



Dean Chapman / Panos Pictures. BURMA.

CHAPTER 6

Persistent Armed Conflict: An Increasing Threat?³⁶

It is now widely accepted that the number of armed conflicts has declined substantially over the last two decades. But there are warnings of serious and even growing causes for concern: that wars are lasting longer than before and that, even when wars stop, violent conflict is increasingly likely to recur. In short, it is argued conflicts are becoming more difficult to resolve.³⁷

This bleak assessment has certainly received support from some influential conflict researchers. For example, James Fearon asserted in 2004 that “the average duration of civil wars in progress has been steadily increasing throughout the postwar period, reaching almost 16 years in 1999.”³⁸ Paul Collier and colleagues, as well as Ann Hironaka, have made similar claims.³⁹ If it is indeed the case that conflicts are lasting longer on average, then this is bad news for efforts to end them.

It is true that numerous conflicts have remained unresolved for decades. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians was recorded as active for 58 of the 64 years from 1946 to 2009, the period covered by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) datasets on which we primarily rely for our analyses. Other conflicts that have lasted decades include those in Burma, the Philippines, and Colombia. And even civil wars in Algeria, India, and elsewhere that started more recently—in the 1980s or 1990s—have already continued for more than a decade.

An additional cause for concern is that in an increasing share of instances where conflicts have stopped, the violence starts up again within a short time. The World Bank *World Development Report (WDR)* noted in 2011 that repeated cycles of violence and recurring civil wars have become “a dominant form of armed conflict in the world today,” pointing out that “90 percent of conflicts initiated in the 21st century were in countries that had already had a civil war.”⁴⁰

If these analyses are correct—if conflicts are becoming much more protracted, more likely to restart once stopped and therefore more difficult to resolve—this raises an important question. Were the vast number of international initiatives that were launched after the end of the Cold War to stop conflicts and prevent them from starting again as effective as the Human Security Report Project (HSRP) and others have argued?

However, while recognizing that conflict persistence is an important policy issue, we argue in this chapter that a closer examination of the data reveals a considerably more encouraging picture than other authors suggest. Most of today's conflict episodes are relatively short; long-lasting conflicts are increasingly the exception rather than the rule. Persistent conflicts are often very small in scale, and the higher rates of recurrence of conflict result in large part because conflicts have become more difficult to win—but not necessarily more difficult to resolve. An increasing proportion of conflicts is terminated by negotiated settlements, the majority of which prevent the recurrence of violence. We further find that even when peace deals collapse, the death toll due to subsequent fighting is dramatically reduced.

Defining and Measuring Conflict Persistence

What do we mean by *conflict persistence*? Generally, concern about armed conflicts arises not because governments and their non-state rivals have serious disputes, but primarily because they attempt to resolve such disputes through armed violence, which is highly destructive and disruptive. Simply speaking, a *persistent conflict* is therefore one that involves many years of fighting.

Conflicts that have resulted in armed combat for long periods without interruption are persistent according to this definition, but so too are those that repeatedly stop and then start again, accumulating many years of fighting in the process. We therefore approach persistence from different angles, looking at the duration of armed conflicts, as well as rates of conflict recur-

rence. Findings on how long conflicts last and how frequently they recur, however, depend to some extent on how onsets and terminations of conflicts are defined.

Most studies on conflict duration and recurrence focus on civil wars—or *intrastate conflicts* as they are defined in the datasets used here—because they are not only the most common type of conflict but also the most persistent. Following this practice, the chapter will also be limited to conflicts that occur within rather than between states.⁴¹ An armed intrastate conflict in UCDP/PRIO terms consists of state forces fighting one or more rebel groups over either government power or the control of a certain territory, leading to at least 25 battle deaths per year.

But how do we distinguish between a new conflict and a recurrence? And what exactly does “uninterrupted” fighting mean? Does a cessation of hostilities lasting for a few years mark the end of a conflict or simply the end of an episode within the same armed struggle?

Studies on duration and recurrence focus on civil wars because they are the most common conflict type and the most persistent.

Some researchers consider a conflict terminated when it causes fewer than 1,000 battle deaths within a calendar year; others apply lower casualty thresholds and require a two-year break in the fighting to qualify as a termination.⁴² One dataset may record certain events as a single long-lasting conflict, another might count the same events as a series of violent episodes within one conflict, while a third may count these events as two separate conflicts. Trends and analytical findings based on these definitions differ as a result.

When the conflict's battle-death toll falls below 25 deaths for one calendar year, this marks the end of a conflict *episode*.

The UCDP/PRIO armed conflict dataset and the related UCDP conflict terminations dataset that we primarily use here avoid this problem by allowing the study of both distinct episodes of fighting as well as conflicts consisting of several such episodes of fighting between the same actors or over the same issues.⁴³

The datasets code a conflict as *active* for each year in which it results in at least 25 battle deaths. When the conflict's death toll falls below this threshold for one calendar year—and thus the fighting is interrupted—this marks the end of a conflict *episode*.⁴⁴

Even when the fighting dies down below this death-toll threshold, the conflict is not necessarily over. The dispute between Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah, for example, was last active (using the UCDP/PRIO definition) in 2006, but few would argue that the conflict—the core antagonism between the rival parties—is really over. The cessation of hostilities in 2006 is counted in the UCDP/PRIO dataset as the end of an episode. If violence breaks out again between these two parties, the dataset will list a new episode within the same conflict. A new conflict, on the other hand, is recorded when fighting erupts between any two parties over an issue that was not previously contested.

The UCDP terminations dataset records, as precisely as possible, start and end dates for all conflict episodes.⁴⁵ The dataset includes information about the outcome of conflict episodes: this can be a peace agreement, a ceasefire, a victory, or—if a conflict falls below the battle-death threshold without a decisive event—“low or no activity” (which in the following we refer to as “other terminations”).⁴⁶

All of these termination types can mark the end of a conflict—or merely an interruption of the fighting. Some of the communist insurgencies in East Asia, for example, dropped below the battle-death threshold without an outright victory or a peace settlement but never started up again. In Afghanistan, on the other hand, the conflict halted for a short while due to the victory of the US- and NATO-backed “Northern Alliance” over the Taliban government in 2001. The Taliban have since regrouped and the violence has resumed.

The UCDP/PRIO data allow us to study the duration of armed conflicts, whether as continuous episodes of fighting or in terms of the total number of years that an intermittent dispute results in battle deaths. We can also track patterns in how conflict episodes end and whether or how often they recur. This enables our analysis of persistent conflict to look at both

conflicts that last for many years without interruption and conflicts that result in a substantial number of years of warfare spread out over periods of intermittent violent struggle.

This definition includes long-running, uninterrupted conflicts such as the civil war in Colombia, which has been active in each year since 1964, as well as intermittent struggles such as the conflict over the Cabinda territory in Angola, which has broken out in seven episodes of deadly violence since 1989, adding up to nine conflict years in total. In both cases, we have a record of many years of armed clashes, but different patterns of violence.

We use the term persistent conflict to include all forms of intrastate conflict that result in more than 25 battle deaths per year over a prolonged time period. The definition includes some conflicts that have seen resolution attempts, but persistent conflicts are not necessarily “intractable”;⁴⁷ instead, many may persist simply because no real effort has been put into ending them.

Are Conflicts Really Lasting Longer than Before?

In 2003 Paul Collier found evidence that “decade by decade, civil wars have been getting longer.”⁴⁸ This widely accepted finding appears to be supported by other studies: James Fearon, for example, points out that the average duration of civil wars has almost trebled since the 1960s.⁴⁹ The UCDP/PRIO dataset, which use a slightly different definition of armed conflict, reveal a less consistent trend, but the duration of civil wars still shows an increase over the same period.

Due to the different definitions and datasets, Fearon’s numbers are not directly comparable with ours. But we argue that this way of measuring trends in duration represents in any case only one part of the picture. A significant problem arises because figures such as those relied upon by Fearon are affected by a strong upward bias over time. The average duration of ongoing conflicts is skewed upward by the longer-running conflicts or conflict episodes.⁵⁰ Short conflicts or conflict episodes will be factored into the average as long as they are active. But once they stop, they cease to be part of the sample and their duration will not affect the average the following year, while the longer-running conflicts keep pushing the average up.

Understanding what determines the persistence of long-running conflicts is important. Yet these conflicts are clearly not the norm.

Thus, as long as some persistent conflicts remain, the average duration of conflicts in progress will go up in most years. Understanding what determines the persistence of these conflicts is important, but as Roy Licklider observed, long-running conflicts are clearly not the norm but rather outliers.⁵¹ And even though Fearon’s measure correctly shows that the world has a significant number of persistent conflicts today, it tells us little about how this compares to other time periods.

Focusing on the most persistent cases does not allow us to analyze whether more or fewer conflicts are now persistent than before. It also does not tell us enough about whether changes

in the ways that conflicts are fought and brought to an end have affected their persistence. These are, however, critical questions for the design and evaluation of policy responses.

A Different Perspective Reveals a Decline in Conflict Duration

To understand whether, at any given time, more or fewer conflicts are becoming persistent, it is useful to look at the average duration of conflicts and conflict episodes that started in the same year or the same time period. Unlike other metrics, this ensures that persistent conflicts are not given more weight than other conflicts.

To understand whether persistence is increasing, it is useful to look at the duration of conflicts and conflict episodes that started in the same period.

When viewed from this angle, the data show that there is ample reason to doubt that most conflicts are lasting longer than they used to. In fact, the average duration of conflict episodes, sorted by start date, shows a clear downward trend. Episodes starting in the 1970s lasted almost seven years on average, but the average duration dropped to around four years in the 1980s. By the end of that decade, the average duration was around three years and has

remained roughly at the same level since.⁵² The drop in duration is slightly larger when we count entire conflicts rather than just episodes.⁵³

We must be careful, however: measuring trends in duration based on start dates also contains a bias. In this case, it is downward: a conflict episode that started in 1950, for example, could theoretically have lasted 60 years by the year 2009—the most current entry in the dataset—while the maximum duration of an episode starting in 2006 would be four years. The most recent conflicts may only appear to be short at this stage because we cannot look into the future to determine their end dates.

