

# United Nation-Building

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## **Abstract**

The aftermath of America's intervention in Iraq and the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Syria shape the contours of the peace-building landscape for the foreseeable future. In the immediate post-Cold War period, scholars were quick to claim that ethnic wars were on the wane. More recently, eminent thinkers noted a decline in violence globally. But patterns of civil war onset show no such trend. Rather, what is clear is that, when ethno-sectarian conflicts escalate to the level of civil war—as they did in Iraq and Syria—they tend to last a long time and when they do end, they often restart within a few years. How can the international community help countries transition out of such wars? The United Nations (UN) has a role to play. It has a good track record in post-conflict peace-building, but it needs to adapt to the demands of nation-building, which is the new goal of “holistic” intervention. The UN went through a transformation before: responding to a wave of new wars in the 1990s, an activist Secretariat transformed UN missions from simple trip-wire peacekeeping to complex, multidimensional operations able to offer technical assistance through civilian operations that complemented the work of armed peacekeepers. The new interventionism that we have witnessed since 9-11 has expanded the range of cases that the UN has been asked to get involved in. But many of these cases have produced hard lessons for all international actors. The precariousness of ethno-sectarian power-sharing has become obvious as has the near-impossibility of foreign-imposed democracy. Peace-builders face three interlocking policy dilemmas in societies emerging from ethno-sectarian war. First, a “sectarian dilemma” arises when the only power-brokers available to structure a power-sharing agreement have narrow (ethnic or sectarian) agendas, thereby obstructing the design of an inclusive political system. Second, these states are weak and lack resources and legitimacy. Some degree of alien rule is necessary to help them transition to peace. But an “institutional dilemma” arises when foreign control of national institutions diminishes their legitimacy and crowds out local leaders. Democratic institutions require local leaders with a reputation for competence, but how can they build such reputations if their country is under foreign rule? Third, nation-building is increasingly seen as the solution to overcome ethno-sectarian divisions. But a “sovereignty” dilemma arises when nation-building is attempted under alien rule: as local leaders struggle to

acquire legitimacy among a nationalist population, they will push foreign administrators out often before state institutions have developed sufficiently to promote self-enforcing peace. Security guarantees should not have an expiration date; but they also cannot last forever. There is a space for UN missions in this new environment. Because peace-enforcers cannot also be peace-builders, the UN should focus on “building” rather than “forcing.” Its inability to wield enough coercive force effectively is not a constraint in this new environment of nationalist resurgence that is opposed to occupation; the UN’s model of consent-based peace-building should help navigate the institutional and sovereignty dilemmas.

## Introduction

In his best-selling book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, Steven Pinker argues that violence has been declining due to the spread of cosmopolitan norms, trade, mass literacy, and democratic institutions.<sup>1</sup> Similar claims have been made by other scholars. In an article published in *Foreign Affairs* in 2000, Ted Robert Gurr predicted that ethnic war had peaked in the early 1990s as attitudes toward ethnic minorities shifted “from confrontation to accommodation...[leading to] a sharp decline in new ethnic wars, the settlement of many old ones, and proactive efforts by states and international organizations to recognize group rights and channel ethnic disputes into conventional politics.”<sup>2</sup>

However, whether there is indeed such a decline in violence depends in part on what type of violence we choose to focus on and how we code it. Inter-state war has declined since the end of World War Two, but the same is not true for civil wars. In fact, two patterns are clear when we look at the data since 1945 (see Figure 1). First, the pattern of new war onsets is a wave with peaks every couple of decades. There is no downward trend. Second, there is an upward-sloping trend in the overall prevalence of civil war in this period. This reflects the fact that civil wars last a long time (more than 8 years on average) and more than a third of all wars restart within two-to-five years. There was indeed a peak in ethnic warfare in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> However, the drop in war prevalence is leveling off and the trend of the past two decades might be reversed.

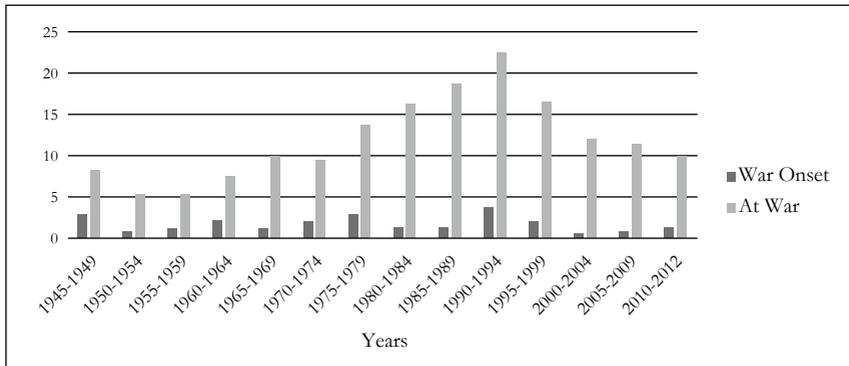
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<sup>1</sup> Pinker, Steven, 2011, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, New York: Viking.

<sup>2</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert, 2000, “Ethnic Warfare on the Wane,” *Foreign Affairs* May/June.

<sup>3</sup> Figure 1 does not distinguish between ethnic and non-ethnic wars, but more than half of all civil wars are ethnic and the pattern for ethnic wars is consistent with Gurr’s prediction.

*Figure 1. Mean Prevalence and Onset of Civil War Globally by 5-Year Periods<sup>4</sup>*



Several countries have had four or more episodes of civil war (these include Angola, Burundi, China, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Myanmar, the USSR, Yemen, Congo/Zaire, and Uganda). Why do some countries get stuck in cycles of violence? And, if civil war is so sticky, how did we get this decline in civil war prevalence in the past twenty years?

