Contents

About the Authors 7

Foreword 11

Henrik Landerholm

Introduction: War and Peace in Transition 15

Karin Aggestam & Annika Björkdahl

1. New Roles for External Actors?
   Disagreements about International Regulation of Private Armies 32
   Anna Leander

2. The Privatisation of Security and State Control of Force
   Patterns, Challenges and Perceptions in the Case of Iraq 53
   Joakim Berndtsson

3. The EU’s Intervention in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 72
   Michael Schulz

4. The Changing Character of Peace Operations
   The Use of Force at the Tactical Level 90
   Kersti Larsdotter

5. Witnessing the Unbearable
   Alma Johansson and the Massacres of the Armenians 1915 107
   Maria Småberg

6. Sequencing of Peacemaking in Emerging Conflicts 128
   Birger Heldt

7. Mediating between Tigers and Lions
   Norwegian Peace Diplomacy in Sri Lanka’s Civil War 147
   Kristine Höglund & Isak Svensson
About the Authors

Karin Aggestam is Associate Professor in Political Science and Director of Peace and Conflict Research, Lund University. Her research covers areas such as ethics of war and peace, diplomacy, negotiation and conflict resolution, and with a regional specialisation in the Middle East in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. She is presently coordinating a research project on just and durable peace in the Western Balkans and the Middle East, funded by the EU’s 7th Framework Programme.

Joakim Berndtsson is a postdoctoral researcher in Peace and Development Research at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. He recently finished a PhD thesis *The Privatisation of Security and State Control of Force: Changes, Challenges and the Case of Iraq*. He is currently working on a new research project entitled ‘Security for Sale: Perceptions of Threat and Security among Private Security Companies’, funded by the Swedish Research Council.

Annika Björkdahl is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, Lund University. Her research interests concern the influence of ideas and norms in international relations, and the role of international organisations in conflict prevention, management and resolution, particularly in the Western Balkans. She is currently engaged in a research project on Just and Durable Peace by Piece in the Western Balkans and the Middle East funded by the EU’s 7th Framework Programme.

Birger Heldt is Director of Research at the Folke Bernadotte Academy, and Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Research. He has
been project leader at the Swedish National Defence College, and post-doctoral fellow at Uppsala University and Yale University. His current research is mainly concerned with peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy.

**Kristine Höglund** is Associate Professor at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. Her research covers issues such as the dilemmas of democratization in countries emerging from violent conflict, the importance of trust in peace negotiation processes, and the role of international actors in dealing with crises in war-torn societies. She recently published the book *Peace Negotiations in the Shadow of Violence* (2008, Martinus Nijhoff).

**Kersti Larsdotter** is Research Assistant at the Department of War Studies at the Swedish National Defence College, and a PhD student at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. Her dissertation concerns military conduct in peace operations and counterinsurgency.

**Anna Leander** is Professor at the Copenhagen Business School. She works with sociological approaches to international political economy and international relations and has focused on security practices. Her work is published among other places in *Armed Forces and Society, Cooperation and Conflict Journal of International Relations and Development, Journal of Peace Research, The Millennium, Review of International Political Economy* and *Third World Quarterly*. She has recently published *Constructivism in International Relations* (with Stefano Guzzini) and ‘Securing Sovereignty by Governing Security through Markets’.

**Michael Schulz** is Associate Professor in Peace and Development Research, Gothenburg University. His areas of interest are long-term peace-building and intervention in war-torn societies and conflict resolution in Israel/Palestine, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Congo, and Somalia. His most recent publications include ‘Reconciliation through education – Experiences from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict’, in *Journal of Peace Education* (2008), ‘Hamas Between Sharia Rule
Maria Småberg is Assistant Professor at the Department of History and lectures in Peace and Conflict Research at Lund University. Her dissertation Ambivalent Friendship. Anglican Conflict Handling and Education for Peace in Jerusalem 1920–1948 (2005) concerns religious and educational peace efforts in Palestine during the British Mandate period. In her ongoing research, she deals with the Swedish missionary Alma Johansson, who witnessed the genocide on the Armenians in eastern Turkey 1915.

Isak Svensson is Associate Professor at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. His research has covered issues such as bias and neutrality in international mediation, religious dimensions of armed conflicts, and strategies of third-parties in peace processes. He has published material in Journal of Conflict Resolution and Journal of Peace Research.
INTRODUCTION

War and Peace in Transition
Karin Aggestam & Annika Björkdahl

Introduction
The last century has been referred to as the era of ‘total war’ in which we witnessed two world wars, the dawn of a nuclear age and superpower rivalry that polarised the world into East and West. With the end of the Cold War, expectations were raised of a more peaceful period, but new forms of violence emerged. Judging by its early years, the twenty-first century is no less conflict-prone than previous centuries. As the causes, dynamics and consequences of war have changed, so have the opportunities and efforts to establish peace. The unresolved dilemmas of the 1990s, such as humanitarian intervention and peacemaking, are joined by new dilemmas of peace-building, state reconstruction and democracy promotion. The international community needs to explore the utility of traditional strategies of conflict management and make sure to adapt them to different conflict settings. In short, the demands and challenges facing external actors in processes leading from war to peace in the twenty-first century are countless.

