

# Peacemaking and Mediation: Dynamics of a Changing Field

## Coping with Crisis

Working Paper Series

Chester A. Crocker

March 2007



International Peace Academy

## About the Author

**Chester A. Crocker** is the James R. Schlesinger Professor of Strategic Studies at Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service. He served as chairman of the board of the United States Institute of Peace (1992-2004), and continues as a member of its board. From 1981-1989, he was U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs and mediated the prolonged negotiations among Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that led to Namibia's transition to independence, and to the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. He serves as a member of the boards of various public and private companies and not-for-profit institutions. Dr. Crocker is the author of *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood*, co-author (with Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall) of *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the Hardest Cases*, and coeditor of *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (forthcoming).

## Acknowledgements

IPA owes a great debt of thanks to its many donors to *Coping with Crisis*. Their support for this Program reflects a widespread demand for innovative thinking on practical solutions to international challenges. In particular, IPA is grateful to the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. This Working Papers Series would also not have been possible without the support of the Greentree Foundation, which generously allowed IPA the use of the Whitney family's Greentree Estate for a meeting of the authors of these papers at a crucial moment in their development in October 2006.

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Sara E. Thannhauser in the preparation of this working paper. He is indebted to the following individuals who answered questions and shared their insights: Teresa Whitfield, Ahmedouould Abdallah, Deepa Olapally, Andrew Marshall, Charles Snyder, Teresita Schaffer, David Petrasek, Monty Marshall, Pamela Aall, Jack Goldstone, Catharin Dalpino, Muthia Alagappa, and David Smock. The author is solely responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation herein.

**Cover Photo:** © Mark Karass/Corbis.

The views expressed in this paper represent those of the author and not necessarily those of IPA. IPA welcomes consideration of a wide range of perspectives in the pursuit of a well-informed debate on critical policies and issues in international affairs.

### **Project Staff, *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series**

Elizabeth Cousens, *Vice-President*

James Cockayne, *Associate*

Francesco Mancini, *Associate*

Naureen Chowdhury Fink, *Program Officer*

### **IPA Publications**

Adam Lupel, *Editor/Publications Officer*

Design by Andrew Nofsinger. [www.andrewnofsinger.com](http://www.andrewnofsinger.com)

© by International Peace Academy, 2007

All Rights Reserved

[www.ipacademy.org](http://www.ipacademy.org)

# CONTENTS

---

Foreword, <i>Terje Rød-Larsen</i>	i
<b>Introduction and Overview about Peacemaking and Conflict Mediation</b>	<b>1</b>
Old and New Debates	
<b>Key Challenges for Peacemaking</b>	<b>3</b>
Crises of Modernization and State-Building	
Uncertain and Unpredictable Engagement by Key Actors and Institutions	
Unanticipated Impact of Normative Change and Diffusion on International Security	
The Quest for Coherence and Coordination of Effort	
<b>Institutions, Coalitions, Roles, and Gaps in Peacemaking Capacity</b>	<b>7</b>
Some Critical Knowledge and Experience Gaps	
An Enhanced UN Role?	
The Issue of Burden-Sharing between the UN and Regional Organizations	
Changing Regional Security Architectures	
Are NGOs and Civil Society the Answer?	
<b>Scenarios and Recommendations</b>	<b>14</b>
Practical Suggestions for Building and Spreading Capacity	
Facing the Need for Setting some Professional Standards	
Towards a Sustainable Sharing of Burdens	
Further Reading	17

## Foreword

Terje Rød-Larsen

*President, International Peace Academy*

The International Peace Academy (IPA) is pleased to introduce a new series of Working Papers within the program *Coping with Crisis, Conflict, and Change: The United Nations and Evolving Capacities for Managing Global Crises*, a four-year research and policy-facilitation program designed to generate fresh thinking about global crises and capacities for effective prevention and response.

In this series of Working Papers, IPA has asked leading experts to undertake a mapping exercise, presenting an assessment of critical challenges to human and international security. A first group of papers provides a horizontal perspective, examining the intersection of multiple challenges in specific regions of the world. A second group takes a vertical approach, providing in-depth analysis of global challenges relating to organized violence, poverty, population trends, public health, and climate change, among other topics. The Working Papers have three main objectives: to advance the understanding of these critical challenges and their interlinkages; to assess capacities to cope with these challenges and to draw scenarios for plausible future developments; and to offer a baseline for longer-term research and policy development.

Out of these initial Working Papers, a grave picture already emerges. The Papers make clear that common challenges take different forms in different regions of the world. At the same time, they show that complexity and interconnectedness will be a crucial attribute of crises in the foreseeable future.

First, new challenges are emerging, such as climate change and demographic trends. At least two billion additional inhabitants, and perhaps closer to three billion, will be added to the world over the next five decades, virtually all in the less developed regions, especially among the poorest countries in Africa and Asia. As a result of climate change, the magnitude and frequency of floods may increase in many regions; floods in coastal Bangladesh and India, for example, are expected to affect several million people. The demand for natural resources – notably water – will increase as a result of population growth and economic development; but some areas may have diminished access to clean water.

Second, some challenges are evolving in more dangerous global configurations such as transnational organized crime and terrorism. Illicit and violent organizations are gaining increasing control over territory, markets, and populations around the world. Non-state armed groups complicate peacemaking efforts due to their continued access to global commodity and arms markets. Many countries, even if they are not directly affected, can suffer from the economic impact of a major terrorist attack. States with ineffective and corrupted institutions may prove to be weak links in global arrangements to deal with threats ranging from the avian flu to transnational terrorism.

Finally, as these complex challenges emerge and evolve, ‘old’ problems still persist. While the number of violent conflicts waged around the world has recently declined, inequality – particularly between groups within the same country – is on the rise. When this intergroup inequality aligns with religious, ethnic, racial and language divides, the prospect of tension rises. Meanwhile, at the state level, the number of actual and aspirant nuclear-armed countries is growing, as is their ability to acquire weapons through illicit global trade.

As the international institutions created in the aftermath of World War II enter their seventh decade, their capacity to cope with this complex, rapidly evolving and interconnected security landscape is being sharply tested. The United Nations has made important progress in some of its core functions – ‘keeping the peace,’ providing humanitarian relief, and helping advance human development and security. However, there are

reasons to question whether the broad UN crisis management system for prevention and response is up to the test.

Not only the UN, but also regional and state mechanisms are challenged by this complex landscape and the nature and scale of crises. In the Middle East, for example, interlinked conflicts are complicated by demographic and socioeconomic trends and regional institutions capable of coping with crisis are lacking. In both Latin America and Africa, ‘old’ problems of domestic insecurity arising from weak institutions and incomplete democratization intersect with ‘new’ transnational challenges such as organized crime. Overall, there is reason for concern about net global capacities to cope with these challenges, generating a growing sense of global crisis.

Reading these Working Papers, the first step in a four-year research program, one is left with a sense of urgency about the need for action and change: action where policies and mechanisms have already been identified; change where institutions are deemed inadequate and require innovation. The diversity of challenges suggests that solutions cannot rest in one actor or mechanism alone. For example, greater multilateral engagement can produce a regulatory framework to combat small arms proliferation and misuse, while private actors, including both industry and local communities, will need to play indispensable roles in forging global solutions to public health provision and food security. At the same time, the complexity and intertwined nature of the challenges require solutions at multiple levels. For example, governments will need to confront the realities that demographic change will impose on them in coming years, while international organizations such as the UN have a key role to play in technical assistance and norm-setting in areas as diverse as education, urban planning and environmental control.

That the world is changing is hardly news. What is new is a faster rate of change than ever before and an unprecedented interconnectedness between different domains of human activity – and the crises they can precipitate. This series of Working Papers aims to contribute to understanding these complexities and the responses that are needed from institutions and decision-makers to cope with these crises, challenges and change.



Terje Rød-Larsen

## Introduction and Overview of Current Thinking about Peacemaking and Conflict Mediation

The study of peacemaking and mediation blossomed in the immediate post-Cold War years and into the new millennium. The 2001 terrorist attacks on the US and subsequent attacks in Indonesia, Spain, and the UK, marked a significant watershed in world politics, raising the question of whether war-fighting against this new adversary would eclipse peacemaking and conflict prevention. While the jury remains out on the extent of the paradigm shift signaled by September 11, 2001, there is no question that today's environment features elements of both continuity and change for peacemakers. The threat to international security posed by certain forms of terrorism cannot be ignored. But the totality of challenges facing the international system today cannot be reduced to the terrorist threat, nor can the international community's response be reduced to a "war on terrorism."<sup>1</sup> In this section of the paper, we will identify important areas of consensus about peacemaking that have carried over from the late 1980s and early 1990s to the present, take note of continuing debates in the broader field of conflict management and resolution that affect the way practitioners and scholars think about their activities, and discuss certain "new emphases" in this field that can affect the way peacemakers operate, whether as state-based or unofficial actors.

It should be emphasized at the outset that peacemaking (including conflict prevention) and mediation are best understood as components of a broader field of activity and study summarized by the term "conflict management" – a term that incorporates the full spectrum of third party activities aimed at preventing, mitigating, suppressing, settling or resolving, and even transforming, violent conflict between and within societies. From the standpoint of the scholarly literature, peacemaking is rooted in the

study of (1) negotiation and (2) conflict resolution.<sup>2</sup> But situating the field in this manner risks creating an overly narrow perception of what peacemaking is all about. Making peace and the threat or use of force both have a place in the arsenal of powerful actors, whether they operate in the interest of their 'national security' or in the interest of broader notions of 'international peace and security' as defined in the United Nations (UN) Charter. The absence or failure of peacemaking results in reduced security. Peacemaking, in other words, is one of the major avenues leading toward enhanced security, and it deserves a central place in the diplomacy of states that have something to contribute, as well as in the activity of the UN Secretariat.

