

# Global Security and Regional Responses: Conflict Management in a Fractured World

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# List of Acronyms

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCSP	Geneva Centre for Security Policy
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SSR	Security Sector Reform
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USIP	United States Institute of Peace



# Executive Summary

On 13-14 December 2009 the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) co-hosted a workshop jointly with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Washington, DC, and the Norman Patterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Canada. The workshop was co-financed by the Swiss Government and the International Development Research Council, Ottawa.

Entitled “Global Security and Regional Responses: Conflict Management in a Fractured World”, the workshop brought together leading experts, practitioners, and scholars in the fields of conflict management and regional security. The discussions touched upon the evolving global security environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, regional security challenges and security institutions, as well as strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in conflict management practices.

Five regions were analysed in different roundtables: Asia, Central America, Africa, the Middle East, and the Transatlantic and Eurasian security complexes. This report reflects on the debates of the workshop and, to a degree, draws on GCSP’s own work on security regionalism as well as on draft chapters of a USIP forthcoming book on the same issues.<sup>1</sup>

The following chapters look at each region in sequence. They address major threats and challenges to regional security, as perceived by the regional security actors. They also describe responses to these security challenges, including conflict management norms, practices, and institutions in the regions. In addition, they focus on strengths and weaknesses of the regional approaches to security and conflict management, and, where appropriate, present options and recommendations for the improvement of security and conflict management practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, *Rewiring Regional Security in a Fragmented World*, Washington, DC, US Institute of Peace Press, forthcoming.

Since the end of the Cold War, global security has become ever more multi-faceted: threats have proliferated from the inter-state to the domestic, and from the international to the transnational levels. The security agenda has broadened with the emergence of non-traditional threats such as terrorism, illegal migration, epidemics, and climate change. Conflict intensity has declined markedly, and inter-state conflicts have virtually disappeared. However, high-intensity inter-state wars have been replaced by lower-intensity civil conflicts and one-sided violence against unprotected civilians.

The management of these threats has gone through tremendous evolutions, both in terms of actors and practices. In particular, states not only act through international institutions, but they also increasingly work alongside non-state actors, bringing conflict management to a new level of complexity.

In this context, regional security institutions have become key actors of conflict management, as they are increasingly seen as an appropriate framework for the management of threats that have a strong regional dimension.

At the same time, the multilateral security architecture is still slow to adapt to emerging challenges and power shifts. At the regional level, security organizations are proliferating, but with the exceptions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and perhaps the European Union (EU), their mandates are usually limited, and their operational capacities remain weakly developed. Furthermore, the rising powers in the regions surveyed – Russia, India, and China – have not shown much inclination to assume responsibility for regional stability and institution development.

The regions with the strongest institutions tend to be those that have overcome traditional notions of sovereignty in favour of a culture of regional integration, NATO and the EU being the most concrete examples. By contrast, regions where sovereignty, understood as a protection against external interference, is still strongly embedded in the political culture, most efforts at regional integration have been limited.

In this context, an important trend that seems to shape the current international environment for conflict management is the ad hoc network approach to the management of security, through which coalitions of interested states, international agencies and non-state actors would cooperate in addressing a given threat.

Such an approach involves both state and non-state actors, and spans various levels of security governance.

All these issues were addressed to a certain extent in the different regional settings.

In East and South East Asia, the rise of China is upsetting the current balance of power. With China's influence expanding beyond the sub-region, it is set for competition with India for regional naval supremacy. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the dominant regional security forum, has performed relatively well in defusing tensions through dialogue and economic integration. However, its narrow membership and limited operational capacities significantly hamper its ability to perform as a major conflict management actor in the broader region. One significant unknown in the region is the future course of North Korea's political development. Implosion of the regime could have catastrophic consequences, including regional nuclear proliferation. In South Asia, the military solution sought by the Government in Sri Lanka could set a dangerous precedent. In both East and South Asia, China and India do not seem to be inclined to promote the development of regional conflict management institutions.

Central America is going through a different process. The region is faced with the challenge of organized crime, which threatens to infiltrate societies and undermine democracy in the region. Central American nations have failed to react in a coordinated way. Instead, they have tended to shoulder their respective militaries with this responsibility, thereby reinforcing an element that has historically hampered democracy. The Organization of American States (OAS) has been ill-equipped to address this threat, and should consider an expanded mandate and new resources if it wants to tackle this challenge in the future.

Africa and its regional groupings show another picture. Africa is still facing a host of traditional and non-traditional security threats, but is also the region that has seen the greatest regional integration over the last few decades. At the continental level, the African Union (AU) has developed a strong institutional framework featuring a collective security system that has made strong inroads against the entrenched and prevailing coup culture. However, the main weakness of African conflict management lies in implementation, due to the AU and other sub-regional organizations' struggle with capacity gaps, be it in financial, personnel or expertise terms.

The Middle East remains a Westphalian regional system, in which regimes are mostly narrowly elitist while beset by a powerful Islamist challenge from below. Major threats to regional security are the Iranian nuclear programme and the Arab-Israeli conflict that have become linked with Iran's sponsorship of Hamas and Hezbollah. Institutions for formal conflict management in the region are weak; instead conflict is generally contained by informal means. The Arab League, the only organization in the region with comprehensive membership, suffers from a lack of cohesion, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) lacks the political clout to play any significant role.

Finally, twenty years after the end of the Cold War, the economic and political integration of Europe has created a zone of peace. There is no threat of major inter-state war on European soil. Accordingly, European attention has shifted to non-traditional threats like terrorism, illegal migration, or organized crime. European peace-mindedness expresses itself clearly in continued demilitarization. NATO still plays an important role in security governance and as a transatlantic security forum, but it is faced with the constant challenge of justifying its role, notably in tackling the so-called "new threats". In regards to the EU, although it has managed to develop a certain conflict management capacity and has indeed become an important security actor, it is also struggling with its political disunity and divergences among its member states on its future course. The global economic crisis has only reinforced these fault lines.

In Eurasia, Russia has developed into a reluctant power that will need to focus on a host of domestic problems. These include crises of demographics and health, violent insurgency, and porous borders. Moscow's relations with the United States and Europe are likely to improve in the long run, as Russia opens up its society in order to overcome its many domestic challenges. Russia's 2008 war with Georgia was a function of its vulnerability in the Caucasus, and its resolution has done nothing to stabilize this precarious region. Furthermore, the relative absence of Russia from the regional stage leaves a power vacuum in Central Asia that is unlikely to be filled in the near future.

# Introduction: The Changing Global Environment for Conflict Management

Two decades after the end of the Cold War, new trends in international security are discernible. Increasingly, post-cold war security is multifaceted. Threats have proliferated. They extend beyond traditional military security to such fields as human rights, economics, ecology, and communication technology. They increasingly spill over state boundaries. Local insecurities easily impact at the national level and beyond, threatening regional and international security. These threats increasingly originate from non-state sources such as organized crime, “terrorists” and pirates. Likewise, non-state armed groups frequently appear as parties in violent conflict. On the other hand, conflict management now entails a wide range of actors. In peacemaking and peacebuilding activities, states work through and alongside regional and international organizations, local and international NGOs, epistemic networks, and private businesses.

Furthermore, conflict intensity has declined markedly, in every region of the world. With few exceptions, the phenomenon of inter-state conflict has virtually disappeared. However, this does not imply less violent conflicts overall. High-intensity inter-state wars have been replaced by lower-intensity civil conflicts and one-sided violence against unprotected civilians. Modern civil conflict tends to spill across state boundaries, while disproportionately victimizing civilians and endangering human security. It undermines the state, triggers refugee flows, and draws neighboring countries into the fighting.

