

ANTICIPATING STATE FAILURE

A PAPER PREPARED FOR THE CONFERENCE ON
“WHY STATES FAIL AND HOW TO RESUSCITATE THEM”

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1. Introduction

The euphoria that came with the end of the Cold War has been dampened by the continuing outbreak of deadly conflict throughout the world. Some of these conflicts have resulted in the complete breakdown of governments, leading to what has been dubbed "failed states." As Michael Ignatieff argued in 1993, "huge sections of the world's population have won the right of self determination on the cruelest possible terms: they have been simply left to fend for themselves. Not surprisingly, their nation-states are collapsing".¹ Robert Kaplan's highly influential 1994 *Atlantic Monthly* article on the "The Coming Anarchy" offered a more bleak assessment of state failure in Africa. In this neo-Malthusian perspective - the world - especially the South - is beset by increasing crises generated by fast-growing populations, demographic changes and weakening state capacity to regulate conflict.²

Somalia, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Bosnia are examples of state failure.³ In each of these cases, the central government ceased to function, was unable to provide for the common welfare of its population or protect it from internal and external threats.⁴ States fail when they are unable to provide basic functions for their citizens.⁵ The economy collapses. Education and health care are inadequate. Physical infrastructure deteriorates. Crime and violence run rampant. These conditions foster opposition groups which often turn to armed rebellion. More often than not, "the weapons of choice are small arms, light weapons and explosives because they are cheap, plentiful, durable, easily transported and simple to use".⁶ Today's wars create huge population shifts and refugee crises, long-term food shortages, failing economies, and the death of large numbers of civilians due to disease, starvation and direct conflict.⁷

The pressure to anticipate and respond to state failure has increased. The international community's track record, in this regard, is not good. The following developments over the last decade demonstrate this point:⁸

- The failure to prevent the relapse of “successful” consolidation processes (Cambodia, Angola);
- The failure to prevent the slow collapse of states in Central and West Africa – despite clear understanding of when and where such events would occur and the availability of forecasts for predicting and explaining their causes and manifestations (Congo, Guinea);
- The failure to anticipate the moral hazards that are generated by efforts to ameliorate the symptoms of state failure, such as refugee flows, ethnic cleansing and clan warfare (Rwanda, Somalia);⁹
- The failure to understand how biased interventions can accelerate conflict between combatants (Kosovo, Sierra Leone);¹⁰
- The failure of policy makers to understand how weak responses to warring factions can generate even greater conflict, and increase the likelihood of state failure (Rwanda, Bosnia);
- The failure to understand how values promoting conflict reduction mechanisms such as democracy and human rights can lead to actions that might actually promote the risk of state failure (Bosnia, East Timor/Indonesia);¹¹

In order to address these and related problems, this paper evaluates contending and complementary approaches to explaining and predicting state failure. It provides some

preliminary insights on what might be required to anticipate and possibly prevent future cases.

The argument of this paper is three fold. First, most explanations of why states fail - including those that rely on comparative case study, historical trends, leading indicators, events-based data, field monitoring and expert opinion – are, in isolation, inadequate analytical tools for either risk assessment or early warning. This inadequacy exists for a variety of reasons. Many analyses point to fundamentally different causes of state failure; others rely on the monitoring of background factors and enabling conditions that are associated with the risk of conflict but do not themselves provide accurate information on the probability of specific events leading to failure. Still others do not distinguish between causality and correlation, while others are fixated on issue-specific problems that are symptomatic of state weakness and human insecurity– e.g. illicit gun flows, child soldiers, black market activity, aids – problems that are by themselves significant and important but are not necessarily associated with failure.

Second, these disparate and often contending analytical approaches constitute a formidable and potentially useful tool kit for risk assessment and early warning but they do not always pass the basic litmus test required for policy-relevance. This is because to be policy relevant these tools must also be useful operationally, organizationally and strategically. The accumulation and integration of research findings is vital if theoretical insights are to generate important policy relevant implications, especially at a time when early warning research is being criticized for its failure to provide policy-relevant diagnosis. Synthesis should first address the significant gap between policy and theory. It should be noted that early warning is not just about facts, theory building and model

development. Early warning is also about anticipating and responding to specific events and preventing them from occurring. Early warning systems are not confined to analysing the potential for state failure, but also relate to the capacities and response strategies for dealing with them.¹²

Third, it is well understood that efforts to prevent states from failing is far more cost effective than it is restoring them after the fact. However if we are to improve the quality of prevention, future funding efforts should emphasize the integration of analytical findings and methodologies of various research programs *as well as* improving the quality of response. In this regard, models and frameworks that relate directly to decision making processes should be the highest priority. Their integration will set in motion a process of “creeping institutionalization” towards a “culture of prevention” through norm development, the enhancement of operational responses and the implementation and evaluation of cost effective structural and operational prevention strategies.¹³

2. Causes of State Failure: Contending or Complementary Analyses?

In this section of the paper I review some of the contending claims on the causes of state failure.¹⁴ Most scholars who seek to explain state failure are confronted by three distinct sets of empirical puzzles. Each puzzle is drawn from the perspectives of systemic transformation, state-society relations and strategic interactions between factions (usually ethnic but not exclusively). The first perspective associates state failure with *macro-level changes in the international system*.¹⁵ The second emphasises *intermediate state-society*

relations and the third emphasises *micro-level strategic interactions between groups* at specific points in time. More generally:

- **Macro** or long term processes associated with system wide transformations and the associated problems of the emergence of weak states;
- **Intermediate** mechanisms associated with institutional viability and “state-society” relations in different regions of the world; and
- **Micro** or short term selection processes and mechanisms that account for preferences of violence over pacific forms of conflict resolution and the subsequent escalation and/or duration of ethnic hatreds, violence and war at a particular point in time.

Much of the literature addresses state failure from the perspective of the first two puzzles, while comparatively less time has been spent addressing micro questions about the timing, escalation and the duration of interactions leading to state failure. This empirical gap is, of course, understandable - long and medium term perspectives furnish a very useful overarching historical framework for studying system change and state transformation over relatively long periods of time, while explanations for specific choices, events or behaviours tend to focus on environmental stimuli in the context of standard social scientific models.

Macro- level Perspectives – System and Structure

The development of political capacity, legitimacy and authority, all essential features of state-building, is not a linear process.¹⁶ This is especially relevant to explaining state failure, since changing environmental conditions can reverse (in very

short periods of time – e.g. months and years) these essential features. For example, changes in system structure can reverse state-building in several non-mutually exclusive ways: through the creation of highly dependent weak states (and the subsequent withdrawal of powerful patron-states) on the one hand; and through processes of globalization and the strengthening of international norms of self-determination on the other.

Chazan et. al argue that there have been four great waves of state building, each following the collapse of empires:¹⁷ South America in the 19th century (the Spanish Empire); Europe after World War I (Russia, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Turkey); Asia and Africa after World II (Belgium, Holland, France, Britain and Portugal) and Central Asia and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s (the Soviet Union).¹⁸ Most of these systemic transitions were associated with the abrupt creation of new states in hostile environments involving conflicts over territory and identity.¹⁹

The post-Second World War phase of decolonisation and the break-up of the Soviet union introduced many more new and weak states into the international system.²⁰ However, unlike the elites of the West European and Latin American nations; the leaders of these African, Asian and East European states were faced with three compounding problems which enhanced their perception of insecurity. The borders they had to defend were far more arbitrary; their societies were usually more diverse in composition; and few leaders had experience in building inclusive civic and democratic cultures. In essence, the security threats of these states were as much internal as external.²¹

In advancing his systemic argument, Holm argues that the new wave of weak states are a consequence of the way the international system has developed and they will

fail if unfavourable systemic circumstances prevail. Like Ignatieff, Holm believes that the Cold War ensured that most of these states survived but with its end most of these states have been left to “sink or swim.”²² Similarly, Rosh and Ayoob argue that state failure is largely a function of the withdrawal of outside support to weak states.²³ To the extent that regional conflicts as well as the maintenance of state integrity were both key features of the international system during the Cold War there may be some validity to this claim. For the period after 1945, in which nuclear weapons prevented direct confrontation between the two blocs, the superpowers did involve themselves in proxy wars and propped up their allies and clients in geo-strategically salient and insecure regions.²⁴ The net result, as Ayoob²⁵ suggests, is the absence of effective statehood in the 'Third World,' or what some scholars have termed 'quasi-states.'²⁶

Historical perspectives suggest that the political configuration of ethnic groups and the degree of constraint they exercise over the state and its decision makers is determined in part by colonial experience.²⁷ In transitional societies, where demographics can largely determine changes in political power, the potential for conflict is high. This is particularly true when political power is not coterminous with economic power. A single ethnic group may dominate the policy-making process at the national level and be confronted by challenges from other groups.²⁸

Consistent with this view, Zartman suggests that state collapse in Africa occurred in two waves – the first came toward the end of the second decade of independence and the second, a decade later and into the 1990s.²⁹ Zartman notes that state collapse is usually marked by the loss of control not only of political space, but economic space as well. The two work in opposite directions with neighbouring states

encroaching on the collapsing state's sovereignty by meddling in its politics thereby making the political space wider than the state's boundary.³⁰ As this happens, the economic space retracts with parts of the economic space captured by the neighbouring states and the informal economy dominating the rest.³¹

Alao provides empirical evidence for this argument through an examination of the causes of state failure in Africa during the post-independence and post-Cold War periods. He finds that most early failures were due to the way they were formed; colonialism brought people of different ethnic, political and religious affiliations together to form a state and forge a common sense of citizenship.³² In addition, most African economies were incorporated into the European capitalist framework which made most of these economies structurally weak to cope with the challenges of nation-building.

