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Editors' Foreword

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The international policy community is preoccupied by a purported rise in fragility, conflict, and violence around the world. The World Bank´s 2011 *World Development Report* cast a spotlight on the many ways collective violence undermines governance and socio-economic development. Likewise, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been working closely with the so-called g7+, a constellation of 19 fragile countries, to re-evaluate the terms by which security and development assistance is issued. Yet amidst all this focus on instability, there is less critical reflection on practical policies and applied practices to promote stability. In other words, we are starting to appreciate the factors that induce fragility but know rather less about how to engender safety and security on the ground.

Now is an opportune moment to critically reflect and interrogate concepts such as stability. Most United Nations member states have acknowledged the interplay of security and development and are searching for new ideas and innovations to ensure that they are mutually reinforcing. The Arab Spring also providing a historic and turbulent critique of the many ways in which factors such as social and economic exclusion, weak governance, and geo-strategic interests are shaping the security and development environment. Indeed, the 'authoritarian bargain' that denied human rights and political participation at the expense of 'stability' has lost much of its luster in the Middle East, North Africa, and elsewhere.

The West´s engagement with stabilization emerged in the wake of experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq. As is well rehearsed in the global media, both countries have long been graveyards for empires as well as hastily rendered approaches to counterinsurgency, recovery, reconstruction, and state-building. In spite of massive aid allocations, the security outlook in both countries remains bleak. Indeed, there are some signs that development assistance may have actually exacerbated local tensions and entrenched conflict. These and other experiences have given 'stability' and 'stabilization' something of a black eye – and rightly so. A narrow range of coercive interventions combining military force with dubious civilian assistance was never likely to work. Indeed, many proponents of stabilization in Afghanistan and Iraq failed to appreciate that security comes not from 'winning hearts and minds' through self-serving quick-impact projects but by prioritizing justice, economic opportunity, political rights, and access to non-violent means of pursuing dignity, equality, and change over the long term.

And while some commentators in the West believe that stabilization – as a set of ideals, practices, and outcomes – is dead or dying, there is ample evidence to the contrary. Indeed, it is flourishing – albeit under different guises and labels – in many parts of the world. Global economic uncertainty has also generated a crucial change in the calculations of some governments. The era of

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large-scale military interventions is coming to a close. Meanwhile, public agencies, multilateral organizations, non-governmental entities and the private sector are forced to cut-back, re-prioritize, and figure out how to do more with less. In the process, many institutions have sought to forge linkages across defense, development, and diplomacy – the so-called 3Ds – and establish whole-of-government, whole-of-system, and 'comprehensive' approaches. All of this has given rise to a new alphabet soup of multi-agency institutions such as Canada's Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) to the UK's Stabilisation Unit and the US State Department's Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization.

Meanwhile, the real and potential sources of instability are also evolving quickly. Indeed, ours is a world where a thirty-second cyber-attack on a stock exchange can prove more destructive, at least in certain respects, than a conventional terrorist attack. Likewise, new forms of transnational organized crime and urbanized armed groups are also forcing their way on to the international agenda. More conventional actors such as pirates roam the oceans, wreaking havoc on sophistical maritime security arrangements. Deep-seated sectarian and ethnic tensions continue to periodically flare up while land and water rights continue to trigger highly localized and urbanized forms of disorder. Throughout the world, persistent sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination, and other forms of inequality continue to generate thousands of deaths that seldom generate meaningful responses or the levels of public attention and condemnation they deserve. Indeed, violence is increasingly integrated, simultaneous and overlapping, forcing many in the security and development establishments to rethink their normative and practical frameworks of engagement.

This journal – *Stability* – was launched precisely to engage with these critical debates. *Stability* is not like any other journal, attempting to carve out a specialized niche in the academic market place. Rather, *Stability* intends to challenge the artificial distinctions between conflict, crime, and violence. While accounting for political and economic approaches, *Stability* also endeavors to deepen the dialogue across disciplines, pulling in sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, psychologists, criminologists, historians, lawyers, and others involved in trying to understand what works and what does not when it comes to the business of security and development. Technical specialists in engineering, agronomy, public health, public administration, policing, and other 'applied' topics will also be solicited to contribute in order to extend and amplify the practitioner voice. Too often complex subjects such as corruption, aid financing, and civil service reform are treated simplistically and not by experts that have conducted an audit, overseen a procurement process, or grappled with human resource procedures.

A comparative advantage of *Stability* is the way it assembles voices from academic, policy, and practice communities in a single venue. Scholarly research can usefully inform policies and practices, and the knowledge and experience gathered by 'doers' – from elected officials to civil servants, aid workers, diplomats, entrepreneurs, and military officers – can in turn shape research agendas and dissemination strategies. *Stability* thus seeks to meld a practical focus with the academic excellence of a top-rated and peer-reviewed journal. Hence, submissions from professional researchers are welcome alongside contributions from experienced practitioners, whether as full research articles, shorter practice notes or poignant commentaries (the specifications for which are outlined in the 'Call for Papers'). Research articles will be peer reviewed to ensure that they genuinely advance theory and understanding regarding stability and related issues, though reviewers will particularly comprise scholar-practitioners who can understand that evidence can take many forms and that the perfect need not be the enemy of the good.

This journal explicitly tackles one addition-

al barrier — that which prevents researchers and experts in developing and fragile settings countries from contributing to and accessing international publishing outlets. *Stability* therefore is actively reaching out to Southern contributors, particularly those in war-torn and violence-affected societies. It is deliberately tailored to this audience and intends to facilitate inputs from non-native English speakers and those who find it difficult to have their work recognized in traditional journals. We feel that it is by engaging with and promoting these voices that new and effective approaches to stability will emerge. Overcoming barriers to ensure Southern contributions is a signal objective of this journal. We are pleased already to have attracted interest from authors in Latin America, Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, whose pieces appear in this inaugural issue and whose work will feature in future issues.

Stability is fully and formally registered as an academic publication in the same way as any respected print journal. But we will not be printing issues. Instead, articles will be released electronically, as webpages and PDF files. Doing so is environmentally responsible and cost effective while also reflecting the basic fact that few people access bound editions of print journals. Unlike a 'traditional' journal, all content published in *Stability* will be free of charge and available to all without a subscription. We do not charge readers, and we do not charge authors unless funds specifically for publishing have already been allocated by a generous research sponsor. Furthermore, after this first issue, articles will not generally be released at one time. Instead, each article will be published electronically as soon as it has been finalized, thus ensuring that information is accessible as quickly as possible. However, every four months — with *Stability* being published three times per year — articles will be packaged into a full issue and labeled as such. Accordingly, this journal aims to comply with the principles and practices of open-access publishing, a movement which is thankfully gaining speed as the grasp of for-profit publishers over journals is rightly being questioned and loosened.

Finally, we are delighted that this inaugural issue reflects the energy and creativity of a number of individuals. First and foremost are the article authors, who contributed to this issue and embraced its themes and publishing model. In addition, the founding Editorial Board members, each of whom has a distinguished record as a scholar-practitioner, helped to steer the journal to its launch. Their inputs, from the journal´s early conceptualization to its delivery, have been instrumental. Ubiquity Press, an innovative publisher working to promote open-access scholarship, has provided technical support for the website and for the design and formatting of the journal itself. Its commitment to open-access principles bodes well for its future and the future of academic publishing.

We hope you find this inaugural issue informative regardless of whether you are an academic, a policymaker or a practitioner. All of us at *Stability* look forward to your thoughts on our work and your contributions to future issues. S

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ARTICLE

Slip-Sliding on a Yellow Brick Road: Stabilization Efforts in Afghanistan

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The ongoing transition process in Afghanistan will deliver three shocks in the coming few years: foreign forces will complete the handover of security responsibility to their Afghan counterparts, aid volumes and international spending in the country will decrease and, lastly, the political dispensation will be upended by presidential elections in which President Hamid Karzai is not supposed to run again. These challenges are mounting at a time when, due to inconsistent international approaches and a lack of appreciation for the Afghan context, Afghanistan is dealing with rising insecurity, dysfunctional governance, rampant corruption, and ethnic factionalization within the society and the domestic security forces. Based upon a review of the security sector, governance, social and economic conditions, regional relations and negotiation efforts with the insurgents, this article finds that fundamental questions about the efficacy of stabilization efforts in Afghanistan continue to lack clear answers. Regardless, significant room for improvement – both in policy and execution – appears to exist. It remains to be seen whether, as many Afghans fear, a civil war will engulf Afghanistan once again in the post-transition period or whether the international community will take those steps – re-energizing governance reform efforts, maintaining financial support and continuing to strengthen the Afghan army and police – which could help to bolster stability.

After a decade of fighting – starting with the relatively easy victory over the Taliban in 2001 and then featuring an increasingly tough counterinsurgency campaign against the reemergent Taliban – the growth of the Afghan security forces has become the lynchpin of the US and NATO strategy to achieve success in Afghanistan and extricate themselves from the Afghanistan war. At the end of 2014, NATO's International Assistance Security Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan will hand over responsibility for Afghanistan's security, economic development, and governance over to the Afghans. This transfer of responsibility is taking place already via a so-called "Transition" process.[1] As yet, however, the Taliban and its jihadi cohorts – the Haqqanis and Hezb-i-Islami – remain entrenched and robust. Although degraded by the 2010 "surge" of US military forces, they still exercise substantial sway over large parts of Afghanistan. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are clearly making progress. But they still continue to be dependent on

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NATO's assistance for critical assets and capacities; and dangerous ethnic rifts and competing patronage networks continue to run through the ANSF.

Despite the improvements of Afghan security forces, few Afghans believe that a better future is on the horizon after 2014. NATO and US officials remain by and large cautiously optimistic about the success of the counterinsurgency and stabilization campaign, even if acknowledging that progress is hard.[2] Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who headed the US Embassy in Afghanistan between July 2011 and July 2012, for example, stated at the time of his departure that he considered the outbreak of another civil war in Afghanistan after 2014 unlikely.[3] Yet many Afghans fear there will be a renewed outbreak of civil war after 2014 when the NATO presence is much reduced.[4]

Worse yet, Afghans have become disconnected and alienated from the national government and the country's other power arrangements. They are profoundly dissatisfied with Kabul's inability and unwillingness to provide basic public services and with the widespread corruption of the power elites. They intensely resent the abuse of power, impunity, and lack of justice that have become entrenched over the past decade. The initial post-Taliban period of hope and promise did not last, as governance in Afghanistan became rapidly defined by weakly functioning state institutions unable and unwilling to uniformly enforce laws and policies. Characteristically, official and unofficial powerbrokers issue exceptions from law enforcement to their networks of clients, who are thus able to reap high economic benefits, and can get away even with major crimes. Murder, extortion, and land-grabbing, often perpetrated by those in the government, have gone unpunished. Many Afghans believe that they live under unaccountable mafia rule.

The culmination of the Transition in 2014 will bring about a triple shock to Afghanistan and its current political dispensation. Not only will ISAF forces be substantially reduced, but international financial flows – whether direct foreign aid or economies spawned by the presence of the large foreign military[5] – will also inevitably decline with the drawdown of NATO forces military. For a country that it still overwhelmingly dependent on foreign aid and illegal economies for its revenues, the outcome will be a massive economic shrinkage. Although various efforts are now under way to cushion the shock, such as pledges by international donors at the Tokyo conference in July 2012 to provide $16 billion in foreign aid to Afghanistan between 2013 and 2016, they are unlikely to be sufficient to offset the revenue losses. There are no easy ways to generate revenues and employment in Afghanistan over the next three years, despite Afghanistan's mineral riches.

Moreover, 2014 is also the year of another presidential election and hence of major power infighting, whether or not President Karzai will seek to remain in power. The fight over the remaining rents of the ending political dispensation and the need to consolidate one's support camps in anticipation of the shaky future, and hence to deliver spoils to them in order to assure their allegiance, will not be conducive to consensus decision making and broad-based good governance.[6] A country's government can maintain stability without legitimacy purely through repression as long as it has a sufficiently effective repressive apparatus. But given Afghanistan's existing war and intense ethnic tensions (that also permeate its security forces), Afghanistan does not have such a repressive apparatus. Yet the government's legitimacy too has been steadily declining for years, and most Afghans consider the government and associated powerbrokers to represent a venal, abusive, and exclusionary mafia rule.

Washington's and the International Definition of the Mission

From 2001 on, the US government and other members of the international coalition have struggled with how to define the mission in

Afghanistan. For the allies, the question for years was whether to characterize the effort as a peacekeeping operation (which many chose to do despite the level of insecurity in the country and a lack of peace to keep) or a counterinsurgency and counterterrorism mission. For the United States, the question was whether to set the objective as state-building or as limited counterterrorism that could be accomplished without ensuring that a stable Afghan government was in place.

The George W. Bush administration vacillated between the two labels of the mission's scope. It conceived of and resourced Operation Enduring Freedom as a limited military intervention, confined to the removal of the Taliban government in order to destroy al Qaeda's capabilities and deprive it of a safe haven. But the Bush administration ultimately recognized that it could not just leave the country merely after driving the Taliban from Kabul. Moreover, the need to generate public support in America for the war, even in the wake of 9/11, led the Bush administration to adopt much broader rhetoric about its goals in Afghanistan, including bringing democracy to a brutally oppressed people and emancipating its suffering women. At the same time, however, it continued providing slim resources for the military and economic efforts in the country, inadequate for either responding to the growing insurgency or for effective reconstruction.[7] The under-resourcing deepened as the White House shifted its focus to Iraq.[8]

Moreover, even while the effort in Afghanistan came to take on the trappings of a state-building effort, the policies adopted did not sufficiently focus on promoting good governance. Instead, the lack of US and international military resources, and the consequent reliance on warlords with a long record of serious human rights abuses in fighting the Taliban, strongly empowered these powerbrokers and weakened Kabul's already tenuous writ.[9] The visible embrace of the warlords by the US military, and the lack of responsiveness on the part of Washington toward President Karzai's early requests that Washington disempower the warlords, progressively led him to seek accommodation with them and gutted his will to challenge them.

The Barack Obama administration inherited the war at a time when the military situation on the battlefield was going very poorly. The Taliban and Haqqani insurgencies had ramped up, and the quality of Afghan governance was progressively deteriorating.[10] And during his presidential campaign Barack Obama emphasized Afghanistan as the important, yet unfinished "war of necessity" unlike the "war of choice" in Iraq he promised to terminate as fast as possible.

But despite the election rhetoric, from the moment it took over, the Obama administration struggled with some of the very same dilemmas that perplexed the Bush administration. Since al Qaeda was the primary source of terrorist threats against the United States, was it also necessary to continue combating the Taliban? Could an effective counterterrorism mission be prosecuted essentially just from the air and off-shore? Or was it necessary to defeat the resurgent Taliban on the ground and build up a stable Afghan government? Should the US military engagement be intensified – with the all blood, treasure, and domestic-support ramifications that would entail– or should the US military engagement be significantly scaled back?

These competing definitions of the objectives embodied very different policies, force postures and military strategies, and civilian components such as economic development programs. They were premised on very different behavior on the part of the Afghans and created different expectations in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Pakistan and among the Western publics. The persistent oscillation among them continued to complicate the Afghanistan campaign even in the Obama administration.

After several rounds of policy reviews on Afghanistan and Pakistan,[11] the Obama administration ultimately did decide to in-

crease the amount of military and economic resources devoted to the war, and its rhetoric about the goals in Afghanistan became far more circumscribed than that of the Bush administration. The strategy consisted of a broad counterinsurgency effort, which was to include a strong agricultural program. Yet, despite its multifaceted and comprehensive approach, the policy was couched in narrow counterterrorism terms, emphasizing mainly the need to prevent al Qaeda safe havens in Afghanistan. [12]

Security Sector

The Obama administration counterinsurgency strategy was embodied in a plan designed by the then-commander of ISAF forces in Afghanistan in the fall of 2009, General Stanley McChrystal. The White House endorsed the plan in December 2009 – albeit with far fewer resources than the general had recommended. Also over objections from the military, the White House stipulated timelines for the withdrawal of US forces. The result was a 30,000 US troop surge lasting through August 2012 and bringing the number of foreign troops in Afghanistan to approximately 150,000 at its peak. The plan assumed that by the time ISAF would be transferring Afghanistan to Afghan forces, large parts of the country would have been secure. Four years later, some real progress had been achieved – such as in central Helmand and Kandahar, both of which used to be either intense battle zones or strongly under the Taliban's sway. But as this article goes to press, the territory cleared of insurgent forces that is being handed over to the Afghans is much smaller than had been projected.

The growth of the ANSF – particularly the Afghan National Army (ANA) – has been one of the brightest spots of the transition process of creating Afghan capabilities. The size of the ANSF has been expanding rapidly – to just over 350,000 combined, and the quality of military skills of the Afghan forces has also been growing. As of the summer of 2012, Afghan soldiers or police were participating – in some form – in at least 90 percent of all operations and leading some 40 percent of operations, even if these were mostly the less complex operations.[13] The ANA Special Forces are the most capable component of the ANSF and are closest to standing on their own. With much of the pre-2014 transition being about the gradual shift in ISAF's mission from "combat to support," the growth of the ANSF is very important. But much about its capabilities remains unknown as yet.

Afghan National Army

The ANA has grown to 195,000 personnel. The current cost of the ANA and the Afghan police is about twice as much as the current GDP of Afghanistan, and for years beyond 2014 Afghanistan will depend on the US and international community to foot the bill for the ANSF. Also for many years to come, certainly well beyond 2014, the ANSF will continue be deficient in several critical domains. These include command, control, intelligence, air support, medical evacuation, logistics and maintenance, contractor management, battle-space integration, and other specialty enablers. Without them, the Afghan Army will be severely hampered. Currently, Afghan forces frequently know how to fight and win battles at the tactical level, but they yet have to learn how to fight and win campaigns. The latter requires the development of logistical systems, ability to combine arms, and strengthened command and control at the strategic level.

The 2012 spate of the so-called "green-on-blue attacks," later renamed "insider attacks," has generated pressures on limiting partnering and restricting interactions between ISAF and ANSF forces as well as between international civilian advisors and Afghan government officials. In September 2012, ISAF announced the end – at least temporarily – of partnering below the battalion level. But it is of course below the battalion level where the vast majority of counterinsurgency operations, including village patrols, take place. Such restrictions can potentially dangerously

reduce the quality of training and advising by international forces. Although NATO has stressed that many of these attacks have been conducted by disgruntled ANSF recruits with personal grudges rather than Taliban infiltrators, the Taliban has been keen to appropriate the attacks as a purposeful component of its insurgency strategy.

A disturbing big unknown is whether the ANA will be able to withstand the ethnic factionalization that is already fracturing the institution. The NATO Training mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A) has worked hard to bring the ethnic balance among the Afghan officer corps closer to what is believed to be ethnic composition of the overall population. Apparently up to 2008, 70% of Afghan kandak commanders were Tajiks, a situation that was resented by Pashtuns.[14] In 2012, ethnic distribution within all senior positions – kandak commanders through generals (ISAF does not separate out kandak commanders in its latest records) – were: 42% Pashtun, 29% Tajik, 13% Hazara, 8% Uzbek, and 8% others.[15] NTM-A has also been striving to make the entire force ethnically balanced. And while overall that is indeed the case, the ANA still manages to recruit disproportionately low numbers of southern Pashtuns. The factionalization problems within the Afghan force, however, are more serious than merely the ethnic balance. Deep ethnic fissures and patronage networks run through the Afghan military, with segments of the force loyal to particular top-level commanders rather than to the institution overall or – more importantly – the government in Kabul.[16]

Afghan National Police

The Afghan National Police (ANP) has of course been notorious both for such intense ethnic factionalization and patronage fragmentation and for general corruption.[17] Its desertion rates, retention problems, illiteracy rates, and levels of drug use are much higher than within the ANA.[18] So is the theft of equipment. Logistical problems remain acute.[19] Often under sway of local powerbrokers, many police units continue to function essentially as militias. Increasingly, ANP commanders, especially at the local level, are prone to reach out to the Taliban in their areas to establish ceasefires and hedge their bets.

The ANP critically continues to lack an adequate anti-crime capacity, and the anti-crime training it receives is minimal, bordering on nonexistent. Instead, for a number of reasons, the ANP is more of a light counter-insurgency and SWAT-like counterterrorism force. Yet crime – murders, robberies, and extortion – is the bane of many Afghans' daily existence, which the Taliban is happy to exploit to its advantage. Traditional informal justice mechanisms – themselves often weakened by decades of war – have not been able to cope with the rise of crime, and are of particularly limited usefulness if crime is perpetrated by government officials and power-brokers. The inability of the Afghan government to respond to crime such as land theft, extortion, and murder (as well as its own participation in crime, of course) allows the Taliban to impose its own brutal forms of order and justice and develop a foothold in Afghan communities.[20] And a bigger problem yet is that the ANP have been and remain notorious for themselves being the perpetrators of many crimes.

Afghan Local Police and other self-defense forces

As extending security via regular Afghan security forces became elusive in large parts of the rural areas, ISAF has increasingly sought to compensate the security deficiencies by standing up irregular self-defense forces. The latest version of the effort is called Afghan Local Police (ALP). Numbering about 16,000 as of August 2012, it is slated to generate at least 30,000 recruits.

