Global Insights
A Symposium: Global Summit Reform and the L-20
The Editors

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Paul Martin

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GLOBAL INSIGHTS

A Symposium: Global Summit Reform and the L-20

The Editors

Global governance currently faces multiple critical deadlocks: on climate change, on disease control, on multilateral trade, on nuclear proliferation, on UN reform, and more. Existing mechanisms have proved inadequate to break these deadlocks. On the one hand, formal multilateral institutions like the UN have lacked sufficient dynamism and flexibility to generate the necessary advances on their own. On the other hand, informal global governance in forums such as the Group of 8 has lacked adequate worldwide representation to obtain legitimate authority.

These circumstances have prompted proposals from a number of quarters for a new apparatus of informal global governance. Paul Martin launched these debates when he was prime minister of Canada with his call for the creation of a group of twenty government leaders, the so-called L-20. Subsequently, the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the International Task Force on Global Public Goods have endorsed similar notions.

As a contribution to this ongoing discussion, Global Governance invited Martin to summarize his proposal, and respondents from countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, who would participate in an L-20, to comment on the idea. The following global dialogue astutely and provocatively highlights various opportunities and challenges that surround the idea of an expanded informal global governance forum. We hope that this symposium will help both to consolidate and advance the discussion.
Global Multi-level Governance
European and East Asian Leadership
César De Prado

Since the end of the Cold War, European and East Asian states have enhanced a series of distinct regional and transboundary structures and agreements. The European Union has grown into a remarkable model of peaceful supranational cooperation, and countries in Southeast and Northeast Asia are gradually developing the ASEAN+3 process into a flexible East Asian community. Through bilateral, multilateral and especially interregional relationships, both Europe and East Asia are now actively engaging with other regions and the global community.

This book examines the opportunity to sustain peace and prosperity through dynamic, multi-level governance in which individual states better engage in global processes and institutions via broad and hyperlinked regional regimes.

César de Prado is a Researcher at the University of Tokyo and a visiting professor at the University of Salamanca. He also serves as an advisor to the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process.
The L-20, a summit gathering of the leaders of twenty important states from all major world regions, would constitute a significant advance in global governance. For all its positive contributions, the Group of 8 (G8) has not been able to make the breakthroughs necessary to develop vitally needed global public policy for the twenty-first century. A somewhat larger group, the L-20 would build on the G8’s strengths of informality and flexibility and provide a valuable complement to the United Nations. The result would be real advances in areas of global gridlock such as climate change, health, and conflict management.

A Changing World

Why do we need an L-20 today? The underlying reason is rapid globalization. Humanity now lives under conditions of high global interdependence. The practical reality is that issues of growth, trade, and aid on the one hand, and environment and poverty on the other, require levels of international coordination today that are fundamentally different from any preceding period. The global community needs global public policies to ensure its well-being. In particular, the world must continuously round off the hard edges of globalization so that this process works for all countries.

This task is not simply the responsibility of the UN system. It is also the responsibility of national governments, all of which—despite their vast differences in circumstances—are dealing country by country with many of the same issues wrought by globalization. While successful international institutions are essential if the world is to work, national governments are the masters of those very institutions—not the other way around.

Among the many national governments across the world, the most powerful have a particular responsibility to manage globalization well. The simple fact is that great economic or military power begets proportionate
international influence and, with that power, comes significant responsibility for the global community. The exercise (or not) of that responsibility directly affects not only a state’s own citizens, but all of us.

Which governments hold this key position? For much of recent history, global primacy was held by the United States. At summit meetings, a hush would fall on the room when the president of the United States entered. Today, still, no player is more important for global governance than the United States.

However, increasingly the ability to create the hush at summits is being shared. We stand at the brink of a period of significant change when it comes to the balance of global influence. The nature of power is transforming. A larger number of countries is likely to wield major power in the years to come, especially as it has become apparent since the fall of the Berlin Wall that military primacy alone is insufficient to ensure that a government’s foreign policy goals will be met.

From an economic perspective, the number of key players in world politics is multiplying. Economic globalization may have had its roots in the fertile commercial soil of a dynamic US economy, but its extension across the world has brought with it the development of significant partners and rivals. As international markets in trade and investment become freer, the less likely it is that a single country will dominate them. In fact, the United States has already been joined at the pinnacle of power by the European Union, Japan, China, and India. Others are not far behind. Even if only a partial transition to multipolarity occurs, the need for more effective global governance poses a significant challenge.

For the moment, there is no effective caucus that can contain, manage, and mobilize this broader distribution of power for the common good of humankind. This is the fundamental rationale behind the L-20 proposal: the world needs a body that can form the consensus required to deal on a timely basis with issues of all kinds that have global repercussions.

The G8 may have once filled this role; it no longer does. It groups only the advanced industrialized countries plus Russia, thereby leaving out the emergent major economies and excluding significant participation from several major world regions. The G8 should continue as an instrument of consultation and coordination among its member governments but, for major global challenges, the G8 is quite simply is no longer representative.

Key Features of the L-20

The L-20 is an auspicious way to address shortcomings in the G8. Informal meetings of a select group of national leaders from all world regions could deal with deadlocked global policy issues where political leadership
is needed to move matters forward. In terms of most of the important questions today, answers will be found only if the key national capitals engage one another directly. The L-20 would be an important first step in making the framework for international decisionmaking more effective, while not detracting from the strengths of existing bodies.

In terms of numbers, about twenty people in a room is probably a reasonable size for attempting to tackle highly political, cross-sectoral problems. With a group much larger than this, a real debate is impossible. With a group much smaller, meaningful regional representation is difficult.

The fundamental criteria for L-20 membership are as follows: First, the countries chosen must include the G8 and other leading economies. Second, members must possess the requisite social and political stability. Finally, the major regional powers should be included regardless of economic ranking.

The membership of the L-20 should be the same for all issues. It should not have a “variable geometry,” with a different combination of leaders to deal with different topics. The problem is that the personal chemistry that will drive positive outcomes can be developed only if the same people meet repeatedly (subject, of course, to the exigencies of each country’s electoral system). Inviting countries for part of a meeting only, as in the G8 Plus 5, or on a rotation basis may work in other fora or may make for good media footage, but it will not work in the context of leaders driving to a solution.

As for citizen involvement, each leader in the L-20 can and should be held accountable by their own country’s civil society and legislative bodies. Both before and after L-20 meetings, governments should engage the consultation processes that they have developed with their civil society and legislative bodies.

The strength of the L-20 lies in its character as a meeting of heads of government. The L in the L-20 is key. Only leaders can take the leap of faith, the calculated risk, and the reversal of an established precedent that are needed to achieve real progress. The resolution of difficult problems requires a willingness to take chances that officials cannot provide.

Successful dialogue at the L-20 requires informality and familiarity. A critical factor is the network of personal relationships that small groups of politicians can build up over time. The leaders involved need to have met often as a group and to believe that they will continue to meet in the future. They need to know the dynamics of the room. That is what happens at the G8. It is what happens at the G-20 Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors. It is what should happen at the L-20.

The personal element is key to generating progress on otherwise deadlocked issues of global governance. The better one knows the person across the table, the better one is able to make the required accommodations. The personal aspect is also absolutely necessary if peer pressure is to be exerted
and serious political risks taken. Well-developed personal relationships can also lessen misunderstandings owing to cultural differences.

Given its potential to break deadlocks in contentious areas, the L-20 would be an invaluable ally of the UN. I am not alone in this belief. The High-Level Panel appointed to advise on UN reforms in the lead-up to the Millennium Plus Five Summit specifically recommended that an informal caucus of leaders, styled in the character of an L-20, be created outside and independent of the UN. This body would serve as a catalyst and conscience for achieving results.

**Moving Ahead**

While the L-20 is an excellent proposal with much potential, it is of course not without problems. Admittedly, the issue of who sits at an L-20 table brings with it concerns about legitimacy. The participating heads of government represent just the key nation-states on a regional basis. The entire enterprise is far from an exercise in direct democracy. However, this approach is the only practical way forward. The L-20 is a way station on the road to more effective global institutions. We cannot afford to make the perfect an enemy of the good.

A more immediate central conundrum for the L-20 project is the ambivalence of the United States toward the concept. When I consulted the countries in the G20 Finance countries group on the L-20 idea, the vast majority were very supportive. But truth be told, the United States has been hesitant.

Yet we are moving inexorably away from unipolarity. The United States will never have a better opportunity than the present to shape the institutional arrangements that will govern the future multipolar world. The longer the United States delays its investment in new approaches to working with emerging regional powers, the more difficult will be the inevitable bargaining and the less influence it will have. Full engagement in the L-20 project could provide the United States with important advantages in laying the foundations for innovation in a rapidly evolving global environment. Based on the way that the United States has always risen to meet its international responsibilities, I am confident that Americans will take on this challenge.

In conclusion, it would be a serious mistake to delay significant reform of global decisionmaking any further. The problems of globalization are too immediate, and its benefits too great, for us to wait. The world beyond the G8 wants in. These regional players are going to get their wish. The question is whether they are going to get their wish in a way that is constructive or in a way that leaves lasting resentment. The L-20 is part of the positive answer to that question.
Note

Paul Martin was the Twenty-First Prime Minister of Canada, and the Member of Parliament for LaSalle-Émard in Montreal, Quebec. He was first elected federally in 1988. He served as minister of finance from November 1993 to June 2002. As Canada’s finance minister, he was highly regarded on the world stage, and represented Canada at a series of international summits. In September 1999, he was named inaugural chair of the G-20, an international group composed of G-7 nations and emerging market nations. He is respected internationally in part for his leadership in forging a new world financial order in which emerging economies would be prevented from plunging into ruinous financial crises.
Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping Operations
Edited by Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric de Coning and Ramesh Thakur

Peacekeeping operations have unintended consequences – this fact has long been ignored by both practitioners and researchers. This book is one of the first attempts to improve our understanding of unintended consequences of peacekeeping operations, by bringing together field experiences and academic analyses. The aim of the book is not to discredit peace operations but rather to improve the way in which such operations are planned and managed. The book identifies the need to develop a culture of accountability, which should include institutionalizing processes aimed at anticipating unintended consequences as a routine part of all planning cycles, and the monitoring of effects, including unintended effects, so that steps can be taken to prevent and manage negative side-effects as early as possible.

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Design for a Multipolar World

Marcos de Azambuja

The proposal for an L-20 can be appreciated as a belated attempt to create a suitable new multilateral architecture after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Neither the United Nations nor US unilateralism are adequate mechanisms for global governance in the twenty-first century. A selective and limited expansion of the G8 with the inclusion of four or five additional states is the best immediate way forward.

A New Era Without a New Architecture

The Cold War was one of the few historical cycles in modern times to end without a major international effort to organize a new world order to emerge out of the old. The Napoleonic Wars led to the Congress of Vienna. The First World War ended with the Treaty of Versailles. The Second World War inspired the political and diplomatic architecture agreed upon in San Francisco. In contrast, no major effort has been made to provide the current globalized and multipolar world with the institutional and conceptual framework that a new age requires. We extravagantly use the prefix post (as in postmodern, post–Cold War, etc.) to signify that we have not found or agreed upon the words necessary to define the new circumstances of our day. It is urgent and important to devise a new framework and vocabulary.

Initially, the sudden and surprising collapse of the Soviet Union and the bankruptcy of Marxist socialism in Eastern Europe gave rise to US unilateralism. The victorious superpower was unchallenged in its hegemony. The United States had no need to harmonize interests with its allies and chose to use its great power unhindered by the constraints and inhibitions that accompany the workings of any coalition.
For a few years, this approach worked for Washington. Then came failure in Iraq, further deterioration of the Israel-Palestine relationship, and challenges posed by terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, and deadlock in global trade negotiations. It has become clear that the world as it has developed since 1989 cannot be regulated by unilateral means. A large number of study groups, panels, and other forums have broadly agreed that a new century and a new world require better instruments and guidelines to regulate international relations. The current US administration remains reluctant to face this fact, but today even official Washington has a growing awareness that the current modus operandi of international relations is unsustainable.

If a rejection of unilateralism is clearly needed, it is also imperative to acknowledge that the type of multilateralism embodied in the United Nations is largely outdated. This rusty system does not reflect the hopes and expectations of a radically different international society where new actors have to cope with new issues. International life cannot be managed solely, or even primarily, by vast assemblies of nearly 200 state actors with enormous disparities in their worldviews and in their political and economic weight.

Reform of the Security Council could be a step toward combining the need for universality on the one hand and selectivity on the other. Current world power distributions are not those of 1945. However, enlargement of the Security Council can be accomplished only through revision of the UN Charter, and the conditions of international politics are such that no reform of this kind can take place in the foreseeable future. Thus, it is imperative to envisage other kinds of groupings with more selective participation that can act as catalysts for key policies and projects on key problems.

A G8 Plus

The challenge lies in finding a new way to balance universality and selectivity. In the absence of Security Council reform, we are left with the option of setting up more informal groupings of key countries. In the area of international finance, the Group of 20—which owes so much to Paul Martin’s vision and vigor—has already shown the contributions that such groups can make.

The membership of the new informal global governance institution must be such that efficiency and cohesion are not jeopardized. On the other hand, participants cannot be so few and arbitrarily chosen as to undermine legitimacy and relevance. The new entity must act in harmony and propose initiatives that, while reflecting the interests of its members, are also responsive to the expectations of the broader international community. Geographical distribution must also be taken into account so as to reflect the
truly multipolar and globalized world in which we now live. Above all, the selection criteria should bear in mind the territorial, demographic, economic, strategic, and technological weight of each candidate so that membership might maximally reflect the currently prevailing realities of world power.

It would, of course, be unwise to do away with the diverse groupings that are already in place in the regional and the global spheres. But it is necessary to create, at the core of international life, a nucleus of key countries that could act as a center of gravity for the whole international system. The most practical approach would be a selective and limited expansion of the G8 with the inclusion of four or five new countries whose policies and practices would not be essentially divergent from or incompatible with the policies of the original membership. The objective should be enlargement without a significant loss of cohesion.

Candidates to join this moderately enlarged G8 should be “self-evident,” in the sense that their selection would be uncontroversial. China, India, and Brazil fall into this category. South Africa and Mexico are also likely candidates. The inclusion of a Muslim country would lend the group additional prestige and influence, as well as build a bridge with over fifty countries and nearly 2 billion people of Islamic culture and heritage.

Regarding the Latin American and Brazilian contribution in particular, it is a region noted for frequent and widespread domestic turbulence coupled with a remarkable external stability and lack of regional conflict. Latin America is distant from the world’s major trouble spots, with deep-rooted international stability behind generally accepted borders. Brazil plays a key role as a force of moderation and balance in the region. However, we also seek to play a more substantial and visible role beyond Latin America with access to the nucleus of global decisionmaking. We offer the assurance of a consolidated democracy, rational macroeconomic policies, constructive collaboration with our neighbors, sensitivity to environmental issues, and respect for human rights. On the other hand, we admittedly have largely failed to achieve equitable income distribution, and our record in protecting the Amazon rain forest within our jurisdiction remains quite inadequate. Brazil is ready and eager to accept new and greater international responsibilities. We hope to be recognized as a necessary and useful partner in the efforts to design and operate an effective global governance. We are a vast laboratory of multiracial and multicultural experiences. Our accomplishments and our failures could be relevant to the world at large.

I have been personally engaged in an exercise that serves as a sort of laboratory test of the possibilities of an enlarged G8 to address major global problems with new avenues of thought free from the constraints of an official and compartmentalized approach. It goes without saying that our experiment does not seek to substitute the normal procedures of governments and official establishments by independent action from influential
persons acting on their personal capacities. What we seek to explore are the opportunities available to individual players—not bound by bureaucratic and formal power structures—to make a creative contribution to the solution of problems that have so far resisted more conventional therapies.

The problem of climate change seems eminently suitable to test the feasibility and the limits of this innovative approach. Global warming is a huge challenge with such broad and far-reaching implications that only a radical departure from established diplomatic procedures would seem to have a chance to succeed. The United Nations Environment Program clearly lacks the resources and even the mandate to tackle such a vast and complex problem. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change machinery set up in Kyoto is valuable, but much more is obviously needed.

In sum, it is worthwhile selectively and cautiously to enlarge the current G8. One could possibly settle with a number somewhat less than envisioned in the L-20. Something around an L-14 would reflect the world as it is now and is likely to remain for the foreseeable future. An expansion from the G8 to an L-14 would be virtually cost free. It does not imply the creation of cumbersome bureaucratic structures. It can be undertaken almost immediately, and it will bring on board players who have much to contribute to world security and prosperity.

The past twenty years have been marked by great reluctance—one might even call it an aversion—to create new international institutions. To some extent, this attitude is understandable, given the disappointment with the performance and cost of existing institutions. With regard to reform of the G8 more particularly, there has also been a certain inertia and an understandable feeling that the coziness of well-established procedures might be disrupted. However, this caution cannot block the need to put in place, in a selective manner and under strict criteria, new bodies to meet new challenges. The transition to an L-14 would no doubt involve initial adjustments, but soon the new members of the club will fit in, have their say, and world politics can move on.

Note

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Design for a Multipolar World
Summit Reform: The Good and the Bad News
Pratap Bhanu Mehta

This essay argues that the case for creating an L-20 process is compelling. This is a mechanism that could effectively socialize leaders into thinking about global problems more responsibly, with an “all things considered” perspective. However, the biggest obstacle to getting it going will not be an institutional issue, but the fact that many countries in the world simply do not take global problems like nuclear proliferation and global warming as seriously as is necessary to make good faith attempts to address them.

Paul Martin’s L-20 proposal has a number of virtues that, at first glance, make it an appropriate mix of realism and idealism. Its objective is to promote multilateral governance without a utopian blueprint. It promotes a more representative world order without wishing away the fact that some countries do carry more weight than others. It recognizes that the world needs new global institutions to adapt to new challenges and realities of power, but that these innovations need to be crafted gradually. It is original in acknowledging that any workable group capable of addressing the world’s problems will have to mix developed and developing countries. But the scheme positions “developed” and “developing” together in a format that seeks to overcome the barriers that these labels often erect. The L-20 proposal makes way for new powers like India and China, without simply marginalizing the old like Canada or Germany. It recognizes that domestic politics within most countries, and the realities of power in the international system, often produce global deadlocks. But while recognizing these structural constraints, it does not give in to them.

The L-20 concept is wisely unfashionable in recognizing the absolutely central role that leadership can still play in world affairs. It creates a formal grouping, but does not encumber it with an intractable, enduring bureaucracy that often becomes its own object. It does not call for the dismantling of existing formal institutions, but instead looks for new means to energize them. It also very subtly understands how leaders interact. Leaders face a complicated array of forces, but who they become—what they learn and come to believe—is partly shaped by the contexts in which they have to justify themselves. A grouping like the L-20 has long-term potential for socializing leaders into a global perspective that goes beyond the platitudes that emanate from large organizations. Indeed, perhaps the only way to have governments acquire global responsibility is to get them to participate in some kind of collective decisionmaking structure. In short, the L-20 is a wonderful way of constructing a global consciousness, without the disadvantages of large bulky structures.
The timing of this proposal is also opportune. There is currently a genuine vacuum in international politics. The UN format is too unwieldy to confront some of the pressing issues, and most other groupings do not have the right mix of countries to propose solutions or even to articulate a common understanding of problems in a way that has global purchase. In addition, very few forums exist where leaders can depart from a tightly set agenda or confront major issues one at a time. The L-20 is attractive in that it provides a forum where leaders of key countries take responsibility, not just for their own nation or region, but for the world as a whole. Additionally, the L-20 is not confined to one or two sectors, in the way of most international institutions.

Admittedly there is, at the moment, a proliferation of summitry: regional summits, cross-regional summits, and summits of unorthodox combinations of countries. However, none of these summit frameworks cuts across all regional divides and the developing country–developed country divide to encompass the world as a whole. Indeed, none of the summitry experiments currently on offer come close to the global integrating function of the L-20 proposal.

There is also growing recognition that certain significant problems—such as nuclear proliferation, global warming, financial imbalances, and trade—cannot be solved without carrying along most of the countries that would be part of the L-20. If these countries do not get together to address these problems, it is unlikely that enduring progress will be made. Germany, the current G8 chair, has already advocated a deeper integration of the G5 (Brazil, China, India, Mexico, South Africa) into the G8, so that G8 discussions with the G5 become more meaningful than the occasional and condescending interactions that currently exist. Possibly the United States will also have to make some dramatic gesture to convince the world that it is once again serious about multilateral engagement. What would be a better gesture than to convene a meeting on the lines of an L-20?

If the framework of the L-20 is compelling, and if the timing is right, what is the obstacle to moving forward? One standard objection against this kind of proposal can be swiftly dismissed. This objection holds that multilateral fora do not work because (some of) the great powers will not let them work. Or, rather, major states will not accede to any institution that does not reflect their power and serve their interests. This diagnosis has some merit in pointedly reminding us that, if states are determined to be bloody-minded about ignoring global problems, there is not much that the mere creation of institutions can do to remedy the situation. However, the L-20 realistically assumes that governments usually inhabit some middle zone between pure self-interest and collective global responsibility. The question is whether the L-20 can provide a form of global sociability, networking, and exchange among leaders that gives concrete expression to this
middle zone. The design proceeds on the assumption that, even if states desire more multilateral cooperation, they will need some form of interchange to crystallize this desire, some form of exchange that operates outside of the constraints and liturgies of standard multilateral institutions. Indeed, the L-20 proposal is innovative because it does not assume that intractable questions like those concerning representation that bedevil formal institutions have a ready-made answer. Rather, it hopes to create a process, perhaps even a reflexive and flexible process, that can adapt to different considerations.

The most formidable obstacle to getting the L-20 off the ground may be that the proposal overestimates the degree to which the major governments around the world believe that the supposed global deadlocks are indeed deadlocks. There is much liturgical acknowledgment of these deadlocks, but more intellectual spadework and dissemination are needed to prove to people that they should care about the deadlocks. Indeed, one of the striking things about the debate from an Indian perspective is how distant most of these deadlocks seem to be. Their presence is often acknowledged intellectually, but they do not provoke the kind of existential angst that would truly compel the leadership of India to insist that these problems must be solved. Two examples well illustrate this point.

The first is nuclear proliferation. This issue is, in principle, a high-priority item for the world and figures prominently in any discussion of global deadlocks. However, the blunt truth of the matter is that almost no leader is losing sleep over the issue. We know that preventing nuclear proliferation will, among other things, require two measures. First, existing nuclear weapons states will have to show some commitment toward disarmament. Yet every major power still wants to technologically upgrade its arsenal. Under these circumstances, it is almost impossible to delegitimize the possession of nuclear weapons. Second, we know that states go nuclear because of their security environment. It is pointless to talk about nuclear proliferation without addressing issues of the world’s security architecture. Is anyone willing to take these matters seriously? If not, why do we talk of a “global deadlock” on nuclear proliferation? Why not simply acknowledge that no major government is actually serious about removing nuclear weapons from the scene? Calling this situation a deadlock misrepresents the situation.

A second example is global warming. Climate change seems as urgent as any global challenge. However, the problem is less one of deadlock between parties than one of all parties taking the issue seriously. To be sure, there are some intractable issues about how the burden of responsibility over this issue should be distributed between developed and developing countries. But the main difficulty is arguably that, on the one hand, developed countries with the very partial exception of Europe show almost no
commitment to move while, on the other hand, the debate over global warming is at only a very preliminary stage in countries like India. The challenge is less to break a deadlock than to gain recognition of the problem.

Hence, the biggest challenge for Martin’s proposal may not lie in questions of composition and procedure. The key issue is not representation (who should be at the L-20 table), the power of summitry (whether leaders really matter), and the format (whether informality promotes solutions or creates more confusion). Neither is the chief difficulty one of gaining a commitment by different countries to work together. On these matters, Martin’s proposal is sound.

No, the main problem is that, looking at the prevailing political discourse in countries like India, it is not at all obvious that electorates in these countries think that there are pressing global deadlocks that require global solutions. The motivating angst that drives the L-20 proposal is fully justified intellectually, but it overestimates the degree to which most people think there are genuine global deadlocks. This complacency makes the case for an L-20 more, rather than less, compelling, but it also suggests that the L-20 faces a somewhat different task. The L-20 could be, in the first instance, a mechanism not so much for problem solving as for consciousness-raising. True, the task of convincing people that there are indeed global deadlocks with, pardon the pun, deadly consequences could be carried out by different forums. But a combination of important developing and developed countries such as the L-20 envisages may provide momentum to the task of raising consciousness. An L-20 would not have the overwhelmingly formal format of the UN, nor would it place developing and developed countries in polarized opposition to each other. The challenge is not primarily to construct an institution, but to convince people that there are global problems that they ignore at their peril. ⊕

Note

Pratap Bhanu Mehta is president of the Center for Policy Research, Delhi. His publications include The Burden of Democracy.
Toward More Inclusive Informal Global Governance: A View from South Africa

Elizabeth Sidiropoulos

South Africa may support a proposal to establish an L-20 because the concept recognizes the value of informal clubs in moving forward processes of global governance. However, the devil is in the details: Who would take the initiative to set up an L-20? How would membership criteria be determined? What would be the rules of engagement, and how would they be developed? These questions would be crucial in ensuring that an L-20 was based not only on shared responsibility, but also shared ownership.

South Africa and Global Governance

Since South Africa’s reentry into the international community in 1994, the country has been a very willing and active participant in global affairs, with a particular commitment to the development of a rules-based multilateral framework. As such, South Africa has been a strong advocate for reform of the UN system and the Bretton Woods institutions, and the creation of a more equitable political and economic global order.

Democratic South Africa’s policy on global governance has highlighted four key objectives. A first aim has been to build effective multilateralism as a vehicle for achieving more equitable global governance. While power in the international system is distributed unevenly, multilateralism provides for it to be exercised within a rules-based framework rather than arbitrarily. South Africa has perceived the actions of the United States since 9/11 as undermining progress in this regard, entrenching the exercise of arbitrary power by the strong against the weak.

Second, South Africa has aimed to develop African solidarity on issues of global governance. Other African states are acutely aware of South Africa’s economic dominance on the continent, and the country is wary of being characterized as “big brother.” This caution often acts as a rein on the positions that South Africa takes in multilateral forums. The most telling instance occurred in 2005 regarding South Africa’s position on reform of the UN Security Council. The government initially favored a compromise proposed by the G4 (Japan, Germany, Brazil, and India) on non-veto-carrying permanent seats of the Council. However, the proposal was not accepted by the African Union, and South Africa then fell into line with this regional consensus.

Third, South Africa has sought to build coalitions among countries of the South in global governance. Such coalitions aim to redress global
imbalance through common approaches in multilateral arenas and also to diversify trade and investment relations away from the traditional North-South axis. Building Southern coalitions is important for South Africa on two fronts. In the global sphere, these collective actions allow developing countries to more effectively pursue issues of global governance reform with developed countries. In the African sphere, these coalitions are important vehicles to take up questions of improving governance and accountability within states on the continent.

One notable initiative in this regard is the India-Brazil-South Africa Forum (IBSA), established in 2003. This formation aims to translate the political and economic weight of these three states into leverage over reform of the global governance architecture, specifically with respect to the United Nations. IBSA thus focuses not only on functional areas of economic cooperation, but also on creating alliances and networks to maximize impact on the current geopolitical balance of power.

An “axis of the developing South” has also been quite strong in the World Trade Organization (WTO), where the emergence of the “G-20 Plus” has redefined power dynamics, highlighting that any progress in the WTO will require the effective participation of a number of key developing countries. In a similar vein, at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference of the WTO in 2005, a group of countries formed the so-called NAMA 11 (Non-Agricultural Market Access), comprising Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Namibia, the Philippines, South Africa, Tunisia, and Venezuela. The NAMA 11 has demanded the elimination of tariff peaks, high tariffs, and tariff escalation in developed countries in order to advance industrial development in developing countries.

Fourth, South Africa has sought to build bridges to the North, especially with those countries that are sympathetic to the objectives of bringing better representation and greater equity to global politics, as well as meeting the South’s development imperatives. Such bridges provide opportunities to develop synergies on issues with powerful countries that control the agenda in global forums such as the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions. Early on, postapartheid South Africa recognized the importance of the G8 and has attended these summits since 2000. The G8 meetings have served as very effective platforms for raising awareness about the challenges facing Africa and also for “marketing” the African renaissance vision through the New Partnership for Africa’s Development.

An L-20: Its Appeal for South Africa

By simultaneously building coalitions with the South and building bridges to the North, South Africa has taken a pragmatic approach to creating vehicles
and opportunities for developing countries to influence the global agenda. While solidarity among all states may be an important factor in aspects of its foreign policy, South Africa also recognizes that to move on certain issues in global forums requires agreement among a core group of states from the North and the South.

It is in this context that an L-20 may appeal to South Africa. If carefully crafted, an informal arrangement of this kind could be representative of the world’s geographic regions, reflecting emergent global demographic, economic, and political shifts as well as cross-cultural and religious divides. As such, it would largely address the three most important qualities that are lacking in the current G8 constellation: inclusiveness, legitimacy, and efficacy.

An L-20 cannot fully address problems of inclusion and legitimacy. Critics will argue that a club of twenty perpetuates a two- or three-tiered world. How the club determines its function and mandate will be critical to how it is perceived. If it is seen as a vehicle for supporting the formal multilateral framework and strengthening a rules-based international system, then its legitimacy will be assured. Equally, an L-20 will have legitimacy if it develops consensus among its members to advance reform of the formal global governance institutions.

Regarding the third factor of efficacy, the limited size of the G8 once allowed for greater effectiveness, but it is increasingly clear that these states can no longer handle global issues on their own. This is evidenced with respect to international financial matters (the basis for the creation of the G8—as the G5—in 1975) as well as the new global public goods agenda. In contrast, an informal arrangement of some twenty states drawn from the developed and the developing world would provide a pragmatic balance between inclusiveness and efficacy.

But The Devil Is in the Details

Having noted the potential benefits of an L-20, the challenge is how to create such a configuration. It is highly unlikely that all members of the G8 would agree to dissolve that mechanism, but a number may be willing to support the establishment of an L-20 in parallel. Several problematic questions require careful consideration on the road to a more inclusive informal summitry.

First, who will take the initiative to set up an L-20? It will require a group of leaders who have wide respect in both the developed and developing world, and are drawn from both. The L-20 must be a joint North-South creation rather than a Northern plan that Southern players are invited to join.
Second, what is the basis of membership in the L-20, and who will determine these criteria? Satisfactory handling of this question is crucial if the L-20 is to be perceived as inclusive and legitimate. Although membership can be a tendentious issue, clear guidelines (such as economic power, political stability, regional responsibility, cultural/religious diversity, and geographical spread) should reduce the difficulties. Undoubtedly, several points of regional sensitivity will arise. In Africa, for example, Nigeria is a continental power and has the largest population of any country. However, uncertainty remains about its long-term political stability and sound governance. On the other hand, incorporation into an L-20 could encourage the country to consolidate progress made on these issues since 1999. Meanwhile, in Europe, membership may have to be pared down from the four countries that figure in the G8 (France, Germany, Italy, and the UK).

Third, how will an L-20 operate, and how will its rules of engagement be established? It should not be assumed that the G8 modus operandi will carry forward into an L-20. Members must feel that there is a level playing field and that the rules of this informal arrangement are developed jointly. South Africa and other developing countries recognize the importance of participating in some arrangements where they may not have developed the rules because those venues provide a platform for engaging the North. However, that does not imply an unquestioning acquiescence to such rules. Rather, the wish is to work within such institutions to change the system and make it more responsive to their particular needs.

Fourth, what will be the L-20’s focus? In recent years, the agenda of the G8 has expanded beyond its original economic and financial roots to include other global challenges such as poverty in Africa and climate change. In many ways, this expanded agenda reflects the growing recognition of the sectoral interdependence of economic, social, and political issues. The value of informal summity lies in its capacities for flexibility and responsiveness to global trends. This strength should not be lost. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of an L-20 will flow from the degree to which it promotes a democratization of the formal institutions of global governance to ensure that the emerging world is a rule maker as well as a rule taker.

South Africa’s Constraints

There are potential tensions between South Africa’s participation in informal clubs of leading states and its professed solidarity with the rest of Africa. Already some quarters have complained about South Africa’s purported dominating tendencies within the continent. As a middle-income country with a willingness to address regional and global challenges, South Africa’s interests often diverge from those of other African states. The challenge for
South Africa is to manage the process in a transparent fashion that generates trust from other African states concerning its engagement and participation in informal global governance forums.

Both the G8 and a prospective L-20 are informal groupings. They cannot, and should not, replace the major formal institutions of global governance. Rather, informal clubs are complementary mechanisms. That said, the pressure for informal arrangements as vehicles for policy change will grow in the absence of significant progress in reforming the UN, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. The global challenges facing us require more substantial economic and political engagement with the developing world, even if certain actors in the industrialized world have concerns about the medium-term political stability and democratic credentials of some developing powers. Building an L-20 will require shared responsibility, which is more difficult if there is not shared ownership.

Notes

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1. The Group started with 20 members, but soon expanded to 21 and then to 22 with the inclusion of El Salvador and Turkey. The original members were Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, China, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, and Venezuela. El Salvador and Turkey did not remain in the Group for long, but Nigeria and Indonesia joined. After the Cancun meeting, Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Peru left the Group.
The rapid economic, social, and ecological changes around the world over the past half-century have generated tremendous new challenges that beg for a different global governance system: one that can, in the words of Paul Martin, “form the consensus required to deal on a timely basis with issues of all kinds that have global repercussions” (p. 302). Martin makes a compelling case for a new mechanism, the L-20. This body would be “a summit gathering of the leaders of twenty important states from all major world regions” (p. 301). According to Martin, the fundamental criteria for L-20 membership are states that have global economic weight, domestic stability, and regional leadership. In addition, he specifies that membership of the L-20 should be the same for all issues, avoiding a so-called “variable geometry” (p. 303). Few would question the need for an occasional meeting of this sort. However, constituting this mechanism of global governance and making it work effectively present some complex and intriguing problems.