In a similar vein, Herbst suggests that the 'paradox of decolonisation' in Africa stems from the formal colonization of Africa and the replacement of the continent's diverse political systems with an artificial state system which was carried forward in post-independent Africa.³³ The 'façade of sovereignty' was to be overturned only a few years after independence by pseudo-Marxist regimes, one party-states and patron-client fiefdoms.³⁴ Alger notes that the main problem was that most Western states failed to foresee that the self-determination of the 1960s, was most certainly going to be followed by collapse. Most Western powers failed to pay attention to developing viable institutions of governance which could support the independence of most of these new states. As a consequence, the emergence of modern authoritarianism in Africa stemmed from a series of interrelated phenomenon that arose out of the colonial legacy (most states were conceived in violence, there was little transformation in the economy and, the local

ethnic elite' s commitment to the western imposed structures was low). The absence of confrontations and conflicts between classes prevented the growth of liberalism with its ideological and legal emphasis on individual rights and liberties. The European models of democracy dissolved quickly as alien arrangements. When there was a convergence of interests between the newly emergent classes it was to end colonization but these goals became fragmented by ethnic loyalties. The consequence of this was the formation of patron-client relations and the development of personal rule resulting in a state based on personal authority and coercion. The political system was structured not by institutions but by politicized ethnically-based patron-client relationships.³⁵ In a few short years following independence, the African state become a non-autonomous arena for ethnic rivalries.³⁶

A second set of related macro level perspectives trace state failure to processes associated with globalization and the development of international norms of self-determination.³⁷ In particular the development of state structures within multi-ethnic authoritarian states usually results in a minority's perceived sense of exclusion and failure in the social, economic and political domains.³⁸ As a result minority groups recognize that internationalization of their demands can both simultaneously encourage internal mobilization and weaken the saliency and effectiveness of the state by creating international forums for sub-state grievances.³⁹ This legitimization process is supported by the existence of supranational organizations and norms which provide a forum and focal point for sub-national claims.⁴⁰ Specifically, international organizations promote sub-state mobilization to the extent that they provide human rights support and recognition which lends a legitimacy to self-determination claims.⁴¹ Allen has suggested that the patterns of violence and warfare in Africa as well as the characteristics of the

‘new violence’ are attributable to this process.⁴² In particular ethnic conflict and the desire for independence arise out of the systematic denial by the modern state of minority aspirations, goals, values and needs. Ryan argues that self-determination is a key legitimizing principle for political mobilization and organization and suggests that structural incompatibilities between the ideology of state-building and minorities is a key determinant of whether a group will pursue organized violence.⁴³ Similarly Azar & Burton argue that the move to violence begins with the denial of separate identities, the absence of security for minorities and clear absence of effective participation for these minorities.⁴⁴

Intermediate Perspectives – State- Society Relations

A second set of perspectives emphasise the *decay* of state-society relations in the face of internal pressures. The assumption here is that the emergence of state disorder and decline is a function of the disjuncture between the subjective and objective aspects of the social order; that is the failure of prevailing values to legitimize existing divisions of labor and political order.⁴⁵ States in decay are in transitional stages in which existing ideologies fail to legitimize the positions of various actors in a hierarchical social structure. Under such conditions most scholars predict the result will be the breakdown of the social and political order.⁴⁶

According to Dearth, a state is said to have ‘failed’ if it does not fulfil the obligations of statehood. The leadership does not have the means and credibility to compel internal order or to deter or repel external aggression. In addition, the leadership does not, or cannot, provide sufficiently for the people to attract minimal sufficient

domestic support. Baker and Ausink see a collapsing state as one that has lost legitimacy, has few functioning institutions, offers little or no public service to its constituents and is unable to contain fragmentation.⁴⁷ State collapse begins when the central state starts to deteriorate, leading to the fractionalization of society, with loyalties shifting from the state to traditional communities that seem to offer better protection.

For Dearth, state decay is a three step progression. First, institutions fail to provide adequate services to the population. Second, improperly channeled ethnic, social and ideological competition erode the effectiveness of these weak institutions even more. Finally, the cumulative effects of poverty, over-population, rural flight and rapid urbanization, as well as environmental degradation overwhelm the weak state to the point of collapse.⁴⁸

This process has both internal and external implications. As Hewitt argues: 'high levels of domestic instability limit a state's ability to act authoritatively within the international community, limit its ability to act on domestic society with any legitimacy, and to deliver socio-economic packages aimed at bringing about widespread industrialization.'⁴⁹ Singh suggests that a state's legitimacy is closely tied to the kinds of ethnic policies it pursues. Narrow policies favouring one group are less sound than broad distributive ones.⁵⁰ In the absence of strong, secular organized parties and strong institutional structures, ideology and culture become the focus for understanding state decay. Ultimately, it is the state's actions that are directly responsible for these dilemmas in the first place.⁵¹ The state does not merely respond to crises, produced by uneven ethnic mobilization and social change, but is itself the dominating force providing differential advantages to regions and ethnic groups.⁵² Wallenstein sees the convergence

of the internal and external dynamics as the ultimate basis for evaluating state performance. There are instances of decay where the state is under-consolidated – a situation where the state is not effective in the performance of its duties; and cases where the state it is over-extended – where it becomes a threat to its inhabitants.⁵³

As states begin to rely more extensively on coercive forms of managing internal (mostly ethnic) tensions, power tends to become more concentrated in the hands of a few and potentially homogenous ethnic groups. This disjuncture creates recurring problems of governability for those in power. The resulting breakdown begins at the state-centre as hierarchical patterns of authority give way to regional, decentralized, ethnic and informal forms of political and economic organization. The net result is conflict between a single ethnic group dominating political institutions and the counterbalancing efforts by minority groups to “wrest” control from the center. Ultimately, as Gros argues, states fail when “public authorities are either unable or unwilling to carry out their end of what Hobbes long ago called the social contract, but which now includes more than maintaining the peace among society’s many factions and interests”.⁵⁴

Empirical support for this argument is provided by Lemarchand who reflects on the crisis in the Great Lakes region of Africa - Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire - and the patterns of state decay affecting these countries.⁵⁵ He suggests that state decay occurred within vertically structured social arenas. Exclusionary policies were a major source of erosion of state legitimacy as evident in the way politics was played out between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi.⁵⁶

Micro-level Perspectives – Dynamic Interactions

Macro and intermediate perspectives are extremely useful for understanding the root causes and background conditions leading to state failure.⁵⁷ They identify structural factors associated with decay and can account for changes in political, social and economic demands. They may, under some circumstances, be able to explain why each side ends up fighting. But they cannot explain violent conflict; that particular subset of human social interaction that involves a high level of inter-group hostility. Nor can they account for variations in the scope, severity and timing of violence more generally. Individuals and groups may be persuaded by elites to hate and fear members of other groups and they may be driven by mass pressures to rebel, but the probability of war, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide depends on the opportunities and constraints that present themselves to the warring factions and their leaders at any given point in time.⁵⁸

Micro-level perspectives are premised on two forms of dynamic interactions. The first are interactions between the belligerents themselves; the second between the belligerents and outside forces which are in a position, through actions and statements, to alter the course of violence. With respect to the former, most assessments of intrastate violence underscore the prominent role played by ethnic elites in the mobilization process. "Failed states" can be viewed as a problem of "emerging anarchy" where organized groups that lack many of the attributes of statehood must pay attention to the primary problem of their own security.⁵⁹ In a state of emerging anarchy, or whenever the internal balance of power shifts, questions of control become pre-eminent. This strategic environment can cause hostile groups to fear extinction and yield to mob violence.

Accordingly, political opponents may emulate traditional state behaviour by seeking relative power gains against other groups. The lack of an arbiter – internal or external - induces problems of credible commitment between groups that do not trust one another are liable to misrepresent information for relative gains.⁶⁰ According to Crawford and Lipschutz, broken social contracts and weakened oppressive institutions open political space for ethnic entrepreneurs to mobilize support. If the political gains made available to ethnic entrepreneurs are achieved through the re-allocation of resources or the disproportionate economic deprivation of one group in favour of another, the net result will be the escalation of conflict towards intergroup violence. Similarly, Tilley suggests that successful use of coercion by a state in order to suppress local ethnically-based challenges enhances the assessment of its future utility. Hence, coercion against minority ethnic groups is also a normative factor since elites who use violence become habituated to violence.⁶¹ Violence becomes part of elite political culture that is assimilated into the national identity. Violence becomes a useful political tool.⁶²

This is because, as irrational as it may appear, violence plays an important role in ensuring group solidarity. Violence appears to be irrational because it leads to undesirable social outcomes over the short term, such as destruction of property and economic decline. Yet however costly and irrational it appears in human and material terms, violence is a means of regulating behaviours and maintaining social hierarchy. In short, a collectivity will pursue violence if it safeguards advantageous and long term political and economic outcomes for them. According to Marshall performance expectations, including those derived from the use of force to protect or obtain entitlements, are a good way to ensure mobilization, cohesion and stronger support.⁶³

Under conditions of decay if the state-centre loses its autonomy by favouring one group over another, the disadvantaged group is likely to believe that whatever social contract there was, is broken and cannot be fixed without some sort of third party to provide minimal security guarantees. A battle for “independence” is likely to follow if a third party guaranteeing agreements between groups cannot be found.⁶⁴ In the absence of a third party guarantor, negotiation will be extremely difficult because groups possess fundamental incentives to defect. The mistrust that develops increases the desirability for disadvantaged groups to pursue a pro-active stance and to mobilize against the state in search of independence.⁶⁵

The second kind of micro-level interactions are those between belligerents and outside forces which are in a position to influence the dynamics of the conflict from onset to termination. Relying on only macro and intermediate level explanations of state failure is as unwise as evaluating only interactions between factions. This argument become clearer when one considers the role and impact of outside parties in affecting the course of specific outcomes. In this view, outside forces affect the selection of violence at key junctures as a strategy for securing group survival. Here the concern is not only partisan support for factions through processes of diffusion and escalation but the less well understood impact that third party interveners have on conflict dynamics. Waltz’s explanation for the relative importance of “structure” in explaining international politics is appropriate here. Waltz uses the analogy of our desire for wealth and prosperity to argue that we might all want a million dollars (for security, survival, etc.), but a very small fraction of the population is prepared to rob a bank to achieve that objective. If the police were to go on strike, however, the number of bank robbers and robberies would

increase. Accordingly outside forces can be either mutually reinforcing, mutually exclusive, or mutually incompatible.⁶⁶

For example, recent research on third party involvement shows that humanitarian assistance can exacerbate tensions between combatants because of the incipient moral hazard problem.⁶⁷ Others suggest that a lack of resolve and credibility within security organizations create additional incentives for escalation and prolonged conflict.⁶⁸ Structural imperatives may have accounted for the mutual hatred underlying fighting in Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda, but these wars were waged with specific objectives in mind. Decisions by Serb leaders to escalate the fighting in Bosnia and Hutu leaders to initiate a genocide in Rwanda depended on the prospects of winning (and losing) specific pre-planned battles and confrontations. With respect to Bosnia, whenever Western leaders mounted a prolonged and stable threat of retaliation backed by ultimatums, deadlines, and a clear commitment to punish, credibility was high and coercive diplomacy worked. Weak threats, on the other hand, promoted violence. The genocide in Rwanda was a direct consequence of strategic decisions by political and military officials within the UNSC to *not* mount an effective and pre-emptive peace enforcement mission as late as March 1994.