The effort is nothing new: the Soviets in the 1980s resorted to raising tribal militias when they realized that they were not winning in Afghanistan and used the militias as part of an exit strategy. Indeed, Afghans overwhelmingly associate the militia program with the

Soviets' defeat and see it as yet another signal of the US preparing to leave without a stable order in place.[21] Since 2002, various versions of the militia option have existed, such as the Afghan Auxiliary Police, the Afghan Public Protection Program (APPP), Village Stabilization program, and the Community Defense Initiative, also known as Local Defense Initiative groups in some areas.[22] In some of these efforts, the self-defense forces are not supposed to be paid; but many of them insist on some sort of payment, so the non-payment rule is often adjusted.[23] A great deal of skepticism is warranted about such efforts.[24] Great variation in the quality of the ALP effort and its long-term consequences are to be expected. Only sometimes can the militias reliably accomplish the tactical objective of effectively fighting the Taliban – Arghandab provides an example where the ALP seems to be a success.[25]

Tribal structures in much of Afghanistan have been deeply damaged, and the community often is unable to resist the Taliban physically. Thus, the Afghans frequently hedge their bets by paying off part of their income – including from ISAF – to the Taliban to reduce its attacks and reach a *modus vivendi* with the Taliban. Indeed, such hedging is typical of Afghan history, with local warlords, khans, and tribes siding and making peace with those they sense would prevail in a conflict, easily breaking deals if the situation on the battlefield changes. Sometimes, such accommodation between the militias and the Taliban even results in temporary improvements in security in the locale, such as along roads, and the community welcomes it. Logar province, where such an initiative is currently under way, presents a good example.[26] But the reduction in violence often exists only at the mercy of the Taliban and the deal collapses when the Taliban chooses to renege on it.

At the same time, the militias greatly complicate state-building efforts and efforts to improve governance in Afghanistan. Self-defense forces in Afghanistan have a long history of turning their force on local populations and engaging in predatory behavior toward local communities, including the theft of land and goods, extortion, and murder. In Kunduz, for example, after they defeated the Taliban in their villages, they started extorting the communities and demanding taxes for themselves.[27] Not infrequently, they also turn and fight each other, instead of the Taliban. One notorious case of such infighting took place in Uruzgan in 2010.[28]

Although the ALP is supervised by the Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Ministry has often proved unable to control the self-defense forces. The MoI, long one of Afghanistan's most corrupt and ethnically-rift institutions, has also sought to legitimize and formalize other militias not vetted like the ALP, raising worries about intensification of predatory behavior by the militias. While the district police chief has authority over the ALP, police chiefs in Afghanistan are frequently corrupt. Hence, the affiliation between the ANP chief and ALP does little to ensure accountability and effective oversight. In the ALP's case, three village elders are also supposed to vouch for each militiaman.[29] Yet not infrequently a powerbroker controls the village elders, dictating his preferences in a way that escapes international scrutiny. At other times, the village elders have no problem vouching for the militia members as long as they only extort a rival village.

Governance Sector

The lack of resolution of the debate over whether effective counterterrorism in Afghanistan requires state-building also has involved continuing policy oscillation over whether to combat corruption and how. A decade after the US intervention, Afghanistan has become the third most corrupt country in the world after Somalia and North Korea.[30] US and Western reliance on corrupt and abusive warlords for intelligence, logistics, and direct counterterrorism operations has often come at the price of ignoring governance. Some of the most notorious power-

brokers, such as Ahmed Wali Karzai, Matiullah Khan, and Gul Agha Shirzai, know how to get things done to facilitate the operations of the international community in Afghanistan. Moreover, the large influx of Western money disturbed with an eye toward fast burn rates and without the ability to monitor the spending generated its own extensive corruption.

Unlike the Bush administration that mostly put anti-corruption in Afghanistan on the back burner,[31] the Obama administration early on accorded greater importance to fighting corruption in Afghanistan: building up various civilian structures, such as the Major Crime Task Force, and ultimately similar equivalent units within ISAF, such as its anti-corruption task force, Shafafiyat. But it often demanded reform with an intensity that ignored Afghan realities and political complexities – a system in which the highest government officials as well as the lowest ones, line ministries, banking centers, and most international contracts are pervaded by corruption.[32] The Obama anti-corruption campaign thus secured dramatic promises from President Karzai to tackle corruption, with little actual follow up. Moreover, the lack of prioritization as to what corruption needs to be addressed first and definitively, often ignores the political debts President Karzai owes and his internal entanglements and dependencies. Karzai thus often seeks (and many times succeeds) to reverse the anti-corruption efforts, such as indictments of powerful corrupt officials or the development of anti-corruption and anti-crime institutions which the internationals are trying to stand up.

But as the Obama administration decided to scale down its military presence in Afghanistan, US officials started vacillating once again in their determination to take on corruption. Many in the US government have begun to argue that tackling corruption is a luxury the United States can no longer afford; instead it needs to prioritize stability. This school of thought holds that limiting the military mission in Afghanistan mostly to remotely-delivered airborne counterterrorist strikes could permit working through the local warlords and powerbrokers, instead of being obsessed with the means they used to acquire their power and their criminal entanglements and discriminatory practices.[33] Meanwhile, absent a coherent policy on corruption, the Obama administration and ISAF have failed to develop mechanisms and structures to work around and marginalize the problematic powerbrokers and often continues to be dependent on their services. The international community's strategy has thus oscillated between tolerating corruption for the sake of other goals – with the justification that Afghans are used to corruption anyway– or confronting it head on, but with little effectiveness. Ignoring corruption is often justified as prioritizing stability, but since corruption and the lack of rule of law are key mobilizing mechanisms for the Taliban and the source of Afghans' anger with their government, it is doubtful that stability can be achieved without addressing at least the most egregious corruption.

Social and Economic Sectors

Health and education sectors have registered some of the greatest improvements since 2002, albeit from an extremely low baseline. Their continuing massive problems and deficiencies notwithstanding, the number of health facilities (however extensive the facilities are) in Afghanistan has grown from an estimated 498 in 2002 to 2,136 in the spring of 2012,[34] expanding access to basic health services for millions of Afghans. In 2002, only about nine percent of the population had such access; in 2008, the number reached an estimated 85 percent.[35] The Basic Package of Health Services, delivered by the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, has helped to reduce the infant mortality rate during the 2001–2008 period from 172 to 77 per 1,000 live births and the mortality of children under the age of five from 257 to 97 deaths per 1,000 live births. Maternal mortality rates also declined significantly, from 1,600 to 327

per 100,000 births.[36] Still, one in ten Afghan children dies before the age of five, and one Afghan women dies every two hours due to pregnancy-related causes.[37] The number of children enrolled in schools (mostly primary ones) is at eight million students – more than ten times the number of children enrolled in 2002.[38] Between 2002 and 2010, the United States provided close to $800 million in health assistance to Afghanistan and close to $680 million in education assistance.[39] Efforts to improve the administrative capacity of line ministries have also registered some notable accomplishments, such as those of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. And in some Afghan districts of intense Western supervision, service delivery has improved.

The Obama administration set out to promote rural development, allocating about a quarter billion dollars a year to the effort. Particularly in the contested south, the efforts focused on providing vouchers for wheat seed, fertilizer, and tools as well as cash-for-work programs and small grants to cooperatives. Yet especially in southern Afghanistan where counterinsurgency has been strong, the economic development programs were plagued by vacillation between two competing understandings of the purpose of economic development projects. Is their purpose to buy off the population and wean it from the insurgents? Or are the projects designed to produce long-term sustainable development?

The buy-off concept – called "economic-stabilization programs" – built upon the so-called Quick-Impact Projects (QIPs) first implemented via the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in 2003 and funded by the US Department of Defense money from the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP).[40] Designed to start with temporary economic injections, often short-term cash-for-work activities, the programs were meant to last weeks or at best months, and only later to be switched to more sustainable efforts. Their goals have been to keep Afghan males employed so that economic necessities do not drive them to join the Taliban, and to secure the allegiance of the population who, ideally, will provide intelligence on the insurgents. Although US government officials emphasize that these stabilization programs have generated tens of thousands of jobs in Afghanistan's south, many of the efforts have been unsustainable short-lived programs, such as canal cleaning and grain-storage and road building, or small grants, such as for seeds and fertilizers. Characteristically, they collapse as soon as the money runs out, often in the span of several weeks.[41] Adequate consideration has not been given to the development of assured markets; consequently much of the produce cultivated under the USAID-contracted programs will possibly not find buyers and rot. And there is no robust and systematic evidence that the stabilization programs have secured the allegiance of the population to either the Afghan government or ISAF forces, nor have they resulted in increased intelligence from the population on the Taliban.[42]

Nor have these programs yet addressed the structural deficiencies of the rural economy in Afghanistan, including the drivers of poppy cultivation, and Afghanistan continues to be the world's largest producer of opium.[43] And the latter – such as the lack of legal microcredit, inadequate rural infrastructure, and no processing facilities for legal crops which might make them profitable – also persist.[44] In particular, CERP-funded and PRT-implemented programs have tended mostly to replace government capacity rather than to grow it.[45] The economic "stabilization" programs often created expectations on the part of the population for cheap handouts from the central government and international community without the programs being economically viable and sustainable in the long run and without requiring commitments from the local community. The result: persisting deep market deficiencies and compromised rule of law. Overall, the vision of economic transformation of Afghanistan

through agriculture growth has produced few tangible outcomes over the decade,[46] with over a third of the population still at extreme poverty levels, and another third only slightly above poverty levels – no doubt, however, it takes a long time to reduce poverty levels.[47]

Moreover, persisting insecurity also threatens the short-term "stabilization" programs. In 2011 and 2012, for example, even in high-profile areas, such as Marja and Arghandab, the Taliban strongly intensified a campaign to assassinate Afghan government officials, contractors, and NGOs who cooperated with ISAF and the Afghan government. Both the implementers and Afghan beneficiaries of the economic programs were killed. This intimidation campaign scared off some Afghans from participating in the programs. Thus, for these stabilization programs, as for any economic development efforts, security is a critical prerequisite.

A constant challenge and dilemma has been whether to provide money through the Afghan government – "on budget" – or directly from the international community to "the people." In theory, channeling outside financial aid through the national government is highly desirable since it can increase fiscal capacity of the state and link the population more closely to the state, building accountability.[48] Yet, the Afghan government at its various levels has turned out to be too corrupt and too lacking in capacity to process the money (at least what has been left after the international community's "overhead" deductions). Bypassing the national government and channeling money directly or through NGOs has resulted at times in the money reaching the ground faster (though not necessarily in a less corrupt manner). But it also has undermined the government's authority and capacity and often has strengthened local powerbrokers. At the July 2010 donor conference in Kabul, President Karzai won a pledge from the international community in which at least fifty percent of all economic assistance will be channeled through his government within two years, a goal reiterated at a donors' conference in Tokyo in July 2012, but not yet achieved.[49]

Even with robust security persisting after 2014 and better donor policies, Afghanistan is heading toward dire straits economically – for at least several years. Much of the money coming into Afghanistan has been associated with the large presence of foreign military forces. That money will inevitably shrink dramatically as a result of foreign troop reductions. And so will the entire economy of Afghanistan – at least in the short term. The World Bank estimates that even under favorable assumptions, Afghanistan's real GDP growth may fall from the 9% a year over the past decade to an estimated 5-6% during 2011-18.[50] The total international current annual aid (estimated at $15.7 billion in 2010) approximately equals Afghanistan's GDP and cannot be sustained. Yet it has been foreign aid that has funded the delivery of essential services such as education, health, and infrastructure as well as government administration. Afghanistan's fiscal capacity will be particularly badly hit: The World Bank projects a 25% GDP financial gap in Afghanistan by 2021-2022, or about a $7 billion annual deficit.[51] Closing the gap requires that foreign donors deliver about $7 billion annually for several years – about $4 billion for the ANSF and another $3 million for the non-security budget. At the Tokyo conference in July 2012, donors did indeed pledge $16 billion in non-military assistance for 2013-2016. Long-term economic sustainability, such as by developing a mining sector – Afghanistan is believed to have mineral assets worth at least $1 trillion[52] – or by becoming a new regional trading hub and resurrecting a New Silk Road,[53] depends on security and, in both cases, is a long way off.

Regional Efforts

For two decades now, Pakistan's government (or at least parts of it) has been coddling the Afghan Taliban, Hekmatyar's groups, and the Haqqanis. Its relationship with the Haqqani network has been particularly tight. More

than merely allowing the groups to enjoy safe havens in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber-Pashtunkwa, Baluchistan, and Karachi – and fundraise in Pakistan – the ISI has also provided logistical support, armaments, and technical and planning advice to the insurgents.[54]

As in the case of Afghanistan, the Obama administration inherited a deteriorated security situation in Pakistan. The country's structural problems had also deepened, its polity was fractured, and after decades of mismanagement the state had been hollowed out. And the strategic trust deficit plagued the bilateral relationship. But in Pakistan US leverage was considerably more limited than it was in Afghanistan.

President-elect Barack Obama and his foreign policy advisers had hoped to launch a new initiative to embed the Afghanistan effort in a regional security framework that included Pakistan and India. That effort was quickly thwarted both by the Mumbai attacks in November 2011 perpertated by Pakistani Lakshar-e-Taiba and linked to Pakistan's intelligence services, the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) and by India's desire to be treated by Washington on its own terms and not in conjunction with Pakistan.[55]

Nor was the Obama administration successful in persuading the Pakistani leadership that the US wanted to be a genuine long-term partner of Pakistan. Indeed, the location of bin Laden's compound – so close to Pakistan's military and intelligence installations in the heart of Pakistan – only raised further suspicions in Washington that Pakistan's duplicity was so great as to undermine top US government priorities (e.g., the campaign against al Qaeda and bin Laden). Even though he had sought for years to build up a positive relationship between the United States and Pakistan, the former US Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, felt compelled before retiring to call the Haqqanis "a veritable arm of the ISI."[56]

Overall, after a decade of some $21 billion in defense assistance and reimbursements and economic aid to Pakistan,[57] whether defined as a transactional payment or the undergirding of a strategic partnership, the United States received little systematic and committed cooperation from Pakistan in return, even on key issues. For dealing with the Pakistan-based al Qaeda and other anti-American militants in the Afghanistan war, the Obama administration was basically left with the option of intensifying its drone strikes across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Although purportedly highly effective in decimating al Qaeda's leadership structure, the policy also came with the cost of further alienating the Pakistani leadership and public from the United States.[58]

Negotiations with the Taliban and Post-2014 Stabilization Efforts in Afghanistan

In and after 2014, Afghanistan will face a triple earthquake: an economic shock, a likely security rupture, and a political crisis as highly contentious (and in the last round in 2009 highly fraudulent and illegitimate) presidential elections are to take place. The United States and the international community have pledged not to abandon Afghanistan after 2014; yet many questions surround the level and type of US and international level engagement. The precise nature of US and ISAF military support for the ANSF after 2014, for example, has not yet been exactly determined. In May 2012, at the signing of the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership Agreement, President Barack Obama spoke of "steady military reductions"[59] in US troop levels in Afghanistan after the end of 2012. President Obama also stated that the US military forces remaining in Afghanistan after 2014, pending the signing of a US-Afghan Bilateral Security Agreement, would focus on only "two narrow security missions" – counterterrorism and training of ANSF.[60] But if the post-2014 mission is narrowly focused on counterterrorism operations, any remaining mentoring capacity will be severely undermined, as likely will be the overall ANSF capacity.[61]

A US and ISAF rush out of Afghanistan, the US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement notwithstanding, will also increase chances that the negotiations with the Taliban will produce a bad, unstable deal that compromises whatever progress has been achieved in Afghanistan and one that the Taliban will violate. Determined to avoid negotiating from a position of weakness – and waiting for the Taliban was degraded on the battlefield first[62] – the United States hesitated a long time before reluctantly agreeing to begin them in 2009. But the ensuing talks with the Taliban (and reportedly also at least feelers with the Haqqanis) have mainly amounted to talking about talking despite repeated feelers from the various factions of the Taliban.[63] The Taliban's willingness to seriously negotiate has also been lukewarm and conflicted. It has repeatedly called for faster confidence-building measures, such as the release of Taliban prisoners by the United States, some of which may be currently under way.[64]

Too much is unknown at this point about what the Taliban could settle for. Certainly, it will be loath to give up any influence it already has in large parts of the country. It may also be leery of simply being allowed to participate in elections, especially at the local level. Its strengths often lie far more in being a spoiler than in delivering good governance beyond order and rough justice. The Taliban faces some tough dilemmas in agreeing to a compromise with Kabul, such as accepting the Afghan constitution. Such a prospect and an overt power sharing deal with Kabul will discredit the group in the eyes of many of its fighters as well as in the eyes of the broader population to whom it appeals on the basis of its claim to be fighting against Kabul's venal, predatory, and unjust rule. Similarly, whether the Taliban will be able to abide by the internationals redlines, including breaking with al Qaeda, is still a major question mark.

Elements of the Taliban, especially the Kandahari ones, may well have learned that their association with al Qaeda ultimately cost them their power,[65] but the group also owes many debts to the global jihadist movement. The death of bin Laden may have weakened some of the networks, but reneging on these debts to their global jihadi brothers will be costly. The Taliban can agree to many things, but what will it uphold? The lesser and more narrowly-defined the presence of the international community after 2014, the lesser its capacity to roll back any violation of the peace deal. And such violations do not have to be blatant takeovers of territory – after 2014, as now, the Taliban can exercise a lot of influence through a far more subtle intimidation.

Meanwhile, the negotiating processes have so far produced far more fear than confidence. President Karzai has felt extremely threatened by the Taliban preference to negotiate with the United States. Despite Washington's extensive efforts to bring Kabul to the table and reassure the suspicions of the Arg Palace, President Karzai has not trusted Washington not to leave him high and dry by signing a separate deal with the Taliban. Ironically, as much as the Arg Palace is suspicious of negotiations, so are Afghan minority groups extremely leery of any negotiations with the Taliban. Memories of the Taliban's brutal rule of the 1990s and the Northern Alliance's fight against the Taliban loom large in their minds, and they also fear the loss of military and economic power they accumulated during the 2000s. Key northern leaders may prefer a war to a deal that they would see as compromising their security and power. Many in the north are actively arming and resurrecting their patronage networks and militias. Many civil society groups, including women's organizations, equally lament being left out of the process.[66] Few are satisfied with the performance of the High Peace Council that President Karzai designated to integrate the various Afghan voices into the negotiations and to promote a broad-based societal reconciliation. Under the current circumstances, negotiations with the Taliban are not likely to prove a strategic game-changer.

Fundamental questions about Afghanistan stabilization thus continue to be unan-

swered. It yet remains to be seen whether it is the fears of many Afghans that another civil war is coming or the optimism of the international community that Afghanistan is strong enough to withstand the post-2014 shocks that will turn out correct. But one thing is clear: The faster the international community rushes out of Afghanistan economically and militarily and the more it continues to underemphasize the need to improve governance in Afghanistan, the more likely it will be the former.

NOTES

1 The term "Transition" is at times used differently by various stakeholders in Afghanistan policy. NATO frequently uses the term in a restricted sense as a military phase to be followed by Redeployment. The United States government often uses the term more broadly as one pillar of a larger political engagement with Afghanistan. And President Karzai sometimes uses the expression to denote the period through 2014, after which he talks about Transformation. When I use the term in the article I mean more broadly the entire process – before and after 2014 – of handing responsibility for security, political, and economic affairs over to the Afghan government as well as any resulting changes in the security, political, and economic order in Afghanistan the process will produce.

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ARTICLE

Against Stabilization

Roger Mac Ginty*

This is a polemic against the concept and practice of stabilization as practiced by leading states from the global north in peace support interventions. It is not an argument against stability. Instead, it depicts stabilization as an essentially conservative doctrine that runs counter to its stated aims of enhancing local participation and legitimacy. It is an agenda of control that privileges notions of assimilation with international (western) standards and mainstreams the military into peace-support operations. As a result, the value of peace is undercut.

This is not an argument in favor of instability. Instead, it is an argument against the specific policies enacted under the name of 'stabilization'. In particular, this polemic discusses why western states and organizations have fetishized control and order with consequences for peace, liberty and localized autonomy. Our interest in stability, and the often draconian stabilization policies pursued in societies emerging from conflict and authoritarianism, says much about us.

The article is offered in the spirit of debate and reflection. It begins by noting how the concept of peace has been side-lined in recent years and has been supplanted by 'stabilization', 'security' and other concepts that are based on ideas of control. The article then charts how the term stabilization has entered the peacemaking and peacebuilding lexicon. The term lacks definitional clarity and is often found alongside a broad range of security and peace-related terms. The article explains the ascendancy of the term, and the practice of stabilization locating much of the explanation in the fallout of the War on Terror. The thrust of the article raises an important question: why is so much international intervention based on the notion of control and stabilization rather than notions that promote emancipation, autonomy, and dissent? It seems that stabilization is axiomatically connected with foreign policy stances that tend to prioritize national interests. As a result, an internal contradiction (and therefore failure) rests in the heart of stabilization.

Whatever happened to peace?

