, and beliefs, but they share a consensus about government institutions and the codes and rules of political competition.” O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and Przeworski (1991) argue that elite pacts represent both formal agreements and informal arrangements to limit competition. *Elite pacts* is a concept that runs throughout the state-building process and is not necessarily linked to violence. Political settlements forged in the wake of violence, or to prevent it, should be seen as a distinct subset of elite pacts.

Of course, elite pacts and broader social compacts are not entirely distinct phenomena, as most citizen participation in political discourse happens through a variety of forms of political representatives or other elites. So elite inclusion may carry with it broader forms of citizen participation or at least broader group recognition so that their interests are reflected in a given settlement. Was the appointment of Hutu elites to significant district government positions by the Tutsi-dominated RPF, in postgenocide Rwanda, an act of elite inclusion or an act of reassurance to the broader Hutu population (McDoom 2010)? Surely both.

Whaites (2008), reviewing the elite pacting and state-building literature, reaches similar conclusions. He argues, “Elites are prominent within the literature on state building, but elites can rarely take social constituencies for granted; they must maintain an ability to organise, persuade, command or inspire. Wider societies are not bystanders in political settlements or state building.” I largely agree; but note that there are sometimes a subset of elites, particularly economic elites, that are largely abstracted from broader social groupings and who may well be able to profit and reinforce their position by reference only to economic deals with the state and external actors, freeing them to broadly ignore local social dynamics.

Moreover, we know less than we should about the different patterns of elite/social relationships within the context of violence. There is an important agenda here of marrying the research literature on how elites emerge, and what

forms of social mobilization facilitate which kinds of leadership, with the specific circumstances of violence. One important critique of both the *2011 World Development Report* and much of the recent OECD work on state building is that it does too little to elucidate the relationship between elites and broader social groupings, to understand thereby the extent to which elite pacts or other versions of elite settlements actually represent broader political forces or are abstracted from them. It would be helpful, for example, to adapt the work by Khan (1996, 1998) on the differences between patron-client relationships in advanced democracies and developing countries to the specific circumstances of violence in fragile states; and to elaborate initial work by Gauri and others (2007) on the ways different social dynamics (including across generations) shape which elites gain prominence.

Finally, policy research increasingly highlights the importance of *inclusion* for sustained peace and development. DfID's peace-building and state-building framework (UK 2010) states:

Political settlements define how political and economic power is organized. Exclusionary settlements are more likely to lead to instability. Supporting inclusive settlements means understanding the incentives of the elites and identifying when and how to empower different actors to push for a broader settlement. Peace processes provide windows of opportunity to reshape existing settlements, but may not address underlying power dynamics. Support to democratic and political processes can help promote more inclusive decision-making.

How strong is the empirical evidence for these arguments? It is worth noting that the OECD has reached similar conclusions. Its policy studies have concluded that "the overarching priority of state building must be a form of political governance and the articulation of a set of political processes or accountability mechanisms through which the state and society reconcile their expectations of one another" (Jones and Chandran 2008). And also that "for a state to be perceived as legitimate, it is crucial that a political process exists that creates space for debate and dialogue among power elites and includes all major political forces" (Papagianni 2008). These claims draw on a growing body of literature that applies state-building theory and the history of contested state building to the contemporary experience of fragile states (Fukuyama 2004; Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Chesterman, Ignatieff, and Thakur 2005; Call 2008; Brinkerhoff 2007; Barnett 2006; Patrick 2011; Rice, Pascual, and Graff 2010; Keating and Knight 2004). Studies of state building in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia by Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama 2004, 2007), and comparative studies by Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart (Ghani and Lockhart 2008) have been particularly influential in this regard. The OECD

also argues that “the participation of the public in the state-building process may also contribute to the legitimacy of the state” (Papagianni 2008), but the evidence for this is less developed. Studies also find evidence that points to elite inclusion as the main factor driving ethnic strife and civil war, because failure to include elites from other groups incentivizes them to foment rebellion (Lindemann 2008). And three recent mixed-method studies find more empirical evidence pointing to inclusion as an important factor in escaping cycles of violence and poverty.