Systemic changes due to the end of the Cold War must be part of the answer. These changes created conditions for several new wars, but the end of super-power competition also explains the decline in civil war prevalence as the motives for proxy wars declined while peace-building activism by the United Nations (UN) increased. With fewer resource constraints, an activist Secretariat was able to expand the global reach of UN peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping doctrine evolved from “first generation” monitoring to “second” and “third” generation multidimensional management and enforcement. The goals of interventions also grew: “sustainable peace” became the measure of success and interventions became increasingly “holistic,” abandoning the early model of trip-wire peacekeeping for a deep transformative intervention in the institutions of societies transitioning from civil war.

Parallel to the rise of UN activism we also saw a rise in US interventionism. As the lone superpower, the US has engaged in small conflicts against recalcitrant states. The aftermath of America’s interventions in Iraq and Libya and the ongoing wars

<sup>4</sup> Data for Figure 1 are drawn from Sambanis, Nicholas and Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl, 2014, “Civil War as Sovereignty Rupture: Coding Civil War, 1945-2012,” Working Paper, Yale University and University of Virginia. The Y-axis gives the share of all country years. All new war onsets are counted, even in countries with ongoing wars.

in Afghanistan and Syria shape the contours of the peace-building landscape for the foreseeable future.

Is there a role for the UN in this new environment?

I will argue that the UN has a lot to offer. UN peace operations have a good track record and UN staff have unparalleled knowledge and experience that they can adapt to the needs of different cases. But there are also limits to what the UN can do.

The organizers of this symposium identified the need for peacekeeping to protect civilians in danger as a key issue the UN has to face going forward. Protecting civilians from extremists and spoilers hardly needs justification from a moral standpoint. But most violence in the context of civil war is strategic so we should consider the strategic implications of a more coercive role for the UN.

I will argue that there is a contradiction built into the new “holistic” interventions that defines the scope for the use of force by the UN. By the term “holistic” I mean that interventions in shattered states such as Iraq or Afghanistan need to involve state-building and that, in turn, requires some degree of nation-building to generate incentives to invest in the state. The goal of state institutions in Iraq has been to bring Sunnis and Shia together under a common in-group identity that shifts their identification away from sectarianism and cultivates an inclusive concept of the nation. That is hard to do and takes time. And there is a dilemma inherent in such nation-building interventions.

The dilemma is the following: Security-provision and protection of civilians is the cornerstone of success for peace-building intervention; as long as individuals are targeted by extremists on the basis of their ethnicity or sect, they will continue to see the nation as a hollow concept. Thus the intervener needs to be able to use force to defeat extremists. However, conducting counter-insurgency-type operations makes the intervener a party to the war and diminishes the legitimacy of any institutions it helps create. And creating national institutions takes time under transitional administration. The more successful such an intervention is in cultivating national identification, the greater the popular pressure will be for the intervener to exit. This is a tough balancing act that the US failed to accomplish in Iraq. The UN might be in a better position to do better (though probably not in Iraq) due to its greater perceived impartiality, its expertise in capacity-building operations, and paradoxically because of its weakness. When heavy-handed intervention generates a backlash, a lighter footprint might work better.

## **Evolution of UN Peacekeeping and the New Interventionism**

The UN's agenda for peace and security rapidly expanded in the early 1990s.<sup>5</sup> UN doctrine evolved to combine in a radical new way war-like peace enforcement with peace-like negotiation.<sup>6</sup> Throughout this transformation of UN peacekeeping, a key concern has been how to use force to avoid the risk of being perceived as too passive while avoiding mission-creep.

A key insight reflected in internal UN documents for the past twenty years is that peacekeeping should remain grounded in the principle of consent. Consent, however, cannot be interpreted narrowly to reflect the interests of a subset of elites in the host country. Peacekeeping is a hostage investment and it would serve the organization well to find ways to enhance the parties' consent.<sup>7</sup> In light of the fact that peace processes often create spoilers and that small numbers of extremists using ethnic violence can undermine the peace, peacekeepers must have the resources and discretion to use force to defend their mandate. The key question is how much force is consistent with the peace-building component of the new "holistic" interventions?

I will argue that the state-building tasks that are necessary to generate self-sustaining peace require some measure of nation-building. It is through social cohesion that states are able to provide self-enforcing institutions. Foreign intervention can support nation-building by defeating extremists and ending ethno-sectarian violence. This allows the population to shift its attention away from ethnic or sectarian differences and toward rebuilding the nation. However, sequencing is important: conducting COIN-type operations while also trying to nation-build is unlikely to work. Nation-building under fire is probably impossible. The challenge is to find a way to transition from enforcement to peace-building with the UN ideally at the helm during the peace-building phase.

### ***What Is the Right Peace-Building Standard? How Can It Be Attained?***

Peace-building outcomes can be arranged along a continuum ranging from the return to war (negative peace) to social harmony (elusive peace). Michael Doyle and I have proposed a fairly modest measure of positive (participatory) peace that peacekeeping operations could aspire to: it requires no major political violence, no divided sovereignty,

<sup>5</sup> Table A1 in the Appendix includes a list of UN missions.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the evolution of UN peacekeeping, see Doyle, Michael and Nicholas Sambanis, 2007, "Peacekeeping Operations," in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws, eds., *Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 323-348.

<sup>7</sup> The problem of passivity as indifference was identified in the Brahimi Report. See United Nations, *Report of the Panel on Peace Operations, A/55/305-S/2000/809*, August 21, 2000.

and a minimum level of political openness (just enough to exclude the most authoritarian regimes; but still too low for the country to be considered a democracy). Even by our modest measure, peace-building success is an elusive goal for many countries. Out of all civil wars that had ended by 2000, we had positive peace in just over one third of all cases two-to-five years after the war.<sup>8</sup> There would be more failures if we employed a more demanding standard.