### Old and New Debates

#### Leverage

One of the most fundamental debates in the field of international relations concerns the proper place of coercive power—the power to deter, to compel, to prevent, to deny and to punish.<sup>3</sup> For some, peacemaking and mediation ought to be the province of impartial (or even 'neutral') actors; and when undertaken by biased actors—including, by implication, powerful states or groups of states such as those in the UN Security Council—the risk of failure or unsustainable settlements rises. Others emphasize that "leverage is the ticket" to successful mediation, with the clear implication that powerful actors wielding coercive instruments of influence may be indispensable.<sup>4</sup>

The evidence from cases strongly suggests that mediation requires leverage of one kind or another. The critical challenge is to grasp clearly the many sources of leverage that are relevant to a peacemaker: the direct, diplomatic, or coercive kind; leverage 'borrowed' from allies or "friends groups"; leverage based upon internationally supported norms or regimes; leverage derived from within the conflict

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed overview of the arguments see the introductory chapter and Charles King, "Power, Social Violence, and Civil War," Chester A. Crocker, "The Place of Grand Strategy, Statecraft and Power in Conflict Management," and Michael E. Brown, "New Global Dangers" in Pamela Aall, Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson, eds., *Leashing the Dogs of War* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> An early post-Cold War survey is W. Scott Thompson and Kenneth M. Jenson, eds., *Approaches to Peace: An Intellectual Map* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1991); and Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds., *Managing Global Chaos: Sources and Responses to International Conflict* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1996). For other useful overviews of the field see I. William Zartman, ed., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2007); and Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution* (London, UK: Sage Publications, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> James Steinberg, "Preventative Force in U.S. National Security Strategy," *Survival* 47, no. 4 (Winter 2005); and Abraham D. Sofaer, "Working Paper: Preventive Force: Issues For Discussion," paper prepared for The Princeton Project On National Security, March 2006, available at [www.wps.princeton.edu/ppns/conferences/reports/pf\\_paper.pdf](http://www.wps.princeton.edu/ppns/conferences/reports/pf_paper.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> The phrase comes from Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman, "International Mediation in the Post-Cold War Era," in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds., *Turbulent Peace* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2001). Regarding the debate on leverage, see Jacob Bercovitch, "Introduction: Putting Mediation in Context"; Peter J. Carnevale, "Mediating from Strength"; and Marieke Kleiboer, "Great Power Mediation: Using Leverage to Make Peace?" in Jacob Bercovitch, ed., *Studies of International Mediation* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

structure or from the battlefield itself; or leverage derived from the legitimacy and stature of an international or regional security institution.<sup>5</sup> Having said this, it is equally evident that non-official bodies and “track two” approaches can also, in certain circumstances, make decisive peacemaking contributions using relationships, borrowed leverage, and cross-cultural skills as well as distinct capabilities to foster dialogue and engage at many critical levels within war-torn societies. Regardless of the source, the key contribution of leverage – both positive incentives/promises and negative pressures/threats – is to move the parties off dead center by posing questions and presenting possibilities that shake up the status quo and require some kind of response.

All sorts of entities and actors undertake peacemaking initiatives today. The important issues are to understand which ones can add real value and under what circumstances, and how to assure that peacemakers do not export their own complexities or rivalries into the conflict itself, thereby making things worse. A growing body of opinion appears to grasp this very point, at least superficially. But, since the barriers to entry into conflict arenas went down with the end of the Cold War, the peacemaking and mediation field has become increasingly crowded with participants. In some instances, conflicts can benefit from a range of interventions of different types at different points in a conflict cycle. However, no institution, nation, or group of powerful actors has succeeded in imposing “strategic coherence” on the field, and any effort to do so would likely meet resistance.

### **Ripeness and Readiness**

The field of mediation scholarship has produced some compelling theoretical insights. A leading example is the effort to pinpoint the condition of “ripeness” for resolution. Like most important theoretical work, the concept of ripeness has generated considerable debate, and the question of identifying ripe moments for third-party action has raised inevitable questions about the role of perceptions and the degree to which the concept of ripeness has predictive power or can only be applied in hindsight. Discussions of ripeness and its

implications have produced further reformulations and refinements, and its advocates have been at pains to underscore that the concept is not intended to justify inaction in an “unripe” conflict. Rather, the operational utility of the concept resides in its potential for identifying obstacles to settlement and exploring ways to overcome them.<sup>6</sup> Thus, “ripeness” occurs when the sides recognize themselves to be caught up in what I. William Zartman has termed a “mutually hurting stalemate,” when they perceive value in exploring options for a political settlement, when there is an available mechanism for talks (typically third-party assisted), and when the sides’ leaderships are strong enough to take the hard decisions required to make peace. One should note the importance of perceptions in this summary: the military stalemate must be perceived as such by both sides, as must the potential benefits of a compromise formula capable of meeting their essential political requirements.

Another concept that appears especially relevant to the purposes of this project is the notion of mediatory “readiness.” This concept—not widely discussed or debated in the academic literature—focuses on the attributes and resources available to the peacemaker and, by implication, what barriers to entry should exist, as well as what forms of mediation capacity-building are potentially available. The notion of “readiness” can also shed light on the sorts of questions and issues a prospective mediator would be wise to raise before accepting a mandate. From the scholarly point of view, such issues reside somewhere in the dusty corners of agency theory or bureaucratic politics; but for practitioners, the idea of “readiness” can form an essential building block of best practices in the mediator’s handbook.<sup>7</sup>

### **Conflict Trends**

Two additional themes in the peacemaking and conflict management fields warrant brief mention here. The first is the question of conflict trends and what factors may account for them. The Human Security Report prepared under the leadership of the former Director of Strategic Planning in the

---

<sup>5</sup> Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the Hardest Cases* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> I. William Zartman, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate,” in Paul Stern and Daniel Druckman, eds., *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2000); see also Dean G. Pruitt, “Whither Ripeness Theory,” paper prepared for the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, 2005, available at [www.ciaonet.org/wps/ica002/](http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ica002/).

<sup>7</sup> The concept of mediator readiness is explored and developed in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “Ready for Prime Time: The When, Who, and Why of International Mediation,” *Negotiation Journal* 19, no. 2 (2003). The material is summarized in Chapter 5 of Crocker et al., *Taming Intractable Conflicts*.

Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General, Andrew Mack, as well as data assembled by the conflict analysis team of Monty Marshall and Ted Robert Gurr at the University of Maryland and the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, point strongly to a significant downward trajectory in the number of violent conflicts and the outbreak of new ones, matched by an upward trend in the number of conflicts settled or managed, often through the auspices of third-party peacemaking.<sup>8</sup> These issues are discussed in some detail in Andrew Mack's working paper in this series.<sup>9</sup> Such empirical work is an important contribution to our understanding of the challenges ahead, but it needs to be interpreted in the context of methodological assumptions and certain risks of correlation analysis using such methods. The question of what defines conflict thresholds—combatant battle deaths or civilian casualties—is an important one. And, as some research makes clear, there are very real possibilities of trend reversals if major actors disengage from active leadership in peacemaking or if fragile peace accords are not implemented with vigor and coherence. Close observers of conflict data trends are in full agreement about the post-1992 trendline at least through 2004; there may be a resurgence of certain cases (i.e., Sri Lanka, Indian Naxalites, Kurds in Turkey) even as other cases suggest progress toward settlement (i.e., Algeria, Burundi, Uganda).<sup>10</sup> While we may hope that the downward trend in conflict occurrence will continue, there are serious grounds for concern that a resurgence may have begun. Looking broadly at zones of current turbulence, it is at least arguable that portions of the Middle East may be headed for worse conflict trends before any sustained progress, as demonstrated in Markus Bouillon's paper in this series which examines different epicenters of instability and crisis in the Middle East that have potential to trigger new, or exacerbate existing, crises.<sup>11</sup>

### Democracy

Second, there is lively debate about the practical implications of the “democratic peace,” a debate cast in a sharper light by the increasing emphasis placed on democracy promotion by the US and other leading western nations. There are, of course, many reasons to support the expansion of democratic norms, practices, and institutions. The issue here is the relationship of democracy and democratization to international peace and security. At one level, the evidence is incontrovertible: mature democracies do not fight one another. At another level, like all fundamental societal change, democratization can be profoundly destabilizing. A significant school of thought argues that the democratization process has historically been associated with conflict outbreaks, and that the conduct of democratic elections ought not to be the first priority of peacemakers or the first action sequentially in a peace process.<sup>12</sup> In their working paper in this series, Charles Call and Elizabeth Cousens suggest that the relationship between war recurrence and the quality of governance is unclear, and that while democracies tend not to fight each other, they do go to war with autocracies at relatively high rates.<sup>13</sup> The jury is likely to remain out on this question for many years to come. It would be more helpful if the debate focused operationally on the sequencing of steps in a peace process and on the proper (and improper) roles of outsiders in exporting democratic institutions and practices.<sup>14</sup>

### Key Challenges for Peacemaking

The task of peacemaking and conflict mediation will remain of critical importance in the coming five years. Only if one accepts extraordinarily optimistic projections for the success ratio of peacemaking efforts will that forecast change dramatically in subsequent five-year periods out to 2025. This section explores why peacemaking will remain a central requirement for

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Mack, *Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century* (British Columbia, Canada: Human Security Center, 2005), p. 153, available at [www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/28/63/](http://www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/28/63/). Also see Andrew Mack, “Global Political Violence: Explaining the Post-Cold War Decline,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> The author is indebted to Monty Marshall for sharing insights on the empirical data.