The idea that “inclusive-enough” settlements matter for recovery is a central conclusion of the *2011 World Development Report*. As the report began its inquiry, the team turned its attention to a question that has until late received little attention in the conflict literature: What is it that has allowed some post-conflict states to *not* relapse? In other words, why does peace endure in some settings? The focus in the literature has been on the predominance of relapse; less attention has been paid to the question of the causal mechanisms that allow some postconflict societies to weather the inevitable bumps in the road of implementation of peace agreements or postvictory settlements.

To focus attention on the question, the World Bank commissioned in-depth case studies of older cases (Germany, France, and Poland after WWII; the U.S. post-Civil War), more recent cases like Rwanda, and multiple case studies comparing successful cases of exit (Vietnam, Rwanda, South Africa, Mozambique, and Cambodia) (see World Bank 2010; McDoom 2010; Roque and others 2010). (These studies were peer-reviewed by the World Bank’s Development Economics research team as well as by panels of external scholars.) The comparison of exit pathways threw up a series of interesting conclusions:

—The initial form of settlement heavily shapes the pathways via which a country emerges from violent conflict, but it does not ultimately determine the outcomes in terms of political and institutional formation/configuration and regime type.

—The existence of substantial differences within nations (ethnic and economic inequalities) has not prevented the maintenance of stability. In fact, in the case countries, poverty and marginalized groups have been conspicuously used or actively managed using regime maintenance and state-society relations mechanisms, to the extent that they form a plausible part of overall consolidation.

—In the medium term, in all cases, a dominant party emerged that was able to reinvent itself as inclusive or democratic while it consolidated the regime through deepening hegemony, executive capability, and privileged patron-client networks.

Particularly notable about these conclusions is that they held even in cases of successful exits, where war had ended through one-sided military victory. In all but one of those cases, the victorious party had reached out to oppositional forces and offered them some form of participation or inclusion in governing

processes, often through strategic appointments. This was a potentially important corrective to a line of argument that has run in the civil war literature since the end of the cold war, namely the “give war a chance” argument (Luttwak 1999.) One of the strong findings in the literature has been that wars that end through military victory are less likely to relapse into conflict than wars that end through negotiated settlement. The presumed causal mechanism here is that defeated opponents cannot muster the political or military capacity to challenge ongoing government and that, having once failed, they cannot convince enough followers to back a second attempt.

A comparative study of successful exits suggests a third mechanism: that those who might have led a second or second-stage rebellion were brought in or bought into the ruling coalition or otherwise into the machinery and spoils of government. Thus defeated “communities” were reassured that their interests would not be neglected under the postconflict governing arrangements. The appointment by the victorious Rwandan People’s Front of key Hutu figures to positions as governors of important Rwandan provinces is an example of such confidence-building terms (McDoom 2010).

To examine this further, I reviewed all cases of civil war conclusion since the end of the cold war. That examination looked at every case of internal or civil conflict extant by 1989, or that started afterward, and coded against a wide range of criteria. For those that ended, I looked for evidence of either deliberate inclusion, or lack thereof, ranging from full-blown power sharing to the use of strategic appointments to bring in opposition leaders. That examination found that, of cases that had ended through one-sided military victory, all but one fell into one of two categories: the victorious party had engaged in some form of inclusion to the opposition forces, and the settlement had endured; or the victorious party had not been inclusive, and the settlement had collapsed back into a new round of conflict (World Bank 2011).

In parallel to the *World Development Report*, Call (2012) conducted a study to address why peace fails or why, following civil wars, countries experience a resurgence of violence.¹⁵ In seeking to find causal patterns as to why civil wars ended, Call uses three parallel methodologies: a quantitative analysis, an in-depth case study of Liberia, and structured smaller case studies of another fourteen cases of recurrence. He finds that “one factor seems to play a more common causal role in civil war recurrence than others. This central finding is that *political exclusion*, rather than economic or social factors, plays the decisive role in most cases of civil war recurrence: Political exclusion acts as a trigger

15. At the time of the design of this study, Call was a CIC nonresident fellow; he conducted the Nepal case study for the adjacent country study and contributed through discussion and written inputs to the initial phase of research and thinking about this preliminary concept study.

for renewed armed conflict. Conversely, *political inclusion*, including but not limited to power-sharing agreements, is highly correlated with consolidation of peace” (Call 2012).