One doesn't need to be a disciple of Foucault, Bourdieu or other dead French philosophers to realize that words matter. The fortunes of the word 'peace' seem to be at a low-ebb. This is not to romanticize the term peace. Human history has seen enough instances of victors' peace to know that 'peace' is often won on the battlefield or enforced through a secret police. In the first century AD, the Roman historian Tacitus observed the following in the aftermath of the Roman subjugation of ancient Britain: 'The Romans created a de-

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sert, and called it peace' (Mac Ginty 2006: 12–32). If we fast forward two millennia then we can see other instances in which cities have been razed and populations cleared to secure 'peace'. Colonel Jeffrey Martindale of the US Army noted the results of the 2010 military surge in Afghanistan thus: 'We just obliterated those towns. They're not there at all. These are just parking lots right now' (cited in Partlow and Brulliard 2010). Similar strategies have been used to pacify Grozny and Aleppo. While both ancient and modern leaders have used force to make 'peace', in recent years there have been further erosions of the term 'peace'.

In part this might be because of a puncturing of the hubris surrounding the liberal interventionism of the late 1990s and first decade of this century. The quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the global financial crisis, have tempered the optimism of would-be interventionists. The appetite for open-ended overseas interventions is very much diminished. There is a greater understanding that conflicts cannot be easily 'solved', and that ameliorative efforts are required to be multidimensional and long-term. International organizations and bilateral donors show a more nuanced understanding of conflict and its links with development (see, for example, World Bank 2011).

A quick survey of states that have experienced post-conflict and post-authoritarian international interventions shows that many lag in indicators on democratization and transparency. This is despite substantial and sustained international peace-support, transition and governance interventions. The 2012 Freedom House indicators list Afghanistan, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tajikistan – all states that have received substantial international assistance – as being 'not free'. All five states in which the UN Peacebuilding Commission has been active (Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone) are ranked as 'partly free' (Freedom House 2012). Nepal, Angola, Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, Cambodia, Burundi and Sudan languish near the bottom of Transparency International's 2011 Corruption Index despite being recipients of significant international attention (Transparency International 2011). The chief point is that the results of international intervention have been patchy at best despite the expenditure of blood, money and prestige. The cumulative experience has had a series of impacts on the ambition and optimism associated with international intervention.

Recent policy documents by international organizations underscore this new realism. There has been a rowing back from a rigid acceptance of western statebuilding and governance norms. The term 'good enough governance' has crept into the governance lexicon, suggesting minimally acceptable standards rather than an exhaustive list of institutional standards fragile contexts are expected to meet (Grindle 2005). There has also been a recognition of the utility and legitimacy of forms of governance that admit the importance of indigenous, customary or traditional decision-making processes (Mac Ginty 2008). The 2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States lowers expectations by noting how 'basic governance transformations may take 20–40 years' and that 'overly technocratic' interventions have failed to make sustainable connections with populations in societies undergoing post-conflict transitions (OECD 2011). The United Nations Development Program's 2011 Governance for Peace report also moves away from top-down prescriptive rigidity by observing that 'responsive institutions are close to the people and so the emphasis is on local governance' (UNDP 2011). The World Bank's 2011 World Development Report recognizes the importance of 'best-fit approaches appropriate to the local political context'. In a break from the prescriptive tone of the World Bank in the 1990s, the World Development Report cautions 'Don't let perfection be the enemy of progress – embrace pragmatic, best-fit options to address immediate challenges' and highlights the importance of 'inclusive

enough coalitions' and 'local participatory practices' (World Bank 2011).

Indeed, the phrase 'good enough' has appeared with increasing frequency in relation to Afghanistan. The former British Defence Minister, Liam Fox, noted that Afghanistan could expect 'good enough security' (cited in BBC 2010). In 2012, the White House, State Department and Pentagon were all reported to be using the phrase 'Afghan good enough' as a shorthand for a lowered benchmark that would enable a swifter exit (Cooper and Shanker 2012).

In one respect, this 'good enoughery' suggests that lesson learning exercises have taken root in diplomatic capitals and in the headquarters of international organizations. Policies are being linked more closely to the capability of international actors to deliver and expectations are being managed. Yet, there is another reading of this new realism: that there has been a significant retreat from the essential goals of international intervention and a refocusing on liberal internationalism-lite, or a stripped-down budget version of intervention. In some cases, it as though the exit strategy has become the central plank of the mandate. It is worth re-stressing that none of this is to romanticize a golden era of international intervention in which pure notions of peace were pursued. Such an era never existed. The pursuit of peace has always had to contend with the prosaic realities of the facts on the ground, limited budgets, shifting policy priorities and demographic conundrums that pit communities against one another.

Yet if peace has always been unfashionable among foreign policy elites, it has become even more so in recent decades. Multiple factors account for this. The world is no stranger to Manichean worldviews, with individuals and societies often reaching for oppositional binaries to understand social phenomena: good versus evil, rational versus irrational, and modern versus traditional etc. Yet, there were signs in the 1990s that Manichean worldviews were eroding in western capitals. The 1990s was the period of inclusive peace processes in which combatants were urged to come in from the cold and negotiate. It was, as John Darby (1996) observed, a time for the 'weak smile and a hard swallow': De Klerk met Mandela, Arafat met Rabin, Adams met British government ministers. The decline of Cold War proxy conflicts allowed international actors space in which to encourage negotiated settlements, for example, Angola, Mozambique, Guatemala and El Salvador. The 1990s saw a massive extension of the number and remit of internationally-supported peacebuilding operations. While not an era of sweetness and light, it did seem as though negotiated settlements were internationally-condoned. Virtually all of the peace accords recorded by the Peace Accords Matrix involved some sort of international recognition or verification of implementation (PAM 2012).

The events of and response to 9/11 changed international (mainly US) attitudes to inclusive peace negotiations. The international space that had encouraged combatants to investigate negotiated settlements became more closed. The War on Terror ushered in a renewed Manichean era of them versus us (see, for example, Bush 2001). This had obvious and well-documented impacts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many other regimes, from Nepal to Zimbabwe, saw the opportunity to use the War on Terror narrative to their own advantage (Falk 2003; Darby 2012). Counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency were used as smokescreens to deny rights and avoid negotiations. The concepts of neutrality and humanitarian space became constrained. The line between combatants and non-combatants has always been blurred, but the armed humanitarianism of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan blurred this line even further. For many Iraqis and Afghans the United Nations was just another part of a western coalition, with the result that attacks on UN and humanitarian personnel have increased markedly over the past decade.

The chief point is that peace became subjugated to other concerns such as winning

the War on Terror or acquiring quiescent allies. Of course, the term 'peace' and the subdiscipline of Peace Studies have always been regarded with some suspicion; something of a hippie holdout while others got on with the serious business of policy and 'solutions'. Yet by the mid-1990s peace based on negotiations was about as fashionable as it was possible for the awkward kid to become. A quick perusal of the list of Nobel Peace Prize winners in the 1990s attests to the international affirmation of negotiated settlements (FW de Klerk and Nelson Mandela; Yassir Arafat, Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin; John Hume and David Trimble; and Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo and Jose Ramos-Horta).

Enter Stabilization

The term 'stabilization' has crept into the governance and intervention parlance steadily since the mid-1990s. The term was commonly used in relation to economies undergoing the shock doctrine of rapid liberalization and the sweeping away of state support (Klein 2007). Stabilization, in this respect, was about controlling hyperinflation, paring back the state and ensuring that post-Soviet sphere states were integrated into an ordered, open economic system. In relation to peace and conflict, the term truly 'arrived' with the establishment in January 1996 of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its association with the military alliance NATO is telling; it was inflected by a military paradigm of security rather than a more optimistic peace paradigm. 'Stabilization' was embraced in the US policy community. In 2003 the US Army Peacekeeping Institute was renamed the US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (Schultz and Agoglia 2006: 23). Peacekeeping had become a domestically unpopular term. Stabilization was further internalized by the policy community with the publication of a new US Army Field Manual on 'Stability Operations' (US Army 2009). In 2004 an Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) was created within the State Department to pool knowledge from the Iraq and Afghanistan experiences. In 2011 the State Department established a Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations into which S/CRS would be folded.

The S/CRS mandate was to 'lead, coordinate and institutionalize US Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy' (Pascual 2005). The mission statement is interesting in that it does not explicitly mention military actors. The mandate is expansive in that it encompasses on-going conflicts and transitions, as well as conflict prevention. The S/CRS invocation of peace, democracy and a market economy is revealing as it locates stabilization firmly the 'liberal peace' paradigm. The liberal peace is taken as short-hand for the dominant form of peacemaking favoured by leading states, international financial institutions and international organizations. It uses a language of liberalism (hence the phrase 'liberal peace') and emphasizes the importance of democratization, transparent institutions, and free markets.

But stabilization is by no means a US preserve. Two United Nations missions have adopted the phrase 'stabilization': the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). The UN-affiliated Peace Operations Training Institute in Turin offers a 'Stabilization and Reconstruction Management Senior Course'. The Government of the United Kingdom has a cross-departmental Stabilization Unit, comprised of personnel from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development. It defines stabilization as 'the process of establishing peace and security in countries affected by conflict and instability. It is the promotion of peaceful political settlement to produce a le-

gitimate indigenous government, which can serve its people. Stabilization often requires external joint military and civilian support' (Stabilization Unit 2012). In 2000 the European Union established its Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization (CARDS) scheme for the western Balkans. This was followed by a process of Stabilization and Association Agreements for countries of the region. While much of the focus was on economic stabilization and preparing the way for eventual EU membership, the EU conceptualization of stabilization includes an interest in security (Council of the European Union 2000).

In one respect there is a good deal of comforting optimism within the definitions of stabilization, and the term 'peace' retains a position in many of them. What is noticeable is that many of the definitions lack precision and resemble a hodge-podge of words around the general areas of peacebuilding, security and development. A number of explanations of stabilization carelessly elide into terms that have distinct definitions. Siegle (2011: 2) for example, refers to peacekeeping 'and other forms of stabilization'. NATO refers to 'stabilization and reconstruction' or 'S&R' (Nelson 2006). Our interest in definitions is not to engage in terminological prissiness. The labels used by states, international organizations and their proxies matter a great deal. Making, keeping and building peace are clearly political projects. Yet it helps that there are some attempts to maintain non-political, humanitarian and impartial space within these projects. This is often difficult to achieve, and has not been helped by the continued blurring of distinctions between combatants and non-combatants (Hancock and Mitchell 2007). The danger is that the terminological imprecision surrounding 'stabilization' creates a meta-category; full of buzzwords but empty of meaning. Moreover, there is the danger that peace becomes subsumed by a range of other terms more closely associated with security.

So is it possible to reach a widely agreed definition of stabilization? Yes, but the definition has to be quite broad: an international endeavour to stop conflict, embed peace and routinize a functioning state that operates according to strictures of good governance. Most definitions mention the input of local actors in conferring legitimacy to a stabilized dispensation. What definitions like this fail to do, and what this article seeks to address, is the underlying ideological and power dynamics that underpin stabilization.

The ascent of stabilization needs to be examined within the wider context of the securitization of aid and peace-support intervention. Securitization is the prioritization of security and the security lens, especially in the development and aid spheres where traditionally notions of empathy and moral compassion held sway. Securitization, or a security-led paradigm, is not new and certainly predated 9/11 and the Afghan and Iraqi debacles. US support to authoritarian regimes in Central and South America in the 1980s can be regarded as an era of securitization in which workers and indigenous rights movements were viewed through a Cold War prism as threats to be extirpated. The War on Terror encouraged a renewed emphasis on securitization, and commentators have declared many areas of life as being 'securitized': the body, food, the environment (Martin 2010; Gueldry 2012). The literature on the securitisation of the humanitarian sector is particularly insightful, with Mark Duffield (2002: 89) charting how development and security have elided over the past two decades:

> 'A metropolitan consensus has emerged that holds that conflict is the result of a developmental malaise in which poverty, resource competition, environmental collapse, population growth, and so on, in the context of failed or predatory state institutions is fomenting non-conventional and criminalised forms of conflict. Instead of seeing a Third World as a series of states constituting a site of strategic alliance and competition, the world's conflict zones have been remapped in

> the representational form of the borderlands.'

These borderlands were to be kept at bay, controlled and securitized. Conflict and societal emergencies were exceptionalized and exoticized: something that happened over there, far away from metropolitan center and something to be defended against. Thus, for example, Haiti, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and many conflict zones were 'othered' and described as hopeless or 'anarchic' (Kaplan 1994).

As Duffield and others point out, we have seen the establishment of a transnational and international form of securitization in which it is associated with entire sectors (humanitarianism and development), regions (the Horn of Africa) and phenomena (AIDS, migration etc.). Securitization has become systemic, embedded within the structures and discourses that frame and respond to conflicts.

Explaining Stabilization

One can quite easily identify a series of proximate factors that have encouraged states, international and multilateral organizations and others to adopt the securitization lens. The already mentioned reaction to 9/11 and the Iraq and Afghanistan imbroglios are the most obvious explanations. Yet proximate factors can only go so far and must be seen in unison with structural factors that provide an ideological milieu and political economy in which stabilization (and an aggressively securitized version of stabilization at that) is regarded as a legitimate and mainstream activity. In the post-9/11 period we have seen the internalization of a security-dilemma in the technocracy of a number of states and international organizations (Booth and Wheeler 2007). Sophisticated political economies of risk identification and 'management' have become institutionalized. In a classic case of epistemic closure, social, economic, political and cultural phenomena are regarded through a security-lens and security-led prescriptions are recommended.

The story behind the development of a political economy and technocracy that regards stabilization as a norm to be achieved is complex. Crucial in this story is the inversion of the notion of liberalism that has traditionally underpinned much peace-support international intervention. In the widely accepted view of liberalism, the individual has the potential to become an empowered citizen who, along with other rational self-interested citizens, can steer the polity towards peace and economic success. In this view, international peace-support interventions seek to empower citizens (through democratization, restraints on centralized states and civil society enhancement).

David Chandler's *International Statebuilding* (2010) constructs a powerful critique of this 'liberal peace', arguing that we inhabit a world of 'post-liberal intervention' in which key ideas of liberalism (that have traditionally guided peace-support interventions) have been discarded. Instead we have entered a post-liberal paradigm that privileges difference over universality, intervention over autonomy and governance over government. So notions of universal human values and aspirations (foundational principles in classical interpretations of liberalism) are subjugated to meaner 'agent centred' views that locate 'the problems of international society with those who have the least access to global wealth and resources and are held to have blocked themselves from achieving this access, through the conscious choices and decisions of the people and/or their political elites' (Chandler 2010: 191). Stated bluntly: 'You've got conflict? That's your problem.' This framing of international problems locates the necessity (and blame) for international intervention with the poor choices of the inhabitants of the conflict area and justifies statebuilding and good governance interventions that manage difference.

The second presumption of the post-liberal paradigm is the privileging of preventive intervention over autonomy. Chandler notes how autonomy has been transformed from a

sphere of freedom and non-intervention in the classical liberal canon to a sphere that calls for intervention in the post-liberal paradigm. Hence forceful intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, but also sanctions regimes against Iran and Syria. 'The starting assumption is that external intervention is necessary as a precondition for social harmony, rather than that intervention is an exception or reaction to the breakdown of social peace' (Chandler 2010: 192). In this view, the autonomy of post-liberal states is regarded as potentially problematic and must be countered by the threat of preventive intervention.

The third presumption in the post-liberal framing of society, conflict and the need for international intervention is that governments have limited capability. Governments, and the formal institutions of sovereign states, are not to be viewed as active agents that deliver services. Instead, they are stripped down into facilitators and moderators. 'The post-liberal paradigm tends, in fact, to reject policy goals and is concerned more with processes of engagement, held to empower the other, enabling them to pursue their goals safely and within a framework of international constraints' (Chandler 193). This has profound implications for what the inhabitants of war-torn societies can expect from statebuilding exercises. They can expect governance rather than government: 'the tasks of international statebuilding are understood as those of the export of good governance rather than the tasks of direction or control' (Chandler 193–4).

The cumulative impact of this post-liberal paradigm is a context in which stabilization is justified as both a means and an end.

Concluding Discussion

It is worth restating the opening remark that this article is not an argument against stability. Much human development and social progress has depended on stability, security and ordered change. Indeed periods of rapid and uncontrolled change are often associated with high death rates; the French, Chinese and Iranian revolutions spring to mind. This article is a critique of the concept of stabilization and how it has been conceptualized and enacted. In particular, the article is concerned about the logic of control that lies behind stabilization.

An argument made in defense of stabilization is that it is an emergency interim measure required when the security situation does not allow a more expansive, civilian-focused international mission. This 'institutionalization before liberalization' argument has plausibility, but only in a limited sense. The author would contended that control and securitization are so hard-wired into contemporary peace-support operations that is difficult for them to adopt a laissez faire attitude to local autonomy.

Four points can be made by way of conclusion. Firstly, stabilization – as a concept and practice – lowers the horizons of peace and peace interventions. It moves us away from the realm of emancipation towards the realm of control. It is, of course, prudent to manage expectations. The peace-support interventions of the 1990s and beyond have been marked by interventions in which public expectations (especially in terms of the provision of public goods) were left unfulfilled. This has left a number of situations, Kosovo and Angola being good examples, in which there is significant public disaffection in the political sphere. Many people are unable to see a link between involvement in formal political activity (such as voting) and an improvement in their material conditions. Yet, while expectation management is sensible, stabilization risks extinguishing the optimism that many transitions require. The term suggests a conservative exercise of maintaining a controlled environment rather than emancipation or liberation. Profound social change (and it is worth remembering that the societies that experience civil war tend to have shocking disparities of wealth and power) requires transformation across many levels of society. Such transformation is likely to have unforeseen consequences, many of which might challenge western norms and sensibilities. It requires

social entrepreneurship, risk-taking and individuals and communities operating outside of traditional roles. All of this is anathema to the notion of stabilization which emphasizes control, order and institutions. Indeed, it is worth noting how statebuilding is the central plank of most peace-support interventions. Statist and institutionalist methods and ends are preferred by the international guardians of peace. Such an approach risks excluding creativity, innovation, dissent, resistance and pluralism; all indicators of agency and of a vibrant polity.

It is worth asking when reviewing stabilization operations: where does power lie? Certainly, many stabilization missions mention local legitimacy, participation, empowerment and consent. Yet the use of a corporate and plastic language often does not equate to a fundamental re-ordering of power away from national and international elites. The primary aim of stabilization is usually ordered transition, with the transition bounded by strictures set down by international financial institutions and diplomatic conventions. In cases where people power has challenged international order (whether Palestinians voting for Hamas or Icelanders reneging their debts) established actors from the global north have branded these activities as 'irresponsible'.

An argument can be made that stabilization missions are revolutionary, and provide opportunities for an expansion of human freedom. This is certainly the narrative employed by the stabilizers. There can be no doubting that international actions have helped topple despots and have introduced significant sociopolitical change in a number of societies. Yet such change is bounded by essentially conservative parameters that reinforce international order, the primacy of state sovereignty, and the dominance of the market economy. The World Bank and others have worked to limit the economic autonomy of post-war and post-authoritarian states. International financial institution strictures to pare back the state, trim welfare, keep inflation low and open (usually fragile) economies to outside competition are rarely empowering. Indeed, international stabilization programs are often a diet of compliance and discipline.

A second concluding point is that the mainstreaming of stabilization has resulted in a hollowing out of peace in international approaches to intervention. Peace still plays a role, rhetorically at least, in the statements of international organizations. Yet, with stabilization, it has to share a billing with securitized and institutionalized order. Again, it is worth restating that there is nothing inherently wrong with security and order; many basic societal functions require security and order. Most expansive definitions of peace, however, emphasize the emancipatory aspects of peace such as fulfilling human potential. The elision of peace with security, which is a recurrent theme in most definitions of stabilization, undercuts the distinctive value of peace. The danger is that peace is relegated to just another glib buzzword that is empty of meaning.

A third concluding point is that the concept of stabilization further normalizes the role of the military and aligned security agencies into peacebuilding. As seen by both the US and UK, stabilization is about harnessing civilian and military know-how, and institutionalizing the working relationships between the two sectors. This is not to impugn the military sector. Many militaries contain highly professionalized and ethical personnel, and they provide the security that is often essential so that public goods such as medical assistance can be supplied. Yet, the principal role of militaries is to fight. They are trained, equipped and conditioned to operate through a security lens. The routine and institutionalized inclusion of the military in peace-support operations endangers expansive notions of peace that are based on the fulfilment of human potential, imaginative and creative expressions of political and cultural desires. So the argument is not against the military per se. Instead, it is against the normalization of a military role in peace-support, which has profound

consequences for issues of impartiality and consent. Indeed, the ease with which NATO moved from stabilization to combat in Afghanistan underscores how the embedded nature of military forces in peace-support missions allows the military dimensions of missions to be stepped up (Suhkre 2008).

The final concluding point is to ask: what does the emphasis on stabilization say about us, in the global north? It has been argued here that stabilization is essentially a conservative doctrine that lowers the horizons of peace and normalizes a military role in peace-support operations. It is about control and ordering the transition of states emerging from civil war and authoritarianism. Many of the criticisms levelled at 'the liberal peace' (Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam 2011; Roberts 2011) remain valid for stabilization: it is an attempt to create compliant, market-friendly any-states that do not threaten the international order. The privileging of stability is manifest in multiple peace-support and statebuilding programs. Whether military mentorship or good governance reforms, the underlying ethos is one of control: the alignment of governing systems in the post-war society so that they meet international (read 'western') norms. This isomorphism reflects a significant insecurity on the part of leading states, international organizations and international financial institutions. It suggests an intolerance towards dissent and an over-eagerness to depict it as 'resistance' or something malign (Mac Ginty 2012b).