At a broader level, shifts in the distribution of power are leaving their marks on the architecture of the international system. While the United States may still remain the “international hegemon” ten years into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the notion of unipolarity is now diffused by the rise of new economic challengers. These new powers – China, India, Brazil, and, to a lesser degree Russia – have become formidable regional players, with increasing abilities and will to exert influence at a global level. Thus far, what is noticeable about the rise of these powers is its

peaceful progression: the absence of major war among these powers. The avoidance of such confrontation will be a major challenge for the international system in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

At the same time, the system appears slow to adapt its response to new realities. Less formalized regimes of economic governance, like the G-8, were the first to recognize the ascendancy of new powers. Indeed, the G-8 has recently been supplemented by a G-20 that gives new regional economic powers a seat at the table.

In the same vein, more formalized global security institutions have acquired renewed relevance with the end of the Cold War, and have accordingly had to shoulder new burdens. On the one hand, the end of super-power confrontation has dissolved the gridlock that hampered the United Nations' role in maintaining global peace and security, and has allowed it to address the proliferation of civil conflicts through a host of new sanctions regimes and peace missions with quickly evolving mandates. On the other hand, these institutions face difficulties in adapting to both the new balance of power, and the evolving nature of security challenges. In particular, they are subject to constraints in terms of funding, mandate rigidity, and bureaucratic practice. This is perhaps as much a reason for, as a consequence of, the tendency of the "international community" to create new institutions to address new challenges (rather than adjusting the mandate of existing bodies). This has led to constitutional overlap and competition between institutions. This competition can be a boost for institutional performance, as it rewards entrepreneurship and creates institutional density that proves helpful in cases where a single institution fails to perform. But overlap also incites great powers to engage in forum shopping, where they choose to act through the venue that is most supportive of their interests.

In this context, the global security architecture is also shaped by increasing security cooperation at the regional and sub-regional levels. In the last two decades, new regional security organizations have emerged while existing regional institutions have expanded their activities into the security field. Regional security arrangements are not uniform in nature, but are designed to respond to the security challenges as perceived by their members. Due to varying threat perceptions, regional security institutions address a wide range of traditional and non-traditional security threats. It is hence no surprise that, for instance, African

regional organizations, notably the African Union, have focused on developing peacekeeping capacities, while Central Asian regional institutions tend to focus on terrorism and organized crime.

Spanning global, regional, and sub-regional levels may turn out to be a new pattern in collective conflict management. Termed “cooperative conflict management” by some workshop participants, this ad hoc network approach to managing conflict features collective action by disparate “coalitions of the committed”.<sup>2</sup> Collective action is not dependent on specific institutions nor on hegemonic leadership, it involves both state and non-state actors, and it spans various levels of security governance. The concerted efforts at fighting piracy in the Gulf of Aden are an example of this practice of cooperative conflict management. Here major maritime powers cooperate with Kenyan authorities and Somali non-state actors in protecting major sea lines in the Gulf of Aden. This effort is paralleled by protection measures taken by the commercial transport sector. So far, interventions of the kind that could be considered cooperative conflict management have been confined to the regional and sub-regional levels, and may hence represent a new regional response to security threats.

One consequence of this evolution might be a broader implication of local as well as international non-state actors in international security. It has yet to be seen whether this will indeed be the case. The hallmarks of the post-World War II order have exhibited remarkable continuity. Global order is still based on the principle of state sovereignty, and its corollary, non-intervention. It is true that the meaning of these notions has become increasingly contested, notably with the principle of Responsibility to Protect. Democratic governance and a broader respect for human rights have made inroads against authoritarian practices of governance. However, the extent of these changes vary regionally, with Europe and the Americas being more progressive, while Africa, the Middle East, Central, East and South-East Asia still cling to conservative interpretations of sovereignty that are marked by a strong aversion to outside intervention.

Accordingly, in many places the constraint of sovereignty over conflict management is no less strong than a decade ago. State aversion to external intervention in their internal affairs limits the set of policy responses open to intervening

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<sup>2</sup> See the conclusion of Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, *Rewiring Regional Security in a Fragmented World*, Washington, DC, US Institute of Peace Press, forthcoming.

parties. In the same vein, states do not appear to be inclined to accept regional autonomy as a solution to separatist conflict. In many crises, regional status quo powers undermine international efforts to apply models of autonomy in their immediate vicinity by quietly backing recalcitrant incumbents in their opposition to making concessions to challengers. This was observed in the case of India in the Nepalese conflict, and Indonesia in the conflict in West Papua. Similarly, many governments are still loath to involve their own civil society in the development of blueprints for power-sharing or regional autonomy arrangements. On a more positive note, one can identify a new pragmatism in conflict management – on part of the US administration among others – when it comes to engagement with non-state actors recently shunned for being “terrorists”.



# Asia: Emerging Threats and Low Conflict Management Institutionalization

Asia as a region is not necessarily a point of reference for the security policy of most Asian states. Unlike in Africa or the Arab world, there is hardly any Asian identity or “pan-Asianism” that would link South, East, and South-East Asian states in their security thinking. Nonetheless, Asia features a number of threats that extend beyond each of the sub-regions. The major traditional security threat may arise from the ascendancy of the two most populous countries in the region, China and India, which could upset sub-regional balances of power and set them on a course of confrontation over broader influence. The Sino-Indian relationship will evolve to be one of the defining parameters of Asian security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While this relationship has been rocky in the past, including a brief war in 1962, it is difficult to predict which avenue it will take in the future. China has traditionally had sound relations with Pakistan, India’s principal adversary. Despite Pakistan’s relative weakness and instability, a Sino-Pakistani alliance would be difficult to contain for India. More encouragingly, both India and China profess to peaceful aims to their ascendancy, which is built on economic growth, and predicated on stability in what they consider their zones of economic and political influence. Both nations, however, have recently sought to match their increasing economic clout with a surge in armaments, especially in terms of maritime assets, such as the development of aircraft carriers. China has gradually increased its presence in the South China Sea, in part to protect the major sea lanes through which it obtains natural resources, responsible for fuelling its economic growth. If China is serious about protecting those sea lanes in the long run, this may lead it to venture further West into the Indian Ocean, which India considers to be its political backyard. This could lead to an arms build-up in the Indian Ocean that could potentially disturb the security equilibrium of the entire area.

China’s policy of military expansion is not only worrisome for India, but is also viewed as a threat in South East Asia. China’s push to dominate the South China Sea, and its claims to the resource-rich waters around the Spratly Islands, have for years stirred trouble with neighbouring Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Control over the Spratly Islands and their territorial waters has been a bone of contention even within the ASEAN, which so far has failed to address the issue.<sup>3</sup> In jockeying for regional influence, all nations in the sub-region have increased investment to upgrade and expand their military capacity. If sparked by a security crisis, this progressive arms build-up could escalate into an arms race in South East Asia.

Sub-regional stability is also threatened by separatism, insurgencies and terrorism. The Muslim community of Southern Thailand has been affected by a separatist insurgency that the government has failed to subdue, having tried both incentives and repression. The Philippines is afflicted by a number of separatist and insurgent groups. On the Island of Mindanao, where the government is fending off a separatist threat from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a negotiated resolution remains plausible. The Communist New People's Army is likewise on the defensive. Islamic terrorism in the South East Asian sub-region, however, has been growing since the late 1990s. Its major proponent, Jemaah Islamiyah, claims to fight for an Islamic state covering the Muslim-populated parts of the sub-region, but has mostly been active in Indonesia and in the Philippines through its affiliate, the Abu Sayyaf Group. In response, joint counter-terrorist operations by affected states in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have reduced the threat of Islamic terrorism, yet it remains high on the region's security agenda.

North Korea also represents a threat to stability that extends beyond the East Asian sub-region, albeit in a different respect. If its nuclear weapons programme is not checked, it could lead to wider regional nuclear proliferation. Preventing proliferation on a large scale depends on the continued involvement of the United States and other regional powers. Hence the point was made that the Six-Party talks should be continued and be premised on a grand bargain of denuclearization for generous economic development assistance. A collapse of the weak yet nuclear North Korean state would be a major source of instability for Asia, and might enable nuclear proliferation to non-state entities.