With regard to difficulties in convening the L-20, one must first ask what the L-20 can achieve that cannot be obtained through other mechanisms. If the L-20 is envisioned as an important decisionmaking mechanism, one could immediately challenge its legitimacy. While the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and other global governance institutions have not been very effective in addressing some global deadlocks, they are legitimate venues where important global decisions are taken through due processes. As Martin notes, the L-20 should make “the framework for international decisionmaking more effective, while not detracting from the strengths of existing bodies” (p. 303). If the L-20 is designed as a forum for consultation and coordination to help resolve global deadlocks, it would have to be set alongside a dazzling array of other regional and global governance forums, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, that already provide leaders of different countries with many opportunities to convene. In addition, many other semiofficial and nongovernmental meetings, such as the World Economic Forum in Davos, also bring leaders together. The last thing that leaders are short of is occasions to meet. If the L-20 is to become a continuing event, it must offer unique benefits that are not available elsewhere.

Another difficulty is that the self-selected nature of this platform of global power could make participating governments feel uneasy. Take China, for example. Recent rapid economic growth in China has generated a wave of media hype regarding a supposed China threat. Chinese leaders
have countered with global and regional diplomacy that tries to convey the message that China will stick to its peaceful development policy and pose no threat to any country. Chinese leaders are keenly aware of the domestic development challenges that face their country. They do not want to raise expectations from the international community that China is not able to meet. Neither would China want to become entangled in international debates that fuel the hype of a “China threat.” As part of this policy, China has insisted that it will work with existing global governance frameworks and not take the lead in the international arena. This approach was first proposed by former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. It was recently reaffirmed in an article in People’s Daily by the current premier, Wen Jiabao. There, he writes that:

Peaceful development is the long-term strategic choice that we have to stick to. It is also the guideline of foreign policy that we must retain. We must focus on our own development. We will not “hold the flag”; nor will we take the lead in the international arena.1

Assuming that the above concerns about convening the L-20 are satisfactorily addressed, other issues regarding the effectiveness of the L-20 mechanism also would have to be handled. A first operational challenge for the L-20 would be agenda setting. Given that many of the current global deadlocks have existed for years, it would be unrealistic to expect that the new summit architecture could perform magic. The L-20 must be selective and focused. At the same time, deep differences between the developing and the developed members would make such choices difficult. The major developed economies place issues like terrorism, climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, intellectual property protection, drug traffic, and trade negotiations at the top of their agenda. In contrast, major developing countries are more concerned about issues that mean life or death for millions, such as extreme poverty, huge financial debt, pandemic diseases, corruption, crime, and social upheavals. Developing countries recognize that many of the items being emphasized by developed countries are global public goods or global evils that require global responses. At the same time, these developing countries could argue that their priority issues, while appearing on the surface to be domestic concerns, are in fact the root causes of the global deadlocks that we now face. Unless these issues are tackled systematically through the joint efforts of developed and developing countries, the world will never be able to sustain peace and development.

Such differences may be reconcilable, provided that the leaders from both developing and developed countries are willing to engage in frank dialogues that are based on informality and familiarity, as a result of personal relationships developed out of frequent meetings. Further, they have to be
willing to go beyond ideologies and superficial media reporting to develop empathy and understanding for the real thoughts and emotions of their peers on the other side. An anecdote from John Thornton, the former chief executive officer of Goldman Sachs, is instructive in this regard. Last year, together with the board of the Brookings Institution, he had the opportunity of a face-to-face conversation with Chinese premier Wen Jiabao. In the two-hour conversation, Thornton was impressed by Wen’s sincerity and enthusiasm to promote democracy in China. He wrote a memo about what Wen had said and shared it with friends in the United States. Weeks later, Premier Wen published the above-mentioned People’s Daily article that conveyed basically the same ideas in an understandably more formal language. However, the Western media’s reports on the article painted a very different story, with headlines like “No Democracy for China in 100 Years,” “Chinese Premier Calls Democracy a Distant Goal,” and “Chinese Premier: Democracy Years Away,” which was precisely the opposite of what Wen intended to convey.

Another challenge that the L-20 would confront involves policy deliberation. Martin has rightly emphasized the unique role that national leaders can play in making hard choices to break global deadlocks. Yet one should not underestimate the influence of broader policy networks on contentious global issues. Such networks include different government agencies, think tanks, nongovernmental organizations, mass media, and other actors. While the constellations and the roles of these players in the policy system may differ from country to country, they exert in all cases tremendous influence on political leaders.

The L-20 mechanism also faces major challenges in the questions that it seeks to tackle. Global deadlocks are, by definition, hard to break. Take climate change as an example. An Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development background paper has identified some major obstacles to making progress on this problem. For one thing, parties at the international level are unable to agree on the overall stringency of the necessary greenhouse gas emission reductions and on the allocation of these reductions among countries. In addition, the parties fear that the costs of climate change action are too high and will hurt economic competitiveness. Furthermore, climate change competes at the national level with other policy priorities that are perceived to be more urgent. The matter is also politically unattractive, given that the costs of acting on climate change hit today, but the benefits primarily accrue to future generations. Moreover, leaders must overcome a commonly held belief that, if we wait long enough, new technologies will become available to solve the problem at less cost. In short, there are reasons for the deadlocks, and the L-20 cannot avoid them by the mere fact of assembling leaders.
Neither are leaders by themselves enough. True, as Martin comments, “only leaders can take the leap of faith, the calculated risk, and the reversal of an established precedent that are needed to achieve real progress. The resolution of difficult problems requires a willingness to take chances” (p. 303). The tension between the intricacy in substance and the informality in process has to be solved by extremely competent assistants who provide the necessary analysis in advance and the technical support on-site. Only then can advantage be taken of the “opportunity” of “spontaneity.” Given the complexity of the issues, this demand is quite towering. At a recent meeting about the L-20, Martin recalled that, in one of the free-flowing meetings among the G7 leaders, there was a moment that offered a breakthrough on trade negotiations, but unfortunately there was no technical expertise on-site to capture the moment.

In summary, the L-20 is a bold idea that has tremendous potential for breaking global deadlocks. At a time when innovation is the currency of the day, our existing global governance system should also be ready to accept novel ideas such as the L-20. That said, it is common knowledge in innovation studies that there is a long and rocky road from initial design to actual production for the market. Thus, proponents of the L-20 must be ready to address the challenges that lie ahead, some of which have been discussed in this commentary. A crucial test of the L-20 as an innovation in global governance will be whether it can select a global deadlock, galvanize the interests of relevant leaders around it, and generate practical solutions that would not be achievable otherwise.

Notes

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Business Power in Global Governance

DORIS FUCHS

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Fighting Terrorism
the FATF Way

Kathryn L. Gardner

An effective counterterrorist strategy must reflect the adaptive and transnational nature of terrorism. The challenge presented to lead organizations in the fight against terrorism is assessing threats and understanding terrorist group behavior with the goal to structure and implement an effective transnational response. The fight to capture and shut down terrorist financing requires coordination points, flexibility, and robust commitment by states. The importance of the structure of such a response is central to the question of state compliance. The success of the Financial Action Task Force makes it an ideal case study for effective measures in response to the particular challenges of funding of global terrorism. This article details how the FATF has become adaptive, facilitating transnational effectiveness in the fight to counterterrorist financing and compliance through globally recognized standards, peer review evaluations, and sanctions. KEYWORDS: compliance, international standards, money laundering, counterterrorist financing, counterterrorism.

The events of September 11, 2001—succeeded by attacks in Madrid, Bali, Casablanca, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, Chechnya, and London—have ushered in a new era of terrorism, manifest especially in the Al-Qaida network. Highlighting the changing nature of terrorism in the 1990s, scholars emphasize its global reach and adaptive nature. There are three key features to the contemporary terrorist threat. First, there is evidence of a more global character with a majority of the attacks being carried out by associated cells with roots in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Caucasus. Second, terrorist attacks have increased since September 11 and this “drastic increase in the terrorist threat has been a result of al Qaeda’s transformation from a group into a movement.” Lastly, there is significant evidence that Al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations have adapted their structure significantly.

The survival of any terrorist organization, but especially Al-Qaida, is rooted in its ability to adapt and create a support base for both logistical and financial resources. The strategic nature of terrorism and its adaptive qualities point to a need for an international counterterrorist organization with a similar modus operandi. A successful counterterrorist policy must be
proactive, assessing threats and understanding the structure in which terrorists operate and their adaptive capabilities, and responding with resources and flexibility to head off the next move.

In this context of a morphing transnational threat, an equally dynamic counterterrorist strategy is required. This has been apparent in the UN struggle to demand that states increase vigor and compliance. In Security Council Resolution 1617 of late July 2005, the Security Council posited that the standard-setting, coordination, and capacity-building efforts of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) constitute a model for crippling finances of terrorist groups. Since 2001, the world community has relied on the FATF as the lead institution of its anti-money laundering (AML) regime, laws, and enforcement measures in this fight to detect and counteract terrorist financing. The success of the FATF makes it an ideal case study for effective measures in response to the particular challenges of the funding of global terrorism.

Attacking Terrorism’s Money

The foundation of the FATF counterterrorist strategy has encountered three central challenges: real denial of assets, knowledge of terrorist threat, and robust state compliance. The goal of a counterterrorist policy, therefore, should be to constrain the environment to diminish, deny, and destroy terrorist capabilities, focusing not just on operational cells but also on the logistical and financial environment that enables its operations to continue. I will take each of these challenges in turn.

Real Denial of Assets

Existing political and financial networks are central to terrorist support and activities, thus demanding a counterterrorist strategy that dismantles the “enabling environment” of terrorism, with the real denial of assets rising to the top of the list of priorities. The events of September 11 increased the international community’s sensitivity to the central role of financing in international terrorist operations. Not surprisingly, the task to prevent a future terrorist attack has centered on disrupting terrorist financing; by “following the money,” state and international actors are able to dismantle terrorist networks. This task, however, remains daunting. Of the more than $2 trillion transferred by wire in 700,000 daily transactions, it is estimated that .05 to .1 percent is laundered, amounting to around $300 million. Sufficient money is laundered daily to fund 600 to 750 operations similar to the attacks conducted on September 11.
To examine the role that financing plays in the larger counterterrorist strategy, it is necessary to understand the political economy of terrorist financing. Financial tracking and freezing has served other goals beyond severing finances in the antiterrorism regime. The authors of a government report on terrorist financing argue that tracking Al-Qaida financing has proven to be effective in helping authorities locate terrorist operatives and supporters to disrupt their structure.\(^8\) By following the money, state and international actors are able to dismantle terrorist networks.

Money laundering, the process by which evidence of money’s illicit origins has been obscured or removed through multiple, layered transactions in the financial system, is conceptually and empirically tied to contemporary terrorist activity. The goal is to conceal the tainted ownership of the money and provide legitimacy for it. In each case, the problems have both domestic and transnational aspects. Similarly, law enforcement is indispensible, but is not itself a complete solution. Coordinating efforts across governments, across levels of government, across agencies, among disciplines, and across the public, private, and civic sectors is both highly important and very difficult.\(^9\)

Terrorism is unlike global crime in critical ways: the direction of the related financial transactions; the tolerance for failure; the motivations of the participants; and the scale of the activity to be suppressed.\(^10\) Terrorist financing generally involves financial flows that originate in legitimate activities to support illegitimate activities rather than the reverse, introducing a significant complication for authorities following the money.\(^11\) A leading terrorist expert notes that the “deep financial logic of terrorism, then, is to be found in the symbolic structures of philanthropy.”\(^12\) The emphasis must be on prevention; thus, the effort to block and seize funds is essential. The stakes are higher in combating terrorist financing; therefore, the goal is not to contain or reduce, but to eliminate. Moreover, traditional money laundering involves a profit motive while terrorist financing has noneconomic motives. A final distinction between the two activities is in their scale: traditional money launderers deal with large cash deposits while terrorists deal with a substantially lesser amount of money. This smaller scale makes detecting terrorist financing a more difficult task, leading to charges from skeptics that tracking money is a marginal strategy in countering terrorism. While the final figures of blocked and seized assets are certainly an indication of success, a UN report on sanctions to block Al-Qaida funds asserts:

The point isn’t grabbing dollars in bank accounts . . . it is destroying the financial infrastructure of terrorism. That means seizing money, but it also involves dismantling the channels of funding, deterring those who would give aid and support to terrorists, and following the leads to terrorist cells.\(^13\)
In spite of the differences between money laundering and terrorist financing, the similarities allow countries to utilize the same techniques and institutions developed nationally and internationally to detect money laundering to identify terrorist financing. Regime tools such as customer due diligence and suspicious transaction reports can be used as investigative devices to ascertain not only the origins of funds but their destinations. Moreover, international cooperation structures are in place for the exchange of information, blocking funds, and closing down channels used to transfer funds.

**Transnational Effectiveness**

Experts have called the evasive strategies used by terrorists as highly evolved and varied. To move funds, terrorists seek mechanisms that above all are nontransparent; sometimes they use legitimate systems with illicit commodities or illegitimate systems, such as trade-based money laundering. By accentuating the intricacies of tracking, seizing, and ultimately ceasing terrorist financing, a US General Accounting Office report highlights the transnational challenge. In particular, global networks such as Al-Qaeda, operating in autonomous networks in 60 to 100 locations worldwide, can "exploit their geographically diffuse structure to move the location of their operations if they are notified that authorities are pursuing their financing activities in a particular location." Fighting terrorism requires a global campaign.

Since terrorists prey upon the most financially underdeveloped states as well as utilizing the financial infrastructure of developed nations, fighting terrorist financing is intrinsically international in character. Because terrorist organizations are constantly adapting to the changing security environment, the key to defeating terrorist organizations is a transnational strategy. Audrey Cronin contends that "in an increasingly globalised international environment, the traditional state-centric means of responding to such a threat will not work and may even be counterproductive," and terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna emphasizes that it is "crucial to develop a truly multipronged strategy to fight the multidimensional character of violent Islamists."

**Robust Compliance**

One of the key features of the contemporary terrorist threat is its diffused, global character, with the majority of attacks being carried out by associated cells based in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Caucasus. With the shift of focus to developing regions, a counterterrorist strategy will only be as effective as its weakest link, and thus the strategy must be sensitive and responsive to regional and national particularities. Such a policy must
be geared toward increasing compliance and state capacity to comply. Compliance is a key issue for the fight against terrorism; noncompliance will spell ineffectiveness. And, as more states and international organizations are joining the fight, it is vital to have a unified purpose and approach.21

Understanding the factors that induce and condition compliance with counterterrorist principles is important to the effectiveness of the international effort. In the international system, states are central in the compliance process. In particular, compliance is a function of a state’s capacity. States with higher levels of development have more resources to yield and are able to establish more effective institutions. These institutions are then able to establish a comprehensive anti–money laundering/counterterrorist financing (AML/CTF) regime. A lack of effective state power is a window of vulnerability for the state, creating conditions in which violence and illegal activity, such as money laundering and terrorism, flourish. While weak states face difficulties in complying, some states, regardless of strength, are unwilling to comply. Intention to comply is the “foundation” for compliance and “there is no substitute for the engagement of self-interest.”22 Compliance is a meaningful choice made by rational actors. Thus, a country’s decision to comply with a counterterrorism regime reflects a judgment that the costs of violation outweigh the benefits. The structure of the regime as well as its contents are important in altering this cost/benefit calculation.

**Financial Action Task Force**

Having examined the three central challenges for a successful counterterrorist strategy, it is clear that the structure of such a response is crucial to compliance generation. I now turn to an assessment of the FATF with a particular eye toward structure in order to distill lessons for the international community in the fight to counter terrorist financing. The FATF was established at the G7 Summit at Paris in 1989 in response to increased concern over the threat posed to international and national financial systems by money laundering. Composed of sixteen industrialized states, the organization’s original task was to examine money laundering techniques and trends, review national and international actions that had already been taken, and identify what still needed to be done.

In April 1990, the FATF introduced its set of Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering, now recognized as the international standard in combating money laundering, which was revised in 1996 and 2003 to reflect changes in patterns of this criminal activity. After the events of September 11, 2001, the mandate expanded to include countering terrorist financing, encapsulated in the Eight Special Recommendations Against Terrorist Financing in January 2002. The recommendations were expanded in October
2004 to the Nine Special Recommendations Against Terrorist Financing, which added a call to interdict cross-border cash movements. The FATF model, the object of increasing international attention that has resulted in calls for both the global and regional replication, involves these AML/CTF standards as well as processes to ensure compliance by member states and nonmember states. The primary instruments by which the FATF monitors progress made by its member governments are the self-assessment and mutual evaluation processes while the Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCT) initiative monitors compliance by nonmember governments.

Currently, the FATF is a body composed of thirty-one member states and two international bodies. Although the membership is limited to thirty-three members of the international community, a high percentage of the world’s financial activity is located in their financial markets. Over the past eighteen years, FATF expansion has included only seventeen new members that have been identified as strategically important. What is more, the FATF’s reach expands beyond its member states and observer organizations to regional bodies.

The Forty Recommendations and the Expanded Mandate

The FATF’s Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering, designed to prevent proceeds of crime from being utilized in future criminal activities, have been widely acknowledged as the international standards. The Forty Recommendations are intended to set out a comprehensive AML framework and universal application. Even though these recommendations are not manifested in a binding international commitment by the international community, a majority of the countries in the world have made a political commitment to implement them.

The Forty Recommendations cover criminal law, state regulations, and interstate cooperation. The cornerstone of the FATF strategy is the “know your customer” approach. This includes eliminating anonymous accounts, identifying all customers, maintaining records of transaction for at least five years, making all records available to legal authorities upon request, and notifying appropriate authorities if unusual or suspicious transactions have transpired. Additionally, the FATF recommends that states criminalize money laundering and extend the requisite predicate act beyond drug-related crimes to other serious crimes as well as lower the threshold to include negligence and willful blindness. The FATF advises the state to grant authorities the legal power to identify, trace, and confiscate laundered money. To increase interstate cooperation, the FATF recommends that nations monitor and keep records of cross-border flows and make such information available to central banks and multilateral financial institutions. Countries should
also share information with the relevant legal authorities in other countries for the purpose of prosecuting money launderers.

By expanding its mandate to include specific measures against terrorist financing in its Eight Special Recommendations Against Terrorist Financing, the FATF responded to governments’ calls to establish a coordinated effort to detect and prevent the misuse of the international financial system by terrorists. Since January 2002, the FATF has worked to identify weaknesses in worldwide efforts to combat the financing of terrorism and set the standard to fight terrorist financing with additional recommendations and interpretive notes. Beyond acting as a guide, the FATF has actively worked to identify countries with priority technical assistance needs in implementing measures to combat the financing of terrorism.

The current Nine Special Recommendations are intended for universal application and, accordingly, the FATF has called on all states to adopt and implement the measures. These recommendations include making the act of money laundering and financing terrorism a crime; giving investigative agencies the authority to trace, seize, and confiscate criminally derived assets; building the framework to share relevant information cross-nationally; extending anti-money laundering requirements to alternative remittance systems; and ensuring that nonprofit organizations cannot be misused to finance terrorism. As was done for the Forty Recommendations, the FATF established a methodology for assessing compliance with the additional recommendations and focused on developing best practices concerning several recommendations, such as the freezing of terrorist assets, alternative remittance systems, and the development of more specific guidelines for the supervision of nonprofit organizations.

Although the organization is composed of thirty-three members, a majority of states have accepted the Forty Recommendations and the Nine Special Recommendations Against Terrorist Financing. These principles function as coordination points for states to combine their AML/CTF fight. Their function as coordination points is illustrated in UN Security Council Resolution 1373. Many of the recommendations of the FATF are similar to measures required by Resolution 1373 and the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) that the resolution established. The similarities in directives imply that the compliance with FATF measures also affects compliance with Resolution 1373 and CTC standards.

In its initial years, the FATF’s recommendations were purposively imprecise to allow for wide interpretation in order to accommodate different legal systems and institutional environments. As the organization has learned more about the nature and practice of money laundering as well as what measures work, the nonbinding norms have become increasingly more precise, enhancing both the legitimacy of the norms and the organization.
In particular, the organization issues Special Interpretative Notes and Best Practices to the recommendations in order to clarify certain provisions and facilitate greater compliance. This increased precision narrows the scope for reasonable interpretation, detailing conditions of application and elaborating required or proscribed behavior.\textsuperscript{25}

The organization also conducts typology exercises that identify emerging trends in money laundering and terrorist financing to continually assess the relevance of the recommendations. These exercises seek to identify terrorist groups’ efforts to adapt and recommend action to limit terrorist groups’ ability to learn or undermine their learning efforts. Terrorist organizations must change and, in order to adapt effectively, they must learn.\textsuperscript{26} Survival requires structural and technical adaptation to the emerging regulatory and security environment. A counterterrorist strategy must adapt as well with success resting on an ability to anticipate how terrorist groups will evolve over time. These typology exercises reflect the organization’s persistent effort to combat terrorism by “[changing] the environment of the terrorist group, making its current knowledge and capabilities obsolete.”\textsuperscript{27}

Organizational Mechanisms to Assess and Ensure Compliance: Self-Reporting, Mutual Review, and NCCT Processes

Establishing international standards is only the first step toward denying terrorists and criminals access to the international financial system. The FATF is equally concerned with consistent implementation of these standards throughout the international community. If standards are applied without uniformity or appropriate rigor, terrorists and criminals will enter the international financial system at the vulnerable seams: the countries of least resistance. The FATF has developed three specific processes to assess the adherence of countries with the Forty Recommendations: the self-assessment process, the mutual evaluation process, and the NCCT process. Self-assessment reports and the peer review process increase transparency and compel states to comply. Each state is expected to submit a report detailing its actions to implement the Forty Recommendations. Then, the state consents to an evaluation process by a peer government to assess this report and the state’s overall progress. For nonmember states, the FATF has employed a “naming and shaming” initiative making public a list of NCCTs. Monitoring and assessment are the key to FATF’s success, providing clearly defined standards, identifying gaps between reality and standards, and providing regular and detailed feedback.

As a condition of membership, FATF members participate in the first two processes, the annual self-reporting exercises and mutual evaluations. These processes scrutinize progress by objectively assessing all countries against the Forty Recommendations, identifying deficiencies in compliance
responses, and ensuring appropriate consequences for countries and institutions that fail to take reasonable steps to implement standards. In the self-assessment exercise, member countries provide information on the status of their implementation of the Forty Recommendations and Nine Special Recommendations through a standard questionnaire. The organization then compiles and analyzes the information, which is subsequently detailed in the Annual Report.

Mutual evaluations are the cornerstone of the assessment process. During this process, a team of three or four selected experts from the legal, financial, and law enforcement fields of FATF member states assesses each member country during an on-site visit and issues a report based on its examination. The purpose of the report is to provide a “comprehensive and objective assessment” and “to highlight those areas in which further progress may still be required.” The incentives and capacities that relevant states have to provide regime-relevant information increase in peer reporting and, thus, increase the overall effectiveness of the reporting system. Peer review is used not only as a method to highlight the particular deficiencies and merits of a state’s compliance situation, but as a method to build capacity through the identification of areas in need of technical assistance.

A last measure in place is graduated peer pressure on noncomplying members. When a member country is deemed to be out of compliance, the FATF initiates a four-step countermeasure program. The first step requires the noncompliant country to deliver a report to the FATF plenary meeting. If further measures are required, the FATF president will then send a letter or a high-level mission to the country. Thirdly, the FATF can issue a statement requiring financial institutions to pay special attention to business transactions from the particular country, its citizens, and its businesses. The final countermeasure is revoking membership status. The last two measures are sanctions. In particular, the third measure constitutes a heavy sanction with many consequences to the designated state. Although nominally requiring increased “scrutiny” of financial transactions, essentially this third measure restricts the access of the state, its financial institutions, and its citizens to the international market (or at least the percentage controlled by FATF member states) through higher barriers to entry. However, this does not entail binding obligations to member states, allowing for a more flexible response.

The NCCT Initiative

In addition to the steps taken against member states, the FATF has a separate process for nonmember states deemed noncooperative by the regime’s standards. FATF is engaged in a major initiative to identify noncooperative countries and territories in the fight against money laundering. This NCCT
initiative began in 2000. Every year (and, in recent years, biannually), the
FATF releases a list of noncooperative countries and territories that have
“serious systemic problems,” a device known as “naming and shaming.”
The NCCT process is intended to point to serious flaws in a country’s AML
system and can subject these countries to countermeasures, such as in-
creased scrutiny by financial institutions. In addition, the NCCT list is used
to demand that financial institutions increase scrutiny to transactions with
persons, businesses, or banks in listed countries or territories with what the
FATF has deemed “inadequate anti-money laundering and counterterrorist
financing infrastructure.”30 Specifically, this has meant the development of
a process to identify critical weaknesses in AML systems that serve as
obstacles to international cooperation in this area. The goal of the process
is to reduce the vulnerability of financial systems by distinguishing those
states that reject making any effort to comply with international standards
to adopt and implement sufficient measures for the prevention, detection,
and punishment of money laundering and those that “accept or can be per-
suaded to accept such responsibility.”31 To this effect, the FATF has a series
of countermeasures in place that have been enacted against NCCTs rang-
ing from requiring member states to be extra vigilant of NCCT transactions
to prohibiting financial transactions with NCCTs.

The informality of the NCCT review process has allowed for a more
flexible and agile response. While the document requires the organization
to conduct annual reviews and to publish the results every June, in practice
countries have been added to the list and removed from the list in between
June assessments. Moreover, there is no specific criterion that is considered
litmus test of a particular jurisdiction’s level of cooperation. Rather, each
jurisdiction is judged by the “overall, total effect of its laws and pro-
grammes in preventing abuse of the financial sector or impeding efforts of
foreign judicial and administrative authorities.”32

Due to a lack of defined procedure, the rules do not address the process
for determining which countries to assess next or how to be released from
the list. The character and size of the financial centers are key decision fac-
tors, although what this exactly means is not detailed in the document.
Assessments probe the presence or absence of a particular criterion being
measured. The evaluations inspect four broad areas: loopholes in financial
regulations, obstacles raised by other regulatory measures, obstacles to in-
ternational cooperation, and inadequate resources for preventing and detect-
ing money laundering. For increased transparency, the committee urged that
the required actions to be taken for removal from the list should be clearly
spelled out for each jurisdiction.

If a jurisdiction fails to remedy its deficiencies, FATF member states
undertake their obligations under Recommendation 21, requiring institu-
tions to secure identification of customers whose financial transactions
originated or passed through a NCCT. The goal is to make it difficult for individuals and entities established in the NCCT to enter the FATF system. While collective action is preferable for the imposition of countermeasures, states are given the choice whether or not to enact countermeasures.

Due to the pressure generated by the NCCT process, many of the countries on the list have enacted most of the necessary legislation and have moved to the implementation stage of the process and been subsequently delisted. However, some scholars point to the lack of uniform application in the NCCT process and question whether the AML regime is properly implemented and robustly updated after removal of a jurisdiction from the list. Throughout the initiative’s tenure, only two countries, which have relatively small financial sectors and modest international linkages, have been sanctioned through Recommendation 21. In December 2001, the FATF imposed a financial quarantine against Nauru, a country on the NCCT list that had failed to adequately place money laundering controls on its large offshore financial sector, and applied similar countermeasures against Myanmar in November 2003. As an indication of progress, the organization revoked the countermeasures against Nauru and Myanmar, although the countries remained on the NCCT list until October 2005 and October 2006, respectively.

Once the FATF has identified a country with serious systematic problems, it offers technical assistance to aid the country’s efforts to comply with the Forty Recommendations and the Nine Special Recommendations. The FATF utilizes international carrots in the form of positive inducements by partnering with international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and Counter-Terrorism Action Group (CTAG), to assess the needs of countries for technical assistance in complying with the Nine Special Recommendations and match these needs with the donor community. Overall, more than 85 percent of those countries with initial deficiencies have responded by bringing their regimes into better alignment.

Accomplishments of the FATF

The level of compliance within the organization is a crucial litmus test in the assessment of the call for a global FATF-style body. The organization’s annual reports show that compliance within the organization is not absolute. It is not merely a matter that countries are entirely compliant or non-compliant; in most cases, a country is not in compliance with particular measures. In the FATF methodology report on compliance, four scale categories of compliance have been identified: compliant, largely compliant, materially noncompliant, and noncompliant. There are three main criteria that deal with the nature of the deficiency and the response to it. The first
criterion concerns the nature of the deficiency, identifying whether the deficiency is discrete or not, or, alternatively, whether it is systematic or not. Secondly, the FATF distinguishes the existence of a response. The final criterion assesses the quality of the response, namely, whether the response correctly addresses the problem and whether the time period to address the shortcoming is reasonable.\textsuperscript{36} A key weakness in this typology is the lack of precision in definitions; however, this lack of precision simultaneously gives the organization flexibility and variability in response.

The self-assessment and mutual evaluation processes indicate that, while member states have a higher level of compliance than nonmember states, the organization still encounters noncompliance with specific recommendations. While the FATF experiences exemplary progress in compliance toward the Forty Recommendations, one can only draw a preliminary evaluation on the level of compliance with the Nine Special Recommendations. An overarching observation is that several of the Nine Special Recommendations suffer significant levels of noncompliance. For instance, SR I, calling on members to ratify the appropriate UN instruments against terrorist financing, and SR VII, calling on members to monitor wire transfers, register levels of noncompliance of almost half the FATF member states while only two jurisdictions, France and Italy, are approved by the organization as being in full compliance with all provisions (see Table 1).\textsuperscript{37} Importantly, the assessment covers only seven of the nine recommendations. A glaring omission in the monitoring compliance concerns SR VIII, covering provisions to regulate nonprofit organizations in which the organization is still considering “appropriate assessment criteria.”\textsuperscript{38}

Tables 2 and 3 document the incidence of noncompliance of FATF member countries with specific provisions. Table 4 specifies each country’s record in 2002–2003 for the Forty Recommendations.

Assessing the organization’s overall success is problematic. First, it is difficult to determine whether states are complying with provisions because of their membership in the FATF. It could be plausible that FATF members may have external motivations for complying with FATF standards.\textsuperscript{39} Second, the organization does not prioritize principles or establish relative weight to recommendations or a clear definition of overall “compliance.” This ambiguity and open-endedness can limit efforts to secure compliance because the member states may be unsure of required action or unwilling to move beyond the minimum. A related difficulty rests in how the organization measures compliance. As is clear through its evaluation process, the measure of compliance is the extent to which national rules reflect FATF recommendations. However, this measure does not address the prosecutorial or punitive rates within the country, a tougher criterion.\textsuperscript{40} One expert argues there is an “intelligence-evidence gap” on this front, with little effort expended beyond freezing bank accounts.\textsuperscript{41}
Utilized in the NCCT process and more generally through publicized annual reports, the sanction of “naming and shaming” coupled with technical assistance have proven useful to induce compliance by member states and nonmember states alike. Since the introduction of the list in June 2000, 

### Table 1 FATF Member States Not Compliant with Special Recommendations to Combat Terrorism

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Recommendation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>SR II</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR V</td>
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</tr>
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<td>SR VI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR VII</td>
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### Table 2 FATF Member States Not Compliant with Forty Recommendations

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<td>SR VIII</td>
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<td>SR X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR XII</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR XIV</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR XV</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>SR XXVI</td>
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<td>SR XXXVIII</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

twenty-three states or jurisdictions have been labeled noncooperative by the FATF. As of October 2006, all identified NCCTs had been removed from the list. Additionally, increased international scrutiny of Saudi Arabia, targeted in many US reports as the epicenter of Al-Qaida financing, led the regime to submit its financial system to FATF inspection.

Although it is widely recognized that the NCCT initiative has been successful in eliciting a positive response from most named countries, the future effectiveness of the program is questionable. First, and significant after 9/11, the list does not evaluate compliance with the Nine Special Recommendations, pointing to a serious disjuncture between the NCCT process and updated Recommendations. It also appears that the program’s energy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Full Compliance</th>
<th>Partial Compliance</th>
<th>Not Compliant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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has decreased since September 2001. While in an era of increased attention to combating the financing of terrorism, the FATF has named only two countries to the NCCT list. Speculation as to the reason for this decreased energy includes decreased attention from the United States. It is acknowledged that the United States was a driving force behind the FATF. Due to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, US policy toward terrorist financing has been diffused through several departments, inadvertently affecting the FATF. Another indicator that the NCCT initiative will be less effective in the future is the movement of the program to the purview of the IMF and World Bank. IMF and World Bank officials have expressed their desire to focus on capacity building rather than “naming and shaming.”

Table 4 Record of Individual FATF Member States on Twenty-Eight Recommendations for Money Laundering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Full Compliance</th>
<th>Partial Compliance</th>
<th>Not Compliant</th>
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</thead>
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</table>

Therefore, the key component of this initiative, the public sanctioning by "naming and shaming," will not be utilized by these organizations.

**Structuring a Transnational Response**

The acknowledged success of the FATF in the fight against money laundering has led many within the international community to call for a "global FATF." In light of the success of the FATF, there is a strong push to design a regime to counter terrorist financing after the organization. Because money laundering and terrorist financing are similar, the response needed to counter terrorist financing can draw from the FATF experience.

Tasked with fighting terrorist financing, the FATF faces a situation in which the contours of this fight, while undeniably global in scope, differ in regional context. Although not universal, the FATF’s reach expands beyond its member states and observer organizations to regional bodies. Over 100 countries throughout the world are members of FATF-style regional bodies (FSRBs). Currently, there are nine FSRBs covering Europe, Eurasia, Asia/Pacific, Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Middle East and North Africa, South America, the Caribbean, and a non-regional body of Offshore Group of Banking Supervisors. FSRBs are tasked specifically to act as standard-setting bodies in the regional context, ensuring the adoption, implementation, and enforcement of the Forty Recommendations and Nine Special Recommendations. FSRBs strengthen the work of the FATF by participating as observers at all FATF meetings, assessing their members against the FATF standards, creating regionally specific standards, and, in many cases, participating in an IMF/World Bank assessment program.

FSRBs play an important role in the reach of the AML/CTF standards in two ways. First, FSRBs expand the FATF’s geographic scope beyond Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development member countries, a crucial tool in the global fight. Second, regional bodies allow the organization to focus on specific regional needs and capacities. Many of the nations that have been placed on the NCCT list are developing countries. In developing regions, the international community faces large problems of weak regulatory oversight and substantial use of alternative remittance systems. One cannot simply graft a US- or European-based regulatory structure on foreign financial markets. Regional bodies are able to address regional characteristics through additional standards and targeted financial assistance.