<sup>11</sup> Markus E. Bouillon, “The Middle East: Fragility and Crisis,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, February 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Roland Paris, *At War's End* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 151–178.

<sup>13</sup> Charles T. Call and Elizabeth Cousens, “Ending Wars and Building Peace,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Fen Osler Hampson and David Mendeloff, “Intervention and the Nation Building Debate”; and Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, “Turbulent Transitions,” in Aall et al., *Leashing the Dogs of War*; and Paris, *At War's End*.



managing conflict, and identifies some of the critical challenges ahead for peacemakers engaged in conflict prevention and mediation activities.

### **Crises of Modernization and State-building**

The most basic reason to project a continuing requirement for peacemakers and mediators is that the raw material for generating and sustaining violent conflict remains plentiful. This raw material includes (1) large numbers of historically “new states” with weak institutions and limited capacity to carry out basic state functions in the areas of security, inclusive and responsive governance (“delivery”), and civil administration; (2) the uneven pace of economic and political modernization within and between regions, as well as dramatically increased inter-societal communication flows, a condition that at least partly explains mounting conflict and crisis within the Islamic world; (3) the unresolved crises between militant Islamists and key western societies; (4) the growing capacity of criminal and terrorist networks and other non-state actors to utilize the instruments of globalization and asymmetric conflict to undermine peace and security, exploit security vacuums, and cohabit profitably with isolated, autocratic regimes (“rogue states”); and (5) the persistence of intractable conflicts within states as well as deeply embedded regional conflict systems between states.<sup>15</sup> Each of these factors is widely accepted and recognized by scholars and professionals in the field. Each warrants more extensive discussion than is possible here, but some of the themes are addressed in other papers in the International Peace Academy’s Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series.<sup>16</sup>

### **Uncertain and Unpredictable Engagement by Key Actors and Institutions**

There has been considerable “learning” about conflict prevention and peacemaking in the post-Cold War period. The increasing interconnectedness of civil society networks, professional associations, and centers of research, advocacy, and documentation has facilitated the transmission of knowledge about prevention and warning of key conflict triggers and about the key

ingredients of mediated settlements. Examples of such sharing of experience include the work of the OSCE’s High Commissioner for National Minorities across Europe and the former Soviet bloc; and, the expert advocacy, training, and documentation work on transitional justice issues by such bodies as the International Center for Transitional Justice and the US Institute of Peace (USIP). Another case in point is the “learning” that has occurred about the potential of “people power” movements (whatever their risks and negative potential) to create an alternative path for relatively peaceful regime change away from abusive, autocratic regimes—a learning process that has been stimulated by research and documentation by groups such as the International Center on Non-Violent Conflict. The impact of organizations such as the Open Society Institute in building civil society in conflicted countries is also noteworthy. Conflict participants are capable of “learning” from the experience of counterparts in other conflicts that there may be ways other than endless violence to manage their relationships and shape their future, and this process may account in part for the apparent downward trend of conflicts in some regions after the highpoints of the late 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>17</sup>

That being said, a critical ingredient in the recent taming of many conflicts has been external leadership and sponsorship of peace processes leading to either conflict suppression or settlement/resolution. It is hard to imagine that relative peace and security would have come to such places as Northern Ireland, the Balkan conflicts, Tajikistan, Timor l’Este, El Salvador, Guatemala, the Baltic republics of the former Soviet Union, Papua New Guinea, Aceh/Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Namibia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Burundi, and Sudan (North-South) in the absence of external engagement. Continued progress in taming conflict will depend on the willingness of leading powers (i.e., the five permanent members of the Security Council, known as the “P-5”) as well as other “security exporting” nations such as Norway, Canada, Kenya, South Africa, and Malaysia to provide sustained leadership across the board in various conflict management roles including

---

<sup>15</sup> See the overview of intractability in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “Introduction: Mapping the Nettle Field,” and analysis of it in Roy Licklider, “Comparative Studies of Long Wars”; I. William Zartman, “Analyzing Intractability”; and Louis Kriesberg, “Nature, Dynamics, and Phases of Intractability,” in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds., *Grasping The Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> See for example Mack, “Global Political Violence”; Call and Cousens, “Ending Wars and Building Peace”; Richard Gowan and Ian Johnstone, “New Challenges for Peacekeeping: Protection, Peacebuilding, and the ‘War on Terror,’” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007; and James Cockayne, “Transnational Organized Crime: Multilateral Responses to a Rising Threat,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, April 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Monty G. Marshall and Ted Robert Gurr, *Peace and Conflict 2005* (College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, 2005), available at [www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/PC05print.pdf](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/PC05print.pdf).

peacemaking and mediation initiatives. The leadership factor is critical, whether peace initiatives are led directly by these nations or conducted by an institutionalized leader such as the UN Secretary-General, ad hoc “contact” or “friends” groups, or regional and sub-regional institutions whose efforts typically depend in some measure on the sustained support of “lead” nations. Such leadership, while essential in most conflict situations, may have more traction when war-torn polities are highly dependent on external support for their continued economic viability. Regimes and rebels living off a local food chain of resource revenues or criminal links are better able to counter or thwart the leverage of external actors.<sup>18</sup>

How sustainable is such leadership by “lead” nations? This question arises in part because of the prospect of “conflict fatigue” in some capitals as the rigors and cost of sponsoring peace efforts becomes apparent. It arises as well due to the impact of other security challenges, such as the struggle against terrorism, a conflict in its own right and one that inevitably complicates the conflict prevention and peacemaking agenda. Particularly important is the increasing recognition that peaceful settlement is just the beginning of the next set of challenges. Crises and failures of implementation are predictable, and it is often at this stage—the stage when major financial and military resources have to be committed as well as firm political support provided—that coherent international support is required. It is not surprising that the fields of post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, nation- or state-building, and post-settlement implementation have tended to merge as central themes of research, policy analysis, and new initiatives by official agencies and the UN system itself. The creation in December 2005 of the UN Peacebuilding Commission is one of many manifestations of the trend. However, recognizing the vital challenge of implementation does not mean that it has been mastered. Reversals and failures will produce renewed conflict and have a dampening impact on the enthusiasm of key actors to get involved in peacemaking in the first place. This reality, in turn, makes it reasonable to assume that there will continue to be work for peacemakers and mediators.

### Unanticipated Impact of Normative Change and Diffusion on International Security

An ironic feature of contemporary international relations is that positive developments in one sphere of activity can have strikingly negative or unsettling ramifications in another. For example, we rightly celebrate the spreading norm demanding non-recognition and isolation of regimes that come to power via military coups d'état; a number of leading nations have domestic laws and policies that mandate the termination of bilateral and multilateral assistance to regimes that overthrow duly-established governments.<sup>19</sup> The long-term impact of the doctrine will likely help expand the rule of law; on the other hand, in the short-term, it may increase the staying power of impacted autocratic regimes that can resist both popular pressures and the threat of coups. In this scenario, is the international community saying that the only way out is to have a civil war? Another emerging norm suggests that the correct response to a violent civil war is to initiate mediation. This raises the interesting challenge of knowing whether all civil wars should be stopped, whether some may be inherent to the process of state-building (as in the Chinese, Mexican, and American civil wars), and whether in some cases the ‘best’ outcome could be victory by one side.<sup>20</sup> These dilemmas are not unique to the peacemaking and mediation field: they apply as well to the broader conflict management field including such aspects as humanitarian intervention and third-generation peacekeeping. Looking ahead, the important factors will be (1) the way various regions adopt and implement the democracy and non-interference norms, (2) the varying approach taken by leading democracies toward applying the norms in different regions, and (3) the development of possible polarization or backlash over these norms between western nations on the one hand and Russia and China on the other. (For discussion of regional variants, see the *Coping with Crisis Working Papers* on individual regions.)

There are other challenges flowing from the process of normative change and norm transmission. Debates surrounding democracy-promotion, governance and transparency, justice and accounta-

<sup>18</sup> For further discussion of this issue see Cockayne, “Transnational Organized Crime.”

<sup>19</sup> The September 19, 2006 Thai coup illustrates the potency of the norm: in the face of public and diplomatic pressures from the US and other Western nations, the Thai military-appointed civilian leadership quickly committed the government to make “all necessary efforts in order to restore democratic principles, civil liberties” to the country and to organize a fresh round of democratic elections within a year or less.

<sup>20</sup> The author is indebted to Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, UN Special Representative for West Africa, for bringing these points to his attention.

bility (e.g., for war crimes, crimes against humanity) all have a place in the discussion. Normative shifts—however desirable—can be destabilizing and may actually encourage violent conflict. In addition, normative shifts may have secondary consequences for mediators, making it more difficult to design potential settlement packages, more complex to imagine appropriate incentives and sanctions, and less feasible to engage with armed actors with checkered if not criminal records. This is not to debate the evident benefits of bringing to account warlords and other assorted ‘bad guys’ who often play central roles in today’s conflicts, and setting precedents that discourage future miscreants. We need to recognize, however, the complexity of making peace among armed actors in civil conflicts under modern conditions and to face up to the stark reality that the alternative to engaging them politically may be to engage them coercively.<sup>21</sup>

In any event, practitioners in the peacemaking and mediation field can be assured of a dynamic future. Among the variables and “moving parts” they will need to grapple with are the rise of China as a global actor with the capacity to catalyze or thwart international action, and the concomitant assertion of a return of Russian aspirations to play a lead role in shaping conflict arenas, especially in Central Asia and the Middle East. Additionally, there is the increasing salience of issues demanding legal and military expertise as mediators confront the need to master jurisdictional and normative issues as well as battlefield management tasks such as monitoring; and perhaps most complex, the rise of a plethora of net-empowered activist and advocacy groups with a growing voice and insistent demands for a serious place at the peacemaking table. To make matters still more intricate, professional mediators will require expertise on the differential pace and depth of normative change in various regions. African decision-makers will likely continue to be subject to external normative demands, diluted in some measure by the buffer of Asian support; African officials will rely heavily on Western and UN support in peacemaking and peacekeeping, even if this dependence is often disguised. But African capacities and requirements for home-grown solutions

are steadily growing. Interestingly, a growing number of African decision-makers are outpacing their Middle East and Asian counterparts in their readiness to move beyond “sovereignty” concerns and to accept the reality of dependence on external help in ending violent conflict.