While it is sensible for leading states to minimize risk, there has been a fetishization of control. Yet, it is worth asking if it is possible to micro-manage transitions. The nannyish instincts of stabilization undervalues the agency that national elites and local communities have in interpreting, delaying, modifying and mimicking inputs from international peace-support and statebuilding actors (Bhabha 1980). All societies are 'hybrid political orders' (Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan 2009), none more so than societies undergoing peace-support interventions in which international and local dynamics combine to produce a fusion polity. International statebuilding or good governance inputs are often adapted to suit local needs and mores. Many societies reach some sort of equilibrium whereby interest groups accommodate one another, and civility rather than civil war is the norm. This is not to romanticize all things traditional and indigenous, nor to underestimate the very real human hardship that emerges from pogroms and ethnic cleansing. It is, instead, to point to the prevalence of everyday diplomacy and civility in many societies. This may not be pretty and may not conform to western, legally enshrined notions of pluralism. Yet, in many societies, it operates at the village, street and workplace levels as a form of social capital that acts as a conflict retardant. The helicopter parenting of stabilization interferes with the tendency of many post-war societies to reach a 'natural' equilibrium. It often privileges some groups and systems of governance over others, and creates a political economy of prestige and resources around the newly built or reformed state.

It should be stressed that the argument in favour of 'equilibrium' should not be seen as a charter for ethnic cleansers and those who wish to impose their will. Instead, it is an argument for more circumspection with regard to international peace-support intervention and the range of activities that comprise the intervention. It is an argument that stabilization diminishes the ability of fragile societies to understand themselves, their conflict, and the ways in which sustainable accommodation can be achieved. This is despite the language of 'local participation' and 'local legitimacy' that often heavily features in the stabilization literature. S

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ARTICLE

From Insurgency to Bureaucracy: Free Aceh Movement, Aceh Party and the New Face of Conflict

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The settling of the 32-year Aceh conflict not only transformed former members of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) into administrators, constructing a new circle of elites, but also created opportunities and new spaces for economic and socio-political competition and contestation. Hence, this transformation sowed the seeds of an emerging conflict in Aceh. This study investigates the emerging conflict patterns along with their causes and the actors involved. Three patterns of conflict have emerged during the post-Helsinki Peace Agreement period: (i) a conflict among the former GAM elites, (ii) a conflict between the former GAM elites and the former GAM rank-and-file combatants, and (iii) a conflict between the ethnic Acehnese majority and the diverse ethnic minority groups. While the first and second conflicts are primarily induced by individual self-interest, the third is specifically triggered by social and political discrimination as well as by under-development.

Introduction

The story of Aceh is that of a human tragedy which unfolded over successive phases. The Acehnese first fought against the Dutch colonialists (1873–1903) and then against the central government after Indonesian independence. The battle against the Indonesian state involved the *Darul Islam* rebellion (1953–1962) as well as the Free Aceh Movement (1976–2005), which is commonly referred to as the GAM.[1] The conflict resulted in a large number of casualties, the deterioration of infrastructure and psychological harm. However, after a series of failed peace efforts, the Government of Indonesia and the GAM made a historic and dignified step by signing a peace agreement on 15 August 2005 in Helsinki, ending the violent conflict after more than three decades.

The biggest challenge for the GAM in the post-Helsinki period involved transforming itself from a rebel movement into a political party.[2] Given that the Helsinki Peace Agreement required the GAM to disband itself, former GAM rebels turned their separatist organization into a democratic and peaceful one[3] called the Aceh Party (*Partai Aceh*), which was later re-named the GAM Party (*Partai Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*) and, finally,

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the Independent Aceh Movement Party (*Partai Gerakan Aceh Mandiri*).[4] The party, which was founded in June 2007 in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital, is largely administered by the former leaders of the independence movement. For instance, Muzakkir Manaf, the former supreme commander of the Aceh National Armed Forces (*Tentara Nasioanl Aceh*/TNA), the GAM's military wing, was elected as the chairman of the party after serving as the province's deputy governor.

Allowing GAM members to compete for political power in the province – fully independent of existing Indonesian political parties – was one of the vital parts of the peace deal. Hence, combatants re-invented themselves as politicians, administrators, businessmen and contractors.[5] This transformation was facilitated by the victories of key candidates affiliated with Aceh Party, Irwandi Yusuf and Muhammad Nazar, in the successive 2006 and 2009 provincial election; other candidates nominated by the Party were selected as the mayors of Acehnese regencies, including Aceh Jaya, Sabang, Pidie, Pidie Jaya, Bireun, North Aceh, Lhokseumawe, East Aceh, West Aceh, and South Aceh.[6] In addition, the Party collected 33 seats (48%) out of the 69 available seats in the Aceh Parliament (DPR Aceh).[7]

Although peace has been attained and the Acehnese people have now returned to a more normal life since the 2005 Helsinki Peace Agreement, levels of violence remain high.[8] Reaching the peace agreement did not automatically cement the peace and eliminate potential for further conflict. The transitional period in Aceh has produced a new social arena for competition and created particular patterns of conflict.

While a number of studies have been conducted concerning the post-Helsinki peacebuilding process (e.g. Aguswandi 2008; Askandar 2007; Aspinall 2008, 2009; Barron 2008; Feith 2007; Iyer & Mitchel 2007), less attention has been paid to the emerging conflicts in the province. This article dissects those conflicts, which could seriously threaten the process of establishing a sustainable peace in the region. In this regards, this study addresses the following questions: What are the general patterns of conflict appearing in the post-Helsinki period? What is the root cause of each pattern of the conflict? And who are the actors involved in each conflict pattern?

In responding to these questions, I first illustrate the historical dynamic of the GAM, providing the background to the protracted Aceh conflict. Then, I examine how the Government of Indonesia and GAM successfully reached a historic deal by signing the Helsinki Peace Agreement. Finally, I explore the emerging patterns of conflict which emerged as former GAM rebels transformed themselves into bureaucrats. The data presented here is primarily drawn from several open-ended interviews with former GAM members, Acehnese scholars and ethnic and religious leaders.

Free Aceh Movement: The Emergence, Leadership, and Revival

The GAM came into being in December 1976, following the issuance of its "Declaration of Independence of Aceh-Sumatra". The movement also became internationally known as the ASNLF (Aceh Sumatra National Liberation Front) or NLFAS (National Liberation Front of Acheh-Sumatra). The GAM began when the movement's "founding father", Teungku Hasan di Tiro, declared Aceh's independence. Like other Acehnese people, Tiro was also a supporter of the Indonesian nation and dreamed of an Indonesian federation.[9] Tiro moved to New York, where he worked part time at the Indonesian mission to the United Nations. However, he left his post to support the *Darul Islam* rebellion in Aceh in 1953.[10] He later served as an overseas representative of the Islam-based rebellion.[11] Tiro's active engagement in the *Darul Islam* rebellion had made him "become openly critical of Indonesia" and Indonesian forces, which he later accused of genocide.[12]

In addition to Tiro, the GAM's leadership comprised relatively privileged elites, includ-

ing Mukhtar J. Hasbi, Husaini M. Hasan, and Zaini Abdullah. The initial leadership of the movement mainly consisted of young professionals and intellectuals, such as doctors, engineers, politicians, and businessmen. Many of its followers had fought in the *Darul Islam* Rebellion (1953–1962).[13] At the outset, the movement was weak and small, probably involving no more than 200 active members moving around in the mountains of Aceh.[14] The declaration of Acehnese independence in 1976 probably involved only 24 leaders.[15] During this period, the GAM's activities were primarily concerned with producing and distributing pamphlets which outlined their aims and ideals.[16] Since its establishment, a large number of Acehnese people had been members of the Diaspora, or were refugees, abroad and contributed to the GAM. For instance, in 2001, the Acehnese Diaspora was estimated to consist of between 2,000 and 3,000 people in Malaysia and another 8,000 permanently residing in Thailand, Australia, Europe, and North America.[17]

The Government of Indonesia quickly responded to Aceh's declaration of independence with the mass arrest and killing of GAM members.[18] At this stage, since the GAM possessed few weapons and members, it was very easy for the strong and well-equipped Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) to suppress the movement quickly.[19] As a result, by 1981, ten of the original 24 signatories to the declaration of independence had been killed by the TNI in an attempt to crush and wipe out the movement before its ideals and ideology could take hold. The 1976 crackdown by the Indonesian military made GAM members go underground or move abroad (Kingsbury & Fernandes 2008, p. 96). The movement seemed to have been crushed by 1982, with most of its leaders either killed, in exile, or in prison.[20]

While living in exile, Tiro and other GAM leaders consolidated and solidified the movement by sending their members to Libya for military training, lobbying the international community, and developing their ideological rhetoric, methods, and strategy.[21] GAM then experienced the first major revival by resurfacing in 1989.

The movement re-emerged with a greater number of better and more organized soldiers due to their military and ideological training in Libya, which started in 1986.[22] Upon their return to Aceh, the trained fighters vigorously renewed their activities, trained local volunteers, and purchased better military equipment, reportedly with Libyan assistance.[23] With weapons purchased from Indonesian soldiers or, later on, taken off of captured troops, the "Libyan graduates" started a military campaign by attacking isolated police and military posts, camps, and installations. The attacks were often conducted to capture weapons from the Indonesian troops and to signal the movement's resurgence.[24]

To counter this new threat, the Government of Indonesia quickly responded by declaring Aceh as *Daerah Operasi Militer* (a Military Operations Area, or DOM) in 1989. The declaration of Aceh as a DOM by the government was a response to the sudden increase in GAM's strength, and the classification was intended to counter its renewed capacity and propensity for violence. It was claimed that by the end of 1991, or somewhat later, the Indonesian troops had successfully crushed the rebellion and killed or captured most of its top leaders and commanders.[25] As of late 1996, the Government of Indonesia officially announced that the counter-insurgency operations had effectively destroyed GAM (*Global Security* 2006). The declaration of the DOM in Aceh reportedly generated casualties. The DOM status was accompanied by interrogations, intimidation, arrests, and indiscriminate or mysterious civilians killings.[26]

Despite such setbacks, the movement enjoyed its second revival in 1999 with a drastic increase in membership and an expansion of its territorial base.[27] The ending of Aceh's DOM status in 1998 – largely due to the Asian monetary crisis of 1997 – was accompanied by the substantial withdrawal of *Kopassus*

(the Indonesian Special Armed Forces). The authoritarian New Order regime in Indonesia collapsed in 1998, thus bringing about a period of transition. Indonesia's transitional period, which was marked by a relatively open political atmosphere, brought huge opportunities and enabled GAM members to express their discontents and unhappiness with Jakarta, strengthen their demands for independence, and consolidate their activities and strategies.[28] However, it is important to underline that the GAM's 1999 second revival was also possible given the failure of the central government to address the underlying economic and social grievances in Aceh by 1998.[29]

The Dynamics of the Helsinki Peace Agreement

The signing of the Helsinki Peace Agreement on 15 August 2005, ending the approximately 32 years of armed conflict in Aceh, was a crucial part of the history of the GAM and offered a ray of hope for Acehnese people. Diverse expressions, such as the "courageous and constructive step", the "peaceful solution with dignity for all", and "the best and most effective vehicle to embody the dream of Acehnese",[30] have all been used to describe the peace agreement.

A number of prominent scholars have recognized the effect of the Indian Ocean tsunami of 26 December 2004 on the successful peace deal in Aceh.[31] The natural disaster flattened the province, resulting in huge casualties and widespread destruction. Aceh was broadly known as the worst hit area by the earthquake-triggered tsunami. It is reported that between 150,000 and 200,000 Acehnese people died or went missing, while the survivors were left in desperate need of food, shelter, and basic medical facilities.[32] The natural disaster also helped give rise to the 2005 Helsinki Peace Agreement. The magnitude of suffering felt by the Acehnese people helped GAM and the Indonesian government to agree to return the negotiating table.[33]

Mediation proved to be effective in peacefully resolving the protracted Aceh conflict. The historic peace talks, which took place in Helsinki between 28 January and 12 July 2005, were mediated by the Crisis Management Institute. In particular, Marti Ahtisaari, the former Finnish prime minister and the director of the institute, was appointed as the principle mediator of the peace negotiation.[34] Ahtisaari was convinced that the Aceh conflict should be treated as an asymmetric conflict.[35] Ahtisaari believed that the Government of Indonesia would never accept the GAM's demand for independence and urged the GAM negotiators to accept "realism". As a result, rather than discussing the GAM's demand for independence, Ahtisaari was immensely engaged in realizing a package of special autonomy.[36] He openly pushed the GAM delegation to accept the package and threatened them with the withdrawal of international support for the movement if they did not.[37] Ahtisaari's strong leadership during the negotiation process played an important part in the overall success of the peace negotiations.

The issue of independence was not set aside until the negotiation came to the third round. During the five rounds of the peace talks, the establishment of local political parties for Aceh had grabbed most of the participants' focus. The GAM delegation particularly believed that the establishment of local political parties in Aceh was crucial since the Indonesian national parties are mostly controlled from Jakarta and thus cannot represent their interests.[38] It was strongly held by the GAM delegation that the establishment of local political parties would not only symbolize their identity but would also safeguard their dignity.[39]

Relative to the previous failed peace efforts, the Helsinki Peace Agreement is often seen as more comprehensive and reflective. It offered a more comprehensive political solution to the conflict rather than just focusing on the cessation of violence on the ground. For instance, the disarmament, demobiliza-

tion, and reintegration of the ex-combatants emerged as an important element which was eventually captured in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). In addition, it established complete special autonomy for Aceh within the Republic of Indonesia and allowed GAM's transformation into a political party.[40]

Aceh Party and the Emerging New Pattern of Conflict

The Helsinki Peace Agreement had a tremendous effect on the lives of the former GAM rebels. Through the new political Aceh Party, a number of the former rebels have occupied various prestigious and strategic political and social positions and won many lucrative contracts during the post-conflict reconstruction process in the province. The new emerging circle of power and the social structure in the province have given rise to internal antagonism and social conflict. In particular, the establishment of Aceh Party by the former rebels is specifically viewed as also having produced conflict among former GAM members. In short, conflict in post-Helsinki Aceh follows three common patterns. The first pattern is related to the economic competition and political contestation among the former GAM elites. The second one involves antagonism and anger between former GAM combatants and elites. The third pattern involves ethnic hostility between the dominant Acehnese ethnic group, who were prominent supporter of the GAM, and the diverse non-Acehnese ethnic groups, who were generally opponents of GAM. The following sections delve further into the three conflict patterns along with the causes of each.

Among the former GAM elites

The first conflict – struggle and rivalry among the former GAM elites – originates in the personal interests of the former top GAM officials. The competition among the elites over political positions, privileges, facilities, business activities, and contracts with major state-owned enterprises[41] have been a major source of factionalism and antagonism. The GAM elites' self-interests became more and more manifest in the post-conflict environment. They greatly benefited from their positions in the movement's hierarchical structure.[42] Through the Aceh Party, the elites captured the top positions in Aceh province and became active in various business sectors backed by their freshly acquired political positions and connections.

This conflict emerged as the GAM sought to divide the spoils of war. For instance, Nur Djuli, the senior GAM negotiator at the Helsinki peace talks, is currently chair of *Badan Reintegrasi Aceh* (the Aceh Re-integration Agency) and therefore receives a high income and other special privileges provided by the Agency. Nurdin Abdur Rahman, another GAM negotiator and the former GAM leader in Malaysia and Australia, is currently acting as the director of Aceh World Trade Center (AWTC). Muzakkir Manaf, the former supreme commander of TNA (the armed wing of GAM), became CEO of *Pulo Gadeng*, a major contracting company. Sofyan Dawood, the former TNA commander in North Aceh and GAM's spokesperson, has won several high-value contracts.[43] This overt and self-interested competition has generated conflict among the former elites. Mundhir, a former GAM elite, who became an important administrator in Aceh, observed how the embedded self-interests generate conflict among the GAM elites:

> "I could not deny that many also fought for their self-interests, which might take diverse forms, positions, properties, favorable economic activities, etc. Many might also wish that they could become *Pegawai Negeri Sipil/PNS* (the governmental civil servants), *Camat* (sub-district head), *Bupati* (district mayor), or *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Aceh/DPRA* (Aceh Provincial Parliament) and many others. Whatever goals and intentions they had in their minds did not have to be a problem for GAM as long as they struggled and made significant

> sacrifices for GAM and finally brought about the victory for the movement. The split and conflict among a few GAM elites after the peace agreement was probably just the ripple effect of the self-interest competitions among them. However, a large number of us were ignorant about our self-interests; and thereby were not really involved in the split."[44]

Figure 1 summarizes some of the former GAM elites' currently collected rewards/benefits that are often considered to be equivalent to their positions in the movement's past hierarchical structure.

In addition, the appointment of the GAM-aligned candidate running for the provincial-level executive election has caused a further rift between the generations of GAM elites. Ahmad Humam Hamid, a prominent local academic affiliated with the national (Indonesia-wide) United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangnan*), ran for the provincial executive position with Hasbi Abdullah, a fellow academic and former political prisoner. The men's candidacy was widely supported by the old GAM generation. However, the GAM's military commanders and younger members refused to support them given that they had entered into a coalition with a national political party, the United Development Party. Two other former GAM elites took advantage of the division to announce their intent to contest the top position. Ultimately Hamid and Abdullah were selected as the governor and the deputy governor of Aceh (2007–2012). While they have been supported, even among younger and grassroots members, the incident showed the extent of competition among the former GAM elites.[45]

The elite conflict does not only take place in the political sphere but also involves economic competition over high-value tenders and contracts linked to the post-conflict reconstruction process. The competition for the projects generates antagonism and even hostility among the former GAM elites. As Sulaiman, one of the former GAM members who used to get involved in competitions for lucrative post-conflict reconstruction projects, stated:

> "For example, there were five people backed by the GAM elites competing for a project tender. The winner of the project tender was often opposed

Position in GAM	**Post-Helsinki Position**
GAM spokesperson	The governor of Aceh (2007–2012)
The GAM Minister of State and the GAM peace talks delegation leader	The governor of Aceh (2012–2017)
Civil/Ideological Trainer	Deputy Governor of Aceh (2007–2012)
Supreme Commander of TNA (Aceh National Armed Forces)	CEO of Pulo Gadeng Holding Company; recently elected to be Deputy Governor of Aceh (2012–2017)
GAM spokesperson	Recipients of valuable contracts for post-conflict reconstruction projects
GAM negotiator	Chair of Badan Reintegrasi Aceh (The Aceh Reintegration Agency)
GAM negotiator	Director of Aceh World Trade Centre
GAM negotiator	Prominent private sector figure

Fig. 1: Translation of GAM Authority into Post-Helsinki Privilege

> by the 4 losers. As a result, their GAM-based friendship was further turned to be an antagonism and resentment between the losing and the winning GAM members. It was always the way the project tender worked on the ground. Those who won the projects often possessed close political or personal networking and connections with specific GAM elites, such as *Gajah Keng* people or other commanders, although their project proposals were not qualified enough. A Darussalam person joining a project tender in Sigli was supposed to be backed by the GAM elites based in Sigli. Otherwise, he/she would lose in bidding for the project. Once somebody won a project, he/she was supposed to share the revenues of the project with the GAM elites who previously backed the project. It seemed to be a common rule for every project competition in Aceh. It was almost impossible to win a project in Aceh without having the GAM elite's support and backing."[46]

The entry of a large number of GAM members into bureaucracy, following the incredible winning of Aceh Party in the provincial election, has created a new circle of power and lucrative patronage networks in Aceh,[47] thereby deconstructing the existing constellation of political power in the province. The newly crafted circle of power then steers economic opportunities to former GAM elites. Moreover, the project bidding system in Aceh, which reflects the local culture of nepotism and corruption (that long predated the Helsinki Peace Agreement), has produced a new sort of horizontal conflict and antagonism among former GAM elites. That is, the transition from war to peace provided new economic and political resources for the Acehnese people and, in the process, generated a new structure of conflict.

Between the former GAM rank-and-file combatants and the former GAM elites

The next conflict pattern involves the emergence of resentment among former GAM combatants of the movement's elites. The conflict is generally produced by the inequitable distribution of the rewards between the elites and the rank-and-file combatants in the post-Helsinki period. Former elites appear ignorant of or unconcerned with the living condition of former rank-and-file combatants, most of whom are unemployed and living in poverty. The political economy of the post-conflict period in Aceh has yielded rewards for GAM elites but not for the former rank-and-file combatants. This gap in benefits has led to a newly emerging conflict rooted in inequality. As Masnan, a former combatant based in East Aceh Regency, stated:

> "My former commander had some construction projects. Sadly, he never shared with me and other members. He had already forgotten his members once he had the project. We all together fought the TNI (the Indonesian National Armed Forces) and lived in the same camp during our guerilla war. During the conflict, we all often shared only one peace of cigarette and also shared the foods since we had no more in the jungle. He enjoyed himself all the money, owned many exclusive homes and rode a luxurious car. He did not care about his members any longer. I think most of the commanders did the same thing. They did not care about the former GAM rank-and-file members. I was very sad and frustrated. If only the conflict happens again, the rank-and-file members would not be willing to go to war again since they had been very disappointed."[48]

Some former GAM rank-and-file members, especially those who still illegally kept their weapons, engage in criminal acts such as kidnapping, intimidation of foreign workers,

and thievery. The criminal acts are primarily intended either to attract the elites' attentions or to taint the elites' public images and reputations.[49] During the conflict with the Indonesian government, solidarity among GAM members was maintained through mutual support. However, once the conflict ended, the solidarity among the elites and ordinary combatants broke down.