The establishment of the two most recent FSRBs in Eurasia (EAG) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENAFATF) in late 2004 enhances the reach of the FATF in crucial geostategic regions. Member states agree “to work together to identify money laundering and terrorist financing issues of a regional nature, to share experiences of these problems and to develop
regional solutions for dealing with them” and “to build effective arrangements throughout the region to combat effectively money laundering and terrorist financing in accordance with the particular cultural values, constitutional framework and legal systems in the member countries.” The structural problems of weak financial regulations of the Islamic banking system and the underground hawala system rise to the forefront of key regional problems.

The advantages of the regional organization stem from its familiarity and proximity to the countries. Regional organizations provide a regular forum that is essential for forming working relationships among governments and actors at multiple levels. In addition to adopting and implementing regional standards and targeted financial assistance, regional organizations can provide an auspicious environment for the persuasion mechanism to work in the mutual evaluation process. Neighbors are more likely to have a vested interest and can yield greater leverage at times due to their proximity and ability to embed the issue in a wider regional context. Apart from their geographic reach, the reach and influence of regional organizations depend foremost on their mandates and, secondly, on the resources at their disposal. It is crucial to realize that not all regional organizations are created alike. Regional organizations must be equipped to handle the tasks set out for them. The budgets of FSRBs are smaller than the FATF and, at times, grossly inadequate for the activities to be undertaken. Thus, the organization is only as strong as its member states’ commitment and willingness to fund its institutions.

Conclusion

An effective counterterrorist strategy must reflect the adaptive and transnational nature of the terrorism it confronts. This article describes how the FATF is adaptive, facilitating transnational effectiveness in the fight to counter terrorist financing and to ensure compliance with globally recognized standards. The organization has endeavored to adapt its structure to meet the demands of the financial system and the transnational terrorist threat, providing leadership in the international community to establish standards against terrorist financing in the Nine Special Recommendations, developing Best Practices, and conducting typology exercises. This has led scholars to call upon the United States to garner the success of the organization and push for its replication in developing regions. A report issued by an independent task force of the Council on Foreign Relations recommended that the FATF be empowered to “lead international efforts not only to articulate international standards relating to anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing (AML/CTF), but also to monitor and assess implementation and compliance with those standards.”
While the FATF is an interesting organizational structure that has attempted to adapt to a post-9/11 terrorism context, it is a model that encounters difficulty in this alteration. The UN Security Council’s call to adopt and implement the FATF standards in Security Council Resolution 1617 demands an international, uniform assessment process. In collaboration with the IMF and World Bank, the FATF established a common methodology in 2004 to assess the level of implementation of AML/CTF measures, providing a foundation with which these international organizations can assess needs and supply necessary assistance. The collaboration with the IMF and World Bank, two organizations with near-universal membership, introduces a crucial global component to the organization through increased peer pressure, transparency, and accountability. This focus on a more universal organization, however, must be tempered against diluting the organizational mandate and weighed against geographic balance and organizational efficiency.

Political and financial support networks are fundamental to terrorist activities, thus demanding a counterterrorist strategy that dismantles the “enabling environment” of terrorism with the real denial of assets rising to the top of the list of priorities: to do so, one has to “look at its finances and more at the informal economy of popular support.”46 A particularly demanding challenge involves the role of charity in the developing world. One of MENAFATF’s first tasks must include a regional standard for regulating Islamic charities in the Middle East, acknowledged as the heart of Al-Qaida’s financial structure.47 Numerous reports have specifically stressed the problem of Islamic charities in Saudi Arabia, a member of MENAFATF.48 Thus, Islamic charities designated by the United States and the United Nations as supporting terrorism have maintained activity in Saudi Arabia. One example is the al Haramain Islamic Foundation, a charity that Saudi Arabia pledged to close; however, as one expert noted, there is little evidence that it has done so.49

Because money laundering and terrorist financing are similar, the response needed to counter terrorist financing can draw from the FATF experience. The strength of the FATF is largely a result of its organizational structure, providing coordination points, flexibility of response, and robust monitoring of compliance in the fight to deny assets, promote transnational effectiveness, and increase state compliance. The FATF provides coordination points for states to harmonize legislation and enforcement efforts through its increasingly precise recommendations; provides flexibility in response to new threats through its updated recommendations and typology exercises; and increases the credibility of a state’s commitment through its mutual evaluation process, graduated peer pressure on noncomplying members, and NCCT process for nonmembers. The fight to counter terrorist financing requires similar coordination points, flexibility, and commitment. A crucial problem is in the political and financial systems abroad—a problem that cannot merely be
addressed by the United States—but necessitates a global effort responsive to regional and local differences to address the inadequacies in regulatory and enforcement measures that are serious impediments. By targeting financial resources, counterterrorist policies have great potential to be realized in the struggle against global terrorism.50

Notes

Kathryn L. Gardner is a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. She is grateful for helpful comments from George Lopez, David Cortright, and three anonymous reviewers.


15. Ibid.
18. Cronin, “Rethinking Sovereignty,” p. 120.
23. The member countries are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Additionally, the European Commission and the Gulf Cooperation Council are members of the FATF.
34. See Reuter and Truman, Chasing Dirty Money, pp. 182–183.
39. It could be that smooth functioning of the financial sector requires states to implement FATF standards regardless of their membership in the FATF, which could render such a membership nominal.
42. In June 2000, the initial FATF NCCT list included 15 jurisdictions: the Bahamas, Dominica, Israel, Lebanon, Marshall Islands, Niue, Russia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Cayman Islands, Liechtenstein, Panama, Cook Islands, the Philippines, and Nauru. Over the course of the list, Burma, Egypt, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Nigeria, Grenada, and Ukraine were added.
49. Comras, “Following Terrorists’ Money.”
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The Nodal Structure of International Police Cooperation: An Exploration of Transnational Security Networks

Nadia Gerspacher and Benoît Dupont

Facing sophisticated, resistant, and highly motivated terrorist and transnational crime threats and numerous difficulties inherent in countermeasures, law enforcement and security providers have shifted from a bureaucratic and hierarchical approach toward a networking morphology. This trend more adequately equalizes the capacities of law enforcement authorities to combat fluid and flexible criminal networks. This article highlights new cooperation mechanisms that are being added to the existing instruments available to law enforcement agencies. The emphasis is on the role of informal initiatives by members of the law enforcement community. Based on the generally accepted assumption that state-driven initiatives generally constrain the level of contributions that formal international agreements can provide, we suggest that the staff of international organizations alter the environment in which law enforcement agencies must collaborate. This will enable the organizations to act as informal entrepreneurs that thrive in building the capacity of states to enhance their participation rates in international systems of information exchange and joint strategy development. KEYWORDS: international cooperation, international policing, networks, international security, entrepreneurship.

The concept of human security outlined in the Millennium Declaration formally recognizes, for the first time, the limitations of the Westphalian order, which established a clear line between external state security and internal public safety. One of the greatest threats to human security has been the rise of transnational criminal organizations that exploit the opportunities created by a global economy, weak and failing states that cannot properly enforce the rule of law, and a strong worldwide demand for illicit goods and services. Even if the scope of the underground economy is subject to debate, no one questions the destructive impact of these activities on human security.

While such criminal organizations are not new, as the long histories of the Yakuza in Japan, the Mafia in Sicily and the United States, and the Triads in...
China attest, the end of the Cold War and the fragmentation of power it created in many parts of the world, combined with the technological revolution that affects every facet of human activity, paved the way for the emergence of a new social morphology—the network—that was embraced by these fluid and adaptable criminal organizations. Networks are usually presented as an alternative to hierarchies and markets because they are more flexible and adaptable than hierarchies, and more coordinated than markets. The damage that the Al-Qa'ida terrorist network inflicted on police and intelligence hierarchies and on the US market economy has often been used to illustrate the superiority of networks over other social organizing forces. Many authors have emphasized the competitive edge that networks give organized crime syndicates and terrorist groups.

Criminal and terrorist networks are able to use the trust between their members to decrease formal bureaucratic processes and structures, thereby making it easier to escape detection by security organizations. The adaptability, redundancy, and decentralized nature of networks make them very resistant to enforcement efforts: removal of some members or even one layer of the network will temporarily hinder, but not compromise, the operational capabilities of the whole network. The versatility of networks also allows them to exploit new opportunities quickly and at little cost, which is very different from slower moving police agencies whose bureaucracies are not as responsive. Finally, criminal networks are “boundary spanners”: they transcend borders and override territorial sovereignties, threatening the stability of governments and the security of their citizens. The purpose of this article is not to provide an additional contribution to the burgeoning literature in this area, but to show the ripple effects of the trend toward the use of networks in criminal organizations. Particular attention will be given to how network morphology is also becoming part of law enforcement and security organizations, a change that is seen by a growing number of researchers and practitioners as the only viable way to fight transnational organized crime and terrorism.

The benefits of networks are not restricted to the underground world of organized crime. Multinational corporations and local organizations for economic development are also moving toward this new form of governance. Scholars studying organized crime and counterterrorism have often noted the need for a flattening of hierarchies and the creation of security networks that can match the capabilities of their illicit opponents, preferably through technology such as interconnected databases and data mining of dispersed information or the creation of new structures that facilitate the sharing and pooling of scarce resources, thereby avoiding duplication of efforts. This suggestion is not made without caveats: there have been attempts to establish international security networks, but these have rarely been acknowledged, due to their lack
of success. This suggests that effective implementation, not awareness, is the problem. For example, the paradigm shift from hierarchies to networks implies a redistribution of power among the organizations involved and is likely to generate fierce resistance from those who believe such changes would lead to their being shortchanged. The issue of scale is also important. Illegal networks are usually small and can rely on shared ethnic or religious roots to maintain their cohesiveness while security networks bring together thousands of individuals with various values. Larger networks also raise the issue of multiplication of technologies, procedures, and practices. It is not yet clear if the competitive advantage of networks can be sustained after they reach a certain size.

This article examines the interrelational dynamics of transnational security networks and their members and the entrepreneurial initiatives that contribute to shaping their identity and roles as well as their influence on existing and new security mechanisms. Can security networks live up to their promises in the fight against transnational crime and the provision of human security? In the first section, we discuss the historical and conceptual framework, showing that security networks have emerged and dissolved over the past two hundred years. We also provide an exploratory typology of security networks and their members that illustrates the plurality and diversity of actors and interests involved. In a second section, we focus on a case study of the two main international organizations in the field of police cooperation, both of which are members of broader security networks and can be construed as networks unto themselves.

**Methodology**

Between 2001 and 2005, we conducted two dozen interviews with officials directly involved in international police cooperation, particularly as it pertains to participation in Europol and Interpol, the two formal international police cooperative organizations. Interpol was created from the bottom up by national police agencies confronted by problems that called for cooperation. Europol was developed as the result of political commitments to encourage multilateral collaboration in the fight against transnational crime. Although these historical differences in their development should be noted, their current structures, missions, and raison d'être are strikingly similar, especially with regard to their contribution to the multilateral fight against transnational crime. Data gathered during these interviews revealed the nature of internetwork relations and the entrepreneurial initiatives of the actors involved. These face-to-face meetings gave us insight into the strategies used by various actors to retain control over the resources deployed by
these networks or to ensure that the actions of the various actors, who often have diverging interests, do not affect agendas and priorities. The authorization for and provision of human security is the result of such constant adjustments.

The arguments made in this article reflect our analysis of the interviews we conducted. While we have not quoted directly from these interviews, due to the space it would take, they were important in helping us identify the relational dynamics between the different levels of actors, their diverging interests, and the mechanisms that each attempts to put in place in order to encourage organized police cooperation and contribute to the establishment of effective and efficient international security networks.

Transnational Security Networks: Historical Continuity and Conceptual Complexity

The trend toward the internationalization of terrorism and organized crime preceded the technological revolution of the past decades by a few centuries. In response, police organizations have attempted to initiate transborder information exchange and cooperation mechanisms, albeit with mixed success. For a number of years, the entrepreneurial private security sector provided an effective alternative to public security systems, as we will see in the first part of this section. In the second part, we will describe a conceptual framework for understanding security networks that makes it possible to account for the complexity of current international police cooperation efforts.

Precursor Security Networks

The first known attempt at police cooperation was the Police Union of German States, established in 1851 under the leadership of the president of the Berlin Police, Karl Ludwig Friedrich von Hinckeldey. The flurry of revolutionary activity that threatened to engulf Europe at this period led the police forces of the German Confederation to pool their “high policing” resources and set up an information-sharing system based on annual meetings at which the activities of German, French, Italian, Polish, or Hungarian political dissidents were discussed. Liaison officers representing the Union were also posted in London, New York, Paris, and Brussels. However, no formal ties were established with local police organizations, who greatly resented this intrusion into the political life of their countries. In 1852, the Austrian police began to publish a bimonthly information bulletin on wanted persons and their modus operandi that was distributed to all other European police forces (except Russia and Italy), which
duly sent their own periodical bulletins to Vienna. Beyond the borders of Germany, however, this information sharing seemed motivated less by a well-defined strategy than by a polite and inexpensive gesture of reciprocation. And it is hard to see that the Vienna police would have had much use for French bulletins containing detailed information on petty criminals who were unlikely to pose a threat to the Austro-Hungarian regime.

The Police Union was designed and promoted by police bureaucrats who found the political process of international treaty making too slow and constraining. Other initiatives to improve collaboration between European police forces followed a similar pattern at the beginning of the twentieth century, developing either in response to assassinations by anarchist groups or to address organized crime activities such as white slavery. However, not all of these attempts were successful and it was not until 1923 and the creation of the International Criminal Police Commission—which would ultimately become Interpol—that permanent channels of information exchange were developed. Mathieu Deflem, in his analysis of those early attempts at police cooperation, describes the emergence of professional or bureaucratic police networks that were sufficiently autonomous from the political sphere despite tremendous external constraints to be able to bypass the slower and less-coordinated national and international legal systems. These networks became permanent international organizations once the focus on general human security, which transcends political boundaries, became more important than the focus on maintaining the political security of continental regimes.

One important feature of these early networks was that private actors were involved with them from the beginning. Moral leagues and other organizations, such as the British National Vigilance Association, were instrumental in pressuring police forces and governments for a more coordinated response to prostitution and its health hazards. Well-known security entrepreneurs also exploited the opportunity they saw in the institutional fragmentation of police systems by offering to serve as informal brokers or facilitators. The Pinkerton Agency, with branches in more than twenty American cities, took on that role and set up and maintained the first national criminal record system in the United States well before the creation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Pinkerton's New York office maintained regular contact with the London, Paris, and Berlin police forces and did not hesitate to send detectives all over the world in pursuit of notorious criminals, a strategy that generated a great deal of free publicity. The strength of Pinkerton's local policing network, coupled with its international ties, made the company the sole "national police force" in the United States in the eyes of many foreign governments and police organizations. During the years before the emergence of national and international law enforcement bureaucracies, the private sector, free from political and
legal constraints, provided an alternative that allowed information exchange and filled in gaps in institutional cooperation.

The purpose of this article is not, however, to trace the history of security networks. Instead, we focus on how police bureaucrats and their private counterparts (who were often pursuing a second career after spending time in the area of public policing) realized the strategic necessity of establishing cooperation mechanisms and maintaining informal ties with colleagues abroad in the face of threats that were as dangerous as those currently posed by Al-Qaida and its offshoots.

**What Do Current Security Networks Look Like?**

The concept of the security network is a conceptual tool that helps us understand certain individual agents or nodes that are interconnected in order to authorize or provide security to the benefit of internal or external stakeholders. As Manuel Castells has discussed, networks are not structurally homogenous: they are comprised of institutions and internal segments of institutions. Structural networks differ from interpersonal networks, an aspect of social life that has been the object of extensive research in the fields of sociology, geography, political science, and anthropology. Security networks are closely connected to hierarchies and markets, the two other dominant forms of organization, and these connections often lead to diminished effectiveness and efficiency. The complexity of security networks varies greatly from one setting to another and only certain nodes can fully exploit the opportunities offered by this new form of governance. Police agencies use networks to distribute responsibilities, resources, and risk more evenly and with an effectiveness and efficiency that cannot be matched by vertical command-and-control structures due to the flexibility of networks and their reliance on trust rather than procedures.

Contemporary security networks come in all sizes and shapes from local partnerships that seek to prevent and deter criminal conduct, to national institutional police organizations that pool their resources in the areas of training, intelligence, or order maintenance, to the web of national law enforcement agencies that work to combat transnational crime. Most of these networks rely on the timely dissemination of information through technological networks. Our focus in this article is on transnational networks, but it is important to recognize that numerous links exist between global and local networks, and that these networks are more closely connected than our presentation may suggest.

International security networks are composed of four main groups of actors: (1) international actors, professionals whose duty is to facilitate interstate cooperation; (2) national policymaking actors, who establish and direct the provision of security at the local and international levels; (3) subnational
police actors, who are the enforcement arm of the state;\textsuperscript{20} and (4) private security companies that replace state institutions in the provision of certain security services and also protect corporations on behalf of transnational business interests, particularly in politically unstable environments. The network concept is particularly useful in the context of international police cooperation because it emphasizes the multiple interests involved and the resulting competition between the various actors,\textsuperscript{21} as well as the highly interdependent and contingent nature of international policing. In order to illustrate this point, we consider a case study of the two international security networks that are involved in the activities of the two most formal and widely recognized international police cooperation organizations, Interpol and Europol. In the nodal structure outlined above, Interpol and Europol are international actors. The governments that have signed the treaties and conventions that regulate and fund their activities are national actors while the police services that provide their human and informational resources are subnational actors.

Beyond the Rhetoric of Cooperation

The multilayered set of actors involved in international police cooperation creates a conflict-ridden environment. Although the stated interest of all the actors involved is to work together and pool resources to fight transnational crime, the specific interests of the various actors differ greatly, which helps explain the slow rate of participation by member states and their police services in international frameworks for cooperation. There is an inherent paradox in these complex webs of interactions: despite the fact that Europol was created by agreement between various countries and Interpol developed as an adaptation of existing international forums for police cooperation, many of the legal, logistical, and technical limitations that these international actors encounter are due to restrictions designed by states in order to maintain state supremacy in matters related to law and order. Subnational actors, including police services and other law enforcement officials (e.g., customs, immigration), could not exist without states: Whose rule of law would they enforce? States, however, rely on both international and subnational actors in order to counter transnational crime. This necessary, but uneasy, interdependence between these three sets of actors creates strains that often inhibit collaboration.

When states created international organizations (IOs), they delegated tasks in an effort to compensate for the insufficiencies of unilateralism. The IOs, however, were expected to respect state supremacy and sovereignty in carrying out their mandated tasks. State actors (national governments) created IOs (Interpol in 1941, Europol in 1999) to promote the exchange of
information collected by national police services with foreign colleagues. In fact, the contractual agreements that set up Interpol and Europol stipulate that these organizations are intended to serve as clearinghouses or collection points where analyses will be made and then sent back to member governments.

Each type of actor has official roles in the context of international police cooperation. International actors (Interpol and Europol, among others) are intended to facilitate international cooperation by collecting, analyzing, and diffusing finished intelligence (which is derived from compilation and analysis of voluntarily shared intelligence gathered by subnational actors, both public and private). Essentially, these international, above-the-state actors provide information that allows national police services to develop a perspective on activities beyond their borders—a larger picture of transnational criminal activity. The threat assessments and other reports that these organizations provide offer unique opportunities to design targeted strategies, narrow the focus in investigations (where to look, who to pursue, how to identify them), and promote investigations and prosecutions in one state that make use of evidence gathered in other states.

In order to facilitate police cooperation, exchange of information, and promotion of joint strategies, these international actors are structured to foster communication between foreign colleagues and services. They have secretariats staffed by police professionals seconded by their own countries and national liaison offices whose mission is to link their own national police services to the IO and, by extension, to the rest of the membership. These sophisticated, highly competent, and experienced officials promote international exchanges and communication. They handle requests for information from national services about particular trends and specific criminal individuals and activities. Crime analysis and the resulting “threat assessments,” “risk assessments,” and other such reports and publications are provided by departments charged with obtaining intelligence specific to a particular form of crime (e.g., human trafficking, drug trafficking, counterfeiting). The Analysis Work Files of Europol, for example, can result from the initiative of member states or a particular department of Europol. Joint operations, usually set up as a result of Analysis Work Files, are intended to use all the information available to Europol and member states to follow up on investigations, locate and observe suspects, and, once sufficient evidence has been gathered, secure the arrest and conviction of these suspects.

These international organizations are intended to provide support for the activities of national police forces within state governance restrictions. Their functions are not intended to deal with the political aspects of policing necessary for effective police cooperation, such as policy harmonization and standardization of laws and procedures (i.e., they have nothing to do with either gathering evidence or ensuring its admissibility in courts outside a state’s territory). Their role is strictly supportive and they have no executive
powers and no police force of their own. They are “field” organizations whose responsibilities are similar to those of national intelligence analysis agencies. They depend on the goodwill of their members to obtain the most relevant and accurate data available on specific criminal groups.

State actors play a significantly different role in international police cooperation. They are political actors rather than operational—governments that engage in policymaking and the negotiation of international agreements. Effective international police cooperation requires that state actors recognize that unilateral action is largely ineffective and that pooling resources with other governments is the only way to level the playing field between transnational criminal groups, who disregard territorial boundaries, and law enforcement agencies that must respect borders and are bound by jurisdictional issues. States express the political will to cooperate by encouraging participation in information exchange frameworks, a commitment to international police cooperation that signals to other states that voluntary contributions are expected.

In order to achieve systematic cooperation between national police services, the political will to cooperate must be translated into operational procedures and instruments via policy implementation. When cooperation breaks down, as it often does, several factors explain the barriers to voluntary information exchange. These factors are structural (legal and organizational), ideological, and cultural (the professional culture of police officers). Structural factors include the lack of a national information system whereby information can be channeled from local field officers to a national collection point and in turn to the international membership via the IO framework. The same channels are necessary for the diffusion of finished intelligence by IOs to national police services. Although the law enforcement institutions of some states are structured in a manner that is conducive to the dissemination of information via computerized databases, most are still using antiquated systems or locally designed bootleg software that precludes any sharing of information beyond the office or unit that created them. When a state actor does not have a framework for information sharing, its cooperation patterns will reflect that lack, and its participation in the collaborative network will remain peripheral.

The relationship between international actors and state actors is defined by the fundamental desire of states to maintain supremacy over their own law and order. States want to control IOs to make sure that they remain clearinghouses with no executive powers, as originally intended. However, the main interest of IOs is to survive and establish themselves as legitimate and significant actors in the fight against transnational crime. Without the systematic collaboration of national police services, the output of IOs is incomplete and, consequently, inaccurate. Without the input from IOs, national police services are less able to fight transnational criminal interests operating
in their territory. This interdependence often makes for an uneasy relationship because the interests of the two groups rarely converge. Member governments want to control IOs to ensure that they respect state sovereignty and neither infringe on national policy formulation nor become directly involved in investigations. However, because IOs see problems that require immediate solutions, they initiate activities that many perceive as interventionist and thus beyond their mandate to serve states as clearinghouses for information.

States have also used IOs to create elite groups of member governments whose resources and relatively sophisticated technological competence allow them to erect a fortress aimed at protecting member governments from states outside the group. Data protection standards are a good example of exclusionary practices that inadvertently limit the cooperation between insiders and outsiders. The Europol Convention stipulates operational guidelines for data protection and specifies procedures that are strictly guided by these standards, which were imposed on Europol in order to respect human rights, a crucial tenet for all European Union (EU) institutions. The resulting standards are so strict that no state outside the fifteen members of Europol can meet them, or chooses to meet them, depending on one's perspective. For example, information sharing between Europol and the United States is limited because of the high level of personal data protection required of Europol—much higher than the criteria of the United States. This effectively places Europol member states in a fortress (often called Fortress Europe) that keeps data and information captive (at least officially). Additionally, Europol, bound by its extremely high standards, cannot include information from other states in its databases unless they maintain the same protections for individuals about whom information is exchanged. This largely ideological struggle has, on certain occasions, been circumvented by the creativity of operational actors and their informal connections.

Subnational actors—police and other law enforcement authorities entrusted with the maintenance of order and compliance with national laws—have repeatedly taken initiatives toward cooperation outside the framework of the state. Interpol and other often bilateral initiatives, such as border cooperation agreements (Franco-German Meuse border agreement, Groupe d’Assistance Mutuelle) or regional arrangements (Centre Cooperation Policier et Douaniere), were created by police officers and then became intergovernmental organizations charged with facilitating interstate cooperation. Subnational actors increasingly see a need for the exchange of information and joint operations. Yet often when they hear about international systems of cooperation, they receive little information about how such cooperation takes place and even less information about how to make the best use of the intelligence that the crime analysis output of IOs could make available to them. Field police officers in any member country usually know about Interpol and
Europol, but do not always have much use for the information that these IOs provide. The police officers blame their failure to make use of IO information on the historically slow responses of Interpol or Europol that do not keep up with the speed required for investigations and pursuit. According to our respondents, police officers who have attended conferences of IOs have regularly requested additional training opportunities, increased networking opportunities, and a variety of additional services. Europol conferences have also led to the development of manuals for operating liaison offices, a collection of suggestions and expectations that can be translated into procedures that will be more useful for police professionals. It appears that a relationship between the IO and the subnational actor often develops due to a need and is based on professional relationships that are the result of interactions that occur outside the formal, official system and often bypass the state.

The Relational Entrepreneurship of Actors

Each level of actor initiates ways of addressing shortcomings in the system in which they operate in an attempt to make it possible for them to fulfill their mandates. As a result, at least initially, we see an increase in unofficial roles assumed by the respective sets of actors in an attempt to overcome the unintended consequences of limitations caused by strict mandates and the structures they create. Because of the diverging roles and interests of these different groups, their official roles, if strictly adhered to, may lead to the breakdown of the existing systems, structures, and practices at all levels. One of the factors that explains these shortcomings is the lack of coordination across the different levels of actors—international, national, and subnational—despite the fact that they are supposed to be engaged in the fight against transnational crime, with each playing their role using means and instruments provided by the other actors. When field officers do not cooperate systematically, it may be because they lack the necessary channels (information flow systems) and the technology to support them, the training that encourages the exchange of information (in contrast to nationalistic mindsets that value secrecy over sharing), and the competence (knowledge of how to use the tools at their disposal) to allow them to exchange information. When states do not foster cooperation, it is often because they lack the expertise, competence, and commitment to develop the tools and frameworks necessary for information exchange and joint strategy design. This has been described in the literature as a lack of capacity.25

It can safely be assumed that national and subnational actors recognized their own shortcomings and those in their relationships when they created Interpol and Europol, among other forums, to facilitate the exchange of information. But the mandates these international organizations were
given are too limited to foster cooperation at political and operational levels. IOs have thus developed an informal entrepreneurship role that allows them to function more efficiently. As one respondent at Europol stated, “If member states don’t do anything, Europol acts as it sees fit.” In much of the existing literature the term informal entrepreneurship refers to the influence of international officials on interstate bargaining and treaty-amending negotiations. Although they certainly play this role, the term is not introduced by us to describe the influence these officials have on interstate bargaining and the outcome of negotiations, but instead to refer to the process by which IOs enlarge their mandates on their own initiative without necessarily informing their political masters, thereby making operational gains and influencing policy in order to standardize practices. Thus, IOs attempt to make up for the shortcomings of state and subnational actors by introducing initiatives that are far beyond their mandates, but are crucial to the development of an institution that will be able to provide real benefits to the members it was created to serve.

The development of effective IOs requires changes in terms of mandates, “powers,” and the behavior of member governments as well as in the infrastructure—legal and operational—that is required for member governments and their national police services to cooperate. Informal entrepreneurship does not take the form of attempting to direct state interactions, but manifests itself more through taking the lead in shaping an international network of institutional infrastructures and competent collaborators at the state level. IOs already provide forums for information exchange (via conferences and other network opportunities), outputs (including threat assessment reports, trends analysis), and training opportunities. New initiatives in these areas are sometimes suggested or requested by police officers, usually not officially but informally from one police professional to another, although more often they are the result of IOs identifying gaps in the cooperation framework that prevent members from participating effectively.

IO officials exercise leadership rather than formal power not only in treaty negotiations and amendment negotiations but also, we argue, in the development of the role of IOs. These informal entrepreneurs are directors and other politically connected staff in IOs. They are professionals whose primary allegiance is to further international cooperation, introduce knowledge and ideas derived from their (and their staff’s) daily exposure to information, and overcome the obstacles they see national police services encountering due to a lack of organization at the national level and as a result of the limiting mandates of IOs. These individuals have a unique focus and exposure to information that gives them a bird’s-eye view of criminal activity. Because they serve as a collection and dissemination point, they are more informed about criminal activity than either of the other actors. They specialize in analysis and are able to identify trends, risks, threats, and obstacles
that need to be circumvented to address these threats. Their focus, big picture perspective, and, especially, their professional contacts (made both prior to coming to the IO and while in the employment of the IO) are particularly important in allowing them to identify solutions to obstacles to cooperation. They develop and initiate the use of new tools and functions that are of aid to police, and then show policymakers the benefits of these new initiatives, demonstrating that there is a “market” for their new program or practice. Their resources allow them to influence the practices of member organizations and to informally offer them privileged access to the network in exchange for reciprocity at the local level, setting up circles of exchanges based on trust and mutual interests.

This informal entrepreneurship is one of the unintended consequences of creating IOs, staffing them with sophisticated professionals, and granting them resources that are paralleled only by those available to transnational criminal groups. The power of informal entrepreneurs places a strain on relationships between state actors and IOs as well as among various members of the IO, whose statuses vary greatly. Denmark recently proposed that the operational powers of Europol be increased to grant it the ability to convince states to cooperate. The French resisted this increase in Europol’s operational powers on the grounds that an increase in powers must be accompanied by adequate control mechanisms. This case shows the diverging interests of state actors and the effect this friction can have on the effectiveness of IOs and the value of their output. Indeed, the multitude of approaches in investigation methods, for example, represent a source of significant friction in collaborative efforts between foreign colleagues. Further, the various procedural and legal systems of the members of the EU diverge to the point that evidence admissible in one member’s court may not be admissible in the court of another member. Europol’s existence has added another element to the negotiation of international arrangements, creating an area in which agreement has to be reached. Europol’s perspective is that, when states exhibit a lack of cooperation, Europol proceeds with “the willing.”

Informal entrepreneurship results from initiatives taken by IO staff members. It represents a not-so-subtle form of intervention in the most fundamental and closely guarded state function: the provision of safety, security, and maintenance of order in the state’s territory. But since territory, in the traditional sense, has become the major inhibitor in fighting transnational crime, the concepts of jurisdiction, territory and borders, and sovereignty must be reconsidered. The attempt to deal with issues has led to the present development of awkward new relationships between the state and those actors the state wants to continue to control.

The opportunities for informal entrepreneurship illustrate the contradictions that arise in the development of relations between the complex networks of suprastate (above the state) and subnational actors. Entrepreneurial actions
by IOs lead to discrepancies between what was intended in the setting up of the IOs and what is actually occurring. Entrepreneurial actions lead to a delegation of authority that transcends state sovereignty, informally at first, then formally and legally when the initiatives have proven their worth. This delegation of authority is often based on the “outsourcing” of a very specific, highly sensitive, and technical set of tasks to IOs, even though the issue of accountability is still a major concern. Considered separately, each set of actors is subject to a range of accountability mechanisms. However, the linkages created in the field of international police cooperation allow actors to participate in new groupings that can be used to shift responsibility toward nodes with weaker accountability standards while maintaining the possibility of denying accusations of misconduct or impropriety if needed. This trend can be observed in the use of extraordinary renditions by the US government and its allies in the “war against terrorism,” or the exchange of airline passenger data despite strong regulatory restrictions.

This concept of informal entrepreneurship fits well with the idea of fluid networks in which ideas or initiatives are introduced, implemented, and even evaluated by non-national state actors, who are funded and made legal or official by national state actors. This manner of operating, however, is very different from that in conventional views of how international cooperation works whereby decisions about policing come first, followed by determination of how this policing is to be implemented, which includes delegation to IOs and subnational actors, with control mechanisms built in.

The picture is further complicated by the emergence of private actors able to compete on a global scale with IOs and substate actors in the provision of security, which suggests that future transnational security networks will include an ever broader range of actors and interests. To provide its contribution to UN civilian police operations, the US government has turned to a private company—DynCorp—that recruits retired police officers, trains them, and sends them abroad on behalf of the State Department. DynCorp has also been awarded contracts in Latin America, where it carries out coca plant eradication missions, and in Iraq, where it trains new police recruits. These tasks were previously undertaken exclusively by public police organizations of UN donor states. Private companies also offer data collection and dissemination services that compete directly with IOs. The US Department of Homeland Security is the latest in a list of more than 800 clients who have purchased access to the databases of the British company World-Check, which covers 250,000 individuals and business entities considered “risky” because of confirmed or suspected ties with organized criminal groups, terrorist organizations, and money laundering schemes. Such services provide lists with broader coverage than those currently available from public sources, essentially because their inclusion criteria are less
rigorous and are not constrained by legal guidelines—an unverified reference in a press clipping is sufficient to trigger an entry. Other companies, such as Choicepoint, have been implicated in more dubious data collection exercises, such as illegally purchasing census and electoral role data in Latin America in order to sell it to border protection and law enforcement agencies in the United States. These examples, which will certainly multiply in the future, raise the question of the effect that private actors, whose activities span the whole spectrum of security networks, will have on subnational, national, and state groups. The fact that private actors depend on states or IOs for contracts should not obscure the fact that their main motive is profit rather than justice or human security.

Conclusion

We need to reconsider the Westphalian order to see if it can accommodate the shift from vertical organization to a more horizontal approach to dealing with threats to human security, especially when it comes to fighting transnational crime. In line with public administration developments that increasingly point to the importance of networked governance, a growing number of human security advocates support the “fighting dark networks with bright networks” approach. Transnational criminal organizations are fluid, adaptable networks whose activities disregard borders. Attempts to curb their activities are moving away from rigid hierarchical structures, which tend to be too restricting. International and subnational actors are looking toward a more horizontal approach as better reflecting their interests, which are directly affected by their ability to work across national boundaries.