Our measure of peace-building success is modest by comparison to the objectives of current interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. It should be clear that ambitious goals in such environments are unlikely to be realized. Many societies cannot absorb massive democratic transitions. The goals and strategy of intervention should reflect the underlying peace-building “ecology”—the strategic environment in which local leaders decide whether to invest in state institutions and uphold the rule of law or fuel ethnic conflict. These ecologies are shaped by the degree of hostility of the factions and the extent of local capacities for peace. International assistance for peace and reconstruction should adapt to those realities. Together, local capacities, hostility, and international assistance constitute the interdependent logic of what Michael Doyle and I call a peace-building triangle: the deeper the hostility, the greater the destruction of local capacities, the more you need international assistance to create peace.

This means that some societies will require a long foreign presence to transition from war to peace. A different way might be to let the war continue until one side wins and imposes a new political order.<sup>9</sup> However military victories are not necessarily the most stable outcome and stability could come at the expense of justice. Our data suggest that victories are correlated with a lower risk of short-term war recurrence, but so are negotiated settlements, particularly if they are assisted by a UN mission (see Table 1). If we look at participatory peace (Table 2), then we find that victories no longer have a statistically significant association with successful outcomes, whereas settlements assisted by UN missions are overwhelmingly successful.

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<sup>8</sup> These data are drawn from Doyle, Michael and Nicholas Sambanis, 2006, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. These data will be updated to cover the period up to 2012. Preliminary analysis shows that results mentioned in this paper do not change when an additional 12 years of data are added to the dataset.

<sup>9</sup> Toft, Monica, 2010, “Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?” *International Security* 34 (4): 6-37; Luttwak, Edward, 1999, “Give War a Chance,” *Foreign Affairs* July/August.

Table 1. War Outcomes and Short-Term War Recurrence

	No war 2 years after termination	New war 2 years after termination	Total number of cases	Pearson $\chi^2(1)$
Military victory	55	15	70	5.50 (p = 0.019)
No victory (truce/settlement)	30	21	51	
Total number of cases	85	36	121	
Negotiated settlement	19	3	22	3.34 (p = 0.068)
No settlement (truce/victory)	66	33	99	
Total number of cases	85	36	121	
<i>Wars with a UN operation</i>				
Negotiated settlement	12	2	14	4.75 (p = 0.029)
No settlement (truce/victory)	6	7	13	
Total number of cases	18	9	27	

Note: Results for military victory are similar for ethnic wars but weaker (not statistically significant) for non-ethnic, non-sectarian wars. Results for negotiated settlement are weaker (not statistically significant) if we break down wars into ethnic and non-ethnic categories. The difference is due to cases without a UN intervention. The full set of results is presented in Table 3.2 in Doyle and Sambanis (2006).

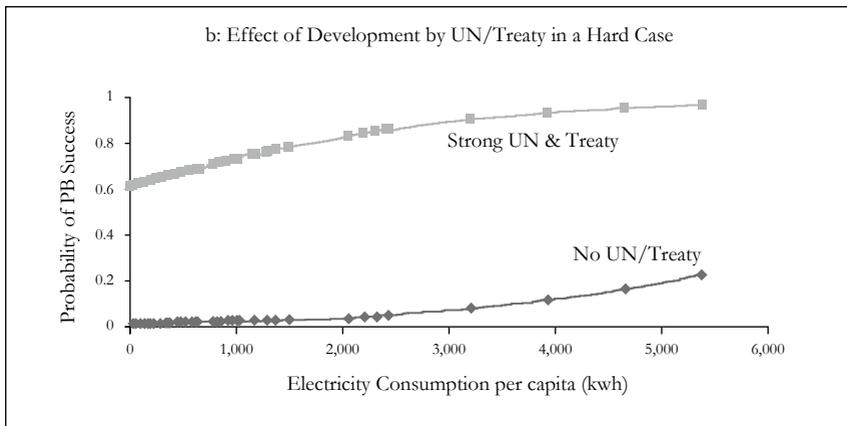
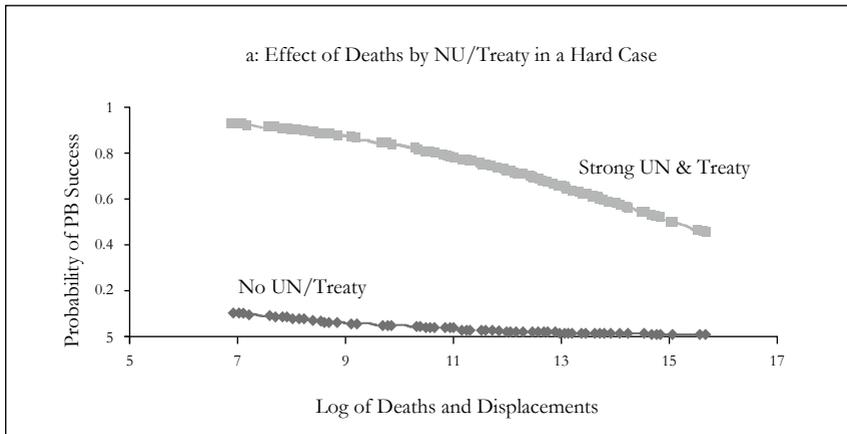
Table 2. War Outcomes and Short-Term Participatory Peace Success

	Success 2 years after war	Failure 2 years after war	Total number of cases	Pearson $\chi^2(1)$
Military victory	20	50	70	0.32 (p = 0.575)
No victory (truce/settlement)	17	34	51	
Total number of cases	37	84	121	
Negotiated settlement	15	7	22	17.91 (p = 0.000)
No settlement (truce/victory)	22	77	99	
Total number of cases	37	84	121	
Negotiated settlement with a UN peace operation				
<i>All wars</i>				
Settlement & UN op.	11	3	14	17.18 (p = 0.000)
All other cases	26	81	107	
Total number of cases	37	84	121	

Note: Results for military victory are similar for ethnic wars but weaker (not statistically significant) for non-ethnic, non-sectarian wars. Results for negotiated settlement are positive and statistically significant for both ethnic and non-ethnic wars. The full set of results is presented in Table 3.3 in Doyle and Sambanis (2006).