Call is worth quoting at length:

Political exclusion here refers to processes rather than substantive policy outcomes. It refers to participation in political or policy processes: the opportunity either to compete in the electoral arena or to enjoy representation in appointed state offices. Political processes signify both the potential and the actual exercise of power, and thus they provide a means of attaining desired ends. Chief among these ends is security for the group and its adherents or associated populations. As such, participation in the security forces (military or police) is an especially important arena of state inclusionary or exclusionary behavior affecting the likelihood of subsequent violent conflict. It is especially perilous for postconflict regimes to violate expectations about the ability of formerly armed and mobilized social groups to participate in the policing and defense of their own country or territory.

Second, political exclusion is contextually defined rather than measured by a single objective standard of participation. . . . That is, exclusion refers here not to a globally applicable objective level of political participation but to subjective perceptions among former warring factions about whether the state engages in exclusion based on prior understandings that emerged from prior war termination. . . . And these expectations are often heavily shaped by peace agreements, which serve as an initial indicator of minimal expectations. However, expectations are also shaped by promises by one party to others and by initial practices that are subsequently changed. Actions that may not be formally proscribed in an agreement can constitute a violation of expected inclusionary behavior, such as firing or persecuting a number of members of one or more parties associated with the prior war. Such a definition complicates, but also enriches, cross-national comparisons.

Call (2012) also links inclusion and exclusion to state legitimacy. Vertical legitimacy he defines as “the broad set of appropriateness of the state and its functioning” and horizontal legitimacy as “the extent to which various social groups ‘accept and tolerate each other.’” He argues that horizontal legitimacy in particular is affected by exclusion, as it is predicated on the inclusion of at least the key groups (through their leadership or elites) in any contested environment.

In addition to this evidence, the Political Instability Task Force—formerly known as the State Failure Task Force—adds to the argument. The PITF was a CIA-funded study designed to identify factors that increase vulnerability to

political instability. The task force considered failure as political crises: revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse or disruptive regime transitions, and genocides or politicides. The model employed 117 cases of failure, each matched to two control cases that appeared similar two years before onset but did not experience crisis in the succeeding five years. Through a combination of statistical logistic regression and neural network analyses, the project analyzed 600 variables related to demographic, economic, political, and environmental conditions in a state. From this, the task force found that four variables could explain over 80 percent of all cases of state failure: regime type, determined by executive recruitment and the competitiveness of participation; infant mortality, as an indirect measure of the quality of life; conflict-ridden neighborhood, for whether a state has four or more bordering states with major armed conflict; and state-led discrimination, reflecting political or economic discrimination against minorities.

Two features of these findings are particularly important to the concept of political settlements. First, the PITF found surprisingly strong results attached to measures of factionalism, which create “extraordinarily high” risks of instability in situations of open competition (Bates and others 2010). Both partial democracies and partial autocracies, based on a measurement of two variables in the Polity IV data set, are about thirty times more likely to experience instability than full autocracies and democracies. Within this, factionalism is most common in new democracies, where “party systems are weak and political participation is more likely to flow through networks rooted in traditional identities or other parochial interests” (Bates and others 2005). Though factionalism exists in autocracies, the strength of its predicting influence is largely based on the presence of open competition (Epstein and others 2006). Second, political and economic discrimination—determined by the Minorities at Risk Project’s codings—is strongly linked to instability. Systematic discrimination is found to be particularly important in models of ethnic war, though it also strengthens the global model (Gurr, Woodward, and Marshall 2005).

The findings on factionalism, open competition, and discrimination highlight important tensions between stability and inclusion in political settlements. The finding on discrimination’s link to political instability, particularly in ethnic wars, is strong evidence for the importance of inclusion. On the other hand, the link between factionalism, open competition, and instability highlights the importance of “inclusive-enough” political settlements and confidence building: open competition and full inclusion have potentially destabilizing effects in the absence of interim steps to decrease factionalism.