### The Quest for Coherence and Coordination of Effort

Peacemaking is a rewarding and prestigious activity; as the field has developed, a competitive dimension has emerged. This issue of “competitive” peacemaking is a stark fact of contemporary international life. The problem of how to reap the benefits of composite, layered, or sequenced peacemaking while, at the same time, to avoid the negative side effects of “multiparty mediation” is a serious one. It cannot be wished away by generalized appeals for “coherence.” When a conflict becomes crowded with mediators seeking to play a role, it tells us several things: First, it typically means there could be trouble ahead because when mediators are unable to organize themselves with a sense of common purpose it suggests that there are different “outside” views about how the conflict should be resolved. Second, it may also indicate that the conflict has “attracted” would-be mediators who have political, bureaucratic, institutional, or financial incentives to become role players—and to be seen doing so. Third, the activity of multiple mediators plying their trade signals the absence of an external “gatekeeper” such as an international or regional body with the stature to impose some measure of order on the proceedings. Finally, a conflict that becomes “crowded” with third parties may suggest that these third parties are more interested in achieving peace than the conflict parties themselves. In other words, the warring sides may have discovered the art of “forum shopping” or may be “going through the motions” in order to have the visuals of cooperating in a peace process while, in practice, playing games with the mediators. It is useful to be alert to the complex motives of both mediators and mediated.<sup>24</sup>

The phenomenon of competitive and potentially dysfunctional peacemaking is relatively new. The field

---

<sup>21</sup> There is a considerable literature of debate in these areas: on transitional justice issues, see Jack Snyder and Leslie Vinjamuri, “Trials and Errors, Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice,” *International Security* 28 no. 3 (Winter 2003/04); on dealing with warlords, see Sasha Lezhnev, *Crafting Peace: Strategies to Deal With Warlords in Collapsing States* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005).

<sup>22</sup> For discussion of some of these trends see Kwesi Aning, “Africa: Confronting Complex Threats,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, February 2007.

<sup>23</sup> This problem is treated at length in Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “The Practitioner’s Perspective,” and Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “Rising to the Challenge of Multiparty Mediation,” in Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds., *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1999).

<sup>24</sup> Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, “When Powerful States Mediate: Motives and Results,” in Crocker et al. *Taming Intractable Conflicts*.

does not have any obvious self-regulating mechanism—that is, unless major actors care enough to cooperate for common purpose and identify a lead actor or mediating group to organize and conduct the process. This is eventually what happened in the case of the north-south conflict in Sudan where the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a sub-regional body, and its critically important external parties (the US, UK, Norway, and at certain points Switzerland and Italy) worked coherently to bring about the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.<sup>25</sup> The ability of key actors to cooperate for common purposes and coordinate efforts depends on whether these purposes are in fact shared. It has always been helpful to have a consensus among the P-5 or at least their tolerance of a particular mediation activity. Typically, the Security Council gets involved because at least one P-5 member wants UN involvement. When interests diverge significantly among leading powers, nothing is gained by pretending otherwise and proceeding forward despite divergent strategic interests, as we learned in the Balkans in the 1990s. Such conditions demand serious political leadership supported by bilateral diplomacy to hammer out differences and seek a common position. In Sudan, for example, more could be done to build on the Darfur Peace Agreement if the US and China placed the conflict higher on their bilateral agenda in the search for common ground. Coherence could also be based on a shared P-5 readiness to hand the problem off to a regional initiative, a “solution” that is only as good as the regional capacity to pull it off.

## Institutions, Coalitions, Roles, and Gaps in Peacemaking Capacity

The variety of actors in the peacemaking and mediation field is, at one level, impressive and reassuring. It confirms that this is a growing field, and suggests that there are positive results in terms of a “track record” and a learning curve as third party interventions become better documented. The field

includes the following categories of actors: private individuals (scholar-practitioners or eminent persons); non-governmental organizations (both external and indigenous to the conflict arena); regional organizations; international organizations; powerful states as well as small and medium powers; and coalitions of states acting as “contact” or “friends” groups—the latter being an area of particular growth.<sup>26</sup> Without doubt, the greatest proliferation in peacemaking organizations has occurred at the non-governmental level: the European Centre for Conflict Prevention directory contains some 1,049 entries.<sup>27</sup> Today, it is not unusual to find five or six NGOs engaged in one form or another of peacemaking activity in a conflict; one scholar identified over thirty in a single case!<sup>28</sup> In part, this proliferation of activity reflects the variety of NGO intervention points in a typical internal conflict—from engagement with clan elders to religious, youth, women’s or professional groups, to sectoral efforts in such fields as education, security sector reform, and “track one and one-half” facilitation efforts with governing elites and problem solving workshops with influential individuals close to those in power.<sup>29</sup>

### Some Critical Knowledge and Experience Gaps

Veteran peacemaking experience and tradecraft knowledge in certain key fields represent a critical gap in many regional institutions—as indeed in most governments. This includes a lack of experience in and knowledge of mediation itself, especially mediation of violent civil conflicts in which the management of relations with armed actors poses an acute challenge for third parties of all kinds. A solid foundation of knowledge about best practices in mediation resides in the archives of a few foreign ministries and is now being built up at UN headquarters; and the work of applied research institutions such as USIP and track-two dialogue groups, such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, contains another rich resource that can be shared with regional institutions.

Another key knowledge gap is the management

<sup>25</sup> J. Stephen Morrison and Alex de Waal, “Can Sudan Escape its Intractability?,” in Crocker et al, *Grasping the Nettle*.

<sup>26</sup> Teresa Whitfield, *Friends Indeed: the United Nations, Groups of Friends and the Resolution of Conflict* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, July 2007).

<sup>27</sup> European Centre for Conflict Prevention, “People Building Peace, Global Directory,” July 2005, available at [www.conflict-prevention.net/index.html?PHPSESSID=9b067f83b8f3eba5c46d78c22312c10a](http://www.conflict-prevention.net/index.html?PHPSESSID=9b067f83b8f3eba5c46d78c22312c10a).

<sup>28</sup> Fabienne Hara, “Burundi: A Case of Parallel Diplomacy,” in Crocker et al., *Herding Cats*.

<sup>29</sup> For an example of the range of track two activity, see Paul Van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, and Juliette Verhoeven, eds., *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Societies* (Boulder, CO: Rienner Publishers, 2005); on the full spectrum see Diana Chigas, “Negotiating Intractable Conflicts: The Contributions of Unofficial Intermediaries” in Crocker et al, *Grasping the Nettle*; Harold H. Saunders, “Interactive Conflict Resolution: A View For Policy Makers on Making and Building Peace,” in Paul Stern and Daniel Druckman, eds., *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2000); and Pamela Aall, “The Power of Non-official Actors in Conflict Management,” in Pamela Aall, Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson, eds., *Leashing the Dogs of War*.

of the post-settlement or implementation phase of a peace process. Peace agreements tend to collapse or fall short when the implementers (both local and external) fail to “connect the dots” between the various disciplines of post-settlement and post-conflict action: these are governance, justice and law, security, and reconstruction and development.<sup>30</sup> Negotiated agreements that fail to spell out in some detail how the peace will be implemented, by whom, and with what mechanisms are likely to prove weak in practice. At first glance, this kind of knowledge may seem to fall into the domain of peacebuilding rather than peacemaking. But this common misconception is exactly the problem. When third parties give little or no thought during peace negotiations to post-agreement implementation issues, it suggests that (1) they are inexperienced or (2) that they have no intention of being involved once the ink dries on the agreement. And when conflict parties see that little thought has been given to how an agreement will be enforced, monitored, and verified they will recognize that the agreement will soon break down. If that is their perception, they will have the tactical choice either to dig in their heels even harder or to sign almost anything since the resulting agreement will be little more than a piece of paper.<sup>31</sup>

A third knowledge gap in many regional institutions concerns the field of ceasefire monitoring. This is a field that demands involvement of military professionals who understand from experience what needs to be done to keep a cessation of violence from breaking down. The tasks include systematic observation, reporting and recording; patrolling the ground; and maintaining inter-party communications between regular meetings among military counterparts. Accordingly, regional bodies need such expertise in-house or, alternatively, they need to recruit military observers or units that are up to the challenge—a problem experienced most recently in efforts to implement the Darfur Peace Agreement.<sup>32</sup> Once again, while such monitoring may only commence after the agreements have been signed, the absence of adequate provision for ceasefire maintenance and monitoring will undercut an agreement. These knowledge gaps make an eloquent case for sustained and focused capacity-building efforts between

appropriate partners.