Human security will remain only a phrase until the mechanisms that could lead to its creation are understood in more detail. Some of the present obstacles are the result of the rigidity and obstinacy of state actors, which still function hierarchically in an effort to protect their sovereignty, rather than opening up the field and letting other actors make their contributions. The Westphalian order is often ill-suited to the fight against fluid criminal networks; a new environment is needed that can allow security networks to respond effectively to the challenges of criminal networks without compromising human rights or the notion of state supremacy. It is no longer sufficient to pool resources. The various groups of actors need both to be empowered to use their resources effectively and to be regulated in order not to abuse these new powers. The traditional forms of accountability, embedded in the concept of sovereignty, need to be replaced by a new form that is more adaptable to a big picture perspective and the level of complexity involved in fighting transnational crime.
Despite the fact that state supremacy remains paramount in terms of power and authority, the entrepreneurial initiatives of the more operationally directed actors, including private security, international organizations, and national police services, have succeeded in promoting some reforms in the multilateral fight against transnational crime. States are reticent to delegate sovereignty-infringing mandates to IOs and have had difficulties in developing the capacity and systems necessary to foster the exchange of information with foreign colleagues. But the informal initiatives and the ad hoc networking between political and operational actors have slowly affected the approach states take toward the implementation of their policies for international cooperation. In this context, the duty of academics should be to illuminate the strengths of such practices as well as the risks they pose—to map the ramifications of the various spontaneous and coordinated networked initiatives and to examine their democratic implications—as well as to recommend possible improvements and adjustments. Policymakers, for their part, would be well advised to come to terms with the inherent messiness and ambiguity of these new arrangements and to start looking for the right mix of bureaucracy, private enterprise, and networks in the delivery of human security.

Notes

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10. See, for example, the conference of Rome in December 1898 that followed the slaying in September of the same year of Austrian empress Elizabeth in Geneva, or the Secret Protocol for International War on Anarchism signed in 1904 by Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Sweden, Bulgaria, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey. Liang, *The Rise of Modern Police and the European State System*, p. 173.

11. A string of conferences was convened, but it was difficult to turn them into sustainable police cooperation mechanisms: Paris conferences in 1904 and 1910, and conferences in Buenos Aires (1905), Madrid (1909), Sao Paolo (1912), Washington (1913), Monaco (1914), Buenos Aires (1920), and New York in 1922 and 1923. Deflem, “International Policing in 19th Century Europe,” p. 38, and *Policing World Society*, p. 4.


20. Our distinction between sets of national and subnational actors is made on the basis of those who are responsible for policymaking and decisionmaking regarding the security infrastructure and those whose job it is to implement the resulting commitments and policies, within the legal environment imposed on them by policymakers. We recognize that police agencies are not necessarily subnational because, in some countries, the police are a national agency or even a separate entity with a political (although not policymaking) arm.


26. The original, from an interview in 2005, was “Si les Etats membres ne font rien, Europol agit à son gres.”


28. Ibid.


30. Extraordinary renditions are extrajudicial transfers of a person from one state to another, without following established extradition procedures. They are usually used by governments that seek to circumvent legal accountability mechanisms and international treaties.


The Lessons of Darfur for the Future of Humanitarian Intervention

Touko Piiparinen

The emergence of post–September 11 military operations in the context of the global fight against terrorism in general and the Iraq war in particular has overshadowed humanitarian interventions conducted by multilateral institutions. However, the threat posed by genocidal governments deserves the continuing attention of global governance because their draconian policies and mobilization capacities constitute the actual weapons of mass destruction against civilian populations. The tardy response of the international community to atrocities in Darfur has been widely regarded as a backlash of the emerging norm in international society which attributes a responsibility to protect civilians targeted by génocidaires. This article, however, will argue that the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, and NATO have in fact devised and implemented two innovative peacekeeping strategies in Darfur that have set more optimistic precedents for humanitarian intervention, namely, a new division of labor between regional and international organizations and a pragmatic turn in peacekeeping. By dint of these new strategies, intervening organizations have an opportunity to counterbalance the deep-seated problems that routinely affect peacekeeping operations, namely, the body-bag syndrome and the rigidity of bureaucratic norms that regulate PKOs. Keywords: conflict management, Darfur, humanitarian intervention, peacekeeping, United Nations.

This article will invoke the lessons learned from the Rwandan tragedy as a reflective point against which to consider the implications of Darfur for peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Darfur and Rwanda will be regarded as two significant cases indicative of a wider tendency, or direction, in peacekeeping in the course of the past ten years and beyond. By investigating what has remained the same in peacekeeping since Rwanda, what advances have been made, and what could still be improved, it is possible not only to assess the most recent progress made with regard to PKOs but also to anticipate the future. This examination will argue that, although political will on the part of member states remains the most crucial factor in explaining the success and failure of PKOs, structural transformations in peacekeeping strategies can considerably alter that will and enable a more rapid and desirable response to humanitarian crises of the future.
Just as the machete-wielding, drunk, and drugged Interahamwe militia quickly became the symbol of the Rwandan genocide, so too the eyes and imaginations of those watching CNN news coverage in the West fixed on the Janjaweed fighters, exotic killers riding on horseback and camelback wielding AK-47s and G3 rifles. In cooperation with Sudanese government forces, the Janjaweed unleashed a campaign of terror, burning the villages of non-Arab communities; raping and abducting their inhabitants; looting their property; forcing them to abandon their homes; and destroying their livestock, water points, mills, and other village assets.1 Such a scorched earth campaign, taking aim not only at the lives of innocent civilians but also at their basic living conditions, intimates the “ultimate crime,” namely, genocide. Such a suspicion was confirmed by the close connection between the Janjaweed and the Sudanese government; the latter supplied uniforms, arms, and financial assets to the Janjaweed. The government not only recruited the Janjaweed to fight non-Arab movements, but also launched indiscriminate aerial bombardments against civilian targets in northern Darfur.2

In Darfur, both non-Arabs and Arabs are black, indigenous, African, and Muslim.3 Nevertheless, while Arabs traditionally have been nomads, non-Arabs have made their living from farming, which partly explains the division of conflict in Darfur along ethnic lines. Following the drought and famine in Darfur from 1984 to 1985, local conflicts erupted between these groups over the scarce natural resources.4 Such a low-intensity conflict, however, soon broke into a larger war, as two non-Arab rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), began to accuse the government of backing the Janjaweed and neglecting the socioeconomic conditions in the region. In February 2003, SLA/M and JEM launched an armed rebellion against the government. Like the so-called Inyenzi attacks on Rwanda by Tutsi refugees from Uganda, the rebellion by SLA/M and JEM triggered disproportionately harsh counterinsurgency strikes by the government on civilians of non-Arab communities.

The analogy between Rwanda and Darfur seems apposite in terms of the nature of the conflicts as well as the international responses they commanded, or indeed the lack thereof. Despite former US Secretary of State Colin Powell’s courageous invocation of the term genocide in relation to Darfur on 9 September 2004, neither the UN Security Council nor the Secretariat has applied that word in connection to Darfur. This silence recalls the unwillingness of the UN to recognize the Rwandan genocide in April 1994. All major powers demonstrated a lack of political will when it came to triggering the provisions of the genocide convention to legitimate a humanitarian intervention in Rwanda. The “shadow of Somalia” (i.e., the heavy casualties suffered by US and UN troops in UNOSOM II in autumn...
1993) generated the paucity of political will to rescue Rwandans six months later. Today, the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan has drained the military and political capacities of those same states that had previously advocated the responsibility to protect vulnerable civilians, thereby producing a reluctance to engage in further military operations in Darfur or anywhere else. What makes Sudan a particularly unattractive target for intervention is the fact that Western governments have become wary of conducting military ventures in Islamic countries. They are aware that such actions may enhance anti-Western sentiment in the Islamic world and thus play into the hands of terrorists.

For the aforementioned reasons, the response of the international community to atrocities in Darfur has been almost identical to that in Rwanda. While the intervention force of the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR II) landed in Rwanda after the genocide had been completed, military intervention in Darfur was not even seriously considered until late July 2004, a full year after the outbreak of large-scale violence. And then, intervention was considered only by the African Union (AU), an organization facing a severe shortage of matériel equipment and logistical capacity with which to conduct any effective military operation. An extensive protection force, the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS II; henceforth, AMIS), was authorized by the AU on 20 October 2004 and strengthened on 28 April 2005, but its capacity to halt atrocities remained weak. In the beginning of June 2005, its total strength stood at only 2,674 personnel out of a total number of 7,731 authorized troops. AMIS appeared a grossly inadequate response to the enormous humanitarian disaster. By July 2005, at least 50,000 civilians had been killed in Darfur. Malnutrition and disease had increased the number of casualties to 180,000. Moreover, nearly 2 million internally displaced persons remained in Darfur while more than 200,000 refugees had fled to neighboring Chad.

The half-hearted reaction of the international community to the plight of Darfurians has been widely perceived to be indicative of the sorry state of current intervention mechanisms. “Too late, too little” was the blunt statement of Human Rights Watch concerning international action in Sudan. In a wider historical and political context, however, the lack of political will on the part of Western powers to deploy troops to Africa has not been absolute, which is aptly illustrated by the examples of Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In May 2000, Operation Palliser was launched by the UK government under orders to evacuate foreign nationals from Sierra Leone. Following the completion of its mission, the mandate of British forces was extended to assist in the peacekeeping operation of the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which had descended into crisis. Hundreds of UN peacekeepers had been captured by the Sierra Leonean rebel organization,
the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), known as the “West Side Boys.” The Royal Marines raided RUF camps and released their hostages. As a result of British efforts, the West Side Boys eventually disintegrated. Secondly, UN conflict management in the Ituri region of the DRC is an instructive example of the way in which the gradual achievements in civilian protection have enabled the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to use robust force against criminal elements, resulting in a decrease of militia activity and the withdrawal of armed gangs from MONUC’s zone of influence.

Nevertheless, such piecemeal progress has unfortunately been overshadowed by the UN’s overall failure to prevent tragedy in the DRC and in other African trouble spots, most crucially in Darfur. John Borton and John Eriksson’s Lessons from Rwanda—Lessons for Today, published in December 2004, provides a pessimistic picture of the changes that have taken place. Most crucially, the report concludes that the Security Council did not discuss the genocidal killing in Darfur until March 2004, thirteen months after the outbreak of the conflict, and neither the Council nor the secretary-general have recognized it as a “genocide.” These observations call to mind the lack of political resolve on the part of member states and the Secretariat to recognize genocide in Rwanda.

Lieutenant-General Roméo A. Dallaire, commander of UN troops in Rwanda at the time of the genocide, formulated his verdict as follows: “Looking at Darfur, seeing Rwanda.” Although Dallaire’s notion captures a sentiment common among those observing the situation in Darfur, one paragraph in his New York Times article alludes to an interesting new dimension to the case thus far neglected in the debate on Darfur and on peacekeeping in general: “Still, I believe that a mixture of mobile African Union troops supported by NATO soldiers equipped with helicopters, remotely piloted vehicles, night-vision devices and long-range special forces could protect Darfur’s displaced people in their camps and remaining villages, and eliminate or incarcerate the Janjaweed.” Dallaire’s statement is groundbreaking in its stark opposition to mainstream and more elaborate stances, both of which are deeply skeptical of the AU’s capacity to protect civilians in Darfur. The latter include, for example, the Bridging Force Option provided by the International Crisis Group (ICG), which maintains that the AU’s AMIS troops should come under NATO’s command and control until it has built up its strength in Darfur. Most crucially, Dallaire shifts the focus of discussion on Darfur from an unrealistic vision of a greater mission by Western forces to a more pragmatic conception of military intervention, one which stands a better chance of being implemented and is less dismissive of African initiatives than the ICG’s option. In short, Dallaire’s comment anticipates a new model of peacekeeping based on humanitarian realism.
On Arthur J. Klinghoffer’s definition, humanitarian realism denotes “a blending of the ‘globalist’ and ‘realist’ perspectives.” Jonathan Moore conceptualizes it as “the accommodation of both realism and idealism.” Essentially, humanitarian realism intimates that moral imperatives are not absolute, but always embedded in the “surrounding” material, temporal, and social realities of humanitarian intervention. Dallaire’s invocation of humanitarian realism in relation to Darfur has its roots in his Rwandan experiences ten years earlier. Three days after the Rwandan genocide had begun, he argued in his telephone conversation with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) officials for a realistic intervention force composed of 4,000 troops, equipped with armored personnel carriers and mandated by what he called Chapter “Six and a half” to protect civilians as opposed to large-scale peace enforcement measures. However, the only option that UN headquarters presented to strengthen the UN peacekeeping force in Rwanda was, unlike Dallaire’s recommendation, overambitious; it envisaged 10,000 troops, a Chapter VII mandate, and peace enforcement tasks against the belligerent parties of the civil war. From the outset, Dallaire knew that UN headquarters’ option was doomed to be rejected by major powers.

Dallaire continues to advocate for Darfur the same commonsensical, straightforward, and realistic thinking on humanitarian intervention that he saw fit in Rwanda. Instead of championing a greater mission by Western forces, to which AU troops should submit themselves, Dallaire seeks the solution in an equal partnership between the AU and NATO. A similarly egalitarian approach has also been recommended for the relationship between the AU and the European Union (EU). Special representative of the EU for Sudan, Pekka Haavisto, noted that passing instructions to the AU by the EU would be a highly sensitive undertaking: “In the AU, they do not fancy any bigwig from the West bouncing in their office.” This article will elaborate Dallaire’s and Haavisto’s insights, informed by humanitarian realism, by claiming that the international response to Darfur should not be assessed against the yardstick of Western greater missions. That is simply because such operations have either existed only as unrealistic, arrogant visions or deceptive paper tigers, as in the Rwandan case, or have engendered a disastrous number of casualties, irresponsible withdrawals, and unsustainable activities, as in UNOSOM II. The new level of analysis proposed here is the degree of structural transformation with regard to the operation and strategy of peacekeeping. By applying this new approach, the case of Darfur may appear in a less pessimistic light than in previous literature. Such an analysis could reveal various strategies by which future PKOs could avoid potential pitfalls that have plagued UN peacekeeping since the early 1990s. The greatest benefit of an approach based on humanitarian realism
lies in the opportunity that it offers both to uncover underlying forces or
problems constraining PKOs and to devise strategies through which their
effects can be counterbalanced or diminished.

One of the most detrimental “troublemakers” in contemporary military
intervention is the body-bag syndrome. Although this infamous term origi-
nally emerged in conjunction with the engagement of the US Army in Viet-
nam, it has been employed subsequently to connote a variety of conflicts in
which the media has brought heavy military losses to the attention of the
public, thereby instigating political tension and a desire to pull back troops.
However, the body-bag syndrome has a specific meaning in relation to
African crises since the early 1990s: popular imagination in the West has
“normalized” conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa as chaotic, mindless, and irra-
tional, thus posing insurmountable risks for any intervention attempts. It
follows that such intangible and seemingly harmless discourses can wield
considerable power through the normalization of deviance; they can, in fact,
wreak devastating consequences for those constructed as “deviant” or “ab-
normal.” Normalization here refers to the way in which the “West” repro-
duces stereotypical images of the “Rest,” for example, by visualizing Africa
as the Conradian “Heart of Darkness.”

The first section of this article suggests that the body-bag syndrome,
triggered and aggravated by Western normalization, can be assuaged or
even eliminated by a “new division of labor” between regional actors. Dar-
fur serves as a laboratory for a new arrangement in which richer organiza-
tions of developed countries, such as NATO, contribute matériel equipment
and logistical support while less affluent African organizations provide
troops. In fact, such a division of labor closely resembles Dallaire’s sug-
gestion as presented in his New York Times article of October 2004, al-
though he could not have anticipated that such an arrangement would mater-
ialize in July 2005, when NATO began to airlift AU troops to Darfur. Neither
could he predict the exact composition of that mission.

The second section of this article will claim that UN and AU engage-
ment in Darfur indicates another innovative strategy, namely, a pragmatic
turn with regard to peacekeeping in general and the protection of civilians
in particular. Previously, PKOs have been prevented from conducting civil-
ian protection by rigid bureaucratic categories, such as the uncompromising
distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement, and by grand
strategies pursued by international organizations that have diverted their
attention away from practical means of protecting civilians. Although civil-
ian protection has not yet become the guiding star of peacekeeping, the case
of Darfur reveals several useful, though piecemeal, measures that together
imply a pragmatic turn in peacekeeping by dint of which the protection of
civilians can gradually become an integral component of any PKO.
A New Division of Labor as a Counterstrategy for the Body-Bag Syndrome

The international response to the crisis in Darfur entails an element that is unique for peacekeeping operations. This distinctive feature is not fully encapsulated by the term *regionalization* because regional and subregional organizations have already increased their role in tackling African conflicts. A more apposite description would be a “new division of labor” between regional and international organizations. It signals a departure from the usual rivalry, unnecessary wrangling, and lack of coordination that have been typical of interactions between organizations. Although it would be premature to evaluate the success of the UN-AU-NATO-EU partnership in Darfur, an analysis of the initial stages of their cooperation reveals not merely a tendency to devolve the leadership and main responsibility for the protection of targeted civilians in Darfur to the AU, but also an unprecedented willingness of all organizations to coordinate their activities in Sudan.

Such interorganizational synergy materialized immediately in the wake of the authorization of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) on 24 March 2005. Security Council Resolution 1590, adopted that day, authorized the deployment of 10,000 UNMIS troops and 715 civilian police personnel to Sudan. Moreover, it requested that the secretary-general outline options for the provision of the UN’s assistance for the AU, including logistical and technical support and reserve capacity. In his response to the Council, the secretary-general concluded that the most viable option for supporting AMIS during the first two phases of its deployment, that is, until August 2005, would entail channeling the logistical and technical assistance through individual donor countries. The UK, for example, contributed vehicles to an AMIS company while Canada and the Netherlands contracted helicopter support for another company.

However, the secretary-general had been actively seeking support for months both from individual states and two major regional organizations in the developed world, namely, the EU and NATO, to back up the AU’s military operation. The EU chose to provide a financial support package worth $120 million to AMIS, which covered almost half the costs of the operation. Similarly, NATO’s North Atlantic Council pledged a substantial contribution for AMIS. On 8 June 2005, it decided to airlift additional AU troops to Sudan. This was a momentous decision in that, for the first time in NATO’s history, it launched a substantial cooperation scheme with the AU and, also for the first time, began operations in Africa. The first NATO airlift took place on 1 July 2005 when Nigerian troops were moved to Sudan, followed by the transfer of personnel from Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and South Africa through July, August, and September.
Furthermore, NATO undertook to assist in the training of AU officers in managing intelligence and headquarters functions, such as command and control, logistics, and planning.\textsuperscript{27}

AMIS symbolizes unprecedented cooperation between the UN, NATO, the AU, and the EU at the operational level. Understanding the underlying causes of, and reasons for, this cooperation requires multiple levels and units of analysis. According to NATO’s formal statements, the impetus for deeper interorganizational collaboration came from the AU, whose active lobbying culminated in the formal request for airlifts conveyed by the AU Commission chairperson Alpha Oumar Konaré to the NATO secretary-general on 26 April 1994. NATO spokesman James Appathurai characterized NATO’s reaction to the AU’s request as “consultations should go forward in a pragmatic way.”\textsuperscript{28} Such “pragmatism” on NATO’s side was caused not the least by France’s deep reservations about NATO’s engagement in Africa, which was regarded as an expansion of Anglophone influence in the area that French political circles considered as “le pré carré,” that is, “our own backyard.”\textsuperscript{29} Due to the initial French objections to the NATO-led airlift operation, NATO has emphasized that its activities are conducted in parallel with the EU’s efforts.\textsuperscript{30}

From the AU’s perspective, AMIS is the embodiment of an increased commitment on the part of African countries to resolve the conflicts afflicting their own continent. In order to realize this objective, the AU and its predecessor the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has steadily built conflict prevention and management capacity since the early 1990s. From the UN’s viewpoint, increased cooperation between the UN and the AU reflects not only African ownership, but also structural changes within the UN system. The influential report of the secretary-general to the Security Council on UN reform, entitled \textit{In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All}, proposes several practical steps by which to improve coordination between the UN and regional organizations. Such measures include the introduction of memoranda of understanding between the UN and individual regional organizations, the purpose of which would be to govern the sharing of information, expertise, and resources. The memoranda would also place the conflict prevention and peacekeeping capacities of each regional organization within the framework of the UN Standby Arrangements System. The UN would reciprocally amend the rules of its peacekeeping budget in order to provide for the option of using its resources to finance operations undertaken by regional organizations, provided that they are authorized by the Security Council.\textsuperscript{31}

This analysis has revealed a multiplicity of factors that underlie the increased synergy between the UN and regional organizations in peacekeeping. Each regional and international actor has been motivated to pursue closer cooperation for different reasons. However, it will be argued below
that such a “rapprochement” is also informed by a longer and deeper historical continuum that has affected all organizations. This interorganizational collaboration has been generated not merely by individual policies pursued by each organization in order to meet its objectives at the level of concrete structures, such as the transformation of the UN system, which aims to give more responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security to regional organizations in accordance with the secretary-general’s In Larger Freedom report and Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The increased coordination and distribution of labor between organizations has also been necessitated by certain deep structures prevalent in Western society. In a word, organizational synergy has emerged partly as a result of either an intentional or, which is more likely, an unintentional strategy to counterbalance and avoid the side effects of Western normalization. Its tendencies, benefits, and drawbacks will be examined below.

At first glance, attributing the increase in organizational cooperation to any racial factors appears somewhat strange. Upon closer examination of figures, however, the growing engagement of the AU in peacekeeping seems to be only a part of a wider tendency, namely, a national and ethnic shift in the composition of PKOs. Toward the beginning of 1991, eight of the ten main contributing countries of UN PKOs were from the developed world. A decade later, in August 2003, all of the ten main contributors were developing countries except Ukraine. Four of these were African, namely, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa. While only a dozen African countries had ever contributed troops or police to UN PKOs before 1988, since then that number has tripled.32

As demonstrated earlier, the national and ethnic shift in UNPKOs reflects an increased ownership of African countries. This has been welcomed in the West, not only because the lion’s share of all post–Cold War conflicts have afflicted Africa, but also due to the engagement of Western states in the war on terror and the consequent overstretching of their military expenditures. Those Western countries that spearheaded the so-called “normative shift” in international society in the 1990s, calling for solidarity in protecting civilians targeted by genocidal governments, have found it difficult to dispatch troops to Darfur or elsewhere due to their simultaneous operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.33 On the other hand, the war on terror and consequent strain on Western defense budgets cannot fully explain the national and ethnic shift in UN PKOs because the latter phenomenon began long before the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

It is suggested here that the national and ethnic shift in peacekeeping, together with increased African ownership and the recent war on terror, can explain the new division of labor between the “West and the Rest,” whose concrete embodiment is the partnership between the AU and NATO within the framework of AMIS: when African states have pledged to provide the
manpower (i.e., troops and police, to peacekeeping operations), Western countries have agreed to offer hardware (i.e., logistical, technical, and financial support). Most crucially, such a division of labor has served as a counterstrategy to deal with the “dark side” of Western normalization that scourged UN peacekeeping in the 1990s, particularly the “chaos narrative” about African conflicts that often triggered the body-bag syndrome. The following examination elucidates this counterstrategy in more detail.

The body-bag syndrome has different historical roots in each country and organization. Even before the shocking images of lined-up coffins belonging to killed marines in Vietnam caused political unrest in the United States, the UN experienced its first body-bag syndrome as a result of heavy casualties taken by blue helmets in the UN Operation in Congo (ONUC) from 1960 to 1964. As the globalization of cable news networks enabled the extensive spread of media images, CNN turned Somalia into the greatest source of the body-bag syndrome known in the Western world. During the UNOSOM II operation in Somalia in 1993, the UN took the heaviest casualties since the ONUC. On 3 October 1993, eighteen US Rangers were killed in the single most lethal incident of UNOSOM II. The body of one murdered US soldier was filmed by CNN as he was dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. The body-bag syndrome culminated in this single image and unleashed fierce domestic criticism of the Clinton administration. The tragedy in Somalia gradually led to a new restrictive policy of the United States toward UN peacekeeping missions.

The body-bag syndrome ensuing from the Somalia debacle has had serious repercussions not only for the United States, but also for the entire UN peacekeeping system. It engendered a normalization process that produced a widely shared (mis)perception of all African conflicts, most notably that of Rwanda following the UNOSOM II incident, as a Somalia-type of unmanageable, mad, and tribal chaos. Even worse, it served to recall the lesson well learned in Somalia that peacekeeping and particularly peace enforcement will be highly dangerous in Africa. Such images created the false impression that no grounds for intervention existed in what was described as a senseless and irrational chaos in Africa presenting insurmountable difficulties and considerable risk of casualties. Through such a normalizing act, Africa became constructed as what could be termed an “abnormal madhouse” excluded from the concerns of the international community. The conflict there was portrayed as a “mindless” one offering no possibility of resolution.

How, then, could the new division of labor in peacekeeping reduce or eliminate the effects of the above-mentioned “chaos narrative” of African conflicts and the related body-bag syndrome? The answer is quite straightforward: by shifting their support from manpower to hardware for the sake of troop protection, Western troop-contributing countries can avoid the
emergence of the body-bag syndrome altogether. At first glance, this logic seems selfish and draconian. However, it has substantial benefits, not only for the intervening side, but also for the targets of intervention; such advantages may outweigh its drawbacks. Perhaps the greatest benefit of diminished involvement of Western troops concerns the disjuncture between the effects and accountability of their intervention. On the one hand, intervening states in the West feel primarily accountable to their domestic sphere to justify their actions. If an intervention leads to casualties among the troops constituting the intervention forces, intervening states typically confront the body-bag syndrome (i.e., substantial domestic pressure to withdraw their forces). On the other hand, the effects of such a withdrawal are visited on those outside the national borders of intervening states. A moral dilemma thus arises when the withdrawal of intervening forces places thousands of civilians at risk because the intervening state is not primarily accountable to the endangered civilians, but to its domestic electorate. The dilemma is worsened by the fact that civilians usually place their trust in the presence of intervening forces. They tend to seek refuge with peacekeeping forces, thereby creating concentrations of people that constitute easy collective targets for génocidaires when intervening forces withdraw. In this way, civilians unintentionally facilitate the work of their killers, as the following example from Rwanda demonstrates.

In Rwanda, the aforementioned disjuncture between the effects and accountability of Western intervention provoked complete disregard for the humanitarian costs of UN withdrawal, which was mainly triggered by the body-bag syndrome following the killing of ten Belgian peacekeepers by Hutu extremists on 7 April 1994. The accountability of member governments to their domestic electorates was uncompromisingly prioritized over the consequences of UNAMIR’s withdrawal for the vulnerable citizens of Rwanda. Most notably, the Security Council failed to prevent or condemn the infamous incident at École Technique Officielle (ETO). On 11 April, the Belgian and French governments withdrew their peacekeepers and evacuation troops from ETO after their successful evacuation of foreign expatriates, despite the fact that thousands of Rwandan civilians were sheltering at ETO under UN protection and the UN troops faced minimal risks there. The withdrawal directly resulted in the massacre of over 2,000 civilians. According to the calculations of the Belgian and French governments, even an infinitesimal risk was not worth taking to save thousands of civilian lives, and no condemnation of this draconian policy ensued from the Council. Such cynical calculations stand in stark contrast to the policy pursued by the Ghanaian government, which actually retained its UNAMIR contingent throughout the genocide, despite the deaths of three of its soldiers in action between April and July 1994.
Even though the new division of labor in peacekeeping may avoid or diminish the aforementioned disconcerting aspects of Western intervention, it is also likely to generate its own “side effects” and problems that should be acknowledged. At worst, it could risk creating another “humanitarian alibi,” which has often characterized Western policy. In early May 1994 when the Rwandan genocide had reached its peak, the president of Médecins Sans Frontières–France, Philippe Biberson, noted at a press conference that “humanitarianism is serving as a cover for the inaction of states. . . . We have [already] known humanitarianism as alibi, but now we are entering into the humanitarianism of impassability and of the dead end.” Humanitarian aid to Rwandan refugees was viewed as a solution to the crisis; erroneously, because the killing could not be checked by food aid or medicine, but required a political and military resolution.

Humanitarian aid thus has frequently served as a camouflage under which to hide the unwillingness of Western powers to use military force to halt atrocities. Similarly, the provision of logistical, technical, and training support by NATO and the EU may be used as a façade, a rhetorical tool, by which Western countries portray themselves as “doing their bit” in alleviating African suffering, when in reality the AU urgently needs not only Western hardware, but also professional soldiers from the world’s most sophisticated armies, especially in challenging theaters like Sudan. In light of the above considerations, the NATO airlift of AU troops may merely represent a “logistical alibi” behind which to hide the reluctance of Western powers to put their soldiers in harm’s way in Darfur. As former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali noted to me, such a danger transcends the case of Darfur and may portend a pessimistic future for peacekeeping in general:

There is something strange: Now, if you look at different peacekeeping operations during the last two years, they all come from Third World countries. You have no more soldiers from European countries or from [other parts of the developed world]. I believe that you are confronted by a kind of fatigue of the member states who are not interested to get involved in all those disputes. After all, what happened in Darfur? Nothing. And you have a real genocide which has been completed in Darfur.

From the perspective of humanitarian realism, the fatigue of troop-contributing states described by Boutros-Ghali represents what E. H. Carr would term an “inevitable character of existing tendencies” in international politics, which should be taken seriously. The Chinese proverb “all cats love fish but fear to wet their paws” seems apposite to the policy of Western countries, characterized by humanitarianism and the simultaneous lack of political will to put their troops in harm’s way to stop human rights violations. At the same time, however, humanitarian realism differs from
Boutros-Ghali’s political realism in the sense that the former would regard such tendencies not so much as “inevitable” than as a starting point of inquiry and policy. On that basis, a humanitarian realist would apply a rather more optimistic approach, seeking solutions and strategies by which the international community could best adapt to these tendencies. Former UN Special Envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, who was tragically killed in a bombing raid while performing his duties in Baghdad in August 2003, exemplifies the humanitarian realist type of thinking. His following comment demonstrates the way in which the new division of labor between regional and international organizations could be considered as a solution to, rather than merely an epitome of, the fatigue of Western troop contributors:

In terms of what is to come, it is clear that multinational arrangements are not the panacea for the future. The Security Council has grown more reluctant to engage in missions that run the risk of turning into long-term commitments with an uncertain outcome and an unclear exit strategy. Instead, there is a move by the Council to have ad hoc regional coalitions armed with an international mandate. Regional arrangements . . . may prove more successful, especially where strong international political, logistic and financial backing is provided.44

De Mello’s comment seems particularly apposite to the Rwandan experiences. The UN peacekeeping force in Rwanda suffered severe shortcomings in equipment, training, intelligence, and planning, which proved fatal both to peacekeepers and Rwandans when the genocide erupted.45 When asked by me whether UNAMIR’s matériel inadequacies, such as lack of ammunition and even drinking water, presented an even greater problem than the shortage of professional troops, UNAMIR Force Commander Dallaire answered: “Yes. It prevented us from even maximizing the troops I had. It was the Achilles heel.”46 The lessons learned from UNAMIR underline the importance of the matériel prerequisites of peacekeeping. The case of Darfur endorses the lesson that, in the future, the matériel necessities might be ensured by the increased willingness of regional organizations from the developed world, most notably NATO and the EU, to assist African regional initiatives.

The latter conclusion seems particularly pertinent in the light of empirical evidence that indicates serious shortcomings in the AU’s organizational and military capacity. The OAU’s first peacekeeping operation, deployed in Chad, became entirely dependent on France’s logistical support. Moreover, the OAU’s first observer group dispatched to Rwanda, the Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG), was paralyzed by a lack of vehicles while the OAU Mission in Burundi (OMIB) suffered a breakdown of communications.47 The new division of labor between regional organizations could mark a significant break in this humiliating history of African peacekeeping
and ensure the material prerequisites and sustainability of PKOs in the future.

Nevertheless, even if the benefits of the new division of labor outweigh its drawbacks, most notably the risk of a “logistical alibi” and the “donor fatigue” among Western countries, there still remains the question as to whether these gains achieved in the matériel sustainability of peacekeeping could be nullified by the rigid and perverse bureaucratic procedures that regulate the command and control functions of PKOs. Once again, lessons learned from Rwanda furnish an instructive example in this regard: bureaucratic procedures prevented UNAMIR from taking decisive action against Hutu extremists in the run-up to the genocide, even though its well-equipped and well-trained Belgian contingent could have made a significant difference in checking the spread of arms. In short, matériel provisions alone are not a panacea for the future of peacekeeping. The following section will therefore scrutinize an important aspect of PKOs that has been missing from the examination thus far, namely, bureaucratic rationalization.

A Pragmatic Turn in Peacekeeping

Although the presence or absence of political will on the part of member states usually provides the main explanation for the UN’s performance, empirical evidence demonstrates that systemic and structural factors at the level of UN bureaucracy also significantly enable and constrain the operations of peacekeeping missions. Hence, the transformation of bureaucratic procedures at UN Headquarters has considerable potential to alter the outcome of peacekeeping missions. The following examination will provide empirical examples of such improvements and explore the various ways in which these structural adjustments can facilitate the protection of civilians. I will claim that the case of Darfur represents a continuum in the gradual transformation of the UN system away from the rigidity of bureaucratic norms toward a more pragmatic direction.