Elite pacts have been particularly emphasized in two related literatures: one on the implementation of peace agreements, the other on the stability of democratic regimes. Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) use regression analysis to

show that power sharing supports lasting peace following episodes of violence. Schneckener (2002), considering cases of power sharing in European countries over time, highlights that political elites and the institutional arrangements they develop are critical to avoiding a breakdown of peace agreements. Rothchild (2002) argues that pacts are “dependent upon the maintenance of balanced elite power and a preparedness to resolve conflicts among pact members through ongoing bargaining encounters.” Elite settlements have also been used to explain both regime transitions and democratic stability.¹⁶

In this regard, it is important to note that the *World Development Report 2011* also incorporated the notion that some forms of exclusion not only may not threaten political stability, they may be necessary for stability. This argument draws on a line of literature about “spoilers” and similar dynamics. For example, Nilsson (2008) argues that strategic exclusion of actors outside peace agreements will not *necessarily* disrupt peace. Lanz (2011) argues for a framework to determine who should be included in peace processes, depending on whether their inclusion would augment the peace process and would be consistent with the values of international actors. Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) argue that power sharing is most effective when peace agreements address power sharing across multiple political, territorial, military, or economic dimensions. Rothchild and Roeder (2005) argue against explicit power sharing in ethnically divided countries, since “these institutions frequently shape political processes so that there are greater incentives to act in ways that threaten democracy and the peace.”

Of course, there are cases where groups or powerful individuals within groups actively resist participation in a settlement—actors that Stedman (1997) describes as “spoilers.” The presence of spoilers in a conflict complicates the search for an inclusive settlement—one reason the *World Development Report 2011* focuses on the notion of “inclusive enough” settlements. Stedman also argues that spoilers who continue to fight do not always undermine peace, depending on the strategies employed by those seeking peace. In other words, there is a relationship between the degree of exclusion and the capacity of the

16. Lijphart (1969) explains the roots of stable democracies in deeply divided societies as a function of “consociationalism”: “The leaders of the rival subcultures may engage in competitive behavior, and thus further aggravate mutual tensions and political instability, but they may also make deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation.” Building on this, Lustick (1997) later argued that stability rested on two elite dynamics: either consociationalism or control, in which one group used its relative power to maintain peace. In consociational democracies, stability rests on elite willingness for cooperation. Diamond (1994) explains: “Elites choose democracy instrumentally because they perceive that the costs of attempting to suppress their political opponents exceed the costs of tolerating them” (and engaging them in constitutionally regulated competition). O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) focus on elite processes to explain how transitions to democracy and subsequent democratic consolidation occur.

state (sometimes supplemented by the UN or other peacekeepers) to combat recalcitrant forces. This is an important side note: whereas the provision of external security forces for peace implementation (that is, peacekeeping) has traditionally been viewed as having an impartial function relative to the political settlement, increasingly UN peacekeepers have been mandated to “extend state authority,” including by helping the state to demobilize or even defeat recalcitrant or rebelling forces (Jones, Gowan, and Sherman 2009). The presence of such external security assistance obviously alters the equation for state actors as to the degree of exclusion they can get away with.

There is also an initial literature on the ways in which elite pacts and their renegotiation are also related to patterns in organized crime. Some of this relates to postconflict cases; for example, Guatemala is a case where organized crime has emerged as a massive source of instability for the state in the period after the settlement of the long-running civil war there (Gavigan 2009). Guinea-Bissau is another example. However, the relationship between organized crime and political settlements is not limited to postconflict cases. For example, some analyses of the upsurge in violence in Mexico point to a triggering event being the challenge, posed by the first election of a non-PRI government in 2000, to the existing political settlement developed under successive PRI governments whereby organized criminal networks were largely left alone in exchange for corrupt flows to government officials and electoral and financial support to the government. Organized criminal groups reacted negatively against the proposed change and went on the warpath against the state, resulting in a massive spike in homicide deaths in the ensuing years. (For an account of the dynamics of democratization and organized crime in Mexico, see in particular O’Neil 2012.)

The emphasis on inclusion in political settlements aligns with a greater emphasis on inclusive institutions in the literature on new institutional economics. That literature starts with the assertion that institutions are the fundamental cause of long-run growth (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2004; Rodrik, Subramanian, and Trebbi 2002; Weingast 1995; Przeworski 1991). Recent applications of that literature to state failure emphasize inclusion. For example Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), in arguing that the fundamental difference between rich and poor countries relates to the inclusivity of their political institutions, also find that the presence of extractive or inclusive institutions creates a self-reinforcing cycle and propose that, by creating incentives for outside actors to become part of the elite, an extractive state is more likely to suffer from infighting and civil war. Similarly, North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009) argue that limited access orders—where institutions and organizations are controlled by a narrow elite and defined by interpersonal relationships—are more violence prone than states that have impersonal institutions. They show a “virtuous circle,” which discourages violence in open-access orders, predicated on citizens’

belief in equality and inclusion; the channeling of dissent through political avenues; and the costs imposed on any organization that attempts to limit access. While these studies are not specifically focused on fragile states, they point to broad conclusions about the role of inclusion that reinforces the initial findings cited above.

