

Political development & policy



Over the next few weeks, we will be talking about how various interventions can foster order (or not)

1. Mediation
2. Making peace pay
3. Trusteeships
4. **Peacekeeping missions**
5. **Humanitarian intervention**
6. Decentralization
7. Foreign aid
8. State building assistance
9. Democracy promotion



A recurring message: Solutions should fit the diagnosis

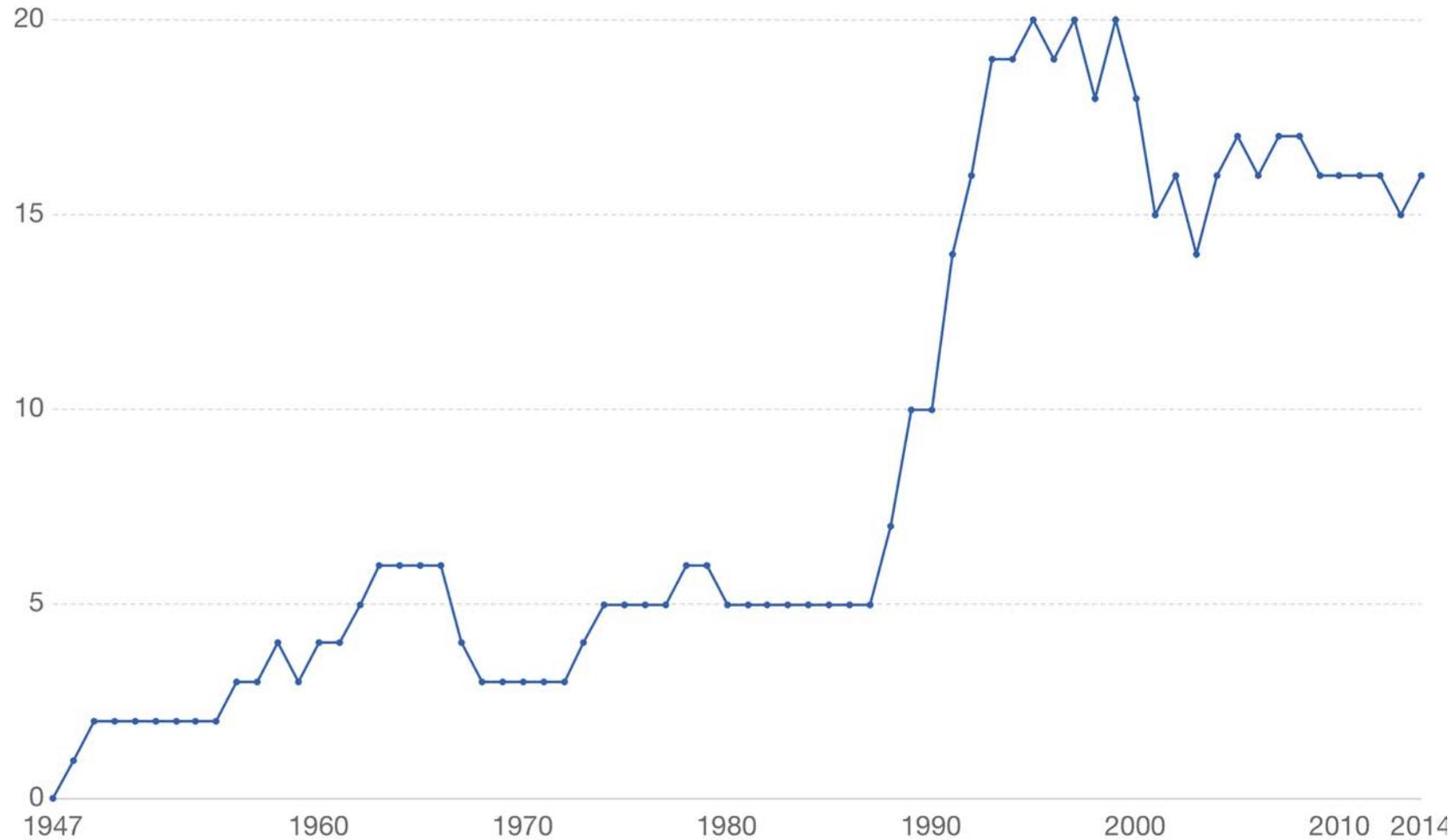
1. **Unchecked elites.** Groups are more likely to fight when decision-makers ignore the costs of war or receive personal benefits (and no one holds them to account)
2. **Violent values.** Sometimes the act of violence is its own reward, in terms of status, emotion, or principle. These are non-material incentives for war
3. **Systematic mistakes.** Competition is a complex set of decisions, and humans tend to systematic mistakes when evaluating costs or chances of victory
4. **Uncertainty.** When the opposing group's strength or intentions are ambiguous, taking a chance by fighting can be the best way to resolve the uncertainty, so that war is the result of a risky gamble
5. **Impossible bargains / Commitment problems.** Some circumstances give one side an irresistible incentive to risk war. Even if there is a peaceful deal that makes both sides better off, that deal is non-credible, as at least once side has incentives to renege

- I. Diagnosing the problem: Roots of post-colonial conflict (continued)
- II. Examining solutions: International interventions to address conflict
 - A. Mediation
 - B. Making peace pay
 - C. Trusteeships
 - D. Peacekeeping missions
 - E. Humanitarian intervention

- I. Diagnosing the problem: Roots of post-colonial conflict (continued)
- II. Examining solutions: International interventions to address conflict
 - A. Mediation
 - B. Making peace pay
 - C. Trusteeships
 - D. Peacekeeping missions
 - E. Humanitarian intervention