But the sharp decline in the duration of conflict episodes—by more than half—around the mid-1980s is too steep to be wholly the result of this bias. Not only did some long-standing conflicts end during the late 1980s but the proportion of civil conflicts lasting longer than average has declined significantly since the 1980s.

By the end of the 1980s, the average duration of an episode was around three years and has remained roughly the same since.

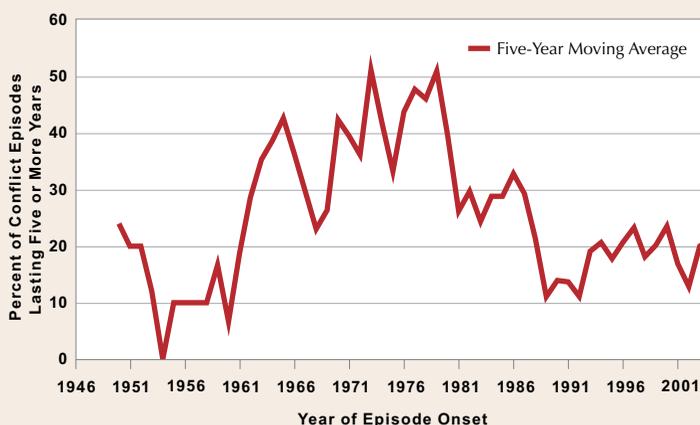
Long Periods of Fighting Have Become Less Common

These two different ways of calculating the average duration of civil wars both have their limitations, as shown above. Another way to track how civil war duration has changed over time is to determine how many of the conflicts that started each year eventually exceed a specified length. When applied to uninterrupted episodes of fighting, this measure shows no bias over time, since each episode has the same chance of reaching the threshold. If the

proportion of conflict episodes that are longer than the specified length has risen over time, then this clearly indicates an increase in conflict persistence.

Civil war episodes since the end of World War II have lasted on average approximately four years and three months. We therefore applied a threshold of five years to capture conflict episodes that have been longer than average.⁵⁴ The results are shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Percent of Intrastate Conflict Episodes Lasting Five or More Years, 1946–2004



Data Source: UCDP/HSRP Dataset.⁵⁷

Conflict episodes lasting five or more years have become less common in recent decades. Since the percentage figures show strong year-to-year fluctuations, the moving average helps uncover the broad underlying trend.

The trend line in Figure 6.1 shows that onsets of conflict episodes that lasted five years or more have clearly become less common in recent years. Their share was highest during the 1970s, when almost half of all conflict episodes resulted in five or more years of fighting. This was followed by a decline during the 1980s and, since the 1990s, the share of longer-than-average episodes of conflict has remained lower at approximately 20 percent.⁵⁵ In other words, roughly 80 percent of the more recent conflict outbreaks were followed by less than five years of continuous fighting. The fact that this figure is significantly higher than during the preceding decades counters claims that there has been a general increase in conflict duration. Recent conflict episodes appear to be less persistent, not more, than those that started earlier.⁵⁶

The duration of uninterrupted conflict episodes gives just one indication of trends in conflict persistence. As explained above, many conflicts stop and start up again after a short break in the fighting. The downward trend shown in Figure 6.1 is confirmed, however, if we look at the cumulative duration of conflicts—i.e., if we consider all conflicts that resulted in a total of five or more active years that may have been interrupted by a period of inactivity. Application

of other thresholds as a way of testing the strength of this conclusion does not significantly alter the trend.⁵⁸

Results drawn from data that include intermittent conflicts may change in the future if more conflicts break out in violence again. Still, the fact that the downward trend in onsets of longer-than-average conflicts and conflict episodes is consistent even when the data are examined in various ways undermines claims that conflicts are generally lasting longer and longer, and counters warnings that persistent conflict is an increasing threat.

Recent conflict episodes appear to be less persistent, not more, than those that started earlier. Roughly 80 percent lasted less than five years.

Summing Up: Conflict Duration Is Not Generally on the Rise

Our analysis demonstrates that different ways of looking at changes in conflict duration over time reveal different trends in conflict persistence. All of these findings convey important messages.

There is no question that a significant number of persistent conflicts exists today. Twelve—or 18 percent—of the 65 civil conflicts recorded between 2000 and 2009 were active in every single year of that decade. This includes the chronic violence in parts of Ethiopia (Oromiya), in Algeria, India (Assam and Kashmir), and Colombia. These persistent conflicts pose major challenges and, as discussed above, they drive up the average duration of conflicts in progress.

These cases are, however, not necessarily representative of overall patterns. Civil wars that have persisted for decades are often difficult to resolve and, obviously, get longer every year. But this does not suggest that conflict persistence in general is a bigger problem than it was during previous periods.

Conflicts that have persisted for decades are difficult to resolve. This does not suggest that persistence is becoming a bigger problem.

Our analysis shows that the conflict episodes that have started recently tend to be short. The overwhelming majority of episodes of fighting that started since the end of the Cold War have been brief. As we have shown, the proportion of conflict episodes that are shorter than five years increased significantly during the 1980s.

Many of the conflicts active today have multiple episodes, stopping and starting again. We will take a closer look at recurrences in the

remainder of the chapter. However, the trend towards shorter duration in recent conflicts discussed above still holds true when we add up the total number of active years spread over a number of episodes. The trend revealed in Figure 6.1 does not, therefore, result simply from the fact that today's conflicts tend to split into many short episodes. More than a third of the

conflicts that started since the end of the Cold War have been both short and nonrecurring—in other words, they are far from persistent.

Yet, the tendency of many contemporary conflicts to stop and start again after a short lull in fighting is a reality as well. Approximately half the conflicts that started during the 1990s had more than a single episode. Understanding why conflicts start up again after a halt is therefore crucial for explaining trends in conflict persistence and for the design of policies aimed at peacemaking. The following section takes a closer look at how conflicts end and recur.

Increases in Conflict Recurrence

Conflict relapse has become characteristic of today's civil wars. The UCDP armed conflict termination data clearly demonstrate that a substantial number of today's conflicts are "on-and-off affairs"⁵⁹ and that the recurrence rate of violent conflict is higher now than at any time since World War II: 60 percent of the conflict terminations between 2000 and 2004 were followed by renewed violence in less than five years.

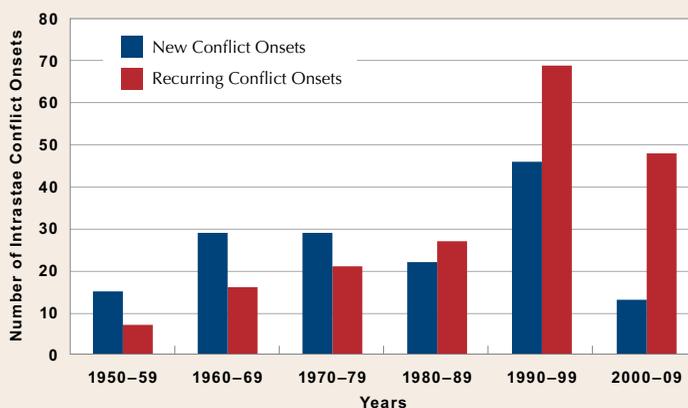
Judging solely by the increase in the rate of civil war recurrence, we might be tempted to conclude that there is much cause for alarm. If, however, our major reason for concern about armed conflicts is the death and destruction

they cause, then a closer look at the data on conflict recurrence reveals that the trend has some reassuring elements. Most importantly, as we explain below, it is very often the case that the conflicts that recur are relatively small and less deadly, not the ones that are responsible for the majority of battle deaths.

In 2011 the *WDR* observed that the overwhelming majority of the conflicts currently active are recurrences of violence. In fact, the report finds that "every civil war that began since 2003 was in a country that had a previous civil war."⁶⁰

Figure 6.2 confirms this finding by presenting a similar measure. The number of onsets of new conflicts—i.e., conflicts that have not been recorded before—was lower between 2000 and 2009 than in any other decade in the post–World War II period. Outbreaks of new conflicts peaked in the 1990s, with 46 new conflicts, and dropped to just 13 in the first years of the new millennium, a reduction by more than two-thirds. Although the number of old conflicts erupting into new episodes of violent conflict dropped by about one-third over the same period, this number remained at a very high level. The share of recurrences for the years from 2000 to 2009 exceeded those of the Cold War decades by a factor of roughly two or more. Recurrences of earlier civil wars now make up almost 80 percent of all conflict episode outbreaks.

Though the number of old conflicts erupting into new conflict episodes dropped by one-third from the 1990s to the 2000s, it remained at a very high level.

Figure 6.2 New versus Recurring Intrastate Conflicts, 1950–2009

Data Source: UCDP/HSRP Dataset.

Conflicts that recur after a short interruption of the fighting have become very frequent since the end of the Cold War. Yet, encouragingly, the number of new conflict onsets declined sharply after a peak in the 1990s.

Not all of the messages that Figure 6.2 conveys are cause for concern. On the positive side, the drop in the number of new outbreaks of conflict suggests that fewer disputes, whether over territorial autonomy or over who should control government, are turning violent. If instead there was a larger number of new conflicts today, this would certainly be bad news for prevention efforts.

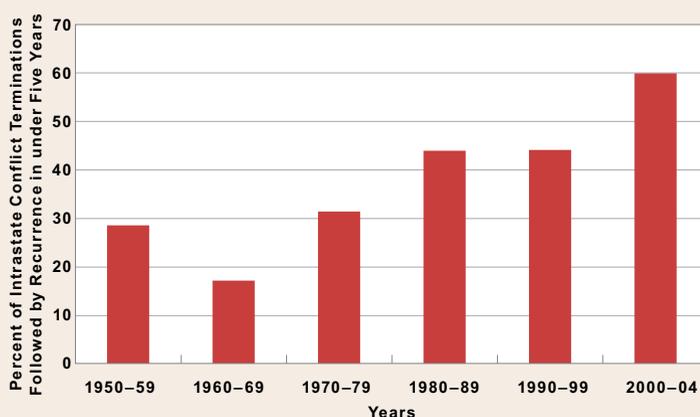
What is more, we have to keep in mind that for a conflict to recur, it first has to stop. The large number of recurring wars must therefore also be seen in the context of the many

The drop in new conflicts suggests that fewer disputes, whether over territory or government, are turning violent.

conflict terminations since the late 1980s. The fact that so many conflicts have terminated is encouraging, but this naturally resulted in more post-conflict settings that always involve a risk of violence recurring.