In what types of cases should we expect UN missions to have the greatest impact? Our data suggests that UN operations are most useful in hard peace-building ecologies—cases where hostility levels are high and local capacities are low. In such cases, the chances for participatory peace a short period after the war’s end are too low without some form of assistance. This is shown in simulations where we construct hypothetical “hard” and “easy” cases on the basis of our analysis and then explore the effect of a UN peace operation that is deployed on the basis of a peace treaty at different levels of hostility or local capacities.

*Figure 2. International Capacities in “Hard” Peace-Building Ecologies*



Note: These figures are reprinted from Doyle, Michael and Nicholas Sambanis (2006, p. 129).

Panel (a) of Figure 2 shows the difference in the estimated probability of participatory peace two years after the war in a hard case at different levels of hostility (measured by the log of deaths and displacements). The chances of success are almost zero without international assistance whereas they are considerable with a UN peace operation. Even with UN assistance, the chances of success decline at high hostility levels. A similar picture is seen in panel (b) where we look at the effects of UN assistance in a hard case across different levels of local capacities (measured by electricity consumption per capita). In “easy” cases, where hostility is low and local capacities high, UN assistance is not necessary, and at the highest levels of local capacities the difference between cases with UN assistance and those without is minimal.<sup>10</sup>

Does any international intervention help or are UN missions more effective? This question is still being debated in the literature and there are differing opinions. But the work that I have done with Michael Doyle and with Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl suggests that UN missions work better if we are focusing on participatory peace.<sup>11</sup>

It is not clear why there is a difference between UN and non-UN missions, but it is certainly not because the UN picks the easy cases (in fact, our data suggests that the opposite is true). One conjecture is that UN missions have a “legitimacy premium” that allows them to perform their functions without generating backlash that undermines the public’s reception of the institutions they create. Another related idea is that the act of war-fighting, which characterizes many non-UN interventions designed to impose a settlement, undermines the legitimacy of the political institutions that these interveners try to create to sustain peace long-term.

That is a key insight—that the peace-enforcer cannot also be the peace-builder. By virtue of its relative weakness, the UN does not engage in COIN-type activities that might undermine its ability to build impartial institutions that unify the nation. Later in my presentation I will outline a theoretical framework that provides a psychological mechanism to explain why heavy-handed intervention sows the seeds of its own failure. The difficulty for the UN is to develop strategies to build institutions without falling prey to extremists who can use violence to destabilize the peace process. This brings us back to the question of consent in peace-keeping.

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<sup>10</sup> Figures plotting estimates for easy cases are shown on page 129 in Doyle and Sambanis (2006).

<sup>11</sup> Sambanis, Nicholas and Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl, 2007, “Evaluating Multilateral Interventions in Civil Wars: A Comparison of UN and Non-UN Peace Operations,” in Dimitris Bourantonis, Kostas Ifantis and Panayotis Tsakonas, eds., *Multilateralism and Security Institutions in the Era of Globalization*, New York: Routledge.

Jean Marie Guéhenno, as under secretary-general for peacekeeping operations, had remarked that “Consent [is] still the principle under which the Department operate[s], otherwise, it [is] simply not peacekeeping and the United Nations [is] not the right organization to do it.”<sup>12</sup> I agree that the UN should not be asked to fight wars or conduct COIN-type operations. But blind adherence to the principle of consent necessarily diminishes the UN’s ability to lead any transitional administration which will almost certainly require the use of force.

Protecting civilians is not just important for the UN’s public relations image or simply justifiable on ethical grounds. There are political consequences. Recent research using natural experiments or survey experiments in conflict areas has shown that exposure to ethnic violence hardens ethnic identities at the expense of the common, national identity. Ethnic violence undermines the goals of nation-building intervention by inducing people to identify ethnically, weakening the support for inclusive institutions. By contrast, the more there is peace, the fewer resources are destroyed, and the more likely people are to identify with their nation at the expense of their ethnicity or sect. Thus, providing security for civilians is necessary for effective state-building and, ultimately, for the peace-builders’ exit strategy.

### *The New Interventionism*

The conflicts that are now in the public eye—Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Libya for example—are characterized by deep hostility, factional incoherence, fragmentation, and low levels of institutional capacity. These are precisely the types of conflict that require extensive international assistance. However, the interveners’ goals—democracy promotion and state-building—are too ambitious for these cases. Those countries’ pre-war institutional and economic development levels are the best predictors of postwar democracy and beyond the very short-term (around two years) any gains in democratic outcomes are not due to UN presence and certainly not to enforcement operations (see Table 3).

The problem is often that elections are attempted in countries with no institutional capacity to ensure that ethno-sectarian competition does not nullify democratic process. The scope for success in such interventions is very small and it hinges on the intervener’s ability to forge a strong national identity in the population.

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<sup>12</sup> Guéhenno’s remarks in press release GA/SPD/265, “Reform of UN Peacekeeping Operations a Real Process with Real Benefits, Under Secretary-General Tells Fourth Committee,” October 15, 2003.

Table 3. How Does Pre-War Democracy Predict Postwar Democratization?