The United States plays a significant role in North East Asian security. With its deployments in Hawaii, Japan, Guam, and South Korea, its defence commitments to Japan and South Korea, and its support for Taiwan, it remains a major security

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3 The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional organization that counts ten members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

actor in the region. The lack of strategic dialogue between the United States and China over a host of issues, including Taiwan, is a detriment to stability in East and South-East Asia. Also, a withdrawal of US troops from Okinawa, as demanded by the Japanese government, may imply greater self-reliance of Japan in defence matters. More robust and confident Japanese Self-Defense Forces would introduce a new regional power to the North East Asia and could reignite fears of Japanese militarism in East and South-East Asia.

Asia has not been spared from non-traditional security threats. Terrorism has been mentioned as a contentious issue. The prominent outbreaks of Avian influenza in East Asia, and repeated Dengue fever pandemics have raised awareness among East and South-East Asian governments that contagious diseases pose an increasing security threat. Similarly, climate change and its effect on weather patterns, as well as the incidence and severity of natural disasters have been recognized as impacting security. These threats are so far, however, not addressed in any coordinated fashion at the regional level.

Asian regional responses to regional security threats are relatively low-key. The unusual approach to collective security that has been labelled as the ASEAN way serves as a good example. Regional cooperation within ASEAN is highly consensual, and is mostly focused on matters of economic exchange and the maintenance of good relations between members. According to this model, security will be maintained by sustaining growth for all states through economic cooperation, and conflicts must be solved peacefully. Intervention in the domestic affairs of a state by its neighbours or a regional organization is considered unacceptable by most Asian nations. It is therefore reasonable to say that the focus is on conflict avoidance rather than conflict management.

In the face of this unwillingness to proactively address regional security threats in a collective manner, the relative stability of the Asian sub-regions is indeed surprising and provides a strong argument in support of the “ASEAN way”. Within the framework of ASEAN a variety of satellite organizations have emerged, many of them designed to link the ten members to important third countries, such as China, Japan, and India, and the United States. These include the ASEAN summit, the “ASEAN + 3”,<sup>4</sup> the “ASEAN + 6”,<sup>5</sup> the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the

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4 “ASEAN + 3” consists of ASEAN states plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

5 “ASEAN + 6” consists of ASEAN states plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. The ARF is the most comprehensive in membership,<sup>6</sup> and can be regarded as the regional platform for security dialogue in Asia. While ASEAN has had an impact in maintaining stability in Asia as a catalyst for confidence building, and in coordinating responses to non-traditional threats such as terrorism, overall regional stability in East and South East Asia may also be due to the fact that most regional parties have realized that the conflicts that they fought from the 1960s to the 1990s were not conducive to their overriding priority of economic development. This focus on economic development might explain why China has opted for its “good neighbour policy”, and exhibited restraint in recent years in pursuing its interests in the South China Sea.

Arguably, however, regional integration into ASEAN has stabilized Vietnam and Cambodia, two countries that were at the fault lines of the Cold War, deeply internally split between US and Soviet proxy factions. ASEAN has also been successful in securing access to the United Nations (UN), particularly in response to the cyclone that hit Myanmar (Burma) in 2007. On the other hand, the Asian attitude of non-intervention has made effective regional responses to the worsening human rights situation in Myanmar impossible, as well as to the Thai coup of 2007. In the same vein, ASEAN does not have a peacekeeping element. Missions in Indonesia have been led by the UN, with ASEAN playing no operational role. Further, it is of concern that ASEAN has no mechanism for fostering arms control, even among its core membership. Still, ASEAN is by far the strongest of the sub-regional mechanisms in Asia.

In sharp contrast is the situation in South Asia. The sub-region has been the stage of a host of unresolved state and inter-state conflicts: between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal and, until recently in Sri Lanka. It is the only region in the world that has seen two nuclear powers in open war with each other, and it remains highly volatile. What is perhaps puzzling is that India, as the most populous democracy in the world and a rising sub-regional hegemon, has not sought to develop mechanisms for effective conflict management in the region. At the regional level, there is an absence of proactive effort in managing conflict, as was illustrated by the apathy of India in the face of the

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6 The ARF consists of the following participants: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, the United States, and Vietnam.

final offensive in the Sri Lankan conflict in 2009. As an aspiring regional power, India could have been expected to play a more engaging role in managing the conflicts in Sri Lanka and in Nepal. On the contrary, India seems to have taken a cue from the Sri Lankan Government's search for a military solution to the Tamil conflict, when it recently announced that it will crush its homegrown Naxalite rebellion instead of addressing the conflict's root causes. If successful, this could set a dangerous precedent for Asia in general on how to deal with internal security challenges.

In summary, Asia largely remains in a Westphalian context. To improve its effectiveness at managing conflict, it would need to transform its culture of non-intervention and recognize the limits of sovereignty. The Asian notion of sovereignty may soften as human rights and democracy make further inroads into the region. Until recently, Asian countries flatly denied the applicability of human rights to their societies. Workshop participants contended that this was not tenable in the long run, and suggested some policy recommendations. Asia could learn from the experience of Africa: having suffered from a host of civil and regional conflicts during the Cold War, Asia has developed a theoretical norm of non-indifference for countries' internal affairs. Asian nations should also seek to improve on the ASEAN approach of institutionalized conflict avoidance by integrating effective arms control mechanisms and implementing practices of positive military cooperation. Finally, they should be prepared to allow civil society participation in conflict resolution, which assumes an understanding of civil society involvement as a resource, and not as a bothersome liability.

# Central America: Strong Organized Criminal Networks versus Weak Regional Integration

During the late 1970s and 1980s Central America was haunted by a series of civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, in which left-wing guerillas faced off against repressive military regimes. In the early to mid-1990s, the United Nations successfully intervened, bringing the conflicts in El Salvador and Guatemala to a peaceful settlement. The UN peace missions were among the first to implement complex mandates including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants as well as security sector reform (SSR), reconciliation programmes as well as a planned and supported transition to democracy. However, these peace processes failed in preventing the spread of criminals throughout Central America that formed organized criminal networks. Today, the activities of these criminal networks form the major threat to Central American security. The rise of these networks is a regional phenomenon that coincided with the transition to democracy in the Central American sub-region, along with increasing globalizing influences in economics and communications. Organized criminal networks operate trans-nationally, engaging in human trafficking, narcotics, and small arms and light weapons. Central America is a known transit route for illicit trade, especially in narcotics. In regard to the cocaine trade, for instance, Central American states are sandwiched between producers in South America and consumers in the United States, and are therefore tackling this challenge on a national level, which is unlikely to resolve the transnational problem.

Moreover, the rise of criminal networks is threatening the weak democracies of Central America. Organized crime is predicated on corruption of politics and of the security forces. Criminal gangs are responsible for large-scale violence that undermines public order and security in areas under their control, and precipitates social breakdown. The escalation of organized criminal activity has had another worrying side effect. It has compelled governments to bring in the armed forces that had been disempowered in the course of the democratic transitions of the

1990s, in order to take on the armed enforcement role that the police had been unable to fill. This is leading to a new militarism that is doubly unfortunate. First, Central American networks of organized crime are typically linked to the military. Leading figures of organized criminal networks are usually former members of the armed services that retain connections to political and military cadres. For this reason, using the military as a second-line police force is largely ineffective in addressing organized crime. Second, and equally important, bringing the military back in may endanger democracies by re-empowering the military old guard, which historically has had authoritarian tendencies.

To improve law enforcement capacity, the United States is providing assistance towards fighting organized crime in the region, and is developing common strategies with partner countries. The most important of these US-led assistance programs is the Merida Initiative, featuring training and capacity-building in law enforcement for the purpose of fighting against organized crime, illicit drug and arms trafficking, and money laundering in Central America. However, the point was made that programme activities and funding are very much concentrated in the United States, and focused on American priorities. The threat of transfers of small arms and light weapons from the United States to Central America, for example, is not sufficiently taken into account in the US-led cooperation.