The problem of multiple, competitive or uncoordinated peacemaking was discussed above, where it was noted that it frequently reflects the absence of a “gatekeeper” to keep some measure of order among third parties. Large regional institutions seem to find it especially difficult to play this role effectively, with predictable results. Not only is “forum shopping” by the warring parties encouraged, but confusion is promoted. When regional divisions within the institution are part of the problem, peacemaking efforts are likely to cancel each other out. Even when this is not the case, the absence of effective gatekeeping leads to issues getting introduced at the wrong time or in ignorance of precedents. Secondary, under-resourced actors may act in ignorance of the sequencing and prioritizing proposed by the primary third party. When a conflict attracts a cocktail of mediators—as in Darfur, northern Uganda, or Colombia—the peacemakers may undercut each other and their own influence with conflict parties by, in effect, lending support to everyone indiscriminately, and by overlooking complex regional, or even global, linkages to the conflict.

Weak regional bodies may lack the clout or internal consensus to do gatekeeping. When this is the case, the task falls to outsiders who may not be well-placed for or interested in enforcing a degree of order in a local conflict environment. The UN secretariat, for example, may choose to defer to the relevant regional body, and the major powers are seldom in a position to take matters in hand unless, by chance, one of them is a primary mediator and has the stomach for disciplining the proceedings.

### **An Enhanced UN Role?**

The upward trajectory in conflict prevention and mediation efforts is by no means confined to the non-official sector. The Human Security Report (2005), working from data derived from the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), notes that the number of UN preventive diplomacy initiatives rose from one to six between 1990 and 2002, while UN mediation/facilitation/good offices efforts rose from four to fifteen over the same period. The Report maintains that these efforts helped prevent a number of latent conflicts from

---

<sup>30</sup> The best iteration of this “task framework” originally developed by a joint study group sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the US Army is available in Robert C. Orr, ed., *Winning the Peace: An American Strategy for Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2004); for a later adaptation, see Daniel Serwer and Patricia Thomson, “USIP Framework for Success in International Intervention,” in Aall et al, *Leashing the Dogs of War*.

<sup>31</sup> The challenge of building implementation provisions into peace agreements is discussed in more detail in Crocker et al, *Taming Intractable Conflicts*.

<sup>32</sup> The author is indebted to Charles Snyder of the Department of State for underscoring the importance of this facet of peacemaking.

becoming violent and accounted for a significant share of the negotiated peace agreements of the past decade and a half—a period that has witnessed a major decline in the number of armed conflicts, according to the study.<sup>33</sup> While the cause and effect relationship in such matters is never easy to verify, the evidence is suggestive of a pattern.

Equally, if not more, eloquent are the recommendations to upgrade the UN's capacities in this area, flowing from the Secretary-General's High-level Panel Report (2004), his own report in response (2005), and the decisions of the September 2005 UN World Summit. Taken together, these documents argue that (1) the UN has been less successful in civil than interstate conflict prevention; (2) the Secretary-General should place greater emphasis on appointing highly qualified, experienced and regionally expert envoys, and should enhance their training, preparation and briefing; (3) DPA requires greater resources in order to provide more consistent and professional support to its peacemaking envoys; and (4) greater resources should be made available for these purposes to upgrade the Secretary-General's "capacity for mediation and good offices," with DPA serving as the Secretariat's center of expertise and administrative capacity related to mediation services.<sup>34</sup> To implement these proposals and decisions, DPA has set itself the tasks of recruiting the best available envoys and mediators, nurturing future professionals in the field, serving as a focal point of interaction with other mediation efforts, stepping up administrative and logistical support for UN envoys, and similar goals. The centerpiece of the new thrust is the creation in late 2005 of the Mediation Support Unit to serve as a "central repository for peacemaking experience and to act as a clearing house for lessons learned and best practices ... [while also undertaking] to coordinate training for mediators and provide them with advice on UN standards and operating procedures."<sup>35</sup> Working with strengthened regional desks in DPA, this departure should help address a severe strain on the department's capabilities. These developments should not be interpreted as implying that there exists some sort of idealized mediator's cookbook. Mediators are doomed unless they appreciate and respect the unique characteristics and context of every conflict. But we have reached the point in mediation research and practice where some

things have been learned, and it would be irresponsible in the extreme to rely primarily on rough-and-ready (or not-so-ready) on-the-job training.

### *Which UN Roles and Which Regions?*

These developments suggest that a start has now been made in addressing some widely recognized deficiencies and gaps in the UN's peacemaking capacity. It may, nonetheless, be worthwhile to ask whether enhancing UN capacity ought to be the top priority on the global peacemaking agenda. The answer depends essentially on one's view of where the world organization fits into the global matrix of peace and security capabilities. This can be assessed at several levels: First, even after the Cold War, there remains a class of conflicts and regional conflict systems that touch directly upon the core national interests of major powers and that, consequently, may not be suitable objects of UN peacemaking—except within the circumscribed bounds set by decisions of the Security Council. This was recently demonstrated in the interactions between Council members, the Secretary-General, and the regional parties in the case of the Israel-Lebanon crisis of 2006. A number of Middle East issues fall into this category, as do conflicts on the Korean Peninsula, and the conflict between India and Pakistan.

Second, we need to unpack the term "UN mediation" in order to make a reasoned assessment of the capacity and potential of the world organization. There are definite limits to the capacity of the Security Council as such to engage in peacemaking; the UN's unsuccessful efforts to tame the Balkan ghosts during the 1990s bear witness to the risks of inflexible, lowest-common-denominator, decision-making by a large group of nations with strong but divergent interests in the outcome. The lesson here is to avoid placing the UN system in a position where it is asked to mount a mediation effort despite basic differences among its leading members on the merits of the conflict and the conduct of the peace process.<sup>36</sup> By contrast, in conflicts where the Council is prepared to support a mediation run out of the Secretariat via the special representative or envoy system, the results can be impressive and effective (whether or not the result is a final peace agreement) as can be seen in such

<sup>33</sup> Mack, *Human Security Report* 2005, 153, available at [www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/28/63/](http://www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/28/63/).

<sup>34</sup> The Outcome Document of the UN General Assembly's 2005 World Summit, High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly Held September 2005, available at [www.un.org/ga/59/hl60\\_plenarymeeting.html](http://www.un.org/ga/59/hl60_plenarymeeting.html).

<sup>35</sup> The United Nation's Department of Political Affairs "Peacemaking" website, available at [www.un.org/Depts/dpa/peace.html](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/peace.html).

<sup>36</sup> Saadia Touval, "Mediator's Flexibility and the U.N. Security Council," AAPSS, *The Annals* 542, no. 1 (1995): 202–212.

cases as Cyprus, El Salvador, Guatemala, Western Sahara, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, and East Timor. Much depends on the clarity of the mandate, the availability of political support from key Council members for the UN envoy, and the quality of the individual mediator.

Third, upgrading UN capacity in the peacemaking field responds to the plain facts of the situation: the UN headquarters is often the first and only responder with much of any conflict prevention or peacemaking capacity at all. The record makes clear that the UN system is often at the center of worldwide peacemaking and mediation efforts; for certain types of conflicts in certain regions, it is quite simply an indispensable actor. UN capabilities are typically recognized as useful in the context of “lower priority” wars and tragedies in places that are often perceived as peripheral to world politics. But the number of contexts in which UN fora and institutions become the default option for big powers grappling with major trouble spots is also striking.

The UN system has a limited roster of top flight peacemaking and mediation veterans, the kinds of people who, by force of personality, experience and skill, are able to master a polarized situation. Ironically, such UN peacemaking capabilities may be in highest demand when major powers recognize the depth of the responsibilities and challenges they have undertaken (as recent experiences in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon make clear). In sectors such as the planning and conduct of elections where the UN has universally recognized expertise, UN assistance is welcomed even by states such as India (in the case of Nepal) that are generally resistant to other UN roles in their backyard.

According to a leading mediation database developed by Jacob Bercovitch for inter-state conflicts in the 50-year period 1945-95, UN leaders or envoys account for roughly 50 percent of all mediation attempts in cases of ‘intractable’ conflicts, while the organization has been engaged in a prevention, good offices or mediation role in some 30 percent of all inter-state cases. Using the same database, another scholar suggests that UN interventions had at least some measure of success (ceasefire, partial- or full-settlement) in around one third of its attempts.<sup>37</sup> One

suspects that the UN’s ‘share’ of the civil conflicts that form the overwhelming majority of today’s wars would be at least as high as for the intractable inter-state cases during the 1945-1995 period, but that its rate of success would be lower. After all, civil wars are more complex to settle and that may be especially true for an organization composed of incumbent governments. One should recall, in this connection, that the UN interacts primarily with governments and other state-based institutions, and is less experienced partnering with civil society organizations and NGOs.

### **The Issue of Burden-Sharing between the UN and Regional Organizations**

UN efforts in the field of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding are concentrated in regions where conflict is most endemic and in places where the UN’s legitimacy and buffering role are recognized. While it pulled back—along with other major actors—from these activities in Africa after the Somalia and Rwanda setbacks, the UN system returned to the region with renewed drive at the end of the 1990s. In the last three years, four out of six new peacekeeping operations (PKO) have been in Africa, while the MONUC PKO in the Congo has been further augmented; today, eight out of eighteen UN PKOs are deployed in African operations which account for over 80 percent of total blue helmet peacekeepers. Paralleling this pattern to some degree, six out of eleven political and peacebuilding missions are in Africa.<sup>38</sup> Other areas of focus for political missions are the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia (East Timor).