	Democracy (2 years after)	Democracy (2 years after)	Democracy (2 years after)	Democracy (5 years after)	Democracy (5 years after)	Democracy (5 years after)
Pre-war democracy score	<b>0.4945</b> (0.1041)	<b>0.4361</b> (0.0971)	<b>0.4237</b> (0.1043)	<b>0.4694</b> (0.1071)	<b>0.3746</b> (0.0956)	<b>0.3556</b> (0.0984)
GDP/capita (year war started)	—	0.0004 (0.0002)	0.0004 (0.0002)	—	<b>0.0007</b> (0.0002)	<b>0.0008</b> (0.0002)
MultiPKO & Enforcement UN	—	<b>4.449</b> (1.399)	<b>3.910</b> (1.494)	—	<i>3.201</i> (1.723)	2.699 (1.887)
Treaty	—	—	1.178 (1.076)	—	—	1.288 (1.031)
Number of factions	—	—	-0.0475 (0.2811)	—	—	<i>0.5089</i> (0.2638)
Oil export dependence	—	<b>-3.917</b> (1.140)	<b>-3.920</b> (1.112)	—	<b>-4.840</b> (1.128)	<b>-5.062</b> (1.050)
Log deaths & displaced	—	—	0.0592 (0.1547)	—	—	0.2107 (0.1671)
Constant	-0.1121 (0.6570)	-0.5063 (0.8253)	-1.381 (1.861)	0.3026 (0.6947)	-0.5512 (0.8877)	-1.722 (2.021)
Observations	136	130	129	135	129	128
R-squared	0.2398	0.3798	0.3853	0.2021	0.3778	0.3991

Note: OLS Regression. Reported: coefficients and robust, clustered standard errors (in parentheses); estimates in bold are significant at least at the 0.05 level; estimates in italics are significant at the 0.05 level with a one-tailed test. Democracy is measured by scores on the polity variable two and five years after the war's end. Pre-war democratization is a moving average of the five years before the conflict. If one of those years was missing, it was replaced with values for the closest available year (usually the year before the conflict). The other variables are taken from Doyle and Sambanis (2006) with update coding to include the period from 2000-2012.

During the 2000 American Presidential election, Republican candidates criticized the Clinton administration for advocating civilian uses of American military in Bosnia and elsewhere. Since then, nation-building has become a staple of the new interventionism. The Bush administration vastly expanded America's involvement in state-building and nation-building exercises abroad. Rebuilding schools and basic infrastructure and helping communities negotiate local solutions to micro-level development projects is now standard.

The new interventionism is here to stay. In the United States, it reflects an awkward alliance between neo-conservatives, who are increasingly prone to intervene in weak states in pursuit of an expansive view of the national interest; and neoliberals, who push for action to prevent humanitarian crises. This confluence of interests across the political

spectrum can result in quick and sometimes counter-productive interventions that leave target countries in no condition to cope with the stresses of postwar transition, with Libya being the latest example.<sup>13</sup>

The UN will have to get involved with these transitions. The American experience in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrates that the peace enforcer cannot also be the peace builder, so after an initial period of war fighting that sets the stage for regime transition, the UN should take over the task of transitional administration because it should be in a better position than other actors to deal with the challenges created by nation-building interventions under transitional administration.

### **The Peace-BUILDER's Dilemma<sup>14</sup>**

Nation-building and democracy-promotion have the flavor of neo-imperialism.<sup>15</sup> But there are differences: In contrast to classical imperialism, the new interventions are not perpetually extractive; rather, the goal is to create self-sustaining peace in an inclusive state that can function on its own. Interventions are usually multilateral; they seek legal authority from the United Nations; and interveners pay the costs and want a fast exit.<sup>16</sup> Despite these differences, intervention can generate anti-imperialist opposition. This creates a dilemma: how can foreign transitional authority succeed in the face of nationalism?

I address this question by considering how institutions, violence, and external intervention combine to affect a population's social identification, and how social identities shape the choices leaders make and, in turn, are shaped by them.

The argument I will present is based on joint work with Kevin Russell and Seok-ju Cho. Together, we have developed a game-theoretic model of peace-building that captures the central dilemmas I have been discussing. The model depends on assumptions about individual behavior that are supported by a rich experimental literature in

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<sup>13</sup> Kuperman, Alan, 2013, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign," *International Security* 38 (1): 105-136; and Kuperman, Alan, 2013, "Lessons From Libya: How Not to Intervene," Harvard Kennedy School Policy Brief.

<sup>14</sup> This section draws on Russell, Kevin, Seok-ju Cho, and Nicholas Sambanis, 2014, "The Occupier's Dilemma: Foreign-Imposed Nation-Building after Ethnic War," unpublished manuscript, Yale University (October 12).

<sup>15</sup> See Ignatieff, Michael, "Nation-Building Lite," *New York Times Magazine*, July 28, 2002; Boot, Max, 2002, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*, New York: Basic Books; and Ferguson, Niall, "No Way to Run an Empire," *New York Times Magazine*, April 27, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> For more discussion of this point, see Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin, 2004, "Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States," *International Security* 28 (4): 5-43.

social psychology and behavioral economics. I will summarize the main argument while skipping over all formalisms.

We model a society that is composed of two groups emerging from ethno-sectarian conflict. The groups are contesting a resource. They are represented by leaders who are assumed to be strategic, whereas the population is assumed to react to their environment while being constrained by their identities. The groups and their leaders interact over time in a dynamic game and they can identify ethnically or nationally. They also choose the amount of effort they want to spend in ethnic fighting to capture the contested resource. Resources are divided as a function of the groups' fighting effort.

We make four key assumptions.<sup>17</sup> First, individuals want to be part of larger social groups and they derive utility and self-esteem from the groups they identify with. Second, if a person identifies with his ethnic group (the nation), then he cares about the group's (the nation's) status and he wants in-group members to have higher payoffs than out-group members. Third, the status of the nation relative to the status of the ethnic groups deteriorates as ethnic fighting intensifies because national resources are destroyed. Fourth, social identification implies caring about one's distance from the group. Distance is determined on the basis of attributes that an individual shares with other members of the group. For any individual, distance from the nation is always larger than distance from his/her ethnic group because the nation includes both groups and individuals only share their own ethnic group's attributes. Thus, in fragmented societies, there is a cost to identifying with the nation; but individuals may still do it if the nation's status is high.