In this context, sub-regional cooperation is limited. The Central American Integration System, a sub-regional organization, bent on creating an Economic Union of Central American states, is weak in comparison with the South American Common Market (also known as Mercosur), which excludes Central American states from membership. Hence the only regional organization is the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS, however, has neither the mandate nor the resources to lead in the fight against organized crime, or to halt the rise of militarism, and has therefore remained largely passive. The OAS has been entirely ineffective in its response to the recent crisis over the deposition of President Zelaya by the Honduran military. The sub-regional instrument designed for such situations, the Central American regional security model, defined by the Framework Treaty of Democratic Security in Central America, has lacked forcefulness and has not had an impact either. Application of bilateral pressure by the United States and other regional actors has similarly proved fruitless. This demonstrates the

lack of effective instruments to address challenges to Central American stability in a coordinated manner.

As in the Asian case, this vacuum in regional security instruments is best explained by the strong attachment to sovereignty that Central American nations exhibit. This attitude hampers effective regional responses in matters of security cooperation, but also in regards to conflict management. The handling of the Chiapas insurgency by the Mexican Government as a purely domestic issue, and its refusal to involve regional or international actors in conflict resolution, is a case in point.

Therefore, as in Central Asia, Central American countries need to address the capacity gap at the regional level by developing the OAS in terms of law enforcement cooperation, new mandates to foster good governance at the national level, and effective programming for security sector reform. A reinvigorated OAS would allow Central American states to collectively address the challenge of transnational organized crime. Furthermore, in their drug prohibition policies, governments would be well-advised to develop a long-term strategic response that gives equal consideration to drug demand and supply. Addressing organized crime and halting the rise of militarism can potentially go hand in hand, if efforts for reform of the security sector can be resumed. Civil society can play an important role here, both as a source of information and as agent of change. However, civil society in Central America struggles to exist outside the narco-culture that has gripped society; the creation of effective civil society therefore needs considerable long-term investment.



# Africa: The Slow Emergence of a Conflict Management Framework

Threats to African security remain manifold, and differ significantly by sub-region. The end of the Cold War has impacted African security in a variety of ways: the incidence of inter-state conflict has receded markedly and today the only unresolved inter-state conflicts (in the classic sense) are those between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and Eritrea and Djibouti, both over border demarcation. More saliently in terms of traditional security, Africa is home to a civil war belt that stretches from Senegal to Somalia and features three sub-regional conflict systems that are active to varying degrees. It is characteristic of these conflict systems that violent confrontation involves state and non-state actors, and that it spills across borders, blurring the distinction between civil and inter-state war. In the late 1990s, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) involved troops from seven foreign armies in addition to the main domestic conflict parties. The reasons for foreign involvement were complex, but the fact remains that neighbouring states used their alliance with local rebels and their direct military presence in the DRC to exploit natural resources such as diamonds and coltan, an activity that is still ongoing. This conflict entrepreneurship is not limited to the DRC, and it remains a particularly formidable security challenge in weak states that are rich in natural resources. Most importantly, it may prolong the duration of low-intensity conflict by endowing non-state armed groups with resources to continue their struggle, and spread insecurity regionally. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), for instance, which has opposed the Ugandan Government since 1987, has sustained itself by looting and the forced conscription of child soldiers, and has evaded the Ugandan army by migrating to areas of South Sudan, the Eastern DRC, and the Central African Republic (CAR). This conflict-ridden Central and East African sub-region has also recently experienced a fall-back in democratic practices, with the post-election crisis in Kenya, and opposition groups subject to new harassment in Uganda and the DRC.

African conflicts are also fuelled by easy availability of small arms and light weapons. While some of these arms are locally produced or are local relics of the African Cold War standoffs, the majority was transferred illicitly to the region in the 1990s. Moreover, arms tend to circulate among the countries that make up a conflict system. To cite one example, even after the end of conflict in Liberia, small arms were transferred to neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea where they had destabilizing effects. Related to the issue of arms transfers is the challenge of organized crime. Heavily invested in the drug and small arms trade, organized crime networks have established themselves in West Africa. The challenge that these networks pose to fledgling democracies and fragile states in the sub-region is no less severe than the one posed by the Central American rings.

Non-traditional threats are also numerous, and include climate change, mass migration, economic degradation, as well as pandemics. HIV/AIDS has a special significance, severely diminishing the productive potentials of many African societies.

Finally, an old threat with a new twist is the acquisition of African resources by foreigners. Whether it is Chinese exploitation of natural resources or the acquisition of agricultural croplands by Persian Gulf countries, recent large-scale transactions have lacked transparency and are increasingly suspected of exclusively serving elite interests at the expense of national welfare. In the Eastern DRC, for instance, civil society has insistently demanded increased transparency on concessions for resource exploitation awarded to China. Outside strategic interest in Africa has recently been on the rise, after a period of near total neglect of the continent – except by the former colonial powers, perhaps – that followed the waning of its strategic importance with the end of the Cold War. It is only recently that those African countries rich in resources or with comparatively well-developed markets have attracted substantial foreign investment.

Africa features a wide variety of sub-regional organizations active in security and conflict management in addition to the African Union (AU),<sup>7</sup> which addresses threats to peace and security at the continental level. The AU, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)<sup>8</sup> and other African sub-regional organizations have acquired experience in the conduct of peacekeeping and

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7 The African Union is composed of all 53 African states, with the notable exception of Morocco.

8 The ECOWAS is composed of 15 West African states: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

stabilization missions. Regional organizations are called upon to intervene because of their conflict-related expertise and familiarity with the culture of the country in crisis. Secondly, due to the regional nature of African conflicts, a response that involves all parties at the sub-regional level might be more effective than a top-down intervention. Finally, despite the fact that Africa has made good progress in regional integration compared to other regions, African states are often wary of international intervention. Sudan, for example, refused to accept a UN peacekeeping mission in Darfur, but agreed to the deployment of an AU-dominated contingent, eventually becoming an AU-UN hybrid mission.

On the other hand, lead nations upon which regional organizations usually depend for their peace missions might have a stake in the conflict at hand, potentially undermining the (perceived) impartiality of the mission. In the early 1990s, for instance, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) failed to enforce a peace agreement in Liberia because it was perceived as being partisan by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL refused to surrender their weapons to the ECOMOG, and the peace deal faltered.

The AU is the only continental organization in Africa which brings all African nations together (with the exception of Morocco), and serves as a "custodian" for regional efforts. It has a strong security and conflict management mandate, and features a rather well-developed institutional framework. Building on the African human rights system, the only one of its kind outside of Europe and the Americas, and the African Non-Aggression and Defense Pact, the AU has increased its capabilities of maintaining stability on the continent. The major decision-making organ in matters of security and conflict management is the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC). Somewhat like the United Nations Security Council, it functions both as a forum, where members can discuss regional threats to peace and security, and as a collective entity that takes policy decisions prescribing action. Most African sub-regional organizations have modelled their institutional architecture on that of the AU.

The AU is mandated to intervene in cases of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Moreover, procedures in place give any AU member the right to approach the PSC and request intervention in any specific crisis. Furthermore, the PSC has gone beyond mere condemnation of unconstitutional displays of power;

it applies sanctions, including asset freezes and travel bans, in response to *coups d'Etat*, as demonstrated against the leadership of Togo, Mauritania, and the island of Anjouan, Comoros.

The weaknesses of the AU lie in its operational capacity. In its operations in Somalia and Darfur, the Union has had to rely extensively on outside support in the critical areas of funding, intelligence-gathering, training of staff, logistics, and institutional structure. In the case of Darfur, the implementing body (the Darfur Integrated Task Force) has been separate from the Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) at AU headquarters, which has undermined the PSC's ability to maintain a coherent approach to operations. Another weakness lies in an inadequate diversification of the AU's resources base, in terms of troop contributions as well as in terms of funding. Troops to the missions in Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, and the Comoros came from only six African countries. Likewise, 75 per cent of the regular budget is carried by only five nations (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, and South Africa). This capacity gap is, of course, not specific to African regional organizations alone.