War in transition
War is a pervasive and universal phenomenon, yet the sheer variety of conflict types, causes, actors and dynamics is striking. The post-Cold War era has been characterised by a varied pattern of war and the emergence of new global security threats.
Changing patterns of conflict

The proportion of intrastate conflicts to interstate conflicts has grown markedly throughout the post-Second World War period (Human Security Report, 2005). Interstate wars have decreased, yet at the same time powerful states are projecting power and conducting military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Georgia. In the last two decades we have seen an upsurge of conflicts, which some refer to as ‘new wars’ (Kaldor, 2001) or ‘wars of a third kind’ (Holsti, 1996). Intrastate wars have waxed and waned over recent decades and they have been unevenly distributed, with Africa and Asia experiencing more organised violence than other regions. The outbreak of secessionist war in former Yugoslavia brought intrastate war to Europe and made this phenomenon more visible as it transformed from something that occurred only in the periphery to something centre-stage.

We have also witnessed widening fractures between and among cultures and a growing cultural divide between Islam and the West. The emergence of a new form of global terrorism, as demonstrated by the 9/11 attack on the US, has changed the global security environment and the sense of insecurity has grown. Hopes for peace in the Middle East have been dashed by the escalating conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians as well as by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, the processes often referred to as globalisation have cemented the gap between North and South, creating tensions between those who gain and those who lose from these global processes. Scarce natural resources are at stake in many contemporary conflicts, such as the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan. Poverty and failed states are not directly causing violent conflict or terrorism but may provide fertile ground for growing discontent and feelings of marginalization.

The developments in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East demonstrate clear examples of the contemporary trend that peace and war often exist in parallel, and contemporary peace operations simultaneously involve combat operations and building peace. A state of no war – no peace is common as violence now continues during peace processes and after peace accords are agreed.
**Identity conflicts**

While these conflicts differ in contexts and histories, they share a number of distinct features, which make them particularly resistant to settle through negotiations and traditional diplomacy. According to some scholars, they stand in stark contrast to our traditional understanding of interstate war. Firstly, claims to power and political arguments are frequently based on identity discourses and ethnic homogeneity. Politics revolve around identity labels of community rather than ideology and national interests of states. As a consequence, it is difficult to distinguish clear strategic goals among the disputants (Kaldor, 1999: 77–78).

Secondly, as these conflicts are identity-based, they draw heavily on discourses of historic enmity, hatred and insecurity, which trigger basic existential fears of group survival, expulsion and ethnic cleansing. Political legitimacy is often mobilised by using arguments from idealised nostalgic history and mythmaking.

Paradoxically, in the midst of increasing existential threats and intensified insecurity, identification provides a sense of security of being part of a larger collective (Schulz, 1999). Thirdly, these conflicts are distinct from interstate conflicts since they often take place within collapsing and weak states. The result is anarchy with an eroding norm system and state monopoly of violence. The distinction between civilians and combatants is blurred as civilians are directly targeted. Civilians therefore constitute the majority of war victims. Women and children suffer the worst consequences of these conflicts. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a case in point, where women in the province of East Kivu are suffering from the systematic use of sexual violence as a tactic of war. Hence, any rules of warfare are rendered meaningless. In this anarchic context, warlords prove to be the major players, both as instigators of violence and paradoxically as providers of security for some groups, as we have seen in Afghanistan. Moreover, warlords in most cases profit financially from the ongoing violence, and the privatisation of violence leads to an ever-increasing number of conflicting parties and non-state actors (Kaldor, 1999).

As a consequence, these identity-driven conflicts are frequently depicted as zero-sum conflicts and are exhausting in human and
material terms. Yet societies learn over time to cope and adapt to an abnormal, violent and insecure environment through various social and psychological mechanisms, which is one of several reasons why some of these conflicts become intractable. In intractable conflicts, such as the one in Israel-Palestine, the parties have accumulated and institutionalised discourses of hatred, prejudice and animosity towards the other. Collective memories and national myths also play a significant role in the reconstruction of self and enemy images. These perceptions turn into an ‘ideology’ that supports the prolongation of conflict and serves as an identity marker of who we are/who we are not, and thus tends to be resistant to change. As a consequence, the vicious and self-perpetuating circles of violence are ‘normalised’ and become central to everyday life (Bar-Tal, 2001).

Continuities and discontinuities

While recognising changes and new challenges, evidence also points to important continuities in war and peace. Many of the sources of conflict that occurred in the 1990s and in previous epochs, for example, the security dilemma, state failure, economic predation, political transitions and ethnic tensions, remain valid and relevant today. Regional stability continues to be compromised by those conflicts that last over time and are largely intractable, for example Israel-Palestine, Sudan, North Korea and Jammu Kashmir. Many of these conflicts have refused to yield despite repeated peacemaking efforts and rounds of mediation. They are a major source of international instability because of the risk that they may escalate. When addressing violent conflicts and designing strategies for conflict prevention, management and resolution, we need to keep in mind both factors of continuity and drivers of change.

At the same time, there has been a decrease in the number of wars, of episodes of mass killing, and of people dying violent battle deaths in the last two decades, despite the terrible cases of Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, and the ongoing conflicts in the DRC, Somalia, Sudan and elsewhere. Another positive and unnoticed development is the reduction in violent conflict in sub-Saharan Africa where the
Combat toll has dropped. But they are only a small part of the whole story of the suffering from war. In general, 90% or more of war-related deaths are due to disease and malnutrition rather than direct violence, as we have seen, for example, in the Congo and Darfur. The single most compelling explanation for these positive changes is found in the unprecedented upsurge of international activism, spearheaded by the UN in the wake of the Cold War (Human Security Report, 2005).