We utilize the social identity equilibrium concept developed by Moses Shayo and myself, so we require the following: First, given social identities, each group chooses an optimal level of fighting; and second, given the level of fighting, no group can be better off by changing its identity. We interpret this equilibrium as the state of the world in which the behavior of the groups and the psychological identities of their members are congruent and mutually reinforcing. Individuals act (they decide to fight or not) depending on how they identify; and increased fighting strengthens ethnic preferences and lowers the status of the nation. Thus, in equilibrium, high fighting levels correspond to ethnic identification and low fighting levels correspond to national identification.

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<sup>17</sup> These assumptions underlie other similar models. See Sambanis, Nicholas and Moses Shayo, 2013, "Social Identification and Ethnic Conflict," *American Political Science Review* 107 (2): 294-325.

The equilibrium level of fighting depends on the size of the contested resources: the more resources are up for grabs, the higher each group's contributions to fighting. We assume that the size of the resources that can be appropriated through fighting is determined by state capacity.<sup>18</sup> State capacity reflects the strength of national institutions that are broadly defined to include formal laws, organizations, and shared beliefs. In equilibrium, when state capacity is high, the fighting level is low (because there is little to be gained by fighting) and thus the population identifies nationally; when state capacity is low, the fighting level is high and thus the population identifies ethnically.

Each group's leader can choose how much he contributes to national public goods or to ethnic goods designed only for his own group. Investing in public goods strengthens national institutions and state capacity for the entire nation. But why would leaders want to do that? Why would they care about members of the rival ethnic group?

The standard way to model leaders (or political parties) is to assume that they care mainly about getting support. Thus, when the population identifies ethnically, leaders do not expect to garner any support from the rival group so they will only invest in ethnic goods, reifying ethnic identification. By contrast, when the population identifies nationally, it may be possible for a leader to receive support from some parts of the rival group if he/she can increase that group's welfare. Thus, leaders will have a strong incentive to provide public goods so as to increase the entire nation's welfare by reducing conflict and stopping the destruction of national resources. Thus, nation-building at the population level underlies leader investments in state-building.

Here is where an outside actor comes in. A peace enforcement mission or occupation force can contribute to nation-building by exogenously reducing the level of ethnic fighting. We show in our model that if a country's initial state capacity is high, leaders can build institutions, fighting decreases over time, and, eventually, the country achieves full nation- and state-building. But there are hard cases—countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria—where initial state capacity is very low and the country can become trapped in a cycle of deteriorating institutions and persistent ethnic conflict. Can a foreign occupier help in such a situation in light of the nationalist resurgence that we now observe throughout the world?

In equilibrium, if the occupier provides sufficiently strong security forces, then it can successfully lower ethnic fighting and induce national identification. However,

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<sup>18</sup> This follows Sambanis, Nicholas, Stergios Skaperdas, and William Wolforth, 2014, "Nation-Building through War," unpublished manuscript.

domestic leaders expect that war will recur if the third party's forces are withdrawn, which will shift the population back to ethnic identification. Thus, if all the intervener does is to provide security, then leaders (who are forward-looking) have an incentive to keep providing ethnic goods (since that is their constituency) rather than public goods even though the population might temporarily identify with the nation while the occupier is in control. Consequently, national institutions never develop during occupation and, after the occupied forces leave, state capacity is too low to induce national identification so ethnic war resumes in a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The problem is that national leaders selected at the end of an ethnic war have ethnic agendas and will only change if they are convinced that the population's preferences have also changed. Thus, the occupier will need to provide public goods as well as security. This captures the scope of COIN-type interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan where "build" follows "clear" and "hold" operations.

What happens in this case depends on how effectively foreign-provided public goods are transformed into national institutions, which in turn depends on the nature of the occupation and on the identity of the occupier.

Here is where the distinctions drawn earlier between the UN and other potential interveners begin to matter. If the occupier is perceived to have benign intentions—if it acts impartially through enhanced consent as is the case with multidimensional UN peacekeeping—then the outside actor can help build national institutions. However, if the relationship between the occupier and the occupied is coerced, then we show that even large contributions by the occupier may not have a transformative effect on national institutions. That is because the occupier crowds out domestic leaders. This is what we call the "institutional dilemma." Citizens do not know if their leaders are competent while the occupier calls the shots.

But let's assume that there is an occupier with expertise in building institutions, which should mitigate the institutional dilemma. The occupier would still need to stay sufficiently long to develop institutions. In an era of resurgent nationalism this creates what we call the "sovereign" dilemma. Occupation lowers the nation's status and will be resisted by the population as it begins to identify nationally. Leaders want to avoid being called puppets of the occupier. They stop investing in public goods and this ultimately undermines national institutions. They call for the occupier's quick exit and, if that comes before state capacity has crossed the threshold where it can keep violence low, then the population shifts back to ethnic identification and intense fighting.

This process should sound familiar. It captures the case of Iraq since the surge and can be applied to other cases beyond Iraq. What the model shows is that third party-led state-building depends to a large extent on nation-building and that this makes it a balancing act: it can succeed only when leaders are induced to act not only in the interest of their ethno-sectarian group, but also the rest of the nation, and this only happens when the institutional dilemma and the sovereignty dilemma are not significant.

### **Conclusion: Implications for UN Peacekeeping**

What does this model suggest for UN peacekeeping? The main implication of this discussion for the use of force in peacekeeping operations is that security provision is a necessary condition for state-building progress. But the psychological mechanism that underlies our model suggests that, when we take social identities seriously and consider the implications of foreign occupation or transitional authority on the perceived status of the nation, then we can expect a nationalist backlash to result even in the most well-resourced peace interventions. The idea that a transitional authority can be established to provide technical expertise that the local population will accept might apply to some cases, but the use of violence during peace transitions complicates things. Transitional authority in the age of nationalism can undermine the peace by crowding out local leadership and robbing domestic institutions of the legitimacy they need to inspire citizens to respect the rule of law.