One key area of transformation in the UN peacekeeping system concerns the mandates of PKOs, which have been previously characterized by inflexibility. An instructive example in this regard is the way in which senior UN officials dealt with early warning signals emitted from Rwanda in January 1994, three months prior to the beginning of the genocide. On 11 January 1994, Force Commander Dallaire informed the UN Secretariat of his intention to conduct search and cordon operations to seize arms caches from Hutu militias who were allegedly plotting the extermination of Tutsi civilians. Senior UN officials, however, refused Dallaire permission for his initiative. The main reason behind UN officials’ decisionmaking pertained to their painful recollections of UNOSOM II. Dozens of UN soldiers had
been killed in similar search and cordon operations in Somalia. On the other hand, UN officials’ decisionmaking was (mis)guided by a strict bureaucratic distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. Marrack Goulding, UN under-secretary-general for peacekeeping operations from 1986 to 1993, noted, “For a long time the United Nations’ peacekeeping doctrine was that coercion cannot be combined with consent-based peacekeeping . . . ‘there is no halfway house,’ I would say, ‘between peacekeeping and peace enforcement.”’\footnote{49} In accordance with this doctrine, UNAMIR, a typical peacekeeping operation, was not allowed to take any enforcement actions against the Hutu militias.

Interestingly, the UN system has recently transcended the aforementioned bureaucratic barrier, through its frequent inclusion of elements from Chapter VII of the UN Charter concerning peace enforcement within the mandates and rules of engagement for peacekeeping operations.\footnote{50} Furthermore, as one UNDPKO official observed, “It appears now that there’s even much more flexibility than before [to move from peacekeeping] into peace-enforcement.”\footnote{51} This notion stands in stark contrast to Under-Secretary-General Goulding’s view in the early 1990s outlined above. The interviewee pondered the functional and historical reasons for such a shift:

It is a better mechanism to control situations when the belligerents know that [the UN mission] can be enforced, that there will be firepower. When they know that there can never be firepower, then the situation goes out of hand. And there is another term which has been used recently which is called “robust UN peacekeeping mission.” So if you look at the genesis of this term “robust,” you see it related to enforcement. The setbacks that DPKO had over years in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda had major impact on this. Those three setbacks did make the Organization change a lot in terms of the way it does its business.\footnote{52}

The term robust mandates mentioned above is derived from the so-called Brahimi report published in August 2000, which provides recommendations on strengthening UN peacekeeping.\footnote{53} Other ideas recently added to the UN’s conceptual toolbox are the notions of peacekeeping as “dynamic police work” and “strong policing.”\footnote{54} The purpose of this reconceptualization is the creation of a “middle ground” between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. On the one hand, it is acknowledged today that such a middle ground would enable peacekeeping missions to conduct those imperative and robust military tasks that previously fell outside their mandate. On the other hand, this type of robust peacekeeping is clearly differentiated from large-scale enforcement actions and the waging of war.

The aforementioned shift in the UN peacekeeping strategy is clearly reflected in the mandate of UNMIS, which is based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter.\footnote{55} This opens up maneuvering space for the UNMIS force commander
to authorize the use of force against potential spoilers of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and against those who plan crimes against humanity. Such discretionary powers were not available to force commanders at the time of the Rwandan genocide, as the events of January 1994 demonstrated. Furthermore, the risk of the so-called mission creep from peacekeeping to the waging of war is reduced by the meticulous wording of the mandate of UNMIS that sets the clear and unambiguous parameters, as well as the objectives and powers of the operation, thus preventing the mission from launching enforcement actions beyond its intended scope. This move away from the uncompromising distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement, in which the aims of PKOs rather than bureaucratic norms determine their functions, could be termed a *pragmatic turn* in peacekeeping.

The pragmatic turn has not only altered the mandates of PKOs, but also improved their capacity to adapt to the requirements of local security environments. Although UNAMIR I was never adjusted to the changing conditions of the security environment in Rwanda, due to a lack of political will and an inflexibility of bureaucratic procedures, both AMIS and UNMIS have been designed to respond to the contingencies that emerge from the particular conditions of the Sudanese civil war. One unique feature of Darfur’s security environment has been the almost complete absence of a functioning police force, which has left a security vacuum and enabled recurrent clashes between various Arab militias and village self-defense groups to proceed with impunity. In order to address this specific problem and break the cycle of violence and impunity in the area, as many as 1,560 civilian police were authorized as part of the enhanced AMIS operation by the AU Peace and Security Council on 28 April 2005 while 715 civilian police personnel were authorized by the UN Security Council on 24 March 2005.

With regard to contingency planning for the protection of civilians, one of the most interesting parts of Security Council Resolution 1590 that established UNMIS is Operational Paragraph 5, which envisages a reserve capacity for UNMIS to assist AMIS. The secretary-general’s report to the Security Council on 3 May 2005 initially rejected the diversion of the UNMIS reserve force to Darfur because all UNMIS capacity was required to implement its main function during the start-up phase, that is, to assist in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Such a calculation appears prudent in retrospect; the death of Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLA/M) leader John Garang on 30 July 2005 sent shockwaves throughout Sudan, particularly in Khartoum and Rumbek, generating suspicion among SPLA/M members that he had been assassinated by government forces or their affiliated groups. Subsequent violence and looting resulted in over a hundred casualties and sparked fears of the breakdown
of the peace accord. Furthermore, the SPLA/M leadership had not allocated seats in the new government envisaged by the accord to a number of its senior veterans, which created a potential for a “South-South” war between excluded and disillusioned veterans and the beneficiaries of the accord. However, it is still possible that, following the consolidation of UNMIS positions in southern Sudan, its force reserve will form a support contingent, or perhaps even a quick reaction force, in case large-scale violence resumes in Darfur. The force reserve thus represents another means by which the capacity of UNMIS has been adjusted to respond with flexibility to emergency situations in Sudan.

Another structural change in the UN system that seems relevant to Darfur concerns the responsibility to protect civilians. In the 1990s, this duty was absent from the mandates of UN PKOs. On 11 April 1994 in an informal meeting of the Security Council, the Secretariat argued that the protection of civilians was not within UNAMIR’s mandate, despite the fact that the peacekeeping mission was indeed carrying out this task. As a major contrast between past and contemporary peacekeeping, the protection of civilians currently belongs to the mandates and tasks of all operations, be they peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions, whether officially stated in the mandate or not. This, in turn, may entail the use of enforcement action even in peacekeeping operations against the belligerent parties who threaten civilians or UN troops. At the time of the Rwandan genocide, by contrast, the protection of civilians occurred mainly as a result of personal initiatives of individual peacekeepers rather than as a consequence of compliance with specific UN guidelines for commanders and troops. In fact, such guidelines did not exist at the time. Two years later, James Mayall observed that, “If by ‘new world order’ is meant structural change in the nature of international relations to allow effective coercive intervention on the side of the victims in civil conflicts, then the first and most obvious conclusion is that no such change has occurred.”

There is still no military doctrine for the protection of civilians in UN missions. However, a broad emphasis is currently laid on the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping, which is reflected in the tendency of the Security Council to include this aspect in the mandates of missions. The following statement, for example, is extracted from the report of the tenth anniversary seminar of UNDPKO organized in 2002, which brought together highly reputed UN officials, including the secretary-general and all the former under-secretaries-general who have headed UNDPKO: “Today, maintaining international peace and security cannot be separated from protecting the individual security of civilians. The UN must put the protection of civilians at the center of its peacekeeping and peace-building activities.”

Security Council Resolution 1590 adopted on 24 March 2005, which
established UNMIS, confirms the aforementioned new development regarding the protection of civilians. In operational Paragraph 16, the Security Council “decides that UNMIS is authorized to take the necessary action . . . without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government of Sudan, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.” Furthermore, civilian protection is mentioned in other relevant paragraphs of the mandate of UNMIS, backed up by reference to Chapter VII of the UN Charter (i.e., the authorization of peace enforcement). Although the protection of civilians in Darfur by means of peace enforcement has thus far existed as an unrealized potential, UNMIS has already set up concrete instruments to monitor human rights in the region. By 23 June 2005, UNMIS had deployed forty-one human rights officers to Darfur, and the number was expected to rise to sixty-five in total. In addition, UNMIS has explored the possibility of establishing effective civilian protection teams in Darfur in cooperation with AMIS.

In AMIS, the protection of civilians is effective not only as the potential power to use force as in UNMIS, but also as a core function currently performed by peacekeepers, namely, the guarding of camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). The inhabitants of these camps had been subjected to recurrent assault and rape by progovernment militia. The positive effect of the AMIS presence in the camps was already visible by June 2005 when the UN secretary-general reported that the deployment of AMIS troops and police in and around the camps had contributed to the decrease in the number of rapes in May 2005. Norway had provided AMIS with mobile police stations to guard thirty camps of internally displaced people by the end of June 2005, and AMIS has planned to deploy its presence to thirty-five more camps by the end of September 2005. The vigorous efforts of AMIS to provide twenty-four-hour police protection in IDP camps might even symbolize the revitalization of the idea of safe havens that experienced a rapid rise and fall in the 1990s.

The transfer of command and control functions from UN Headquarters to the level of regional organizations may constitute another pragmatic turn in inaugurating more effective decisionmaking in peacekeeping. The structural weaknesses and inadequacies of command and control functions executed by UN Headquarters have been extensively analyzed in the previous literature. As Stuart Gordon bluntly states, “The UN Secretariat is not structured to fulfil the role of what could be described as a strategic- or operational-level headquarters.” Mats Berdal has also denounced the lack of horizontal and vertical integration between UN departments and individuals, where the horizontal denotes deficiencies in coordination between various UN departments, such as the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the vertical refers to defects in streamlining decisionmaking and enhancing resources.
On the one hand, the transfer of command and control functions from UN Headquarters to the regional level offers a means of avoiding the aforementioned problems. At the same time, it may indicate a return to the application of what Thomas G. Weiss and Jarat Chopra term a “‘sub-contract’ . . . [by member states] acting on behalf of the organization.” The most illustrative example of such subcontracts was the US-led multinational coalition in the Gulf in 1991, an operation that acted under the normative umbrella of Security Council Resolution 678, but was never under the UN command. On the other hand, certain analysts fear that this transfer of functions from the overstretched UN to another resource-starved organization with little previous experience in PKOs, such as the AU, may relocate rather than resolve the problem. Such concerns have already been voiced by officers at NATO’s Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. To summarize the above analysis, this section has examined three aspects of bureaucratic rationalization that seem pertinent to peacekeeping, namely, the mandates of PKOs, the responsibility to protect civilians, and the level of command and control functions. Although this falls short of an exhaustive analysis of PKOs, both AMIS and UNMIS display major improvements in these three areas as compared to PKOs of the 1990s.

Conclusion

The (in)action of the international community in Darfur has been widely regarded as epitomizing the discrepancy between the bold statements and actual deeds of Western governments. While Western leaders have actively promoted the responsibility to protect innocent civilians targeted by genocidal governments, they nevertheless have lacked the commitment and resolve to launch an effective humanitarian intervention in Darfur. In this regard, Paul D. Williams and Alex J. Bellamy argue: “While it is important to acknowledge that in some cases, such as Chechnya, strategic concerns render intervention imprudent, such arguments are less persuasive in this case.” This article endorses the former argument about the mismatch between the rhetoric and commitment of the international community. Yet it is also claimed here, contra Williams and Bellamy, that the strategic calculations and humanitarian concerns of international and regional organizations have found a new balance in Darfur, a balance that can pave the way to a more sustainable peacekeeping than ever before.

To clarify the argument advanced here, one should critically evaluate the following claim of Williams and Bellamy: “Advocates of the responsibility to protect idea must . . . find ways to convince Western states to live up to their statements of intent and to take risks in order to save strangers.” The need to back up stated intentions with necessary actions seems convincing. However,
the latter part of Williams and Bellamy’s assertion fails to acknowledge that excessive risks taken by intervention forces may actually prove counterproductive not only in terms of troop protection, but also of civilian protection. In this regard, UNAMIR provides a crucial lesson concerning the body-bag syndrome; the killing of ten peacekeepers may be sufficient to trigger hasty and irresponsible withdrawals with disastrous humanitarian consequences for civilians. Hence, instead of demanding that governments take more risks in peacekeeping, attention should rather be focused on how to strike a balance between strategic calculations, including troop protection, and humanitarian concerns because such a balance is essential for peacekeepers and civilians alike.

This article has explored two new strategies that the international community has devised in Darfur in order to achieve sustainable peacekeeping. On the one hand, such strategies seek to reconcile humanitarian values with strategic considerations. On the other hand, they have the potential to counterbalance the deep-seated problems of PKOs that have generated quick-fix solutions, withdrawals, and inaction since the 1990s, most notably in Somalia (UNOSOM II) and in Rwanda (UNAMIR). The first section of the article assessed the possibilities of the new division of labor between organizations to overcome the body-bag syndrome, perhaps the greatest problem afflicting peacekeeping. Although the new division of labor could indicate increasing unwillingness of Western countries to send their peacekeepers to what has been portrayed as the African heart of darkness, if the arrangement becomes widely accepted and institutionalized, it could also serve as a means of supplying the military wherewithal desperately needed by African organizations. The second section of this article suggested that the pragmatic shift in peacekeeping may offer a solution to another problem afflicting PKOs, namely, the rigidity of bureaucratic procedures, which has obstructed the protection of civilians in particular.

These conclusions intimate changes in the operation and structure of PKOs, thereby providing hope for both Darfurians and for the future of peacekeeping. How, then, can the causal impact of such transformations be measured? With regard to the situation in Darfur, numerical evidence suggests that the skillful application of the three strategies or techniques outlined above has contributed to, or at least enabled, a decrease in violence. Following the steady increase in carnage since September 2004, January 2005 saw a peak of 300–350 confirmed casualties directly caused by the killing. Since then, the number of deaths has not exceeded 100 per month.78 With regard to the overall UN peacekeeping system, assessing the causal impact of the aforementioned changes on its capacity to conduct humanitarian intervention becomes more difficult. However, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s Action Plan to Prevent Genocide provides a realistic and productive,
though not exclusive, means of conducting such an assessment. The *Action Plan* was published at the commemorative event of the Rwandan genocide on 7 April 2004, and outlines five points: (1) the prevention of armed conflict; (2) the protection of civilians; (3) the ending of judicial impunity; (4) the strengthening of information gathering and early warning; and (5) the implementation of swift and decisive action.\textsuperscript{79}

One of the most pertinent structural transformations relates to Point 2 of the *Action Plan*; the example of Darfur proves that the pragmatic shift away from the rigidity of bureaucratic norms and the new division of labor between relevant organizations can contribute effectively to the protection of civilians. Perhaps the area in the current UN PKO system that most requires urgent attention and further transformation in order to enhance its conflict prevention capacity is Point 5 of the *Action Plan* (i.e., the ability to implement swift and decisive action, including military intervention). The tardiness of international response to the crisis in Darfur should not be downplayed: since the outbreak of violence in February 2003, more than a year passed before the first international organization, the AU, decided to deploy a military operation to put down the massacres. It took two years until UN troops were deployed in southern Sudan, with only a limited mandate to operate in Darfur. Ironically, the vanguard of the UN forces deployed in Sudan was composed of officers from the Standby High Readiness Brigade. The “high” readiness of the UN to intervene in large-scale human rights violations still requires vast improvement.

The latter, rather pessimistic conclusion notwithstanding, this article has provided a more optimistic picture of the implications of Darfur for the future of UN peacekeeping than has the previous literature. The principal lesson of these implications concerns the new division of labor between regional organizations. Previously, the serious incapacity of African organizations to conduct peacekeeping in terms of logistics, air transport, vehicles, and communications had given rise to what has been described as an undignified “begging syndrome”\textsuperscript{80} (i.e., the unsystematic and often high-handed way in which rich Western patrons have given ad hoc “presents” to their African counterparts). The new division of labor between regional organizations represents the first serious attempt to transcend this old system characterized by ad hoc contributions of richer countries to their former colonies, which have frequently been intermingled with neocolonial attempts to expand Western political influence in what has been regarded as the African “backyard.”

The EU Africa Peace Facility established on 19 April 2004 provides a concrete example of the way in which peacekeeping can move away from ad hoc arrangements toward a more permanent, institutionalized, and collective system. The purpose of the Facility, the first of its kind, is to support
African-led, -operated, and -staffed PKOs on the continent (i.e., to strengthen the capacity of the AU and subregional organizations to plan and implement peacekeeping operations in Africa effectively). The EU’s aid to AMIS and other African operations has been channeled through the Facility, which has been deemed the “‘financial muscle’ to back up [the AU’s] political resolve.”81 The Facility sets a precedent not only for EU-AU relations, but also for NATO, which has the potential to establish cooperation schemes in terms of financial aid as well as technical and logistical support. The first step in deepening cooperation between NATO and the AU should be the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two organizations, similar to that proposed by the UN secretary-general for UN-AU relations. The MoU should define a stand-by system of equipment and logistics provided by NATO for the use of the AU and determine the conditions under which such reserves could be applied in “another Darfur.”

Notes

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7. The strengthened AMIS force was planned to include 6,171 military personnel and 1,560 civilian police.


20. According to Michel Foucault, power in Western societies is exercised not only through the military and within political circles, but also in schools, prisons, and expert communities where those subjects labelled “abnormal” are systematically isolated, marginalized, and excluded from the “normal” sphere of life. The criteria determining the cases that deserve attention and those that are bluntly excluded depend less on the case itself (the “Other”) than on the insider account (the “Us”). See, for example, Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 32–33; Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Brighton, UK: Harvester, 1982), pp. 184–185.

21. Although African initiatives aimed at managing conflicts on the continent have mainly been undertaken by subregional rather than regional organizations, most notably the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG), the African Union (AU) has also built peacekeeping capacities at the regional level. In 1993, the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution was set up by the AU’s predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Mechanism established observer missions in Rwanda, Burundi, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. With the transformation of the OAU into the AU, its peacekeeping activities increased further. In February 2003, the AU authorized the deployment of 3,500 troops as part of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB).


37. Michel Foucault’s notion seems apposite here: “We have yet to write the history of that other form of madness, by which men, in an act of sovereign reason, confine their neighbours . . . through the merciless language of non-madness.” Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason (London: Routledge, 1989), p. xi.


39. Major Stefan Stec, who was the head of the humanitarian assistance cell in UNAMIR in 1994, gave his opinion on the ETO incident: “What Belgians did in the ETO, it’s inexcusable. These soldiers were not in danger. They could literally do
what they wanted: drive slowly out, let people march along, or around in front, fire in the air if needed. It would work, it would work. But instead, leaving these people there, give them lunch, and sneak out, and let two and a half thousand people get killed. . . .” Major Stefan Stec, interviewed by the author, London, 27 March 2004.

The withdrawal from ETO was purely a Belgian decision, and UNAMIR Force Commander Dallaire was not even informed of the presence of civilians at the ETO site. Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire, interviewed by the author, London, 27 March 2004; Major-General Henry K. Anyidoho, interviewed by the author, London, 27 March 2004.

40. The presence of Ghanaian troops directly contributed to the saving of 25,000 Rwandan lives.


46. Dallaire interview.


50. Lieutenant-Colonel Ben Klappe, special assistant to the military adviser of the secretary-general, interviewed by the author, New York, 1 December 2003.


52. Ibid.


59. Ibid., pp. 4–5.
61. Haavisto interview.
62. The identity of the Secretariat representative is not disclosed in this context because the statement does not necessarily represent his or her personal opinion, but the Secretariat’s overall policy at the time.
64. Colonel Jussi Saressalo, military adviser to the International Peace Academy, personal communication with the author, 1 September 2004; Samuels, Use of Force, p. 5.
71. Ibid., p. 4.
72. On the emergence of areas designated as “safe havens” or “safe humanitarian zones” in international politics in the early 1990s, see Hikaru Yamashita, Humanitarian Space and International Politics: The Creation of Safe Areas (Alder-shot, UK: Ashgate, 2004).
74. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
79. UN Doc. SG/SM/9197, AFR/893, HR/CN/1077 (7 April 2004).
80. Yorke, “Regional Initiatives,” p. 86.
Prevention of Violent Conflict: 
Tasks and Challenges for the United Nations

Barnett R. Rubin and Bruce D. Jones

In endorsing the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (HLP) in 2004, then Secretary-General Kofi Annan committed the United Nations to a newly elaborated doctrine of conflict prevention.1 If such an agenda is to be more than rhetorical, it will have to overcome basic structural weaknesses of the UN that inhibit it from preventing and managing incipient conflicts that are internal to states or that involve great powers.

By almost any measure, the UN’s record in preventing armed conflict has been mixed to poor. UN activities in conflict prevention have centered on the preventive diplomacy and mediating functions of the secretary-general’s office and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The UN has tried to develop more comprehensive strategies for prevention through the Interdepartmental Framework for Co-ordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action (generally called the Framework Team [FT]) established in 1995. The FT brings together all departments, funds, and agencies, plus the World Bank, to pool information and analysis and develop multidisciplinary strategies to be implemented by the UN organization itself.
The HLP recommended a significant strengthening of the political clout behind such strategies by recommending the use of the proposed Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for early warning and prevention. In his report prior to the September 2005 World Summit, the secretary-general preemptively rejected the proposal, which was unlikely to win assent. He suggested instead that the PBC be available to assist states that seek support in developing capacities to prevent conflict. This intergovernmental body—since established—includes the UN’s political owners, both donor and recipient government representatives, as well as international financial institutions (IFIs). A Peacebuilding Support Office in the Secretariat supports its work and also exercises budgetary authority over a Peacebuilding Fund.

The PBC could also help address additional, internal challenges of the UN. These include a deeply embedded inability to coordinate based on differing mandates, governance structures, and funding mechanisms of different parts of the organization; lack of capacity for knowledge-based strategic planning; weakness of structures to support regional cooperation for conflict prevention; and an introverted overemphasis on the tasks of intra-UN coordination to the detriment of the UN’s potential to mobilize external actors.

This article delineates the three types of conflict prevention activities—operational, structural, and systemic—as seen against the UN’s previous track record and its potential for playing critical roles in the future. It argues that the UN has had limited effectiveness as an implementer of conflict prevention programs, and shows greater promise as a norm setter and a catalyst and strategic center of political action. The article concludes with recommendations regarding how the UN might more actively pursue these roles.

What Is Prevention?

In his 1992 doctrine paper, An Agenda for Peace, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali distinguished peace operations over the life cycle of a conflict. Prevention consisted of mediation or preventive deployment to prevent disputes from escalating to violence. Conflict resolution involved negotiating peace agreements, which were then implemented with the help of peacekeeping and made permanent through peacebuilding, which included preventive aspects.

In practice, it is very difficult to distinguish prevention from other types of peace operations. Since half of all armed conflicts reignite within five years after a peace settlement, many conflicts are recurrences of chronic problems. The development of networks of conflicts within regions means that implementing a “postconflict” agreement in one country may be necessary to preventing war in another. This is the case today in both West Africa and central Africa.
What sets apart postconflict peacebuilding operations is primarily that they are post-agreement, and these agreements provide a mandate for the UN and other international actors. Such operations aim to prevent further armed conflict, but they differ from those operations usually called “preventive,” where there is no agreement and no specific mandate for the international community and where access must be either painstakingly negotiated or disguised as something else. This is the category of preventive action discussed here.

**Analytical Framework**

**Types of Prevention and Approaches to Prevention**

Since then Secretary-General Annan’s report on prevention in 2001, building on prior work by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, discussion of conflict prevention has tended to focus on two distinct modes of prevention: operational and structural. Operational prevention refers to relatively short-term efforts using political or military tools to forestall incipient or escalating violence. Structural prevention refers to efforts (through developmental and economic tools) to address the so-called root causes of conflict. The HLP report also calls for better regulatory frameworks, thereby invoking the third approach, systemic prevention, which seeks to reduce conflict on a global basis with mechanisms not focused on any particular state.

**What Are We Trying to Prevent?**

Prevention requires not just a set of “tools” and “capacities,” but also agreement on what is to be prevented; that is, on definition of the main threats. The UN was founded primarily to prevent interstate war, which it has a mandate and tools to do. Preventive diplomacy during the Cold War aimed mainly to prevent wars between lesser powers. In some cases, the UN tried to prevent escalation by insulating interstate and civil wars from the Cold War context.

The broader prevention paradigm that developed between the end of the Cold War and September 11, 2001, focused on prevention of civil wars, ethnic conflicts, state failure, gross violations of human rights (including war crimes and genocide), and humanitarian emergencies. This agenda corresponded to hopes for increased capacity of the UN, especially the Security Council, to take on a more disinterested role as the guardian of a global humanitarian public interest as a result of the end of the Cold War deadlock among veto-wielding permanent members. The new agenda also responded to the transformation of the dominant form of war from interstate to so-called
internal conflict, and hence a change in threat perceptions. Since 9/11, US concerns have defined terrorism as the chief threat, though still without an international consensus on its definition, let alone its cause or diagnosis. For others, a major threat has now become preemptive wars and other policies launched by the United States in response to perceived or asserted threats of terrorism. Some counterterrorism policies, such as new military aid flows, and control and surveillance over international movements and transactions, may provoke violence or repression, while others may complement prevention of humanitarian disasters. The terrorist threat is partly linked to other types of threat definitions, notably to “failed” and “rogue” states. The US response to terrorism has been focused on confronting rogue states, not assisting failed states, although events in Afghanistan and Iraq have dragged an initially reluctant Bush administration toward “nation building.” The UN has been more focused on “failed states” and related types of armed conflicts. There are some policies, especially with respect to systemic prevention as mentioned below, where the two threat definitions have some convergent implications.

Recent UN Activities in Operational Prevention

The Concept of Operational Prevention

Interstate operational prevention is the core mission of the UN as a whole and is carried out both by the Security Council and, for less acute cases or cases involving less powerful nations, by the secretary-general or the DPA acting under general mandates. In internal conflicts, it is the most controversial part of preventive action by the UN because it entails direct involvement in the internal affairs of a state. Nepal, Macedonia, and Myanmar are cases where the UN, represented by the DPA, failed to gain formal acceptance of even a good offices role to try to prevent escalation of armed conflict.

Operational prevention can include: persuasion or negotiation, by means of good offices or mediation; sanctions or threats; and incentives, including transformational policies that do not simply bribe actors to behave differently, but change their perceived alternatives. It is the latter type of policies that some UN officials seem to have in mind when they envision a partnership of the UN’s political wing with its development wing through the FT. In this case, operational prevention is closely linked to what are usually thought of as structural measures. Military intervention can also be a tool for operational prevention, although obviously of a different character and solely within the province of the Security Council and member states.

Without action by the Security Council, the DPA alone can offer only the good offices of the secretary-general or its mediation services. The recommendations of the HLP specifically concerning prevention of internal
wars focused on regulatory frameworks and sanctions regimes, information and analysis, preventive diplomacy and mediation, and the rare option of preventive deployment. The panel also recommended a more systematic method of identifying and training mediators and of supporting their activities with information, analysis, and options. In the most prevalent type of potential or actual conflict situations today, however, governments rarely consent to such a UN role.

Recent Cases: Interstate Wars

In disputes between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan and Nigeria and Cameroon, the UN helped neighboring states resolve disputes over oil-related border issues. In these cases, the secretary-general and the DPA as his secretariat played a classic mediating role of preventive diplomacy. Subsequent actions on Gabon-Equatorial Guinea followed the same pattern.

In the case of Israel-Lebanon (involving a relatively powerful state that generally resists UN involvement, with US backing), the UN special coordinator and Security Council acting in concert arguably helped forestall a clash between Hezbollah and Israel, possibly leading to renewed war, after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in June 2000. Forceful and consistent Security Council action in defense of its own resolutions increased the political costs to the parties of violating those resolutions. Here, the DPA and the secretary-general were able to mobilize the Security Council around a coherent strategy largely developed by the special coordinator of the secretary-general.

Not all cases of prevention with respect to interstate conflict between small- or medium-sized states succeeded, however. Neither the DPA nor the Security Council anticipated or prevented the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Neither did the UN succeed in its own terms in prevention in Kashmir or Iraq, while the US-led action in Afghanistan was authorized by the Security Council as legitimate self-defense. Though a small set, the above were all cases of interstate wars since 2000. The UN’s track record in them appears to confirm an important commonsense understanding of the role of the UN as an organization: that its conflict management and prevention activities are limited to small- and medium-sized states. Where the interests of the major powers are heavily involved or where a major power is a party to the conflict, the UN, including the Security Council, is less likely to play a decisive role.

Recent Cases: Internal Wars

The UN’s record of performance in internal or transnational conflicts—the bulk of wars for the past two and a half decades—is decidedly weaker than on interstate wars.
How the UN sets priorities for action among potential conflicts remains unclear. The DPA, some member states (e.g., the US State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization), and other international organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have established watch lists. The UN could potentially serve as a clearinghouse for these lists.

The UN’s political role in internal wars of major states is just as limited as its role in wars between them. No part of the UN has any activity related, for example, to Chechnya or other parts of the northern Caucasus, Uyghur rebels in western China, or the various groups waging limited internal conflicts in India. An attempt by the UN special expert on human rights in Afghanistan to call attention to the abuse of prisoners in US detention led to the termination of his mandate in 2004 only a few weeks before violent demonstrations sparked by the abuses he had documented.

**Mediation**

In none of the cases studied has the DPA succeeded in obtaining consent of a government to play an overtly political role of mediation between governmental and nongovernmental actors. Short of Chapter VII intervention, mediating an internal conflict constitutes the most politically problematic type of UN conflict prevention. The process treats both governments and opposition groups as parties to a conflict, rather than granting the government a monopoly on legitimate representation. It defines the problem as international rather than domestic and labels certain events as acts of war rather than crimes. The appearance of taking sides becomes almost unavoidable. Even the most scrupulous neutrality of expression cannot disguise the fact that the UN is treating as a political actor a group that the government may depict as criminal deviants.

During the civil war in Nepal, the DPA desk officer used second-track approaches and discreet contacts with political parties in parliament, civil society, and the press to create a constituency for UN involvement. Based on this work, Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi visited the kingdom, and the UN also established a human rights mission. While domestic political changes rather than UN mediation proved decisive in ending the conflict, the relationships that the UN had developed with multiple actors, including the Maoist guerrillas, facilitated its role as a monitor of the peace process. This is an example of the UN acting as a focal point for unofficial actors. Such a strategy is not feasible in countries such as Myanmar, however, where neither the press nor any other part of civil society has sufficient autonomy from the regime.

In Colombia, the UN Secretariat role was limited by the ambivalence toward it by two very different successive governments. In 2000, Bogotá
asked the secretary-general to appoint a special adviser on Colombia while insisting that he have no overt political role. The government elected in mid-2002 vacillated on the utility of the UN’s good offices, while prioritizing a military solution to the conflict. The special adviser’s role in Colombia was welcomed by member states at a loss as to how to counter the overwhelming influence of the United States within Colombia. However, the lack of tangible results exemplifies the difficulties confronting the secretary-general’s good offices when the will to make use of them is lacking among parties to the conflict.

In one large African country that faces sharply declining development indicators of the type that often precede wars, the DPA and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) have engaged in discreet support to the leadership to head off rising tensions. The serious constraints on operational prevention in this case arise from the government’s intense sensitivities regarding perceived affronts to its sovereignty.

Institution Building

Where consent for direct action is not forthcoming, the UN has tried to create coalitions of actors favoring preventive action. These have included engaging with the government through training and institution-building exercises. This was first tried in Nepal, where the UN failed to win consent for use of the secretary-general’s good offices to resolve the conflict with the Maoist insurgency. It was tried again, with greater success, in Niger, to obtain government consent for the development of a national forum for conflict prevention without focusing on any particular internal conflict. The experience in Niger applied some lessons from Nepal, in particular concerning the degree of preparation needed, but the different—and politically more modest—goals were also a factor in its greater degree of acceptance. Niger was the first example of a joint program by the UNDP and the DPA now administered by UNDP’s Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery to strengthen capacity for conflict prevention in developing countries.

This study confirms the conclusion that led to the establishment of this program: that the UN has been more successful in obtaining access and cooperation for proactive institution-strengthening interventions that do not require political recognition of violent nonstate actors. Governments are becoming less hesitant to agree to such programs. This appears to be the type of initiative foreseen by former Secretary-General Annan when he stated that “it would be valuable if Member States could at any stage make use of the Peacebuilding Commission’s advice and could request assistance from a standing fund for peacebuilding to build their domestic institutions for reducing conflict, including through strengthening the rule-of-law institutions.”

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Regional Approaches to Preventing Internal Conflict

In Central Asia and West Africa, the UN through the FT has taken an explicitly regional approach to conflict management and prevention.

In Central Asia, where the major challenge has been to find a way to interact with Uzbekistan, the UN chose an approach focused on regional institution building with quasi-governmental think tanks rather than direct bilateral engagement. This approach has not yet succeeded.

A proposal from Kyrgyzstan for a UN conflict prevention center for the region in Bishkek was opposed not only by Uzbekistan, but also initially by the United States and Russia, both of which saw direct counterterrorism as having a higher and conflicting claim on their attention. Faced with resistance by the regional power backed by two major powers, the UN made use of other parts of the UN system, including the personal intervention of the secretary-general himself with heads of state, and also brought in other regional states and multilateral organizations, such as the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum. This is an unusual example of a multifaceted political strategy aimed at building a global and regional coalition for preventive action as a counterweight to member state influence.

Progress has stalled, however, since a November 2003 meeting in Ashgabat. The UNDP did not manage to implement the quite modest follow-up activities related to border and transit issues, and the DPA could not gain consent for a more permanent intergovernmental forum. The combination of resistance from some actors in the region and dependence on disparate authorities and budgets within the UN system has thus far thwarted this effort. In a similar, but more ambitious, undertaking, it took seven years from the passage of a Security Council resolution to the first convening of the Conference on Security, Development, and Democracy in Central Africa.

The UN has had more success in establishing the institutional framework for a regional approach to conflict prevention in West Africa, through a regional office headed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah in Dakar and a partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Unlike both Central Asia and central Africa, this region has a subregional organization with some legitimacy and capacity that covers the geographical scope of most of the subregion’s conflicts, and that is underpinned by the membership of the regional hegemon, Nigeria. Nonetheless, it would be hard to qualify the overall program as a success. In the past seven years, the UN has worked hard to catch up with the rapid mutations of violence in this region, but nonetheless remains a secondary actor, working in partnership with ECOWAS and the former colonial powers, the UK and France. UN action did not succeed in heading off the transnational conflict in and around the Parrot’s Beak, halting the
escalation of conflict to civil war in Côte d’Ivoire, despite the secretary-general’s early deployment of a senior envoy for preventive purposes in 2000. Nor did the UN succeed in blocking repeated recurrences of war in Liberia and Sierra Leone; the most recent agreements developed largely from the initiatives of other actors, though with the involvement of various UN departments. An outbreak of violent conflict in Guinea in 2007 was averted, but ECOWAS and the African Union played more critical roles than did the UN.