However, there are troubling signs that international norms and institutions, which upheld human rights, established codes of conduct in war, checked the proliferation of nuclear weapons, banned landmines and deterred piracy are eroding in many corners of the world. At the same time, support for democratisation processes are included in many of the United Nations mandates for peace support operations and an international consensus is growing in support of the emerging norm pertaining to the responsibility to protect (R2P), aimed at protecting civilians from mass atrocities (Evans, 2008). These emerging norms challenge or may provide alternative interpretations of the institutionalised norm of state sovereignty, which guides interstate relations and limits the possibilities for external actors to interfere in the domestic affairs of states.

**Peacemaking in transition**

Peace is elusive and the quest for peace is perpetual. Yet in response to the transformation of war, efforts to promote and build peace have been transformed. Peace operations, for example, have moved away from traditional peacekeeping to complex peace support operations. These new types of multifunctional, multidimensional and complex peace operations have an ambitious agenda, ranging from conflict prevention to state reconstruction and peacebuilding.

*Forces for good*

At times, the use of military force by external parties is required to stop violence, establish security and stability and prevent relapse into war. This form of coercive diplomacy remains a controversial
option in peace operations and is often the last resort. Yet the appropriate and timely use of force can make a difference in preventing the outbreak of massive violence or in bringing the parties to the negotiation table.

However, the use of force alone does not bring peace. It needs to be accompanied by a political process of peacemaking, including mediation and negotiation. Other civilian, humanitarian and policing tasks are also required. Most conflict situations are defined as complex humanitarian emergencies with displaced people and massive starvation, requiring support for relief aid and refugee camps, safe havens, humanitarian corridors, humanitarian emergency assistance and assistance for refugee return. To create stability and a secure environment, security sector reform (SSR) and demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) are crucial. The availability of light weapons and small arms in most conflict zones in combination with unemployed, demobilised former combatants are obvious threats to stability. It increases violence in the form of criminal violence, which threatens everyday lives and the process towards peace in many war-torn societies. Conflict-ridden societies also frequently lack sufficient institutional capacity, and reconstructing state institutions has become a major task following the peace operations. The international community is also often involved in promoting new norms and practices pertaining to good governance, peaceful conflict resolution, democracy, rule of law and human rights.

Privatisation of peacemaking

Another general trend, which to a certain extent may be viewed as part of the liberal peacebuilding model, is the privatisation of peacemaking. As many contemporary conflicts concern state-society relations, NGOs come to play an increasing and vital role in peacemaking. Duffield (1997), for example, argues that economic development is becoming the West’s favoured response to ‘new’ wars. Economic development has become ‘securitised’ and part of the general framework of conflict management, conflict prevention and peacemaking. At the same time, NGOs are today
significant actors in economic development, particularly in the last decades as the West’s official development assistance (ODA) in general has seen major cutbacks and/or has been relocated to NGOs. This trend of ‘privatisation’ is partly based on the assumption that development assistance will become more efficient. Activities by NGOs are believed to be more participatory, flexible, innovative and effective, while less expensive than governmental agencies. For example, it is seen as easier for NGOs than for governmental agencies to link development aid to ethnic reconciliation. Moreover, these activities are seen as contributing to the growth of civil society and good governance, which will prevent future conflicts. In other words, there seems to be an ‘agreeable fit’ between the privatisation of ODA and NGOs (Duffield, 1997; Nicolaidis, 1995: 60–64). Also, many states are ‘contracting’ out humanitarian relief and assistance to NGOs.

This trend of ‘privatisation’ of world politics in general and diplomacy in particular tends on the one hand to de-politicise peacemaking, which ultimately is value-laden. The activities of NGOs are often framed as apolitical tools in the management of conflict, particularly in disputes where states are seen as the inhibitors of socio-economic development. Hence, the ‘de-politicisation’ of NGOs risks focusing on technical and not political solutions. However, others argue in contrast that the trend of privatisation of peacemaking is part of a policy agenda of neo-liberal economics and liberal peacebuilding. NGOs, by this interpretation, come to symbolise everything that governments are not; that is, unburdened with large bureaucracies, flexible and open to innovations, faster at implementing development efforts and quicker to respond to grass roots needs (Duffield, 1997; Natsios, 1995: 444–446).

The new actors in security, ranging from international peacekeepers to private actors such as military security companies, attempt to fill the security vacuum and provide the security the state fails to uphold, and development agents, such as NGOs, attempt to meet the demands for food, shelter and health unmet in weak and failed states. This contributes to a privatisation of both security and the state, which obscures the public-private distinction. In addition, state security has partly been replaced by the notion of human se-
curity, prioritising the security of the individual before the security of the state, and aims to ensure freedom from want and freedom from fear.

**Coordination and cooperation**

The sheer number of actors involved in various peace efforts makes coordination and cooperation between states, intergovernmental organisations (IGO) and NGOs critical. How workable such cooperation is depends largely on the existence of some kind of shared understanding of war and peace in general. Furthermore, they need to pool resources and improve coordination in order to meet the challenging task of preventing and managing contemporary conflicts, which are bound to be at the core of the twenty-first century of diplomacy. Some describe this (inter)governmental–NGO relationship as one more of convenience than of a ‘passionate romance’. Each side remains distrustful and uncomfortable about working together, partly because they differ (and at times compete) in their understandings of peace, as well as speaking to different constituencies (Natsios, 1995: 413). There are, for example, many governments which regard information emanating from NGOs as inaccurate and unbalanced because they are considered to have their own agendas, which do not conform to the views held by many diplomats. This ‘credibility problem’ becomes particularly troubling at times of early warning issued by NGOs (Carnegie Commission, 1997: 10).