What about the Long Term? The Long Process of Building Political and Security Institutions

When we move from political settlements to building institutions, we encounter an important lacuna, both in applied knowledge and in practice. Development actors have studied institution building but have largely neglected political and security institutions. Political and security actors have long engaged in providing or understanding short-term security gaps (such as wars and peacekeeping operations) but have largely neglected true institution building. Only a small body of political science has studied the development of political and security institutions, mostly in comparative and historical perspective, and we've only begun to apply the conclusions of that study to the contemporary experience of fragile states (to which the findings of earlier developments may or may not be relevant; see Moore 1958, 1966; Huntington 1965; Moe 1990). Yet the development of political (accountable, representative), justice, and security institutions is fundamental to long-term, sustained recovery from war and to the prevention of relapse.

There's substantial normative resistance to this agenda. This comes first from parts of the development community itself, which still see the issues that arise in fragile states—issues that are necessarily political and that stray heavily into the security terrain—as being outside the development framework. There's political pressure on development agencies to avoid going too deeply into this question. This comes from nonfragile developing countries, many of which (justly) fear that there will be a continuing shift in the prioritization of resources away from reasonably successful lower middle-income countries toward fragile states, where there's a greater concentration of the absolute poor. (This gets expressed, among other ways, in a debate over whether international development should concentrate simply on the absolute poor, defined as incomes below \$1.25 a day, or rather on a wider bandwidth of poverty, at least up to \$2.00 a day.)

The resistance comes also from powerful middle-income countries, including the emerging powers, which are cautious about the agenda, in part because several of them have ongoing subregional conflicts or experience high levels of organized crime, and do not wish to be tarred with an international brush on these issues. There are, arguably, mandate problems too; for example the World Bank ruled that direct financing of national police structures constitutes

a violation of the IBRD's apolitical charter. (Though, weirdly, the far more contentious issue of community policing can be financed.) The notion that providing law and order is a more political function than economic bargaining (the bread and butter of World Bank work) is bizarre, even laughable. The Bank does not agree.

Still, the sheer fact of where the absolute poor are, combined with mounting political advocacy from fragile states themselves, is likely to continue to create pressure for a deepening of the normative space for dealing with issues of fragility and conflict as part of the development agenda. Then there are the problems of modalities. Aid projects are often of short duration, and financing and strategic frameworks for engagement are generally applied in three-to-five-year increments. Finding processes that yield meaningful institutional reform in these short engagement periods is unusual, and when an engagement period ends, the strategy is often revised. Multiyear funding is insufficient. As a result, the consistent, predictable support for institution building that is needed is not the norm.

Moreover, there's the additional challenge of volatile aid flows. Fluctuations in aid have negative effects in their own right, and practitioners have observed the negative impacts that aid volatility has on recipient states' deficits. Without steady assistance, governments are left with uncertain budget outlooks, introducing yet another element of difficulty into planning their expenditures (Kharas, Makino, and Jung 2011). Fragile and semistable situations are the ones most in need of reliable assistance, given the need to guard against backsliding and reform setbacks. Yet volatility in aid flows is worse for fragile and conflict-affected states than for other recipients. By some estimates, this volatility is more than twice that of aid to other states. The costs of this volatility are only magnified by their effect on already-weak institutions, as opposed to functioning institutions in other aid recipients. Recent work on the topic shows that the impact of volatility in net official development assistance flows on economic performance for weak states was double that for other states (Kharas 2008). The estimated decrease in efficiency is 2.5 percent of GDP in fragile and conflict-affected states (World Bank 2011).