Huge increase in missions since end of the Cold War

Number of United Nations peacekeeping operations around the world, 1948-2014



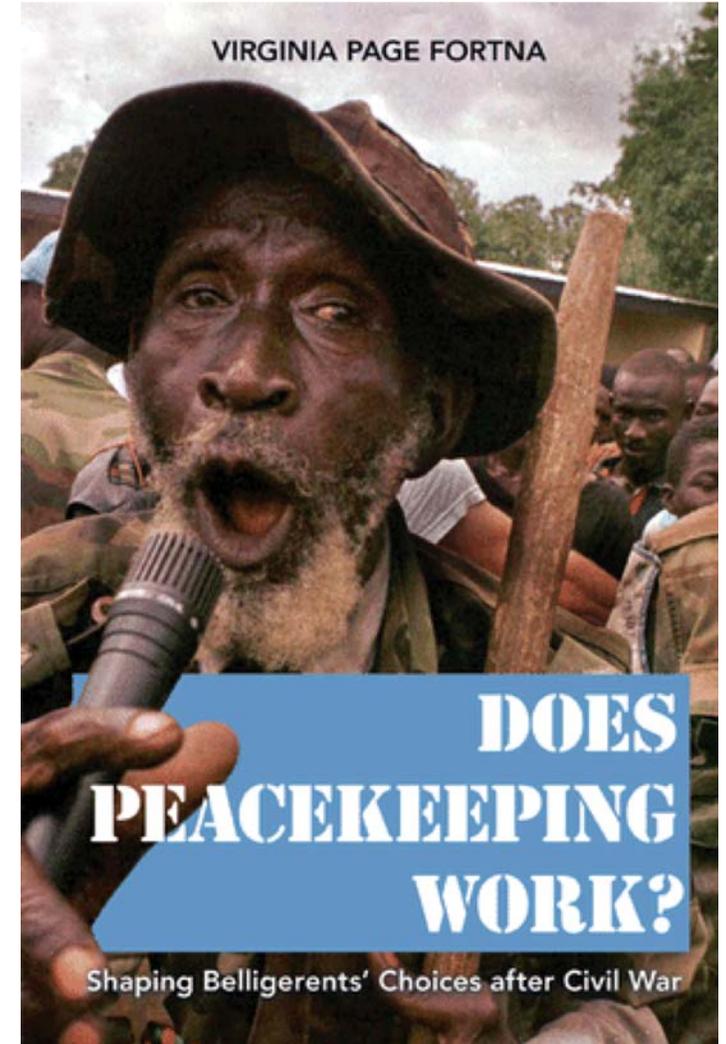
Source: United Nations Peacekeeping

OurWorldInData.org • CC BY-SA

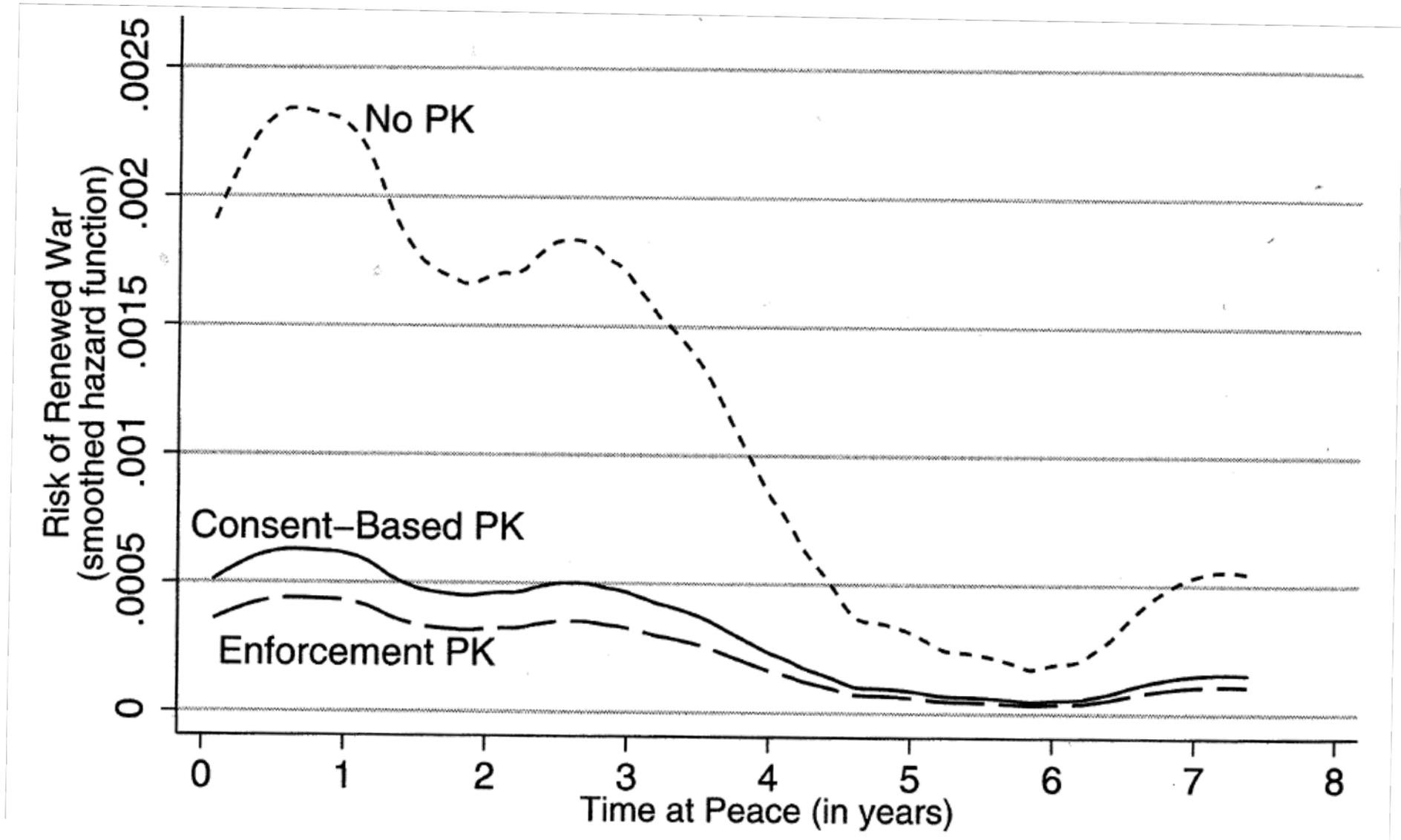
What is the problem to which peacekeepers are a solution?

What do peacekeepers do?

- Two kinds of missions
 - With consent of fighting parties (Chapter VI)
 - Without consent (Chapter VII)
- Lightest missions are tasked with monitoring cease-fires, troop withdrawals, or other conditions
- Over time missions have become:
 - More aggressive (without consent)
 - Wider in scope, going beyond observation and enforcement to include electoral supervision, police and security forces reform, institution building, economic development, and more
- Vast majority of these have been stationed in Africa



Fortna: Peacekeeping associated with a lower risk of renewed warfare



But does peacekeeping cause peace?

Could be a selection problem

- What if the UN Security Council picks the “easy” cases?
- Then peacekeeping would correlate with peace by construction
- To test: collect data on conditions likely to influence peacekeeping

But does peacekeeping cause peace?

Could be a selection problem

- What if the UN Security Council picks the “easy” cases?
- Then peacekeeping would correlate with peace by construction
- To test: collect data on conditions likely to influence peacekeeping

BUT, probably not the case

- Historical ties and economic interests are not associated with peacekeeping support
- In fact, peacekeepers seem to go to the tougher cases
 - Especially where belligerents can’t agree on a solution
- Hence (if anything) Fortna understates the impact of peacekeeping

Peacekeeping as rationalist warfare in reverse?

Create commitment

- Enforce commitments to peace
 - Military deterrence and threat of force
- Provide direct incentives for peace
 - Condition aid on good behavior
 - Provide a ‘peace dividend’
- The core idea is to provide temporary external enforcement of commitments until self-enforcing commitments can be reached

Reduce info asymmetries

- Reduce uncertainty and mutual fear
 - Monitoring, reporting, and communication
- Prevent and control accidents
 - Deter rogue groups and ‘spoilers’
 - Provide law and order