A reasonably comprehensive program of prevention in West Africa now would require a complex effort including, among other things:

- Avoidance of conflict recurrence through well-conducted peace-building operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone;
- Comprehensive monitoring and support of a very fragile agreement in Côte d’Ivoire;
- Firefighting to avoid escalation in Togo;
- Use of good offices and regional diplomacy in Guinea to promote opening of the political system and prevent the conflict over elections from escalating to civil war;
- Coordination of these operations, together with efforts in other countries, through the regional office, for instance, by assuring that weapons buy-back programs are timed and priced in such a way as to complement rather than contradict each other, in view of the mobility of armed groups and arms trafficking;
- Efforts to assure that the subregion’s important countries, first of all Nigeria, and then Ghana and Senegal, remain stable and capable, with legitimate governments, so that they can sponsor and implement sub-regional peace efforts;6
- Improvement of the peacebuilding capacities of ECOWAS and the African Union;
- Continued efforts to cope with arms trafficking, diamond trafficking, drug trafficking, mobile cross-border armed groups, and informal economies that fund violence;
- Resettlement and employment of displaced people and refugees, especially young men;
- Halting the spread of groups affiliated with Al-Qaida in northern Nigeria and the Sahel, while also monitoring US counterterrorism activities and their potentially destabilizing effects; and
- Monitoring potentially destabilizing effects of debt crises and commodity prices important to countries in the area so as to prevent economic shocks.

In operational terms, conflict prevention in West Africa would require the UN to act much more as a coordinator of bilateral and multilateral activities
and as the focal point for action by other organizations, rather than just an implementing agency.

**Conclusion: Limits to Operational Prevention**

Lack of government consent for a UN good offices or mediation role presents the main obstacle, even when dealing with fairly weak states. In many cases, it is only when nonstate actors have proved themselves unavoidably part of the political landscape, often by persistent violence, that governments are willing to allow others, including the UN, to help deal with them. Unfortunately, this is how movements learn that violence is necessary to obtain recognition. Certainly, this was a lesson learned by the Albanian nationalists in Kosovo and then in Macedonia.

The UN Secretariat’s lack of clear rules regarding how to treat the use of force by nonstate actors may actually induce violence. Because there is no procedure, or set of criteria, by which a subnational group can claim recognition or inclusion in a political process, some turn to violence in hopes not of victory but of provoking international intervention. A mandate for conflict prevention provides incentives for movements to pose a risk of violent conflict.

The cases studied do not indicate that the UN acting alone is particularly well placed to stem the escalation of conflict by offering good offices, except in interstate wars involving low to medium powers. The UN may do more in situations where it may play a convening and coordination role among actors who have more power and resources. That this is not the primary mode of engagement relates to broader questions about how the UN sees itself as an organization involved in different modes of conflict prevention—especially structural prevention, in which it engages through an interagency process.

**UN Roles in Structural Prevention**

**The Concept of Structural Prevention**

Structural prevention consists of measures to decrease the risk of conflict in particular spaces (states or regions). The HLP report cites research showing the link between poverty and risk of internal armed conflict. Structural prevention consists of measures to help countries and regions break free of the mutually reinforcing equilibrium of poverty and violent conflict. Structural prevention measures aim to reduce the risk by finding some low-cost ways to strengthen institutions; targeting key institutional problems (managing
natural resource incomes, transforming illegal and informal economies, building state institutions); alleviating certain types of inequality; targeting youth unemployment, regional conflicts, arms trading, drugs, and so forth.

The large number of factors that in some sense contribute to conflict can create confusion. Once one defines prevention as “addressing root causes of conflict,” virtually anything that the UN does can be rehatted as conflict prevention in order to show conformity to the new mandate or appeal to certain donors.

Structural prevention should aim at risk reduction through sound governance and institution building, including public financial accountability, natural resource rent management, social policies, and incorporation of both informal and illegal sectors. But breaking the cycle of poverty-war-poverty may require more targeted interventions (i.e., structural prevention focused on governance, as well as operational prevention that may be needed to gain time for longer-term structural prevention to work). Hence, targeted prevention must integrate both structural and operational elements.

Insofar as structural prevention is about reducing the destitution of a rather large group of countries trapped in a state of underdevelopment, the UN is not particularly well endowed to engage in structural prevention. UNDP is a small development actor compared to the IFIs, which are small compared to the global private sector. Many analysts believe that the strategies of these institutions may weaken states and incite conflict rather than the reverse.

Most of the structural prevention activities in which UNDP is involved seem to be about targeted institution building. Another part of structural prevention consists of a sort of second-order operational prevention: building institutions that increase local, national, and regional capacities to engage in operational prevention. The UNDP-DPA program that established a Forum on Conflict Prevention in Niger largely consists of such activities, and efforts based on a similar partnership model have since been launched in Ghana, Guyana, and Yemen.

Creating or strengthening the capacities of regional institutions to act as forums for dialogue and problem solving can also be a form of structural prevention. Such is the strategic goal of the UN program in Central Asia, where such an organization has yet to be established, and in West Africa, where building ECOWAS’s capacity is a principal goal. Such regional institutions or forums could deal with regional arms races, border issues, cross-border development issues such as trade and transit (important for the high-risk group of landlocked countries), and coordination of the implementation of systemic prevention measures at the regional level. They also increase capacities for operational prevention and for coordinating the implementation of peace agreements and reconstruction programs.
Interagency Relations and the Multidimensional Nature of Structural Prevention

The UN’s operational doctrine for structural or multidimensional prevention focuses on interagency cooperation through the FT. More recently, the DPA and UNDP have developed a more flexible partnership for strengthening capacities for conflict prevention in developing countries. Theoretically, the FT should develop strategies to be implemented in a coordinated manner by the UN as a whole, combining political, development, human rights, and humanitarian tools.

Several evaluations, however, found little evidence of actual implementation of such a coordinated approach. The process of building consensus among so many actors can be cumbersome and time consuming, especially because their governance and funding structures virtually require them to act at cross-purposes. Without cooperation with the IFIs or bilateral donors, the ability of the UN to wield influence through structural prevention tools or to use aid as an incentive is limited. While the World Bank is a member of the FT, its governance constrains coordination with overall strategy.

The main form of cooperation occurs between the DPA and UNDP. All cases in which the DPA, which has no field presence, tries to deal with internal conflict require some form of cooperation with UNDP through the resident coordinators. States, including those that are generally most suspicious about prevention, are willing to host a “development” presence that works in cooperation with the government. They would be unwilling to host a political presence that might “put the government on trial,” as the prime minister of one small African country put it when discussing a prevention exercise, according to a UN senior official.

Though improved in recent years, the relationship of the DPA and UNDP is often fraught with tension. Neither the DPA nor UNDP have been fully able to exploit the potential synergies in the relationship, partly because of restrictions imposed by member states and partly because of bureaucratic and funding problems. Despite UNDP’s presence on the ground, it is formally precluded from political reporting. Its staff is occupied with activities other than political analysis and, in any case, is often not trained or equipped to carry it out.

In recent years, the UN has carried out a number of training programs in conflict analysis for prevention, as well as strategic staff secondments, to try to build the needed capacity within the limits set by member states. A disproportionate amount of energy seems to have gone into promoting small programs of interagency cooperation while the major debates and activities about development and conflict proceed elsewhere, notably in the World Bank, among some bilateral donors, and in the unofficial sector.
UN Roles in Systemic Prevention

An additional type of conflict prevention, which the report of the HLP referred to as the improvement of regulatory systems, is systemic prevention.\(^9\) In his July 2006 report to the General Assembly, then Secretary-General Annan adopted this term for the first time, defining *systemic prevention* as “measures to address global risk of conflict that transcend particular States.”\(^10\) Systemic prevention consists of measures to lessen the global prevalence of violent conflict through measures not targeted at specific states. The World Bank report *Breaking the Conflict Trap* states that “many of the things that would make rebellion more difficult require action at the regional or global level, and the international community can actively discourage rebellion without taking sides in political disputes.”\(^11\)

In his July 2006 report to the General Assembly on conflict prevention, the UN secretary-general summarized such measures as:

- International efforts to regulate trade in resources that fuel conflict, such as diamonds; attempts to stem illicit flows of small arms and light weapons and the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; efforts to combat narcotics cultivation, trafficking and addiction; action against HIV/AIDS; and steps to reduce environmental degradation, with its associated economic and political fallout. Many of these endeavours include international regulatory frameworks and the building of national capacities.\(^12\)

Other measures include:

- Blocking activities that create situations prone to conflict (anticorruption measures; anti-money laundering policies, norms and sanctions against purchase of war booty futures contracts or kidnapping insurance by corporations, prohibition of use of public funds for ransom).
- Creating incentives for peaceful behavior (access to aid, membership in the European Union, assistance under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative).
- Cushioning countries from the effects of commodity price shocks.

The secretary-general also included “systemic actions to strengthen norms and institutions for peace,” such as international treaties and covenants on human rights and humanitarian law, the International Criminal Court, the norm of the “responsibility to protect” populations from massive violations, regional norms against overthrowing elected governments, and the culture of peace.\(^13\)

The UN system as a whole has lacked a well-defined strategic goal in the field of prevention. It could define such a goal as lowering the global prevalence of violent conflict, for instance, by halving the number of civil
wars within a given period of time. As suggested by Paul Collier, the secretary-general could establish goals and benchmarks for this, as he has done with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This would provide a more realistic benchmark of prevention than trying to analyze whether particular actions by the UN or others prevented particular conflicts.

**DPA as a Conflict Prevention Institution**

The DPA requires special consideration as the intended focal point for conflict prevention in the UN and the operational base for most UN mediation activity.

**Strategic Analysis**

The DPA was organized basically as a conference service for the members and the Secretariat of the secretary-general. It was not designed to have, and consequently lacks, the capacity to undertake the analysis needed for prevention. Prevention cannot succeed without general analysis of risk, specific analysis of developing situations, and evaluation of the effectiveness of different tactics and strategies. The DPA has undertaken a number of initiatives to remedy this deficit, but more substantial reforms have been resisted by member states.

The DPA’s analytic capabilities are limited by its lack of field presence. This is particularly the case for the type of analysis necessary for operational prevention (including in postconflict operations aimed at preventing conflict recurrence). While analysis of risk factors may be carried on to some extent in a quasi-academic manner using statistics and broad observations, analysis for operational prevention requires much more specific and context-sensitive knowledge. When dealing with a situation that has potential for escalation, it is vital to be on the spot with good sources of real-time information. The analyst has to be able to see under the surface phenomena that the press reports. In trying to devise a strategy to deal with a potential “spoiler” group, he or she needs to know who really makes decisions in the group, what degree of maneuver the decisionmaker has, to what extent the group is ideologically committed to a goal and to what extent the group is opportunistic, what type of opportunists the group’s members are, and so on. Such information may not be available on the Internet, in the press, or in statistical databases. It cannot be acquired in spare moments between drafting reports, talking points, and speeches at a desk in New York. It requires a presence on the ground and the building of relationships with networks of people. Member states are not wrong when they compare such analysis to intelligence.
Currently, most desk officers in the DPA are occupied with tasks that do not require research skills. Hence, they have little incentive to hone them and, if they come to the department with such skills, they are likely to lose them. It is necessary to adopt a more strategic and research-based approach to prevention, in which different types of research and analysis would find their appropriate place, most likely in dedicated units or in collaboration with other institutions.

The DPA and other parts of the UN are trying to address these gaps in a number of ways. Increasingly, routine collaboration with outside actors is helping to fill the gap in country and regional knowledge and provide UN actors with a sounding board for ideas and strategies. The “knowledge project” evaluated different ways that the UN collects and gathers information.16

### Funding and Focal Points

The DPA is officially the focal point for prevention in the UN, but it would require additional analytical and organizational resources to carry out this role. It is more totally dependent on the Secretariat budget than any other body in the UN. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations receives assessed contributions for peacekeeping operations, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance can raise voluntary contributions through the appeals process. The only comparable source of surge funding for the DPA is the trust fund for prevention, which is considerably smaller. Approval of disbursements from the fund, which is managed in the secretary-general’s office, takes time to comply with relevant UN regulations on the management of trust funds and is not useful for quick response.

### Research and Early Warning

An organizational culture of prevention requires several different types of research for different types of preventive action. The types of research needed to document global trends, to identify risk factors, and to make context-specific strategic and tactical decisions are quite different.

As the focal point for prevention, the DPA could serve as the center for identifying risk factors as well as strategies for mitigating their effects. For the DPA to actually exercise this role, it would have to establish a research capacity, analogous to that of the World Bank and be able to place countries on a watch or risk list, just as the World Bank evaluates countries’ economic policy performance. It would make analytical sense for the DPA to collaborate with the Bank to develop an analogous list and program, based on research by both organizations, to establish priorities for prevention of violent conflict.
Mobilizing Non-UN Actors

In only a few cases (notably Central Asia) did UN officials working on prevention succeed in mobilizing action by major donors (states, IFIs, or other multilaterals), politically influential states, NGOs, or the private sector. When he was special representative of the secretary-general in Burundi, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah made effective use of both local and international NGOs to amplify his message and try to promote coordination among many actors. The UN is more likely to succeed in galvanizing significant multidimensional preventive efforts through such means than simply through interagency cooperation within the organization itself.

The DPA, acting on behalf of the secretary-general, can convene delegates of key member states, meet with them individually, organize informal discussions, and, in some circumstances, establish more formal “friends groups.” Convening formal meetings is likely to encounter objections in cases where the UN is seeking to help states deal with internal violent conflict, but less formal means might be used. Regional organizations can be useful partners in such efforts because they are often more palatable to the states involved.

The role of various parts of the UN among all these actors in the overall task of preventing violent conflicts is not settled. The dominant internal paradigm of how the UN should function in prevention—that the DPA is the focal point for prevention, which should operate through an interagency process that mobilizes the resources of UN bureaucracies—does not explicitly mention the UN’s major role as the coordinator and potential mobilizer of member states and other global actors, though such actions could be part of a strategy approved by the FT. Since the UN is not a major “development” actor (compared to IFIs and bilaterals), its role in structural prevention as it relates to development issues is necessarily limited.

The UN, as an intergovernmental organization, can help member states identify common interests (e.g., in preventing a particular conflict) and align their respective bilateral strategies. This approach, quite familiar in mediation in the form of friends groups, is as yet apparently underdeveloped with respect to prevention. While the DPA cannot convene member states with the authority of the Security Council or other UN legislative bodies, it has convened friends groups, often at the assistant secretary-general level. Often it is effective to do so with an appropriate regional or unofficial organization, or it can prevail on one state to invite others. The presence of IFIs may also act as an incentive.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This article suggests some ways in which the UN as a whole may move toward playing a more central role in identifying the goals and principles of
conflict prevention and a more limited one in implementing them. The UN should expand its view of prevention beyond whatever it can directly implement as an organization. Conflict prevention can be a bilateral, regional, or nongovernmental activity, and the UN operational role is variable. One of the roles of the UN should be to promote greater cooperation and a more self-conscious dialogue to set common goals and agree on a division of labor, as it did with its European partners with respect to the South Balkans in 2000.

In addition to interagency coordination, the UN's efforts in structural prevention will nearly always require close collaboration with the World Bank, multilateral and bilateral donors, regional states, and the private sector. Internal coordination mechanisms like the FT are certainly useful for tackling one piece of the puzzle, namely, interagency coordination, but they do not address the much wider (and, in most cases, more important) challenge of mobilizing bilateral action and concerted action by other organizations.

In his July 2006 report on conflict prevention to the UN General Assembly, the secretary-general highlighted “systemic prevention.” He also called for reforms in financing of preventive action, in the collection and management of information, and in collaboration of the UN with other actors to meet some of the challenges identified above. The global focus of systemic prevention responds to the appropriate concern of many in the G-77 that a lot of the drivers of violent conflict are found in the developed countries. It could also meet concerns of the United States because there is some convergence of means for preventing both terrorism and armed conflict in areas such as covert finance, money laundering, arms trafficking, and the drug policy regime. Systemic prevention also provides a context to address the role of global development norms and strategies (including the MDGs) in conflict prevention and propose inclusion of a reduction in the global level of violent conflict as another formal goal to be monitored by the UN system.

Notes

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5. *In Larger Freedom*, par. 115.

6. The DPA and the UN Country Team have begun working toward a preventive forum in Ghana, partly modeled on the experience in Niger.


8. Private conversation between author and anonymous senior UN official.


Moving Beyond Mediation: The OAS Transforming Conflict in Guatemala

Yasmine Shamsie

In 1995–1996 the hemisphere’s multilateral forum, the Organization of American States, launched a conflict prevention and management program in Guatemala entitled “Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peacebuilding in Guatemala.” The overarching goal was to help Guatemalans address ongoing tensions and political disputes, particularly related to the implementation of the historic peace accords. This article provides a detailed account of this OAS attempt to prevent and diffuse conflict, suggesting that it represents a novel effort that draws heavily on the conflict transformation approach to conflict management. Still, it argues that, at the conceptual level, there appears to be a disconnect between this approach to conflict prevention and the Organization’s broader approach to peacebuilding, which embraces a free-market path to development, including the implementation of market-oriented economic reforms. Keywords: conflict prevention, Guatemala, Organization of American States, peacebuilding, reconstruction.

Since the signing of the historic Guatemala Peace Accords in December 1996, the hemisphere’s multilateral political forum, the Organization of American States (OAS), has supported the country’s fledgling democracy through various peacebuilding initiatives. Particularly relevant to the Guatemalan situation is the fact that the OAS recently expanded its peacebuilding agenda to include conflict resolution and prevention programs. It is during the phase following the signing of peace accords that activities aimed at preventing a renewed outbreak of violent conflict are considered especially valuable. With this in mind, the Organization established a special program to help Guatemalans address ongoing tensions and political disagreements, particularly those related to the implementation of the peace accords. The program entitled “Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peacebuilding in Guatemala” (OAS/PROPAZ or PROPAZ) focused primarily on strengthening the capacities of governmental, civic, and community institutions to manage and resolve disputes in collaborative ways.
This article explores OAS efforts to expand its peacebuilding work into the area of conflict prevention and management through an examination of the PROPAZ program (1995–2003). I do not set out to evaluate PROPAZ’s empirical record per se, although I will offer a judgment in this regard. I provide, instead, an informed account of the program’s work in order to highlight a shift in OAS peacebuilding theory and practice. I argue that, although the OAS continues to practice conventional peacebuilding work that emphasizes technical assistance to member states, it recently has adopted conflict management approaches that entail greater engagement with civil society actors. Still, at the conceptual level, there appears to be a disconnect between this newer conflict prevention work and the Organization’s broader peacebuilding approach, which Roland Paris has termed liberal internationalism. The PROPAZ approach, which places emphasis on the question of social justice and rejects the objective of restoring the status quo ante, sits uncomfortably within a paradigm that privileges order and stability and views social justice as a low priority. Finally, I argue that, although the adoption of this new more comprehensive approach to conflict prevention is praiseworthy, it was not systematically applied in the case of Guatemala. Crucial societal actors related to land conflicts (the private sector and the military) were not invited to participate in the intersectoral or zonal components of the program. While large landowners were invited, they could not be persuaded to participate. Given the critical role of these actors in past and current conflicts, their absence reduces PROPAZ’s ability to act as an agent of lasting change.

This article serves one other purpose. Andy Knight has rightly noted the lack of conceptual clarity when it comes to peacebuilding. The degree of conceptual and definitional imprecision in the area of conflict management is no less daunting. Indeed, a variety of programs and strategies are slotted almost interchangeably under the rubrics of conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. Therefore, I explore the assumptions that underlie the PROPAZ program in order to determine the theoretical approach that has informed its practice on the ground. Situating the program within the conflict prevention literature makes it easier to track the evolution of OAS work in this area.

I begin by discussing the Organization’s approach to peacebuilding. I then situate the PROPAZ program within the conflict management literature, suggesting that it draws on the conflict transformation approach. I conclude by arguing that PROPAZ sits uncomfortably within the overall peacebuilding framework employed by the OAS because a conflict transformation approach (with its focus on social justice and structural change) is unlikely to thrive within a liberal internationalism paradigm.
The OAS and Peacebuilding

One of the principal objectives of peacebuilding in countries torn by internal conflict is to improve their capacity to manage future conflict without violence. The peacebuilding exercise is a complex one that can include activities related to disarmament, supporting democratic governance, human rights, the rule of law, and sustainable development. While there remains continued disagreement regarding the empirical and theoretical boundaries of the peacebuilding exercise, what has become clear is its decidedly political nature. The fact that peacebuilding encompasses such a wide assortment of activities across such a broad spectrum of developmental fields (political, social, and economic) has led some practitioners and analysts to suggest that many countries are being forced into embracing a set of economic and social policies that are not of their choosing, and which, in some cases, could be “contradictory to the very values and aims of peace building.”

Paris has suggested that the peacebuilding efforts of international agencies are guided by a paradigm of liberal internationalism that champions liberal democracy and market-oriented economics. Compliance with these prescriptions is ensured by “imposing conditionalities requiring states to undertake specific economic and political reforms in exchange for economic aid, and by taking on quasi-governmental functions in war-shattered states.”

The OAS approach to peacebuilding has been informed by the assumptions and prescriptions contained in liberal internationalism. The Organization has identified the liberal paradigm (market-oriented reforms, representative democracy, civil society building, and good governance) as the most fitting form of economic and political governance, and as the most promising approach to reducing social tensions and preventing violent conflict. Predictably, the Organization has advanced a blend of market-friendly economic reforms and liberal political policies for the hemisphere, persuaded that they will result in a stable and lasting peace. In fact, in the early 1990s, the OAS established the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) and OAS member states enthusiastically embraced a US proposal for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), signalling the consolidation of a new hemispheric consensus based on transitions to representative democracy combined with economic liberalization. Since that time the Organization has been associated in the economic realm with neoliberal reforms and structural adjustment.

On a more practical level, OAS peacebuilding efforts have tended toward a top-down approach driven by government policies and activity. The Organization is accountable to member states and responds to their official requests on the peacebuilding front. OAS work in Guatemala (i.e.,
PROP AZ), as we shall see, marks a shift toward more direct and systematic engagement with civil society. In general, OAS peacebuilding activities have been in the main political. Although the Organization has at times supported disarmament and demobilization processes, it has focused primarily on the political problems that lead to violent conflict. This has translated into assisting in the creation or rebuilding of governance institutions, and helping to develop peaceful avenues for conflicts that emerge over power and resources, in addition to helping to organize and monitor elections. In sum, the OAS concentrates on “postwar democratization.” As such it has been forthright in its position on the elusive and much contested concept of democracy. It has articulated in its governing instruments, and through the Summit of the Americas process, that it supports “representative democracy,” which it essentially views as an institutional approach to decisionmaking. Elections involving universal suffrage and a regime that guarantees political freedoms characterize the OAS model. Concerns over participation, equity, and social justice are given less weight because they are considered to follow from the establishment of democracy rather than being intrinsically linked to its consolidation. The OAS has actively supported democratic development in member states since the early 1990s.8 Still, technical assistance in this area has been aimed primarily at governments and political parties rather than civil society.

Conflict prevention is a new area of work for the OAS but, like its defense of democracy strategies, it is contentious. The apprehension stems from power asymmetries between the United States and member states, and a history of US intervention that has made Latin Americans staunch defenders of sovereignty and noninterference—even when the goals (conflict prevention and democracy promotion) seem noble. As Richard Bloomfield has pointed out, the smaller states have been particularly concerned fearing they will be the more likely targets of intervention.9 So far, practice has borne this out. Interestingly, it is the larger states that have been least supportive of the OAS conflict prevention agenda.10 As for the Guatemala-PROP AZ program, there was some resistance early on. Still, because it was a small “boutiquish” program under the UPD and the protective arm of its very capable director, it acquired considerable autonomy in terms of goals and strategy. It is worth noting that the United States has been a strong supporter of the OAS moving into conflict prevention work and was the main funder of early efforts in this direction, including PROPAZ.

**The Guatemalan Peace Process and PROPAZ**

Guatemalans hold the unenviable distinction of having their past described as “a long history of intense socio-political violence.”11 Stephen Baranyi
has usefully summarized the country’s history as “a combination of struggles and accommodation between elites (whose status has been based on their Spanish extraction and their control over strategic resources such as land, capital and military power) and the poor, largely indigenous and rural (but also increasingly mixed race and urban) majority.” The most recent stretch of violence, during the 1980s, ended with the signing of the National Peace Accords between the government and the insurgent Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity [URNG]). These accords were substantive and comprehensive, covering democratization, human rights, refugee resettlement, socioeconomic reforms, reform of the armed forces, and historical clarification of human rights abuses. The accords were an impressive achievement, not only because they succeeded in putting an end to the conflict, but also because their provisions sought to address the deeper root causes of the conflict. In sum, the accords represent the product of diametrically opposing forces making critical concessions on very contentious issues.

While the negotiation of the accords constituted an impressive achievement, a difficult and more politically charged implementation phase remained ahead. Guatemalan civil society was incorporated into this process through the creation of two types of commissions for building policy proposals: comisiones paritarias (parity commissions) charged with tackling themes related to the historical discrimination of the Maya peoples (issues of land reform, educational and linguistic reform, etc.), and a second type of commission that brought together wide representation from the sectors of society with a stake in a particular issue. Commission participants were expected to work collaboratively to shape proposals, which would be forwarded for legislative reform. This required the parties to develop a common perspective on the causes of the conflict and to build a shared plan for addressing them.

OAS/PROPAZ was established in 1995 as a pilot program to support Guatemala’s fledgling peace process. It was expanded after the accords were signed to help build the capacity of both government and civil society to pursue dialogue during the implementation phase of the accords. The program carved up its work into three areas: intersectoral work that supported government and civil society actors involved in the commissions; a zonal component aimed at strengthening the capacity of local community actors to manage and resolve conflicts at the municipal level; and a training component to ensure that PROPAZ staff were themselves appropriately trained and to develop a national capacity in conflict prevention.

The UPD did not rely on a particular theory or methodology when it developed PROPAZ. Still, it drew conceptually from its own peacebuilding guidelines that included: the view that conflict is not only a source of violence and destruction, but also a catalyst for social change; the notion
Conflict Transformation Efforts Through PROPAZ

Although the conflict literature is very dense, one can distinguish three overarching approaches: conflict settlement, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. This section describes the conflict transformation approach, perhaps the most far-reaching in terms of its methods and objectives, in order to show how PROPAZ drew on its principles and strategies. Conflict transformation consists of “outcome-, process-, and structure-orientated long-term peacebuilding efforts,” aimed at surmounting direct, cultural, and structural violence. This approach goes further than the conflict resolution approach because, whereas conflict resolution concentrates on facilitating dialogue and cooperation among actors of equal status, the transformation approach employs similar strategies to build relationships among actors of unequal status as well. Another point that distinguishes the transformation school from other approaches is its attention to and respect for local cultures. Conflict transformation theorists believe that local communities already possess the
potential for peacebuilding within their traditional culture. Therefore, they discourage automatic transfer of conflict management techniques from one culture to another and look to local people for the tools, strategies, and analysis of a given conflict.

Because conflict transformation views protracted violent conflicts as rooted in unequal and often exploitative social and political structures, it supports the “empowerment and recognition of marginalized groups in the form of non-violent struggle.” This has led some conflict transformation practitioners to take up what John Paul Lederach refers to as nonviolent advocacy. This form of advocacy supports the oppressed side in a conflict. It seeks to help generate an awareness of the weaker party’s inferior position and to assist it in identifying its needs and interests. This is based on the premise that negotiations or mediation can take place only once the parties involved are on a relatively equal footing. This leads conflict transformation practitioners to work more closely with Track III actors (grassroots organizations, nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]) to develop workshops that empower and build the capacity of these actors. This work reflects “the logic of (local) empowerment by aiming to . . . support or even generate local struggles for social justice and hence for radical, structural change.” As Hugh Miall usefully summarizes, conflict transformation emphasizes “support for groups within the society in conflict rather than for the mediation of outsiders. It also recognizes that conflicts are transformed gradually, through a series of smaller or larger changes as well as specific steps by means of which a variety of actors may play important roles.”

In general, this line of thinking does not inform the theory and practice of intergovernmental organizations like the OAS. Still, a respectable case can be made to demonstrate that PROPAZ (1996–2003) drew on the “conflict transformation approach” in a number of ways: its theoretical influences; its understanding of conflict; the actors it worked with and strategies it employed; and finally, its approach to culture. Further, it is telling that one of the scholars who most influenced the program’s development was Lederach, a leading theorist in the field of conflict transformation. In fact, Lederach eventually was invited to lead PROPAZ staff in a workshop to reflect on the program’s work.

To begin, PROPAZ operated from an understanding of conflict that challenged the mainstream or realist position on conflict. Rather than viewing conflict as a problem of restoring order (a very status quo–oriented approach), it viewed conflict as a potential catalyst for social change. In other words, the program assumed that conflict has a transformative capability at the personal, group, and structural levels. Moreover, as noted earlier, the program’s literature identifies the sources of conflict in Guatemala as issues of redistributive justice, identity, and participation in political life. These fall under the category of needs rather than negotiable interests,
which also separates PROPAZ from the more realist-inspired conflict management programs.

Also indicative of the transformation approach is the fact that PROPAZ sought to strengthen the capacities of the parties involved so they could effectively participate in dialogues and collaboration processes. What distinguishes conflict transformation from conflict resolution is its attention to situations of gross power imbalance. The transformation school recognizes that the weaker party often requires assistance in identifying its interests and needs and developing its strategies. The commitment to empowering the weaker parties (helping them develop new skills, organize themselves internally, and generally be more effective) distinguishes this program from typical mediation work. This statement by the former general coordinator of PROPAZ, Sandra Dunsmore, is revealing: “PROPAZ has always been based on principles of social justice, fairness, dignity, and respect. We are impartial but not neutral. That means that if one of the partners in the intersectoral work is weak, we need to see how they can be strengthened. It would be unethical to mediate a formal process where the differences are so great.”27 This view is in keeping with the transformation approach and the commitment to capacity building where weaker parties are concerned.

Regarding program partners and strategies, PROPAZ worked with various actors although it dealt more regularly with Track II actors (academics, local NGOs, and mid-level government bureaucrats). Key societal players, such as the military and the landed elite, were not among PROPAZ’s program partners or “counterparts.” There were two reasons for this. First, counterparts were expected to request support for a program or training and these actors never requested PROPAZ’s assistance.28 Although the military expressed interest in PROPAZ when it was working in rural areas, it had no desire to participate in dialogue processes. Questions asked by military personnel were more of a recognizance nature. Moreover, PROPAZ staff were uncomfortable about including military staff in any dialogue sessions. Second, a minimum condition for initiating a process of dialogue or negotiation was the recognition by the parties involved of their interdependence. A consultant with the project noted that these actors had yet to accept this basic principle.29 At the same time, the decision to sidestep these actors raises serious questions about the ability of the program to help achieve lasting peace and “act as a catalyst for social change,” one of its overarching goals. Moreover, if PROPAZ hoped to contribute to the development of constructive relationships that could lead to agreements on substantive issues, the main protagonists needed to be at the table. It is worth noting that these issues were front and present in the minds of staff. In fact, the final staff evaluation recommended that “new groups” and political parties be targeted in the future.30
A notable exception to the program's intersectoral work, which privileged Track II actors, was its “zonal” or local conflict transformation work in three municipalities—Rabinal, Sayaxché, and Ixcan—parts of the country with high incidences of land conflicts. In this instance, PROPAZ identified local leaders in selected communities and trained them in mediation in order to build a local capacity to prevent, mediate, and resolve disputes. Between 1996 and 1999, PROPAZ staff in Rabinal and Sayaxché trained auxiliary mayors in communication skills and conflict analysis and supported efforts to improve relations and communication among local government authorities in the municipalities.31

As noted earlier, PROPAZ's work at the municipal level constituted an unusual and controversial area of work for the OAS because it required that the Organization engage far more directly and systematically with civil society.32 Indeed, as Dunsmore herself points out, the approach and activities of PROPAZ's zonal component resembled those of NGOs working in conflict transformation.33 The work was community-based, rather than national in scope, and it focused on training and dialogue, rather than on mediation. In sum, this part of the work was not in keeping with the typical peacebuilding content and style of the OAS. Although other factors were cited as reasons for abandoning the zonal work, one cannot overlook the fact that OAS member states might be uncomfortable with initiatives that are so intensely focused on civil society. Indeed, the OAS and hemispheric civil society actors have had a rather tumultuous relationship in the past. It has been only recently, and after much acrimonious debate, that the OAS incorporated mechanisms for civil society input into its instruments and agencies.34 Moreover, many of the region's governments remain suspicious of civil society organizations, slow to forget the role that some of these groups played in national social and political struggles.35

Another element of PROPAZ that drew inspiration from the conflict transformation approach, and especially Lederach’s work, was its commitment to supporting indigenous or local resources for dealing with conflict. In his writings, Lederach challenges three assumptions about culture and conflict. First, he questions the assumption that culture barely matters, or that current conflict management programs are applicable across cultures, requiring only minor tweaking; second, that culture can be accommodated by adopting particular techniques; and third, that these techniques can be added to the skills set that conflict staff already have. Lederach argues instead that “social conflict emerges and develops on the basis of the meaning and interpretation people involved attach to action and events . . . From this starting point, conflict is connected to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and knowledge is rooted in culture.”36 The point is that cultural differences affect the very nature of a conflict, making a “technical” approach to conflict
inadequate. Drawing on this perspective, PROPAZ worked to support locally inspired and locally developed conflict transformation processes. Staff believed that outside actors should nurture the processes devised by local actors and, as already noted, worked to develop unique processes with input from local groups that requested assistance. In other words, to the extent that indigenous or traditional methods and institutions of conflict resolution existed, PROPAZ incorporated, strengthened, and supported them.