But the increased number of episodes where violent conflict recurs after a lull remains a concern, because it indicates that terminations of intrastate conflicts have become less stable.

The proportion of terminations that are followed by renewed violence in less than five years has shown a substantial and steady increase over the last 40 or so years. Figure 6.3 demonstrates that the rate of recurrence has now reached 60 percent, a more than threefold increase compared to the 1960s.⁶¹ In the first half-decade of the new millennium, the risk of recurrence increased by more than one-third compared to the 1990s.

Figure 6.3 The Rate of Recurrence in Intrastate Conflicts, 1950–2004

Data Source: UCDP/HSRP Dataset.

Of the intrastate conflicts that had stopped, the proportion that restarted in under five years has increased significantly since the 1960s. Although this is a concern, the recurring conflicts tend to be less deadly.

Civil Wars Have Become Difficult to Win

Conflict episodes can end in a number of different ways, and some endings are far less stable than others. The prime reason why there is a higher rate of recurrence of violence today is that less stable types of outcomes have become—relatively—much more common. For reasons we explain below, this change is not as big a cause for concern as it may seem.

As mentioned above, the UCDP terminations dataset records whether a conflict episode ends in a victory or a negotiated settlement, which can be a peace agreement or a ceasefire. Conflicts that drop below the 25-deaths activity threshold without a settlement or the defeat of one party fall into the “other” category.⁶²

Victories have long been known to be the most stable type of outcome.⁶³ Table 6.1 shows that between 1950 and 2004, less than 20 percent of the conflicts terminated by victories recurred in less than five years. In most cases, victory prevents renewed fighting because the defeated side simply lacks the capability to continue the struggle.

The reason for the higher rate of recurrence of violence today is that less stable types of outcomes are more common.

By contrast, where hostilities cease as a result of negotiations, both parties often retain their capacity to continue to fight. Given this, and given that the experience of war usually increases suspicion, fear, and mutual antipathy between the parties, it is not surprising that between 1950 and 2004, twice as many ceasefires (38.2 percent) and nearly twice as many

peace agreements (32.4 percent) as victories (18.3 percent) were followed by renewed violence within five years.

Table 6.1 also clearly demonstrates that fighting is most likely to recur when a conflict episode ends with neither victory nor negotiated settlement. In most cases where a conflict dies down without a victory or settlement, there is merely a lull in the fighting, followed by renewed violence within a few years.

In most cases where a conflict dies down without a victory or settlement, there is merely a lull in fighting.

There are cases where conflicts taper off and do not start up again because the rebels quietly give up the fight. This happened, for instance, in Thailand, where the small communist insurgency ended in the 1980s. The rebels were not decisively defeated, nor was there a peace deal, but the conflict has not recurred since.

Yet, this is the exception rather than the rule. Between 1950 and 2004, almost 60 percent of conflict terminations that fell into the “other” category were followed by renewed violence in less than five years. The figure for the early years of the new millennium was nearly 80 percent.

The data presented here show that the risk of conflict recurrence differs considerably for various types of conflict outcomes. But they also demonstrate that the relative frequency of these different outcomes has changed significantly over time. Figure 6.4 displays victories, negotiated settlements, and “other terminations” as a percentage of the total conflict terminations in each decade since 1950. It reveals a major shift over time.

Victories—the type of outcome least likely to be followed by a recurrence of violence—were by far the most common form of conflict termination from the 1950s through the 1970s. But civil wars have become much more difficult to win outright, and victories are becoming very rare.⁶⁴ As Figure 6.4 illustrates, approximately only one in 10 of all terminations since 2000 has been a victory by one side over the other.

68 percent of peace agreements and 62 percent of ceasefires recorded in the dataset led to a stable solution of the conflict.

The decline in the number of victories has coincided with a fairly steady increase in negotiated settlements (ceasefires or peace agreements). As Figure 6.4 shows, for each decade of the Cold War period, the share of conflicts ending with a peace agreement or a ceasefire was only 20 percent or less. Since then, however, the share has risen to almost 40 percent.

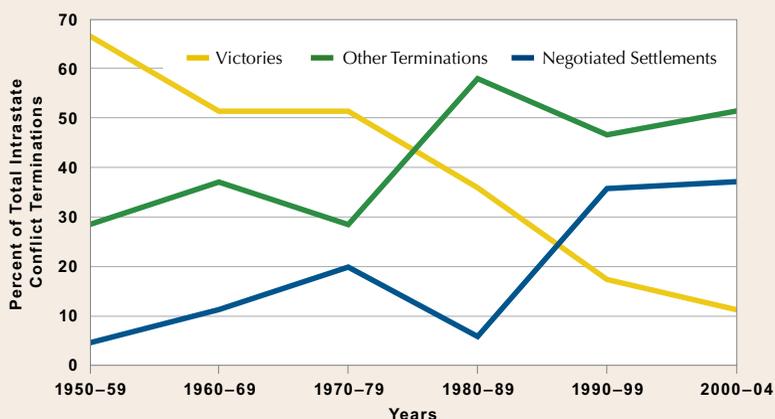
Table 6.1 shows that in the majority of cases—68 percent for peace agreements and 62 percent for ceasefires—negotiated settlements lead to a stable solution of the conflict. But neither peace agreements nor ceasefires reduce the risk of relapse into violent conflict as much as victories do. That the increase in the number of settlements relative to victories has contributed to a higher overall recurrence rate is therefore no surprise.

Table 6.1 Types of Intrastate Conflict Terminations and Recurrence Rates, 1950–2004

Years	PEACE AGREEMENTS			CEASEFIRES			VICTORIES			OTHER TERMINATIONS			TOTAL TERMINATIONS		
	Total No.	No. Restarted in under 5 Years	% Restarted in under 5 Years	Total No.	No. Restarted in under 5 Years	% Restarted in under 5 Years	Total No.	No. Restarted in under 5 Years	% Restarted in under 5 Years	Total No.	No. Restarted in under 5 Years	% Restarted in under 5 Years	Total No.	No. Restarted in under 5 Years	% Restarted in under 5 Years
1950-59	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	14	3	21.4	6	3	50.0	21	6	28.6
1960-69	2	1	50.0	2	0	0.0	18	1	5.6	13	4	30.8	35	6	17.1
1970-79	5	1	20.0	2	0	0.0	18	6	33.3	10	4	40.0	35	11	31.4
1980-89	2	1	50.0	1	0	0.0	18	3	16.7	29	18	62.1	50	22	44.0
1990-99	20	8	40.0	23	9	39.1	21	2	9.5	56	34	60.7	120	53	44.2
2000-04	7	1	14.3	6	4	66.7	4	2	50.0	18	14	77.8	35	21	60.0
Total 1950-2004	37	12	32.4	34	13	38.2	93	17	18.3	132	77	58.3	296	119	40.2

Data Source: UCDDP/HSRP Dataset.

Victories were the most stable form of conflict termination for the period 1950–2004, with only 18 percent having restarted in under five years. While peace agreements have a higher rate of conflict recurrence, still only one in three has seen renewed violence within this time threshold. The numbers further suggest that peace agreements have become more stable in the most recent period.

Figure 6.4 The Shift in How Intrastate Conflicts End, 1950–2004

Data Source: UCDP/HSRP Dataset.

The share of intrastate conflicts ending in victories—the most stable termination type—has declined since the end of World War II. This has contributed to the recent elevated recurrence rates in recent years.

Note: Unlike the other line graphs in this section, which show yearly trends, these lines display changes from one decade to the next.

Figure 6.4, however, indicates another major change: unlike during most of the Cold War decades, the majority of today's conflict episodes end without a clear outcome. In the 1980s, "other" terminations surpassed victories as the most common type of outcome. Since then, roughly half of all conflict terminations have been "other terminations," involving neither outright victory nor a ceasefire or peace agreement.

As explained above, these "other terminations" are far more likely to be followed by renewed violence. The change in how most conflicts terminate thus represents the single most important explanation for today's high rate of recurrent violence. In fact, almost two-thirds of the recurrences since 1990 have been associated with "other" conflict terminations.

The data patterns discussed here clearly demonstrate that the rise in civil war recurrence rates is not because victories or negotiated settlements have become less stable over time. As we point out in the box on page 178-9, the data seem to suggest instead that peace agreements, at least, have recently become considerably more successful. There is also no clear trend for the stability of victories or for ceasefires.⁶⁵ In other words, there is no general increase in recurrence rates of all types of terminations; instead, there is a change in the ways conflict episodes end.

The Least Stable Terminations Occur in the Least Deadly Conflicts

Different types of conflict outcome not only have different risks of recurrence; they are also associated with different levels of lethality. Conflict episodes that end in victory are by far the

most deadly. In a sense this is not surprising, since military defeats almost by definition mean large death tolls. By contrast, conflict terminations that fall into the “other” category, comprising the majority of all terminations today, have the lowest battle-death tolls. During the two decades since the end of the Cold War in 1989, the civil conflict episodes that terminated with neither victory nor a negotiated settlement had an average annual toll of less than 350 battle deaths. The toll is two times higher for ceasefires, three times higher for conflicts settled through peace agreements, and seven times higher for conflict episodes that ended in victory.

The comparatively small death tolls associated with the termination type that is most prone to conflict relapse suggest a link between low-intensity conflict and high recurrence rates. And there is, as we show below, evidence to support the view that the limited scope of conflicts can favour persistence.

We note that the definitions of conflicts and conflict terminations may partially explain the finding that low-intensity conflicts are more likely to stop and start up again. If a conflict only accounts for a few dozen codable battle deaths and thus hovers just above the threshold of 25 battle deaths a year, not much needs to change for it to be coded as inactive in one year and as starting up again in the next. A high-intensity conflict, on the other hand, killing 1,000 people per year, will require significant changes in the conflict dynamics for the toll to fall below 25 battle deaths.

If the high recurrence rate of low-intensity conflicts were only an artifact of the coding of the data, the finding would be of little value. However, there is evidently more to it. Research based on a new dataset indicates that contemporary conflicts significantly affect only a small fraction of a country’s territory.⁶⁶ It is often these small conflicts that are also the most persistent conflicts of recent decades.