These ideas must be explored further in new research. A fruitful avenue for more research would be to explore the consequences of violence exposure during peacekeeping. This will help us assess the range of cases to which this model can be applied. Recently, survey experiments conducted in Afghanistan have found that citizens who have been exposed to ISAF violence have developed negative attitudes toward the state and the intervener. That is precisely what we would be concerned with if UN peacekeepers used force extensively to implement their mandate. However we do not yet know if citizens' reactions would be the same if they were exposed to violence by a consent-based peacekeeping UN force. In terms of the model's causal logic, perceptions of the intentionality of the use of force could be different depending on the actor involved. Local leaders might not have the same incentive to undermine the peacekeepers' authority as they might when an occupier sets off a nationalist backlash. These questions have not yet been researched empirically, but what if we find that peacekeeping violence is legitimized by the fact that national leaders have asked for the peacekeepers' presence? Such a finding, applied to different empirical contexts, would go a long way toward resolving

the institutional and sovereignty dilemmas that our model has highlighted and would resolve the long-lasting debate within the UN about the use of force. As long as peacekeeping violence is clearly justified to defend civilians and does not cross the threshold from peacekeeping to enforcement, it might be compatible with the long-term goals of state-building and nation-building.

If extensive enforcement action is needed, then UN missions might be inappropriate to lead transitional administrations. In our model the efficiency with which third-party resources are transformed into public goods to support national institutions depends in part on how the third party is perceived. As long as the UN does not allow itself to become the major powers' scapegoat, it can use its relative weakness to its advantage by specializing in institutional peace-building in hard cases where occupation by another party is likely to cause nationalist backlash. In such cases of low state capacity, force alone cannot induce a nation-building equilibrium, however many resources are used. New thinking on peacekeeping should focus on how to provide a bridge between COIN-type enforcement operations that might be necessary to stop ethnic fighting and the peace-building missions that the UN can deliver effectively.

*Table A1. Principal UN Peacekeeping Missions, 1947-Present*

<b>MISSION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>PEAK FORCE SIZE</b>	<b>FUNCTION</b>
UNSCOB	1947-52	36	Monitor violations of Greek border
UNCI	1947-51	63	Observe Indonesian cease-fire and Dutch troop withdrawal
UNTSO	1948-present	572	Report on Arab-Israeli cease-fire and armistice violations
UNMOGIP	1949-present	102	Observe Kashmir cease-fire
UNEF I	1956-67	6,073	Observe, supervise troop withdrawal and provide buffer between Israeli and Egyptian forces
UNOGIL	1958	591	Check on clandestine aid from Syria to Lebanon rebels
ONUC	1960-64	19,828	Maintain order in the Congo, expel foreign forces, prevent secession and outside intervention
UNSF	1962-63	1,576	Maintain order during transfer of authority in New Guinea from Netherlands and Indonesia
UNYOM	1963-64	189	Supervise military disengagement in Yemen
UNFICYP	1964-present	6,411	Prevent internal conflict in Cyprus, avert outside intervention

MISSION	DATE	PEAK FORCE SIZE	FUNCTION
DOMREP	1965-66	2	Report cease-fire between domestic factions
UNIPOM	1965-66	96	Observe India-Pakistan border
UNEF II	1973-79	6,973	Supervise cease-fire and troop disengagement, control buffer zone between Egypt and Israel
UNDOF	1974-present	1,450	Patrol Syria-Israel border
UNIFIL	1978-present	7,000	Supervise Israeli troop withdrawal, maintain order, help restore authority of Lebanese government
UNGOMAP	1988-90	50	Monitor Geneva Accords on Afghanistan and supervise Soviet withdrawal
UNIIMOG	1988-91	399	Supervise cease-fire and mutual withdrawal of forces by Iran and Iraq
UNAVEM I	1989-91	70	Verify withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola
UNTAG	1989-90	4,493	Assist Namibia's transition to independence, ensure free and fair elections
ONUSVEN	1989-90	120	Monitor Nicaraguan elections
ONUCA	1989-92	1,098	Verify compliance by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua with agreement to disarm and neutralize irregular forces in the area
ONUVEH	1990-91	260	Observe elections in Haiti
UNIKOM	1991-2003 <sup>1</sup>	1,440	Monitor demilitarized zone between Kuwait and Iraq. Removed with the occupation of Iraq by an American-led coalition. (Small observer group remains, but technically nonfunctioning and awaiting Security Council action)
UNAVEM II	1991-95	476	Verify compliance with Peace Accord to end civil strife in Angola
ONUSAL	1991-95	1,003	Monitor cease-fire and human rights agreements in El Salvador's civil war
MINURSO	1991-present	375	Conduct referendum in Western Sahara on independence or union with Morocco
UNAMIC	1991-92	380	Assist Cambodian factions to keep cease-fire agreement
UNPROFOR	1992-95	21,980	Encourage cease-fire in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, protect relief programs
UNTAC	1992-93	19,500	Demobilize armed forces of Cambodian factions, supervise interim government, conduct free elections
UNOSOM I	1992-93	550	Monitor cease-fire between Somali parties, protect shipments of relief supplies