Between the ethnic Acehnese majority and the various ethnic minority groups

The last emerging conflict pattern in the post-Helsinki period involves ethnic antagonism and hostility between the ethnic Acehnese, who were the major supporters of the GAM, and the various ethnic minority groups, including Gayo, Alas, Tamiang, Aneuk Jamee, Kluet, Singkil and Simeulue ethnic groups, who generally opposed the GAM in the past. This conflict predates the signing of the peace agreement. Ethnic Acehnese make up about 80 % of the total population of Aceh and are concentrated in the regencies located in the north coastal areas of the province.

Ethnic stratification in Aceh, which also occasionally appears on other Indonesia's islands, has produced a specific situation that places one ethnic group as more privileged and prioritized than the others. Ethnic division in Aceh has created some prejudices and, in most of the cases, resulted in antagonism and hostility between the ethnic Acehnese majority and the various ethnic minority groups. The minority ethnic groups in Aceh, particularly Gayo, Singkil, and Alas people, have long been socio-politically marginalized and isolated by the ethnic Acehnese majority,[50] a fact which led them to oppose the GAM. Najmuddin, one of the prominent leaders of Alas ethnic group, shared his experience:

> "The Acehnese people often treated us like we were not part of Aceh province. They often looked down and disvalued the ethnic minority groups by using various methods. When we were in Banda Aceh and tried to normally mingle with the Acehnese people, we felt that we were not Acehnese because of their discriminations. Other Alas people also felt the same thing when they were in Banda Aceh, the capital. When I was a child, I was often told by my parents that we were not Acehnese. If there were Acehnese people here, they would be isolated. The similar situation applied in Pidie. Some of the Alas people were isolated there. We were always frustrated if we had some administrative duties to do in Banda Aceh. We were just ignored and inappropriately welcome if we could not speak Acehnese. The officers there would not serve us if we used Indonesian *Bahasa.* My Alas friends often asked my help if they had some affairs to manage in Banda Aceh as I could speak a little bit Acehnese."[51]

The ethnic tensions have been transmitted across generations in the province. They have also manifested themselves in politics. As Nurdin, one of the Gayonese ethnic leaders and academics, pointed out:

> "When the Acehnese were betrayed by Jakarta for the first time in the 1950s, they started behaving discourteously and meanly towards the non-Acehnese ethnic groups. They treated us in the Aceh province like the way Jakarta treated them. They obviously adopted the way Jakarta discriminated them for marginalizing us. Their discriminatory measures and policies especially included the restriction and/or the reduction of the budgets of the local governments of the various ethnic minority groups' regencies. They also often assigned the ethnic Acehnese people as the district heads or mayors of the [minorities'] regencies. The method was very much similar to the way Jakarta appointed

> the Javanese people as mayors in most of the Aceh's regencies."[52]

Unfortunately, the issue of ethnic discrimination in Aceh is poorly covered either by the mass media or scholarly research.[53] The media's coverage of the Aceh conflict concealed the issue and used the word *Acehnese* to refer to residents of Aceh without differentiating among the various ethnic groups.[54] Studies of Aceh tend to view Acehnese as a singular group of people living in the Aceh province,[55] thereby failing to portray the ethno-political structure of conflict in the post-Helsinki period.

Socio-political marginalization has frustrated ethnic minority groups and, as a consequence, led them to demand for the establishment of administrative sub-units.[56] The idea of *Aceh Leuser Antara* Province (abbreviated as ALA) is primarily designed to include Central Aceh, Bener Meriah, Gayo Lues, Southeast Aceh, Subulussalam and Aceh Singkil Regencies, where the ethnic minorities of Gayo, Alas, and Singkil are concentrated. Moreover, the proposed *Aceh Barat Selatan* Province (abbreviated as ABAS) includes Aceh Jaya, West Aceh, Nagan Raya, Southwest Aceh, Simeulue, and South Aceh Regencies, which are home to other ethnic minorities. The increasingly emerging demand for the regional partitions in Aceh is not a trivial issue; it is indeed a serious challenge for the process of seeking a sustainable peace in the region.[57] Demands for such provisions reveal horizontal ethnic hostility – and the potential for conflict – between the majority and the minority ethnic groups.

Conclusion

Resolving the Aceh conflict resulted in the emergence of new social and political opportunities and competition over them. The transformation of the GAM elites into an administrative, political, and private-sector elite has created a new circle of power in Aceh, which situates the former GAM leaders at its center. This new circle of power enables not only the distribution of the economic and political rewards among the GAM members but also gives rise to new patterns of conflict in the post-Helsinki period. Clearly, reaching a peace deal does not automatically eliminate all forms of conflict; rather, it brings "the old conflict" to an end and marks the starting point of new conflict patterns. Such conflicts are potentially detrimental and costly and, in the long run, may undermine the process of seeking a sustainable peace in the region if not managed well by the province's leaders through existing democratic institutions.

NOTES

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32 Rizal Sukma, *ibid.*, p. 5; Kamarulzaman Askandar, *ibid.*, p. 255; Kirsten E. Schulze, *ibid.*, 2007, p. 216.
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43 See Edward Aspinall, *ibid.*; Patrick Barron, *ibid.*
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45 See Edward Aspinall, *ibid.*, 2008, pp. 50–51; Sidney Jones, Menjaga perdamaian: keamanan di Aceh. In Aguswandi & Large, J. (ed.). *Accord: rekonfigurasi politik proses damai Aceh*. (London: Conciliation Resources Publication, 2008), pp. 79–83.
46 *Confidential interview*, East Aceh, November 11, 2009.
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48 *Confidential interview*, East Aceh, February 10, 2010.

49 Zulfikar, one of the former GAM rank-and-file members, *confidential interview*, Lhoksumawe, November 14, 2010.
50 See, for example, Stefan Ehrentraut, *Dividing Aceh? Minorities, Partition Movements and State-Reform in Aceh Province,* Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series, No. 37, Aceh Working Paper Series, No. 6, May 10.
51 *Confidential interview*, Southeast Aceh, November 21, 2009.
52 *Confidential interview*, Central Aceh, December 12, 2009.
53 Michelle Ann Miller, *ibid.*, 2009, p. 142, also noticed this issue as stating that "one under-reported dimension of the contemporary conflict in Aceh has been the sometimes strained relationship between Aceh's ethnic minority groups and the ethnic Acehnese majority". See also Stefan Ehrentraut, *Dividing Aceh? Minorities, Partition Movements and State-Reform in Aceh Province,* Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series, No. 37, Aceh Working Paper Series, No. 6, May 10.
54 Edward Aspinall, *Islam and nation: separatist rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 4.
55 Michelle Ann Miller, *ibid.*
56 See International Crisis Group Report, 2005; Michelle Ann Miller, *ibid.*; Matt Davies, *Indonesia's war over Aceh: last stand on Mecca's porch.* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 52. It is also worth noting that the group often call themselves as *Galaksi* movement, an acronym of Aceh's Gayo, Alas, Kluet and Sinkil indigenous ethnic minorities.
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PRACTICE NOTE

Interim Stabilisation in Fragile Security Situations

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The Challenges of Conventional Stabilisation

For more than two decades a conventional approach to security promotion has been widely applied by multilateral and bilateral agencies during war-to-peace transitions. Advocates of this approach typically recommend a combination of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) to consolidate peace-making and peace-building processes (Colletta et al 2009, Muggah 2006). Notwithstanding the broad acceptance of such activities – and the theory that underlies them – there is little evidence that such interventions have contributed to any enduring solution to conflict and fragility (Muggah 2009). Indeed, analysts have come to recognise that the political, economic and social pre-conditions for DDR and SSR – including a relatively functional government, a reasonably stable labour market and a minimum level of social trust – are seldom in place. Even when these ambitious pre-requisites have been achieved, it is not clear that they are sufficient for DDR and SSR to take hold. Nevertheless, these orthodoxies persist in security promotion policy and practice.

Policy research has endeavoured to determine why conventional approaches to securing transitions so often fall short of expectations (Colletta and Muggah 2009; Berdal 1996). On the one hand, there is widespread acknowledgment that such activities are difficult, perhaps more so than originally anticipated. The specific determinants of socio-economic reintegration of former fighters into a productive civilian life (DDR) and their effective integration within security institutions (SSR) are as complex as they are insufficiently understood (Humphreys and Weinstein 2005). This is often the case during the early phases of the transition from war to peace when conditions on the ground, particularly popular confidence in security institutions and labour market opportunities, frustrate conventional post-conflict security promotion activities. The knowledge gaps and routine operational dilemmas surrounding security provision during fragile transition processes further complicate matters.

Policy makers and practitioners confront a number of questions when it comes to promoting security in the aftermath of armed conflict. How can they deal with poorly educated and unskilled former combatants and mid- and upper-level commanders in an economy with very limited labour absorption capacity? How might they restructure a security sector while simultaneously integrating large numbers of minimally-trained combatants? How should they deal with the risks of a security vacuum in the context of a shaky political settlement? How can civic trust be re-established (or established for the first time) following decades of violence, of-

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ten in the context of extreme uncertainty? How can they implement comprehensive security transition programmes given weak government capacities? Ultimately, the key preoccupation of such actors is ensuring both short and long-term stability in high-risk, low-trust, insecure and unpredictable environments. Such efforts must be pursued amidst unsettled issues such as political and economic power sharing and elite positioning.

There is growing recognition that DDR and SSR processes often fail because the political and economic context – to the extent they are reflected in the programme design – are not ripe at the time of a ceasefire agreement or the signing of a peace agreement, nor fully settled during the initial implementation stages (Colletta and Muggah 2009). For example, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan are indicative of settings where, in spite of the emergence of an interim government and political settlements, political elites, local militias and commanders still contend for power. What is lacking in such settings is not so much a politico-technical solution to DDR and SSR but rather the requisite time and space to rebuild livelihoods and facilitate a modicum of mutual trust and confidence between the key parties and the wider polity. More specifically, transitional mechanisms are required to allow the necessary economic opportunity, trust and confidence to be established while the situation gradually ripens to the point that control over armed groups can be realistically pursued and eventually established.

Context is King

Policymakers and practitioners confront a host of trade-offs when promoting security in the early aftermath of armed conflict. They need to balance short term stabilisation imperatives with long-term peace-building and state-building goals while also considering ways to balance the political aspirations of local elites against the real day-to-day concerns of (formerly) armed groups and vulnerable populations. There is also a need to ensure that conflicting parties can move from a reliance on "hard power" to a more stable reliance on "soft power" rooted within good governance and social and economic progress within a civilian society and economy (Colletta et al 2008).

Yet international actors' frequent reversion to past strategies and boilerplate approaches often emerges, and trade-offs between expediency and efficacy are decided without fully understanding the local context and the concerns of all stakeholders. Doing so has the tendency to create "spoilers" out of those whose interests and perspectives are set aside (Fearon and Laitin 1996; Steadman 2005). In the interest of short- and long-term stability it is important that all peace-building, state-building and stabilisation measures reflect the local context and overcome the reversion to boilerplate approaches. Policymakers and practitioners must invest heavily in understanding the key contextual factors that shape security transitions in fragile situations. A closer reading of a country´s political economy is essential in order to prepare the ground for short-term stabilisation and successful long-term peace processes. This requires investments in diagnostics to better apprehend the nature of the armed conflict, including its underlying structural dynamics as well as the motivations and characteristics of the fighting parties. Furthermore, those designing stabilisation strategies must also assess the level of trust and confidence in political commitments amongst parties and between social groups. This is typically captured in an analysis of the nature of the peace, that is, the manner in which the conflict ended (i.e., whether imposed, negotiated, or mediated by a third party). Understanding the nature of peace also requires an analysis of those factors that either helped bring about the resolution of the conflict or which enable it to persist in the fraught post-ceasefire environment.

Other factors that shape successful stabilisation efforts are fundamentally connected to the political and economic circumstances on the ground. For example, the governance and

administrative reach and capacity of the state, particularly the ability to provide public security and access to justice along with other basic services, is a key determinant. Likewise, the state of the economy or, more specifically, the ability to absorb unskilled labour, is critical for smooth transitions. Finally, the character and cohesiveness of communities and combatants and the degree of social integration is also crucial to understand when designing transitional strategies linked to DDR and SSR. Indeed, the level of ethnic and religious homogeneity at the community level are important mediating variables informing conflict resolution and peace-building.

Enter Interim Stabilisation Measures

International actors' attempts to match interventions to local contexts have repeatedly been wanting. As indicated by Colletta and Muggah (2009), there is a wide range of security promotion activities in post-conflict settings that do not easily conform to conventional DDR or SSR approaches. Policymakers and practitioner must be aware of the options available to them in order to ensure that they can identify and adapt the most appropriate approaches to the nuanced circumstances at hand. Alongside what are termed stability operations such as those described in a forthcoming volume edited by Muggah – Stabilization Operations, Security and Development (2012) – are so-called "interim stabilisation measures" (ISMs). While not necessarily described as such, these ISMs are often mobilised during security transitions (Downes and Muggah 2009). They include "measures that may be used to keep former combatants' social cohesiveness intact within a military or civilian command and control structure while creating space and buying time for political dialogue and the formation of an environment conducive to military integration and/or social and economic reintegration" (Colletta et al. 2008).

Interim stabilisation interventions mirror, to a greater and lesser degree, conventional stabilisation efforts that seek to quickly facilitate political settlements between opposing parties. However, their focus is less on engineering socio-political change and "winning the hearts and minds" of populations than on providing former combatants with an unambiguous "peace dividend". It should be stressed here that interim stabilisation is not being proposed as a mandatory first step during the peace-building process. Nor is it conceived here as a necessary precondition for or component of DDR and SSR processes. Rather, the intention is to identify a number of concrete ISMs that may be available – should they appear necessary or beneficial – during the security transition between the signing of a peace agreement and its eventual implementation.

ISMs seek to facilitate the transformation of former military groups into quasi-civilian organisations. Such arrangements can prove effective both from a collective and an individual perspective. When carefully implemented, ISMs can enable and sustain social control, social cohesion and mutual support among former combatants under civilian command structures. As noted above, they can also help open up the time and space needed for the political process and early recovery efforts to yield tangible progress. At the same time, they can enable individual combatants to ease into a productive civilian life rather than experience a sharp transition in both their livelihoods and their identities. There are a wide range of ISMs which can be organised according to a basic typology. These include: (i) civilian service corps; (ii) military or security sector integration; (iii) transitional security forces; (iv) semi-autonomous and decentralised local community forces; and (v) combined military integration and civilian reintegration programmes. Several of these are elaborated below in order to provide a more tangible understanding of ISMs and their roles within transitional contexts.

Civil Service Corps. Civil Service Corps are typically made up of an organisation of individuals who work together on a voluntary or paid basis for a period of time. For instance,

consider the case of the South African Service Corps (SASC) (Lamb and Dye 2009). Following the end of apartheid, former combatants of South Africa's conflict who did not meet the requirements of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) were to be demobilised and reintegrated into civilian life. Two options were provided to beneficiaries. The first option included a social and economic reintegration package consisting of a cash transfer and a voluntary, two-week counseling programme. The second option was to join the South African Service Corps (SASC) for a maximum of 18 months.[1] The SASC was designed to train close to 22,000 combatants, primarily from Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA) and Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK) resistance forces, between 1995 and 2001 (Williams 2005). While innovative, the SASC inevitably encountered difficulties. Poor planning and management undermined the credibility of the organisation, which was further tarnished by the perception that it would not help combatants obtain employment (Mashike 2006). Despite such difficulties, the SASC nevertheless provides an instructive example of an ISM designed to buy time for the labour market and communities to receive returning soldiers with limited skills and few employment prospects. For all of its limitations, the SASC shows how the creation of a "halfway house" for former combatants who are not eligible, or unwilling, to join the national armed forces, can be used as a strategy to ease their transition into a productive civilian life.

Military Integration. The concept of military integration is widely known and often pursued as part of a wider SSR strategy. It is typically defined as the incorporation of non-statutory armed groups (e.g. local militia, insurgents and revolutionary groups) into a statutory security framework (e.g. national police, army, reserve corps). Military integration is increasingly common in peace processes and in the post-conflict recovery process. Indeed, one third of all documented peace processes since 1990 have featured some form of military integration, including the integration of former rebels into the national army (Hoddie and Hartzell 2003; Mills 1992). Military integration and redeployment of armed groups as "transitional security forces" may generate some security dividends. Likewise, keeping intact groups of former combatants who are subsequently given civilian policing duties and provided with life-skills training and/or socio-psychological support is another.

Transitional Security Forces. Transitional security forces represent a pragmatic form of ISM intended to prevent a security vacuum in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Transitional forces can address the immediate occupational and income needs of former combatants while temporarily maintaining the social control and cohesion of intact command and control structures. In Kosovo, for instance, the security transition was at least partially achieved through the shift of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), a civilian emergency response organisation while maintaining the cohesion, command and control of the former KLA. Members of the KPC were precluded from holding public office or from actively engaging in political affairs. All inhabitants of Kosovo ethnic societies, including Kosovo Serbs were eligible to join, though interest among groups other than the Kosovo Albanians was weak. The formation was modeled after the French Sécurité Civile while in practice the organisation basically retained the military structure of the KLA, including weapons, military uniforms and ranks.[2] Importantly, the KPC subsequently transitioned into a leaner national army combining a demobilisation and reintegration program with the conversion to the Kosovo National Army (KNA) of the newly independent entity of Kosovo. Thus the KPC provided a functional interim transitional security institution in form if not function, buying time and space for economic and political progression to a legitimate KNA. The KPC, then, is illustrative of how the interests of relative stability and alternative

civilian livelihoods can be combined through transforming one or more military groups and redirecting them towards civilian tasks.

Transitional Local Autonomy Forces. Another ISM entails the granting of a level of local autonomy and/or decentralised security capacity within an overall national security framework during a transitional period. A prominent example of such a scheme is the agreement between the Hun Sen led Cambodian government and the Khmer Rouge (KR) in Cambodia initially after signing a cessation of hostilities agreement in 1996.[3] In 1996, Hun Sen announced his Win-Win Policy to bring the Khmer Rouge back into the fold of the state. While a complex and multi-faceted policy, the Win-Win strategy included three levels of reintegration: (i) military integration[4], (ii) administrative reintegration[5] and (iii) socio-economic reintegration.[6] By offering a win-win scenario, the Cambodia People's Party was able to lay out concrete incentives to Khmer Rouge defectors. Defectors were ensured a guarantee of personal and family safety, safety of property and opportunities to continue the professions previously held. They were also allowed to maintain a degree of social cohesion, often a factor explicitly rejected in conventional DDR and SSR interventions. What is more, the process allowed Khmer Rouge followers to more gradually integrate into formal administrative structures and be exposed to sensitisation.

The scheme also underlines the need to tie transitional measures into longer-term peace building strategies, including, as appropriate, reintegration and national reconciliation programs (Colletta and Cullen 2000).[7]

What Next for Interim Stabilisation?

Conventional security promotion activities such as DDR and SSR are often ineffective because the political, economic and social circumstances on the ground are not ripe. This is especially the case in early post-conflict settings when ceasefires and peace agreements have not been signed and when transitional governments have yet to coalesce. This practice note has shown that, in certain cases, ISMs provide important options to "ripen" a situation whether employed as military, civilian or hybrid civ-mil tools. The use of ISMs will depend very much on specific contextual factors, especially how the conflict ended, the degree to which reconciliation has progressed and the relationship between various combatant groups and the broader society. And while offering a strategic opportunity for policy makers and practitioners, it is important to stress that there is still comparatively limited empirical research on how contextual factors are likely to influence different kinds of ISMs.[8] There also remains a relative paucity of knowledge regarding the most appropriate implementation arrangements (e.g., vetting procedures, management processes, sequencing of activities) for different ISMs (Colletta and Muggah 2009).

A common aspiration of all ISMs is to temporarily hold former combatants in cohesive structures and maintain basic security and social supports in order to "buy time" and "create space" for other pertinent conditions on the ground to coalesce. The over-arching goal, of course, is to prevent and reduce the onset and severity of organised violence at war´s end while also reducing the likelihood of spoiler violence. ISMs can thus generate a host of opportunities in post-conflict settings such as: (i) facilitating the continuation of political dialogue; (ii) enabling the settlement of outstanding power sharing issues in the political and security arenas; (iii) building trust and confidence amongst parties to enable a political settlement; (iv) constituting provisional administrative structures and legal instruments to promote security and safety; (v) promoting the absorptive capacity of different economic and social sectors of society; (vi) sensitizing communities in advance of more formal DDR and SSR activities; and (vii) enhancing socio-psychological adjustment of combatants as they gradually move towards a fully civilian life or integration into the security services.