Thirty-eight percent of the conflicts that recorded three or more episodes over the last two decades had average death tolls of less than 100 casualties per year. These include the conflicts in Angola over the territory of Cabinda, the struggle between the government of Eritrea and Islamist rebels based along the Sudanese border, and the conflict over Tripura in India. Only four conflicts with more than two episodes—the conflicts over government power in Pakistan, Somalia, and in the Republic of Congo (“Congo-Brazzaville”), as well as the conflict in Sri Lanka—had an average annual death toll of more than 1,000.

Many of the conflicts with the highest number of cumulative years of fighting since 1989 are also of relatively limited scale, both in terms of intensity and geographical scope. India’s insurgencies in Assam, Manipur, and Bodoland have each accumulated between 15 and 20 years of conflict but resulted in average annual death tolls lower than 100. There are, of course, a small number of long-lasting conflicts that are also quite deadly, including the civil wars in Afghanistan, Sudan, and Sri Lanka, each of which has claimed more than 1,000 lives per

Contemporary intrastate conflicts significantly affect only a small fraction of a country’s territory.

EVEN FAILED PEACE AGREEMENTS SAVE LIVES

Today a greater share of conflicts is brought to a halt through negotiated settlements than at any time since the end of World War II. But about a third of peace agreements have broken down in less than five years. So, it might seem that peace agreements are an ineffective means of ending civil conflicts.⁶⁷ In fact, there is strong evidence that the opposite is true.

There are different forms of negotiated settlements that show a varying risk of conflict recurrence: ceasefires and peace agreements.⁶⁸ These settlements differ in the degree to which they address the root causes of the conflict. Unlike ceasefires, peace agreements include concrete steps to resolve the issues at stake between the warring parties.⁶⁹ As might be expected, their failure rate is slightly lower, with 32 percent of peace agreements being followed by recurring violence between 1950 and 2004 compared to 38 percent of ceasefires (see Table 6.1 on page 45).

Even though this is a significant failure rate, most settlements recorded in our dataset succeed in ending the conflict.⁷⁰ And, as the last *Human Security Report* pointed out, there is evidence to suggest that peace agreements became more stable in the new millennium.⁷¹

When we read that peace agreements have “failed,” we might conclude that the peace process is reversed entirely and the affected country relapses into full-scale war with no diminution of deaths. This would be a mistake.

Not everyone goes back to war after a failed settlement. On the contrary, when renewed violence occurs after a peace deal, it sometimes involves rebel groups that did not sign the agreement in the first place. In other cases, only one of several signatories resumes the fighting. The data show that two warring parties who have signed a peace agreement rarely go back to war with each other.⁷² Put differently, the recurrence of violence does not always mean that the settlement was a failure since crucial conflict actors usually stick to the agreement despite the presence of spoilers.

A Dramatic, but Little Noticed, Reduction of Violence

That the collapse of an agreement does not always mean complete failure is even more evident when we look at the intensity of the fighting: wars that restart after peace agreements virtually always experience a significant *reduction* in death tolls. In 10 out of the 11 collapsed peace agreements between 1989 and 2004 the annual death toll was lower after the conflict restarted. Peace agreements, in other words, save lives, not only by stopping hostilities, but also by reducing the level of violence if the conflict recurs.

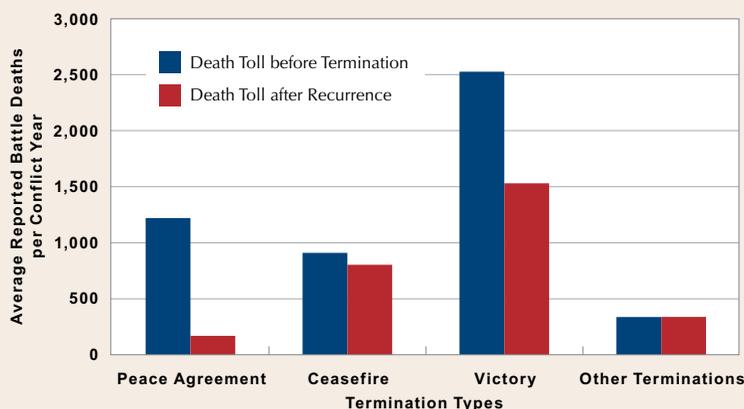
That peace agreements are associated with significant reductions in battle deaths, however, stands in contrast to the work of other authors. In 2010, for example, Harvard University’s

Monica Duffy Toft claimed that “the empirical evidence ... does not support the normative argument that negotiated settlements save lives.”⁷³ Her definition of “negotiated settlement” is similar to what we refer to here as a peace agreement.

Professor Toft maintains that wars with failed settlements have higher death tolls compared with the average for all recurring conflicts including victories.⁷⁴ Yet, Toft’s analysis does not permit the conclusion that such higher death tolls are, as she argues, “costs of negotiated settlements.”⁷⁵ Her comparison tells us only that, in her sample, negotiated settlements occurred in conflicts that are on average more deadly than other recurring conflicts. Nothing in her results suggests that the higher death tolls actually resulted from the peace settlements.⁷⁶

A better way to test how different types of terminations may have an impact on death tolls in conflicts that subsequently recur is to compare the death toll before a conflict stops and after it recurs. As shown in Figure 6.5, the evidence from more recent and fine-grained data than Professor Toft uses clearly suggests that the intensity of the fighting decreases most dramatically when conflicts recur after a peace agreement.⁷⁷

Figure 6.5 Battle-Death Tolls and Termination Types in Recurring Intrastate Conflicts, 1989–2009



Data Source: UCDP/HSRP Dataset.

Although peace agreements are less stable than victories, they lead to a much greater reduction in battle deaths. Ceasefires do little to stem the violence, while conflicts that taper off show no improvement.

As Figure 6.5 demonstrates, the reduction in deadliness associated with peace agreements is very large. The average annual death tolls of civil conflicts drop by more than 80 percent when they recur after a peace agreement. The percentage decline is only half as big for victories, while death tolls for ceasefires and other terminations show little change.

year on average. But aside from these few cases even the more deadly persistent conflicts are usually limited relative to the size of the countries in which they take place. These conflicts typically do not engulf entire nations but are concentrated in smaller areas. Examples are the conflict in Northern Uganda, and in Turkey over Kurdistan.

This raises a question with important policy implications: why are small conflicts so persistent, in terms both of protracted low-level fighting and of high rates of recurrence?

The Persistence of Small Conflicts

We have seen that types of conflict terminations differ markedly in their rates of recurrence, and that the least stable outcomes and some of the longest-running conflicts are associated with very low death tolls. As we show in this section, there is a plausible explanation supported by recent scholarship: the smaller a conflict is, the fewer incentives there are for the parties to end the fighting.

Guerrilla forces in remote areas are hard to defeat. The government's problem is not defeating them in battle, but locating and engaging them.

Some conflicts are characterized by both persistence and a high intensity of fighting, as in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, and Sri Lanka. But many of the persistent civil wars active today are limited both in terms of human and material costs and the amount of territory affected by violence, because rebels often choose to base themselves in remote and inaccessible areas.⁷⁸

A number of recent quantitative studies show that small and peripheral insurgencies are more likely to persist. And some of the authors provide support for the argument that strategic considerations in the capital may be one reason for the persistence.⁷⁹

Fearon has argued that the reason these peripheral cases last a long time "may be that they involve relatively few combatants, pose relatively little threat to the center, and thus stay fairly small. They are difficult to eliminate entirely, and because they tend to be so small, not worth the cost of doing so."⁸⁰

Guerrilla forces in remote areas are extremely hard to defeat. The Philippines Army, for example, possesses military resources that are vastly superior to that of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), an insurgent group mainly active in remote and mountainous areas. But, as in other small, guerrilla-type wars, the government's problem is not so much defeating the rebels in battle, but locating and engaging them.

In other words, while peripheral insurgencies present little real threat, they are nevertheless difficult to put to an end. As a result, governments have few incentives to devote the resources necessary to end the insurgencies, either by military action or by negotiations.

There are additional reasons why state actors might not push forcefully to end low-level insurgencies. A state military organization, for example, may invoke domestic rebellion as a

threat to national security in a bid to build its power base, or even to legitimize a coup against the government. Moreover, international actors are less likely to pressure a government to negotiate a settlement where the conflict is small and contained.

It is, of course, difficult for the quantitative studies cited here to determine what motivates the decisions of conflict parties, whether it is a government's indifference or inability that presents obstacles to solving a conflict. But the argument that small-scale conflicts are allowed to persist because they do not significantly hurt the interests of the government side are consistent with findings from the qualitative literature as well. Chester Crocker et al., for example, point out that a state of war can become "a comfort-zone"⁸¹ when there appears to be an acceptable status quo—at least for those in positions of power on both sides.

Explaining Changes in Conflict Persistence

This chapter provides one of the first systematic analyses of trends in conflict persistence. Persistent armed conflict, we argue, can manifest itself in long, uninterrupted periods of fighting, as well as in intermittent conflicts that stop and start again frequently. We have therefore taken a closer look at patterns of conflict duration and recurrence.

First, we noted that the often-cited rise in the average duration of ongoing conflicts, while not untrue, is misleading in that it gives the impression that wars overall are becoming longer and more intractable. There are, of course, significant numbers of decade-long—and longer—conflicts that are still active today. These conflicts, understandably, receive a great deal of attention from researchers, which contributes to the impression that most conflicts are getting longer.

But while long-duration conflicts are a source of obvious concern, and while they inflate the *average* duration of conflicts, they remain the exceptions, not the rule. In fact, most of the conflicts that have started in recent years have been of short duration.

We point out that the rate at which conflicts restart after a brief calm has increased significantly. Today's high recurrence rate, however, can to a large extent be explained by the trend towards small-scale armed conflict with few violent clashes that are often interrupted by months and years of tranquility.

As noted above, fighting in today's conflicts tends to take place in confined geographic areas. The most persistent of these conflicts also result in low numbers of battle deaths and take place at the periphery of a country. And the data and research discussed above suggest that such conflicts are often allowed to persist precisely

because the intensity and scope of the fighting is limited. Paradoxically, the very weakness of rebel groups may help them avoid defeat if it means that they carry out operations in peripheral territories where the violence and destruction they perpetrate do not represent a significant threat to the central government.

The weakness of rebels may help them avoid defeat if they are not a threat to the government.

