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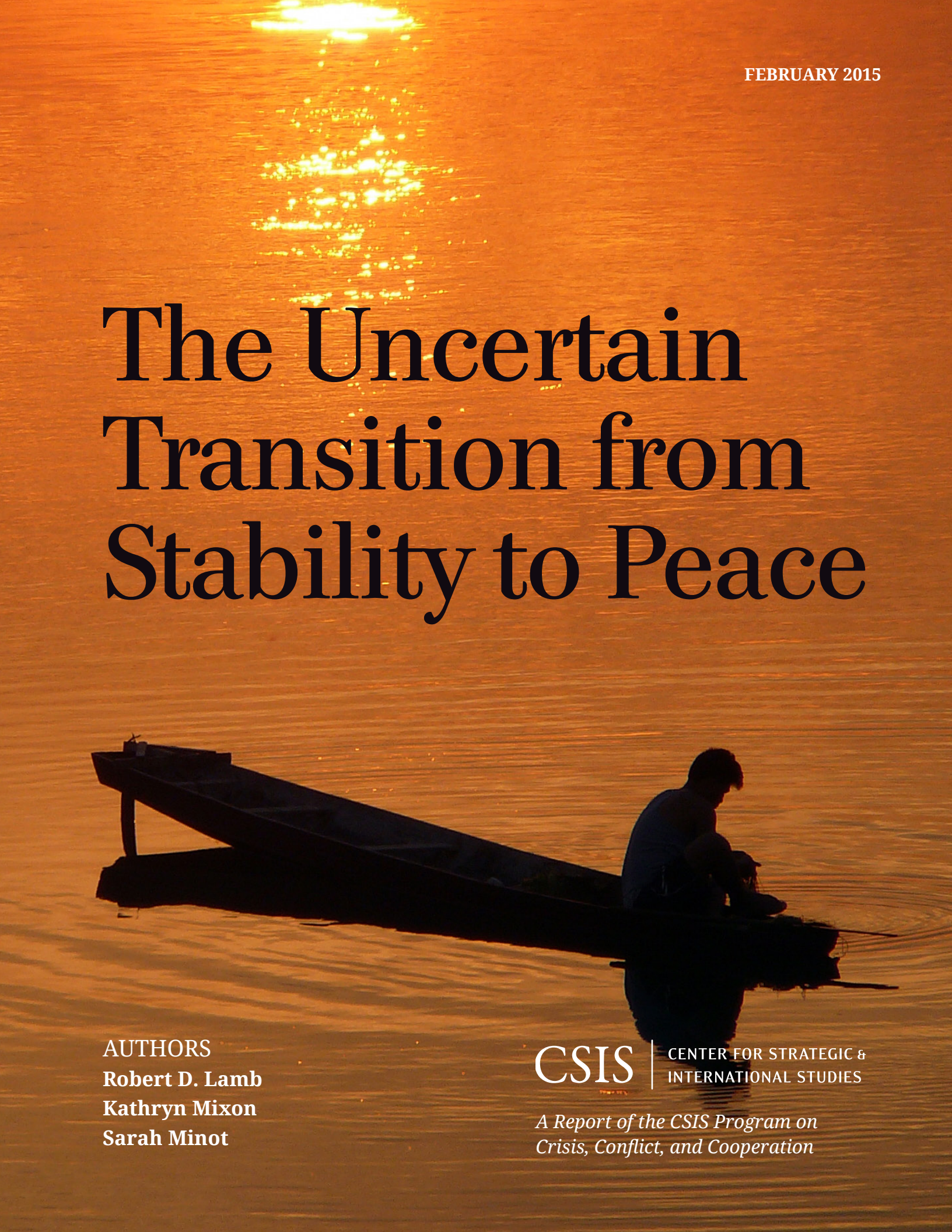
The Uncertain Transition from Stability to Peace



AUTHORS
Robert D. Lamb
Kathryn Mixon
Sarah Minot

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

A Report of the CSIS Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation

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Center for Strategic & International Studies
1616 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-887-0200 | www.csis.org

Rowman & Littlefield
4501 Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, MD 20706
301-459-3366 | www.rowman.com

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Executive Summary

Violent conflicts end when one party to the conflict defeats all others, when the main combatants fight themselves into a stalemate and determine that negotiating peace is preferable to continued violence, or when an outside party intervenes and provides incentives and mechanisms for a settlement of differences. There is often a risk that violence might resume. But sometimes peace persists.

To understand how some countries manage not to fall back into violence while others do, this report presents the results of a study of four cases of countries that have experienced violent conflict but have had different experiences emerging from it: Chad, El Salvador, Laos, and Mozambique. Chad is stuck in a cycle of violence. The other three have emerged from violence into stability, but with different results on the path to peace.

- El Salvador ended its civil war with a political settlement that brought rebels into the political process, which has largely succeeded, but the country was soon beset by significant criminal violence.
- Mozambique likewise had a political settlement with rebels, and while that settlement did less to share political power than El Salvador's did, violence remained largely under control in Mozambique for quite a while despite growing political tensions, until a recent rise in criminal violence.
- Laos's stability came about by a rebel victory followed by repression and, later, economic and political reforms that increased inclusion, with low-level violent conflict against loyalists of the deposed regime continuing until 2004.

For the purposes of this report, *stability* refers to a prolonged absence of violence, roughly equivalent to what the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) calls "negative" peace. Assessing stability is generally a matter of paying attention to patterns of violence or to dynamics related to its proximate causes. Successful stabilization is not simply ending violence. Rather, success in stabilization is judged by whether any cessation in hostilities is sustained beyond the immediate cause of cessation. At minimum, stability can be judged successful as long as violence continues to fall or if lower levels of violence are judged to have stabilized by those who would be affected by its recurrence.