One example of this commitment was the program’s support for a local project known as the Mesa de Cobán (Roundtable of Cobán). This initiative emerged independently of PROPAZ, when two senior members of the UN Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) explored the possibility of bringing local actors together to address unresolved land conflicts in the area of Cobán, which had destabilized the region. When the word spread that there was interest in forming a group that would address local conflicts, concerned individuals from various social and governmental entities (the Catholic Church, the Ministry of Labour, the National Institute to Transform Agriculture [INTA], the regional association of coffee growers, the National Indigenous and Campesino Coordination [CONIC], and others) began to attend preparatory meetings. These individuals participated without institutional affiliation and as volunteers. They restricted their agenda to specific land conflicts in the region (rather than broader issues of land reform) in order to keep political and ideological issues from derailing the processes. Most of the people who came to the Mesa for counsel were peasants, and the problems included, among others: land invasions by peasant communities, boundary disputes, unresolved land conflicts, and conflicts between indigenous communities over land and borders. The Mesa volunteers relied on an informal conflict resolution approach in which they listened to the parties, asked questions, and suggested ways forward. If an agreement was reached, it was documented. Implementation, however, was based on the goodwill of those involved because the Mesa had no coercive enforcement powers.

PROPAZ was instrumental in assisting the work of these local peace-builders while the Mesa was in its formative stages. The OAS program provided institutional support and training, through a fifty-hour training course for the Mesa’s volunteers and interested members of the Cobán community. In essence, it supplemented the accumulated and instinctual knowledge of these local actors with tools and methods in conflict analysis, mediation, and negotiation. PROPAZ also facilitated a process to build and strengthen the relationship between the Mesa and the government agencies charged with land-related issues. (This was an important contribution because the government agency charged with settling land disputes [CONTIERRA] had expressed concern and suspicion at the fact that the Mesa was encroaching on its jurisdiction.) Afterwards, CONTIERRA frequently joined the Mesa’s
meetings, as did other government agencies such as the National Land Trust Fund (FONTIERRA). Consequently, the Mesa became not only a space of conflict resolution and mediation, but also a place where campesinos can obtain information regarding government-sponsored solutions to land issues.

Some would argue that the Mesa’s inability to enforce its decisions was a significant weakness. To be sure, it did limit the project’s effectiveness and reach. This was compounded by the fact that landowners often refused to attend the dialogue sessions. According to some observers, this was due to issues of class and race. Simply put, few Guatemalan landowners and wealthy businesspeople would agree to sit around a table with peasants, much less with indigenous peasants. Despite these weaknesses, however, developing local peacebuilders was a worthy goal and vital if peace was to be sustained. In fact, it seems that the best possible scenario involving external peacebuilding initiatives is where outsiders work collaboratively with local partners to design and deliver the “processes” (workshops, facilitation and capacity-building processes, and training sessions). In this way, outside expertise is combined with insiders’ knowledge of the culture and the context. Despite its limitations, PROPAZ support for the Mesa de Cobán represents a fine example of this strategy.

At the same time, an examination of PROPAZ’s efforts to reduce land conflicts cannot overlook that the program is nestled within the OAS broader peacebuilding paradigm of liberal internationalism. This implies that a market-based approach to land reform that relies on privatization, land registration and titling, and land taxes is viewed as the solution to the unequal distribution of land and ensuing land conflicts. This approach, which is favored by all intergovernmental organizations in Guatemala, is based on the belief that securing property rights will permit small producers to use their property as collateral for much-needed loans. Aside from the fact that a number of studies have questioned the ability of this approach to affect the overall structure of land tenure in Guatemala, there is still the problem of those peasants who do not have land for which they can secure title. Moreover, regarding those peasants who do hold insecure titles, even with security of tenure, benefits will emerge only in a broader sociopolitical context that is advantageous to these rural households. The neoliberal model of development, which the OAS abides by, favors capitalist producers over peasant farmers and makes that context unlikely to develop. Stated differently, this market-based model of land reform leaves little space for a development strategy that supports small peasants, rural workers, and other popular sectors in society. As such, it can be expected to contribute in only a limited way to reducing the land conflict problem.

It is important to note before closing the discussion on culture and conflict that some specialists in agrarian issues question the usefulness of conflict resolution and transformation processes, which they argue are unable
to fully address the clash of cosmologies that takes place between the dominant culture and that of the Maya peoples. There are solid grounds for this perspective. Land conflicts in Guatemala are not only juridical matters; they also embody a complex mix of cultural, ethnic, political, and spiritual factors. The starting points on these matters for the parties involved (government, the private sector, and the Maya peoples) are entirely different. For indigenous populations, land is not a commodity. It is heritage, a connection, and it signifies belonging; these are not matters that can be easily settled in the marketplace.

Bettina Durocher has documented the difficulties associated with negotiations between the Guatemalan government and the Ixiles peoples over land issues. She describes how, over the course of discussions, government representatives were absorbed with legal arguments while the Ixiles were focused on issues of historical legitimacy over the land on which they have lived for centuries. Matters can be even more complex when issues of spirituality enter the foreground. Carlos Camacho, a specialist on agrarian issues at MINUGUA, described a case where Maya groups were opposed to a logging venture because the forest in question was the home of a deity. It was difficult to come to an agreement regarding which part of the land could be logged because allowing even one tree to be cut could harm the spiritual being if it resided in that particular tree. And determining the whereabouts of the spirit was impossible.

Dunsmore recognizes that creating processes among actors with such different worldviews is extremely challenging. "You are dealing with a majority population that by force of history and circumstance has to interface with a dominant culture," she acknowledges. Still, whereas Camacho and others consider PROPAZ an inadequate tool for addressing conflicting cosmic visions, Dunsmore believes it is possible to make the inevitable interface between divergent forces constructive. The contribution of a program like PROPAZ, she suggests, is in helping both sides see the other’s perspective, rather than in mediating some sort of solution, a role the program has avoided.

Conclusion

Over the course of the past decade, the OAS has designed and implemented comprehensive support programs for states in postconflict situations. Recently, it has focused on conflict management and prevention. Its conflict prevention work in Guatemala (the OAS/PROPAZ program, 1995–2003) was informed by one of the more thoroughgoing conflict management approaches—conflict transformation. This is evident from PROPAZ’s
understanding of conflict, the actors it chose to work with and the strategies it employed, in addition to its approach to culture.

At the same time, OAS peacebuilding work is guided by the paradigm of liberal internationalism that assumes that Western models of economic organization and governance can manage, or better yet, transform conflict. The OAS, like many international actors, has identified the liberal paradigm (market-oriented reforms, representative democracy, civil society building, and good governance) as the ideal form of economic and political governance and as the most promising approach to reducing societal tensions and preventing violent conflict.

The problem of land was identified by the PROPAZ program as a critical source of conflict in Guatemala. Hence, the program facilitated dialogues and processes with civil society and government actors involved in land-related issues, strengthened indigenous or locally inspired conflict transformation initiatives related to the land problem, and provided assistance to the various actors involved in the land struggle. At the same time, the OAS implicitly supported, at the macro level, a market-based solution to the problem of landlessness, which is unlikely to significantly alter the status quo. Further, the Organization supports the negotiations for a trade and investment agreement, which will ultimately strengthen those social forces (agro-exporters, bankers, and industrialists) with an interest in maintaining the current unequal distribution of wealth and power. Consequently, we have the OAS employing one of the more novel and thoroughgoing approaches to conflict management (which assumes transformation at all levels) while simultaneously advancing a palliative and even counterproductive approach to the land question at the structural level.

While the purpose of this article was not to evaluate the PROPAZ program, something needs to be said about its results. It is true that conflict resolution and conflict transformation work is process and structure oriented, making what constitutes successful results difficult to determine. After all, if the more weighty intent of conflict transformation is to alter the social fabric of a society as well as its social structures, how do we determine whether progress has been made? Even if progress has been made, how do we link it to a particular program? And, how do we measure the political and moral contribution of a process or a workshop? Success in this type of endeavor is necessarily incremental. It manifests itself in attitudes and interactions within communities, making relevant evaluation criteria unclear when it comes to measuring impact. At the same time, it is also true that outcome is not the only measuring stick. As noted earlier, the program’s decision to exclude certain actors from its dialogue processes (private sector actors) or its inability to attract key actors in the land conflict area (landowners) without doubt reduced its effectiveness.
If we accept that peacebuilding exercises are vehicles for the promotion of a particular set of domestic governance norms, as Paris suggests, then what of conflict management programs aimed at promoting dialogue and securing peace? Are they to be taken at face value, that is, as tools offered to war-shattered societies in search of nonviolent means of addressing conflict? The contention here is that a conflict prevention program that is nestled within the broader paradigm of liberal internationalism is unlikely to have transformative effects, regardless of the progressive and far-reaching approach that drives it. The overarching paradigm calls into question the long-term relevance of a program like PROPAZ because, even if it serves in a particular moment to advance a process of dialogue, one cannot help but wonder if it is in fact acting as a firefighter rather than a tool for transformation, given the broader neoliberal institutional context within which it functions.

Notes

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2. The OAS began to work in Guatemala just prior to the signing of the Peace Accords, in order to help move the country toward peace. At that time, the peacebuilding portfolio included programs aimed at: (1) conflict prevention and resolution (the PROPAZ pilot program); (2) strengthening the electoral system (assistance to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal); (3) modernizing political parties and the party system (the Program of Democratic Values and Political Management); and (4) supporting the national peace and reconciliation process (mine clearing).

3. In May 2003, the PROPAZ program was slowly phased out. It has been transformed into a Guatemalan national institution (the PROPAZ Foundation) steered by a board of directors. The purpose of this transformation, according to OAS staff, was to leave behind a national capacity that would continue to support the peace process, political dialogue, and democracy building, once the OAS program was terminated.


15. The common plan resulted in a proposed list of reforms that went before Guatemalans in the form of a national referendum, or Consulta Popular, in 1998. The reforms did not pass because they lacked sufficient public support.


20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., p. 15.
26. Ibid.
27. Sandra Dunsmore, general coordinator, OAS/PROPAZ, personal communication with the author, 13 May 2003, Toronto.
29. Brown interview.
33. Sandra Dunsmore, general coordinator, OAS/PROPAZ, personal communication with author, 13 May 2003, Toronto.
35. Shamsie, “Mutual Misgivings.”
37. Its longer name was La Mesa de Negociaciones Para Conflictos de Tierras en Alta Verapaz. For a detailed account of the Mesa’s work, see Isabel Aguilar Umaña, La Mesa de Alta Verapaz. Una Alternativa de Solución a los Conflictos de Tierra en Guatemala (Guatemala City: Organización de los Estados Americanos [OEA]—PROPAZ, 2000).
38. See Isabel Aguilar Umaña, La Mesa de Alta Verapaz.
39. Dunsmore interview.
41. Neoliberalism refers to a body of thought and an economic project that is directed at increasing and assuring the mobility of capital on a global scale. Consequently, neoliberal restructuring aims at eliminating barriers to trade, ensuring
macroeconomic stability, and ensuring the harmonizing of fiscal and monetary policies because these are essential to increased transnational capital investment.

42. Carlos Camacho, MINUGUA, agrarian specialist, interviewed by the author, Guatemala City, 18 December 2002.


44. Bettina Durocher, Los Dos Derechos de la Tierra: La Cuestión Agraria e el País Ixil (Guatemala City, Guatemala: FLACSO/MINUGUA/CONTIERRA, 2002).

45. Camacho interview.

46. Dunsmore interview.

47. Ibid.

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The Political Economy of Conflict Financing: A Comprehensive Approach Beyond Natural Resources

Achim Wennmann

This article argues that an emphasis on natural resources in conflict financing is unhelpful. Instead of focusing on individual methods of conflict financing, conflict economies should be approached as a combination of financing strategies. This opens new space for analyzing the vulnerability of organized armed groups. The article shows that organized armed groups are rational, have multiple sources of financing, and shift from one to another as a function of their needs. They operate in a structural environment that facilitates conflict financing. This challenges the effectiveness of multilateral policy against conflict financing and the viability of postconflict peacebuilding. If the availability of revenue sources can affect the dynamics of armed conflict, policy against conflict financing holds a promising potential for peacebuilding. KEYWORDS: political economy of conflict, conflict financing, natural resources, organized armed groups, peacebuilding.

The literature on the political economy of conflict has contributed to our understanding of the processes and dynamics of contemporary armed conflict. The literature is based on an understanding of conflict as a process of social transformation in which violence is functional. It seeks to contradict claims that liken armed conflict to a new form of barbarism in which violence is inherent in every human being and thus is inevitable. Natural resources have a prominent position within the political economy of conflict. Over the past few years, analyses of the relationship between natural resources and armed conflict have generated much debate and critique and have contributed to an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the issues and problems involved. Nevertheless, the focus on natural resources as a financial source has led to a distorted understanding of the financing of contemporary armed conflict. While natural resources undoubtedly play a great role in some conflicts, in others they are of minor importance or only one of the methods of conflict financing.

This article argues that an emphasis on natural resources is unhelpful in developing a better understanding of the larger phenomenon of conflict financing. A focus on natural resources does not adequately reflect that most
armed conflicts involve multiple methods of financing. An understanding of conflict financing that goes beyond natural resources is thus required. Although much of the literature on the political economy of conflict is devoted to natural resources and conflict economies, little has been written on conflict economies as a combination of various methods of financing conflict. Such a comprehensive approach opens new space to help analyze the vulnerability of organized armed groups with respect to multilateral initiatives against conflict financing and provides insights into the viability of postconflict peacebuilding. The challenge for policy is to deal with organized armed groups that are rational, have multiple sources of financing, and shift from one to another as a function of their need. They operate in a structural environment that facilitates conflict financing characterized by the persistence of weak states, willing collaborators, shadow economies, and open economies in developed countries. Identifying and tackling sources of conflict financing is a prerequisite for viable postconflict peacebuilding. If not, there is a risk that armed conflict will recur. If the motivation to organize armed conflict depends on the availability of financing, policy against conflict financing holds a promising potential.

The argument and implications in this article will be elaborated in three parts. The first part briefly reviews the literature on the political economy of conflict, natural resources, and conflict economies. The second presents a comprehensive approach to conflict financing. The third charts the implications of a comprehensive approach for policy. It makes reference to multilateral initiatives against conflict financing and postconflict peacebuilding, such as sanctions and the Kimberley process.

The Political Economy of Conflict and Natural Resources

The literature on the political economy of conflict emerged as a response to unsatisfying explanations for civil wars in the 1990s and the proliferation of nonstate actors in conflict areas. While historical work on conflict economies and the early work on the political economy of conflict tended to be more comprehensive, the field began focusing on natural resources with the issue of conflict diamonds. Henceforth, the literature grew in diversity and quality and the field became increasingly dominated by two research agendas. The first agenda analyzes the relationship between development and civil war and its implications for conflict prevention. This work was channeled through the World Bank and given the label "greed and grievance." The greed and grievance approach analyzes the factors conducive to predicting the onset of civil war. At its core are a number of relationships that predict the risk of civil war based on statistical models. The second agenda is the literature on economic agendas in civil war as exemplified by the work of
the International Peace Academy. This literature focuses on the economic agendas of belligerents and the dynamics of conflict in the context of globalization, transnational networks, and development. Rather than considering civil wars as chaos, the economic agenda approach depicts violence as functional. Belligerents benefit from the absence of legal authorities by accumulating economic rewards. Civil war is a process of social transformation in which people adapt their behavior in order to survive, minimize risk, and maximize opportunities. As a result, conflicts become increasingly protracted and determined by economic objectives.

While these two research agendas are methodologically and qualitatively distinct, they both focus primarily on the interaction between the internal dynamics of conflict and the global economy. Contemporary conflict is clearly embedded in regional and global networks and has effects beyond national borders in the form of refugee flows, the spread of disease, or economic shocks. Moreover, both agendas are based on a rational and functional framework of social interaction. Actors are rational in the sense that they must organize financing to conduct armed conflict. Although ideologies or identities may be motivating factors, they still must coordinate the business of war in order to realize their military objectives. The literature particularly emphasizes the interplay between the motives of actors and the opportunity structure that enables or limits their choices. The perception of violence as organized use of force is based on a functional approach to violence. Armed conflict is a form of organizing violence on a large scale and is dependent on individuals who are mobilizing segments of society and external actors for war. Approaching armed conflict from the perspective of organization makes the political economy of conflict literature a powerful tool. A functional perception of violence places responsibility on the individual actors who are in breach of domestic or international law.

The literature on the political economy of conflict devotes considerable attention to natural resources. There has been a great deal of work on individual commodities, such as oil, diamonds, drugs, coltan, and timber. On the multilateral level, the issue of conflict goods gained prominence through various reports by the UN Security Council sanctions monitoring mechanism. The relationship between natural resources and armed conflict has previously been an issue in Marxist theories of imperialism, the resource war literature at the beginning of the 1980s, resource mobilization theory, and the debate on environmental scarcity and conflict.

The political economy of conflict approaches the relationship between natural resources and conflict from the perspective of resource abundance, by emphasizing the role of pull factors (economic opportunities, greed) over push factors (migration, overcrowding, grievance). In this vein, it has been argued that armed conflict is likely to occur in regions with a high concentration of natural resources. Paul Collier argues that dependence on primary
commodity exports increases the risk of civil war by four times in comparison to a country without primary commodity exports. However, resource abundance and scarcity are neither a necessary nor sufficient criteria for conflict. There are resource abundant countries (Botswana, Norway, Australia) or resource scarce countries (Japan) that develop without experiencing armed conflict. Thus, what matters is not whether natural resources are simply present, but how they are managed.

Over the past few years, the analysis of the relationship between natural resources and conflict has become increasingly sophisticated. The widely accepted claim that natural resources became essential for rebel groups to offset declining support from Cold War patronage networks has been qualified in at least three ways. First, patronage payments during the Cold War were a feature of Western power politics rather than a general phenomenon. Western powers were much more involved in financially supporting guerrilla movements in comparison to the Soviet Union and China. Second, even during the Cold War, guerrilla groups were able to rely to some extent on natural resource extraction and the taxation and operation of economic activity. Examples include guerrilla groups in Lebanon, the Philippines, Burma, Cambodia, and Angola. Third, it is misleading to assume that third-party support stopped after the Cold War as the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina illustrates.

Another point of critique is that the focus on natural resources is too broad and does not capture the multitude of resources, their individual attributes, and their effects on different types of civil wars. Philippe Le Billon develops a typology of resource conflicts leading to the following propositions:

- Concentrated, but proximate, resources are associated with competition over state control because they are easily monopolized and their exploitation is capital intensive.
- Concentrated, but distant, resources are associated with secessions because only de facto control of territory is required.
- Diffuse, but distant, resources are associated with warlordism because they can be exploited with little technology and capital once de facto control over the territory is established.
- Diffuse, but proximate, resources are associated with rebellions as people living off the land protest in the capital.

Michael Ross adds the dimension of lootable and obstructable resources. He argues that lootable resources are more likely to start nonseparatist conflicts while unlootable resources are more likely to produce separatist conflicts.
Another feature is the analysis of the effect of resources on the dynamics of civil war. One study summarizes the main findings as follows:

- Oil dependence is linked to the initiation of conflict, but not to its duration. Oil dependence is more strongly associated with separatist conflicts.
- Gemstones, opium, coca, and cannabis are not linked to the initiation of conflict, but do increase the duration of preexisting wars.
- Agriculture has no link to either the initiation or duration of civil war.
- The claim that primary commodities are associated with the onset and duration of civil war does not appear to be robust.  

These propositions echo the broader assessment that economic agendas of conflict are more strongly related to the duration than the initiation of armed conflict.  

This brief review indicates that the relationship between natural resources and armed conflict deserves a nuanced understanding. The link between natural resources and conflict is not automatic. A note of caution should apply when it is construed as the most important factor for the motivation or financing of contemporary conflict. While natural resources are clearly important for the financing of some conflicts—most notably in Africa—they ultimately are just one way of financing conflict. Thus, in order to explore the phenomenon of conflict financing, it is necessary to go beyond natural resources and reconnect to the more comprehensive tendencies of the earlier work on the political economy of conflict. In this way, one may be able to relate conflict economies to the economic strategies of conflict in order to provide a framework for policy against conflict financing and close a gap in the literature. Conflict economies reflect a comprehensive understanding of the production, mobilization, and allocation of economic resources to sustain conflict, the economic strategies of conflict are practical measures to deliberately disempower organized armed groups through sieges, embargos, and the exploitation or destruction of economic infrastructure. A connection may be possible when considering conflict economies as a combination of various methods of conflict financing while, at the same time, each individual method provides a target for policy to deal with conflict economies.

**The Political Economy of Financing Conflict**

The political economy of conflict has undoubtedly improved our understanding of the dynamics involved in contemporary conflict. Nevertheless, the analytical scope of this literature has not yet been fully exhausted. This
section attempts to take a fresh look at conflict economies by conceptualizing them as a combination of individual methods of conflict financing (Table 1). The core premise is that conflict economies are the sum of different methods of conflict financing. Thus, a comprehensive approach goes beyond focusing on individual methods of conflict financing by looking at the combination of various financing methods available to organized armed groups. As the political economy of conflict literature has shown above, we essentially are dealing with rational conflict organizers who seek financing to conduct armed conflict. Even if ideologies and identities are a part of the motivation for conflict, those who want to wage war must deal with how to finance their operations. When attempting to cut their financing, focusing on one method misses the point because conflict organizers are likely to diversify their portfolio and shift from one source of financing to another if they are targeted by policy. This is evidenced, for example, by the history of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA).31

Table 1 Methods of Conflict Financing

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Centralized war economy</th>
<th>External assistance</th>
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</table>

Source: Based on the references in this section.
Among the key methods of conflict financing are centralized war economies, conflict goods, asset transfers from civilians, and external assistance. Other methods include the printing and forging of money, protection rackets, landing fees, kidnapping, and revenue from portfolio investments and legitimate business ventures as well as interest accruals from overseas bank accounts. This section presents a short overview of each of these methods.

**Centralized War Economy**

A centralized war economy makes reference to the interplay between establishing territorial control, extraction, and conflict that is reminiscent of Charles Tilly’s models of state making. This method can also be extended to organized armed groups that act like states within the territory under their control as evidenced in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. For both states and rebel groups, these revenues flow into a defense budget. In cases where regular defense budgets are not sufficient, parallel means of accounting can be used to fill the gap. States may also profit from attracting international investments and development assistance or diverting money borrowed from domestic or international markets.

**Conflict Goods**

With declining assistance from foreign patrons, rebel groups and governments have relied increasingly on the commercialization of the resources under their control. The global campaign against conflict diamonds in Angola, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) led to an increasing awareness about the problems of resources and conflict. A recurring issue is the broader phenomenon of conflict goods and conflict trade. Conflict goods have become tools for financing conflict in multiple ways. The first is the direct involvement of an organized armed group in the commercialization of a resource. For example, this has been the case in Angola with diamonds and oil and in the DRC with the exploitation of copper, cobalt, diamonds, gold, coltan, coffee, timber, niobium, and cassiterite. Other ways to profit include futures contracts and the taxation of resource exploration.

**Asset Transfers from Civilians**

Asset transfers from civilians encompass looting, robbery, extortion, pillage, and ransom payments. These methods can be an important way to reward, pay, and motivate soldiers or be a part of a larger strategy for depopulating areas in order to more easily extract resources or establish ethnic homogeneity. Violent appropriation can also be part of the early stages of insurgency as
well as provide start-up capital. Predation on civilians has been a major feature in Mozambique.

**External Assistance**

Most of the aforementioned methods of conflict financing are rooted in the control over territory and are hence domestic sources of financing. However, most of these domestic sources cannot be commercialized without the partnership of foreign actors. This partnership is based on commercial interests, profiteering, or political aims and is associated with governments, diasporas, humanitarian organizations, and foreign companies. The role of government funding was crucial during the Cold War. The United States covertly supplied $3 billion to Afghan mujahidin, an amount needed to equip an army of 200,000 to 300,000 men with sophisticated weapons.

Another source of third-party funding is the support of diasporas. While in most cases diasporas are a source for good, individual members of a diaspora can be a powerful force that sustains and encourages conflict in some cases. Diasporas often nurture a romanticized attachment to their country of origin. The matériel and financial support of diasporas tends to be more ideologically and politically extreme because they do not directly experience the effects of political instability and armed conflict. Examples of such diasporas include the Lebanese diaspora in West Africa that supported the Amal militia in the Lebanese civil war and the Tamil diaspora in Western Europe and Canada. However, the role of diaspora remittances in financing conflict must be qualified. The disposition of diasporas toward their homeland differs from community to community depending on the circumstances under which emigration took place, the relative size of the diaspora, the geographic concentration, its socioeconomic status, and the citizenship policies of the host state. Moreover, diaspora remittances can have an ambivalent effect on opportunity structures depending on who controls them.

Humanitarian organizations can contribute to conflict financing if the delivery of aid is taxed by those controlling a territory or if the goods provided are simply stolen and then sold by organized armed groups. Organized armed groups can use their role of controlling access to populations as a method of financing. Moreover, they may use humanitarian sanctuaries to ensure direct access to resources, increase their protection, and gain international recognition.

Companies inject external financing by doing business in areas of conflicts. This may include bribing local governments or warlords to exploit resources or gain access to markets. This may also imply paying for security by contracting a private military company to secure an area of exploitation. Companies operate in a competitive market and the loss of an important area
of current or future exploitation may preclude their ability to enter into the market after a conflict ends while rivals with fewer scruples can improve their market position. When De Beers retreated from Angola in 1999 in fear of a consumer backlash after the conflict diamond debate, its competitor Lev Leviev entered the market. This move gave Lev Leviev prospective control over Angola’s diamond reserves which had been estimated to be 10 percent of world diamond reserves and valued at $800 million. Another tool is the use of futures contracts with foreign resource extraction companies. Futures contracts have the advantage of allowing money to be raised quickly and are thus very useful in difficult situations. Such contracts were used on a number of occasions during the conflicts in Sierra Leone, Angola, and the DRC.

**Kidnapping**

Kidnapping has become increasingly important to conflict financing due to the increase in number of foreign actors involved in areas of conflict since the end of the Cold War. However, local people can also be affected. A virtual kidnapping industry has emerged in Colombia with different groups specializing in the identification of funds potentially available from a family to pay ransom, the execution of the kidnapping event, and the negotiation of the ransom. The groups specialized in kidnapping treat the hostage like a commodity that they can sell to the highest bidder who then recapitalizes by negotiating the ransom. To protect themselves against kidnapping, some companies and international organizations resort to purchasing ransom insurance for staff posted in countries with high rates of kidnapping. However, ransom insurance can be enormously counterproductive. If an organized armed group knows that its target is insured against kidnapping, this may further encourage kidnapping. Having the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan in mind, this is an undesirable prospect.

**Miscellaneous Methods of Conflict Financing**

Finally, there is an amalgam of other methods of conflict financing, such as protection rackets. If organized armed groups control a certain area and have a monopoly over the use of force, they can determine the level of violence in this area and thus extort protection money from companies and civilians. In these “zones of insecurity,” violence creates a conducive business environment for illicit commerce. Organized armed groups can also be involved in asset management, portfolio investment, or legal business ventures. In the 1980s, the PLO was said to have made $1 billion from direct investments in factories, real estate holdings, stocks, and bonds. Landing fees are a common source of conflict financing and affect all external actors...
that want to operate in an area that is controlled by anyone with authority. The União Nacional Para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) charged a landing fee of $2,000 to $5,000 per plane in the territory under its control and generated approximately $5 million from these fees between 1996 and 1997.\textsuperscript{51}

**Implications for Policy**

Going beyond natural resources toward a comprehensive approach to conflict financing should be particularly interesting for policymakers because each individual method can be construed as a policy target. Rather than approaching conflict financing from the point of view of interdependent economic interactions of various actors, a comprehensive approach focuses on the combination of individual methods of conflict financing and seeks to understand conflict financing from the perspective of a conflict organizer that wants to fund its military or business objectives.

A comprehensive perspective gives rise to a number of implications for policy. It shows, for example, that conflict financing is inherently dynamic and not static. Organized armed groups change their methods of conflict financing if existing strategies no longer work or external factors change. It is therefore illusionary to think that, when one method of conflict financing is cut, belligerents with the conviction and coherence to continue fighting would ask for mercy, accept a peace plan, and reconvert into civil society.\textsuperscript{52} Curbing one source of financing does not mean that all sources of financing are cut. Neither does it mean that an organized armed group will not be able to develop new sources of financing. Hence, inclusive and multilateral policies against conflict financing tend to be more effective than initiatives focusing on just one source of financing. If organized armed groups shift from one source of financing, then policy must also shift to turn off the faucet.

Moreover, a focus on individual methods of conflict financing opens space to analyze the vulnerability of organized armed groups to multilateral measures against conflict financing.\textsuperscript{53} This can be used as a tool to assess the effectiveness of policies against conflict financing. Vulnerability is divided into sensitivity and resilience. Sensitivity can be understood as the effects of an external shock on an actor in the short term before the actor can adapt to a new situation. Resilience works in the long term and captures the actor’s propensity to adapt to a new situation after an external shock has taken effect. Financial vulnerability is part of an overall vulnerability of organized armed groups that also includes political, historical, social, and environmental aspects. For a policy to be effective, it must create a shock that affects the sensitivity and resilience of an organized armed group. Thus, sanctions, travel bans, the freezing of bank accounts, or third-party
assistance must be supported with sufficient material and political resolve by the international community so that transaction costs and operational risks are increased for organized armed groups. If not, sanctions risk having little effect, and unintended consequences—such as strengthening the shadow economy through sanctions busting—become their main legacies.\textsuperscript{54}

However, the dilemma of policy is that organized armed groups do not operate in a vacuum, but within a social, economic, and political context that facilitates the financing of conflict. Weak states, for example, facilitate the financing of conflict by their lack of effective control over territory. This control deficit is an invitation to local leaders, warlords, or clans to establish control over the economic opportunities available in a specific region.\textsuperscript{55} Moreover, competing commercial actors in conflict zones act as a pool of willing collaborators who facilitate the financing of conflict by providing access to international arms, commodity, and financial markets.\textsuperscript{56} They profit from the relative openness of liberalized economies and the business environment in conflict areas. The former facilitates the sale and laundering of products and profits; the latter provides an ideal environment for shady business because conflict areas are outside any effective domestic or international jurisdiction and thus are easily controlled through coercion and corruption. This cover from prosecution and the high profit margins involved give these actors vested interests in the maintenance of conflict and the conditions it creates. Furthermore, shadow economies facilitate the financing of conflict because economic activity is parallel to the state and thus more easily exploited by rebel or crime groups. The control of borders is particularly important because it means controlling resource flows and the movement of people that is, in essence, a license for money making.\textsuperscript{57}

The effectiveness of policy against conflict financing is severely compromised by these factors. While development policy seeks to address them in the long term, in the short term they undermine the effectiveness of policies. The Kimberley process against conflict diamonds, for example, may be able to bring some diamonds back into regular channels; however, most of the diamonds traded in conflict areas are traded on parallel markets, filtered into the regular channels, and smuggled across areas where borders exist on maps, but not in reality. The access to global markets, the absence of functioning states, and few alternative employment opportunities in the countries of exploitation make the trafficking of diamonds an intractable endeavor. This is compounded by the problems of size and identification involved in certifying diamonds.\textsuperscript{58}

More broadly, the applicability of the Kimberley process to other commodities may be limited because the regulation that it embodies clearly goes against the general trend of trade liberalization and raises the eyebrows of officials from the World Trade Organization.\textsuperscript{59} Rather than focusing on measures against the physical movement of goods, future regulations
should increasingly focus on the financial networks and individuals supporting conflict trade. However, this approach must be sensitive to the cost of policy against conflict financing borne by banks. Investments into monitoring financial flows are not welcomed because they are expensive, clients may not like it, and, ultimately, conflict financing may be too insignificant in banking terms to justify changing established business practices. Thus, much lobbying must be done to convince the banking sector that policy against conflict financing is indeed worthwhile.

A focus on the financial vulnerability of organized armed groups is also helpful to develop a better understanding of conflict recurrence and the viability of postconflict peacebuilding. When belligerents stop fighting, a country undergoes a period of postconflict recovery. However, rather than marking their ascent to prosperity, postconflict countries usually remain vulnerable to the recurrence of conflict. In these circumstances, a peace deal may be a mere indication of the interruption of fighting rather than the beginning of a peace process. About one-third of civil wars that occurred between 1945 and 1996 recommenced after termination and their overall duration of conflict increased from two years in 1945 to fifteen years in 1999. The challenge for postconflict peacebuilding is to identify and manage economic opportunities that can be used to resource the recurrence of armed conflict. The control over economic opportunities may facilitate the funding of a 500- to 2,000-strong insurgency to press through a personalized agenda. In these circumstances, the general salience of grievances, group identities, and political competition within a society may not matter much.

If the international community is not sensitive to the actors and factors contributing to conflict financing and the recurrence of conflict, the agenda of peace spoilers may prevail and ultimately lead to the loss of billions of dollars invested in postconflict assistance, reconstruction, and development.

Conclusion

Understanding the phenomenon of conflict financing requires going beyond natural resources. While a focus on greed and grievance, economic agendas, and conflict economies has ameliorated our understanding of the dynamics of contemporary conflict, this article has sought to demonstrate that much is to be gained analytically and practically when adopting a comprehensive approach toward conflict financing. Conflict is financed by a multitude of methods and their combination in various times and places makes conflict financing inherently dynamic. Organized armed groups adapt their behavior and shift to other methods of conflict financing in response to external policies levied against them. This dynamism is based on an understanding of armed conflict as organized use of force for which rational conflict organizers seek
financing to further their military or business objectives. Even if ideologies and identities are part of the motivation for conflict, those who want to wage war must find the financing to organize conflict.

The effect of policy against conflict financing is compromised by a structural context that facilitates the financing of conflict. Weak states lack effective control over their territory, competing and weakly regulated commercial actors provide a pool of willing collaborators, and shadow economies can be easily exploited for economic profit by organized armed groups. Although development strategies seek to address these conditions in the long term, organized armed groups profit from them in the short term. As a result, they accumulate profits that may be well above the resources earmarked by the international community for postconflict peacebuilding. The continuous availability of financing may explain why armed conflicts are protracted and recurring.