A second reason for the higher recurrence rate of conflict episodes today is the increase in the number of negotiated settlements. Since 1990 more conflicts have ended through negotiations than at any other time in the post–World War II era. Because such settlements have a significant risk of relapse into violence, any increase in their share contributes to a higher rate of conflict recurrence. Despite this, as we argue in more detail below, negotiated settlements are almost always the best available outcome for a conflict episode.

The picture we present is more encouraging than most other accounts of trends in conflict persistence. However, this is not to suggest that conflict persistence is a marginal issue. A significant number of persistent conflicts exist today and some of them are highly destructive. Responses to conflict persistence depend on reliable information about trends and what drives them. But just as important as understanding the causes of conflict persistence is trying to account for the positive developments over the last decades.

Why Most Conflicts Today Are Short-Lived

Global changes in the way conflicts are fought and resolved have had a profound impact on patterns of conflict persistence. Since the end of the Cold War, the intensity of armed conflicts has declined dramatically. In many cases, long-standing civil wars came to an end while new conflicts tended to end after only a few years of fighting. As a result, the number of conflicts has declined globally, but as we showed above, the duration of recent conflicts and conflict episodes has also seen a significant drop. The reduction in the intensity of armed conflicts, however, may have contributed to conflict persistence in other cases. As we have argued, some conflicts are able to persist precisely because their intensity is low so that they pose so little threat to governments.

For more than four decades following the end of World War II the superpowers and their allies engaged in “proxy” wars by fuelling civil wars in the developing world. This exacerbated death tolls and prolonged the fighting by providing the warring parties with financial, military,

ideological, and political support.⁸² The end of the Cold War abruptly reduced the external support that had helped sustain both governments and rebel forces. Without it, many long-standing conflicts simply ground to a halt.

With fewer sources of external support, the civil wars that started during the 1990s and 2000s became both shorter and less deadly. Few

of the rebel movements active today have much chance of defeating the governments they oppose. Indeed, less than 5 percent of terminations in civil wars since 1990 have been insurgent victories.

The reduction of superpower support following the end of the Cold War affected rebel groups but also states.⁸³ It is often claimed that conflicts persist because weak or “failed” states simply lack the capacity to end them.⁸⁴ But they may also persist because governments are

Few of the rebel movements today have much chance of defeating the government.

much stronger than insurgents, pushing the latter towards the periphery and out of reach of government forces.⁸⁵ Where threats to a state are low because rebels are weak, but the challenges of crushing a peripheral insurgency are high, governments may prefer the low-cost option of containing the insurgency, rather than the high-cost route of seeking to defeat it.

The Successes of Peacemaking and Peacebuilding

The end of the Cold War also coincided with an upsurge in peacemaking and peacebuilding missions seeking to bring armed conflicts to an end and to prevent them from starting again. The 2009/2010 *Human Security Report* explained how this international activism has helped reduce the number of active civil wars around the world since 1992.⁸⁶ But a much-less-remarked-on benefit of these international efforts has been a reduction in conflict duration.

There is strong evidence that the mediation efforts central to post-Cold War peacemaking have shortened the average length of armed conflicts. Patrick Regan and Aysegül Aydin

found in 2006 that “diplomatic interventions dramatically reduce the expected duration of a conflict. For example, the expected duration for civil conflicts that have experienced diplomatic interventions is reduced by about 76 percent over conflicts without diplomatic interventions.”⁸⁷

Abel Escribà-Folch explains that economic sanctions, which have also increased dramatically in number over the past 20 years, may be much more successful in bringing conflicts to an end than is usually assumed. His models show that sanctions increase the chances of civil war termination or, in other words, shorten the duration of conflicts.⁸⁸

The upsurge in international activism thus provides an additional explanation for the decline in conflict duration since the late 1980s that we have highlighted in this chapter. As internationally supported peacemaking initiatives have increased, negotiated settlements have become more common. But, as we point out above, such settlements have—by their very nature—a considerable risk of collapse.

Today’s high rate of conflict recurrence is to some extent related to the increase in negotiated settlements and therefore also to the success of peacemaking, which has helped create more post-conflict settlements, and hence more situations in which conflicts may recur. This raises an important question for policy-makers: does the high recurrence rate of civil wars put in question the success of international efforts to shorten conflicts?

Some observers have argued that because of the high risk of subsequent failure, negotiated settlements artificially prolong the fighting and exacerbate human suffering.⁸⁹ By contrast, conflict terminations that result from the decisive military defeat of one of the warring parties are seen as a better outcome because the defeated party often lacks the capability to go back to war.⁹⁰ Conflicts that end in the military defeat of one of the warring parties are not immune to

As peacemaking initiatives have increased, negotiated settlements have become more common. But such settlements have a risk of collapse.

recurrence. But, as shown above, only around 18 percent of victories were followed by renewed violence, making it the most stable type of conflict termination.

What then are the advantages of peace agreements as a means of bringing conflicts to an end? The evidence clearly suggests that despite their risk of collapse, negotiated settlements almost always present the best available option to end wars and save lives.

First, negotiations may be the only practicable means of ending some conflicts. While victories tend to occur in shorter wars, negotiated settlements are usually needed to bring the longest-running conflicts to an end.⁹¹ Where a conflict is stalemated and victory has become unattainable by either side, the only alternative to a negotiated settlement is continued warfare, perhaps interrupted by short breaks in the fighting. Such “other terminations,” as we show above, are even more likely to be followed by renewed violence than negotiated settlements.

While victories tend to occur in short wars, negotiated settlements are usually needed to end long-running conflicts.

In other words, negotiated settlements do not prevent victories that, according to some scholars, would occur if a conflict was allowed to follow its “natural course.”⁹² Instead, settlements typically stop those conflicts that are stalemated and unlikely to be resolved through any other means.

In a small number of cases, peace agreements end the fighting even though one side is on the verge of defeat; that is, when victory for the other side is a realistic possibility. These settlements are usually very stable, since they involve a dramatic diminution of the military capacity of one side *and* negotiations that give at least some concessions to the weaker party. The conflict in Angola is a case in point. In 2002 the government struck a deal with UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) after the rebels had been seriously weakened. Since then, UNITA has transformed into a political party and no fighting has recurred in this conflict.

Last but not least, it is seldom recognized how much the costs of conflict are reduced by peace agreements *even when they break down*. The focus on conflict recurrence has drawn attention away from a crucial fact: the analysis in the box on page 178-9 points to the crucial, but largely unnoticed, finding that even peace agreements that break down almost always lead to a dramatic reduction in battle deaths. Death tolls drop by more than 80 percent on average in conflicts that recur after a peace agreement. This is a greater reduction than for any of the other termination types.

It is true that peace agreements have repeatedly failed to bring about an enduring peace and that this pattern may be repeated in the future. Yet, the evidence presented here clearly shows that peace agreements are often the only available option to raise the chances of peace and decrease casualties in persistent civil conflicts.

Moreover, there are ways to increase the success rate of peace agreements. Reaching and implementing a peace settlement demands a high level of cooperation and trust from the

warring parties, yet such sentiments are usually absent in wartime. And, as Barbara Walter has argued, a peace deal usually “offers enormous rewards for cheating and enormous costs for being cheated upon.”⁹³ She argues that this is why security guarantees from outside actors like the United Nations are crucial for reducing the risk of cheating and thus limiting the risk that conflicts will break out again.⁹⁴

UN peacemaking and peacekeeping missions have been shown to be successful at helping to end civil wars and preventing them from restarting.⁹⁵ Both effects have the consequence of reducing conflict persistence. But even though peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts have grown rapidly in number since the end of the Cold War, they address only a limited number of conflicts.

The UN tends to deploy peacekeepers to high-intensity conflicts in relatively weak states.⁹⁶ Many other conflicts—those on the territories of major powers and major regional actors, as well as small-armed struggles—receive little or no direct attention from international actors. This is not likely to change in the future. New research, however, suggests that in these cases, potential improvements in the quality and legitimacy of governance within the conflict-affected state may also reduce the probability of conflicts recurring.⁹⁷ There are many fragile and conflict-affected states where there is little prospect of a peace operation being mounted but where the international community may still work with national leaders to help them enhance the quality and legitimacy of their governments.⁹⁸

PART II

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER 5

- 1 For the purpose of this chapter, the US, the UK, France, and Russia (USSR) are considered major powers. In some conflicts, such as in Iraq and in Afghanistan, the government may receive support from both major powers and other countries—the latter rarely involved in more than a minor combat role. Where this is the case the conflict is still treated as a civil war with military involvement by a major power.
- 2 This *Report*, like previous *Reports*, uses battle-death data from two datasets. For the long-term trend from 1946 to 2008, we rely on the dataset compiled by the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO). Data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP) are now available from 1989 and are updated annually. The overall trends for the period where the two datasets overlap—the post-Cold War period—are very similar. There are, however, differences in absolute death tolls between the two datasets that reflect the different approaches to estimating battle deaths. UCDP's methodology, which requires much more detail in order to code battle deaths, tends to report lower battle-death tolls. The number of battle deaths reported by either UCDP or PRIO for any individual conflict should therefore be treated with caution, but the trend is reliable (see Appendix for more details).
- 3 We consider the post-Cold War period to start in 1989.
- 4 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/Centre for the Study of Civil War, International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2010, http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset/ (accessed 14 March 2012).
- 5 Each *conflict* year represents a calendar year in which a conflict was ongoing. Most calendar years involve more than one conflict year because more than one conflict was being fought during that year.
- 6 The long-term trend remains the same steep decline shown in Figure 10.4 of the last *Human Security Report*, however the numbers are different. The last *Human Security Report* used PRIO data for 1946 to 2001 and UCDP data for 2002 to 2008. Figure 5.2 in this *Report* only uses PRIO data and ends in 2008, the last year of the dataset. UCDP data, which cover the period from 1989 to 2009, are graphed separately.
The Human Security Report Project (HSRP) has also changed how it calculates best estimates for the PRIO dataset in cases where PRIO has not provided a best estimate. In the past, HSRP calculated the straight average. HSRP now uses the geometric mean to calculate best estimates. This reduces the upward bias when there is a substantial difference between the high and low battle-death estimates.
- 7 Centre for the Study of Civil War, International Peace Research Institute Oslo, (PRIO), Battle Deaths Dataset 3.0, <http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/Battle-Deaths/The-Battle-Deaths-Dataset-version-30/> (accessed 14 March 2012), updated from Bethany Lacina and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21, no. 2–3 (2005): doi: 10.1007/s10680-005-6851-6.