And the gaps are not found just in development agencies. There are also serious problems about long-term support to interim security—as the story of CAR's multiple authorized peacekeeping operations suggests, we need to be thinking about longer-term engagement in the provision of security or of over-the-horizon security for states facing the risk of relapse into conflict. This is a critical part of the agenda, but it is undertheorized, underexplored, and uncosted. A simple step would be to do some detailed costing of various alternatives, partially to counteract the argument that sustained security engagement is simply too expensive: it may be; but it may be less expensive than paying the costs of response to a relapse

into conflict, and that's to say nothing of the economic effects on neighbors. But there's been little work on long-term security provision.

We do now have, though, a set of important cases from which it would be possible to draw lessons about alternative modalities for longer-term support. In Bosnia, the UN, the EU, and NATO have retained various forms of light political and security support arrangements for almost twenty years. In Somalia, a radically different case, there was important innovation by the UN and the World Bank in developing new techniques for financing the recurrent costs of national armed services. In Burundi, a long-term partnership between the national authorities and the Dutch government—on the basis of a sustained partnership between the Dutch development and security departments—has shown promising results. A detailed, lessons-learned, exercise, ideally conducted jointly by development and security actors, could inform policy development.

In addition, the international policy community has increasingly focused on the importance of the rule of law—both as part of what causes instability and as important elements of recovery strategy. There's good long-term logic to this, but there are deep gaps in our understanding of what works in the shorter term, absent robust institutions. We lack, for example, a solid understanding of the relationship between political settlements and judicial/accountability processes (Kalyvas 2006; Collier 1999). Under what conditions do tentative political settlements support the development of justice/accountability mechanisms? Under what conditions can justice/accountability mechanisms survive even in the absence of strong political support? Under what conditions can justice/accountability mechanisms actually drive political reform? Deeper understanding of such questions is essential to understanding where and when policy engagement aimed at support to justice/accountability mechanisms can actually succeed.

But all of this ignores what is arguably the most critical question, which is about gaps in trust, gaps in confidence, and the challenge these gaps pose to institution building (Collier 2011; Stedman 2001; Walter 2010). The argument is that a lack of confidence in the future action of other parties constitutes a major barrier to cooperation, and thus to institution building, and that real institution building can only begin after some basic restoration of confidence or the use of commitment technologies to overcome trust dilemmas. If this is right, it should constitute a major new starting point for how to think about policy intervention in fragile states. But first, the conclusions must be challenged, tested, and refined. Essential research questions include the following:

—If violence produces a confidence barrier to cooperation/development, how long does that effect last?

—Does it have different lengths of endurance in different sectors (that is, does economic risk taking recover more quickly than political/security risk taking?).

—What set of factors drives elite/popular decisionmaking to rebalance between risk avoidance (because of a confidence gap) and risk taking?

—What roles do economic opportunity/need play? Family/household pressures? Regional/global factors? Security guarantees?

—How much does national mobilization matter?

—Can national projects unify a population and restore some degree of trust among elites?

And then, external actors need to look at what they can do to help overcome some of these commitment gaps. By analogy to the financial sector, what post-violence societies need are a set of commitment technologies—third-party tools that the various elites involved in contesting the course of a settlement can refer to and rely on in choosing to make the choice, to take the risk, of betting on new institutional arrangements for long-term growth. In a study I found five examples of things that outsiders can do to nudge, or in one case shove, things in the right direction (Jones, Elgin-Cossart, and Esberg 2012). They can

—Provide direct support to government and use policy engagement to try to persuade government elites to adopt an inclusion agenda. The theory of change in this case is simply that national authorities may be more susceptible to engaged policy argument from reliable partners than they are from intrusive outsiders. This approach has been used, for example, in Nepal by Western donors seeking to support an inclusive peace process, peace implementation, and elections. The evidence from Ethiopia, Pakistan, Rwanda, and other places where this approach has been used is mixed.

—Provide support to opposition groups and civil society actors, to increase their ability to make their own claims for inclusion in the political settlement. This approach has been used at various times, with varying degrees of success, from Tanzania during its democratic transition (relative success) to Nepal after elections (mixed results) to Serbia (relative success).

—Help create normative space by investing in research or public debate around issues of inclusion. Topics that have been the subject of internationally supported debate include minority rights, women's rights, and decentralization. The theory of change here is about increasing domestic pressure on established elites. As yet there's not a sufficient track record to evaluate the success of such strategies.