Some experiences from Liberia: (i) Peacekeepers responding to riots



(ii) Peacekeepers and pacifying occupied rubber plantations



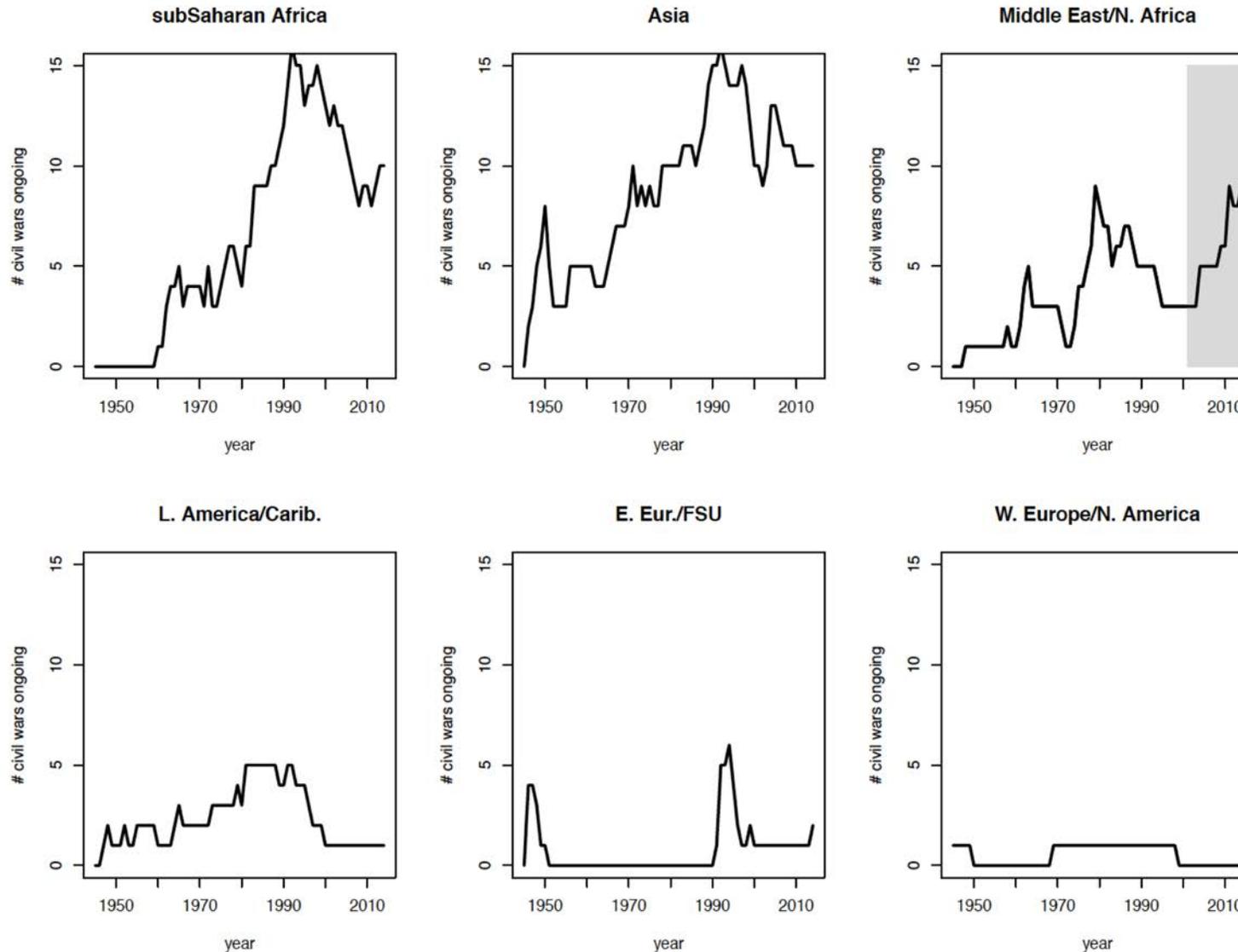
Why doesn't peacekeeping seem to be enough in places like South Sudan?

- Peacekeeping can fail to keep the peace for many reasons
 - E.g. At least one side continues to see strategic advantage in fighting
- One limitation of the S Sudanese mission is relatively low levels of force size, especially given the size of the territory

Table 1. UN Peacekeeping Operations in Five African Failed States

Country	Highest Number of Peacekeepers	Date	Peacekeepers per 100,000 Persons	Peacekeepers per 100 Square Kilometers
Burundi	7,145	May 2004	112	28
Democratic Republic of Congo	19,566	January 2006	33	1
Ivory Coast	9,098	June 2004	53	3
Liberia	17,700	January 2006	508	18
Sierra Leone	18,339	March 2001	304	25
South Sudan	15,777	Since July 2011	126	2.5

Fearon 2018: But one major change in recent warfare: The rise of conflicts in North Adfrica & Middle East, with heavy foreign involvement



Fearon 2018: "The international community's peacekeeping + treatment regime has not and probably cannot be applied in this region"

Why?

1. These are regional wars involving major powers running proxy wars
 - Thus it is hard to get UN approval for a peacekeeping operation
2. "Even if you could, who would send troops? Foreign troops are like catnip for jihadis/nationalists"

Examples where international forces exited due to violence:

- Failed, abortive mission to Somalia in early 1990s
- Abortive mission to Syria, April-August 2012

How would you characterize Fearon's concerns using the 5 roots of conflict?
What other concerns would you raise about peacekeeping these conflicts?

1. Unchecked elites
2. Violent values
3. Systematic mistakes
4. Uncertainty
5. Commitment problems

His points are yet another illustration that context matters. There is no simple template. Solutions have to fit the problems.

International action to stop violence may be more challenging in these contexts, but far from impossible.

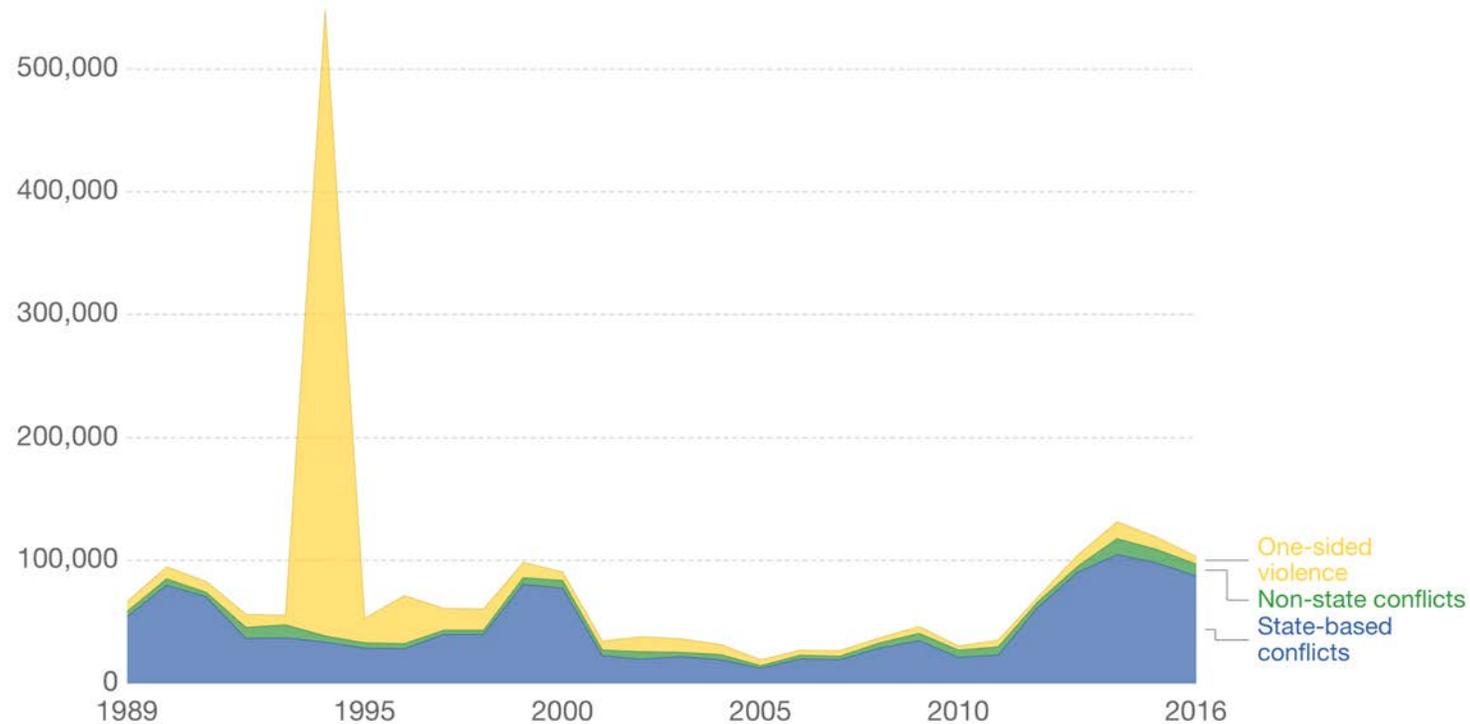
- I. Diagnosing the problem: Roots of post-colonial conflict (continued)
- II. Examining solutions: International interventions to address conflict
 - A. Mediation
 - B. Making peace pay
 - C. Trusteeships
 - D. Peacekeeping missions
 - E. Humanitarian intervention

Since World War II some 50 episodes of mass killings have led to between 12 and 25 million civilian casualties and by 2008 have induced the displacement of 42 million people

Violent deaths in conflicts and one-sided violence since 1989



The data refer to direct violent deaths. Deaths due to disease or famine caused by conflict are excluded. Extra-judicial killings in custody are also excluded. Only incidents involving more than 25 deaths are included. One-sided violence is that between a named organisation and civilians, such as genocides. The spike in 1994 reflects the high death toll of the Rwandan genocide.