Today’s raw numbers tell one part of the story. Turning the clock back ten years would indicate a far greater UN concentration on the Balkans and Central America. In the western hemisphere—Haiti apart—the UN has stepped back from lead roles in peacemaking and peacebuilding; the Organization of American States (OAS) or its leading regional members have stepped to the forefront in conflict prevention and mediation when conflict erupts (e.g. Peru-Ecuador). No single institution or group of states has had much success grasping the Colombian nettle, where the war and peace dynamics are dominated by local actors, as described by Arlene Tickner in her working paper for this series.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Jacob Bercovitch, “Mediation in the Most Resistant Cases,” in Crocker et al, *Grasping the Nettle*; Judith Fretter, “International Organizations and Conflict Management: The United Nations and the Mediation of International Conflicts,” in Jacob Bercovitch, ed., *Studies of International Mediation* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

<sup>38</sup> Data from United Nations Peacekeeping website, available at [www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/); and Center on International Cooperation, Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2006 (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006).

<sup>39</sup> Arlene B. Tickner, “Latin America and the Caribbean: Domestic and Transnational Insecurity,” *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, February 2007.

In Southeast Asia, a somewhat different picture emerges. When former Malaysian diplomat Razali Ismail resigned as UN envoy for Burma in January 2006, it seemed that the world organization was turning the account over to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) initiatives. Apart from East Timor, where the UN has the clear lead, ASEAN members have gradually stepped forward to assume greater security roles, using the UN (and the Chinese veto) as an occasional shield against Australian or American initiatives. ASEAN member states engage their powerful neighbors through the ASEAN Regional Forum mechanism and via individual arrangements with specific powers (e.g., such as China itself in the case of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea). When a dispute involves Muslim and non-Muslim parties as in the Philippines/Mindanao conflict, Malaysia likes to take the lead, often under the banner of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), rather than the UN.<sup>40</sup>

### Changing Regional Security Architectures

The security architecture of specific regions is influenced by a range of factors: (1) the presence and activity of UN missions; (2) bilateral or regional security arrangements with powerful external actors such as the EU and multilateral collective defense organizations such as NATO; (3) the vigor and capacity of regional collective security organizations such as the African Union (AU) or OAS and subregional defense bodies such as the Gulf Cooperation Council; (4) the presence and programs of individual NGOs or networks of civil society groups, both external and indigenous; and (5) the extent to which these varied actors have real capacity including the capacity to organize and cooperate for common purposes. An increasingly important additional factor is the extent of extra-regional support and interest from 'security exporting' institutions such as NATO and the EU, as is evidenced today in Afghanistan and the DRC. Each region has unique features and institutional endowments and it is not the purpose here to offer a complete sketch of regional architectures. Instead, a few general observations will provide an outline of the evolving situation.

The capacity for effective action on peacemaking and mediation is not always to be found in those regional institutions that have the formal titles and

charters, and such charters are not necessarily very revealing. For example, some of the most impressive peacemaking capacity in Africa is found in the organs of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), while the current charter of ASEAN does not fully reflect its cautious entry into certain peacemaking functions such as ceasefire monitoring in Aceh and tentative conflict prevention efforts in Cambodia and Burma. The current ASEAN charter review process shepherded by "eminent persons"—some of whom have forward-leaning ideas about the group's future potential—will provide interesting evidence of the pace and direction of the group's evolution.

A second general observation is that there appears to be a gradual rise in the assertiveness, self-assurance and capacity of the leading regional security bodies in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, but this trend is not paralleled in the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, or East Asia. Each case may be sui generis: for example, regional security functions including peacemaking in Central Asia risk being distorted by the US-led war on terrorism and hijacked by the China-Russia dominated Shanghai Cooperation Organization whose agenda appears largely directed at checking US influence and cooperating locally against terrorist and rebel movements. In South Asia, the overwhelming weight of India and the impact of the India-Pakistan conflict sharply limit the scope and peacemaking potential of external actors and vitiate the role of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) whose charter explicitly excludes involvement in bilateral conflict issues.

It is important not to mistake institutional size and formal mandates for real capacity and practical effectiveness. In the case of large regional or universal membership bodies such as the Arab League, OIC, OAS, and AU, there may be limited or no real capacity within the institution itself; rather, "its" capacity may derive from informal or ad hoc initiatives carried out by a few key countries under its broad aegis. In most regions, governments tend to seek out some form of legitimizing umbrella or aegis for diplomatic interventions or security initiatives, regardless of the internal capacity or charter language of the institution. An example is the leadership of Malaysia acting in the name of the OIC as a mediator and – together with Brunei – as a peace observation presence in the Mindanao conflict between the Philippine govern-

<sup>40</sup> See further Michael Vatikiotis, "Asia: Towards Security Cooperation," *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series*, International Peace Academy, New York, February 2007.



ment and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. It was not the OAS but the 1942 Rio Protocol guarantor powers (Brazil, US, Argentina, and Chile) who brought the 1995 Ecuador-Peru conflict under control and negotiated the overall settlement. But the peace process was nurtured by and fully consistent with the norms and political culture of the Inter-American system of which the OAS is the central feature.

Similarly, it was a handful of leading African nations (headed by South Africa and Botswana), backed by Western partner nations, that made possible the 2002 Sun City and Pretoria agreements concluding the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and paving the way for the transitional government's establishment. Interestingly, South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki—working with Secretary-General Kofi Annan—played the central role in converting an earlier Southern African Development Community (SADC)-sponsored ceasefire in Lusaka in 1999 into the more robust framework of 2002, and its implementation has depended heavily on South African diplomatic and military leadership.<sup>41</sup>

At times, formal structures and informal or local initiatives come into conflict, especially in large membership bodies. The problem is that annually rotating chairs (or even troikas) may believe they have a right to a central place in every peace photograph and a right to approve or veto the procedural preferences of the actual conflict parties. A related issue is the degree of real institutionalization of intergovernmental bodies. In regions where politics is top-down and presidents or princes are used to a great measure of personal control, little delegation occurs and apparently senior officials of regional bodies have very little scope for action as envoys and mediators. This makes peacemaking dependent on good luck and the attention span of heads of state or government whose roles are not permanent.

Thus, regional institutions tend to reflect the size, quality of governance, power balances, and political cultures of their membership. In relatively less developed institutions member governments have limited resources themselves and prefer to keep institutional secretariats and staffs under close supervision and control. Weak institutions may find themselves used by their top leaders as a disguise for the pursuit of undisclosed private or personal agendas.

By the same token, when personal and geopolitical rivalries occur within the membership, its decision processes will be subverted and its organs captured by individual governments. These problems help explain the lame performance of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and SADC in the DRC between 1997 and 2001: weak regional institutions even provided cover for the predatory ambitions of neighboring governments. On the positive side, when forward-looking and determined leadership exists, there is the possibility of turning an institution around, as indicated above. The 2001–2002 transition from the OAU to the AU stayed on a positive course in part due to Mbeki's network checking the ambitions of Libya's Muammar Ghadhafi to control the new-born regional body. The AU's relatively more hopeful trajectory thereafter has attracted a range of European and US commitments to upgrade its peacemaking as well as peacekeeping capacity by means of financial help, military training, and technical support.

Unhappily, fundamental capacity problems continue to hold the AU back from its potential. Senior special envoys are sent out with minimal support from headquarters, uncertain funding, skeletal, if any staff, and sometimes non-existent information technology support. Too often, when the need for action occurs, the instinct is to reach out to senior former leaders and deploy them “cold” into a complex, dynamic situation without proper briefing or preparation of the ground. AU officials and envoys are well aware of their need for help from donors and NGOs, but are sometimes reluctant to be seen as relying upon it. Some of these capacity problems could be addressed by grooming a small cadre of full-time professionals under the leadership of a strong senior official and making an appropriate budget available.<sup>42</sup> Another implication of this portrait of AU challenges is that appropriate recognition and support of proven sub-regional bodies such as ECOWAS and IGAD make good sense. The peacemaking accomplishments of the former in Liberia and the latter in Sudan are especially noteworthy. Upon closer inspection, it is often the case that a few key individual diplomats and mediators made a decisive difference. A wider and deeper talent pool would clearly be desirable, but success also hinges on a readiness of heads of state/government to make proper use of the talent that exists. A contrasting but often successful

---

<sup>41</sup> Mark Malan and Henri Boshoff, “A 90-day Plan to Bring Peace to the DRC: An Analysis of the Pretoria Agreement of 30 July 2002,” Paper 61, paper prepared for Institute for Security Studies, September 2002, available at [www.iss.org.za/PUBS/PAPERS/61/PAPER61.pdf](http://www.iss.org.za/PUBS/PAPERS/61/PAPER61.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> The author is indebted to Andrew Marshall, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, for drawing his attention to these issues.

example lies in the top-down peacemaking leadership style of South Africa's Mbeki (supported by a handful of officials) in the cases of DRC and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as that of former president Nelson Mandela and former Deputy President Jacob Zuma in Burundi.

### Are NGOs and Civil Society the Answer?

The range and variety of non-official actors engaged in peacemaking and mediation was noted above. The profusion of such actors, however, does not tell us much about the conditions in which they have the most potential to make a difference. A starting place is to identify the kinds of power and leverage that non-governmental organizations may possess. One analyst sees important parallels between the power and leverage of *track one* and *track two* actors, noting that the primary limits on the latter are the lack of capacity to manipulate tangible carrots and sticks (reward and coercive power, in the terminology of Jeffrey Rubin).<sup>43</sup> In this view, the potential for unofficial peacemakers to be effective in bringing warring parties to consider political solutions depends on their imagination, reputation, wits, uses of 'borrowed' leverage and legitimacy variables, and their tradecraft skills. Critical among such skills is the ability to coordinate with powerful states or intergovernmental institutions and the knowledge of when and how to link an unofficial process to a track one peace negotiation.