In contrast, a much stronger commitment to enforce intense and protracted air strikes and bombing raids to deter fighting in Kosovo set the stage for less intense fighting and cut short the ethnic cleansing underway in the Spring of 1999. One important benefit of this kind of swift and fairly intense retaliation is that it quickly eliminates the threat that triggered the deployment, so that sustained pressure from the public to leave is satisfied without facing the prospect of withdrawing with the threat left

hanging.⁶⁹ Establishing a credible reputation for responding to internal violence is important, and arguably, military measures have a greater chance of lowering payoffs to violence than less vigorous forms of intervention such as sanctions. Potential and actual antagonists may become inclined to pursue more peaceful avenues of conflict resolution when faced with the high costs of fighting a more formidable opponent.

Nevertheless there is the question whether the effect on belligerents' behavior is necessarily beneficial, i.e. can actions taken by third parties to forestall violence actually encourage it? This paradoxical consequence may occur if an intervention designed to limit damage reduces the risks that belligerents face in pursuit of gains through violence.⁷⁰ The difficulty is that many third parties are unwilling or incapable of separating combatants from non-combatants.⁷¹ The security provided by third parties can be understood as a public good available to belligerents and civilians alike.⁷² Thus, the potential source of moral hazard occurs when the intervener cannot prevent the instigators of violence from enjoying the benefits of the intervention although they may be able to identify the instigators, interveners do not have the technology to exclude them.⁷³

3. Generating Evidence – From General Theories to Model Development

Thus far, I have examined general theories on state failure and/or processes associated with state breakdown and decay. Unfortunately, theoretical insights alone are insufficient to generate effective and specific responses to state failure. This is because most theories by themselves lack specificity and they rarely consider the operational milieu in which effective responses have to be generated. Theoretical insights are useful

as a starting point for more in-depth analysis and then only if decision-makers can be persuaded that the information is useful to finding an appropriate fit between strategy, the problem at hand and the resources available.⁷⁴ More generally, the collection and analysis of intelligence is now more than ever heavily influenced by the shifting needs of policy makers. The demand that such profound changes place on decision makers and analysts has been compared to kayaking in rapids.⁷⁵ There is:

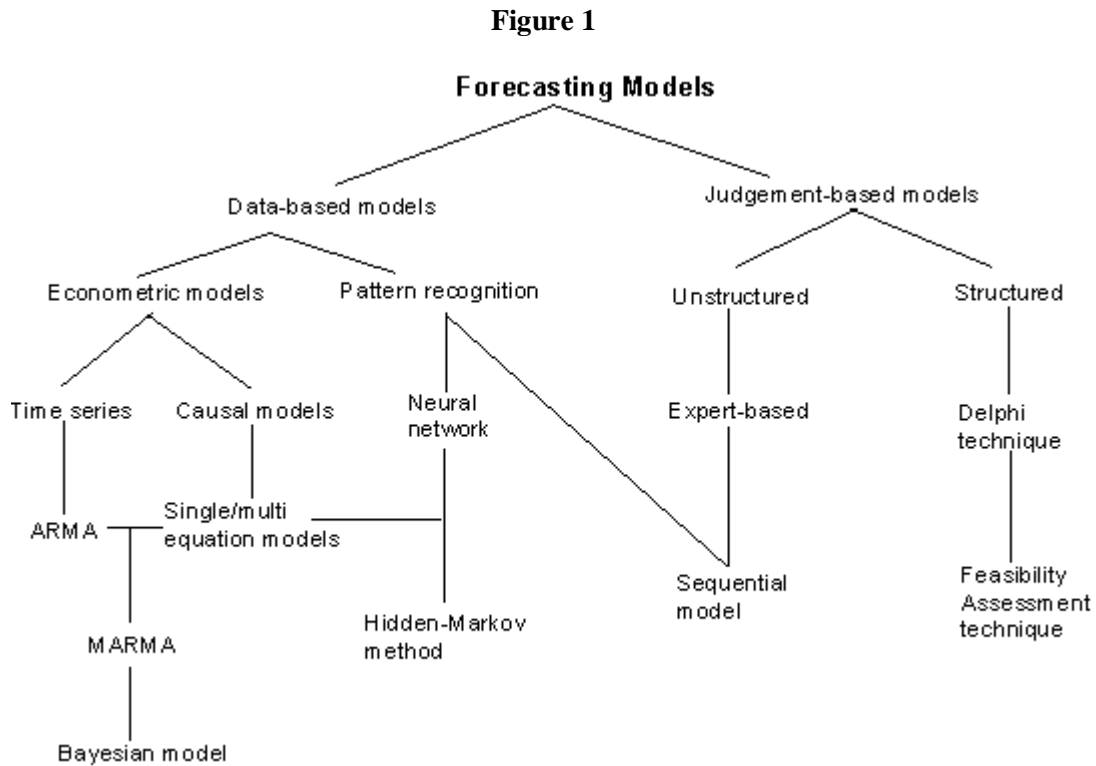
"a premium on strategic timing and the ability to think beyond the next bend or, in other words, to be able to draw conclusions from a complex array of individual observations about how a system' s dynamics may be about to undergo radical change."⁷⁶

These problems mean that analysts must establish a time frame appropriate to the issue at hand. In this sense, anticipating state failure is like peeling an onion in which each layer reveals progressively longer time lines: long term fundamental dynamics relating to structural causes and consequences, mid-term behavioural patterns, and current events such as humanitarian crises and ethnic cleansing.

For example, warning must come years in advance to respond strategically to structural problems (development, institution building, establishing infrastructure) but only a year or two or less when escalation is imminent and when the tasks are to engage in preventive diplomacy, dialogue, and mediation.⁷⁷

Models used to generate evidence for the prediction of state failure correspond to the macro, intermediate and micro perspectives discussed earlier: the macro pertaining to system wide influences on state performance; the intermediate level largely concerned with state-society relations and micro-level assessments, group dynamics and decision

making⁷⁸ These include forecasting as well as risk assessment models.⁷⁹ As Gupta shows – in addition to distinct levels of analyses these approaches can also be distinguished by their methodologies as depicted in Figure 1.



Source: Gupta, D. 1997.⁸⁰

The following approaches are identified according to the methodology employed and the level of analysis:

1a) • Macro Level *evaluation of structural indicators* (econometrically or through pattern recognition techniques) (e.g. parts of the State Failure Project; PIOOM;

CIFP; HEWS; ICB; FIRST, Rummel's Democide data-base, Uppsala's Conflict data-base);

b) • Macro Level *time series of leading indicators*⁸¹ (e.g. IOM; Refworld; FAO's GIEWS; Reliefweb; the UN system-wide Earthwatch; HazardNet for disasters; the Epidemiological Early Warning System -NEWS for health concerns and; the global early warning system for displaced persons - GEWS);

2a) • Intermediate Level *conjunctural models* that track changes in pre-specified events (eg conflict/cooperation, genocide, non-violent protest) using machine-coded data, pattern recognition and neural networks (e.g. GEDS; PANDA; KEDS);

b) • Intermediate Level *structured (Delphi) and subjective* models, which utilize a team of experts who identify key actors and estimate their future position on a given issue (regime stability, turmoil likelihood, investment restrictions and trade restrictions) with regards to their power to influence the outcome, the importance (salience) they attach to the issue, and the certainty or firmness of the actor's orientation (eg, Decision Insights; Political Risk Services). The scores which emerge from this assessment are used to provide a formal estimate of probability;

3a) • Micro Level *sequential models* which develop risk assessments based on tracking of specific behaviors – using accelerators (e.g. parts of State Failure; CEWS);⁸²

b)• Micro Level *response models* which evaluate outside response to conflict and develop feasibility assessments based therein (e.g. Fein’s Life Integrity Violations Approach; IDRC’s PCIA, JEFF);

c) • Micro Level *field reporting* by NGO networks (e.g. FEWER; FAST; ICG, CIPPD) using structured and/or unstructured reporting techniques.

The array of choices in terms of units of analysis, deductive and inductive methodologies, qualitative and quantitative theoretical assumptions and time frames renders politically relevant integrated and cumulative analysis of state failure difficult but not impossible. On the one hand, where conflicts are well understood in both form and content and the causes are proximate and escalation is likely, the main problem will be the evaluation of micro-level interactions (3a,b,c). On the other hand, where the situation is latent and only remotely suggestive of political or economic collapse, careful monitoring at the macro and intermediate level will be essential (1a,b, c; 2a,b,c).