Source: UCDP/PRIO

OurWorldInData.org • CC BY-SA

Note: State-based conflict is between at least two named organisations, where at least one was the government of a state. Non-state conflict is between two named non-state organisations. One-sided violence is that between a named organisation and civilians, such as genocides.

Humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention

- “Humanitarianism”
 - An alternative to the sovereignty of states and principles of noninterference
 - Asserts basic rights of humankind regardless of differences in race, gender, religion, national belonging, political creed, etc
- “Humanitarian intervention”
 - “political, economic and military interference in the domestic affairs of a state justified by a nascent transnational morality” – Roberto Belloni
 - In practice, can mean different things to different advocates/critics
 - Mediation
 - Travel bans, financial freezes, and other sanctions
 - International criminal court investigations
 - Chapter VII peacekeeping missions
 - Other military solutions, including targeted attacks
 - Also, preventative measures? For example...

“In the past six decades, we have witnessed mass atrocities committed against others across the globe. We all share a responsibility to do whatever we can to help prevent and protect one another from such violence.

...The place to start is with prevention: through measures aimed in particular at building state capacity, remedying grievances, and ensuring the rule of law.

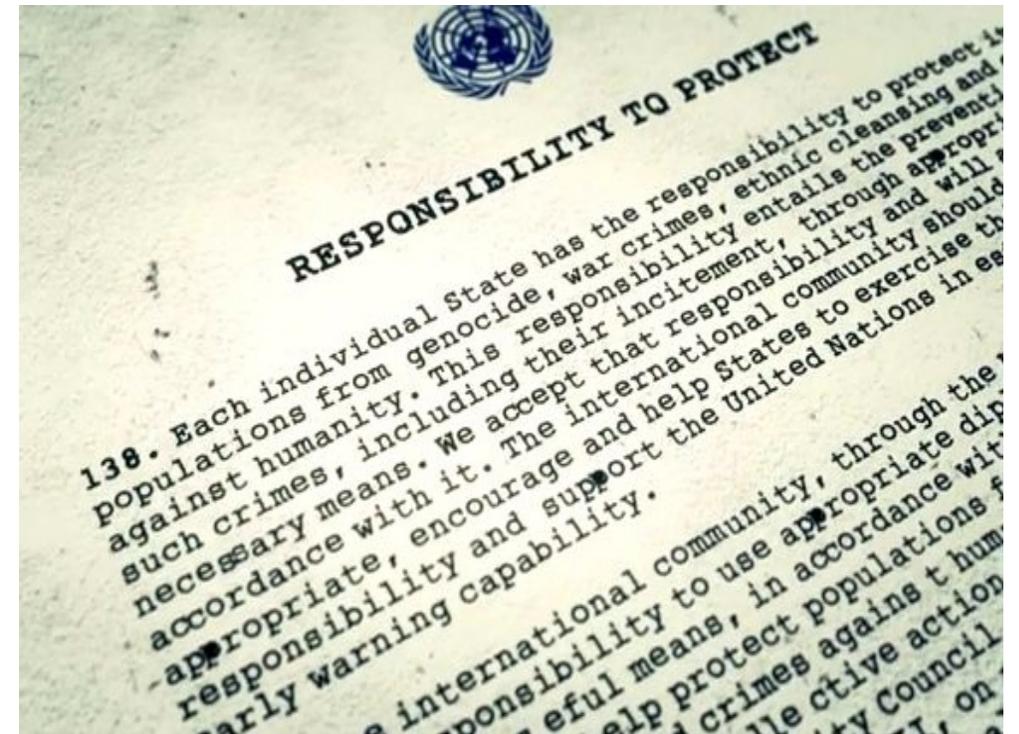
My hope is that in the future, the Responsibility to Protect will be exercised not after the murder and rape of innocent people, but when community tensions and political unrest begin. It is by preventing, rather than reacting, that we can truly fulfill our shared responsibility to end the worst forms of human rights abuses.”



Archbishop Desmond Tutu, 2008

Humanitarian intervention versus the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

- A commitment endorsed by all UN member states in 2005
- Recognizes that there are limits to sovereign noninterference
- A framework for employing measures that already exist to prevent atrocities
 - Mediation, sanctions, and chapter VII powers
- Authority to employ force rests solely with UN Security Council
- “Humanitarian intervention” is broader, and includes the use of force without Security Council authorization



Before we get to this, what is the problem to which these varieties of humanitarian intervention are a solution?

One sided violence is seldom entirely one sided (or in isolation)

Some stylized facts:

- Almost all mass killings in history were perpetrated by government or militarily powerful rebel groups killing large numbers of an identifiable group in their country
- Most mass killing events have taken place towards the end or after wars, especially civil wars
 - Between 1960 and 2000 roughly a third of all civil wars (50 out of 152) featured mass killings, while in none of the interstate wars (23) were there mass killings
 - Hence these events are difficult to disentangle from insurgency and counter-insurgency

Where might you locate mass killings? Anywhere?

1. **Unchecked elites.** Groups are more likely to fight when decision-makers ignore the costs of war or receive personal benefits (and no one holds them to account)
2. **Violent values.** Sometimes the act of violence is its own reward, in terms of status, emotion, or principle. These are non-material incentives for war
3. **Systematic mistakes.** Competition is a complex set of decisions, and humans tend to systematic mistakes when evaluating costs or chances of victory
4. **Uncertainty.** When the opposing group's strength or intentions are ambiguous, taking a chance by fighting can be the best way to resolve the uncertainty, so that war is the result of a risky gamble
5. **Impossible bargains / Commitment problems.** Some circumstances give one side an irresistible incentive to risk war. Even if there is a peaceful deal that makes both sides better off, that deal is non-credible, as at least once side has incentives to renege