Yet the diverse roles and activities of NGOs often take place in parallel or together with states and IGOs. The advantages of NGOs are that they are grass root-centred and close to the field and thus come to play important roles in diplomacy, particularly in the early phases of conflict through early warning and in the post-conflict phase. NGOs may, for example, facilitate through ‘soft mediation’ communication channels, foster peaceful dialogues between disputing parties and counter hate propaganda (Nicolaidis, 1995: 60–65). In addition, MacFarquhar, Rotberg, Chen (1995: 6) suggest that ‘field diplomacy’ should be further developed, which means sending NGO teams to regions of antagonism for extended periods of time in order to stimulate and support local initiatives for peace-building. Also,
a growing number of human rights missions have become integral parts of second/third generations of peacekeeping in post-conflict settings. These are also referred to as multifunctional peacekeeping, which includes features of traditional peacekeeping, but concerns larger international deployments, with a wider mandate and greater non-military dimensions.

In short, the enormous challenges of contemporary efforts to ensure durable peace require cooperation by a multitude of various actors and create problems of coordination. The division of labour is often unclear and lead agencies are not always designated. In general, there is a need for collaboration between civilian and military actors, between state and non-state actors, between external and internal actors, and between the elite and the general population. Obviously, coordination and cooperation are major challenges to complex peace missions and few principles have been agreed upon to establish reasonable burden-sharing, efficient division of labour and legitimate leadership in order to avoid overlap, competition and inefficient use of scarce resources.

**Chronic conflicts resistant to peace efforts**

Despite international and domestic efforts, emerging conflicts have resisted efforts at prevention and in many post-conflict societies peace processes have reached impasse or collapsed. On other occasions, a frustrated and contested peace has emerged from the peace processes, where the peace is constantly challenged and threatened by a relapse into violence. Instead of promoting a self-sustainable peace, external peace-builders have at best managed to freeze an emerging conflict while the root causes of the conflict are still largely unaddressed. In other cases an ambivalent peace has been established in the aftermath of violent conflict. Both situations are recognised by the absence of large-scale violence, but with persistent inter-communal insecurity, discrimination of out-group members and where ethno-national groups continue to face societal security dilemmas. This in turn means that there exists only weak popular legitimacy for the existing peace (Kostic, 2008: 95). This has spurred research towards a more critical direction and assessment of peacebuilding
strategies, particularly focusing on the poor record of successful implementation and durability of peace agreements (Stedman et al. 2002; Hampson, 1996). Although every peacebuilding situation has its own dynamics, a lesson to be drawn from the many mistakes in the last decades is that leaving too soon, or doing too little, are the most common mistakes rather than staying too long or doing too much. At the same time, all intrusive peace operations need an exit strategy, and one that is more comprehensive than just holding elections as soon as possible.

The quest for peace

The peace that follows many contemporary conflicts is often unsatisfactory and marked by a continuation of inter-ethnic tensions, lack of order and eruption of violence. The lack of sustainable peace arrangements is illuminated in the body of literature, which conceptualises peace as temporary and contested in terms of fragile, precarious, unstable, or turbulent peace. In this vein, the liberal democratic peace has emerged as the dominant idea for a sustainable peace. The liberal democratic peace promises to deliver reconciliation and reconstruction in post-war societies. This notion of peace has been widely promoted as a means of coming to terms with many of the problems facing unsuccessful peace processes. It is based on peaceful conflict resolution, protection of human rights and minority rights, political representation, good governance and rule of law. In theory, it may also emancipate individuals. Both the elite delivering the peace and the grass roots receiving it become acculturated to the liberal democratic peace idea (MacGinty, 2006). As the liberal democratic peace is perceived as superior to alternative understandings of peace, little space is left during the negotiations to explore local varieties of peace and to incorporate local articulations of peace. Consequently, rival notions of peace are not put forward in peace processes and thus peace accords will rarely reflect local understandings of peace. Challenging conventional wisdom, MacGinty argues that ‘the peace delivered on behalf of the liberal democratic peace is often illiberal and undemocratic’ (MacGinty, 2006: 35). Although a bad peace is better than no peace, the quality of peace should be
critically examined. Johan Galtung’s two concepts of positive and negative peace can here assist in assessing the outcome of various peacemaking efforts.

Challenges for external actors

To be sure, these distinct transformative features of war and peace lead to a number of challenges to peacemaking and interventions by external actors. We have identified four such challenges which are particularly troublesome for external actors to resolve when pursuing peacemaking: (1) recognition and the problem of compromise, (2) asymmetry and the problem of mediation entry, (3) spoiling behaviour and the problem of managing violence, and (4) implementation and the problem of compliance.

Recognition and compromise

First, negotiations are often stalled because recognition needs to be resolved before any meaningful progress can be made. As the negotiations involve a multitude of actors and non-state actors, recognition, legitimacy and leadership become decisive and major issues of contention in a peace process. Hence, how to deal with the large number of factional parties in a negotiation process is a major challenge for external actors. For example, who is to be considered a valid spokesperson and a legitimate leader of a non-state actor? Who are to be included and excluded in the process? What are the consequences of exclusion? John Darby (2001: 118–119) argues for a ‘sufficient inclusion,’ which includes those with power to bring the peace process down by violence, such as militant organisations.