In addition to mediation potential, NGOs are capable of performing a range of conflict prevention functions: capacity-building by means of education and training in zones of conflict; placing conflict issues on the public policy agenda by means of advocacy and expert analysis; giving voice to societal actors with a particular stake or responsibility in times of conflict; mobilizing civil society leaders to take peace initiatives and their constituents to press for an end to violence; and, research and brainstorming activity that develops fresh proposals for transmission to political elites or opinion shapers in order to create a positive climate for negotiation. Some of these activities are best performed by unofficial bodies. Religious leaders, for example, bring unique stature to the task of curtailing a cycle of violence or building a multi-confessional dialogue process. They may be indispensable to

cultivating public acceptance of sensitive compromises required for a negotiated agreement, and the failure to engage religious actors can be a major stumbling block.

The interplay of official and non-official peacemaking plays out in accordance with the conflict types and institutional architecture of each region. While the UN, in theory, could be well-placed to bring coherence among multiple actors, it tends to be better at interacting with governments. As suggested earlier, formal regional institutions may have limited human talent and experience—and member state leaders may be reluctant to delegate to them in any case, a situation that makes their regions more likely to turn to external peacemakers and foreign NGOs for expertise and initiative. The role of such groups as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Conflict Management Initiative, and USIP in certain Southeast Asian conflicts illustrates this point as does the role of Norwegian mediation in Sri Lanka. Unofficial think tanks and dialogue groups may flourish when official peacemaking is stymied, as the South Asian experience suggests. Groups such as Sri Lanka's non-governmental Centre for Policy Alternatives are in a position to feed ideas to the peace secretariats of both the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Elite bodies such as the Kashmir Study Group and the Balusa Group play significant roles in developing and legitimizing ideas and providing an impetus to official talks. They may develop confidence-building initiatives, as with the Balusa group's study of the economic feasibility of transporting Turkmenistan and Iranian natural gas to Pakistan and India, which has been dubbed the "mother of all confidence building measures."<sup>44</sup> Looking ahead, it is interesting to consider the dynamics at work in the interplay of such institutions. In Sri Lanka, Norway may have "stimulated" the flowering of non-official research and analysis about the protracted peace process. There is little doubt that Canadian and Indonesian-sponsored non-official workshops on the South China Sea conflict played a catalytic role in developing ideas for cooperative action and conflict avoidance that formed the backdrop for the official 2002 China-ASEAN Declaration on this topic.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Pamela Aall, "The Power of Non-Official Actors in Conflict Management," in Pamela Aall, Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson, eds., *Leashing the Dogs of War*; the reference to types of power is from Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, eds., *Mediation in International Relations* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992), chap. 11.

<sup>44</sup> For an assessment of the limits, contributions and achievements of non-official dialogues in South Asia, see Navmita Chadha Behera, Paul M. Evans, and Gowher Rizvi, *Beyond Boundaries: A Report on the state of Non-Official Dialogues on Peace, Security and Cooperation in South Asia* (North York, Ontario: University of Toronto-York University/Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, 1997). The author is a member of the Kashmir Study Group. He is indebted to Teresita Schaffer for drawing attention to the activity of the Balusa Group.

<sup>45</sup> For background, see Hasjim Djalal and Ian Townsend-Gault, "Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea," in Crocker et al., *Herding Cats*.

In another example, it is possible that the initiatives taken by ASEAN parliamentarians and environmental groups may “stimulate” action by ASEAN itself on outstanding regional issues.<sup>46</sup> An African example of the same phenomenon is the prolonged discussion of the 1991 Kampala Document initiated by the African Leadership Foundation and Nigeria’s Olusegun Obasanjo calling for the creation of a regional Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), modeled on the CSCE/OSCE. This intellectual process helped stimulate regional thinking about the need to move beyond the stagnant procedures and charter of the OAU and played a role in the transition to the AU.<sup>47</sup>

Overall, the potential of NGOs will depend on a host of variables—for example, the type of conflict and how “hot” it is, the access to key decision-makers that an NGO may develop, regional and cultural factors that may encourage or hinder NGO effectiveness, and the special linkages NGOs may be able to develop with key conflict parties. As noted above, NGO roles are not confined to direct mediation between track one leaders. And even in this more challenging arena, the accomplishments of Sant’Egidio in Mozambique<sup>48</sup> and the Conflict Management Initiative in Aceh, as well as FAFO in the Oslo peace process in the Middle East, make clear that one should not underestimate these organizations. This discussion suggests that (1) there are niches and opportunities for skilled non-official bodies to make a difference in peacemaking and (2) that they may have special attributes that—properly applied—can give them value in the eyes of governmental decision-makers and conflict parties. Collaboration among third parties is essential for successful mediation because long-term adversaries know how to manipulate outsiders for their own ends. Working together, third parties may be able to move a peace process along, layering their efforts even as they each work in their own area of comparative advantage. Non-official organizations may bring strengths to these situations that are not usually found in the repertoire of powerful states—e.g., long-established relationships with the conflict parties, training programs to increase negotiation and dialogue skills, or educational and

informal counseling sessions that expose the parties to different ideas and ways of framing the conflict. But experienced NGO practitioners know their limits and recognize that the settlement of violent political conflicts—whether large geostrategic cases or smaller regional ones—requires the political and financial support of leading international actors and institutions. NGOs may prepare the ground, reframe the issues, and foster critical relationships and dialogue. But it usually takes official resources and clout to translate this progress into tangible agreements and implementation plans.

## Scenarios and Recommendations

Before offering specific recommendations, it is useful to recap the major “drivers” or variables that affect the level of “demand” for peacemaking and mediation capability in the medium and longer-term. As noted at the outset, these include the following:

- Crises of state-building and state consolidation, linked to regional conflict dynamics that could exacerbate state decline if left unattended or could enable state strengthening if the poison is drawn out. There are related crises linked to the modernization crisis in the Muslim world, the confrontation between western nations and militant Islamist groups, and the challenge posed to state-building by criminal mafias.
- The potentially destabilizing impact of normative change and transmission to already unstable zones not able to manage and digest new demands placed on them, resulting in the outbreak of new conflicts.
- The unpredictable level of engagement and staying power from the current, primary providers of conflict management and peacemaking leadership in the face of intractable civil and regional conflicts. This variable is linked to the trajectory followed by the leading powers in dealing with terrorism and WMD proliferation.

In sum, the level of “demand” depends on assumptions about broad, systemic factors and about the availability of leadership and sufficient consensus among leading global actors so that challenges are

---

<sup>46</sup> The author thanks Deepy Olapally and Catharin Dalpino for bringing these examples to his attention.

<sup>47</sup> Francis M. Deng and I. William Zartman, *A Strategic Vision for Africa: The Kampala Movement* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2002).

<sup>48</sup> In the Mozambique case this NGO placed itself at the center of a network of sources of power and applied its own considerable intangible resources to lead a successful two-year peace process that culminated in agreements ending the civil war in 1992. The case underscores what can be accomplished when an NGO understands both its capacity and its limits, and works to attract the cooperation and support of major international actors.

addressed and the level of conflict is contained and gradually further reduced. If the “demand-supply” balance remains where it is today, one could project a middle scenario (“muddling through”) in the medium term. It is a distinct possibility, however, that conditions could deteriorate over the same period, producing a “worst case” in which key actors disengage, major multilateral institutions fail to elicit sufficient support from member states and fall short, and new forms of rolling turbulence spread across already unstable zones such as the Middle East, overwhelming the supply of peacemaking. In the “best case” scenario, the inventory of conflict would be contained and systematically whittled down through deliberate, concerted efforts to surround conflict with expert third-party interventions and to check fresh outbreaks with enhanced prevention methods and skilled peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts. Longer-term scenario development in this field will depend heavily on levels of cross-cultural engagement, the spread of governance norms to today’s authoritarian zones, and the capacity of at-risk regions to manage potential legal and governance transitions.

The recommendations below are aimed at assuring, at a minimum, that a “muddling through” scenario is achievable. They represent “constant gardening” rather than a fundamental transformation of peacemaking.

### **Practical Suggestions for Building and Spreading Capacity**

A number of improvements need to happen. To begin with, leading powers and interested states should provide firm backing to the new mediation support unit of the UN’s Department of Political Affairs so that greater coherence about doctrine, briefing procedures and access to best practices databases is achieved and UN envoys receive enhanced back-stopping from headquarters. Furthermore, leading donor groups such as the G8 should give priority to capacity building initiatives targeted to the major regional institutions such as the OAS, AU, and ASEAN.

The UN needs a strengthened roster of veteran envoys so that it is in a position to field credible personalities whenever the need arises. To complement these resources, leading institutions in the conflict management field should collaborate in developing “lessons learned” materials from extensive applied research, theory-builders, and case study

collections, and generating instructional materials that can be placed at the service of key university-based education and training institutions as well as national governments and multilateral institutions. While the needs of various “consumers” may vary, there is now sufficient experience and useful knowledge available to justify the effort of systematic collection and diffusion. Additionally, the leading multilateral bodies need an inventory of the leading non-official groups engaged in peacemaking and mediation so that state-based actors have useful guidance on the resources available from the non-government sector and how best to tap into them.

### **Facing the Need for Setting some Professional Standards**

More attention should be given by prospective sponsors of peacemaking and mediation to the concept of mediation “readiness”—that is, those qualifications, attributes, financial resources, human resources and information technology needs that are necessary to mount a serious effort.