In Africa, an increasingly vibrant civil society has been strongly involved in peacemaking and peacebuilding activities. They have played a particularly strong role in the success of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions that have been an integral part of recent peace processes. The flexibility of response to the Kenyan crisis – involving the international peacemaking NGO Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the UN Department for Political Affairs, an AU Panel of the Wise in collaboration with interested governments – might be a model for conflict management that would be worth repeating in crises in Africa and beyond. In the wake of the Kenyan crisis, there has also been an astonishing reaction on the part of civil society in support of a resolution of the crisis, which included a sizable text-messaging campaign. In the process of mediation, however, the parties to the conflict chose not to avail themselves of the resources that civil society had to offer. This reluctance on the part of governments in crisis to draw on the resources offered by their civil society organizations persists all over Africa. In many African countries, proactive civil society groups face a backlash designed to curb their activities. In Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, for example, where elections were due respectively in 2010 and 2011, governments have sought to cripple civil

society activity by means of prohibitive legislation. In peacebuilding especially, the increased involvement of civil society would be one element of an overdue shift to a long-term strategy in crisis intervention that could expand regional and international commitment to peace processes. The success of both UN and AU interventions has been hampered by incomplete post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, and disengagement has been premature. Insufficient interventions have led to a resurgence of violence and a loss of credibility of the interveners, which damages the chances of bringing conflict to a lasting resolution, therefore presenting a threat to African security. In sustaining its fledgling conflict management operations, it was suggested that the AU would be well-advised to avail itself of the resources that civil society can offer in this field.

# Middle East: The Inefficacy of Conflict Management Tools

As a region, the Middle East is the result of a geographical categorization rather than of regionalization in terms of economic or political transactions. This explains why definitions of the region's boundaries continue to be subject to debate and change. For example, as is true for Asia in a broader sense, there is no such thing as a Middle Eastern identity. In recent years, for instance, the "borders" of the Middle East have expanded to include Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hence, Middle Eastern regional politics are determined by the dynamics of sub-regional relations, which reinforces the region's unequal political development. Therefore, in terms of security, it is necessary to distinguish between the different blocs. The Arabian peninsula is considered the most integrated, and has embarked on a hesitant path of sub-regional integration by establishing the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). These preliminary steps notwithstanding, the Middle East remains very much a Westphalian system that is challenged only from below by the existence of pre-modern political entities, the Kurdish heartland and Palestine. The distribution of power is uneven and has constantly been in flux in the region. At the state level, the main security protagonists are Iran, Iraq, Israel, Libya, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, each of them having the ability to upset the regional order. Secondary security players are, at the moment, Algeria, Egypt, and Syria, but these are generally not regarded as potential dangers to the precarious regional order. Turkey, however, is rapidly emerging as a growing economic and political power in the region and has the potential to play a transformative role in the region's affairs.

In terms of foreign influence, the Middle East has long been the scene of active outside involvement. The United States is still the dominant force in terms of political impact and military significance. Its relations with countries in the region range from close economic, political, and military cooperation with Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf countries at one end, to more hostile relations with Syria and Iran at the other. In recent years, the center of gravity in the Middle East has

shifted from the Levant to the Gulf, because of the rise of Iranian influence and the removal of its Iraqi counterweight. Iran and Turkey have sought to position themselves as regional powers, which has fostered a feeling of powerlessness among some Arab states, as Arab collective capacity to set the region's agenda has faltered.

Due to the heterogeneity of the region, security perceptions in the Middle East are divergent, polarizing distinct populations of countries. The Lebanon (2006) and Gaza (winter 2008-09) wars, for instance, were perceived by Arab public opinion to constitute a threat to the Arab world more broadly. Even though many Arab governments did not necessarily share this assessment, they towed the line in a show of solidarity.

A series of threats to regional security can be identified. First, regional interactions in the Middle East remain militarized, and violence has been endemic to inter-state relations, which makes preserving regional stability a precarious balancing act. There exists a web of inter-state tensions that have been put on hold for strategic reasons. Beneath the surface of this network, non-state protagonists such as Hamas and Hezbollah have become the new catalysts of violence.

Two regional security threats are of particular importance: Iran's nuclear programme, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Iran embarked on its nuclear programme in the 1990s, in order to deter an aggressive Iraq in a region where Iran has no allies, and at a time when its conventional capabilities were inadequate. Beset by unfriendly neighbours, Iran has used its nuclear programme and skillful foreign policy to bolster its erstwhile feeble regional position.

The frozen nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict has allowed non-state actors to violently seize the initiative. Iran has exploited this stalemate skillfully, and its foreign policy in support of Hamas has led to a linkage between the Iranian nuclear programme and the Arab-Israeli conflict. This relationship is now seen as a Gulf-Levant security problem that is perceived as such by most if not all parties in the region.

Arab countries fear a nuclear Iran because it would upset the conventional balance and would allow Iran to project power beyond the immediate sub-region. It is hence to be expected that an Iran with nuclear weapons would trigger a proliferation chain reaction across the region that would result in a precarious

multipolar nuclear scenario. Second, with the rise of Iran and the fall of the Baathist regime in Iraq, identity politics and inter-confessional tensions have come to the fore and are increasingly influencing inter-state relations on a regional level. The overthrow of the Iraqi regime in 2003 has created a dangerous power vacuum that has not yet been filled, and will in all likelihood remain a destabilizing factor for regional relations. With a post-war Iraq to be dominated by the Shia majority, the confessional balance of power could be tilting in the Persian Gulf. In another complicating development, Iran has gained a certain leverage over Arab public opinion through its exploitation of the stalemate in the Arab-Israeli conflict. By supporting Hamas, and by lashing out vigorously against Israel, Iran has put considerable pressure on Arab governments. With the Arab-Israeli conflict causing a major identity issue of transnational importance for Arab populations, no Arab government could comfortably oppose Hamas or Hezbollah in a public forum. Indeed, Arab governments are increasingly vulnerable internally. This is a consequence of the existing pressure on the social contract: the rise of Iran and the breakdown of Iraq have highlighted the confessional fractures that mark many Arab states, and have reinvigorated Shia populations who seek greater political participation. Moreover, Islamist fundamentalism is spreading across the region, fuelling the Sunni-Shia conflict within the population, and concurrently casting doubt on the legitimacy of ruling elites. Ironically, this is nothing more than mobilization based on “salafization” of politics by some of the most narrowly elitist Arab regimes, most notably Saudi Arabia.

In the wake of Arab paralysis and Iran’s rise, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been transformed as well. The dominance acquired by Hamas over Gaza has been regarded warily by Arab governments, especially by Egypt, who now has an offshoot of its opposition Muslim Brotherhood in its neighbour’s government. To a certain degree, an Iranian-backed Hamas is now not only a threat to Israel but also a major irritant to Arab governments.

In this context, the lack of political regionalism and the policy of government elites to maximize sovereignty at the expense of citizen participation and regional integration, have hampered the development of regional conflict management mechanisms. In this region, sovereignty trumps norms of political participation and human rights. Supplementing this traditional authoritarian streak is a deep



distrust of international norms. In the opinion of Arab leaders, Western shielding of Israel from sanctions over Israeli illegal occupation of Arab territory has made a mockery of international law. Arab governments are accordingly suspicious of concepts such as the Responsibility to Protect, which they view as a Western ploy to permeate the region. Arab governments, and their populations, also differ in their perception of Hamas and Hezbollah. Whether they are comfortable with these movements or not, they do not view violence perpetrated by them as acts of terrorism, but rather as legitimate acts of resistance to foreign occupation. Norms that may enjoy consensus at the international level are generally not recognized in the region.<sup>9</sup>

If anything, the Middle East has experienced de-regionalization in the recent past with the ebbing of Pan-Arabism. More recently, crisis management has also been subject to de-regionalization, which reflects a decreased capacity for regional conflict management. In contrast to what has happened in Africa since the end of the Cold War, all major Middle Eastern security crises (the Iraq wars of 1991 and 2003, the Lebanon War, the Sudan crisis, and the Afghanistan War) have been internationalized, but with limited success in terms of conflict management.