An example of the former approach is Barbara Harff ‘s sequential model for early warning of genocides and politicides. The approach resembles a qualitative time series approach, but incorporates the role of accelerators. She identifies ten background conditions, four intervening conditions, and eight accelerators. What is interesting is that she does not assume that crisis development is linear. Where processual models, without accelerators and triggers, identify stages of a conflict, these static models cannot provide adequate risk assessments that will allow for planning of responses to ‘impending’ situations. This is where the dynamic role of accelerators and triggers comes in, and ideally those that are essential and necessary.

An example of the latter methodology is Moore and Gurr's employment of data from the Minorities at Risk project to compare three empirical approaches to long term risk assessments. Their work generates risk profiles; lists of high risk factors, or leading indicators, that are generated based on general theoretical knowledge such as group incentives, capacity, and opportunity. Then they apply a theoretical regression model in which an argument is expressed as a multiple equation model, and a statistical technique—three-stage least squares—is applied to the data to estimate the parameters of a predictive equation. Finally, they employ an empirical regression model; an inductive approach similar to the State Failure project, in which statistical software determines specific indicators for assessing probabilities.⁸³ It should be noted that each model produces slightly different results, although with a proportion of overlap.

The obvious conclusion, is that barring any weaknesses in the internal validity and reliability of these methods, it is difficult to select, on the basis of findings and rigor, one over the other – they each purport to explain and predict different facets of state failure. Therefore the dilemma remains: the emergence of empirically valid but potentially contending claims on the causes of state failure, on the one hand, and the desire for accumulation, integration and policy-relevance on the other.

How can multiple approaches and the accumulation of findings be simultaneously encouraged and developed? One approach would be to integrate research at the level of findings. The focus would be on those *cases, indicators and accelerators* that appear in *multiple* assessment lists. This would entail a brief description of the method employed in policy-relevant terms and then the establishment of a ‘watch list.’ While it is true that one does not need a complex model in order to put states on a watch

list it also true that models and theoretically generated insights can direct the analyst towards causal factors that are potentially unique to a given situation (in other words they provide details about what specifically is to be warned about); and counterintuitive (they direct the analyst's attention to something that might otherwise be overlooked or ignored).

A second approach would be to integrate methodologically dissimilar risk assessment procedures, frameworks and models through a consortium of analysts, policy advocates and practitioners into a dynamic exchange of information. Such an approach might provide a more comprehensive and more accurate picture than would any single methodology.⁸⁴ It would also be better placed to identify solutions as well as causes. However, since such an approach is concerned as much with solutions as it is the complexity of acquiring meaningful and informative facts and accounts of country situations, there is a formidable challenge.⁸⁵

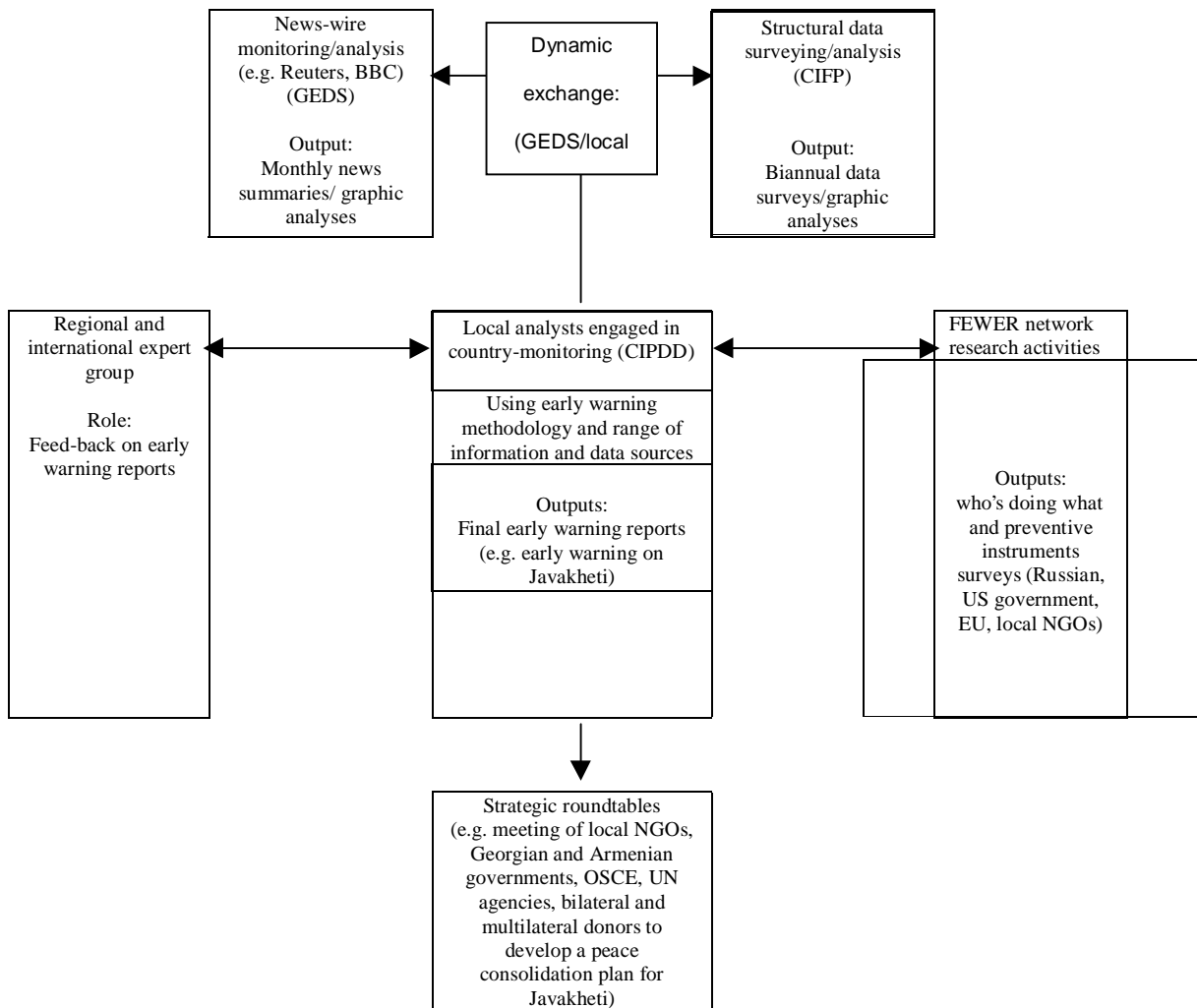
This challenge includes:

- a) the need for an understanding of three elements: (i) conflict generating factors as specified above; (ii) stakeholder agendas and grievances; and (iii) peace generating factors (structural and dynamic peace developments, effectiveness of peace-making/building activities, etc.) and;
- b) the need for a range of data sources and analytical methods, such as (i) micro-level assessments (e.g. events and perceptions not covered by the media); (ii) intermediate and micro-level events (such as those covered by newswire reports e.g. Reuters, ITAR-TASS, BBC and expert analysts); and (iii) macro-level trends using structural data and leading indicators.

Figure 2 illustrates how this might be achieved and how the macro, intermediate and micro operate together.

Figure 2

Dynamic Early Warning Systems.⁸⁶



The operational relevance of the system-described above can be further illustrated with a brief (and simplified) summary of early warning issues in Javakheti – and who would (and does) provide relevant information and analysis as noted in Table 1.

Table. 1

Case-study application of dynamic methodology: Javakheti.⁸⁷

<i>Conflict generating factors</i>		<i>Stakeholder agendas/grievances</i>		<i>Peace-generating factors</i>	
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Source</i>
Weak Georgian statehood	CIPDD and CIFP ⁸⁸	Armenians and Russians: Ambivalent to Georgian citizenship	CIPDD	Evolving Georgian statehood	CIPDD and CIFP ⁸⁹
Socio-economic isolation	CIPDD	Armenians: Isolation reflects governmental discrimination	CIPDD		
Ethnic tensions	GEDS ⁹⁰ , CIFP ⁹¹ , CIPDD	Resource scarcity creates Armenian, Russian, and Georgian tensions	CIPDD	Strong Armenian-Georgian relations	GEDS ⁹²
Presence of Russian bases	CIPDD and GEDS ⁹³	Mixed perception: Bases provide jobs, but should go	CIPDD		
Repatriation of Meskhetian Turks	CIPDD	General perception: Return will increase hardship	CIPDD		
Economic under-development	CIPDD and CIFP ⁹⁴	Armenians: Poverty reflects governmental. discrimination	CIPDD	Seasonal migration of labor to Russia	CIPDD

Trends drawn out from assessing the balance between: (i) conflict generating factors; (ii) stakeholder agendas and grievances; and (iii) peace generating factors

The above illustration is premised on the claim that conflict prevention is not just a state-based activity.⁹⁵ Notwithstanding the substantial difficulties in encouraging local actor engagement, effective analysis and integration of findings as well as the generation of effective responses can be implemented at the local level by a range of local actors many of whom are themselves stakeholders in the conflict.⁹⁶

Conclusions

With respect to policy, preferences for solutions to state failure often depend on the explanations we accept for explaining their onset, decay and collapse. If one emphasizes root structural causes (economic, social, political) the list of solutions might include long term developmentally oriented structural prevention. If one emphasises

medium and micro level political behaviours and interests the range of solutions might include everything from partition, power sharing, democratization, constitutional entrenchment of ethnic or minority rights, to more specific operational responses such as sanctions, peace enforcement and the long term development of effective institutional response.

Debates on state failure, thus far, have largely focused on definitional issues, the strengths and weaknesses of contending methodologies and evaluation procedures as well as the causes and manifestations of state failure. Much less attention has been paid to the question of what to do about them. In this paper I have argued that in addressing the latter problem, a multifaceted, multilayered and multi-actor methodology is appropriate. This is because anticipating state failure is a process-based approach requiring sound analysis as well as an explicit connection to policy options for preventive measures.⁹⁷ Unfortunately states and international organizations have done little towards the creation of a working and useful conflict prevention regime at the regional and global level. While there is no lack of rhetoric on the necessity of conflict prevention, serious attempts to give international and regional organizations the tools to put a global preventive system into place are modest at best. Rhetorical commitment to preventive diplomacy and action continues to be high, while commitment to its implementation is very weak.