Non-state actors on the one hand dispute their lack of recognised status, and governments on the other hand dispute claims for proto-political status (Richmond, 2006: 66–68). Recognition is therefore often withheld either as a way to undermine the other side’s position or simply because it does not benefit the long-term interest of oneself. Consequently, the principle of negotiating in good faith becomes increasingly problematic since compromise is secondary to recognition and legitimacy. In many cases, peace nego-
tions are initiated after heavy international pressures are exerted on the parties. The parties may hold devious objectives and accept negotiations for other reasons than compromise (Richmond, 1997). Hence, a major challenge is therefore how to establish good-faith negotiations which are based on the commitment, good intention and willingness of the parties to reach a mutually satisfying agreement that will be honoured. Frequently, parties may use a peace and negotiation process primarily as a way to gain legitimacy and recognition. Compromise and reaching an agreement may thus be secondary for the disputants.

Furthermore, many contemporary conflicts are, as mentioned above, identity-based and therefore particularly difficult to resolve via negotiations. Negotiations are framed as a zero-sum game and as major risk-taking since compromises involve existential questions and concerns of group survival. The role of religion as part of the identity construction and justification of violence exacerbates the difficulties of conducting negotiations based on compromise. Religion is about absolute and particularistic values. Hence, political goals become less visible and incentives to compromise are limited at best or non-existing at worst. The existential framing of negotiation, in combination with uncertainty about the direction of a peace process, feeds mistrust and fear. Also a negotiation process by itself may challenge the disputants’ sense of understanding ‘self’ and ‘other’, which is intimately related to conflict. Thus, belief perseverance is further strengthened if there is a continuation of violence. It proves that the other side has not changed and consequently confirms firmly held enemy images.

**Asymmetry and mediation**

The asymmetry that characterises most contemporary conflicts is considered by most negotiation theorists as detrimental to efficient mediation and negotiation. As William Zartman (1995: 8) states, ‘negotiations under conditions of asymmetry (asymmetrical negotiations) are a paradox, because one of the basic findings about the negotiation process is that it functions best under conditions of equality.’ Consequently, implications of asymmetry in a negotia-
The negotiation process are numerous (see further, Aggestam, 2002). Moreover, asymmetry makes a continuation of unilateral actions more likely. Hence, a mutually hurting stalemate, which William Zartman (1989) defines as a particularly ripe moment for mediation and negotiation, becomes less probable. Such a stalemate stipulates increasing symmetrical relations and a situation where the parties are trapped, without being able to resort to unilateral strategies. However, asymmetrical conflicts are characterised by gross power inequality in economic, political and military resources between state and non-state actors. Stronger parties are inclined to use their power superiority to continue unilateral actions, whereas weaker parties mobilise strength and compensate for the asymmetry through strongly held commitments to the armed resistance (Zartman, 1995: 9).

When delineating the characteristics of asymmetrical conflict, it becomes evident what an immense challenge it is for mediators to gain acceptance and legitimacy for intervention. Mediators face several specific problems. There is a discrepancy in the expectations of mediation between strong and weak parties. Strong parties tend to reject international mediation, whereas weak parties make constant appeals for forceful international intervention. Strong parties may therefore put a number of preconditions, which the mediators and the weak parties have to accept in order to get the negotiation process started. Consequently, stronger parties tend to stipulate the ‘rules of negotiation’. Moreover, since stronger parties exhibit lesser political willingness to negotiate, mediators are particularly attentive to their positions in conflicts. Furthermore, mediation may be used by parties who are not committed to negotiations and compromises. Mediation therefore becomes a cover for more ‘devious objectives’, such as to enhance international legitimacy or gain time, as discussed above. Mediation may also be used simply to preserve a status quo situation in the conflict without the parties attempting to resolve it. The conflicting parties might also be inclined to focus their efforts to allying with the mediators rather than creating common grounds with the opposing party (Richmond, 1998; 1999).
In recent years the spoiling problem has gained increasing attention among external actors. Spoiling refers to intentional acts of violence aimed at derailing a peace process. Yet in academia it is a relatively unexplored area of research. Stephen Stedman (1997), who introduced the notion of spoiler and spoiling, has contributed with important research, particularly on policy-relevant issues regarding the role of international custodians. Also the work by John Darby (2001) and together with Robert MacGinty (2003) has generated important insights about the impact of violence during peace processes, deduced from a large number of empirical case studies (see also Newman & Richmond, 2006). Even though peacemaking is highly complex, divisive and uncertain in its outcome, the spoiler problem paradoxically tends to be a predictable phenomenon in most contemporary peace processes. Paul Pillar (1983) also underlines that most peace negotiations are accompanied by ongoing violence.