There are inevitably a number of risks associated with ISMs. As we have seen in the

brief examples presented above, ISMs run the risks of: (i) reconstructing oppressive structures or maintaining rebellious units; (ii) providing impunity from justice; (iii) facilitating criminality and maintaining illegal networks (e.g. drugs, money laundering, etc.); (iv) promoting the continuation of illegitimate control over natural resources; and (v) inadvertently de-legitimating the state by maintaining a separate and semi-intact source of potential authority and coercion. Like other peace-building efforts, ISMs also run the risk of creating new dependencies or becoming isolated from other main pillars of the peace-building and state-building processes. These are of course valid concerns that require management and mitigation. They are also common to many interventions during war-to-peace transitions. A key strategy is ensuring that ISMs are implemented under an accepted and largely legitimate civilian authority and are, from day one, accompanied by clear and transparent timelines and sunset clauses. Ultimately, high-risk strategies can also yield high gains that may justify the trade-offs entailed.

NOTES

1 The SASC was instituted within the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) in September 1995 (Williams 2005).
2 The KPC was to be allowed 2,000 weapons of which 1,800 would be "held in trust" in KFOR secure weapons facilities. The remainder would be available for the guarding of installations and security when units were deployed. Note, this is not unlike the dual key locked box method of placing weapons in third party trust as part of an acceptable Northern Ireland (de Chastelain 2004). These were preconditions of the KLA to accept the terms (Petersen 2005; ICG 2000).
3 Another example would be the de facto maintenance of the "Pesh Merga" in Kurdistan within the larger newly formed national army in Iraq following the American occupation.
4 All Khmer Rouge defectors were integrated into the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. The mid-level commanders continued to lead their soldiers under the Cambodian Armed Forces structure.
5 The Khmer Rouge leaders were allowed to either keep their old positions or accept alternative civilian government positions in their own communities.
6 The Government granted these Khmer Rouge areas autonomous economic development zone status: no taxes for three-years and permission to open a number of 'Border Economic Gates' with Thailand to promote trade. The economic development helped create social harmony, which was of crucial importance in the reintegration process. Land was fairly distributed within the autonomous zones. Each combatant and his or her family were provided with two cows, five hectares of land and 5,000 Baht. Many still live peacefully on this land.
7 This case also highlights the importance of not closing the door on future justice processes dealing with crimes committed during the conflict. The singling out of specific crimes of genocides as exceptions to the Law to Outlaw the Democratic Kampuchea Group has allowed for recent arrests of former Khmer Rouge leaders and has finally allowed the launch of an international criminal court on unique hybrid terms (a mixture of International and Cambodian Jurists) on Cambodian soil.
8 Even so, research indicates that there are likely a number of favorable pre-conditions that may influence the direction, shape and impacts of interim stabilisation measures. For example, Glassmyer and Sambanis (2007) have singled out factors that positively and negatively shape the outcomes of military integration or transitional civil-military mechanisms. Examples include the extent of economic opportunity; clear military victory or a negotiated peace settlement; and the existence of a broad multi-dimensional peace processes.

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PRACTICE NOTE

What if the FARC Demobilizes?

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Introduction

In September 2012, the Colombian government officially announced ongoing peace talks with the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). This gesture was the first of its kind since the failed negotiation process with the same guerrilla group during the government of Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) (see Villarraga 2009). The FARC remains the largest and strongest non-state armed group operating in the country, and can be traced back to as early as 1964. Observers of the current negotiations are largely optimistic about the prospects for peace and the end of the decades-long conflict.

A jointly created document entitled the 'General Agreement for the Ending of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Durable Peace' (FARC and Gobierno de Colombia 2012) lays out the six points to be discussed during the negotiations. Point three on this list – 'end of the conflict' – envisages the 'abandonment of weapons' and the 'economic, social and political reincorporation of the FARC into civilian life'. While other elements of the peace negotiations may be equally fundamental, in this piece, we focus on this specific point and highlight some of the critical issues that might emerge *if* the peace process between the Colombian government and this guerrilla group is successful. The ideas presented here are based on several historical applications of former combatant disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) as a peacebuilding activity. We particularly attempt to extract implications from the demobilization of the paramilitary United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) between 2003 and 2006 (Nussio 2011a), the ongoing desertion and reintegration of individual guerrilla members (Anaya 2007), and the accumulated knowledge about the structure and history of the FARC (Pizarro Leongómez 2011).[1] Although the peace process is likely to face many obstacles – and a complete failure is possible – we nevertheless remain positive about a negotiated settlement. As such, we reflect here on the critical issues that might need to be considered to support a sustainable and peaceful outcome.

What About Their Guns and Fighters?

Depending on the source, the size of the FARC is currently estimated at 8,000 to 10,000 combatants. How many of these might eventually demobilize? The AUC demobilization process could provide some indications; their leaders referred to some

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15,000 armed men during the negotiations, but more than 30,000 demobilized in the end (CNRR 2010). The government claims that the inflated numbers were a result of the demobilization of non-combatant members associated with the group, such as those who were in charge of logistics or acted as informants. Critics state that the AUC deliberately increased the number of participants in the demobilization process by recruiting people who were not eligible but nonetheless sought to take advantage of DDR benefits. Two top paramilitary leaders (Ever Veloza, alias 'HH' and Freddy Rendón, alias 'El Alemán') have confessed to engaging in this practice (El Tiempo 2011a; El Tiempo 2011b). Given that the FARC has been in existence for many decades, the group has large support networks in areas where they have long operated. According to the United Nations Integrated DDR Standards (United Nations 2006), people associated with the armed group but who are not necessarily combatants should be eligible for inclusion in the DDR process. The actual number to demobilize may thus be several times higher than the current estimate of FARC combatants.[2]

Regarding inflated numbers, it will be crucial to apply clearly defined eligibility criteria more strictly than was done under the AUC demobilization process. According to Decree 3360 of 2003, the government considered *all* persons appearing on the lists submitted by AUC leaders to be entitled to demobilization assistance. Such a criterion proved to be too simplistic and trusting in many ways and should be matched with additional controls and standards. The technical design of collective demobilization applied for the AUC, including international oversight by the Organization of American States (OAS), may offer a good model to replicate, as long as it adopts a policy of nontolerance and prevents false combatants from entering into the process. The broader involvement of international observers in addition to the OAS might give the process more teeth.

A crucial issue associated with the demobilization of combatants relates to child soldiers. Data published in a recent study of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (El Tiempo 2012) indicate that about 50% of all FARC fighters joined this group when they were younger than 18 years of age and that youth recruitment has increased dramatically in recent years. It is difficult to calculate how many will still be underage at the moment of demobilization, but this topic is critical both in terms of providing differential assistance to former child and adult soldiers and given that commanders responsible for the forcible recruitment of minors may face judicial action.

With respect to disarmament, we have evidence that the AUC kept a stockpile of weapons hidden during its 2003–2006 demobilization process. These weapons may be in current use by post-demobilization armed groups.[3] The maintenance of secret arsenals will also be an issue for the FARC, as will be their use and possession of non-conventional high-impact weapons such as homemade explosive material and landmines. These weapons should be explicitly included in the disarmament process. In addition, a more general parallel weapons reduction program involving the civilian population – framed as being connected to the FARC's disarmament – might help to reduce the number of illegal arms circulating in Colombia, thus contributing to lower levels of violence in the post-conflict period (Muggah 2006).

Will They Get Jobs?

The economic reintegration of former combatants has proven to be challenging in a number of DDR processes and will be so for the case of FARC soldiers. Many former AUC fighters and a significant number of guerilla deserters have moved to cities not only to find jobs but also to restart a more anonymous life, free from social stigma and possible threats from previous friends and foes (Nussio 2011b). However, the rural identity and skills of most FARC members should lead

to a less urban-focused economic reintegration process. However, this will only be possible if rural development – including large infrastructure projects – become a priority for the government. While the 'rural question' is the first topic on the negotiation agenda, unequal land tenure, forcible displacement, and rural underdevelopment have proved to be almost unsolvable difficulties in Colombia (UNDP 2011) A more rural-oriented DDR process also implies that the Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR – the organization concerned with the reintegration of former combatants) needs to decentralize its services away from urban centers. The continued focus of service provision in urban areas could create an incentive for ex-combatants to move to cities.

One positive sign for economic reintegration comes from the participation of the Colombian Business Federation (ANDI) at the negotiation table. In addition, the Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP) has conducted research on the attitudes of Colombian businesspeople and have identified that they are interested in the peace process and supporting the economic reintegration of ex-combatants (FIP 2012).

An additional proposal is to convert some FARC fighters into a rural police and reintegrate others into the military forces, thus taking benefit of their existing skills. Experiences in Nepal and Kosovo may be instructive in this respect. However, both options will most probably face resistance in Colombia. When debating the integration of the AUC into the military forces, their massive human rights abuse history and involvement in drug-trafficking did not allow for the realization of such a policy (Guáqueta and Arias 2011). Similar reasons may be brought forward for the FARC.

What About Their Old and New Social Networks?

Achieving the social reintegration of former combatants is no easy task, but it is crucial for the ultimate success of any DDR process. Approximately 97% of ex-combatants in Colombia claim that they need to be an active part of their communities in order to feel completely 'reintegrated' (Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2010). According to recent research conducted in Colombia, the social opportunities offered to ex-combatants in receiving communities are critical for their participation in local organizations (Kaplan and Nussio 2012). Hence, an increased focus on the community should contribute to a more positive experience for both ex-combatants, who have been largely stigmatized in earlier processes, and for community members, who have rightly complained about an exaggerated focus on demobilized people (Nussio 2012).

In addition to the creation of new networks, managing old networks will be a necessary component of the FARC demobilization process. Most literature on DDR has called for a complete dismantlement of command and control structures due to the risk of remobilization, such as experienced with the *Corporación Democracia* in Medellín (Guáqueta and Arias 2011). However, the former group dynamics might have a positive potential as well, especially in the case of the FARC fighters who have a strong in-group identity. Intentionally destroying this social anchor might lead to fragmentation and further increase their vulnerability to remobilization or engagement in illegal activities, as was the case for former fighters in Afghanistan (Zyck 2009). Also, leveraging networks and contacts among former fighters might facilitate the integration of ex-combatants into the job market (de Vries and Wiegink 2011).

Will They Participate in Politics?

According to a survey conducted by the FIP in 2008, half of the FARC combatants who have already demobilized attended ideological training sessions at least once a week when they were active. This finding can be interpreted as a strong indicator that the FARC maintains a political dimension and that they cannot be simply reduced to narco-terrorists, as government officials have

often referred to them (see also Ugarriza and Craig 2012).

Past experiences give a sense of what might be possible in the case of the FARC. The political reintegration model applied to the M-19 and other guerrilla groups in the early 1990s was largely successful thanks to a widely held perception that the M-19 was fighting for political ideals and not for private criminal interests (Palou and Méndez 2012). They participated in creating a new constitution, and many are important political figures today. Regarding the demobilization of the AUC, the political question was excluded from the debate for various reasons–among them the highly criminalized character of the paramilitaries (Guáqueta 2007). A middle ground between the two extremes may be necessary for a demobilization of the FARC. For ex-combatants, this would mean translating some of their learned ideology into the political sphere. However, direct participation might be limited to mid and lower-ranking ex-combatants. The conversion of top FARC leaders into congressmen could provoke negative feelings amongst the population due to FARC's involvement in massive human rights abuses against the civilian population. Also, their involvement ultimately depends on the transitional justice measures that will accompany DDR. Paramilitary leaders responsible for atrocities received a reduced prison sentence under the Justice and Peace Law (Pizarro and Valencia 2009). Creating similar legislation for the FARC would make the involvement of top leaders in big-P politics impossible. However, the reintegration program might be well advised to move the question of political reintegration away from party politics and political roles for current FARC leaders, and instead focus on ensuring that FARC members are able to become politically aware citizens who find a place in the existing political spectrum (see Söderström 2011). The newly created leftist *Marcha Patriótica* movement, which is especially interested in the rural question, may become an important platform for politically engaged former FARC combatants.

And What About Security?

Persistent or increased insecurity following the DDR of the FARC will be one of the largest concerns for citizens, practitioners and policymakers. Demobilization does not always lead to better security outcomes, as has been seen with the paramilitary process. Research showed that immediately after the close of the demobilization process with the AUC, rates of violence decreased (Restrepo and Muggah 2009). However, a longer-term view has indicated that the homicide rate is increasing in areas where reintegration is occurring, when holding constant other causes of homicide (Howe, Sánchez, and Contreras 2010). Violence has remained high in those areas of the country where there are opportunities to extract illegal rents and where local governance structures are weak (Howe 2012). The principal threat to security in Colombia since 2006 has been the surfacing of post-demobilization armed groups, which are variously referred to as successor groups, neo-paramilitaries or criminal gangs (*bandas criminals*, or BACRIM for short). There is substantial evidence that these groups have a variety of linkages with the former AUC (Massé et al. 2010). A similar outcome may emerge following the FARC DDR process depending on such issues as state capacity to control FARC-dominated areas, the evolution of drug-trafficking, the role of former mid-level commanders in the peace process, and recidivism among rank-and-file combatants.

State control over FARC-dominated territory

The FARC has largely been located in areas outside the reach of government forces. What will happen to these spaces from a governance perspective if the FARC demobilizes? Again it is possible to draw some inferences based on the experience of AUC demobilization. The AUC, in the locations where it was dominant, provided many state functions, including protection, to the local population. It also controlled many of the local state resources such as education, health,

and politics as well as economics (Duncan 2006). Their demobilization has lead to a type of power vacuum whereby there is no legitimate legal actor with full territorial control. This dynamic has been linked to worsening security in former AUC dominated areas since DDR (Howe and Nussio, under review).

The FARC has been located in areas where the state is weak or non-existent. The areas under their control need to receive a rapid injection of genuine local governance, particularly in terms of protection while demobilization is being rolled out. FARC territory, as a result of their market activities (described below), is a valuable resource that other existing armed actors may attempt to seize. A legitimate force must be installed in these locations to prevent post-demobilization armed groups or successor groups that splinter from the FARC process from controlling this territory and beginning violent operations. These assertions are supported by several studies in Colombia that link increased state presence (in the form of arrests per homicides) to a decreasing homicide rate at the sub-national level over time (Echeverry and Partow 1998; Howe, Sánchez, and Contreras 2010). Policing may thus be a key activity to increase state presence and manage post-demobilization violence. However, a whole range of post-conflict security policies under the labels of 'interim stabilization measures' and 'second generation approaches' should be considered in Colombia (Colletta and Muggah 2009).

Drugs and illegal markets

In a context of limited state presence, the opportunity to extract revenues from illicit sources has contributed to elevated rates of violence since the DDR of paramilitaries in Colombia (Howe 2012). Therefore, such illegal rents should be a focus for authorities as they consider the demobilization of the FARC. The FARC has been a major player in the cocaine industry since the 1980s. They have been involved in the setting of prices, organizing markets, taxing production, and directly managing commercialization and export. Cocaine, in addition to kidnapping and extortion, has kept the organization financially afloat for several decades. Some large landowners have benefited from FARC presence and have paid them to provide security and 'discipline' among peasants (Gutiérrez Sanín 2004). However, these illegal markets do not disappear with DDR, as is evidenced by the paramilitary process. Paramilitaries were heavily involved in the drug trade, charging protection fees to large land-owners and multi-nationals, benefiting from governmental contracts, and running shadow economies – to name just a few of their illegal activities. Their dissolution has not led to the collapse of illegal markets; instead, post-demobilization armed groups have (re-)surfaced to extract these rents in largely the same areas where the AUC was formerly operating (Granada, Restrepo, and Tobón 2009). Special care should be taken to ensure that top-level FARC commanders are not intending to sell their businesses like 'franchises' to post-demobilization armed groups, as occurred with the paramilitaries (Verdad Abierta 2012).

Mid-level commanders

One of the weaknesses of the DDR process with the AUC was that no special provisions were made for mid-level commanders. Mid-level commanders inhabit a special and powerful place in the ranks – both close to top-level commanders and influential over troops within the rank and file. They are the sub-group most likely to experience loss in terms of status and economy as the result of a demobilization process, and therefore should be recognized for their role as potential spoilers (Stockholm Initiative 2006; Themnér 2011). Many of the leaders of post-DDR armed groups are former mid-level commanders of the AUC (CNRR 2010; Massé et al. 2011). It will therefore be important to consider this special group of combatants during the FARC DDR process. The Program of Humanitarian Attention to Demobilized

People (PAHD) involves former mid-level commanders in preventing the recruitment of youth into armed groups and provides them with personal protection (Arias, Prieto, and Herrera 2010). Such initial ideas should be extended to the ACR and implemented more broadly.

Recidivism and post-demobilization armed groups

Will the foot soldiers of the FARC really stop fighting? Or will they enter into the ranks of the criminal gangs – the BACRIM – that currently have a presence in 24 of 35 departments in Colombia and which are estimated to have up to 10,000 members (CNRR 2010; Human Rights Watch 2010)? These groups commit human rights abuses against civilians and use violence as a way to gain territorial control for drugs and other illegal markets (Granada, Restrepo, and Tobón 2009). For demobilized AUC fighters, an estimated 15 per cent have re-engaged in some type of illegal activity, often related to the BACRIM (CNRR 2010). A second source of post-DDR violence could be splinter groups that do not demobilize and which offer a place for combatants who are unwilling to reintegrate into a legal lifestyle. It is possible that remnant groups from the FARC might constitute an additional BACRIM or may integrate into one or several of the existing organizations. Alliances between the BACRIM and the FARC have been reported repeatedly throughout the past years and would provide the necessary contacts for the period following conflict (International Crisis Group 2009).

We identify three specific factors relevant for recidivism in the FARC process – one relates to the history and identity of the FARC and the other two are based on lessons learned from the DDR of the AUC. The FARC is a vertically organized structure with very strict codes of conduct. Soldiers sign up for life, they are subject to tough disciplinary measures, and desertion is punishable by death. All wealth accumulated – through narco-trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, etc.– goes directly back into the organization. Looting or any acts to obtain personal wealth are strictly forbidden, even within the higher ranks. The personal risk of joining the FARC is much higher than for the paramilitaries or regular army (Gutiérrez Sanín 2004; Gutiérrez Sanín 2008). Based on this type of organization, we can hypothesize the conditions under which recidivism is likely to occur. If there is a clear intention and commitment to disarm and demobilize amongst the mid and high-level commanders, the rank and file are likely to follow suit due to their history of following strict orders within a hierarchy. Their risk of joining post-demobilization armed groups is lower than that of ex-AUC because personal enrichment has neither been a part of their reason for joining the FARC nor a part of their soldiering experience. In the same vein, the vertical organization of the FARC makes a potential DDR process less vulnerable to dissident groups and remobilization than in the case of the AUC, which was a rather network-like umbrella organization with strong regional leaders. While members of the FARC may be pre-disposed to less recidivism than the former paramilitaries considering their organizational history, the Achilles' heel will be ensuring meaningful political participation and employment for a largely peasant-based cadre.

The second issue, which affects both rates of recidivism and security, is the protection of individual ex-combatants. Former members of the AUC have been disproportionately targeted by post-demobilization armed groups, and their security remains precarious (Munévar and Nussio 2009; Observatorio de Procesos de DDR 2010). Ex-members of the FARC may be sought out by criminal organizations because of their particular violent skill sets, connections, or intimate knowledge of valuable illegal markets. Ex-combatants may also be targeted by other members of the community – including ex-paramilitaries and victims – who may seek violent revenge. However, insecurity related to continued illegal networks rather than re-

venge among individual ex-combatants has been more common in recent years. Earlier peace processes with guerrilla groups have been accompanied by an upsurge of right-wing paramilitary violence (Romero 2003). The legal political arm created by the FARC during the peace process in the 1980s (the Unión Patriótica) was one of the foremost victims of such rightist violence. As a consequence, effective protection mechanisms for former FARC members must be put into place in order to dissipate their accumulated fears. Research has shown that demobilized paramilitaries who face violent threats often choose independent security strategies including rejoining armed groups. This decision-making tactic stems from high level of distrust in formal institutions. A lack of trust in legal protection mechanisms thus could jeopardize the success of a potential FARC demobilization process (Nussio 2011b).

Third, continuous juridical insecurity for both high-ranking and rank-and-file ex-combatants has contributed to remobilization for former AUC combatants. Breaking their agreement with AUC leaders, the government of Colombia extradited 18 of top AUC commanders to the United States on drug charges (FIP 2009). An estimated 19,000 rank-and-file ex-combatants have persisted in juridical limbo for years (Palou and Méndez 2012). With the timely presentation of a constitutional amendment that passed congress in May 2012 (the 'Legal Framework for Peace'), the Juan Manuel Santos administration seems prepared to give the FARC demobilization a clearer and more stable juridical framework, which may contribute to less recidivism.