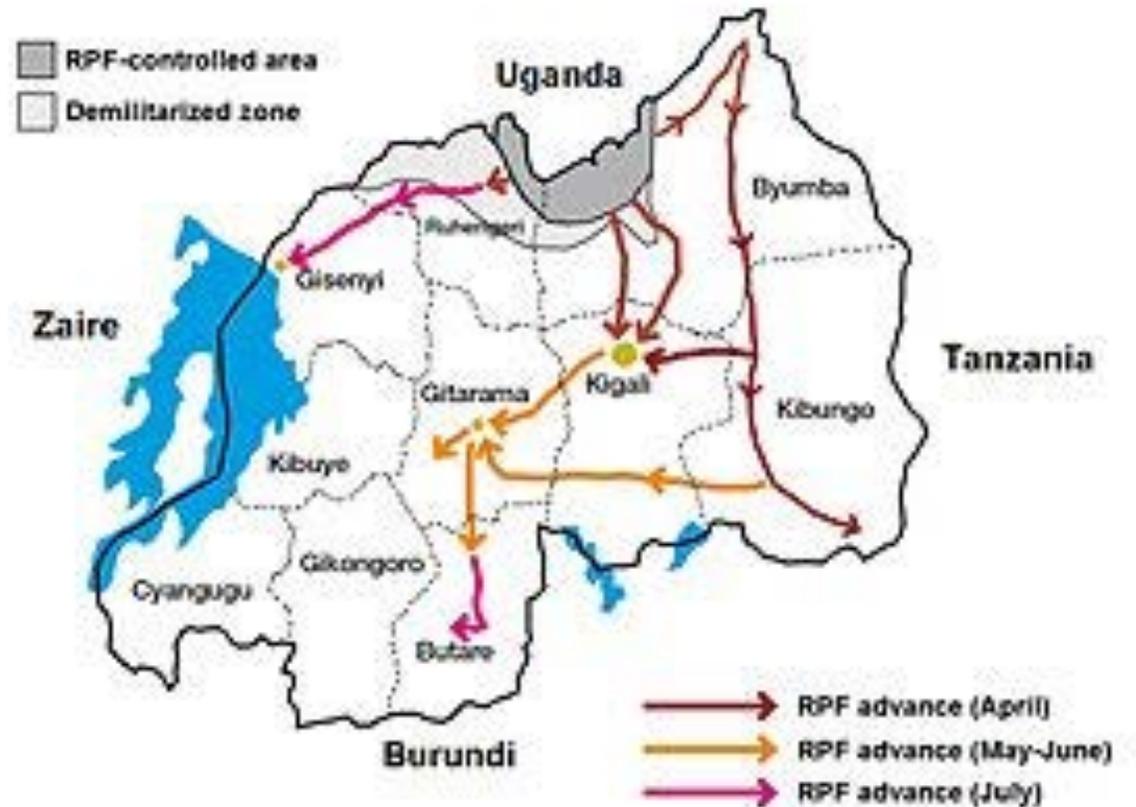
One common logic of mass killings and genocide:
An example of “preventative war” resulting from a commitment problem?

- Mass killings are often an attempt to reduce the size of opponent groups, either directly or by causing refugee outflows and displacement
- Killing large numbers of a group is one way to avoid having to bargain with them in future
 - Reduces the rents you have to share with them
 - Though it can reduce productive output that depends on labor
- This is likely one reason mass killings are more likely in natural resource dependent countries
- Mass killings are also significantly more likely after recent democratization and in small, ethnically polarized countries

e.g. Rwanda, April-July 1994:

An attempt to permanently change the balance of power in the country

- In 1990, a minority Tutsi rebel group, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), begin a civil war
- In 1993, international pressure leads to a ceasefire and beginnings of a power sharing agreement
- Hutu President dies in a plane accident
- The next day the Hutu elite initiate a highly planned mass killing of Tutsis
- Roughly 70% (800,000) of minority Tutsis were killed by majority Hutus
- A small Chapter VI UN peacekeeping mission is ordered not to interfere
- Ended when RPF took the capital



The failure to intervene in Rwanda (1994) and a mass killing in Bosnia (Srebrenica, 1995) helped to build a global political constituency to intervene in mass killings

- President Bill Clinton referred to the failure of the U.S. to intervene in the genocide as one of his main foreign policy failings:
- “I don't think we could have ended the violence, but I think we could have cut it down. And I regret it.”



What would be the “rationalist” argument in favor of interventions?

The argument in favor emphasizes checking elites and violent preference, and solving commitment problems

- Third-party intervention to stop atrocities are designed to make it more costly and less effective for states to commit atrocities
- The credible threat of an intervention should mean that states are more reluctant to commit atrocities
- The audience for these interventions is not just the present killers but all future potential ones
- Most discussion focuses on how to make the threats more credible
- The number and length of civil wars and mass atrocities have declined over the past 20 years, as the norm supporting intervention has taken hold

The following decade sees a number of military interventions (not necessarily responses to mass killings) that help to end long-running conflicts

- Haiti 1994
 - After a military coup ousts a recently elected President, generals capitulate without a shot fired as a US diplomatic force informs them of imminent invasion
- Bosnia 1995
 - The Srebrenica massacre of 8000 Bosniak civilians is followed by a military intervention that brought to an end three years of war
- Kosovo 1999
 - NATO bombed Yugoslavia to compel it to withdraw its forces from the breakaway territory of Kosovo, after which Yugoslavia agrees to withdraw troops and allow a foreign military in
- Sierra Leone 2000
 - A small British force bolster a UN peacekeeping force and the Sierra Leonean Army against rebels, helping lead to a ceasefire
- Liberia 2001
 - A union of West African states and a credible threat of US military intervention helps to persuade rebel groups to a ceasefire and President Charles Taylor to enter exile in Nigeria

Recent interventions are also held up as success stories

Kenya 2007-08



Cote D'Ivoire 2011



What might be a counterargument?

Caution 1: The moral hazard problem in mass atrocities

- The prospect of intervention could encourage weak groups to rebel, and even to provoke state atrocities to trigger international intervention
- Perversely, this could actually *increase* the probability of war and atrocities
- Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) leaders openly acknowledged that they would lose without intervention but hoped to provoke Serbian atrocities in order to draw in the international community
- In theory, this should not outweigh the reduction in killings from intervention



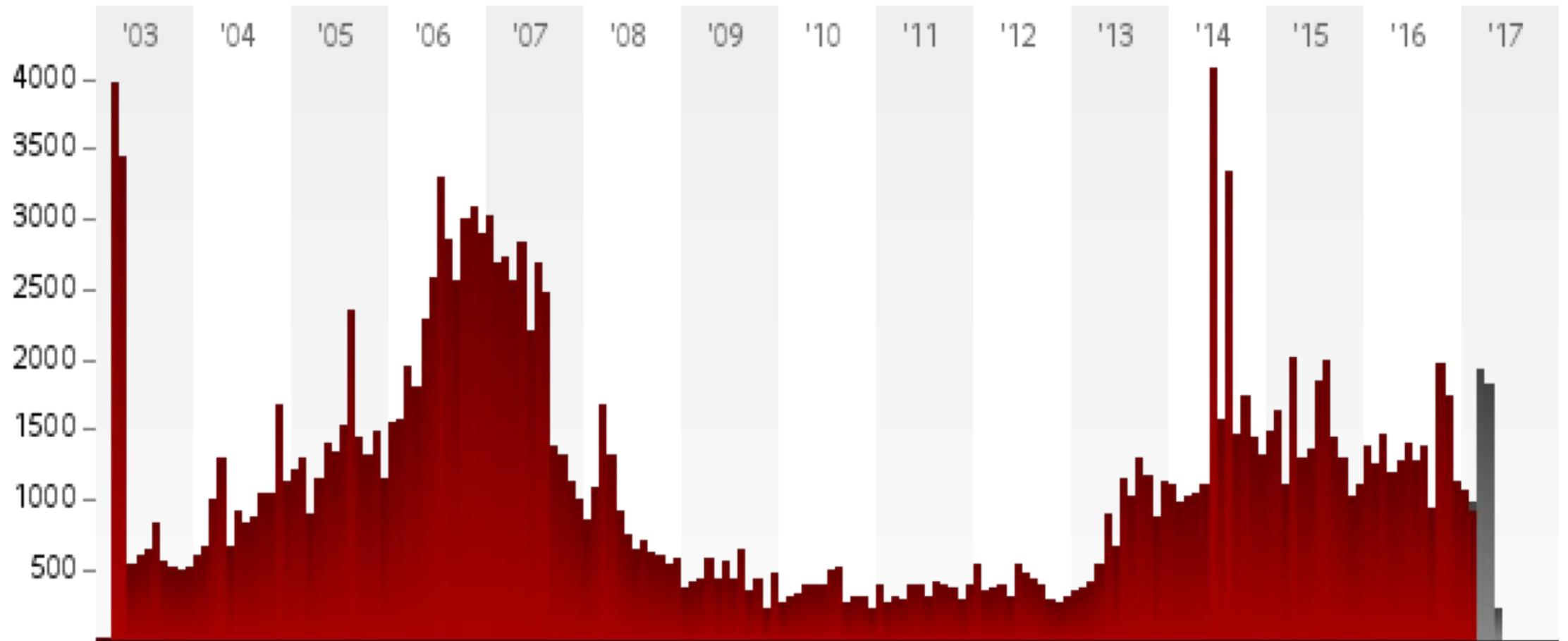
Caution 2: A tendency to overreach?