- 8 This latter conflict was also associated with significant levels of *one-sided violence*—deaths due to targeted attacks on civilians by government forces or by formally organized non-state armed groups. See Chapter 8 of this *Report* for more analysis of this type of organized violence.
- 9 HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and the Shrinking Costs of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 160.
- 10 The battle-death data graphed here are similar to, but not exactly the same as, those shown in Figure 10.4 of the last *Human Security Report*. The last *Human Security Report* used PRIO data for 1946 to 2001, and UCDP data for 2002 to 2008. Figure 5.4 only uses UCDP data, which are now available for the period 1989–2009. PRIO data are graphed separately.
- 11 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/ Human Security Report Project, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.
- 12 While no one doubts that the war-related death toll in the DRC was very high, the last *Human Security Report* demonstrated that the much-cited estimated 5.4 million death toll is a substantial overestimate. Nor is the claim that the war in the DRC is the world’s deadliest conflict since the end of World War II correct. Deaths from organized violence—both in total numbers and per population—were many times higher during the Korean War, for example. See HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010*, 121.
- 13 Some intrastate conflicts are internationalized in only some of the years of the conflict. Following the coding of the UCDP dataset, the term *internationalized intrastate conflict* in this chapter only refers to conflict years (see endnote 5) with external military intervention. When comparing internationalized intrastate conflicts with other types of conflicts, we check the robustness of our findings by comparing all civil conflicts that have ever had foreign military involvement with those that have never had such an involvement.

With both definitions, UCDP data for 1989–2009 show internationalized intrastate conflicts as just over twice as deadly as other intrastate conflicts. PRIO data from 1946 to 2008 confirm this with the latter definition. When considering conflict years, PRIO data show internationalized intrastate conflicts as nearly four times as deadly on average as other intrastate conflicts.

- 14 The definition of internationalized intrastate conflict excludes solely indirect military assistance, such as the provision of arms. Internationalized intrastate conflicts, however, include some cases in which fighting occurs outside the territory of the disputed government. The rebel group may be fighting the forces of more than one government but has only stated its intention to target one, so all related deaths are considered part of that conflict, and the forces of the other governments are considered to be fighting on behalf of the targeted government. These cases include the fighting in Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the DRC involving the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which is in conflict with Uganda; the fighting in the DRC involving the FDLR, which is in conflict with Rwanda; plus, the fighting in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Yemen involving al-Qaida, which UCDP codes as conflict with the US.
- 15 Most peacekeeping missions start when a peace process is already significantly advanced. Peace agreements tend to be in place before the UN deploys a peacekeeping mission, which is then mandated to support that peace. This role is quite different from military operations intended to secure victory for one side of the conflict.
- 16 Bethany Lacina, "Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 2 (2006): 285–287, doi: 10.1177/0022002705284828 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 17 Kristine Eck, "From Armed Conflict to War: Ethnic Mobilization and Conflict Intensification," *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2009): 380, doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2009.00538.x (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 18 Patrick M. Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 57, doi: 10.1177/0022002702046001004 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 19 See, for example, Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom, "On the Duration of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 253–273. doi:10.1177/0022343304043769.
- 20 See Regan, "Third-party Interventions," 55–73.
- 21 See, for example, Dylan Balch-Lindsey and Andrew J. Enterline, "Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (2000): 615–642. Ibrahim A. Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, "External Interventions and the Duration of Civil Wars" (unpublished manuscript, World Bank, March 2000), http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2000/09/30/000094946_00091405494827/additional/122522322_20041117154546.pdf; Regan, "Third-party Interventions," 55–73.
- 22 David E. Cunningham, "Blocking resolution: How external states can prolong civil wars," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 124–125, doi: 10.1177/0022343309353488 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 23 The US also supported UNITA but not with armed forces on the ground.
- 24 Cunningham, "Blocking resolution," 116–117.

- 25 Therese Pettersson, "Pillars of Strength: External Support to Warring Parties," in *States in Armed Conflict 2010*, edited by Therese Pettersson and Lotta Themner (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2011), 51.
- 26 Bethany Lacina, "Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars," 285.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 286.
- 28 Andrea Kathryn Talentino, whose definition is broader than the one we use here for internationalized intrastate conflict, also finds an increase in intervention following the end of the Cold War: "[o]f all post-Cold War [conflicts], 71 percent saw some form of intervention, compared to 59 percent during the Cold War." Andrea Kathryn Talentino, *Military intervention after the Cold War: The evolution of theory and practice* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 26.
- 29 These data include interstate conflicts. However, because interstate conflicts have been very rare in the new millennium, the recent surge in conflicts with external troop support is almost entirely in internationalized intrastate conflicts. See Pettersson, "Pillars of Strength," 49, 57.
- 30 The number of internationalized intrastate conflicts is significantly lower than the number of intrastate conflicts in every year. This in large part explains why the trend in Figure 5.2 is more uneven than that of the intrastate conflicts.
- 31 Although China may also come to mind as a major power, we do not include China in this list, as China has not been involved in any internationalized intrastate conflicts since 1989.
- 32 As we showed in our last *Report*, France, the UK, the US, and Russia (USSR) have each been involved in more international conflicts—which include interstate as well as internationalized intrastate—since the end of World War II than any other state. HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010*, 165.
- 33 In some cases, the conflict may involve both major and other powers, such as in the Kosovo conflict in 1999, fought between the Serbian military and US-supported Kosovo rebel force, with additional military forces from other NATO countries. For the purpose of this discussion, we consider these conflicts to be civil wars with external military support by a major power.
- 34 Ann Hironaka, *Neverending Wars: The international community, weak states, and the perpetuation of civil war* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 155.
- 35 HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010*.

CHAPTER 6

- 36 An extended version of the arguments made in this chapter has appeared in Sebastian Merz, "Less Conflict, More Peace? Understanding Trends in Conflict Persistence," in *Conflict, Security & Development* 12, no. 3 (2012): 201–226. doi:10.1080/14678802.2012.703532.
- 37 Fen Osler Hampson, Chester A. Crocker, and Pamela Aall, "If the World's Getting More Peaceful, Why Are We Still in Danger?" *Globe and Mail*, 20 October 2005, A25.
- 38 James D. Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 275–301, 275. doi: 10.1177/0022343304043770 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 39 Paul Collier, *Breaking the conflict trap: Civil war and development policy*, ed. World Bank, A World Bank policy research report (Washington, DC: World Bank; Oxford University Press, 2003), 99–100; Ann Hironaka, *Neverending wars: The international community, weak states, and the perpetuation of civil war* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 4.
- 40 The World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development* (Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2011), 57.
- 41 Unlike in other chapters of this *Report*, the term *conflict* will in this chapter only refer to intrastate conflicts. This includes *internationalized intrastate* conflicts where foreign troops are involved on at least one side. The category of intrastate conflict also includes a number of bloody coups d'état. Note that because coups are very short and occurred most frequently during the Cold War years, the inclusion of some of these coups makes conflicts that occurred prior to 1989 appear shorter than if all coups were excluded. Even so, the data show that Cold War-era conflicts have tended to last longer than more recent conflicts.
- 42 Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom, "On the Duration of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 253–273, 257. doi: 10.1177/0022343304043769; Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" 278–279.
- 43 At the core of UCDF/PRIO's definition of *conflict* is the "contested incompatibility" between the warring parties, which could be over the control of government power or over control of a specific territory. According to this definition, there can be only one conflict over government in a country, which means that in a few cases, episodes of fighting involving unrelated rebel groups are coded as part of the same conflict, even if those episodes occurred many years apart. Such cases are relatively rare, but we have checked our findings that refer to the duration of entire conflicts by using alternate definitions of conflicts. For this, we coded as a new conflict over government any cases where the conflict had been inactive for 10 or more years and the rebel side had changed completely. The result was not appreciably different.

- 44 As a consequence of this coding rule, the coding of terminations lags one year behind all other conflict data; in other words, the data presented in this *Report* include conflict outbreaks through 2009 and conflict terminations through 2008.
- 45 The start date of a conflict episode is the first day when a conflict (for the first time, or for the first time after at least a year of nonactivity) reaches the threshold of 25 battle deaths in a year; the end date is the last day of fighting before a full calendar year of inactivity. See Joakim Kreutz, *UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset Codebook*, Version 2010-1, http://www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/55/55056_UCDP_Conflict_Termination_Dataset_v_2010-1.pdf (accessed 27 May 2011).
- 46 We simplify the termination types from the UCDP dataset, using just four categories: peace agreements, ceasefires (which we sometimes discuss together as *negotiated settlements*), victories, and “other.” UCDP differentiates between two types of ceasefires, which we count in a single category here, and also has two categories without specific outcome events that we combine in the category “other terminations” here. See Kreutz, *UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset Codebook*.
- 47 Crocker et al. use the term “intractable” specifically for conflicts that resist resolution. See Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall, eds., *Grasping the nettle: Analyzing cases of intractable conflict* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2005), 5.
- 48 Collier, *Breaking the conflict trap*, 4, see also 82–83.
- 49 Fearon, “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?” 276 (Figure 1).
- 50 Fearon does not distinguish between conflicts and conflict episodes. He considers a war terminated if there is “either a military victory, wholesale demobilization, or truce or peace agreement followed by at least two years of peace.” See *ibid.*, 279.
- 51 Roy Licklider, “Comparative Studies of Long Wars,” in *Grasping the nettle: Analyzing cases of intractable conflict*, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2005), 42.
- 52 When using the median value, which is less vulnerable to distortion by outliers, the rate of decline is almost two-thirds, from 3.5 years in the 1970s to just over one year during the 1980s, and has remained at that level.
- 53 Using the duration of entire conflicts rather than conflict episodes shows the average duration halved between the 1970s and the 1980s. Because conflicts may restart any time in the future, however, choosing total conflict duration aggravates the problem of truncated data.
- 54 The percentage of onsets of civil wars and international conflicts followed by 10 years of fighting—that is, the most persistent conflicts—dropped significantly after the 1970s, as we reported in the *Human Security Report 2009/2010*.
- 55 The graph ends in 2004 to make sure that all conflict episodes in the sample had an equal chance of reaching the five-year threshold.