Hence, the Middle Eastern security architecture is confined to the sub-regional level, where organizations such as the Arab League and the GCC are active. While the Arab League is relatively comprehensive in terms of membership it is very disparate, including such politically divergent countries as Syria and Saudi Arabia. The GCC is very limited in terms of membership, but more unified in terms of members' foreign policies and alliance structures, including their dealings with outside actors. A possible alternative framework, integration based on Islamic identity, would resonate with the regional population but would probably not produce opportunities for mediation in regional conflicts.

Overall, conflict management efforts by these sub-regional organizations are routinely hampered by inconclusive implementation on the part of governments. The Arab League, for instance, serves as a forum to deliberate issues behind closed doors. The framework of Arab unity also lends higher legitimacy to the common positions adopted. Unlike successful regional organizations, however, the Arab League has a limited capacity for action for several reasons. First, poli-

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<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that while both Hamas and Hezbollah are on the US list of terrorist organizations, only Hamas is on the EU list.

tics in the Arab world tend to be highly personal, which can make relations fragile. Second, underdevelopment of civil society reduces government accountability both at the domestic and regional levels, creating a perfect environment for corruption. Third, attempts to introduce a top-down follow-up system within the Arab League have not been successful. The combination of these factors makes diplomacy in the Arab world appear erratic, as states adopt common decisions but then act divergently. This was illustrated by the dual game played by Arab governments with regard to the US invasion of Iraq: a unanimous resolution by the Arab League condemned the Iraq invasion, even though most members supported it in reality.

These dual attitudes have stalled the development of formal conflict management norms and practices in the region. However, informal means of mediation and conflict prevention have been somewhat effective in containing conflict and defusing tensions in the past. Such informal measures include the buying off of parties to the conflict to secure stability, the activation of cross-border religious or business ties, and most importantly, the utilization of channels that link the region's security apparatuses.

To defuse tensions in the region and create lasting stability, several participants argued that the Arab-Israeli conflict has to be peacefully resolved, and the Iranian nuclear programme needs to be addressed. Since both issues are linked in substance they need to be approached comprehensively at the regional level. This has been brought home by the failure of the GCC to make headway towards an arrangement with the Iranian regime. Despite the honest effort by a regional broker, Qatar, which invited Iran to the organization's summit in 2007, the GCC has been unable to even sustain dialogue with Iran. It is becoming increasingly clear that Iran is not willing to engage with sub-regional actors but rather has its eyes fixed on regional powers and resourceful external actors such as the United States, China, India, Russia and Israel. Seeking a grand bargain, Iran has a strong incentive to spoil any stand-alone progress in solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In terms of substance, the Arab Peace Plan could be an adequate basis on which to initiate a new peace process. Still, as the recent past has shown, external intervention is necessary to initiate conflict management in the region. One possible way forward would be to replicate recent pragmatic approaches like cooperation

on Iraq which involved all neighbours and relevant foreign powers. Both Iraqi reconstruction and the Arab-Israeli conflict could be addressed jointly in an open framework that gives Iran a seat at the table and involves major outside actors, similar to the Madrid Conference for the Middle East Peace Process. However, any initiative needs to be prepared carefully. International actors need to be able to establish some measure of credibility, and need to be perceived as honest brokers by the regional populations, lest engagement with them discredit their partnering regional governments. In addition, in building a constituency for this process, facilitators chosen from among the leadership of the smaller countries in the region should conform to the informal norms of conflict management in the region. This involves a personalized approach in which family ties as well as channels between security services are activated to build trust, and where understanding needs to be formed as the basis of agreement at the later stage. This would, by default, be a top-down approach, and as such would leave little room for civil society participation. Indeed, any move by foreign parties to bring in civil society would most likely prove unsuccessful, as traditionally, in this region, civil society has no role in the security field and, more broadly, is mainly limited to charity initiatives and issues of economic governance. Moreover, attempts by international actors to build the capacity of, or to provide support for any particular organization would probably doom that organization, in a region where governments have routinely cracked down on civil society organizations that have received external support.

# Transatlantic Area and Eurasia: Achieved Integration and Power Vacuum

Transatlantic cooperation on security matters has been one of the closest and most stable in the world. After the end of the Cold War, NATO has remained without a challenger, and has expanded eastward in the last few years to absorb the Eastern European (former Warsaw Pact) states until it reached the Russian border.

In the meantime, Europe has unified, first militarily within NATO, and then politically within the European Union (EU). With this unification, inter-state war on European soil has become virtually unthinkable. Hence, and this is unique among all regions discussed, major security threats either originate from outside of the region, or are non-traditional in nature (organized crime, terrorism, etc.). Today's security challenges facing the United States and Europe broadly overlap. They include terrorism, organized crime, climate change, economic disruption, and illegal migration. However, threat perceptions differ. Workshop's participants argued that terrorism, especially in relation to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, is the major threat to both Europe and the United States.<sup>10</sup> However, although the United States has perceived this threat as existential, and has adjusted its foreign and defence policy towards winning what former President Bush called "The War on Terror", Europe has not taken the same approach. Notwithstanding the participation of some Eastern European countries in the Iraq war of 2003, a geopolitical adventure that proved misguided, most European nations essentially remain in the Cold War state of relative demilitarization. European states tend to focus on their own political integration, and continue to rely on NATO as a last-resort guarantee of their conventional defence. In parallel, the EU has sought to develop its own defence and conflict management institutions, through the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), renamed Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) under the Lisbon Treaty. Europe is now a major exporter

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<sup>10</sup> Although in Europe quite a few countries have never been the target of modern terrorist attacks.

of intervention, and both the EU and NATO have launched peacekeeping and stabilization missions within Europe and beyond. At the same time, Europe has become war-averse, a function of the post-war success of its model of security-building through regional integration. European distaste for casualties, public disapproval of the NATO war in Afghanistan and a resulting unwillingness of European governments to commit troops to combat duty, all attest to Europe's reluctance to using force to further defence and foreign policy.

For some participants, the absence of any major conventional threat to trans-atlantic security and European skepticism towards the use of force do not bode well for the future of the Northern Atlantic defence alliance. The new non-traditional threats facing Europe and the United States require whole-of-government responses that the institutional framework of NATO is ill-suited to supply. Hence, in the mid- to long-term, NATO will have to find a new security role for itself to remain relevant. Within the organization, two broad visions for such a role have emerged. Globalists see the future of NATO as an institution of global reach, guaranteeing order and security at the global level. NATO's recent performance in Afghanistan, however, has dealt a blow to this attitude. Minimalists, by contrast, would prefer NATO to focus on its core mission of providing strategic reassurance. However, considering the low level of defence spending by many allied governments even as NATO is fighting a war in Afghanistan, it will probably be difficult to persuade them to commit funds to what would be little more than a military insurance policy.

Given the recent trends of both Europe and the United States – in its Iraq and Afghanistan wars – turning their backs on NATO, some have predicted a relative decline of the organization in the future. If so, the question remains whether the fledgling EU security and defence architecture will step in the void and establish Europe as a credible military player that is able to back up its economic might by force. This seems unlikely in the short run judging from the development of CSDP, which has been carried disproportionately by France and unevenly supported by Britain so far.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an inclusive Europe has been hugely successful at pacifying its immediate neighbourhood through economic cooperation and integration. In a matter of years, the European model will likely extend further to

incorporate, and unite, all of the Western Balkans, a region that convulsed with violence less than two decades ago.