This recommendation is central if the quality and sustainability of mediation initiatives is to improve. And it will begin establishing something the field lacks today: barriers to entry. Practitioners in the field are increasingly aware of the absence of a clearinghouse or gatekeeper to deal with the phenomenon of crowding and competition among mediation efforts. A veteran envoy remarked recently that the “multiplicity of mediators is so absurd it is embarrassing,” and the market may be reaching the point of requiring some regulatory help or the development of professional guidelines.<sup>49</sup> It is not clear who is best placed to take the lead in proposing some professional or ethical “rules of the road.” Negotiation over their content – especially intergovernmental negotiation – should be avoided. The question of who would “apply” them or whether they would be self-administered also arises. Presumably, wide transmission of information about such guidelines could help to engender greater self-awareness and self-restraint among prospective mediators, checking the proliferation of parallel initiatives. While the UN could hypothetically serve as a clearinghouse, this notion also has drawbacks and needs more study.

However, when the UN itself is considering taking the lead, it should assert its primacy (or demand exclusivity as appropriate) as Secretary-General Kofi

<sup>49</sup> Based on discussions held at a recent mediators’ retreat sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, June 2006.

Annan did publicly in relation to the Israel-Lebanon prisoner exchange issue in September 2006 when he remarked, “Everywhere you go, you hear rumors that this country is doing it or the other. If I’m going to take it on, my mediator should be the sole mediator. ...If others get in, we will pull out.”<sup>50</sup>

Such guidelines could address a range of emerging issues (not simply how to manage competition or how to avoid messing up in a crowded field). These could include the dilemmas of mediation among armed actors; when not to offer mediation (see below); the implications for mediation of emerging norms of justice and accountability; information sharing and “layering” of third party activities to enhance mutual reinforcement.

### **Towards a Sustainable Sharing of Burdens**

The UN system is in the process of strengthening its capacity to provide leadership in peacemaking and mediation. This process, much needed and welcomed, should not be interpreted to mean that the UN should take the lead everywhere or whenever possible. Rather, it should signal a raising of standards and an internal capacity-building exercise so that (1) UN efforts have better prospects of success and (2) the UN is in a better position to play a supportive, complementary role alongside other institutions or diplomatic coalitions. The UN secretariat should focus on its comparative advantages and be sensitive as well to its liabilities as a mediation agent. Particular attention should be paid by secretariat officials to avenues for achieving enhanced coordination at the strategic level with regional bodies. However, it will be up to member governments to determine whether to promote and provide tangible support for UN leadership or regional leadership in specific cases.

The UN system is in some measure placed in the position of the triage ward in a public hospital—it is the “default” option or last resort. But UN officials (and Security Council members) also need to reflect upon when the UN should say “no,” and what the implications of doing so might be.<sup>51</sup> To put the point more positively, the Secretariat and the Security Council could usefully discuss whether and when to “set the bar a little higher” before mounting yet another diplomatic exercise of peacemaking: the world body’s scarce and valued resources could be

focused on conflict parties that demonstrate seriousness about wanting a political solution rather than one made available “on demand.” This attitude adjustment would discourage “photo op” diplomacy and make clear the distinction between suppressing or freezing a crisis and actually working to resolve the underlying conflict. In a related recommendation, the leading practitioners of peacemaking (not only the UN) need to consider whether there are circumstances when peacemaking and mediation services should not be offered—by anyone. Some conflict parties appear to require something other than pure mediation—a mixture, perhaps, of police action or coercive diplomacy linked to mediation openings if cooperative behavior is forthcoming. Some conflicts continue to burn on, neglected or forgotten by the international community. Others, by contrast, may receive an excess of attention. In the latter case, it may be timely for the “supply” of mediation to be volunteered somewhat less eagerly by the profusion of would-be peacemakers who circle around today’s hot spots.

Having said this, the major powers need to be reminded of their own direct responsibilities as peacemakers and mediators. The evidence suggests that powerful states can be especially effective and persuasive in certain circumstances, and their absence from the peacemaking stage only exacerbates the challenges to international peace and security. When the “staying power” of an initiative led by powerful states comes into question (due, perhaps, to other priorities or domestic political shifts), consideration should be given to embedding a mediation initiative in Security Council mandates to assure some continuity of focus.

The way forward is for everything possible to be done to encourage capacity building and initiative-taking at the regional and subregional levels; where such processes have already begun and new roles are being developed (as in Southeast Asia), they should be supported in practical and political ways. Where NGOs continue to play critical roles, their contributions deserve strong official backing in order to link them to emerging regional capabilities. Where regional bodies remain woefully under-resourced and under-developed, concrete proposals for rapid capacity enhancement should be developed.

---

<sup>50</sup> Warren Hoge, “UN to Mediate Israel-Hizbollah Talks, Annan Says,” *The New York Times*, September 4, 2006.

<sup>51</sup> This draws from discussion referred to in note 42 above.

## Further Reading

Bercovitch, Jacob and Jeffrey Rubin, eds. *Mediation in International Relations*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992.

*This volume, though published at the outset of the post-Cold War era, remains a classic and its essays provide a powerful typology of mediation actors. The chapters include a still path-breaking analysis of the sources of potential influence of different mediation actors. These conceptual chapters are illustrated and supplemented by useful case studies.*

Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds. *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*. Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2007.

*This volume is a comprehensive text on the various sources of contemporary conflict and the range of potential conflict management tools available to policymakers, ranging from coercive instruments to political-diplomatic, institutional, normative and governance tools.*

Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds. *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the Hardest Cases*. Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2004.

*This volume is written as a handbook for mediators considering or actually conducting conflict mediation. Its chapters consider the motives of mediators, the challenge of “forgotten” conflicts, the environment of intractable conflict cases, the role of diligent analysis and attention to mediator “readiness,” how to sustain a mediation that gets into trouble, and the critical importance of the implementation phase in designing mediation initiatives.*

Durch, William J. and Tobias C. Berkman. *Who Should Keep the Peace? Providing Security for 21st Century Peace Operations*. Washington, DC: The Henry Stimson Center, 2006.

*This authoritative volume, co-authored by a lead drafter of the Brahimi Report on UN peacekeeping, provides an important companion guide for peacemakers who need to understand the challenges of peace support operations (peacekeeping). It includes institutional histories and crisp profiles of the performance of various actors that engage in peace and stability operations—the UN, regional organizations, alliances, coalitions, and private security firms. The volume includes basic data on who is doing what and on the critical ingredients of institutional effectiveness as well as the limits of force in peacebuilding.*

Stern, Paul and Daniel Druckman, eds. *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000.

*This is an outstanding collection of essays on the various dimensions of peacemaking and peacebuilding by leading scholarly authorities. Particular strengths include in-depth assessments of the capabilities of track two initiatives, the challenge of managing spoilers, the meaning of ‘ripeness’ for mediators, and the contributions of economic sanctions, truth commissions, constitutional engineering, and autonomy regimes as tools of conflict management.*

I. William Zartman, ed. *Peacemaking in International Conflict Methods and Techniques*. Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2007, Revised Edition.

*This new edition of a successful text includes conceptual essays mapping the field of peacemaking and outlining the varied approaches of negotiation, mediation, arbitration/adjudication, non-official workshops and religious dialogue processes. It includes discussion of education and training tools, as well as economic instruments and the role of force in peacemaking.*

The **International Peace Academy** is an independent, international institution dedicated to promoting the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts between and within states through policy research and development.

**Coping with Crisis** is a multi-year research and policy-facilitation program on emerging human and international security challenges and institutional response capacities.

### **The Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series**

#### **The Middle East: Fragility and Crisis**

Markus Bouillon

#### **Africa: Confronting Complex Threats**

Kwesi Aning

#### **Asia: Towards Security Cooperation**

Michael Vatikiotis

#### **Central Asia and the Caucasus: A Vulnerable Crescent**

Thomas de Waal and Anna Matveeva

#### **Europe: Crises of Identity**

Shada Islam

#### **Latin America and the Caribbean: Domestic and Transnational Insecurity**

Arlene Tickner

#### **Global Political Violence: Explaining the Post-Cold War Decline**

Andrew Mack

#### **New Challenges for Peacekeeping: Protection, Peacebuilding and the “War on Terror”**

Richard Gowan and Ian Johnstone

#### **Small Arms and Light Weapons: Towards Global Public Policy**

Keith Krause

#### **Ending Wars and Building Peace**

Charles Call and Elizabeth Cousens

#### **Peacemaking and Mediation: Dynamics of a Changing Field**

Chester Crocker

#### **Nuclear Weapons: The Politics of Non-proliferation**

Christine Wing

#### **Transnational Organized Crime: Multilateral Responses to a Rising Threat**

James Cockayne

#### **Global Public Health and Biosecurity: Managing Twenty-First Century Risks**

Margaret Kruk

#### **Population Trends: Humanity in Transition**

Joseph Chamie

#### **Energy Security: Investment or Insecurity**

Fatih Birol

#### **Food Security: Vulnerability Despite Abundance**

Marc Cohen

#### **Climate Change and Conflict: The Migration Link**

Nils Petter Gleditsch, Ragnhild Nordås, and Idean Salehyan

#### **Poverty and Conflict: The Inequality Link**

Ravi Kanbur

#### **Global Terrorism: Multilateral Responses to an Extraordinary Threat**

Eric Rosand

For more information about the series and electronic access to additional papers go to  
[www.ipacademy.org/our-work/coping-with-crisis/working-papers](http://www.ipacademy.org/our-work/coping-with-crisis/working-papers).



International  
Peace Academy