- 56 The total number of civil war episodes of five years or more dropped during the 1980s, spiked in the 1990s, and declined again in the early 2000s. In other words, there is no consistent decline in the absolute number of longer-than-average conflict episodes when the length threshold is five years. This, however, must be seen in the context of an extraordinary increase in the total number of conflict onsets during the 1990s: twice as many civil wars broke out during the 1990s as in any other post–World War II decade. The trend displayed in Figure 6.1 shows that longer episodes increased to a much lesser extent, which means that long conflict episodes as a percentage of all conflict episodes shrank.
- 57 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/ Human Security Report Project, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.
- 58 The overall trend is the same if we apply a 10-year threshold to the conflict-episode duration data. Almost one in three episodes starting in the 1970s lasted for 10 years or more. In the 1990s it was only roughly one in 11. If we do an analysis similar to Figure 6.1, but using conflict rather than episode duration, the trend is confirmed both with a five-year and a 10-year threshold (using conflict duration, however, again confronts the truncated-data problem described above).
- 59 Joakim Kreutz, “How and when armed conflicts end: Introducing the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset,” *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 244, doi: 10.1177/0022343309353108 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 60 World Bank, *World Development Report 2011*, 58. The WDR cites UCDP/PRIO data and thus its results are comparable with the data presented here.
- 61 In our figures, we only include conflict terminations through 2004 and consider them recurred when renewed violence is recorded within less than five years. This is to ensure that all terminations have the same amount of time to recur, making sure that figures are comparable across time.
- 62 We simplify the termination types from the UCDP dataset (see endnote 46). The difference between ceasefires and peace agreements is explained in more detail in the box on page 178-9.
- 63 Roy Licklider, “The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945–1993,” *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 3 (1995): 681–690. The well-established finding that victories tend to be stable outcomes (not followed by another episode of violence) is not undermined by the fact that between 2000 and 2004, as shown in Table 6.1, victories have shown an exceptionally high recurrence rate of 50 percent, because the 50 percent figure is based on only four cases.
- 64 Page Fortna, “Where Have All the Victories Gone? Peacekeeping and War Outcomes” (prepared for presentation at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, Toronto, ON, 2009), http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1450558 (accessed 5 December 2011).

- 65 The high failure rate of victories in the 2000s is based on a very small number of cases: two of the four victories counted between 2000 and 2004 broke down. Similarly, only very few ceasefires were recorded in civil conflicts before 1990, which may have been due in part to under-reporting. The small number of cases makes it difficult to discern reliable trends, because the results are influenced heavily by only a handful of observations.
- 66 Raleigh et al. analyze a sample of new geo-referenced data on conflicts between 1997 and 2010, and find that, on average, repeated fighting takes place in only 15 percent of the territory. See Clionadh Raleigh, Andrew Linke, Håvard Hegre, and Joakim Karlsen, "Introducing ACLED: An Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset: Special Data Feature," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 651–660.
- 67 Several scholars have questioned the effectiveness of peace agreements and other settlements. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," 36–44; Robert Wagner, "The Causes of Peace," in *Stopping the Killing: How Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York, New York University Press, 1995), 235–268; Monica D. Toft, "Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?" *International Security* 34, no. 4 (2010), 20, doi: 10.1162/isec.2010.34.4.7 (accessed 4 April 2012).
- 68 As pointed out above, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) differentiates between two types of ceasefires, which we count in a single category here.
- 69 Kreutz, *UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset Codebook*, 2–3, http://www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/55/55056_UCDP_Conflict_Termination_Dataset_v_2010-1.pdf (accessed 27 May 2011).
- 70 Note that the dataset only records terminations followed by at least one calendar year in which the conflict does not reach the threshold of 25 battle deaths.
- 71 As Table 6.1 in this report shows, the most recent recurrence rate for the years 2000–2004 is significantly lower than the 40-percent figure of the turbulent 1990s. Because two peace agreements signed since 2004 (not included in Table 6.1) have already failed, the preliminary recurrence rate for the new millennium currently stands at some 20 percent, but this figure will be subject to change as new data becomes available.
- 72 D. Nilsson, "Partial Peace: Rebel Groups Inside and Outside of Civil War Settlements," *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 4 (2008): 479–495, doi: 10.1177/0022343308091357 (accessed 4 April 2012). At this (dyadic) level of analysis, the failure rate of peace agreements in intrastate conflicts between 1950 and 2004 is a mere 10 percent.
- 73 Toft, "Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?" 20.
- 74 Ibid., 20. See also the discussion of these findings in Toft, *Securing the peace*, 61–62. Note that Toft's findings are based on a total of five failed peace agreements. In two out of these cases more than 10 years lie between termination and recurrence.
- 75 Toft, *Securing the peace*, 62.

- 76 In fact, the reverse is very likely the case. Toft's finding appears to be driven by death tolls *before* a settlement. It is much more plausible that the willingness of the conflict parties to settle their dispute through negotiations was influenced by the high intensity of protracted fighting—a so-called hurting stalemate—rather than the other way around.
- 77 In Figure 6.5 we focus on the period 1989–2009 for which we have updated battle-death data and a larger number of observations than Toft's sample that covers the years 1940–2003. Terminations are included through 2004 to make sure that all terminations had an equal chance of reaching the five-year recurrence threshold; battle deaths are included through 2009. The patterns remain the same if the analysis is extended to the entire post-World War II period.
- 78 Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" 283; Karl R. de Rouen and David Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 303–320, 307, doi: 10.1177/0022343304043771 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 79 Halvard Buhaug, Scott Gates, and Päivi Lujala, "Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 544–569. doi: 10.1177/0022002709336457; Daron Acemoglu, Andrea Vindigni, and Davide Ticchi, "Persistence of Civil Wars," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 8, nos. 2–3 (2010): 664–676, doi: 10.1111/j.1542-4774.2010.tb00536.x (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 80 Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" 289.
- 81 Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall, "Introduction: Mapping the Nettlefield," in *Grasping the nettle: Analyzing cases of intractable conflict*, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen O. Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2005), 6–7.
- 82 Bethany Lacina and Nils P. Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21, no. 2–3 (2005): 145–166, doi: 10.1007/s10680-005-6851-6 (accessed 13 August 2012); Hironaka, *Neverending wars*, 124–125.
- 83 Stathis N. Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, "International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict," *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 415–429, http://stathis.research.yale.edu/documents/Kalyvas_Balcells_APSR.pdf (accessed 21 September 2011).
- 84 Hironaka, *Neverending wars*, 151; Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman, *The political economy of armed conflict: Beyond greed and grievance* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 9.
- 85 Rouen and Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome."
- 86 HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and the Shrinking Costs of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

- 87 Patrick M. Regan and Aysegul Aydin, "Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 5 (2006): 748–749, doi: 10.1177/0022002706291579 (accessed 13 August 2012).
- 88 A. Escribà-Folch, "Economic sanctions and the duration of civil conflicts," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010), 129–141, doi: 10.1177/0022343309356489 (accessed 13 August 2012); HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010*, 74.
- 89 Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (1999): 36–44, <http://digilib.bc.edu/reserves/sc094/finn/sc09436.pdf> (accessed 18 November 2011).
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Kreutz, "How and when armed conflicts end," 246.
- 92 Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," 36. In the *Human Security Brief 2006*, we provided a more detailed critique of this argument. See Human Security Centre, *Human Security Brief 2006* (Vancouver, BC: Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, 2006), 22, <http://hsrgroup.org/human-security-reports/2006/text.aspx>.
- 93 Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to peace: The successful settlement of civil wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 161.
- 94 Ibid., 90. For a different view on security guarantees, see Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the peace: The durable settlement of civil wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 30–32.
- 95 Virginia P. Fortna, *Does peacekeeping work? Shaping belligerents' choices after civil war* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). For a more in-depth discussion of the effect of peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions on the risk of recurring violence, see HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010*, Chapter 4.
- 96 Michael Gilligan and Stephen Stedman, "Where Do the Peacekeepers Go?" *International Studies Review* 5, no. 4 (2003): 37–54.
- 97 James D. Fearon, "Governance and Civil War Onset: World Development Report 2011 Background Paper," http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/WDR%20Background%20Paper_Fearon_0.pdf (accessed 9 August 2012).
- 98 Indeed, this is one of the objectives of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States agreement—an initiative of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding—that was concluded at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness at Busan, South Korea, on 1 December 2011.

CHAPTER 7

- 99 For more discussion about the shift in armed conflict, see Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Jacob Bercovitch and Richard Jackson, *Conflict Resolution in the Twenty-First Century: Principles, Methods, and Approaches* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009); Martin van Creveld, "The Transformation of War Revisited," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 13, no. 2 (2002): 3–15. doi: 10.1080/09592310208559177 (accessed 13 August 2012); World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development* (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank, 2011), 53, <http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/fulltext> (accessed 13 December 2011).
- 100 Kristine Eck, Joakim Kreutz, and Ralph Sundberg, "Introducing the UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset," Uppsala University, 2010, unpublished manuscript.
- 101 UCDP codes broad categories of identification, such as Christian and Muslim, by country; an example would be Christians versus Muslims in Nigeria. A global conflict between Christians and Muslims, by contrast, would not be coded in this dataset. See Ralph Sundberg, *Non-state Conflict Dataset Codebook v 2.3-2010* (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2009), 3.
- 102 State-based conflicts, on the other hand, were recorded as active for 6.4 years on average. Note these figures are not directly comparable to figures provided in Chapter 6. Here we consider the cumulative number of calendar years a conflict was active, whereas in Chapter 6 we consider the number of consecutive years in a conflict episode, using more precise coding for start and end dates.
- 103 Therése Pettersson, "Non-state conflicts 1989–2008—Global and Regional Patterns," in *States in Armed Conflict 2009*, Research Report 92, ed. Therése Pettersson and Lotta Themnér (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2010), 187. One reason that non-state conflicts have generally been short is that the majority of them are fought between groups that are less organized for combat than state actors. Few such groups have the resources to sustain long periods of fighting.
- 104 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/Human Security Report Project, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.
- 105 In the measure of duration used here we count the number of years in which a non-state conflict was active. The conflict does not need to be active for the entire 365 days of a given year to be considered "active" in that year.
- 106 In the relatively rare case of a failed state with no effective government (the situation in Somalia is a case in point), UCDP codes fighting between rebel groups and militias over government power as non-state conflicts. This will result in a higher number of non-state conflicts being coded than if one of the warring parties was holding government power.
- 107 World Bank, "World Development Indicators 2010," (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank, 2010), <http://data.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/wdi-final.pdf> (accessed 5 April 2012).
- 108 Pettersson, "Non-state conflicts 1989–2008," 195.