However, while Europe has had remarkable success at stabilizing its own lands, it has been less effective in dealing with its “near abroad”, despite historically strong ties with these regions. These include the southern Mediterranean, satellite states of the former Soviet Union, Central Asia and the Middle East. In part, this is a result of clashing norms. In all of these regions, the notions of sovereignty and non-intervention are still strong, and they are not compatible with European value-based foreign policy. Generally, European foreign policy conditions access to European markets and cooperation on the external partner’s performance in the areas of democratic governance and human rights. Secondly, the European integration model has its geographic limits. Europe cannot or will not offer membership to countries of its “near abroad”, with Turkey being a contentious case in point. Thirdly, relations with the “near abroad”, and especially the post-Soviet nations, remain problematic, with some Eastern European countries expressing concerns vis-à-vis Russia, and voicing support for Ukrainian EU-membership, while the Franco-German axis favors good relations with Russia as a political and economic partner.

Finally, in the case of the southern Mediterranean, and the post-Soviet states, there might be a post-imperial problem of deeper cultural alienation from Europe. Former imperial control exerted by the Ottoman and Soviet empires was incomplete and deeply traumatic for these countries. It was also not brought to an orderly closure, as opposed to the British Empire, which did so with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Nations. In this context, the point was made that accession to the EU by Turkey could introduce a change of course in terms of European relations with its “near abroad”, and also in terms of general European power. It would arguably give Europe new geopolitical interests and greater influence in its dealings with the South Caucasus and the Middle East. While Turkey has aligned itself with European positions in recent years, its European commitment could be called into question.

As evidenced by the growth of regional organizations in Africa, Europe’s model seems to resonate strongest in Africa, the region that was most heavily colonized by European powers. The delicate colonial past of core European states helps

to explain Europe's much stronger showing at the global multilateral level. This cultural influence may, however, only be supplementary to Europe's peaceful foreign policy that emphasizes and supports multilateral cooperation, thereby resulting in considerable "soft power" for Europe. The strongest supporter of the existing global order, Europe aspires to lead in the spheres of international financial cooperation, international trade, and climate change. Its diplomacy is backed by international aid and the assumption of responsibilities for global order, in terms of support for peacekeeping and peacebuilding. While Europe as a bloc increasingly acts like a global power, it avoids competition with rising powers like Brazil, China, or India, through its rejection of militarism.

The situation is significantly different in the former Soviet states. Twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, its successor states have exhibited remarkable stability, given the power vacuum left by the demise of the Soviet Union. The region has not experienced any major war, but is beset by a number of regional conflicts. The young successor states have successfully managed to consolidate their statehood. The authoritarian models of governance in Central Asia have guaranteed a certain degree of regional stability<sup>11</sup> and are still underpinned by a degree of nationalism that confers legitimacy. Moreover, in the early 2000s, it appeared as though the post-Soviet power vacuum could be filled as Russia registered double-digit GDP growth. Despite expert criticism of its hydrocarbon economy, and the harsh impact of the global financial crisis, Russia is expected to grow healthily into the next decade. In its relations with Europe and the United States, Russia has rediscovered its self-confidence. These relationships, however (especially true for Russian-European relations), remain dominated by the lack of closure after the Cold War, which created lasting mistrust between Russia and the NATO countries. In 2010, US-Russian relations seem to have developed more favorably. Both states have cooperated successfully in Central Asia on a wide array of challenges posed to the sub-region by the Afghanistan conflict. Moreover, the outreach efforts by US President Obama to improve the relationship with Russia have been well-received by the Russian leadership. Ongoing negotiations on the recently expired Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) present a welcomed opportunity to reinforce this positive turn in US-Russian relations.<sup>12</sup>

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11 The conference took place before the June 2010 unrest in Kyrgyzstan.

12 The conference took place before the conclusion of the "New START" agreement.

The relationship between Europe and Russia will, however, most likely continue to be difficult as fear still dictates the foreign policies of Eastern European states towards Russia, particularly in the wake of the 2008 Russia-Georgia war. As a consequence, the EU policy towards Russia remains unsettled.

Predictions anticipating that access to the Arctic will be the next major bone of contention between Europe, the United States, and Russia are most likely premature. Seemingly contentious moves by Russia should not hide the fact that ultimately, not least due to an inability to enforce its claims with military might, Russia is seeking a negotiated solution to settle disputes with its transatlantic partners. In the long run, Russia is likely to eventually seek cooperation with Europe, as it becomes increasingly clear for the country's elite that it has to open up politically and economically to overcome severe domestic challenges. The liberal rhetoric espoused by President Medvedev, whether genuine or not, can be seen as an indication that such an opening-up is in demand with the rising middle-class.

Russia, in the short and mid-term, will most likely be preoccupied with staving off the internal challenges it faces, and will focus on its own priorities for economic development. Russia is confronted with a rapidly shrinking population, record immigration from Central Asia resulting from porous borders and a veritable public health crisis. Its economy is insufficiently diversified, and remains vulnerable to oil price shocks. This natural resource dependency is accentuated by widespread corruption, and weak but strongly centralized state institutions. It is also beset by separatist challenges in the North Caucasus. In this difficult domestic situation, Russia is increasingly becoming a reluctant power. In particular, Russian willingness to assert responsibility for order in the former Soviet space seems to be uneven. While the 2008 war with Georgia has shown that Russia is willing to act forcefully in defence of immediate security interests, it also served to expose the limitations of the Russian armed forces in terms of force projection. Russia is unlikely to invest scarce resources in establishing regional order in either the Caucasus or Central Asian sub-regions. At the same time, there are no logical successors to fill the space. Neither China nor the EU have strong enough interests in the region to warrant adequate political and economic investment in sub-regional security. In the short and mid-term, this leaves a power vacuum in the



Caucasus and Central Asian sub-region. The fragile state of order in the Caucasus region was demonstrated by the Russian-Georgian war of 2008, when a long-seated conflict erupted unexpectedly. Despite high-level efforts to resolve the crisis, no progress has been made in this direction. Nagorno-Karabakh is another regional frozen conflict in danger of erupting. Here Turkey has assumed the role of the major outside power, in an evolving strategic partnership with Russia. The recent escalation in Azerbaijani rhetoric, however, is a function of warming relations between Armenia and Turkey, which has cast doubt on Azerbaijan's ability to regain full control of the area.

In Central Asia, a number of issues are challenging regional stability, including the absence of a strong regional architecture to address various points of conflict: disputes over water allocation and border issues, jihadist pressure on authoritarian regimes, and a possible spillover of the Afghanistan conflict. With Russia reluctant and China disinterested in guaranteeing stability in the former Soviet space, it is no surprise that whatever institutional architecture for maintaining stability exists, it is rather weakly developed. Existing organizations are inter-regional or sub-regional, and leave out the conflict-ridden South Caucasus region. The only explicit defence organization is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) that links Russia and the Central Asian countries in a military alliance. Like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) that has China as an additional partner, the CSTO focuses mainly on cooperation in border protection and terrorism prevention. Other organizations active in the former Soviet sphere include the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These two organizations offer limited assistance in terms of governance, border controls, and economic development to the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

While prospects for conflict management in the Caucasus remain dim, there appears to be progress in addressing the gaps in terms of conflict management and security cooperation capacity. Since no regional power is willing to take the lead, these sub-regions could present an opportunity for civil society organizations to build structures in a bottom-up approach. Such activities could be assisted by the presence of UNDP offices and OSCE missions in the region. Issues with top priority would include the development of bilateral confidence-building

measures, the design of security sector reform programmes, and the cooperative resolution of local border disputes. Such activities could be reinforced for Central Asia if the US-Russian partnership in this region were to evolve further, which is particularly likely if the reinforced US engagement in Afghanistan does not yield any tangible results.