How is the U.S. invasion of Iraq influenced by previous interventions (or lack of intervention?)



Of course we know how that turns out, with severe consequences for the reputation of humanitarian intervention

Documented civilian deaths from violence by day, via iraqibodycount.org



Caution 3: Looking back, it has proven to be easier to halt the atrocities of low-capacity regimes (Stewart and Knaus)

Low capacity

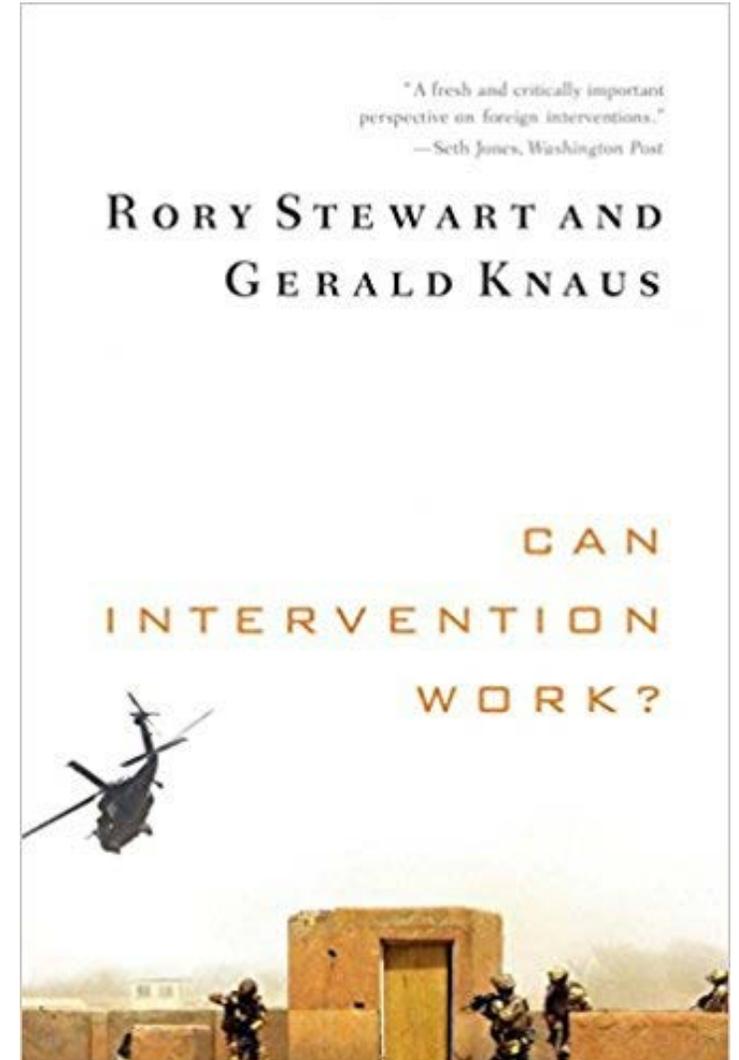
- Centralized power structure controlled by narrow elite
- Popular organization and support base limited
- Limited resources or resources that are easily shut off (e.g. capture the refinery, end diamond trade, cut off remittances, etc.)

High capacity

- diffuse power structure with a broad-based elite coalition
- Large, centrally controlled conventional and internal security forces embedded in bureaucratic institutions.
- Access to finance that is hard to cut off (e.g. from a strong external backer)
- Widespread social organization

Caution 4: International community seldom aware of its own weaknesses

- “International policy-makers always have a muddled and half-understood picture of the country before intervention, perhaps an equally muddled and half-understood picture of their own society in the West, and some generally doubtful guesses about how to get from one to the other”
- International community much weaker than imagined
 - Have unparalleled resources and drive and resourcefulness
 - But isolated from local society and ignorant of context
 - Prey to misleading abstract theories
 - Lack legitimacy and local support
 - Underestimate local leaders and abilities to compromise

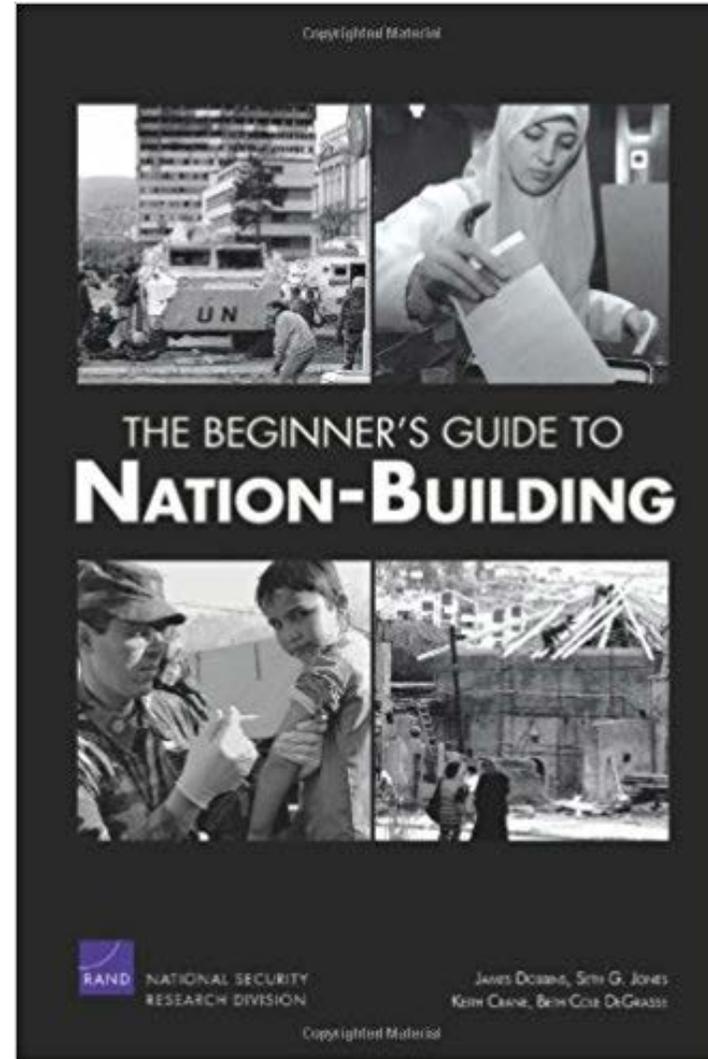


Stewart & Knaus's Exhibit A

“ *The more sweeping a [nation-building] mission's objectives, the more resistance it is likely to inspire.*