Notes

¹ Ignatieff, Michael (1993) Blood and Belonging (Toronto: Praeger) p.8.

² Kaplan D. Robert (1994) "The Coming Anarchy" Atlantic Monthly (February).

³ From a video transcript: "Small Arms and Failed States" October 24, 1999.
<http://www.cdi.org/adm/1307/transcript.html>

⁴ To understand what a failed state is, it is important to understand a successful state. At its core, a successful state provides for the basic security of its population, protecting it from both internal and external threats. It also has the capacity to provide for the health and welfare of its population. <http://www.cdi.org/adm/1307/transcript.html>

⁵ State Failure Task Force Report: November 30, 1995. Prepared by: Daniel C. Esty, Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr, Barbara Harff, Marc Levy, Geoffrey D. Dabelko, Pamela T. Surko, and Alan N. Unger. According to the Task Force, in general terms, a failed state is one that is "utterly incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community" (p. 1). Narrowly defined however, "state failures consist of instances in which central state authority collapses for several years" (ibid.). However, since fewer than 20 such episodes have occurred during the last 40 years, it is difficult for any statistical analysis. Therefore, the task force broadened the concept of state failure to include a wider range of civil conflicts, political crises, and massive violations of human rights that are typically associated with state breakdown. In line with such a broad definition, the task force isolate four kinds of state failure: (1) revolutionary wars, (2) ethnic wars, (3) mass killings, and (4) adverse or disruptive regime change. Using more than 2 million pieces of data and examining more than 600 potential independent variables, the task force identified 75 high-priority variables deemed to be: (1) most likely to correlate with state failure and (2) based on reasonable complete and reliable data sources. They classified these variables into four broad areas:

- 'Demographic and societal measures, such as infant mortality, school enrolment, and population change.
- Economic measures, such as GDP per capita, change in inflation, and trade openness.
- Environmental measures, such as access to safe water, drought, and intensity of use of cropland.
- Political and leadership measures, such as democracy level, traits of ruling elites, and presence of ethnic discrimination and separatist activity" (pp. vii-viii).

The second Task Force Report builds on the first one. The task of this second phase was basically refining the models used in the first phase. The statistical analyses of this phase identified factors correlated with state failure, basically not much different from the first phase. Among the factors identified were:

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- “The finding that a greater involvement in international trade is associated with lower risks of state failure suggests that policies that create a climate conducive to international trade could help prevent political crises;
 - Because partial democracies – often newer ones – were found to be associated with elevated risks of failure, particularly in countries where quality of life is relatively low, democratization policies may have to be combined with broader development strategies that help improve the overall standard of living. This finding also suggests that the gradual introduction of democratic institutions may improve the chances of having a durable transition.
 - Findings on Sub-Saharan Africa suggest, perhaps surprisingly in light of the prevalence of ethnic conflicts, that while ethnic factors bear monitoring, the fact of ethnic discrimination or domination by itself is not the most important factor generating conflict. The most effective policy approach may be to combine efforts to control or limit ethnic discrimination with development strategies designed to raise the living standard of all groups, to further integrate states into regional and global trade, and balance urbanization with economic growth.
 - Good environmental data are still lacking for many variables and regions. Nonetheless, analysis of the available data suggests that, while environment matters, efforts to track environmental factors that may affect political stability need to be complemented by assessments of a country’s vulnerability and its capacity to deal with environmental degradation” (p. ix).

According to the authors of the report, these results of the second phase suggest several useful future research directions, among them:

- “Obtaining a better understanding of the factors that ensure a successful democratic transition.
- Improving environmental data, both by combining currently available data in new ways and by developing a core set of indicators that could support future analyses.
- Further developing the concept of “state capacity” as a mediating factor in general and regional models.
- Investigating the impact of international support on the risks of state failure.
- Further investigating the usefulness of analyzing daily events, in conjunction with background factors, to track the immediate precursors of state failure” (p. x).

⁶ See <http://www.cdi.org/adm/1307/transcript.html>. Also Baker and Ausink start off by challenging the central post-cold war assumption that state collapse and ethnic violence are of low priority for American foreign policy. Drawing from a National Defense University report which noted that state failure is becoming more common and the US public often insists on intervention, Baker and Ausink present an early warning and evaluation system to assess crises that are likely to result in state collapse. Pauline H. Baker and John A. Ausink (1996) “State Collapse and Ethnic Violence: Toward a Predictive Model,” *Parameters*, Spring, pp. 19-31

⁷ Adelman, Howard (1996) "Responding to Failed States" Paper prepared for a conference on Canada and Global Issues, Ottawa, October. Adelman, Howard and Astri Suhrke (1996) Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (Norway). When states collapse, there are international consequences. Failed states are important to the United States and Canada because of the demands that they foster. They bring increased refugees, human starvation, the causing of disease across borders, and they create insecurity in the states that surround the failing states, thus causing demands for the United States to intervene.

⁸ See: Lund, Michael (2000) 'Creeping institutionalisation of the culture of Prevention?' in *Preventing Violent Conflict: The Search for Political Will, Strategies and Effective Tools*, The Report of the Krusenberg Seminar, 19-20 June, p. 23. for these and other examples.

⁹ The question remains as to why the benefits of intervention are provided at all. In the Cold War era, client states and groups can be thought of as 'purchasing' insurance by allying themselves with a superpower sponsor. Such sponsorship opportunities, to a greater or lesser degree, offered 'mutual' assistance in security matters. In the post-Cold war period, however, these strategically-based insurance contracts are somewhat less available or desirable (being offered only by a monopolist) (Rowlands, D. and Carment, D. (1998) 'Moral Hazard and Conflict Intervention' in Wolfson, Murray ed. *The Political Economy of War and Peace* (London: Kluwer Press).

¹⁰ The literature is ambivalent on specifying the conditions in which biased interventions will lead to increased stability. This is a significant weakness because intervention is a costly process and imposes long and short term costs on both the intervener and the belligerents. Failed interventions also have implications for future interventions. Biased efforts that result in failure may result in future challenges at a later stage of the conflict.

¹¹ Robert H. Dorff, (1996) 'Democratization and Failed States: The Challenge of Ungovernability,' *Parameters*, Summer, pp. 17-31.

¹² (Adelman, Howard 1996) Fewer reports (various) available at www.fewer.org.

¹³ Lund, Michael (2000) 'Creeping institutionalisation of the culture of Prevention?' in *Preventing Violent Conflict: The Search for Political Will, Strategies and Effective Tools*, The Report of the Krusenberg Seminar, 19-20 June, p. 23.

¹⁴ Alao's framework provides a useful point of departure. He suggests that a number of interrelated factors are at work. These include: weak state structures and their inability to cope with post-Cold War transition; deteriorating economic conditions; and the rise in ethnic conflict. See: Alao, Charles Abiodun (1999) 'The Problem of the failed state in Africa,' in Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *International Security Management and the United Nations*, Tokyo: UNU Press,, pp. 83-102. See also Helman,

Gerald B. and Ratner, Steven R. (1992/93) 'Saving Failed States,' *Foreign Policy*, 89, Winter, pp. 3-20.

¹⁵ The number of states within the system also varies across time and region so conflict and failure may also be a function of the number of states in the system (and by extension the number of borders, affinities and weak states in the system). For example, there were fewer states in the system during the inter-war years, compared to the bipolar, polycentric and post-Cold War periods. The international system, obsessed with this principle, paid little attention to the long-term survivability of these new states. Economic assistance was poured into these new nations to make them viable. In addition, the Cold War prolonged the viability of some of these states through the infusion of aid from Europe and from the superpowers. The Minorities at Risk Project (M@R). M@R finds that Africa has the largest number of groups subject to relatively severe discrimination (Gurr 1992: 20) and that the potential for minority-based conflict in Africa is high - "...once violence begins, it often escalates to very high intensity." (Gurr 1992: 29). In a similar vein, Brecher and Wilkenfeld found that Africa was most prone to violent ethnic conflict for the period 1945-1988 (1997). Gurr, Ted, Robert. (1992) "The Internationalization of Protracted Communal Conflicts Since 1945: Which Groups, Where and How." In Midlarsky, Manus, I. ed., *The Internationalization of Communal Strife*. London: Routledge. pp. 4-24. Brecher, Michael and Jonathon Wilkenfeld (1997) "The Ethnic Dimension of International Crises." In David Carment and Patrick James, eds., *Wars in the Midst of Peace: The International Politics of Ethnic Conflict*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, pp.164-193.

¹⁶ Gurr, Ted, Robert, ed. (1980) *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*. New York, NY: Free Press. Huntington, Samuel, P. (1968) *Political Order In Changing Society*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

¹⁷ Chazan, Naomi, ed. (1991) *Irredentism and International Politics*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner

¹⁸ Wallensteen argues that social stratification most of the time leads to the break down of states. During the 20th century for instance, 27 empires have been dissolved: Sweden, the self-determination moves following World War I, decolonisation after World War II, to the dissolution of the Soviet, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak unions in the early 1990s are clear examples. However, break-up does not always imply anarchy. Using data on how civil wars end since 1945, Wallensteen argues that state break-up, when well-managed does not have to be as disruptive as often thought. Peter Wallensteen, (1998) 'State Failure, Ethnocracy and Democracy: New Conceptions of Governance,' Paper presented at the Failed States Conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, February 25-27, 1998.