A peace process almost by definition produces spoiling behaviour since it challenges established assumptions of who is a patriot and traitor, enemy and friend. Who become the winner and loser when a peace agreement is to be implemented? One decisive factor is leadership, that is, the ability of political leaders to deliver their followers and manage groups associated with violence. Political leaders will have difficulties leading if their followers are unwilling to go in the same direction (Darby, 2001: 121). Moreover, leaders who sign agreements are vulnerable to accusations of betrayal and treason, which often work as a powerful deterrent against those who want to promote a peaceful settlement with the enemy (Iklé, 1964: 60). Violence in such circumstances will feed existing fears and uncertainties among the general public about the direction of the peace process. Opposition groups may convincingly argue that compromises do not lead to peace, but to more violence (rewarding and giving in to terror), which limits the mandate and bargaining range of the negotiators. Spoiling is particularly effective when political leaders have publicly declared and made a commitment not to negotiate and make concessions under fire. It is assumed that to negotiate while violence continues signals weakness to the other side, even though in practice it means that the negotiators become...
hostages to spoilers. Hence, spoilers become the veto-holders of the peace process and determine its pace and direction (Darby, 2001: 118).

The power of spoiler groups is further enhanced when extremists on both sides, despite their violent struggle against each other, tend to form a tacit alliance where they can derive justification from each other (Aggestam & Jönsson, 1997: 778–80). As Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter (2002: 264) underline, ‘extremists are surprisingly successful in bringing down peace processes if they so desire’. For instance, only 25% of signed peace accords in civil wars between 1988 and 1998 were implemented due to violence taking place during negotiations (Kydd & Walter, 2002: 264). Hence, the capacity of spoilers to undermine a negotiation process depends on the degree of popular support they enjoy among the public as well as on their principled stance to continue an armed and violent struggle. Some spoilers, whom Stephen Stedman refers to as total spoilers (in contrast to greedy and limited spoilers), simply cannot be accommodated or defeated since their demands are non-negotiable. The popular support of spoilers also depends on how the public view the peace process in general and how active or passive war and peace constituencies are. Yet as John Darby (2001: 98) soberly points out, peace negotiations rarely result from domestic pressures, despite years of war-weariness.

Stephen Stedman (1996: 350) underlines the complex transition for leaders, who were previously committed to the rhetoric of total war and victory, to enter into a negotiation process and declare willingness to conduct compromise. Since leaders in such circumstances may be accused of cowardice and treachery, they may out of fear talk peace in private and war in public. Secret negotiations are therefore often sought to avoid arousing public anxiety despite the fact that secrecy is generally seen as democratically offensive. The sheer fact of being excluded from the process may therefore generate opposition and spoiling. If the negotiations are surrounded by violence and viewed as unjust and illegitimate, concession-making and implementation of an agreement become almost impossible.
Implementation and compliance

The problem of implementation is a widespread dilemma in most contemporary peace processes. The reasons are many and varied. International law specifically states that *pacta sunt servanda*, but enforcement mechanisms are often absent in many peace agreements. However, custodian monitoring has become more frequent in recent years. Custodians are, according to Stephen Stedman (1997), international actors who oversee the implementation of peace agreements. For example, in Cambodia the United Nations has acted as a custodian and the United Kingdom and Ireland as joint ‘internal’ custodians of the Northern Ireland peace process. Other obstacles to implementation may be that the agreements have been badly designed, vaguely defined, or intentionally ambiguous since the parties have relied on constructive ambiguity¹ as a way of avoiding deadlocks (Hampson, 1996). It may exacerbate an already fragile situation characterised by suspicion and mistrust, and consequently create new grounds for hostilities because these ambiguities need to be addressed, interpreted and agreed upon. A ‘sceptical scrutiny’ of a peace agreement may develop and as a result there is a reactive devaluation of the agreement (Ross, 1997: 34). In such cases, third parties may play a monitoring role in promoting new norms and codes of conduct, particularly in the area of human rights and minority rights. They may report on misbehaviour and investigate human rights abuses and other war crimes. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe play such roles.

¹ ‘Constructive ambiguity’ is a frequently used diplomatic term. The intention is to overcome deadlocks by avoiding and postponing detailed interpretations until implementation. The basic rationale is that the parties will be more committed to a signed agreement, that is, following the device of *pacta sunt servanda*. However, in identity-based conflicts, which often lack established or accepted rules of the game of negotiation, constructive ambiguity frequently turns destructive and counterproductive.
Outline of the book

Chapter one examines the role of private military and security companies and discusses their engagement in contemporary conflicts under the ‘culture of impunity.’ Anna Leander explores the complexity of international legal and regulatory tools to regulate the activities of these actors. The second chapter examines the link between the privatisation of security in the context of armed conflict and state control of force. Joakim Berndtsson provides an empirical analysis of the changes and challenges of the privatisation of security in Iraq. Chapter three presents an overview of the European Union’s efforts of conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Michael Schultz pays particular attention to the political visions, ambitions and strategies of the EU directed at the level of the political elite, middle and grassroots level. Chapter four, by Kersti Larsdotter, assesses the changes and challenges in peace operations concerning the use of military force at the tactical level of operation. She argues that the conduct of military force has a crucial impact on the outcome of peace operations. In the fifth chapter, Maria Småberg utilises a historical perspective to challenge the conventional understanding that women are new in the peacebuilding arena. She provides a historical account of the Swedish missionary and peacebuilder Alma Johansson, an eyewitness to the Armenian genocide, and explores the role of women in peacebuilding. In chapter six, Birger Heldt raises questions about the sequencing of various peacemaking efforts, such as when mediation should be undertaken in violent conflicts to ensure cumulative as well as synergetic effects. Chapter seven explores the mediation efforts of Norway in the Sri Lankan peace process. Kristine Höglund and Isak Svensson analyse among other things the motivation behind mediation initiatives. The book concludes with a summary by the editors, highlighting some of the challenges faced by external actors engaged in the transition from war to peace.