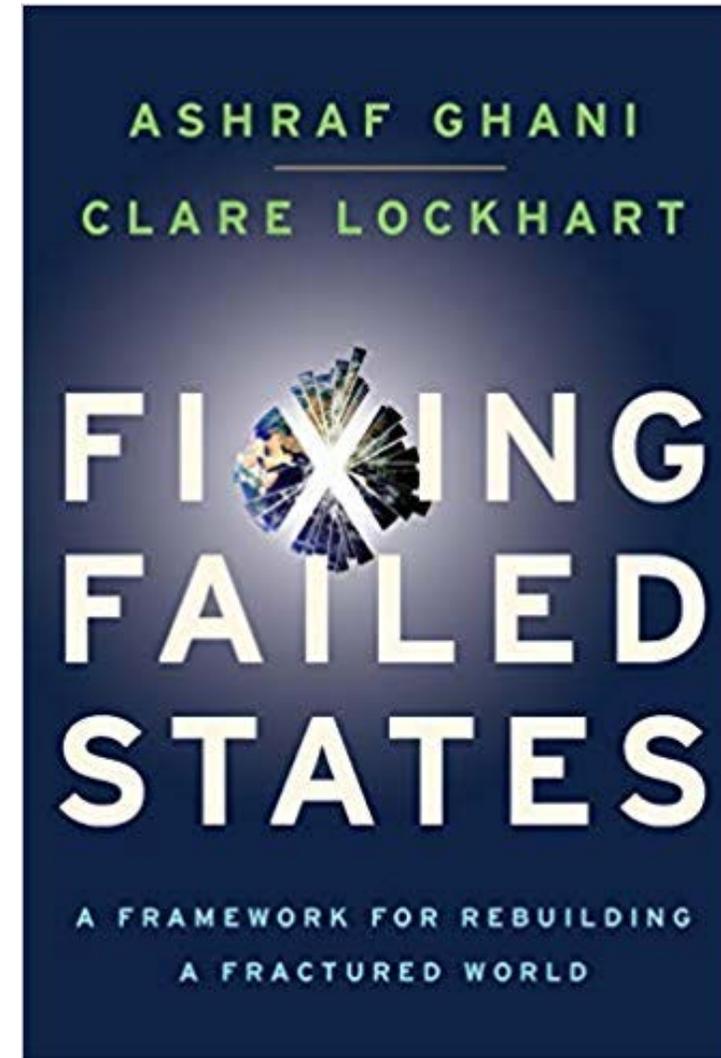
Resistance can be overcome, but only through a well-considered application of personnel and money over extended periods of time.

—RAND Corporation



Other more balanced plans still suffer from some of the same weaknesses

- Sets out an ambitious, centrally-planned and coordinated set of state-building solutions for places such as Afghanistan, Sudan, and Nepal
- Focused on service provision by states financed largely by aid, and aspiration for taxes in longer term
- Almost wholly avoids the discussion of difficult political compromises and unbalanced political power



Save Darfur:

One of the largest global social movements and lobbies of the 21st century

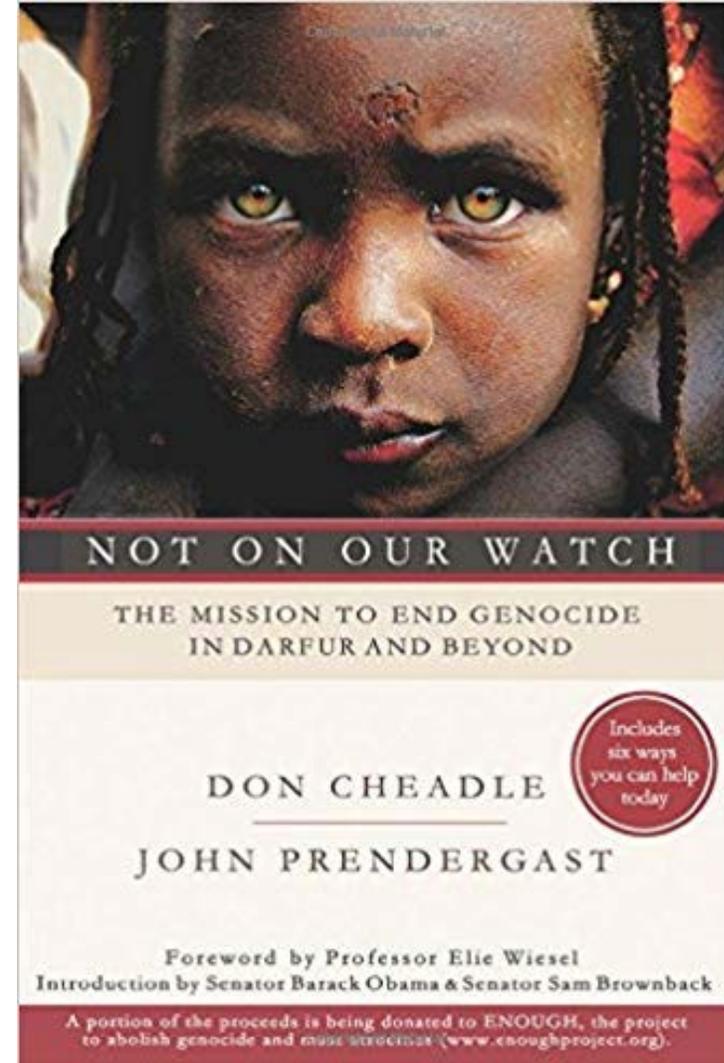
HOME SEARCH

The New York Times Magazine

Magazine

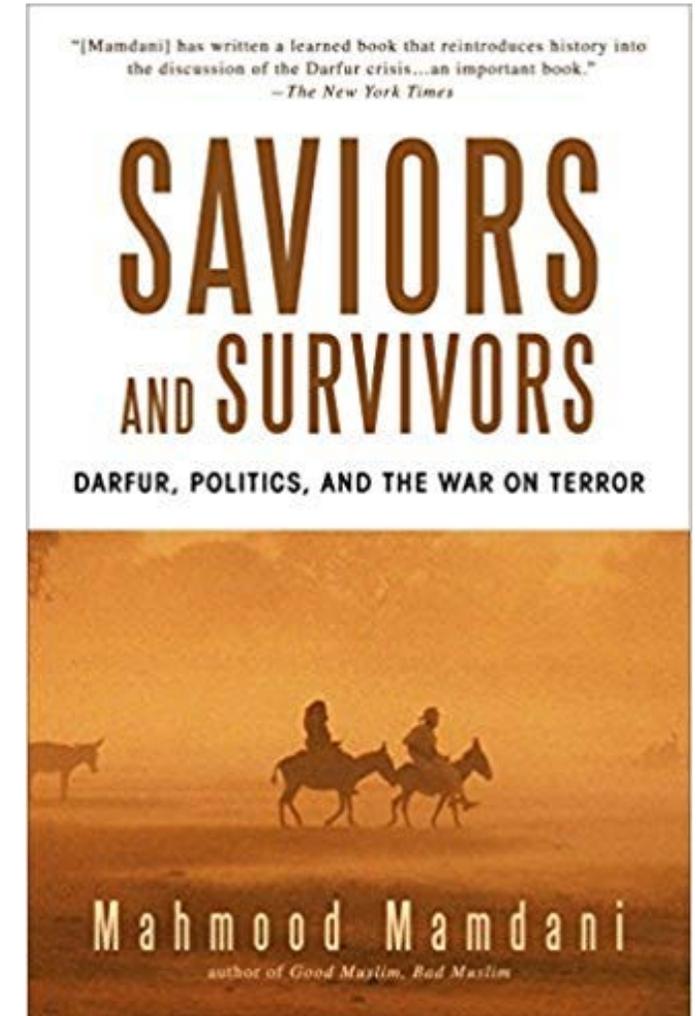
Attention-Grabber for Sudan's Cause

By DANIEL BERGNER DEC. 2, 2010



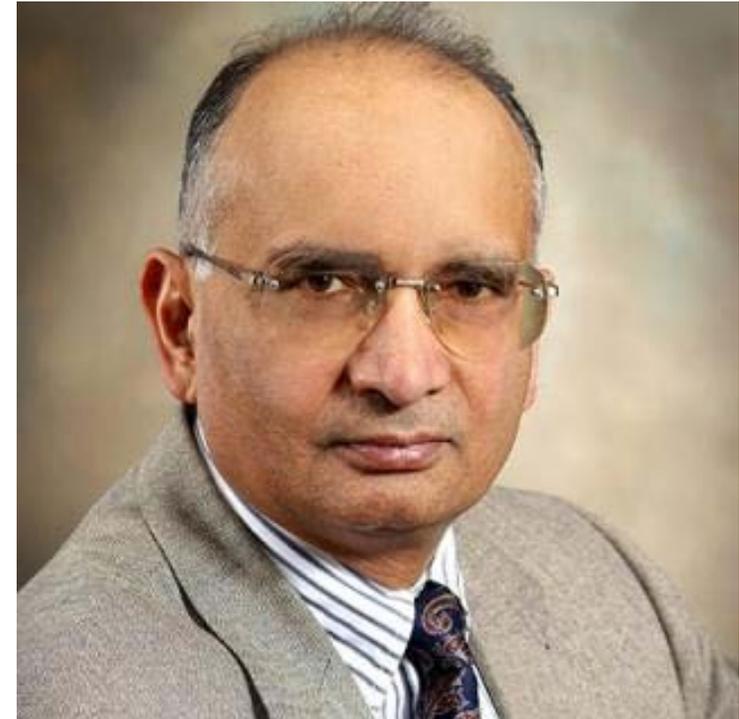
Western R2P social movements like Save Darfur garner much criticism e.g. Mahmood Mamdani

- Sees a history of powerful outsiders using the language of race and tribe in pursuit of their own interests
 - Colonial, Cold War interests, War on Terror, etc...
- Since most Americans do not know Sudan's history well, it offers a simplistic moral crusade
 - In Darfur, they oversimplify the conflict, simplistically “bad Arabs” and “good Africans,”
- Encourages Americans to believe that American military intervention is the best response to global conflict
- Has set back attempts to reach a peace settlement
 - Advocates promote a moral urgency when the political complexities might counsel slow, patient analysis
 - Argues this is an insurgency & counter-insurgency, not a genocide
 - ICC indictment of President Bashir hinders peace



Other critiques of the international community

- Trying to rectify an unhealthy dominance of Western perspectives who approach R2P from the point of view of the rights and privileges of the intervening countries
- Views the problem as the inadequate means to respond, especially preventive activities like investigations and international courts
- Also sees many gaps: civilians in occupied territories (Gaza), internally displaced persons, or non-UN sanctioned invasions (Iraq in 2003)



Ramesh Thakur, former Assistant Secretary-General of the UN

Stewart and Knaus:

Argue for the superiority of incremental over ambitious missions

Incremental

- Time limited
- Aiming to foster bargains that stop hostilities between groups
- Raise the costs for a ruling group to commit atrocities

Ambitious

- Deposing elites coalition in power
- Nation building
- Pursuit of democracy
- Ending corruption

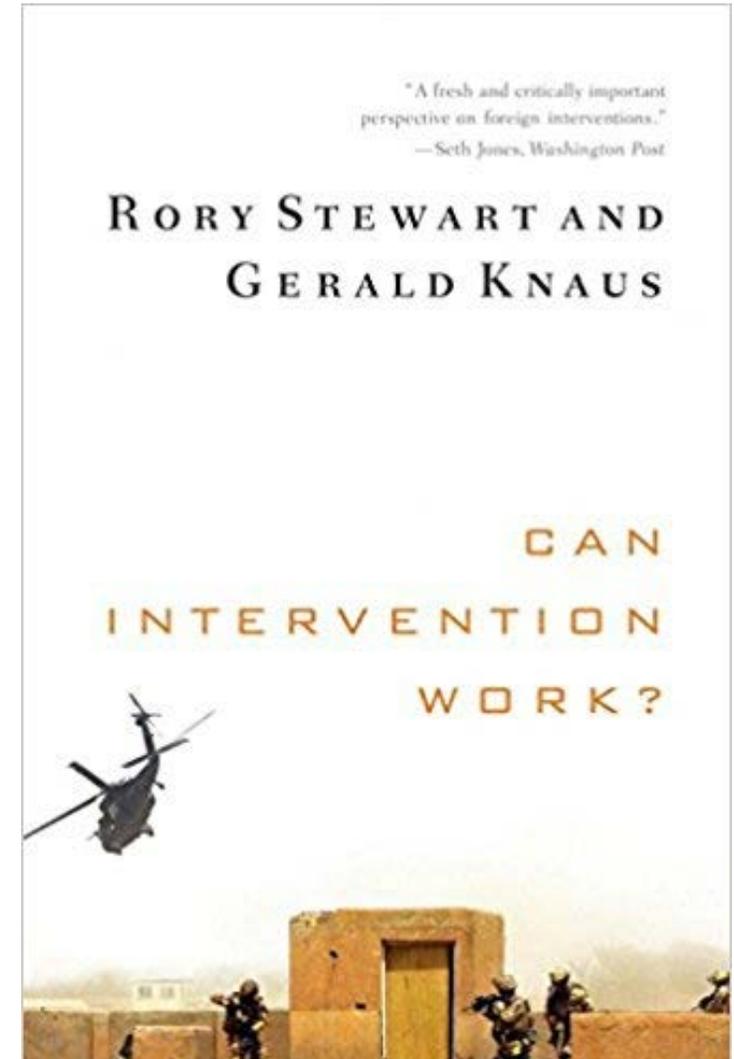
These will be themes that echo throughout the rest of the course

- Incrementalism
- Problem driven experimentation
- Self-awareness of strengths and limitations of external intervention
- Attention to politics
- Humility
- Balancing moral imperatives with all of the above

Knaus calls for “principled incrementalism” and Stewart, “passionate moderation.”

“The best way of minimizing the danger of any intervention is to proceed carefully, to invest heavily in finding out about the specific context, particularly after the intervention, and to define concrete and not abstract goals.

Power and authority must be given to local leadership through elections as soon as possible. Only local leaders have the necessary ingredient of knowing the situation well, over many years and in all kinds of conditions; only they can get around the dangers that cannot be avoided, and skillfully respond to them.”



Critiques of Mamdani's critique

- “does not know Sudan or Darfur well, has cooked his political narrative in advance, and in his inaccurate and over-generalizing attack on American Darfur advocacy largely ignores the enormously and deliberately destructive actions of Khartoum in Darfur, even those of its central players”
- “because Mamdani is so focused on the political economy of activism, he refuses to allow civilian suffering to enter the equation of his argument and thereby misses the appeal of the activist movement”
- “Anger blinds analysis, and many parts of *Saviors and Survivors* read like an angry harangue against the Darfur advocacy movement, the history of British imperialism, and American foreign policy in Sudan and all of Africa—often done in a tone that equates all three”