¹⁹ According to Zinnes (1980), Levy (1989) and James (1987) a theoretical and empirical distinction must be made between these linkages. There are several distinct causal mechanisms: (1) the internalization of external conflict in which weaker states invite intervention. For example, Gurr concludes that external intervention exacerbates internal conflict to the extent that the poorer the nation, the more invidious the inequalities, and the more dependent the state is, the more susceptible to violence internally and; (2) The externalization of internal conflict involving: a) shift in the dyadic balance of power or; b) external intervention. Zinnes, Dina (1980) "Why War, Evidence on the Outbreak of International Conflict." In Ted R. Gurr, ed., *Handbook of Political Conflict*, New York, NY: Free Press, pp.331-360; Levy, Jack, S. (1989) "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique." In Manus I. Midlarsky, ed. *Handbook of War Studies*, Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman. pp. 259-288; James, Patrick (1987) "Conflict and Cohesion: A Review of the Literature and Recommendations for Future Research." *Cooperation and Conflict*, 22:1: pp. 21-33.

²⁰ Gurr, Ted, Robert (1993) "Resolving Ethnopolitical Conflicts: Exit, Autonomy or Access." In Ted Robert Gurr, et.al. *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press; Calvert, Peter (1986) *The Foreign Policies of New States*. New York, NY: St. Martin' s Press; Azar, Edward, E. and Chung-in Moon (1988) *National Security in the Third World: The Management of Internal and External Threats*, Aldershot, England: Edward Elgar.

²¹ See: Azar & Moon 1988.. The absence of interstate ethnic strife in South America supports this conclusion. Although homogenous, these states also have lower levels of internal cleavage and very low levels of transnational affinities.

²² He is of the view that the answer lies in the international norms which define the international system. According to him "The international system is created on the basis of the norms from the dominant states concerning the idea of the state, legitimacy, and the legal framework for the state. The weak states are unable to live up to these norms. The weak states represent both a system failure and a system responsibility Hans-Henrik Holm, (1998) "The Responsibility That Will Not Go Away Weak States in the International System," Paper Presented at the Failed States Conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, February 25-27, 1998.

²³ Rosh, Robert (1987) "Ethnic Cleavages as a Component of Global Military Expenditures." *Journal of Peace Research*, 24:1: pp. 21-30. Mohammed Ayoob, (1996) "State-Making, State-Breaking and State Failure: Explaining the Roots of ' Third World' Insecurity," in Luc van de Goor, Kumar Rupesinghe, and Paul Sciarone, eds., *Between Development and Destruction*, London and New York: Macmillan Press and St. Martin' s Press, pp. 67-86.

²⁴ Some regions that may have had important geo-strategic value to colonial great powers such as France and the UK and the two superpowers- the U.S and the Soviet Union may account for this difference.

²⁵ Ayoob (1996) examines the western model of state-making (in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) and tries to draw a parallel with what is currently taking place in the ' Third World. Ayoob also examines the twin concepts of ethno-nationalism and self-determination which he tries to relate to state failure. According to Ayoob, state failure "predominates when institutions collapse, when existing institutions are not fulfilling people' s basic needs and when satisfactory alternative structures are not readily available" (p. 80).

²⁶ Ayoob' s main argument is to link the emergence of state failure to superpower competition in the ' Third World.'

²⁷ Horowitz, Donald (1985) *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, University of Berkeley Press).

²⁸ Rene Lemarchand, (1997) 'Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa: Reflections On The Crisis in The Great Lakes, *Afrika Spectrum*, 32, 2, pp. 173-93.

²⁹ Zartman, William, I. (1995) 'Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse,' in I. William Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 1-11.

³⁰ According to Zartman, what is notable in such scenarios is the absence of clear turning points and warning signals. Nonetheless, he likens collapse to a slippery slope that has some notable characteristics towards the end and these sometimes serve as warning signals of imminent collapse He identifies five such characteristics: the devolution of power to the peripheries because the center fights among itself; the withering away of power from the central government; government malfunctions by avoiding necessary but difficult choices; the incumbents practice only defensive politics; and the ultimate danger – the lost of control by the center over its own agents.

³¹ With regards the causes of state collapse in Africa, Zartman poses very important questions. First, did the state fall apart in Africa because it was not the appropriate institution? To this question, he argues that since no common theme runs through all cases of collapse, it will be wrong to say the state was the wrong institution in Africa. Rather, the state collapsed because of the poor performance of their functions – representation, interest articulation, output efficiency, etc. The second question is did the state collapse because the balance between its coercive and rewarding functions was tilted more toward coercion? Zartman cites tyranny in places like Uganda under Amin, Liberia under Doe etc. to support this hypothesis.

³² Alao, Charles Abiodun (1999) "The Problem of the failed state in Africa," in Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *International Security Management and the United Nations*, Tokyo: UNU Press, pp. 83-102.

³³ Herbst, Jeffrey (1996/97) "Responding to State Failure in Africa," *International Security*, vol. 21, 3, Winter, pp. 120-144.

³⁴ Alger, Chadwick F. Alger (1998) "Failed States and the Failure of States: Self-Determination, States, Nations and Global Governance," Paper presented at the Failed States Conference, Purdue University, February 25-27.

³⁵ Rothschild's vertical, parallel and reticulate models are appropriate in this context. The reticulate model more closely approximates the ethnic composition of most states because ethnic groups and social classes "cross-populate each... [and]... each ethnic group pursues a wide range of economic functions and occupations [to the extent that] a certain amount of over-representation and under-representation of ethnic groups within economic classes and political power clusters is possible-indeed likely." Rothschild, Joseph (1981) *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press pp. 81.

³⁶ In comparing the crises in Rwanda and Kosovo, Howard Adelman (1996) comments: Both countries were run by elected dictators. Both countries had a legacy of nationalist authoritarianism. The concept of a loyal opposition would have been odd to both systems. Both countries lacked a strong middle class. Both countries had well-developed oppositions that had put considerable pressure on the regimes for reform. The dominant extremist Hutu tried to eliminate the Tutsi from Rwanda. The dominant Serbs are trying to eliminate the Kosovars from Yugoslavia. In both cases, there was plenty of early warning of the intentions and activities of the dominant group actively abusing the human rights of the minority.

³⁷ Burton, John (1986) "The History of International Conflict Resolution." In Edward E. Azar E. and John W. Burton, eds., *International Conflict Resolution*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner: pp. 28-40; Azar, Edward, E.. 1990. *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict*, Aldershot, Dartmouth Publishing; Gurr, Ted, Robert. 1994. "Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System." *International Studies Quarterly*, 38: pp. 347-377; Smith, Anthony, D. (1993) "The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism." *Survival*, 35:1: pp. 48-64

³⁸ The cases of Biafra, Ethiopia and Somalia illustrate this. In each instance, ethnic groups, threatened with human rights abuses drew the attention of a variety of monitoring groups including United Nations bodies, private organizations such as Amnesty International and church groups Instrumental factors relate to the differential bearing that trade and economic development assistance have upon various ethnic groups within a state.

³⁹ For Smith organized violence is largely associated with the growth of an ethnic intelligentsia and the emergence of a repressive state dominated by a specific nationalist group Smith, Anthony, D. (1986) "Conflict and Collective Identity: Class, Ethnic and Nation." In Edward Azar and John Burton, eds., *International Conflict Resolution*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. pp. 63-84. 13. Michael Nicholson, (1998) "Failing States, Failing Systems," Paper presented at the Failed States Conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, February 25-27.

⁴⁰ Holm (1998) further examines what he calls the 'new international system' and its attendant negative consequences on the survival of weak states. He looks at the recent construction of a 'bifocal' system with wealthy nations at the top and poor nations at the bottom and consequently, with the emergence of two zones: that of peace and that of war. While grappling with the instability that has been created by this bifocal system, the international system was further affected by the emergence of globalization, which has overshadowed the bifocal system; creating further instability (cf: Chris Allen).

⁴¹ Allen begins by examining the patterns of violence and warfare in Africa as well as the characteristics of the what he calls the 'new violence.' He then examines the 'why' of these patterns. These include: new barbarism; economics of war; the nature of African political systems; globalization approaches; and approaches using social, cultural, and individual factors. This is where Allen differs. He is of the view that these approaches help in understanding violence in terms of its timing, relationship to economic changes and external forces, durability etc. They are however weak in explaining the politics of violence since they assume that all types of violence will submit to the same analysis; and pay lip service to the question of whether and how African political systems themselves generate such violent conflicts. Chris Allen, (1999) "Warfare, Endemic Violence & State Collapse in Africa," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 81, pp. 367-384.

⁴² Allen (1999) uses the term 'spoils politics' to describe what is at play in Africa. "Spoils politics occurs when the primary goal of those competing for political office or power is self-enrichment" (p. 377). Prolonged spoils leads to terminal spoils and ultimately to state collapse. At the terminal stages of spoils politics, where state failure sets in, the main political features include: the decline or disappearance of state functions and offices; abusive use of remaining institutions, notably the army and police; the contraction, fragmentation or disappearance of central authority; and a relationship between the state and society that consists very largely of mutual avoidance or violence and resource extraction. Allied to the political features are a number of economic features: general contractions of the economy leading to its decline or the emergence of the 'second economy.' The social consequences of all these, according to Allen, is endemic violence.

⁴³ Ryan, Stephen. (1988) "Explaining Ethnic Conflict: The Neglected International Dimension." *Review of International Studies*, 14: pp. 161-77. Ryan, Stephen. 1998. "Preventive Diplomacy, Conflict Prevention and Ethnic Conflict ." In David Carment and

Patrick James, eds., *Peace in the Midst of Wars: Preventing and Managing International Ethnic Conflicts*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, pp. 63-92

⁴⁴ Azar, Edward, E. and John Burton, eds. (1986) *International Conflict Resolution*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

⁴⁵ See: Kohli, Atul. (1990) *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Baker and Ausink (1996) define the state as "a political entity that has legal jurisdiction and physical control over a defined territory, the authority to make collective decisions for a permanent population, a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and a government that interacts or has the capacity to interact in formal relations with other such entities" (3:1996).

⁴⁶ (Huntington 1968). The emerging gap between tradition and modernity marks a transitional stage characterized by anomie and the decay and corrosive impact of economic development on established beliefs and behaviours.

⁴⁷ (Baker and Ausink 1996).