Conclusions

If the FARC and the government reach an agreement over the terms for peace in Colombia, the DDR process will certainly face a rocky road ahead. Disarmament might not be complete, and fake recruits are likely to appear on the lists of demobilized people. Economic reintegration of ex-combatants will take time, and related rural reforms will face resistance and opposition. Political and social reintegration will continuously reopen old sores, and remnant armed groups will persist, or new groups will emerge to exploit illegal rents generated from drug-trafficking and extortion.

Despite these challenges, the chances for success are better than for previous demobilization processes. Most importantly, if the negotiations come to a satisfactory end, the armed conflict will finally have been overcome. This will dramatically reduce the number of potential spoilers to the peace agreement, and will also allow for a clearer distinction between criminal and political violence, a line that has been difficult to draw in the past. Additionally, foreign governments (including the US which qualifies the FARC as terrorist organization) and international organizations have so far taken a very positive stance towards the Colombian peace initiative following the official announcement of President Santos. This is in direct contrast with the rather skeptical position (especially from the United Nations) during the peace talks with the AUC.

The DDR process with the FARC will depend not only on the issues mentioned in this article but also on broader issues related to peacebuilding, violence reduction strategies, and wider development policies (see Rettberg 2012). In fact, DDR will tap its full potential only if embedded in a wider peacebuilding framework and if managed with realistic expectations. However, there are some benefits DDR generates on its own. According to a survey conducted by the FIP, for former combatants, the Colombian Reintegration Agency is the most trusted of all state institutions. DDR is thus not only a technocratic tool to deal with experts in violence, it may also have the potential to build trust amongst a significant post-conflict population. Especially for formerly antagonistic insurgents, the creation of institutional trust is crucial for an enduring peace.

NOTES

1 Between 2002 and 2010, around 52,000 combatants demobilized in Colombia. Some 31,671 of them belonged to the AUC and demobilized in a collective process between 2003 and 2006 after negotiations were held between the government and the AUC leaders. The remaining 20,000 combatants were deserters mostly to the FARC guerrilla and to a lesser degree, the National Liberation Army (ELN) and other smaller guerrilla groups and the AUC prior to its collective demobilization.

2 If the ELN decides to participate in the process, this number will be larger. According to current estimates, the ELN counts on about 2,000 active members. In September 2012, ELN leader alias 'Gabino' announced the ELN's interest to participate in the peace process with the FARC.

3 Interview with a paramilitary ex-combatant in Bogotá, May 2010.

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PRACTICE NOTE

Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention: Obstacles and Opportunities

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Introduction

Preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and other forms of preventive action intended to stop armed conflicts before they escalate to widespread violence are the subject of intense debate. And despite their elevation to a norm in the United Nations, where they have been debated in the General Assembly and addressed in prominent reports from the Secretary-General, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention continue to face daunting obstacles. Drawing from recent high-level consultations on the topic, this piece considers some recurrent obstacles and emerging opportunities in relation to preventive action (Muggah 2012).

There is indeed a new appetite amongst United Nations member states and agencies to invest in preventive action. It has a certain economic appeal. The idea of devoting a relatively modest amount of resources to preventing violent conflict rather than investing in drastically more costly humanitarian, peacekeeping, reconstruction or stabilisation operations makes practical sense in a world facing a tumultuous economic slowdown (Gowan 2011). Yet as appealing as they may be, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention continue to gain limited traction in policy and practice. While this partly stems from the difficulties associated with anticipating future challenges, the lack of uptake is fundamentally connected with the changing nature of violence.

International diplomats and some practitioners have been comparatively slow to come to terms with the way the global burden of violence is changing and what this means for preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. This is because complex inter-state conflicts gave way to large-scale civil wars, which are themselves being rapidly overtaken by smaller rebellions and mid-sized insurgencies large enough to cause significant damage on a national scale but too small to draw urgent diplomatic attention from United Nations Security Council members. Yet these nasty, protracted conflicts have become increasingly entrenched and geographically spread, thus lengthening the length of the average armed conflict (Rangelov and Kaldor 2012). What is more, the growing scale and significance of chronic organised criminal violence, often sustained by trans-national crime networks, has recently raised new challenges about the definition of what constitutes armed conflict and to what extent this can be cleanly dif-

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ferentiated from certain forms of criminality (Muggah 2012).

The research community is beginning to move beyond simple metrics of 'armed conflict' as a measure of the number of deaths per year. Indeed, *The Global Burden of Armed Violence* by Krause, Muggah and Gilgen (2011) provides a more sophisticated assessment of the temporal and spatial dynamics of collective violence. It finds that nine out of every ten violent deaths today occurs outside of war zones, thus raising new questions about the appropriateness of the international community's structure and standard crisis-response toolkit. It also points to new and innovative violence-prevention and reduction efforts in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean that involve new forms of mediation and pacification of criminal armed groups. It indirectly asks some tough questions: can narcotics trafficking networks in Latin America or Central Asia be addressed through means similar to those applied to armed conflicts? What international legal frameworks apply for such actors? What kinds of international involvement would be most appropriate, and which sorts of stakeholders or mediators are most likely to yield a positive resolution? And when is the intensity and organisation of violent settings ripe for preventive action, particularly preventive diplomacy?

Defining Conflict Prevention and Preventive Diplomacy

Before proceeding further into the discussion it is important to define preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, two concepts that we address under the rubric of *preventive action*. The absence of a shared definition amongst policy makers has in fact inhibited policymaking and practice and generated divisions between stakeholders, some of whom view preventive diplomacy as 'soft' mediation while other refer to 'muscular' diplomacy which includes credible threats of pre-emptive military action (see Zounmenou, Motsamai and Nganje 2012). To some experts in Sub-Saharan Africa, preventive diplomacy constitutes the consensual resolution of tensions and disputes while to others in North Africa it indicates a more regressive form of appeasement that allows underlying drivers of conflict to persist under a veneer of stability. The same holds true for conflict prevention, which certain diplomatic analysts perceive as including preventive diplomacy while development stakeholders commonly perceive it as a form of conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding, which are themselves contested concepts.

These terminological disagreements stretch back more than two decades. The United Nations' (1992) *Agenda for Peace* stated that preventive diplomacy specifically refers to 'action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur'. Then-UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali differentiated preventive diplomacy from its cousin, peace-making, which he viewed as the resolution of large-scale conflicts through mediation and negotiation, and from its distant relative, peacekeeping. This early definition provides a core understanding of the goals of preventive diplomacy, which the United Nations and others have associated with a specific set of actions such as s good offices, facilitation, mediation, conciliation, adjudication and arbitration. Accordingly, it does not include what others refer to as conflict prevention, which primarily includes human rights, humanitarian and development assistance intended to ameliorate the underlying sources of conflict by improving the quality of governance, social and economic conditions, equality and the management of shared resources. That said, today conflict prevention continues to comprise a crucial form of preventive action which may have a role in creating local conditions which facilitate preventive diplomacy.

While we refer to both preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention as preventive

action, it may be more apt to view them not as concepts but rather as key elements in what is increasingly referred to as 'infrastructures for peace' or 'peace architectures' (Ganson and Wennmann 2012: 9; Muggah and Sisk 2012). Such infrastructures are designed from below and are intentionally embedded in formal and informal institutions at the grassroots. They combine networks of local community-based organisations, research and academic institutes, faith-based entities and political and social associations engaged in actively monitoring disputes and sources of tension, drawing attention to signs of trouble so that they can be ameliorated via conflict prevention or resolved through preventive diplomacy. According to such an understanding, they bring together a combination of preventive action efforts and help identify appropriate responses to various forms of collective violence depending on their character and dynamic progression.

A Renaissance for Preventive Action?

Notwithstanding semantic disagreements over preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, norms, rules and institutions related to preventive action have proliferated since Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld's first utterance of the phrase 'preventive diplomacy' in 1960 (Lund, 2008). In 2001, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, and three years later the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) stood up its Mediation Support Unit. Just last year, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon released his report on *Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results* (2011) which highlighted the growth of preventive diplomacy and called for more predictable and generous financial support, enhanced capacity building and the formation of partnerships to strengthen the work of 'preventive diplomats'.

But the United Nations is not alone in advancing preventive action. Other international organizations have followed suit. The World Bank's *World Development Report 2011* highlights 'fragility' and 'resilience' as themes, with the latter encapsulating countries' ability to channel chronic collective violence into less violent directions either before armed conflict breaks out or in its aftermath. What is more, the World Bank's new 'Hive' serves as a platform for the mitigation of fragility, conflict and violence and has implications for conflict prevention, albeit not in the more orthodox diplomatic tradition. Within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the establishment of the Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre (CCOMC) in 2012, as discussed in Major General Andy Salmon's piece in this issue of *Stability*, serves to both improve crisis response and to enable what NATO (2012) refers to as 'crisis identification'.

Regional bodies have also increasingly taken up the language of conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy (Mancini 2011). In Africa, the African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) has been highly active, as have numerous other associated bodies such as the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). Sub-regional bodies such as the South African Development Community (SADC) and, in particular, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been particularly active in attempting to settle disputes before and after they have turned violent. ECOWAS, for instance, played a key role in mediation efforts in Guinea in 2009 and 2010 along with the African Union and United Nations. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has established a Regional Forum mandated with monitoring and preventing conflicts. The Pacific Island Forum, Organization of American States (OAS) and High Commission for National Minorities within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have also been closely engaged with regional preventive action initiatives. More recently, the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council have taken a strong step forward into this area,

sending mediators to try and resolve political crises in Syria and Yemen, respectively, since the start of the so-called 'Arab Spring'.

National initiatives have also proliferated. In the United States, the Obama administration's *National Security Strategy* highlights the importance of preventing violent conflict, and conflict prevention has been identified as a priority for the newly established Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (Williams 2012). Within the past year, the US government also began work on an Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) with a mandate to stop genocide-level violence and human rights abuses before they begin. Other national initiatives have also been developed amongst developed and emerging economies such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). As the prestige associated with conflict-ending or conflict-preventing mediation has risen in recent years, these countries—as well as increasingly important players such as Qatar—have put sizable resources into preventive action. Many have also led prevention initiatives themselves and financed a widening array of private actors, particularly NGOs and for-profit mediation firms (Eskandarpour and Wennmann 2011). Beyond more traditional peace and conflict-focused organsiations such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Saferworld and International Alert, humanitarian and development agencies have also taken up the banner of conflict prevention. As with gender, climate change and other transversal priorities, conflict prevention and resolution have become core cross-cutting themes to be addressed through a wide array of humanitarian and development programmes in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

Obstacles Confronting Contemporary Preventive Action

The resurgence of preventive action has helped compensate for the previously-limited attention to these issues, but it has also engendered new ones. Certain obstacles remain that will impede the shift from preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention from ideas whose time have come to highly effective practices. Indeed, the rapid emergence of new stakeholders focused on conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy has generated challenges associated with coordination and quality control. While the diversity and heterogeneity of these new players may offer some exciting innovation, it also produces challenges of cooperation and mutual awareness. Without better understanding one another's efforts, agencies may duplicate efforts or worse, undermine each other's attempts and generate conflict prevention fatigue. Indeed, there is a common complaint among officials, civil society representatives, religious leaders and activists in countries affected by chronic collective violence of being invited to an endless array of workshops, trainings, conflict resolution forums. The highly variable quality of the conflict prevention 'community' – from local peacebuilding groups to high-powered international mediation experts – has also generated negative feedback on the ground and encouraged calls for the development of standards.

What is more, progress in decentralising preventive action to the regional and local levels has yielded successes but also undermined the likelihood that conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy will occur. Research has long rallied around the benefits of localising preventive action – emphasising the role of regional, national and subnational stakeholders rather than international experts with less familiarity of the local context. This localisation of preventive action has been heavily supported by regional organisations, national authorities, scholars and civil society representatives in chronically violence-affected contexts. It has led to the proliferation of regional initiatives by the AU, ECOWAS, ASEAN, OAS, GCC and others intended to prevent and resolve violent conflicts. While a positive and long-sought development, the increased role of regional bodies has confronted certain challenges. For example, regional institu-

tions tend to primarily concerned with the interests of their member governments and not necessarily non-state actors. They have thus strongly emphasised strict notions of national sovereignty in which many forms of prevention action are deemed to be inappropriate if not hostile. The UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), for instance, is only able to involve non-governmental stakeholders if national governments do not object (UNRCCA 2012). At the same time, many regional bodies concern themselves primarily with situations that have already become a clear regional security threat or which are occurring outside of the region and are, hence, 'safe'. For instance, the Arab Lead and GCC did not begin addressing political instability until regimes in the Middle East were already rapidly deteriorating.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (2012) addressed North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan and nuclear proliferation at its most recent meeting in July of this year rather than the many challenges within member nations. Its preventive diplomacy agenda has, likewise, been steered away from drivers of violent conflict and instead focused on disaster relief, maritime security and partnerships, with mediation being one of several priorities, most of which bear little resemblance to preventive action (ASEAN 2001). There is a risk that regional bodies close their eyes to problems within neighboring countries as part of an implicit agreement that members of the club will not meddle in one another's affairs. Not surprisingly, regional bodies, whether due to political opposition among member nations or capacity and resource constraints, also tend to have fewer linkages with civil society. They are state-centric and slow to develop partnerships insofar as they are statutorily able to do so. This creates a situation in which appropriate prevention activities may be delayed or undermined. The UN's focus upon regional solutions may lead to the handing over of selected prevention activities, including preventive diplomacy, to regional bodies that express a desire to become involved despite having limited political will to ultimately take meaningful action.

Furthermore, the evidence base for preventive action – the data showing how many conflicts have been averted and what methods work best – remains weak and unlikely to improve in the short term. Metrics of success for conflict prevention are notoriously hard to come by given that the optimal outcome – the absence of conflict – could hypothetically have been achieved without any intervention at all. When stakeholders agree that a conflict has been prevented, it is often unclear who ought to get the credit. Obtaining evidence for what does and does not work remains complicated for practical as well as political reasons. Research has suggested that confidentiality is crucial in some mediation processes, thus preventing researchers from observing or fully understanding the factors which did or did not lead to successful conflict prevention. Yet macro-level studies of preventive diplomacy yield only general findings regarding the types of actions, categories of mediators or approximate timing of effective interventions that correlate with success or failure. What might work when and under what conditions in a particular context – the types of questions practitioners mediating highly nuanced conflicts need to know – remains poorly understood. Of course, research networks are increasingly tackling such a challenge, and we provide recommendations in the following section for bolstering the evidence base.

Opportunities for Moving Preventive Action Forward

Each of the challenges above presents corresponding opportunities. Stakeholders that are fragmented can be better coordinated. The presumption that regional or national entities are inherently better at conflict prevention than international actors can be nuanced, and analyses of past experience and political arrangements can show where a regional or sub-regional body may be effec-

tive and where either international or highly local (e.g., subnational) strategies may be warranted. Moreover, the evidence base can be strengthened. An array of informed recommendations has emerged from the excellent work of the International Peace Institute, the United Nations, the World Bank, the Folke Bernadotte Academy and others. What follows is a collection of noteworthy recommendations, most of which emerge from the International Expert Forum event on preventive diplomacy and from the field (Muggah 2012).

Share but don't align conflict analyses

A number of policy and research assessments of preventive action begin with the presumption that coordination and collective action will be facilitated by joint analyses of local conflict and context dynamics (see, for instance, UNRCCA 2012). They propose the development of standardised frameworks and alignment of analyses across national, regional and international agencies. While sharing of conflict analyses can certainly help distill possible interpretations of a violent conflict, aligning perceptions is certain to result in more generic and potentially flawed analyses. Multi-stakeholder conflict analyses tend to result in 'shopping cart' documents which include numerous explanations yet do not actually prioritise the key proximate and underlying drivers of violence. Rather, more dispersed analysis can potentially increase the likelihood that someone will 'get it right'. By vetting and validating different analyses with stakeholders on the ground, it may also be possible to help identify – imperfectly and incrementally – elements of each analysis which may hold water and merit preventive or ameliorative responses.

Align conflict analyses to local understandings and terminology

Such analyses need not only be vetted with local stakeholders; they must also reflect their understandings of the conflict and the language they use to describe the dynamics at play. Overly intellectual and prescriptive studies of violent conflict causes may have analytical value but may not be as useful to mediators on the ground that are dealing not only with objective factors but with the local framing of those issues (Ganson and Wennmann 2012). It is the difference between identifying 'ethno-political exclusion' as a driver of conflict and understanding that the lived experience of this exclusion is shame, a denial of dignity and intense frustration. Local narratives and connotations are crucial to grasp in any conflict analysis or form of preventive diplomacy or conflict prevention.

Research drivers of peace separately from drivers of violence

From the World Bank's *World Development Report 2011* to the Global Peace Index, there is increasingly empirical and instinctual understanding that factors which facilitate peace or enhance societal resilience may be markedly different from those which render conflict and violence likely. Understanding the drivers of peace, which are as contextually-rooted as the drivers of conflict, is crucial for preventing conflict recurrence or for establishing conditions – particularly through infrastructures for peace – that make conflict unlikely even amidst periods of political, social or economic turmoil.

Study the micro-determinants of success in preventive action

Research related to preventive action has much further to go. The data limitations noted above make it unlikely that researchers will be permitted to observe, document and publish the factors which lead to a successful mediation effort. Nor are published accounts generally detailed or accurate enough, commonly representing one perspective from individuals promoting a particular narrative. Hence, the 'banner headline' mediations may not be the most fruitful subjects for research. Instead, academics and scholar-practitioners may wish to turn to subnational and local, even community-level, conflict resolution and prevention ac-

tivities to understand what does and does not work (i.e., the micro-determinants of success). Such studies can help close the gap between those who approach conflict and preventive action as a science and as an art.

Begin a dialogue on coordination of preventive action

The range of actors involved in preventive action is too diffuse and fragmented for any coordination body to step in and impose a degree of order. The subject matter at hand is also too sensitive, and stakeholders would rightly be concerned about the ultimate goal of coordination and the use of any information they might share. However, there is an opportunity for a trusted stakeholder, likely a private foundation or widely admired NGO, to bring relevant groups together and discuss questions such as the following: Do you believe there is a need for increased coordination? What institution or set of institutions should host such a coordination mechanism? What would be its purpose and goal? Who should be included and excluded? How should sensitive information be safeguarded? These are just an initial collection of questions to be addressed in an open and participatory consultation process. Of course, the outcomes of any such dialogue would be far more meaningful if donors were willing to allocate financing for future coordination efforts in advance.

Ensure sufficient and flexible financing for preventive action

The question of donor agencies necessarily lends itself to a discussion of who pays for what and how. While donors have increasingly accepted the notion of preventive action, funding generally remains limited and earmarked for specific activities in specific countries. The 'tyranny of the now' means that resources are rarely set aside for potential crises when current ones are wreaking havoc. Yet the notion of preventive action is rooted in flexibility and in an ability to put resources where they are needed with little notice. Hence, the formation of a dedicated, multi-donor trust fund for preventive action which disallows earmarking for pet countries or projects could present one way forward which is gaining some momentum and attention.

The opportunities noted above could, if acted upon, improve the evidence base for and quality of preventive action in violence-affected environments around the world.

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COMMENTARY

Catalysts and Networks for Stability

MGen Andy Salmon

Operation Charge of the Knights in the Spring of 2008, which cleared extremist militias out of Basra, created a strategic opportunity for building stability in that troubled Province. Security had improved but the situation was still fragile: attacks on Coalition forces were common, essential services were poor, the City needed cleaning up and revitalising, and the people had to believe that the future was going to be a better place than the present. I was about to assume command of Coalition Forces in South East Iraq in the Summer of 2008 and my team and I were working out how to seize this "Kyros"[1] moment.

In working out possible campaign approaches, ideally before any intervention, I have always found it helpful to talk to people who really understand the nature of the operating environment. So, with 2 months left to go, I found myself in a lecture room at the London School of Economics, explaining our thinking and discussing ideas with a group of Iraqis and Iraq experts, who had personal experience of Basra. A local businessman, who had fled Basra with his family, calmly asserted that the first thing we should do was listen to the people. He said that would be a great start and would mark a refreshing change. Given that insecurity had led to the fragmentation of society and had made it difficult for communities to talk to each other, he said the second step we should take was to use our position and authority to enable the people of Basra to connect with one another. Business needed to engage with the people, civil society with provincial politicians, the military with the police and security forces with the citizenry. After that, he said we ought to leave it to Basrawis to do the rest. Listening to and internalizing that advice led to a seminal shift in the way we approached our campaign. We became catalysts, both consciously and subconsciously, and embarked on a campaign of connecting people in order to create networks of stability.

We have witnessed since 9/11 – itself a series of coordinated attacks perpetrated by a network – a huge investment in security. We have also seen that military power, when applied in isolation, has limited utility in fostering enduring stability. Fiscal austerity also means that investment in military capabilities will decline, and governments will have less appetite to expend blood and treasure on endeavours such as Iraq and Afghanistan. With fewer military forces to go round, there is a greater need to work in an integrated and collaborative manner while finding smart approaches to tackling instability.

Those campaigns also underscored the bald point that the military can't do it all on their own. Accordingly, civilian, multi-agency and cross-institutional approaches are required that create new cooperative and collaborative compacts and networks. Myriad regional and local actors are in the mix too, and, as

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NATO Supreme Allied Commander Admiral James G. Stavridis explained in a TED talk on 'Open Source Security', connections need to be made between private, national and international domains which straddle the business, security, diplomacy and development communities.