2 This book is a result of the biannual conference on Peace and Conflict Research, which was held at Lund University in October 2008. Financial support for organising this event was graciously granted by the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Thanks also to David Ratford, who provided excellent proof reading of the manuscript.
CONCLUSION

Changing Roles and Practices

Karin Aggestam & Annika Björkdahl

Introduction

To manage conflict dynamics and strengthen peace processes is an enormous challenge to the external actors concerned. A key question pertains to the timing of interventions by outside actors. At what point should international actors become involved in a conflict? An obvious problem is whether or not to respond to calls for attention and swift action from conflict-ridden societies. At the same time, lack of political will has become a major stumbling-block in the mobilisation of resources and personnel for peace-support operations. The reasons and motivations of external actors vary and influence the extent of their engagement.

The motivation and timing of entry into a conflict will consequently determine the strategies and tools used by the external actors. The international community has a vast range of approaches, strategies and instruments in its toolbox to build peace. Yet how to combine peacemaking strategies in the most efficient way is still unresolved. Different strategies are frequently implemented simultaneously, but without serious consideration of whether the strategies reinforce or undermine each other.

This points to the challenge of coordination and cooperation between the multitude of external actors on the ground in order to avoid unnecessary overlaps and to establish some kind of division of labour. However, it is necessary to strike a balance between the responsibilities of local and external actors. Peace can only be
achieved through a combination of activities undertaken by local and external actors in order to be sustainable also when the external actors withdraw. This points to the common critique that external actors do too little, too late and leave too early. When and how should external actors disengage and transfer responsibility to the local actors? The problem of exit affects decisions concerning entry, since a pre-determined exit date and a prepared exit strategy are sometimes preconditions for engagement.

Challenges of entry

The literature on escalation models of violent conflicts provides important insights about the appropriate timing to initiate conflict prevention, management and resolution (see for example, Zartman & Faure, 2005). Concepts such as early warning, preventive diplomacy and preventive action indicate that external actors should undertake actions early in the conflict cycle prior to the outbreak of systematic violence. In the early phase of the conflict, levels of hostilities are low, casualties are generally few, memories of atrocities are limited and this in turn may serve to make peace more likely (Lund, 1996). In contrast, Stedman argues that preventive diplomacy provides no easy solution and should not be oversold. Despite the attractiveness of the notion of prevention, an international political will needs to be mobilised, interests and motives must be spelled out, priorities set and scarce resources balanced (Stedman, 1995).

Another frequently used notion of timing is the ‘ripeness’ of conflict; that is, a mutually hurting stalemate (Zartman, 1989) or an enticing opportunity (Mitchell, 1995). Birger Heldt explores in his chapter the timing of intervention by external actors in recently initiated, low-level intrastate conflicts. The findings presented suggest that disputants in the early phase of an escalating conflict should avoid unaided, direct face-to-face talks, and preferably communicate indirectly through a third-party.

Höglund and Svensson also address the problematique of the appropriate timing of mediation efforts. The involvement of external actors, in this case the mediation of Norway in the Sri Lankan
peace process, is a function of supply and demand for mediation. In other words, ‘the mediation will occur when there is interest from a mediator to function as a peacemaker, and simultaneously there is an interest from the primary and secondary parties to request third-party mediation from a particular mediator’ as argued by Höglund and Svensson in this volume. Highlighting the demand for external engagement from the parties to the conflict leads to the important issue of consent. In contemporary international relations, sovereignty is still the overriding principle guiding state interaction. Like any norm, sovereignty changes over time, but most external actors still respect the norm and avoid intervening in the internal affairs of other states (Björkdahl, 2006: 214–228). Hence, for external actors to attempt to manage conflicts within states and promote peacebuilding, consent remains a key aspect. In internal conflicts such as the one between the government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the government position is more powerful in terms of legitimacy and international recognition, which is a common characteristic of contemporary asymmetrical conflicts.

Consenting to third-party mediation in negotiations with separatists, may somewhat alter the balance or power, as it confers legitimacy to the non-state actor as well as some type of international recognition. Consent by the host country has traditionally been one of the main principles of peacekeeping and regarded as crucial for both deployment and success. In contemporary peace operations, where the use of force or the threat of use of force is a viable option, the issue of consent is increasingly complex, as Kersti Larsdotter argues in her chapter. It is not only important to gain consent from the political elite of the main parties to the conflict, that is, at the military strategic level, but also to gain consent at the tactical level, which refers to the will of the local population.

A prerequisite for outside involvement is the ability to muster a political will among the key members of the international society to take swift and resolute action in times of crisis. Maria Småberg illustrates in her chapter that the lack of political will is not only a contemporary phenomenon due to humanitarian fatigue. The lack of international response to the early-warning signals from, among others, the Swedish missionary who witnessed the onset of the
genocide of the Armenians clearly demonstrates the limited interest of the great powers in the early 20th century in reacting to, and alleviating, the suffering of a small nation.