⁴⁸ Douglas H. Dearth, (1996) "Failed States: An International Conundrum," *Defense Intelligence Journal*: 5-2, 119-130. Failed states are a matter of concern, according to Dearth, for two reasons. The first is formalistic - because the state system has for the past 350 years characterized the organization of the international system, when states fail, especially in large numbers, the entire system is thought to be in danger. The second reason is humanitarian - state failure results in widespread human suffering.

⁴⁹ Hewitt, Vernon (1997) *The New Politics of South Asia*. Manchester University Press: Manchester and New York, p. 198.

⁵⁰ For example, Kohli shows that since 1967, India's political system has undergone a decline in order and authority. This decline has arisen as a result of two factors: the emergence of political parties based on ethnic identity and the diminishing capacity of secular elites at the state-centre to influence the political behaviour of those below them. Political disorder has emerged in India precisely because of the failure of prevailing democratic and secular values to legitimize new socio-economic hierarchies that have emerged out of India's modernization.

⁵¹ See: Brass, Paul (1991) *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*. London: Cambridge University Press. Brass, Paul (1990) *The Politics of India Since Independence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁵² In examining the roots of state failure, Wallenstein argues that it has to do with state building. He examines the issue of ethnocracy and the dissolution of empires and argues that the ethnization of society can be a cause of its falling apart. Ethnocracy – the rule by one ethnic group, instills in all social groups an understanding that ethnic security is associated with state power.

⁵³ (Peter Wallensteen 1998).

⁵⁴ Jean-Germain Gros, (1996) 'Towards a taxonomy of failed states in the New World Order: decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti,' *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 17, 3, pp. 455-471 (p. 456). Ultimately as Gros suggests: poor economic performance; lack of social synergy; authoritarianism; militarism; and environmental degradation caused by rampant population growth. According to Gros, since the degree of 'stateness' varies considerably across most cases of 'state failure,' rather than putting all cases together as instances of failure, it makes sense to situate them along a continuum. Based on this argument, Gros presents a taxonomy of five types of failed states. These include: the anarchic state - where there is no central government; the phantom or mirage state - where a semblance of authority exists; the anemic state - where the energy of the state has been sapped by counter-insurgency; the captured state - where there is a strong central authority but one that is captured by members of insecure elites to frustrate rival elites; and states that failed *in vitro* (aborted states) - states that failed before the process of state formation was consolidated

⁵⁵ Rene Lemarchand, (1997) 'Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa: Reflections On The Crisis in The Great Lakes, *Afrika Spectrum*, 32, 2, pp. 173-93.

⁵⁶ According to Lemarchand, long before Rwanda and Burundi hit 'collapse' they were faced with demographic pressures which they could not contain. They were faced with among other things, land shortage, a key ingredient of ethnic strife in that region, according to Lemarchand. Another important factor, of relevance to all the countries in the region, is the shrinking of the political bases of state authority. A common phenomenon in the region was regional struggles over patronage which intensified to the point where power and authority tended to gravitate increasingly around the presidency. This was especially true in the case of Rwanda. It was also true of Zaire where the Mobutu government was for a long time more recognized abroad (by the US especially) than at home where Mobutu's control was limited to only the capital city. With regards triggers, Lemarchand challenges the notion espoused by some analysts, especially Zartman, that it is not easy to clearly discern triggers of state collapse. Using evidence from the case of Rwanda, Lemarchand identified a number of triggers which were indicative of looming collapse. Among them, the October 1990 invasion of Rwanda by the RPF; the arrest of thousands of Tutsi civilians following that invasion; and the two surface-to-air missiles that brought down president Habyarimana's plane over Kigali on April 6, 1994.

⁵⁷ Ethnic elites often intentionally promote feelings of cultural and economic inequality for political gain in hopes of establishing a strong, unified base for action. The strategy often involves tapping economic grievances and re-framing them in the discourse of ethnonationalism. Where culturally divergent groups inhabit a common society, there is a "structural imperative" in which one group becomes subordinate to another. This is

especially common when ethnic cleavages are reinforced by differences in class and status or when labour markets are divided along ethnic lines. The inequalities often result in exploitation, discrimination and blocked mobility for members of subordinate groups, which create the grievances, feelings of relative deprivation and, by implication, the motives for ethnic mobilization and violence.

⁵⁸ Whereas cultural differences can account for the motivations behind demands for political, social or territorial separation based on distinct national identities, and can explain why each side may end up fighting, but the approach is less successful at establishing whether the violence is a product of animosities produced by the fears associated with ethnic differences, or international forces and environmental stimuli.

⁵⁹ Posen, Barry (1993) "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict." *Survival*, 35:1: pp. 27-47.

⁶⁰ Lipschutz, Ronnie and Beverly Crawford (1999) *The Myth of Ethnic Conflict*, Berkeley, University of California Press p.36. For example, Lipschutz and Crawford argue that ethnic entrepreneurs who are able to offer tangible resources to disadvantaged populations are those most likely to gain political support. They go on to argue that the level of resources available to entrepreneurs is dependent on 1) the degree to which cultural criteria were historically used to allocate these resources... and 2) the level of resources provided by international alliances.

⁶¹ When intergroup violence ensues, states take control through the provision of policing and similar functions. The degree of enforcement available to states is variable. At one end of the spectrum are "police states" in which all forms of political conflict are discouraged. For example, frequent success in the use of state-organized violence (for example, to achieve national consolidation and suppress internal challenges) leads to the development of police states (Gurr 1980).

⁶² These include military regimes and one-party states. In states that have little or no experience in managing ethnic tensions, and constraints are low, hegemonial exchange and its more coercive variant, the control model, is usually the alternative. Control models differ from hegemonial-exchange models to the extent that there is a superordinate ethnic group in power. The elites of these groups have developed the techniques of coercion, depoliticization and cooption in order to maintain power. Control becomes institutionalised and usually arises when the state is faced with imminent collapse

⁶³ See Marshall, Monty (1997) "Systems at Risk" in Carment, D. and James, P. eds. *Wars in the Midst of Peace* (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press). There are two reasons for this. First, unlike states, most ethnic groups have neither diplomats nor armies and therefore have to gradually escalate their conflicts through violence. Second, armed-struggle is the result of an ethnic group's quest for identity, positive group distinctiveness and ingroup cohesion Heraclides, Alexis (1989) "Conflict Resolution, Ethnonationalism and the Middle-East Impasse." *Journal of Peace Research*. 26:2: pp. 197-212.

⁶⁴ See: Fearon, James D. (1998) "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict." In David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear Diffusion and Escalation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Lake, David, A. and Donald Rothchild., eds. (1998) *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear Diffusion and Escalation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

⁶⁵ Hardin, Russell (1995) *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflicts*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, p. 143. Research that combines insights from primordialist, political economy and instrumental perspectives generally focus on economic and political disparities between the state-center and minority. For example, Gurr concludes that four factors determine whether or not a minority will mobilize against state dominance. The first is the degree of economic, social and political disparities between groups. In general, severely deprived groups have a greater chance of becoming politically active. By itself, though, deprivation is not a sufficient condition for ethnic conflict to ensue. A group must also possess a common purpose, strong leadership and organizational capacity. A second factor is the salience of group identity. Cross-cutting identities or low cohesion among ethnic groups is thought to reduce the probability that an ethnic group will be able to act in concert. Motivations for forming ethnic groups may be material, as in mobilization for the defense of interests. Changes experienced at one level, such as dehumanization (a psychological factor), stimulate cohesiveness and eventually increase polarization between groups. Symbols are important group markers in this process of mobilization. Third, organizational skills and regional concentration are also crucial to the development of political activity. For example, leadership is crucial to the rise and growth of ethnic movements. Increased scales of ethnic organization encourage ethnic mobilization to the extent that small-scale bases of ethnic organizations are weakened in favour of large scale ethnic affiliations that provide the organizational framework and constituency for ethnic collective action. Finally, ethnic mobilization must elicit a response from the dominant group or state against which it is reacting. Reciprocity and interactions also are important factors to consider. Conflict between dominant groups and minorities usually involve issues of national identity; the expansion and centralization of nationalist political authority which creates a competitive arena for state controlled resources; and the recognition of ethnicity as a basis for resource competition and political access

⁶⁶ As Modelski points out (1996: 339) , Special Issue on Evolutionary Theory *International Studies Quarterly* "conditions that favour political evolution in turn depend on other evolutionary processes that are exogenous to it." There are a multiplicity of political, economic, cultural and societal evolutionary processes that drive human social behaviour, and they all play a role in some evolutionary system.

⁶⁷ (Rowlands& Carment 1998). See also Kuperman, Alan (1996) "The Other Lesson of Rwanda: Mediators Sometimes do More Damage Than Good" *SAIS Review*, vol. 16, winter-spring, pp. 221-40; Kuperman, Alan (1999) "Transnational Causes of Genocide: Or How the West Inadvertently Exacerbates Ethnic Conflict in the Post Cold War Era"

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2-5, 1999, Atlanta, GA.

⁶⁸ Carment, D and Harvey, Frank (2000) *Using Force to Prevent Ethnic Violence* (Westport, CN: Praeger Press).

⁶⁹ Of course, the ability to generate the international consensus required to mount an effective response is becoming increasingly limited and difficult. But when consensus is reached, credibility and resolve are dramatically enhanced. For example the evolution of NATO's reputation for responding to ethnic violence created a set of conditions that made escalation in the fighting unacceptable to all sides in the Bosnian dispute only after four years of sustained conflict in the region. In Kosovo the wide-scale violence was far shorter in duration, less intense and involved far fewer casualties.

⁷⁰ In the absence of solid information-gathering networks of their own, interveners are often forced to rely on information provided by the combatants themselves, who may reveal only false or partial information. Incentives to misrepresent information include the belief that there are gains to 'bluffing', the tendency to disguise true goals in order to avoid the label of an 'aggressor', and the pursuit of group military strategies that can not be shared with an opponent. Under these circumstances, interveners may be unable to determine which group or groups should be held responsible for instigating the violence, and in the hope of alleviating suffering they provide benefits to all regardless of their role in the conflict.