NATO's operation in Libya also highlighted a campaign that had its origins in the way social media spreads information and ideas, which can go viral fast. Smart phones and the Internet enable connections and networks that have created a new stability dynamic. While high-tech in many respects, such technologies also reflect the fundamental wisdom of the Baswari businessman who reminded us that we must continue to understand catalysts and networks in the 21st Century.

Catalysts

In science, a catalyst is a substance that initiates a chemical change without changing itself. Leaders and people that facilitate and accelerate change – that oxygenate a room full of people, inspire by example and motivate without telling – are human catalysts. They typically have emotional intelligence, which enables them to work collaboratively behind the scenes, to build trust and to lead without necessarily relying on traditional command and control hierarchies. The key is to work out who they are, find enough of them and to deploy them effectively, because these people are good at creating close personal relationships and can create chain reactions that lead to irreversible momentum. They are your connectors.

When we arrived in Basra we soon realised that we needed to change the profile of the mission and help build a sense of optimism amongst Basrawis about their future. We needed more teachers, coaches and mentors who could embed deeply within the Iraqi security forces – the police and military. More personnel who could work the street, touch elements of Iraq society and help improve the delivery of essential services had to be found too. We surveyed our human resources – diplomats and officers who conducted key leader engagement, the Provincial Reconstruction Team, contractors, USAID personnel, civil affairs experts and engineers – and the results were dismaying. We estimated that no more than three percent of the roughly 6,500 military and civilian personnel from the United Kingdom and the United States had regular contact with people and could theoretically influence the local population; even if they were doing their jobs properly, they weren't necessarily acting as catalysts. We had to change this equation and maximise the utility of our force to shift the campaign in the right direction.

The Consul General and I set about inviting Basrawis from all walks of life to seminars. For instance, we brought together teachers and industrialists. At one such meeting with local businessmen, after three hours of listening to a series of grievances and complaints, there was a realisation that there was a lot to do and that they, the Basrawis themselves, simply needed to get on with it. For some around the table, it was the first time they had ever met each other. We learnt a huge deal from listening and connecting, and, in general, the Basrawis we met felt valued, respected and empowered by doing something for themselves.

We also imported catalysts. We created mixed civilian-military and Iraqi Joint Reconstruction Action Teams (JRATs) to tackle essential services and get out amongst the people. One JRAT overseeing trash collection and disposal, for instance, had a huge challenge ahead of it. But we found a waste management expert from Miami with good emotional intelligence, who helped make an immediate impact on the municipal rubbish collection. I'm not saying that the city of Basra looked sparkling after a couple of weeks, but one person made a big impact by being a catalyst.

The key is to find the right people, and give them freedom and room to manoeuvre and to work their magic. Chain reactions can occur, and the results can be startling. This can look loose and chaotic, and isn't neces-

sarily comfortable for conventional organisations with linear approaches. Overall, the levels of violence in the Spring of 2009 had reduced to 2003 levels, and the atmosphere in Basra city radically improved. The efforts to catalyse provincial elections after the re-establishment of Iraqi sovereignty in January 2009 and to create a positive result also paid off. When we tried to understand what had happened, we realised that by making connections through catalysts we had created a web or a network of optimism that had squeezed extremist networks. Although difficult to scientifically and fully quantify, this helped make Basra a safer and more stable place for its citizens.

Networks

Networks existed as soon as man was able to forge human relationships. Now, social media sites like Facebook have enabled networks to grow exponentially and globally through the Internet – and we can measure them. Libyans could tweet locations of tanks during the Summer of 2011. Through web platform services like Ushuhadi, Macedonians can report cases of corruption through the Transparency Watch Project. But as Karen Stephenson (2011), an authority on networks, states "We literally and figuratively live in a Milky Way of possible connections. The technological connection is only a catalyst, not a driver." When we create networks, there needs to be a rationale, social interaction, face-to face dialogue, time to get to know each other and, most importantly, trust.

This needs to be taken into account when we think of how to make concepts like the Comprehensive Approach and Open Source Security work. In Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), the military strategic headquarters for NATO, we have built a new Comprehensive Crisis Operations Management Centre. This is to assimilate new tasks as a result of NATO's Strategic Concept of 2010, to improve the way (learning from Operation Unified Protector in Libya) we anticipate and deal with crises, collaborate better with partners and connect to a network of stakeholders to approach security and foster stability in a comprehensive way.

This new Centre is a work in progress, but a docking station that is both virtual and physical is being created and will bring a comprehensive network to life during the next phase, which will be ready next year. Building on the successful experiment with the Civil-Military Fusion Centre, we are examining ways to harness smart technology and information systems, to share knowledge, coordinate and even collaborate where appropriate. Overcoming security caveats and creating the right protocols to access information are important for success. Openness and transparency are key as well, but having the space for people to meet face to face, create confidence and build effective personal relationships is what really engenders trust. This is networked and open-source security.

Network Culture

For conservative hierarchies like the military and large, pedestrian, multinational bureaucracies with stovepipes and silos, giving free reign to catalysts and working across networks are both threatening and challenging. It means transforming culture. When we stand in our learning room with our teams and work out how to create networked security approaches, we map out networks and quickly recognise the degree of interconnectedness. When you examine the criss-crossing lines and concentric circles, you can't help but realise that the traditional boxes and organisational layers of conventional 'organograms' seem inefficient, slow and reveal some redundancy. Pointing out such complexity is deemed heresy by some and incomprehensible or too challenging by others. Acknowledging the complex nature of real-world networks highlights the need for a transformation of culture, work-spaces, mind-sets and behaviours.

This is a 20th Century hierarchical structure rubbing up against a 21st Century cultural phenomenon, which we need to em-

brace and get used to. The challenge is not too dissimilar or even distant from increasing the utility of our forces in Basra when I was there. The resources tied up in redundant parts of any conventional structure need to be transferred to create more catalysts to connect and encourage networks. In looking for the people to do this, we have to turn to a younger generation, who have often inadvertently put hours of practice into using smartphones, iPads, mobile apps, Playstation and other inherently networked technologies. They are the new generation of catalysts who are already shaping our future and need to reverse-mentor us, the older generation. With these catalysts, a dose of experience and people like the businessman from Basra, we can create networks for stability. S

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1 Kyros meaning now is the time, as opposed to Chronos, which means this is the time.

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COMMENTARY

Globalisation with a Twist: Stability, Volatility and Fragility All in One

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This article does not reflect the official views of the OECD.

The process of globalisation[1] has brought the world innumerable improvements and opportunities. Economically, for example, it has vastly increased global trade and foreign direct investment, opened up markets for exports and often optimised allocation of capital. Politically, it has stimulated waves of regional integration and democratisation. In identity terms, it has connected cultures and worldviews as never before.

Globalisation has not, however, made the world a more stable or equitable place (e.g. Yergin and Stanislaw, 2008; Judt, 2010; Heine and Thakur, 2011). Economically, commodity price spikes or crashes, often in part transmitted through rapid changes in global demand and supply, frequently lead to food riots. The Asian financial crisis (1997), the Argentine economic crisis (1999-2002) and the current European sovereign debt crisis are reminders of the costs that globalisation can rapidly spread and amplify. In the realm of politics, the swift, domino-like overthrow of autocratic regimes in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt springs to mind, enabled by powerful technological platforms and a sense of deprivation fed by acute and detailed awareness of circumstances at home as elsewhere. In identity terms, without the power of the Internet and social media, al Qaeda's or Boko Haram's efforts to position radical Islam as an alternative response to 'Western modernity' could not have been nearly as global in scope.[2]

In the main, the rapid growth in interdependencies and interconnections that has occurred as a result of globalisation has created vast opportunities for human progress and simultaneously introduced new risks, while highlighting vastly different national capacities to engage with both. In this vast panorama, it is increasingly recognised that fragile and conflict-affected countries are particularly vulnerable to the risks because of their generally weak governance systems and/or low capacity (e.g. World Bank, 2011). This is of concern because conflict and fragility today constitute a global challenge. There are about 40 such countries (ca. 20% of UN membership)[3], which are home to approximately 1.5 billion people and which are unlikely to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals. These countries also feature a significant slice of today's organized violence.

In this brief contribution we explore two specific critical risks posed by globalisation for conflict-affected and fragile countries.

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Building on these, we subsequently advance three elements of an international agenda that could stabilise some of the volatility these countries face as a result.

From a conflict and fragility perspective the premier risk of globalisation is that it has enabled a vast expansion of the global marketplace for illicit goods and services that rides on the coat-tails of its licit cousin and offers easy access to resources such as ideas, funds, weapons, services, recruits and even loyalty. It facilitates the use of violence as a tactic for political or commercial profit. The two marketplaces – licit and illicit – must not be conceived of as separate but as deeply interwoven. Free trade can benefit both licit and illicit goods on a scale previously unknown; while better controls are possible, they also reduce trade, profit and jobs. Easy and anonymous corporate registration even in the most developed and well policed countries attracts savvy entrepreneurs and dodgy shell companies alike. The export of arms and security services has become a thriving business that, however, also enables and perpetuates conflict. The symbiotic nature of the licit and illicit activities that globalisation enables may partially explain the lack of concerted international action to, for example, better regulate the market for arms and security services or to reduce money laundering. Legality and illegality are intermeshed in such a way as to make it highly complex to combat illicit activities without impinging on licit ones.

A second critical risk of globalisation from a conflict and fragility perspective is that it has enabled dominant economic and political ideas to be more intrusively 'imposed' on societies dependent on external support by powerful players with global reach but without either adequate fit or adequate consent. Such 'exporting of ideas' takes on different forms that range from benign to unintentionally harmful or intentionally manipulative and damaging. For example, the 'export of democracy' is generally considered in a positive light. However, in the context of conflict, it has acquired a strong and sometimes detrimental focus on holding elections. Worse, where the institutions and values required for peaceful political competition lagged behind the pace of democratisation, it has on occasion fuelled violence. Similarly, the case for the 'export of liberal economic policies and measures' – generally argued to be wealth- and growth-enhancing – is already much less clear-cut, especially where it is rushed, ill-sequenced and insufficiently attentive to risks for vulnerable groups. In Kosovo, for instance, a straightforward programme of economic liberalisation seems to have resulted, more than a decade after conflict, in 43% unemployment, poverty rates of 48% and deep socio-political fractures set – incredibly – against a rising GDP. There are also much less benign ideas whose propagation is greatly facilitated by globalisation, including aggressive forms of religious fundamentalism, militarism and the notion that international law can be set aside when the end justifies the means.

These two risks generate long-term volatility that manifests itself in cycles of conflict and fragility. A strong international agenda to stabilise this dimension of globalisation is desirable, both out of self-interest and out of a notion of shared responsibility. Unfortunately, both the nature of global governance and the global power distribution are subject to intense debate and competition at the moment. The disappointing results of international conferences in Doha (trade), Durban (climate) and Rio (sustainability) offer some telling proof.

Hence, any stabilisation agenda needs to cater to different sets of interests to take off. We argue that a basic layer of common interest is provided by the increasing realisation that the cost of violence and fragility are being paid locally, regionally and globally as an inevitable consequence of the interdependencies mentioned above. It is by no means just fragile and conflict-affected countries that suffer. One has only to consider the harmful effects of piracy, the drug trade,

human trafficking, corruption and money laundering on the societies of developing, emerging and developed economies alike (e.g. World Bank, 2011; OECD, 2011). A useful first action in support of such an international agenda would be to quantify the cost of conflict and fragility for fragile, emerging and developed economies more rigorously. Despite the inevitable educated guesses involved, this would offer a healthy starting point for debate and an incentive for change.

In addition, we offer three elements for such an agenda that, as a package, both cater to different interest sets and could go a long way in helping fragile countries deal more effectively with some of the volatility that globalisation has brought to their doorsteps.

Changing course in the current approach to the global war on drugs is the first element of our agenda. Globalisation (economic and trade liberalisation in particular) has helped the drug trade to become a truly global business that links mostly OECD-based demand via transit through Central America, West and East Africa and Central Asia with production in Afghanistan, Latin America and South-East Asia. The trade's high profitability and illegality stimulates organised violence because it triggers criminal competition for profits and offers an attractive revenue stream for groups engaged in conflict. At the moment, the approach to drugs is characterised by criminalisation and supply-side reduction (see e.g. the Global Commission on Drug Policy, 2011). But this approach faces two problems:

- Because the drugs trade is a global business, the laws of supply and demand suggest that at constant levels of demand a reduction of supply will first increase prices and subsequently encourage 'new' market entrants. This easily leads to increased levels of violence. With a death toll of around 47,515 people killed in relation to organised violence since 2006, the situation in Mexico illustrates this tragic dynamic (BBC, 2012). Worse, reduction of supply often means destruction of the livelihood of small farmers who have few alternatives to make a living and pushes more people into poverty.
- The drug trade is profitable because the product commands an attractive, non-transparent price premium resulting from its illegality. As long as this remains the case, drug enforcement activity alone will be ineffective to reduce it. Given the cost some OECD countries pay to fight crime, maintain public health, struggle with non-state armed groups sustained by the drug trade (e.g. in Afghanistan) and confront a range of other threats financed by drugs money, the search for alternative policies is urgent. Joining the call of Latin American countries for a serious debate on the issue could reduce an important driver of violence to the benefit of fragile, developing and developed societies alike.

The second element of our agenda is the need to halt the spread of radical Islam as a global factor that fuels conflict. Modern communication technology, financial liberalisation and easier travel have greatly facilitated the instantaneous dissemination of its ideas and enabled a real-time dialogue between leaders and followers. With an emphasis on violence, social 'exit' and state overthrow, this ideology has inspired a great many local conflicts from Nigeria to Indonesia – significantly damaging the image of Islam in the process. The societies where radical Islam resonates often feature weak governance, corruption, high poverty and ethnic diversity with little access to education or possibilities for open debate. This suggests that a more enlightened and balanced approach is required than hunting down terrorists and freezing assets.

Capitalizing on the powerful imagery, change and fear spread by the Arab Spring, wealthy Gulf States might be subtly tempted to use their petro-dollars to reduce inequalities both within their societies and to partner with lesser endowed Arab states. This momentum could also be seized to create new partnerships in higher education between,

for example, the EU and Tunisia, Libya and Egypt that can work a long term influence by creating platforms for debate, study and reflection as well as skills acquisition. A more Islam friendly discourse and migration policies in OECD countries selectively aimed at skills transfer could also help turn the tide. None of this alone offers an immediate solution, and vigilance remains required; but over time such measures can reduce the effects of this and similar violence-stimulating ideologies.

Finally, better regulation of the international provision of security services forms a third element of our agenda. Catalysed by the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the security services industry has grown from a niche business to a global industry over the past two decades, which now provides services ranging from risk assessment to combat support on a global commercial basis. This would not have been possible without a global economy. At the same time – and despite the tragedy at Nissour square in 2007, the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers and the Montreux document – the industry remains largely non-regulated. Yet, making security available on a commercial and lightly regulated basis in societies characterised by inequality and unaccountability creates serious risks of aggravating conflict; security itself can potentially become a primarily private, rather than a public, good and right. There is little reason why markets in security services, just like those in military goods, should not be guided by a legally binding framework that establishes the principles and conditions under which they can be provided and purchased.

These three elements are interlinked and can be complemented by many others. They suggest basic building blocks for an international agenda that can stabilise some of the volatile effects of globalisation on conflict and fragility. Contrary to the stabilisation agendas in Iraq and Afghanistan, these building blocks can incentivise and mobilise a range of countries to address mutual and common interests in reducing conflict and fragility. Sustainably benefiting from the gains of globalisation requires addressing its less savoury or unintended effects on the basis of shared responsibility and partnership, in full recognition of the symbiotic nature of licit and illicit processes and their feedback loops. The alternative is for such factors to exercise their influence unchecked against a deepening process of globalisation and a fragmenting international ability for effective governance. S

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1 We understand globalisation as the acceleration of processes of political, social and economic change due to increases in international interdependencies and international access to goods, services, markets, people and ideas. Such increases are primarily enabled by the reduction of space and time as critical barriers to interaction because of the falling cost and increased ease of transportation and communication (building on Wolf, 2005; Yergin and Stanislaw, 2008).
2 The use of social media to spread alleged inflammatory movies and images in the ethnic and tribal clashes in Assam (India) offer another recent example of the power of digital platforms. See BBC (2012).
3 Depending on which fragility index one consults.

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BOOK REVIEW

Understanding Security Practices in South Asia

Reviewed by Zulfiqar Ali

Understanding Security Practices in South Asia: Securitization Theory and the Role of Non-State Actors. By Monika Barthwal-Datta 2012 London: Routledge

This book seeks to explore the ways and means through which non-state actors (NSAs) in South Asia are engaged in securitizing non-traditional security challenges, especially at the sub-state level. The writer discusses the research gap in this specific subject area, explaining that although South Asia is the epicenter of important international security challenges, the intricacies and complexities of the region's security dynamics remain insufficiently researched. The vast potential for theoretical and empirical investigations remains unexploited by scholars within and outside the region due to the historic dominance of realist thinking and the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan. While traditional security issues such as inter-state war, border disputes and the threat of nuclear devastation remain high on the agendas of policy makers and academics, both within and outside this region, non-traditional security challenges merit greater attention and receive it in this book.

Monika Barthwal-Datta, in *Understanding Security Practices in South Asia,* observes that security in the region remains, in the eyes of many, mainly about military-political challenges. However, for the common people living in South Asia, life is riddled with insecurities emerging from several issues which are separate from the security concerns of the state. For instance, high levels of deprivation have led to the perpetuation of a vicious cycle of conflict and made South Asia the battleground for some of the world's long standing religious, ethnic and caste conflicts. Yet, rather than viewing these challenges from the perspectives of those who are most affected by them, states in the region have mainly chosen to focus on protecting the interests of the state rather than those of the people.

Barthwal-Datta further discusses securitization theory, as proposed by the Copenhagen School, which continues to focus on the state level in identifying security responses. Thus, the state continues to be the preferred security actor, and there is lack of clarity about the role of the securitizing actor and the securitizing agent. South Asia has vast and active networks of NSAs operating in many non-traditional issue areas. The work being done by these NSAs potentially provide states and governments in South Asia with solid and durable foundations upon which co-operative approaches to security may be further developed at the inter-state and regional levels.

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The book utilizes case studies to demonstrate and assess how various NSAs are influencing and shaping security discourses in the region, and the author offers recommendations on how to tackle and resolve prominent security challenges at the sub-state level. Moreover, it offers a critique of securitization theory and attempts to suggest a theoretical approach which considers NSAs to be legitimate security actors in order to resolve the security dilemma and the related challenges in the present South Asian context.

The study has challenged the basic rationale for continuing to follow realist thinking in dealing with security issues in South Asia. It has pointed towards enhancing the role of NSAs with active support at the state level and channeling their efforts to meet the non-traditional security challenges in the region. The research strives to re-invent the concept of security practices in the South Asian context while dealing with non-traditional security threats that are crucial today. It places the security concerns of common people, who are struggling to survive in different countries of South Asia, at the heart of all security policies and practices, which has thus far been lacking.

A tangible example of an NSA dealing with a non-traditional threat successfully is the book's case study on human trafficking in Nepal, which is a source of insecurity for women and children in particular. In February 1996, Indian law enforcement agencies in Maharashtra rescued 500 women and children, including approximately 200 Nepalese nationals, from Mumbai brothels. The Nepalese government refused to repatriate them given that they could not provide their proof of citizenship. As a result, these trafficking survivors suffered in public sector rehabilitation centres in India for five months. At that time, a group of Kathmandu-based NGOs resolved and chalked out a plan to repatriate and rehabilitate the Nepalese victims. They appealed to the Maharashtra High Court for their release, and, subsequently, 124 of the victims were returned to Kathmandu in July 1996, where NGOs helped them move into seven different rehabilitation centres. In this instance, NSAs achieved what the state failed to do. They acknowledged and gave expression to the state of insecurity in which the rescued group of Nepalese women and children were suffering. Moreover, they subsequently worked to provide them with essential rehabilitative measures in order to help facilitate their reintegration into society. Thus, it could be argued that these NGOs effectively performed the role of security actors in the absence of political will and action by the Nepalese state.

To further strengthen the work, the author may have also considered the efforts of NGOs like Eidhi Trust, pioneered by Pakistani philanthropist Maulana Abdul Sattar Eidhi, which is handling non-traditional security threats in multiple sectors to communities in South Asia. There are many such examples of NGOs/NSAs contributing to security in South Asia today. These include organisations such as the Ansar Burni Trust, which is securing the release of innocent prisoners in Indian and Pakistani jails who have been accidentally or mistakenly imprisoned as a result of continuing India-Pakistan hostilities. Here too, there are a host of such NSAs offering their meritorious services in managing non-traditional security threats in the different countries of this region. Of course, it would not have been possible for the author to capture every one of the positive examples available throughout the region, and the book currently fills a crucial gap very well.

Finally, the study could have given more space to issues such as food security, which poses a major threat to international security as well as to the poor in South Asia. Taking up the banner of human security could open new avenues for research into non-traditional security risks and the myriad ways in which NSAs address them. There is clearly much room to build upon this excellent study of security practices in South Asia and the role of NSAs.