# Conclusion

The regional stocktaking exercise that sought to describe the conflict management environment a decade into the twenty-first century has not yielded any uniform results. Threats vary across regions, and so does the level of convergence of the perception of these threats. In the meantime, common perceptions of threat arguably presuppose effective regional cooperation that has the effect of harmonizing their member states' security visions. European post-war integration, a function of the experience of recurrent continental war, is probably the most concrete example of this. Interestingly, those regions that remain most strongly within the Westphalian tradition, where traditional threats in terms of inter-state conflict play out most strongly, are also those exhibiting the feeblest capacity for conflict management. This is particularly true for the Middle East, South Asia, and Central Asia. By contrast, those regions that have moved beyond the Westphalian model to a normative order based on democratic governance and human rights are those that perceive themselves to be disproportionately affected by non-traditional threats. These regions, Europe and Africa, are also the ones with the highest institutional capacity for conflict management. But it may also be those countries that are the most robust as states – Western European countries, the United States, etc. – are the most comfortable in regional/global institutions, as they do not fear an erosion of their sovereignty. In between these two poles are regions such as East and South-East Asia, where sovereignty is resilient and at the same time, a measure of stability in mutual expectations has been achieved through political dialogue and economic exchange.

Regional cooperation in conflict management seems not to have become any easier after the end of the Cold War. Cooperation is still haphazard in most regions, where there are institutions that fulfil some stabilization and conflict management functions, but not in a comprehensive manner. In East and South-East Asia, for instance, ASEAN has been very useful in serving as a forum that

is comprehensive in membership and provides a platform for security dialogue and confidence-building. However, due to the absence of a military and arms control dimension, ASEAN has failed to check distrust fuelled by the rapid arming of regional powers. ASEAN should hence be equipped with an arms control mandate, structures for confidence-building and positive military measures to check an potential arms race in the region.

The AU, the best-developed security organization outside of Europe and North America, boasts comprehensive membership, a clear mandate, and recently improved decision-making, but has strong operational deficits as evidenced, for instance, by its reliance on cooperation with the UN in implementing its peace-keeping mandate in Sudan. Like most of its sister organizations in other regions, the AU remains underfunded, and is lacking in capacity.

In most cases, the weakness of regional organizations mirrors a lack of will on the part of states to commit themselves and their resources to regional security cooperation. Interestingly, the rising regional powers have not assumed responsibility for stability within their respective areas. Russia has arguably played a destabilizing role in the South Caucasus and has withdrawn from Central Asia, leaving a power vacuum in the region. India has meddled in the peace process of its neighbour Nepal, to the detriment of stability there. Even though China has taken a more cautious approach in relations with its neighbors, its displays of military might have worried other states in the region.

Workshop participants have identified two trends that are shaping the current international arena for conflict management. Both point towards a deinstitutionalization of conflict management. First, there is evidence of a new tendency to militarize conflict management, a trend that has defined recent government responses to internal threats in South Asia. Sri Lanka has set a precedent with its violent repression of Tamil insurgents, and India seems to be following suit in its forceful response to the Naxalite insurgency. The Sri Lankan model could have global repercussions if more governments forgo seeking a negotiated solution in protracted conflicts, where reconciliation has not been successful. Of course, this would narrow the window of opportunity for lasting peacemaking to take place.

Second, there has occasionally been a tendency to skirt traditional conflict management channels in favour of ad hoc approaches from coalitions of interested

states, international agencies and non-state actors. This has mostly happened in Africa, where an emerging culture of intervention has supplanted more traditional notions of sovereignty. It is too early to tell whether this network approach will strengthen or weaken collective conflict management. While the deinstitutionalization of conflict management in favour of initiatives by “like-minded” actors could make international practice in this field less legitimate and more haphazard than truly institutional responses, the emerging role of civil society actors in conflict management broadens the constituency for peace and is hence unequivocally welcome. However, the effect of civil society involvement on peacemaking will only be sustainable if these organizations are locally rooted and accountable. Especially in those regions where a notion of sovereignty as freedom from outside interference prevails, governments that may accept the services of international peacemaking NGOs are often much more reluctant to draw on domestic civil society in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Despite certain challenges, local civil society needs to be much more engaged in both peacemaking and peacebuilding. Putting aside the physical elements of peacebuilding such as economic reconstruction, peace processes are fundamentally about reconciliation and transformation of relationships, for which sustained participation of civil society is necessary. In this field, where international efforts have in the past yielded only limited results, it is especially important to foster civil society participation and ownership to guarantee a continuation of the peaceful transformation of conflict, once international attention has waned.

More broadly, while the capacity, expertise and record of conflict management institutions are uneven from one region to the other, one major conclusion of the workshop is the growing importance of the “collective conflict management” approach, i.e. a multifaceted, ad hoc network approach to managing conflict. Such an approach involves both state and non-state actors, and spans various levels of security governance. This means that institutions not only need to develop their conflict management capacities, but they also have to learn how to cooperate with other entities (thereby making conflict management truly multidimensional). The time has passed when a single institution or set of institutions could prevent, manage, and/or resolve conflict. Future success will depend on creative collaboration between different kinds of institutions, bringing their own set of capabilities to the problem and acting together to build a greater whole.

# Seminar Programme

**Sunday 13 December 2009**

## **Opening Session and Welcome**

<b>Welcome</b>	Ambassador Fred TANNER, Director, Geneva Centre for Security Policy Fen Osler HAMPSON, Director, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University
<b>Introduction</b>	Pamela AALL, Vice President, Domestic Programs, Education and Training Center, U.S. Institute of Peace

## *Reception and dinner with a keynote address*

<b>Keynote speaker</b>	Chester A. CROCKER, James R. Schlesinger Professor of Strategic Studies, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University and Board Member, U.S. Institute of Peace <i>"Challenges for Conflict Management at the End of the 1<sup>st</sup> Decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"</i>
<b>Discussant</b>	Abiodun WILLIAMS, Vice-President, Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, U.S. Institute of Peace

**Monday 14 December 2009**

## **The Changing Global Environment for Conflict Management**

<b>Chair</b>	Ambassador Fred TANNER
<b>Speakers</b>	Fen Osler HAMPSON, Director, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University Thomas BIERSTEKER, Professor of Political Science and first holder of the Curt Gasteyger Chair, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies Martin GRIFFITHS, Director, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

## **Regional View 1: Asian Security and Conflict Management**

<b>Chair</b>	Graeme HERD, Course Co-Director, International Training Course in Security Policy, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
<b>Speakers</b>	Richard BITZINGER, Senior Fellow, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Rama MANI, Associate Fellow, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
<b>Discussant</b>	Soung Chul KIM, Senior Fellow, The Sejong Institute

## Regional View 2: African and Central American Security and Conflict Management Norms and Institutions

Chair	Katharina VOGELI, Deputy Director, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
Speakers	Raul Benitez MANAUT, Researcher, Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Tony KARBO, Programme Officer, UPEACE Abiodun WILLIAMS, Vice President of the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, USIP
Discussant	Caty CLEMENT, Faculty Member, Geneva Centre for Security Policy

### Lunch

Keynote Speaker	Ambassador William Lacy SWING, Director General, International Organisation for Migration
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## Regional View 3: Middle Eastern Security and Conflict Management Norms and Institutions

Chair	Ambassador Andrea SEMADENI, Special Representative for the Sudan and Horn of Africa, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland
Speakers	Anoush EHTESHAMI, Professor and Co-Director, ESRC Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World, University of Durham Bassma KODMANI, Executive Director, Arab Reform Initiative
Discussant	Ambassador Nassif HITTI, Director of the Office of the League of Arab States in Paris; Permanent Observer Mission of the League of Arab States to UNESCO

## Regional View 4: European, Eurasian and Transatlantic Security and Conflict Management Norms and Institutions

Chair	Pál DUNAY, Course Director, International Training Course in Security Policy, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
Speakers	Ambassador Alyson BAILES, Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Iceland Chantal DE JONGE OUDRAAT, Associate Vice President, Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program, U.S. Institute of Peace Oksana ANTONENKO, Senior Fellow and Programme Director for Russia and Eurasia, International Institute for Strategic Studies

### Concluding Roundtable

Moderators:	Chester A. CROCKER Fen Osler HAMPSON and Pamela AALL
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# List of Participants

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