—Engage in direct mediation between parties (often through diplomatic rather than developmental arms of government), or financial and capacity-building support to national mediation or dialogue processes. Mediation fails roughly three out of every four times it is attempted; but a 75 percent failure rate is also a 25 percent success rate, and mediation strategies—unlike peace-keeping strategies or war strategies—can be repeated frequently at low cost.

—Peacekeeping operations increasingly undertake “extension of state authority” activities designed to help an elected or otherwise (internationally) legitimate government weaken the military challenge posed by excluded actors. That changes the underlying realities in which the above strategies may then play out.

And then there are more coercive strategies designed to compel government elites to adopt more inclusive strategies, or forgo specific exclusive or abusive policies. This can involve military action, ideally authorized by the UN. In addition, economic and aid actors may impose a range of penalties or sanctions to try to induce inclusive behavior or, more commonly, to attempt to stave off specific exclusion strategies.

Finally, we should not exclude from the analysis options like transitional authorities (as were imposed in Timor-Leste, Kosovo, and Eastern Slavonia); and longer-term arrangements for shared sovereignty (as in Bosnia). These arrangements are unpopular, replete with challenges, and have been met with widespread criticism about neoimperial attitudes and the like (Chesterman 2005). But we would be unwise to rule them out a priori, not least because in each of these cases and even arguably Cambodia they’ve been moderately successful—certainly by comparison to other modes of international engagement.

Conclusion

Of course, because something is a problem doesn’t mean it has a solution; and it certainly doesn’t mean it has an international solution. It’s possible that outsiders can’t do much to help states forge political settlements. But that’s not a conclusion we should yet reach with certainty. Certainly there’s no need to overlearn from recent cases like Afghanistan and Iraq—no need to overlearn from the extraordinary arrogance of NATO and the overall incompetence of the effort. There are examples of more savvy, more sensitive, and above all more humble efforts—in Mozambique, in Sierra Leone, arguably in Liberia, even in Timor-Leste—and there are lessons to learn.

This is a challenge for the development community and the security community, both. It’s going to require moving past tried and tired divisions of labor between political, security, and development actors and beyond exhausted approaches to coordination. Fifteen years of learning lessons on this issue make it unequivocally clear that only genuinely unified operations can deliver the combination of physical and economic security that states are going to need to make the sustained transition from war and poverty to peace and development. These are intrinsically interlinked transitions, and each will fail without progress on the other. There are really only two options as to how to go about this: build on what exists, or build from scratch.

Build on What Exists

The first, most obvious, and most likely approach is to build with existing tools and instruments, most of them located within the UN and the World Bank, but linking also to regional organizations. The existing tools are not trivial, despite the critique of performance above. They include the office of rule of law and security institutions at the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations and the global rule of law center at the UN Development Program (now, somewhat usefully, colocated); the office on rule of law in the secretary general's office (a kind of normative coordinating entity, albeit one with few if any powers); the High Commissioner for Human Rights; and the World Bank's Global Center on Conflict, Security and Development.

However, the track record on reform of these entities has been slow and disappointing. At the UN, more than fifteen years of continuous efforts to cajole the UNDP into a more concerted focus on conflict has produced modest results. In its most recent reform bid, soft launched in 2013, the UNDP administrator Helen Clark stressed that conflict would go from being a subtheme of UNDP's work to a central one, but insiders and observers alike were confused by the adjoining proposals, which downgraded the existing conflict-focused unit, with no corollary recruitment effort to replace core UNDP staff with staff having greater experience in conflict or political and security institutions. The UNDP has been losing donor funds and donor confidence at a steady rate, and it is too early to say whether this round of proposed reforms will be enough to reverse that tide. But absent a more dramatic change to personnel, funding, and policy, it's hard to see how reform of the UNDP can be more than a piece of this particular puzzle.