Challenges midway

A basic challenge for outside actors pertains to cooperation and coordination and whether to engage in top-down or bottom-up policies: to establish, reform and strengthen democratic institutions; to persuade and coerce war-makers to abstain from violence and negotiate with political leaders, or to foster a functioning civil society in the hope that strong peace constituencies will influence the political elite and cultivate self-sustainable peace in the long term. Maria Småberg highlights the bottom-up approach in her analysis of the female missionary and peacebuilder at the local level, supporting the civil society through health work rather than spreading Christianity to the local community. A justifiable criticism of the top-down approach is that it is not founded in or adapted to the local context (Chopra, 2002). This in turn creates a sense of lack of ownership of the peace efforts and peacebuilding processes among the local population in war-torn societies. Michael Schulz underlines in his chapter the importance of a multitrack approach to peacebuilding as a means of including the broader civil society and to ensure local ownership and needs, interests and visions of peace. The difficulty of allowing for local ownership is revealed in the Norwegian mediation in Sri Lanka, where both the antagonists held veto-powers over the outcome of the mediation process, rendering the mediator powerless to push for a specific outcome.

The interaction between international and local actors is dynamic and complicated, yet crucial for the successful transition from war to peace. Kersti Larsdotter provides insights into the dynamics of interaction between international and local actors in Afghanistan. Peacekeepers in contemporary complex, multi-dimensional, hybrid missions will often be in close interaction with the local population, and ensuring their collaboration and understanding is deemed to be essential to the success of the operation. The ability of ISAF-peacekeepers to use force affects the interaction with the local Afghan
population. Larsdotter illustrates that under such circumstances minimum use of force or use of force in protection of the local population may contribute to strengthening the relationship between the outside and the inside actors. The experience of the British-led Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) demonstrated the efficiency of minimum use of force, which gained the acceptance of the parties as well as the local population. In contrast, the German-led PRTs’ approach to the use of force at the tactical level could better be described as ‘show of force’, with large number of troops wearing body armour on patrolling missions, travelling in heavily protected vehicles, and inclined to more robust use of force.

Cooperation and coordination between state and non-state actors is a contentious issue in the field of security, which raises questions about the division of labour between public and private security actors and about state control and monopoly of violence. The growth of private military and security companies (PMSCs), active in the midst of conflict or in post-conflict settings, contributes to the general trend of privatisation of war and peace. According to Anna Leander, this trend can be traced to contemporary neoliberal practices, which makes the question of accountability of these actors particularly troublesome. Moreover, there are divergent views on what kind of actions should be taken to improve international regulation of PMSCs. As argued by Joakim Berndtsson, the increase in the number of PMSCs changes the composition of the instruments of force and with it the basis of state control, thereby challenging the functional, political control, as well as the social control central to civil-military relations. The extent of security privatisation in Iraq is unparalleled, with PMSCs providing a number of both civilian and military functions, such as training, SSR, armed-convoy escort services, translators, bodyguards for NGOs, states and their armed forces. Most PMSCs in Iraq operate outside the traditional military chain of command, which creates additional problems of collaboration and coordination.

Closely related to collaboration and coordination is the key challenge of how to sequence the numerous activities undertaken by the myriad of actors engaged in a particular conflict setting. As Birger Held demonstrates, if peace talks are properly sequenced, synergies
between various peace-promoting activities can be found and the cumulative effect achieved will be more advantageous. However, several peace processes often lack coordination and collaboration between various peacemakers, which may generate counterproductive results.

Challenges of exit

There are several conflicts, such as the asymmetrical conflict in Sri Lanka, which may be described as intractable because they prove to be remarkably resistant to resolution. This makes the exit of external actors particularly challenging. As already mentioned, many peace-support operations and peacebuilding missions are conditioned by the existence of a pre-planned exit strategy. The result of such a precondition may be a premature withdrawal of troops, resources and overall engagement before a situation of self-sustainable peace has been established. The holding of elections is a preferred strategy to boost the legitimacy of a peace accord. It is also a common exit strategy, which characterised several of the 1990s peace-support operations. Early elections have also been used to transfer authority and responsibility from international actors to newly-elected political elites. This has been perceived as a swift way of withdrawing, while at the same time countering criticism of lack of local ownership and accusations of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism. Yet as Roland Paris (2004) underlines, there are great risks in holding premature elections in vulnerable post-conflict societies, as they tend to generate counterproductive results, such as ethnically based party systems, polarisation of the electorate, and large-scale violence. They risk sparking violence during the campaigning and the elections themselves, and after the results are out (Högblund 2008). Voters in Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, believed that they had to counterbalance the expected nationalistic voting of the other ethnic groups and felt compelled to vote for their ethnic-based parties. Also, even though electoral contest is obviously to be preferred to violent contest, militants transformed into politicians tend to continue the conflict by other means.

Continued international presence to monitor implementation
of peace accords has proved central to the establishment of a self-sustainable peace. International NGOs may also be able to continue monitoring and assisting a development towards self-sustainable peace and to collaborate with and support local NGOs and representatives of the civil society. In general terms, the existence of vibrant civic organisations can counter the top-down tendencies of the political elites and international regulations and provide local participation and ownership to the peace process. Due to the legacy of the conflicts, most post-war civil societies are likely to be dominated by sectarian groups. However, some groups strive to promote ‘civic politics’ in contrast to ethnic politics and to open up a political space to articulate local ideas of peace (Belloni, 2008). These groups may therefore function as pro-peace constituencies and be central to the self-sustainability of peace.

In conclusion, external actors face a number of challenges, where the choice of timing is deemed essential for successful and efficient third-party intervention. Another critical aspect is the challenging task of coordination and cooperation, due to the multitude of actors who are engaged in contemporary peace-support operations.