MISSION	DATE	PEAK FORCE SIZE	FUNCTION
ONUMOZ	1992-94	7,500	Supervise internal peace accord in Mozambique, disarm combatants, establish a non-partisan army, hold national elections, conduct humanitarian program
UNOMIG	1993-2009	120	Verify cease-fire agreement, with Abkhazia, observe CIS peace-keeping force
UNOMUR	1993-94	100	Observer mission in Uganda-Rwanda, monitor arms shipments
UNOSOM II	1993-95		UN mission in Somalia, peace-making operations
UNAMIR	1993-96	5,500	Stop the massacre of the defenseless population of Rwanda, assist refugees, report atrocities
UNMIH	1993-96	900	Mission in Haiti, pacification and monitor elections
UNOMIL	1993-97	91	Observer group in Liberia monitor OAS peacekeeping
UNASOG	1994	25	Observer group in Aouzou Strip, Libya-Chad border
UNMOT	1994-2000	24	Investigate cease-fire violations and work with OSCE and CIS missions in Tajikistan
UNMIBH	1995-2002	1,584	Monitor law enforcement in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNPREDEP	1995-99	1,150	Preventive deployment force Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
UNCRO	1995-96	20	Confidence restoration in Croatia
UNAVEM III	1995-97	5,560	Angola verification in Mission of the Peace Accords (1991), the Lusaka Protocol (1994), and relevant Security Council resolutions
UNMOP	1996-2002	28	Monitor demilitarization in Prevlaka Peninsula, Croatia
UNTAES	1996-98	5,257	Facilitate demilitarization in Eastern Slavonia (Croatia)
UNSMIH	1996-97	1,549	Support Mission in Haiti
UNTMIH	1997	300	Transition Mission in Haiti
MINUGUA	1997	155	Verification Mission in Guatemala
MIPONUH	1997-2000	290	Civilian Police Mission in Haiti
MONUA	1997-99	5,560 <sup>ii</sup>	Observer Mission in Angola and a follow-on to UNAVEM III
MINURCA	1998-2000	1,350	Help maintain and enhance security and stability in the Central African Republic

MISSION	DATE	PEAK FORCE SIZE	FUNCTION
UNAMSIL	1999-2005	109	To observe and report to the Security Council military conditions in Sierra Leone. Took over from UNOMSIL.
MONUC	1999-2010	5,537	Monitor cease-fire agreement, provide humanitarian assistance Democratic Rep. of Congo. Replaced by MONUSCO
UNMIK Kosovo	1999-present	40,000 (KFOR)	Combines effort in pacification of Kosovo with KFOR/NATO forces, essentially humanitarian assistance
UNMEE Ethiopia and Eritrea	2000-2008	4,300	Monitor cessation of hostilities
UNAMA Afghanistan	2002-present <sup>iii</sup>	450	Not technically a peacekeeping mission, works with International Security Assistance Force, provides humanitarian aid
UNMISET East Timor (Timor Leste)	2002-2005	5,000	Transitional Security for the new Timor Leste government
MINUCI	2003-2004	0	Oversee implementation of Linas-Marcoussis Agreement with ECOWAS and French troops
UNMIL	2003-present	15,000	Oversee implementation of the cease-fire and peace agreement, provide police training and assist in formation of a new restructured military
MINUSCA	2014-present	10,000 military, 1,820 police (authorized, still building)	Protect civilians from violence and assist in implementation of transition process in CAR. Took over from African Union-led MISCA.
MINUSMA	2013-present	11,200 military, 1,440 police	Support the efforts of the transitional authorities in Mali to stabilize country
MINUSTAH	2004-present	8,940 military, 4,391 police	Monitor the restructure and reform of Haitian National police; restore public order; increase stability following 2010 earthquake
UNAMID	2007-present	19,555 military, 6,432 police	Protect civilians in Darfur; monitor and verify peace agreements among belligerents
MONUSCO	2010-present	19,815 military, 760 military observers, 391 police, 1,050 uniformed police units (22,016 total)	Protect civilians in DRC by any means necessary to support government's stabilization efforts.
UNISFA	2011-present	5,326 military, 50 police	Monitor demilitarization of Abyei area between Sudan and South Sudan; verify border normalization process

MISSION	DATE	PEAK FORCE SIZE	FUNCTION
UNMISS	2011-present	12,500 military, 1,324 police	Consolidate peace and security in South Sudan to help establish conditions for peace and development
UNOCI	2004-present	6,908 military troops, 170 military observers, 1,471 police (8,549 total)	Facilitate implementation of 2004 peace agreement, protect civilian population without prejudice, support authorities in stabilizing security situation. Replaced MINUCI.
MINURCAT	2007-2010	5,200 military, 25 military liaisons, 300 police	Protect civilians in Chad and CAR, assist in return and reintegration of refugees, took over from EUFOR
UNOMSIL	1998-1999	192 military observers, 15 other military, 2 person medical	Monitor the security situation and progress of DDR in Sierra Leone
ONUB	2004-2006	5,400 troops, 168 military observers, and 97 police	Monitor and help implement Burundi ceasefire agreements, facilitate DDR and completion of electoral process as stipulated in Arusha Agreement
UNMIS	2005-2011	9,304 military troops, 513 military observers, 702 police officers (10,519 total)	Support, monitor, and verify implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement
UNTAET	1999-2002	9,150 military, 1,640 police.	Transitional administration of East Timor, empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority. Succeeded by UNMISSET.
UNMIT	2006-2012	1,608 police, 34 military liaison and staff officers	Multidimensional support of democratic consolidation and peace stabilization in Timor-Leste
UNPSG	1998-1998	114 police	Took over policing tasks of UNTAES, monitor performance of Croatian police
UNSMIS	2012	278 military observers.	Monitor and support plan to end conflict, mission ended when violence escalated

SOURCE: Lawrence Ziring, Robert Riggs and Jack Plano, *The United Nations* (Belmont, Ca: Wadsworth, 2005), 216-219; United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, *Police, Troops and Military Observers—Contributors by Mission and Country*, UN peacekeeping homepage, December 2002; Center for International Relations, *Current UN Peace-Keeping Operations*, Zurich, Switzerland, PKO webmaster, Jan. 1998; UN peacekeeping homepage, accessed October 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/>.

<sup>i</sup> Still in force according to UN records.

<sup>ii</sup> The force identified with UNAVEM III is the same force operating under MONUA.

<sup>iii</sup> Not judged a UN peacekeeping force.