At the World Bank there was an initial burst of reform enthusiasm that followed the *World Development Report 2011*. This resulted, notably, in the establishment of the Global Center for Conflict, Security and Development in Nairobi (colloquially known as "the Hub"), designed as a one-stop policy shop on conflict and fragility issues. But like the UNDP conflict bureau that preceded it, the Hub was given no authority over resources in fragile states, nor hiring, nor evaluation. The track record of global advisory services shows that they can be useful sources of support to country programs that are seeking to deepen their conflict expertise, but they cannot drive deeper change. Moreover, there have been partial reversals. In the (extraordinarily complicated, opaque, and apparently mismanaged) reform proposals developed by the new Bank president Jim Kim, conflict issues did not arise as one of the major pillars of the Bank, but these were treated as a form of cross-cutting issue, and the early hires by Kim did not include the position dealing with conflict issues (see "Restructuring Hell" 2014; Northam 2014).

More worrying still, after several years of effort to generate flexibility in the Bank's legal office, the most recent legal rulings take a very narrow view of what it is that the Bank can do in political and legal institution building.

Efforts to link the work of the Bank and the UN have also been similarly slow and underwhelming. Years and years of donor efforts in New York and Washington during the early 2000s made almost no progress on this score. Whatever modest progress has been made can be attributed to the accidental fact of the shared Korean heritage of the two institution heads. The two took a trip together to Central Africa, where Kim pledged additional support for development initiatives undertaken in the context of peace implementation overseen by the UN. But officials in both institutions readily acknowledge that this chief-executive-to-chief-executive coordination has not filtered down even to the very senior working level, let alone to the staff level, and no mechanism has been put in place to achieve that goal.

Hence, my recurrent interest in the second option, which is to recognize that these two, large, important institutions are not fit for this particular purpose and, like all large bureaucracies, are extraordinarily resistant to deep change. And thus, to starting fresh.

Build from Scratch

To really begin anew, a new structure would be needed. This could be a hybrid, part NGO, part formal institution. Although it also could be another UN agency within the UN Secretariat, the risks are that it would replicate some of the existing flaws of UN structures. Third, it could be a hybrid entity composed of hived-off parts of the World Bank and the UN: the Bank's Hub merged with DPKO's Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions and UNDP's Global Center, all fused into one new, separate entity.

If an official model is needed, one choice is the successful aspects of a UN High Commission. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has been one of the most effective UN bodies over many years, and for good reasons. The membership structure is self-selecting: it's not universal but rather is confined to governments that have signed and implemented the UN Convention on Refugees, which not all governments have. This means that rather than constantly debating core principles within the governance structure, the governance structure reinforces both the core mandate of the institution and creates a form of peer pressure for continued compliance by those same governments. The management structure is useful too. Because high commissions are structurally part of the UN Secretariat, their heads are appointed by the secretary general and thus escape some of the horse-trading and race-to-the-bottom modes that sometimes characterizes appointments by intergovernmental bodies. Further, high

commissions are not managed by the UN's budget, human resource, or administrative arms; they have their own, far more efficient, far more operational, administrative vehicles.

So one idea might be to establish a high commissioner for the rule of law, or something similar, with a focus on institution building for political, security, and justice institutions. This would not in fact have to be built from scratch, because there's a body of talent, experience, and expertise already resident at the Bank, the UN, regional institutions, and donor governments that could form the core of any new institution designed to tackle this thorny problem. The experiences and experiential knowledge of Bank staff in Afghanistan and Libya, by UN staff in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tunisia and Jamaica, by USAID staff in Egypt and Iraq, by Dutch SSR teams in Burundi—these form the necessary core that any new institution would need. Unlike existing high commissions, an effective body should seek to replicate something of the research culture of the World Bank (unlike the antievidence culture of the UN). The scholarly expertise that resides in such centers as Stanford's Center for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law and in research centers in South Africa, the UK, Brazil, and points in between could be brought to bear, either through in-house capacities or through structured, long-term engagement with outside bodies (which might be more effective).

This would not be starting with a blank slate, but it would be a fresh start. And there's little doubt that a fresh start is needed if we're going to succeed in going the last mile in helping states build the institutions they need—political, security, justice—to escape the trap of recurrent violence and fragility by becoming resilient.

For almost twenty years, the debate among development and humanitarian actors has been about bridging the gap between humanitarian relief and long-term development. It's a fairly sorry tale of repeated trial and error without anywhere near sufficient learning—a story of turf wars and tortured concepts, of a long-running “pass the buck” game among development agencies, but also of humanitarian actors, peacekeepers, and donors. It's time to do better—time to stop trying to bridge the gap—and instead, to fill it.

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