⁷¹ Under the worst of conditions the third party may become a target rather than an intermediary. Of course the suggestion that outside actors should first strive to "do no harm" are important words to consider under any conditions of conflict management, but doubly so when the risks of proactive involvement include the potential loss of lives and not just resources. Secondly, triangulation begs the question of who should be actively engaged in the first place. Under ideal conditions preventive activities would be locally owned and enacted upon. But not every situation is one calling for long term structural transformation. Preventive activities engage outside actors to the extent that is they that can often provide threats and promises (coercive activity) that can induce rapid de-escalation of tensions in situations where wide-scale violence is already at hand.

⁷² Food aid directed through non-governmental organizations is often provided to belligerents as well as victims. Emergency health care is given to both combatants and non-combatants alike Barber. 1997. "How Humanitarian Aid Feeds War and Conflict." *The Globe and Mail*. July 12 1997. D9

⁷³ (Barber 1997).

⁷⁴ Decision-makers can then develop an active and effective response to the specific conflict based on a combination of factors. These would include the salience of the

conflict, the potential for a larger regional conflict, the resources available and the available alternatives (which might include doing nothing).

⁷⁵ There is secondarily the problem of weak signals leading to problems of interpretation. Errors in predicting outcomes become greater as we move away in time from crisis onset. The signals are inevitably clearer as a crisis looms but this is of less benefit to a decision maker. Additionally, with the complexity of today's conflicts analysts need to think about alternative sequences of events, not just one or two, but many and far enough ahead to anticipate a likely chain of events.

⁷⁶ von Muller, Albrecht and David Law. 1995. "The Needs of Researchers: Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention in a Historic Transition Period", *Information Technologies and International Security*, Number 30/95, p. 27-38, p. 28

⁷⁷ McCarthy, Mary, O. 1997. "Potential Humanitarian Crises: The Warning Process and Roles for Intelligence" in Schmeidl, S. & Adelman, H. eds. *Synergy in Early Warning Conference Proceedings*, March 15-18, 1997, Toronto, Canada, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁸ Of the commercial tools, the most comprehensive products are those provided by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Political Risk Services, and Control Risks Information Services. It is important to note that the definitions of political risk ratings varied widely between instruments. For example, the majority of the commercially available tools focus on the risk to business interests and define political risk very narrowly as it relates to the willingness and ability of a given state to repay its loans. Databases available through Moody's Investors Service, Standard and Poor's Rating Group, Business Environment Risk Intelligence and Euromoney are examples of narrowly focused economic forecasting systems encompassing only limited elements of political risk. Overall, however, all of these instruments rely heavily on qualitative analysis by experienced analysts, with a surprisingly low level of methodological complexity.

⁷⁹ Forecasting is about the likelihood an event will happen. By itself it has no strategic connotation or purpose. Forecasting can be either passive (about events over which we have no control) or active (about events over which we have some control).¹⁰ For example, weather forecasts are a form of passive forecasting; they do not tell us that when there is a 50% chance of rain, whether it will rain half the day, or whether it will rain every half hour or whether it will cover half the region. To be policy relevant, forecasting needs to take on three additional qualities. It must be diagnostic, by which emphasis is on describing how and why things work as they do. It must also take the form of a conditional generalization -- that is, in situation X, if one does Y, one should expect Z. Finally, policy-relevant forecasting must be prescriptive, offering explicit recommendations to policy makers faced with certain kinds of problems.¹¹ Policy relevant forecasting (or risk assessment) has traditionally referred to the chance or probability that some event will occur with the associated word gravity used to describe the event's consequences. More formally, risk means an expected value arrived at by

multiplying consequences by the probability that they will occur. Risk indicates probabilities about consequences.

⁸⁰ Gupta, Dipak (1997) "An Early Warning About Forecasts: Oracle to Academics" in Schmeidl, S. & Adelman, H. eds. *Synergy in Early Warning Conference Proceedings*, March 15-18, Toronto, Canada, pp. 375-396.

⁸¹ A leading indicator approach would use previously identified relationships or sequences of events to identify the precursors of instability or conflict. The basis for this approach holds that there are sequencing regularities that allow the forecaster to discover what variable to focus on in order to project a trend. For example, political risk assessments routinely incorporate signs of military build-up, increasing rhetoric, or escalating human rights abuses to identify potential areas of internal or external conflict. The major disadvantage of a leading indicator approach is that while it can often predict the direction of change, it gives no indication of its magnitude

⁸² Background conditions form the pre-conditions of crisis situations such as systematic political exclusion, inherent economic inequities, lack of adequate and responsive institutions, the presence of ethnic minorities, resource exhaustion, and over-dependence on international trade. Accelerators are feedback events that rapidly increase the level of significance of the most volatile of the general conditions, but may also signify system breakdown or basic changes in political causality. Triggers are sudden events that act as catalysts igniting a crisis or conflict, such as the assassination of a leader, election fraud, or a political scandal. See Ampleford, Susan (2000) *CIFP Methodology Report* <http://www.carleton.ca/cifp>.

⁸³ Moore, Will and Gurr, T.R. (1997) "Assessing Risks of Ethnopolitical Rebellion in the Year 2000: Three Empirical Approaches" in Schmeidl, S. & Adelman, H. eds. *Synergy in Early Warning Conference Proceedings*, March 15-18, Toronto, Canada, pp. 45-70. Definitional and operationalization issues are always problematic when dealing with a class of events that are controversial, rare and not well understood. Harff includes a fairly broad definition of genocide and politicide. This is a reasonable decision in part because it increases the number of events but it also assumes that having a broader definition outweighs the costs of model coherence. Gary King and Langche Zeng - *Improving Forecasts of State Failure* (unpublished paper) point out several methodological flaws in the testing procedures of the State Failure Task Force. They draw attention to biased causal inferences; exaggerated claims of forecasting performance and forecasting probabilities that are too large. They also evaluate the inherent trade-off between providing accurate forecasting and making causal inference from the same models. They suggest that a claim about accurate forecasts is also a claim about causal structure. The net result can be an overwhelming array of associations and causal relationships that explain the onset and execution of genocides and politicides. Parsimony gives way to complexity.

⁸⁴ Here the distinction between risk assessment and early warning is important. The policy relevance of early warning stems directly from the fact early warning systems are not restricted to analyzing a crisis, but also assess the capacities, needs, and responses for dealing with a crisis. Second, early warning is essentially networks- states, Inter-Governmental Organizations and NGOs - conducting their analyses together in order to prevent likely events from occurring. According to the Forum for Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) early warning is "the communication of information on a crisis area, analysis of that information and development of potential strategic responses to respond to the crisis in a timely manner. The central purpose of early warning is not only to identify potential problems but also to create the necessary political will for preventive action to be taken. See <http://www.fewer.org>.

⁸⁵ Source: FEWER Secretariat. <http://www.fewer.org>.

⁸⁶ The groups identified are: Caucasian Institute of Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD); Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) and the Global Events Data System (GEDS) and the Forum for Early Warning and Early Response. See: <http://www.fewer.org>).

⁸⁷ Source: FEWER Secretariat.

⁸⁸ Data on political rights and civil liberties - Freedom House and CIFP.

⁸⁹ Data on political rights and civil liberties – Freedom House and CIFP.

⁹⁰ Media reports on ethnic violence incidents in Armenia, Russia and Georgia involving different groups.

⁹¹ Data on minorities and minorities at risk.

⁹² Media reports on Georgian and Armenian co-operation.

⁹³ Media reports on negotiations regarding the withdrawal of Russian bases in the Caucasus, and Russian troops fighting in Chechnya.

⁹⁴ Data on economic growth and government expenditure. See: <http://www.carleton.ca/cifp>.

⁹⁵ The goal is not to prevent conflict *per se* but to prevent destructive and potentially violent conflict at any stage of conflict (latent, pre and post-phases). The key questions are how to render academic analyses accessible to the practitioner; and how to ensure the end-user is equipped with the best available skills to ensure valid and reliable results. The solution that has been raised by all of the ROs is the need to train local staff with meaningful analytical skills and field monitoring of indicators. Risk assessment models must be tailored to meet the needs of the practitioners. On the other hand, the

practitioners must clearly articulate what they need. This dialogue entails first, and obviously, common understandings on the linkage between cause and effect (there is a need to know what to look for and what specifically should be warned about – refugee flows, state failure, human rights violations all stem from a variety of different sources, and hence require somewhat different explanations, strategies and responses.)

⁹⁶ See for example the comparative studies on NGO effectiveness in Rotberg, R. ed.(1996) *Vengeance and Vigilance* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Inst Press). One of the key criticisms of NGO involvement is their lack of leverage. Its important that the link between early warning and preventive measures be a direct function of the proximity of the analyst to senior decision-makers. As Tapio Kanninen has argued, “[e]arly warning is linked to possible immediate action by an actor who is close to one giving the early warning, e.g. belonging to the same organization.” This, he asserts, calls for early warning to be “practice-oriented, dynamic, and geared to the possibilities of the actor to intervene purposefully.” Tapio Kanninen, (1991) “The Future of Early Warning and Preventive Action in the United Nations,” Occasional Paper No. 5, Ralph Bunche Institute on the United Nations, New York: CUNY, May, p. 2.

⁹⁷ A process-based approach means that the method and format of applied early warning is shaped directly by the operational focus of the process itself, in this case preventive action as opposed to preparedness. All of these elements point to the relevance of basic policy analysis and planning methods to close the warning-action gap. Such methods incorporate the structuring of problems, the application of appropriate analytical tools to solve those problems, and the communication of analysis and recommendations in a format useful to decision-makers. In short, policy planning is a type of decision-support procedure (Cockell, J. 2001. ‘Early Warning and the United Nations System’ in Carment, D. and Schnabel, A. eds. *Conflict Prevention: Naked Emperor or Path to Peace?* (United Tokyo: Nations University Press) .