Given this context, it is essential that policy against conflict financing focuses on what can be achieved rather than wasting resources on unrealistic objectives of social engineering. Policies against conflict financing will always be partisan and related to the interests of the actors behind them. Their implementation will be limited by financial and human resource constraints and is likely to remain reactive rather than proactive. Only in theory and rhetoric may they be part of an effort to stop the financing of conflict itself.

These reflections give rise to some general observations that may refresh our understanding of the financing of contemporary conflict. The first is that some types of armed conflict are relatively cheap. This qualifies the general perception that armed conflict is always accompanied with great costs of organization. For example, insurgencies or low-intensity conflict profit from existing stockpiles of small arms that are cheaply available or simply inherited from disintegrating states. Second, there is enough money around to finance conflict. Iraq is a case in point with about fifty militant cells drawing on “unlimited money” from an underground financial network. Third, contemporary conflict is easy to organize. Private military companies, transnational organized crime networks, and individual conflict entrepreneurs can easily procure weapons, recruits, and money.

Nevertheless, much can be achieved when focusing on the financing of organized armed groups. The PLO’s financial strain in the wake of the Gulf War in 1991 is thought to have contributed to its involvement in the Oslo peace negotiations. In Sri Lanka, the funding of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was seriously affected by legislation in the United States and the United Kingdom against terrorist financing. Ultimately, the rationale for policy against conflict financing rests on an individual assessment of each case. More generally, it will also depend on whether motivation alone is enough to start and perpetuate conflict—and financing follows automatically—or
whether the availability of revenue sources can affect the initiation, perpetuation, and recurrence of armed conflict. Thus, the question is whether money follows motivation or motivation follows money. Most likely, it is a combination of both; however, if there is a tendency toward the latter, policy against conflict financing holds a promising potential.

Notes

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5. Conflict financing is understood as the efforts of an organized armed group to resource the organization and conduct of armed conflict. The term organized armed group includes both rebel groups and government forces.


15. See notes 3 and 4.


25. The typology is based on four geographic characteristics (resources are concentrated/diffuse or proximate/distant to the capital) and four types of armed conflict (competition for state control, secession, rebellion, and warlordism). See Le Billon, *The Political Ecology of War*, p. 573.

26. Ibid., pp. 572–575.

27. Lootability refers to the ease with which resources can be extracted and transported by individuals or gangs (diamonds, drugs). Obstructability refers to the ease with which the transportation of a resource can be blocked (oil, gas, deep-shaft minerals). See Ross, “Oil, Drugs and Diamonds,” pp. 54, 64–67.


32. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, pp. 74–76.


41. Collier et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, pp. 84–85.


60. Ballentine, “Beyond Greed and Grievance,” p. 278.


Over the past quarter-century, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and activist networks have increasingly “gone global.” Between 1973 and 1993, transnational social movement organizations concerned with human rights, the environment, peace, and development more than tripled in number, rising to over 600 organizations.1 Formerly local and national NGOs and community organizations now regularly operate transnationally: swapping information, networking, coordinating campaigns, framing claims, and locating shared targets. This is a change not only in the frequency of interactions across borders, but also in the networks’ density, adaptability, complexity, and reach. Sidney Tarrow and Donatella Della Porta have called this trend “the most dramatic change we see in the world of contentious politics.”2

Transnational social movements are dynamic networks of multiple organizations and issues, forged in parallel and autonomous international summits, protest events, and via the Internet.3 They have even created their own space, the World Social Forum (WSF), as well as a web of regional, national, local, and thematic forums modeled on the WSF’s horizontal, “open space” format. Here, the movements deepen and broaden their solidarity ties...
and joint analyses under the strategically ambiguous slogan that “Another World Is Possible.”

While diverse, the networks are united in the conviction that this alternative should be forms of governance other than neoliberal globalization. Activists decry this current global (dis)order as being characterized by mounting poverty and inequality within and among societies, corporate encroachment of “the commons,” environmental devastation, the feminization of poverty, the exacerbation of conflicts, and the erosion of democracy. They identify and denounce the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO) as the main institutional promoters of neoliberalism.

Beyond this shared oppositional orientation, these actors have diverse—and often conflicting—demands, organizational cultures, tactics, and ultimate goals. At the most recent WSF in Nairobi, Immanuel Wallerstein spoke of a “family of movements,” replete with all the affinities, identifications, and squabbles that constitute such relationships. Broadly, the movements divide between “reformist” NGOs and more “radical” direct action social movements and networks. At bottom, the feuds between these two tendencies stem from fundamentally different conceptions of existing global governance and order (as well as their place within it) and from the degree and methods of change that each pursues. Contemporary activist forums like the WSF have brought these different circles into contact with one another and thus have helped to attenuate the polemic between them. Yet tensions remain, and there is evidence that the “other superpower” is both demobilizing and fracturing along traditional leftist fault lines.

But who are these new global actors? What are their points of convergence, contradiction, and outright conflict? And how do they engage with, legitimate, or challenge both the state and the international governance regimes that states have constructed? Finally, what can we learn about the nature of global governance from the movements’ relatively marginal vantage points? These questions orient this essay.

Each of the four books examined here offers a unique standpoint and insight into this upstart clan of nonstate (and sometimes antistate) actors that challenge the patrician families comprising global governance: those of states, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and transnational corporations (TNCs). This essay will introduce two contrasting models of global governance to illustrate the divergent positions and visions of the reformist NGOs on the one hand, and anarchists and Marxist autonomists on the other: the simple polity model and the imperial rhizome, respectively.

The first two books—Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl’s NGO Accountability and Clifford Bob’s The Marketing of Rebellion—focus on the well-behaved, but conflicted, sons and daughters of an emergent, cosmopolitan, civil society. While rhetorically aloof from partisan politics, in practice these
actors seek greater rights, resources, recognition, and influence within a
global polity dominated by states, IGOs, and corporations. These are the
prototypical Northern-based, international NGOs (INGOs) with Southern
beneficiaries, now frequently called “partners.”

In contrast, the other two works—Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s
*Multitude* and Richard J. F. Day’s *Gramsci Is Dead*—exemplify the rebel-
lious, nomadic, and prodigal sons and daughters in contemporary global
social movements. These post-Marxists and anarchists battle against the
reformers, and among themselves, for the hearts and minds of the anticapi-
talist youth—as well as those young at heart—within and against an oppres-
sive, all-encompassing global “empire” and toward an open, egalitarian, and
horizontally networked—or “rhizomatic”—world.

Together, these two pairs of books encompass, and indeed lay bare, the
family resemblances and the sibling rivalries among activists who are striv-
ing to inform—and transform—global governance, the state, and capitalism
at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

**NGOs and the Domestic Polity Model**
**Transposed to the Global Level**

While activists, scholars, and policymakers acknowledge the conceptual and
practical pitfalls of projecting the “domestic analogy” onto the international
level, civil society actors often betray such a transposition in their assump-
tions, practices, and goals. Global politics is more complex, entailing a
larger diversity of actors, more pathways for petitioning, and greater uncer-
tainty. Yet civil society practices of demanding recognition, rights, and
resources from governing agents goes largely unchanged and unchallenged.

This implicit assumption of global governance as the modern, liberal
state writ large can be illustrated via the simple polity model depicted in
Figure 1. The model represents a regime, which consists of government and
its relations to the population that falls under its claimed jurisdiction. While
government forms the hub, polity members, such as corporations and pow-
erful interest groups, constitute political actors that enjoy routine access to
government agents and their resources. Further out lie the challengers, that
are also political actors yet lack, and aspire to, routine access to the gov-
ernment’s ear and purse. Subjects are unorganized individuals and groups
who inhabit a government’s jurisdiction. Finally, outside political actors,
including other governments, reside beyond the limits of jurisdiction, but
may, through their ties to subjects, challengers, polity members, and indeed
governments themselves, impinge upon the domestic polity.

Transposition to the global level creates obvious difficulties. Instead of
one “black box” government, all governance bodies—states, IGOs, and the
legal and normative regimes they establish—are potential avenues to petition for rights and resources. Yet because there is no single seat of authority, the nature and extent of rights differ and are contested while resources are dispersed and dynamic. This creates both threats and opportunities for polity members and challengers that must seek and maintain access to this diverse web of governance sites in order to make their demands, and also must expand as collective actors—often across borders—to enhance their power. Given the disaggregated nature of governance authority, there can be no final arbiter when rights are violated, and so attempts to uphold such rights are inconsistent, controversial, futile, or require force. In the global polity, theoretically there is no “outside” and thus no actors or sites beyond the regime’s jurisdiction. Jordan and van Tuijl’s NGO Accountability and Bob’s The Marketing of Rebellion illustrate well the difficulties of attempting to transpose this polity model.

Jordan and van Tuijl adopt a somber tone, rueing the INGO’s precipitous fall from grace:

In the final decade of the 20th century, there seemed to be a broad-based consensus that . . . NGOs were a good thing—as shepherds of development, as democratic agents and in making sense of globalization. NGOs
were seen as the core of active civil societies, supporting the delivery of public services and contributing to an ever-stronger wave of democratization that appeared unstoppable after the fall of the Berlin Wall. (p. 3)

In the early 1990s, the commanding heights achieved by the once lowly NGO seemed further proof that history had indeed (dead-)ended into liberal democracy. In this domestic analogy par excellence, INGOs were the vanguard of a nascent global civil society within an international society of democratic states. Via their expanding networks, they contested, petitioned, pleaded, and cajoled; and, in so doing, legitimized and empowered the emerging hubs of global governance. This was seen as the culmination of a longer project of NGOs being partners in bringing history to its screeching post–Cold War halt: from the missionary work that went hand in glove with colonization—and, more recently, the transition from communism—to their changing, but always complementary, roles in overseas development work as modernizer, public service provider, democracy promoter, and good governance watchdog.

No longer is this true. Domestic publics, academics, grassroots activists, IGOs, the media, corporations, and governments increasingly question by what authority NGOs purport to speak for others and aspire to influence domestic and international polities. NGOs have suffered a left-right, one-two punch from the popular backlash against the “Washington Consensus” and the post-9/11 empire striking back. They have drawn fire from the left as the willing handmaidens of neoliberal globalization. In addition, with the rising discourse of nonstate actors as threats to national security, NGOs are being painted by the right as Trojan horses that compromise state sovereignty and security as terrorist consorts (Jordan and van Tuijl, pp. 10–12).

In the Foreword to *NGO Accountability*, Michael Edwards scolds NGOs for not heeding his call in the salad days of the mid-1990s to put their house in order. As a consequence, they are now bearing the brunt of the Bush administration’s restrictive measures like Executive Order 13224, the Patriot Act, and voluntary Anti-Terrorist Financing guidelines for charities issued by the US Treasury. Hostility toward NGO involvement in global governance, says Edwards, is a defining feature of neoconservative thinking. The war of ideas is also being waged to discredit NGOs by conservative think tanks aligned with the administration, such as the American Enterprise Institute’s NGO Watch project and the Rushford Report (p. viii).

*NGO Accountability* thus offers an overdue, internal debate on a growing problem that defies easy solution. The volume addresses questions of NGO rights, roles, responsibilities, and accountability. More broadly, this collection of essays grapples with the proper role of NGOs in local, national, and international governance structures. The thirteen chapters by NGO practitioners and scholars begin by surveying traditional approaches
of legal accountability, certification, and donor regimes. The book then moves to non-Western perspectives on accountability from China, Indonesia, and Uganda, and finishes by critically assessing recent transnational efforts at NGO accountability.

The strengths of a compilation of engaged, empirical case studies are considerable, including the quality and timeliness of the descriptive evidence, the concrete lessons drawn, and the critiques provided by insiders. Yet these strengths often carry with them weaknesses. For example, the book lacks a consistent argument, well-developed theory, and even concluding remarks. So, while useful evidence can be gleaned from each chapter, the work tacitly raises questions that go unaddressed.

The book brings three contradictions into sharp focus. The first lies between NGOs’ assertion of autonomy and their admission of dependency. On the one hand, an NGO is a “self-governing, private, not-for-profit and with an explicit social mission” (p. 8). Yet its “intermediary organization with a defined legal body and organizational shape . . . qualifies it to receive assistance from donors” (p. 9). NGOs do not just give charity; they must also receive it. In order to be charitable, they must maintain donor patronage. This double-edged sword of the charitable status recurs throughout the book. For example, Hetty Kovach lambasts the weak accountability mechanisms of NGOs and their donor governments, IGOs, and corporations (pp. 195–210). If NGO accountability exists at all, it is biased in favor of powerful donors. Jem Bendell and Phyllida Cox point out that, while some 15 percent of all international development funds are funneled through NGOs, much of it is “phantom” money (pp. 109–126). Either it is squandered by highly paid consultants before reaching its target or it is bound by aid conditionalities that require purchases from donor country companies. Corporate donors are similarly motivated by self-interest, giving in order to influence public opinion and legislation and also to increase brand loyalty and expand market share. In the face of these mixed motives, it is little wonder that INGOs are reticent to pursue and make public candid assessments of their practices and projects, opting instead for largely glowing reports that gloss over failures or problems. Although the authors rightly blame donors and urge them to reassure INGOs that honest assessments will not result in losses of funding, given their patrons’ self-serving motivations, NGOs are wise to keep their accountability cards close to their chests. Their collective resistance to practice greater transparency and accountability demonstrates that they have internalized this lesson.

A second contradiction arises from this notion of charity. NGOs aspire to be charitable organizations serving the “public good” and thus to stand above the political fray and beyond repute. Yet in practice, they pursue greater recognition, resources, and rights for themselves and their beneficiaries. They thus seek (in the language of the simple polity model) certification as polity
members as opposed to mere challengers. This dissonance between self-perception and action involves, on the one hand, a continual reaffirmation that their “moral authority” (read: power to influence) is “embedded in civil society, as distinct from political society.” NGOs are above and outside of politics, which is the (dirty) realm inhabited by political parties and others “struggling for control of the state” (Edwards’s “Foreword”; chapter 1). While admittedly not aspiring to the dictatorship of the nonprofit organization, their distinction seems unduly purist, and breaks down in actual practice. Corporations, too, do not seek to capture the state, and yet NGOs often denounce their undue political influence. Truth be told, there is a growing battle of interests and ideals between at least two types of challenger/polity members, the NGO-led advocacy network and the TNC, over who gets what, when, where, and how. To claim that either actor, by virtue of its pro-social motives, stands above or outside politics belies the nature of their conflict and its consequences. And because the liberal democratic terra firma upon which NGOs could stake their universal claims has eroded after September 11, 2001, they are forced to take overtly political stands. The previously uncontestable “public goods” of human rights promoted by a vibrant civil society sector are under attack. No longer viewed as apolitical service providers, NGOs are now partial advocates and impartial watchdogs of other global political actors. Jordan and van Tuijl aver that, as NGOs contest the status quo, their credibility and legality are challenged in a variety of ways: by attempted co-optation or corruption; by disruption of their operations; and by violation of their fundamental rights (pp. 6–7).

A third contradiction evident in this book most clearly reveals the flaw of the “domestic analogy,” namely, that NGOs increasingly employ a rights discourse in a realm of global governance that lacks a liberal, democratic government capable of granting such rights. This perceived need to demand that their civil rights be recognized and protected betrays their rearguard action in these dark times: exposed as “charity cases” as much as charity givers; wings clipped by donors’ dictates and dubious motives; and halos tarnished and gowns soiled by their stooping to the political level. No longer hovering above the political terrain, they have come crashing to earth and are confronted with the fact that they are small-time players in the game of global politics, beholden to big actors whose state-centric or profit-maximizing interests they do not necessarily share.

This book reveals INGOs to be dependent and conflicted challengers that grudgingly aspire to global polity membership on a par with TNCs and other powerful interest groups. Yet to whom can they petition for this change in status from fallen angelic challenger to full-fledged polity member? While demanding that their civil rights be recognized in every domestic polity and at the global level, they are at the same time aware of the conceptual, legal, and practical difficulties of wresting rights out of hostile
domestic governments, let alone weak international organizations. Jordan and van Tuijl acknowledge the difficulties in constructing the global liberal polity issue by issue. Yet their book’s contributors see little option but to press on in this quest for “rights-in-parts” from the local to the national to the global levels of governance.

Bob’s *The Marketing of Rebellion* is a Zapatista-style “basta ya!” to all this NGO hand-wringing and soul-searching. He advises NGOs to “get real.” You cannot change human nature or society, he avers, so it is better simply to embrace the rational, self-interested logic and try to beat other actors—or at least survive—within a competitive political market where scarcity increases the further out from the regime’s core that one is located. Bob presents a more systematic and scholarly treatment of the anxieties and issues that the NGO insiders raise in the Jordan and van Tuijl volume. As a self-defined “skeptic” regarding the putative moral motivations of NGOs, Bob strives for a “more realistic” explanation of transnational networking, in which the fittest NGOs and social movement organizations are the most strategic. His work challenges more normatively liberal and constructivist international relations theorists who champion the NGO-led advocacy networks and the moral norms they help embed in global public opinion and political practice. While not completely dismissive, Bob demonstrates the obvious that NGOs have their own needs of organizational and mission maintenance, and therefore must first and foremost please their donors and members (pp. 1–8).

Bob seeks to shift the discourse away from a “global civil society” spawned by an emergent “global consciousness” eroding the realpolitik world of self-interested, competitive, and rational states. It makes more theoretical and practical sense, he says, to extend the logic of the latter into the former. It is, Bob argues, a jungle out there where solidarity is in short supply. Global civil society is thus more accurately viewed as a crowded, Darwinian terrain wherein needy groups must compete and differentiate themselves (p. 8).

Given this harsh environment, Bob seeks to answer how and why some local challengers become global causes with a network of supporters while others whose circumstances are equally, if not more, dire remain obscure and unassisted. He first sketches the dimensions and dynamics of this “transnational market” and then compares two contentious milieus: one being the Niger Delta and the other rebellious provinces in southern Mexico. Bob shows how the Ogoni struggle and the Zapatistas of Chiapas prevailed over their domestic challengers to win international support, attributing their success to strategic and organizational factors. His findings are sobering. Most local movements fail to attract international solidarity. When one of them succeeds, it sparks an upsurge in mobilization by others seeking support. But the price of “winning” is the need to reframe the movement’s demands
in ways that have international appeal; for example, as environmental threats, human rights violations, or malfeasance on the part of powerful corporations or IGOs. While this reframing seems necessary to garner INGO patronage, it also diverts attention and resources from a group’s original grievances and goals. The local movement may also take risks by overanticipating international support and transnational intervention. These actions will draw attention, forcing governments and other targeted polity members to respond. But apparent acquiescence or accommodation on the part of powerholders can give way to repression against “traitorous” challengers (pp. 181–185).

Viewed more abstractly, Bob’s book fleshes out, advances, and even embraces the projection of the liberal, pluralistic polity model onto the international level. Although a skeptic, he is a sympathetic one, seeing transnational movements and NGOs as potentially valuable counterpoints in a global order dominated by state and corporate actors and their interests. To Bob, global civil society is embedded within a nascent global polity of unequal competition, replete with power differentials and tensions. Desperate and disadvantaged domestic challengers are relegated to subject status when viewed within the global polity context. Thus, they must contort their demands and compete against those who might otherwise be local allies for the attention and gifts of more powerful actors. The Marketing of Rebellion transposes the NGO sector onto a global liberal polity model. In order to move from the position of “subject” to that of “challenger,” local movements must throw the “boomerang” and try to hitch it to an INGO, preferably one that is close to the core with maximum resources, credibility, and access.

Taken together, NGO Accountability and The Marketing of Rebellion reveal the NGO to be an organizational type conflicted over its self-definition and motives, its relationship to its “stakeholders,” and its role in an emergent global polity. Returning to the family metaphor, NGOs appear as confused, conniving, or petulant children, fashioning themselves as little angels in order to stay in their father’s good graces. Yet their incessant cries of “You’re not the boss of me!” are each day less credible and, indeed, have grown annoying and embarrassing. Yell too loud or get too far out of line, and the purse strings are yanked, exposing the myth of their pious autonomy. In the final analysis then, NGOs are forced by their constitutions to remain the more-or-less well-behaved sons and daughters of their powerful patrons. They do not—and indeed cannot—fundamentally challenge the state, the corporation, or the structure of international governance. Rather, their aspirations run parallel, and indeed complement, the two-level game of the domestic and global polity. Within both, they seek to move from the role of challenger to that of a more prominent polity member enjoying greater access to governing agents and resources. In so doing, they help to construct the pluralist polity model and its logic of demanding rights at the global level.
Post-Marxists and Postanarchists
Within and Against Empire

A decidedly different vision of global governance and power emerges from the more radical wings of contemporary social movements. While social-democratic currents denounce corporate encroachment of the state’s responsibilities and authority, and thus call for reembedding economies within reinvigorated welfare states, recent neo-Marxist and anarchist thought has largely converged around Hardt and Negri’s model of the rhizomatic empire. I have attempted to sketch this tendency toward a globally networked political order in Figure 2. According to the authors:

Empire is materializing before our very eyes. . . . Along with the global market and global circuits of production has emerged a global order, a new logic and structure of rule—in short, a new form of sovereignty. Empire is the political subject that effectively regulates these global exchanges, the sovereign power that governs the world. . . . The passage to Empire emerges from the twilight of modern sovereignty. In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers. Empire manages hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges through modulating networks of command.6

Figure 2 The Imperial Rhizome

Source: Author’s depiction of Michael Hardt’s and Antonio Negri’s “empire.”
“Empire,” as elaborated in Hardt and Negri’s book with that title, is a considerable innovation in theorizing postmodern sovereignty and global governance. It infuses Polybius’s tripartite governance structure of imperial Rome with Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s rhizomatic network in which nodal points proliferate on an open plane and connect with all others. The top three tiers, or plateaus, of the rhizome constitute Polybius’s imperial monarchy, which exercises control through the destructive power of the bomb. The United States holds the position of the pinnacle node, wielding a monopoly of force. Its powerful allies reside just below, using IGOs to regulate international monetary exchanges and exercising power over culture and so-called “biopolitics”—that is, the power to regulate social life from the inside. The two center plateaus comprise what Hardt and Negri term the aristocracy, which exercises financial control via judgment. Networks of TNCs bring the command structure of the higher monarchical tier to life. Below the corporate nodes are states, which have the function of filtering the powers above and disciplining their subject populations. Finally, the nodal points and relations at the base of the imperial pyramid constitute what Hardt and Negri call the matrix of democracy. Here, we find governments of the Global South, operating alone and through forums like the UN General Assembly. Also at the base is a wide range of groups seeking to capture, tame, mediate, and “represent” the popular interests of the multitude. These actors include NGOs, religious organizations, and the media. The multitude is regulated by and made subject to this “ethereal” web of control primarily through superstition and fear. There is no possibility of escaping the imperial rhizome, no ground upon which to construct collective actors or a political program beyond empire.

Yet empire is neither merely an apparatus of control nor a theoretical model or paradigm. Hardt and Negri also seek to chart—theoretically and politically—the possibility of subverting imperial power. It is precisely this lowly multitude that holds the potential to act within and also against empire. Imperial control is conceived as parasitic, feeding off the productive energies of its multitudinous host. This constitutive power of the multitude makes empire possible; thus the multitude can also destroy it and construct a postimperial, global order.

In their sequel to Empire, under the title of Multitude, Hardt and Negri further theorize the bases for counter-imperial, democratic social structures. Toward that end, they rethink concepts such as power, war, resistance, democracy, the proletariat, and the commons. Hardt and Negri are ambitious, in that they liken their two works to Thomas Hobbes’s Leviathan and De Cive, now written at a new and equally portentous historical moment. Hobbes gave definition to the social body and citizenship for the nascent bourgeoisie and articulated a form of absolute authority that would develop into the modern notion of national sovereignty. In a similar vein, Hardt and
Negri theorize an emergent global sovereignty—empire—as well as a counter-hegemonic global class—multitude—that is capable of creating an alternative global society at the cusp of postmodernity. “Hobbes Is Dead” could be the Multitude’s grandiose subtitle, and in his stead resurrects, and reconstructs, Marx. Here, “multitude” recasts the proletariat and class struggle in much broader terms. The industrial working class cedes its counter-hegemonic position to a new formation in the shape of immaterial social production (e.g., communications, relationships, and even forms of life). This shift to immaterial production, Hardt and Negri argue, creates the possibility for “real democracy,” which they define as “the rule of all by all based on relationships of equality and freedom” (p. 67).

Although Multitude is less obtuse than Empire, the sequel is still a Byzantine read. Only its conceptualizations of global order and change are addressed here. Multitude identifies two countervailing tendencies within the imperial rhizome model of global governance. From the top, “Empire spreads globally its network of hierarchies and divisions that maintain order through new mechanisms of control and constant conflict” (p. xiii). Yet simultaneously, the multitude produces “new circuits of cooperation and collaboration that stretch across nations and continents and allow an unlimited number of encounters” (p. xiii). While both forms of power are “biopolitical”—in that they engage the entirety of social life—they do so in different ways. The top-down “biopower” of empire emanates from command nodes and casts itself as a transcendent sovereign authority that imposes order. In contrast, the multitude is involved in bottom-up “biopolitical production,” which is immanent to society and creates relationships through collaborative forms of labor and gives content to democracy. Whereas the vertical biopower creates a people, the nation, and indeed a civil society, the horizontal, biopolitical production constitutes the multitude as a multiplicity of identities or subjectivities that cannot be reduced or subsumed under a single unity (pp. xiv, 93–95).

How is this multitude to maintain its diversity while managing to communicate, build solidarity, and act together against empire? This is not just a philosophical or academic question. Indeed, it is perhaps the most pressing concern of contemporary activists. Now that the “unity” politics of workers’ movements and political parties is largely discredited, how do today’s social movements recognize shared affinities and establish solidarity among diverse groups that wish to maintain their autonomy? Furthermore, do Hardt and Negri present a convincing case to abandon the politics of demand and its project of extending the liberal state and rights regime to the global level of governance?

In their defense, Multitude is a philosophical work, not a how-to guide for activists. Yet as a self-styled latter-day Marx and Engels writing on and indeed participating in an actual global rebellion, it does not seem too much
to ask that Hardt and Negri provide the rough contours of a concrete project. Strewn throughout the text—which is their maddening way—are clues. On page 69, they advocate “resistance, exodus, and the emptying out of the enemy’s power.” On page 347, they applaud “new political weapons,” such as carnival, mimicry, street demonstrations, and illegal immigration. A weeklong “global biopolitical strike” that “would block any war” is casually suggested, but not elaborated (p. 347). We are scolded throughout that it is “not a matter of taking power and commanding the armies but destroying the very possibility” (p. 347). In this war against war, there will be martyrs—not suicide bombers, mind you, but those who will be killed as a consequence of their Lutheran love and rage (pp. 346–353).

In such a manner, do Hardt and Negri convince us that it is even possible, let alone likely, that the multitude can move beyond empire? They assure us that the historical moment is ripe for an emancipatory “event,” but they also acknowledge that the multitude might be recaptured in a “new regime of exploitation and control” (p. 212). The unilateralism of the United States is today being checked by “aristocratic” state powers and TNCs who demand a “new magna carta” to reinvigorate global productive forces via poverty reduction, debt cancellation, and technology transfer for poorer countries. This potential “new deal” with the aristocracy would not bring about global democracy, but instead a more multilateral form of imperial control. Hardt and Negri view this moment as a strategic opportunity for the multitude to build alliances with aristocratic forces that could lead to revolutionary change. Perhaps, but such alliances could just as easily lure the restive multitude back under the imperial command.

The preceding two paragraphs illustrate the scattershot and slippery nature of Hardt and Negri’s reasoning. They have a predilection to reinterpret every defeat to the proletariat cum multitude as a victory deferred. Every potential threat is an opportunity to somehow, spontaneously be grasped. This optimism gives their critics as much fodder as it gives hope to their sympathizers. But after wading through 400 pages of cryptic fortune-cookie logic, I came away with little more guidance on the feasibility or wisdom of bringing down empire.

Like Bob to Jordan and van Tuijl, Day’s Gramsci Is Dead attempts to get a little more real than Hardt and Negri. Day is hesitant to appropriate the terms of “empire” and “multitude,” regarding them as “Eurocentric, androcentric” and “class-determinist,” and so simply renames empire “the neoliberal project” (p. 6). This is not necessarily a bad move because while running broadly parallel to Hardt and Negri, and engaging with many of the same authors, Day’s argument is considerably clearer and more accessible. He engages quite masterfully with anarchist, Marxist, and liberal traditions before transitioning to poststructuralism and finally locating himself within postanarchism and autonomist Marxism. This is the only position, Day
argues, from which to chart a path of global governance that can bring about progressive social change that responds to the needs and desires of diverse identities without unifying them forcibly under a single common project.

In contrast to Hardt and Negri, Day is skeptical about recent mass mobilizations against existing forms of global governance. He dismisses the “elitist practice” of summit hopping that drains resources. “Many do not lament the demise of this phase of struggle,” and Day is apparently one of them (p. 3). Large protests only temporarily impede or marginally reform existing structures, he opines. These actions fail to address fundamental problems associated with capitalism and the state.

Yet as a scholar-activist, Day knows better than to misrepresent street demonstrations as solely “brought to you by Ryanair.” If governments have managed to chase people off the streets through outright repression, nationalist propaganda that instills fear of the terrorist “other,” or disillusionment in the face of flouting the popular will, is it not a defeat and a cause for concern and reflection?

Not so, says Day. On the contrary, this is an ideal moment to embrace a more “radical” tactic, such as writing books, bartering, and cooperative squatting. For him, mass mobilization is not necessarily the way to move forward in struggle. Instead, Day makes a virtue out of marginality, as anarchists often do. We are urged to break once and for all with the “popular fiction” that effective social change comes through massive revolts on large terrains. Marxists, liberals, and post-Marxist reformers are all seen as trapped by the same majoritarian logic, the politics of demand, and the hegemonic notion that revolutions generate comprehensive transformation (pp. 8, 65).

Day argues instead for the progressive potential of “micropolitics,” or the politics of minority rather than majority. Micropolitics pursues nonuniversalizing, nonhierarchical, noncoercive relationships based on mutual aid and shared ethical commitments. Contemporary radical activism, or what Day terms the “newest social movements,” entails “conscious attempts to alter, impede, destroy or construct alternatives to dominant structures, processes, practices and identities” (p. 4). These struggles “seek change to the root . . . to address not just the content of current modes of domination and exploitation, but also the forms that give rise to them” (p. 4). These are the “non-branded” strategies and tactics of independent media (“Indymedia”), affinity groups, Reclaim the Streets, and the direct action black, pink, and yellow blocs seen at street protests. These practices are also revealed in indigenous movements among the Mohawk Nation, the Zapatistas, and aboriginal provisional governments in Australia and New Zealand as well as among radical feminists and gay activists. What makes these movements unique and potentially subversive is that they do not—in
the way of liberal and Marxist traditions—aim to take over the state or to reform capitalism. Rather, they seek to recover or establish their ability to determine the conditions of their own existence while encouraging others to do the same.

Day seeks to convince us that the “hegemony of hegemony” of old-style radical politics is being overtaken by new politics of “affinity for affinity.” The politics of demand is being replaced by a politics of the act. Radical social movements today are realizing that, by demanding rights and freedoms to be gifted from the state and other corporate forms, people only perpetuate their oppression (p. 15). Recalling Figure 2 above, the newest social movements are no longer letting the parasitic empire feed upon their labor and retain them as subjects. They are breaking this relationship by avoiding making such demands in the first place and instead networking directly among themselves. These newest social movements point the way, via direct action and a rejection of the state and corporations, toward other ways of being.

Yet one cannot escape the paradox that the tactics and movements that Day champions are by definition micropolitics—the politics of a minority—and seem destined to remain as such. Moreover, Day admits that the decentralization of power within global governance does not necessarily mean greater freedom: “Much more likely under current conditions [it] means a shift from modern discipline to postmodern control” characterized as hierarchical and authoritarian (p. 216). This realistic assessment contradicts Day’s otherwise optimistic, even utopian tone. Here we glimpse a future world that looks much like our own, where imperial control persists and the politics of demand seems to be the only global game possible to play.

Returning to the schism between reformers and radicals, Day avers that “civil society . . . is not only superfluous, but dangerous, as it presumes and reinforces both the state and corporate forms” (p. 213). _Gramsci Is Dead_ provides the most theoretically detailed and conceptually clear explanation of why this cleavage exists and is unlikely to be sutured. Day’s measured analysis reveals these disputes to be much more than merely semantic, for they spring from irreconcilable conceptions of the state, global governance, democracy, and the possibility of human agency and freedom, resistance, and alternative forms of social organization. NGOs and other reformers in practice project the liberal, pluralistic polity model onto the international level. They seek to transform civil society actors’ roles from marginal challengers to formidable polity members on par with TNCs and IGOs, and thereby gain greater access to governing agents and resources and rights protections within an emergent global polity. However, anarchists and autonomist Marxists envision a decentered and deterritorialized, yet all encompassing, global network of rule and resistance to it. Within this imperial rhizomatic terrain, radical social movements must practice nonuniversalizing, nonhierarchical, and noncoercive relationships based on mutual
assistance and shared ethics in order to destroy and replace dominant statist and corporate structures and practices.

Yet as disparate as these two tendencies are from one another, they nonetheless share some affinities and common practices: NGOs and anarchists both bristle at the notion of engaging directly with their adversary, which they attribute to their own superiority, but in the process betray their real marginality and lack of power or influence. NGOs claim an autonomous sphere and pure motive above and beyond the dirty game of politics while de facto they engage in and even transpose the politics of demand to the global level. Anarchists advise withdrawal into experimental ghettos in the hopes that the state and corporations will whither and die as a consequence. Neither seems like a particularly honest self-appraisal nor a winning strategy in the face of mounting oppression, inequality, and injustice. Contemporary transnational activists by and large acknowledge this fact by seeking out broad-based coalitions that avoid one extreme or the other. Via their praxis, they articulate new forms of global governance that fall somewhere between, or beyond, the two ideal typical models depicted in this essay. Scholars and policymakers alike could learn much from studying these alternative worlds in the making.

Notes

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5. Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, Dynamics of Contention (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 11–12.


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