- 109 Recent research identifying such factors can be found in papers such as Håvard Hegre and Nicholas Sambanis, "Sensitivity Analysis of Empirical Results on Civil War Onset," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 3 (August 2006): 508–535. doi: 10.1177/0022002706289303; and Jeffrey Dixon, "What Causes Civil Wars? Integrating Quantitative Research Findings," *International Studies Review* 11, no.4 (December 2009):707–735. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2486.2009.00892.x.
- 110 Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy: How scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet," *The Atlantic*, February 1994, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/02/the-coming-anarchy/4670/?single_page=true (accessed 9 November 2011).
- 111 See N. P. Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 381–400, doi: 10.1177/0022343398035003007 (accessed 8 November 2011).
- 112 Halvard Buhaug, Nils P. Gleditsch, and Ole M. Theisen, "Implications of Climate Change for Armed Conflict," in *Social dimensions of climate change: Equity and vulnerability in a warming world*, ed. Robin Mearns and Andrew Norton (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2010), 89–93.
- 113 Eric Melander and Ralph Sundberg, for example, describe non-state conflict as a "form of violence that carries a much lower cost of initiation than interstate and intrastate wars, and that is known to be much more localized in its geographic scope, and thus can be expected to be more sensitive to local conditions"; Melander and Sundberg, "Climate Change, Environmental Stress, and Violent Conflict," 8 November 2011, unpublished manuscript, 4.
- 114 Ibid.
- 115 Ole M. Theisen and Kristian B. Brandsegg, "The Environment and Non-State Conflicts," (paper presented at the 48th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, 2007), <http://www.svt.ntnu.no/iss/fagkonferanse2007/intern/papers/Ole.Magnus.Theisen@svt.ntnu.noThe%20Environment%20and%20Non-State%20Conflicts.doc> (accessed 9 November 2011).
- 116 For more on the debate, see HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and the Shrinking Costs of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 68.
- 117 Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595, doi: 10.1093/oep/gpf064, (accessed 8 November 2011).
- 118 Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War"; James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90, doi: 10.1017/S0003055403000534 (accessed 8 November 2011).
- 119 Hanne Fjelde and Gudrun Østby, "Economic Inequality and Inter-group Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990–2008," last modified 10 November 2011, unpublished manuscript.
- 120 Joakim Kreutz and Kristine Eck, "Regime Transition and Communal Violence," 8 November 2011, unpublished manuscript.

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- 121 Joakim Kreutz, *One-Sided Violence Codebook v 1.3* (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2008), 2, http://www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/55/55080_UCDP_One-sided_violence_Dataset_Codebook_v1.3.pdf (accessed 18 January 2012).
- 122 United Nations General Assembly, "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html> (accessed 28 November 2011).
- 123 Madelyn H.-R. Hicks et al., "Global Comparison of Warring Groups in 2002–2007: Fatalities from Targeting Civilians vs. Fighting Battles," *PLoS ONE* 6, no. 9 (2011): 1–14, 2, doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0023976 (accessed 13 April 2012).
- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007). See also our discussion of these claims in Chapter 3 of this Report.
- 126 Chyanda M. Querido, "State-Sponsored Mass Killing in African Wars—Greed or Grievance?" *International Advances in Economic Research* 15, no. 3 (2009): 351–361, doi: 10.1007/s11294-009-9207-x (accessed 13 April 2012).
- 127 Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman, "One-Sided Violence against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 2 (2007): 233–246, doi: 10.1177/0022343307075124 (accessed 13 April 2012).
- 128 Reed M. Wood, "Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 601–614, doi: 10.1177/0022343310376473.
- 129 Lisa Hultman, "Keeping Peace or Spurring Violence? Unintended Effects of Peace Operations on Violence against Civilians," *Civil Wars* 12, nos. 1–2 (2010): 29–46, doi: 10.1080/13698249.2010.484897 (accessed 13 April 2012).
- 130 Ibid., 30.
- 131 Margit Bussmann and Gerald Schneider, "A Porous Humanitarian Shield: The Laws of War, the Red Cross, and the Killing of Civilians," September 2010, unpublished manuscript, <http://147.142.190.246/joomla/peio/files2011/papers/Bussmann,%20Schneider%2027.09.2010.pdf> (accessed 8 September 2011).
- 132 Lara J. Nettelfield, "Research and Repercussions of Death Tolls," in *Sex, Drugs, and Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Global Crime and Conflict*, ed. Peter Andreas and Kelly M. Greenhill (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010), 159–188.
- 133 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/ Human Security Report Project, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.
- 134 The adjustments to the death toll were made based on new evidence from the UN *Mapping Report*, which was published in 2010. See Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "DRC: Mapping Human Rights Violations 1993–2003," August 2010, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/ZR/DRC_MAPPING_REPORT_FINAL_EN.pdf (accessed 21 November 2011).

- 135 UCDP's high estimate for the Rwandan genocide in 1994 is around 800,000, while the low estimate is approximately 150,000.
- 136 HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and the Shrinking Costs of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 182.
- 137 The percentage of deaths that occurred in sub-Saharan Africa includes the Rwandan genocide. However, excluding deaths in Rwanda, the region still accounts for 61 percent of global deaths from one-sided violence.

APPENDIX

- 138 The discussion about the differences between the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and Uppsala University's Conflict Data Program (UCDP) datasets on battle deaths from state-based armed conflict was initiated by Gerdis Wischnath and Nils Petter Gleditsch, with subsequent input from UCDP and the Human Security Report Project (HSRP). This overview, prepared by HSRP, reflects the views of all three institutions.
- 139 State-based conflicts from 1946 to 2010 are recorded in the now widely used UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.
- 140 Centre for the Study of Civil War, International Peace Research Institute Oslo, (PRIO), Battle Deaths Dataset 3.0, <http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/Battle-Deaths/The-Battle-Deaths-Dataset-version-30/> (accessed 14 March 2012), updated from Bethany Lacina and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21, no. 2–3 (2005): doi: 10.1007/s10680-005-6851-6; Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden/ Human Security Report Project, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.
- 141 See Nils Petter Gleditsch, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg, and Håvard Strand, "Armed conflict 1946–2001: A new dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 5 (2002): 615–637. doi: 10.1177/0022343302039005007, and the two websites, http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset/ and <http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/> (accessed 27 April 2012).
- 142 Bethany Lacina and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21, no. 2–3 (2005): 145–166. doi: 10.1007/s10680-005-6851-6. One version of the PRIO dataset has data going as far back as 1900. See Bethany Lacina, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Bruce Russett, "The Declining Risk of Death in Battle," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2006): 673–680. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2006.00419.x. The replication data are found at <http://www.prio.no/csw/datasets> (accessed 27 April 2012).
- 143 More information on the coding of the low, high, and best estimates for each dataset can be found by consulting the respective PRIO and UCDP codebooks, available on the websites cited above.

- 144 For a description of UCDP's data collection methodology, see UCDP "How are UCDP data collected?" http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/faq/#How_are_UCDP_data_collected_ (accessed 27 April 2012).
- 145 Summary estimations of battle deaths may be based in part on body-count data from the warring parties. Typically, both sides will tend to minimize their own casualties and maximize those of their enemies. Reliance on such data is not likely to lead to any systematic upward or downward bias, however.
- 146 To produce annual battle-death estimates in these cases, PRIO had little choice but to divide estimates for the entire period of the war by the number of years it had lasted. The researchers recognized, of course, that in reality, the probability that each year of conflict would have the same number of battle deaths was low. This is another cause of the difference between PRIO's annual estimates and UCDP's—the latter are always based on incident data of reported battle deaths.
- 147 They may also include some *non-state* conflict deaths—fighting between rival militias, for example, which would be counted separately by Uppsala.
- 148 Conflicts that are likely to include a high level of one-sided violence are noted in the documentation for the PRIO dataset.
- 149 This is an even greater problem with estimating deaths from one-sided violence, since few armed groups are likely to boast about killing civilians.
- 150 There are additional technical issues that we do not elaborate on here. Most notably, PRIO researchers do not publish best estimates for conflict years where they lack reliable information based on their set of sources. Using an average of high and low estimates to replace the missing best estimates as we do in Figure A.2 exaggerates the differences between PRIO and UCDP. Note also that the PRIO and UCDP battle-death data currently available are based on different versions of the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, which means that some conflict years are coded in one, but not the other, battle-death dataset.
- 151 See Ziad Obermeyer, Christopher J. L. Murray, and Emmanuela Gakidou, "Fifty years of violent war deaths from Vietnam to Bosnia: analysis of data from the world health survey programme," *British Medical Journal* 336, no. 7659 (2008): 1482. doi: 10.1136/bmj.a137. See rebuttal by Michael Spagat, Andrew Mack, Tara Cooper, and Joakim Kreutz, "Estimating War Deaths: An Arena of Contestation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 6 (2009): 934–950. doi: 10.1177/0022002709346253. See also Meredith R. Sarkees, Frank W. Wayman, and J. David Singer, "Inter-State, Intra-State, and Extra-State Wars: A Comprehensive Look at Their Distribution over Time, 1816-1997," *International Studies Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (2003): 49–70. See rebuttal by Bethany Lacina, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Bruce Russett, "The Declining Risk of Death in Battle," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2006): 673–680. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2006.00419.x. See also Anita Gohdes and Megan Price, "First things first: Assessing data quality before model quality," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, forthcoming (a response by Bethany Lacina, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Bruce Russett will be published in the same issue).

- 152 See Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (New York: Viking, 2011); Joshua Goldstein, *Winning the War on War: The Decline of Armed Conflict Worldwide* (New York: Dutton, 2011); and HSRP, *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and the Shrinking Costs of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 153 See HRDAG, "Projects," <http://www.hrdag.org/about/projects.shtml> (accessed 30 April 2012).