By contrast, *peace* refers here to the presence of institutions and attitudes capable of absorbing conflict, which IEP calls "positive" peace. Peace is not merely the absence of violence that comes as a result of a peace agreement. For there to be peace, there needs to

be a structural change in the affected society that enables it to absorb violence or the grievances or criminal motives driving it. Assessing peace, therefore, is less straightforward than assessing stability. It involves monitoring changes in societal attitudes, distributions of benefits, institutional reforms, and other factors that are often complicated to identify and generally require sophisticated use of broad frameworks, such as the "five pillars" of post-conflict reconstruction from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) or the "eight pillars" underpinning IEP's Positive Peace Index, which here was used to drive the selection of cases.

Because they have traveled different paths on the journey out of violence, with some similarities and some differences in circumstances, the four countries studied in this report have potential lessons about the conditions under which stabilization and peace building are feasible, given information about conflict and violence, stabilization efforts, peacebuilding efforts, internal dynamics, and foreign relations. The three cases of successful stabilization can be compared to the unsuccessful case of Chad to identify factors that might contribute to a successful transition from violence to stability, and they can be compared with each other to find hints about what might contribute to a successful transition from stability to peace.

The findings of this research suggest five factors that make a conflict or post-conflict situation "ripe" for a successful transition. A conflict situation is most "ripe" for stabilizing when a window of opportunity opens (either a recognized stalemate or an outright victory) if (1) the direct parties to the conflict are cohesive enough to command their combatants to stop fighting and (2) their foreign patrons (if any) are pressuring them to do so. A post-conflict situation is most ripe for successful peace building if there is (3) enforcement capacity to contain violence as it emerges, (4) demonstrated commitment to increasing political inclusion, and (5) demonstrated commitment to making material improvements in the lives of residents. These five factors are discussed in turn.

Internal cohesion. The conflicts in El Salvador, Laos, and Mozambique involved two main parties: the state and the rebels. There were paramilitaries and splinter groups as well, but each side was generally cohesive enough to be counted on to meet any commitments its leaders might agree to, including commitments to peace. In Chad, however, there were multiple rebel factions and extremist splinter groups, and the government was often itself a coalition of rivals who alternately tried politics and violence as their calculations shifted in response to changing conditions on the ground; with so many actors pursuing so many different agendas, the probability of stability was naturally low.

Unfortunately, conflicts increasingly have complex mixes of actors, alliances, and motives—more like Chad than the others—and the international community is not well positioned to understand, much less influence, such conflicts. The authors have found no evidence that foreign peace makers can improve the internal coherence of a deeply fragmented opposition movement or a deeply divided society. Significantly more research is therefore needed on how complex conflicts are influenced.

External pressure. In all three cases of successful stabilization, foreign supporters of one or both sides either withdrew support or put pressure on their clients to negotiate a settlement. The royal government in Laos lost Western support, tilting the balance strongly in favor of the rebels, who continued to receive Communist support during and after their victory. The apartheid government in South Africa fell soon after Mozambique's peace agreement, and South Africa's policy priorities quickly shifted away from supporting foreign rebels. The Soviet Union fell, dramatically reducing the financing available to Communist rebel movements worldwide, giving Salvadoran rebels an incentive to negotiate peace. By contrast, in Chad, neighboring countries did not respect the peace agreements, continuing instead to fund their client groups when it fit their interests, until the 2010 agreement.

Discouraging states from engaging in unconventional warfare (subsidizing combatants in other countries) falls into the realm of international diplomacy, where success has historically been limited. States make their own calculations of their own self-interests and are generally immune to efforts by other states to convince them otherwise. Diplomacy is severely under-cultivated as a tool for stabilization and peace building.

Enforcement capacity. Laos cannot be said to have built peace but it was extremely successful at stabilization, mainly because of its high level of enforcement capacity. El Salvador and Mozambique made real progress in political and institutional reform, but it is clear that among their shortcomings was their inadequate capacity to contain violence; the police forces and justice system simply were not up to the task as the criminal violence problem emerged and quickly grew. There is no logical reason enforcement capacity in the immediate post-conflict period needs to be entirely domestically derived; in principle, international forces could be used to bolster security until domestic capacity increases. Laos had strong North Vietnamese forces bolstering its own troops, and Mozambique had multinational forces (albeit with a weaker mission). In El Salvador, when criminal violence skyrocketed, international forces did not have the mandate and domestic forces did not have the capacity to contain it.

Enforcement capacity needs to be available in case subnational or regional actors emerge with a new or renewed commitment to violence. Security and justice sector reform is difficult and not always successful. In places where the security and justice institutions have limited capacity, multinational forces might therefore have to play a bigger role in bolstering law enforcement, protecting civilians against criminal violence, as well as their more traditional mandates.

Commitment to political inclusion. The main difference between Laos on the one hand and El Salvador and Mozambique on the other is that the post-conflict government of the latter two made political space for former opponents immediately following the settlement. In El Salvador, that space grew faster, such that the opposition won the 2009 and 2014 presidential elections. Mozambique's opposition still has not won a national-level election, two decades on. But Laos has remained a closed, one-party state for nearly four decades. A sincere willingness of the ruling party at the beginning of the post-conflict period to be

politically inclusive suggests a degree of ripeness for peace building: national or international efforts to support political, economic, institutional, and social reforms will be more likely to succeed when the political will to implement them is demonstrated early on.

In the absence of evidence that the parties to a settlement are committed to political reform, however, any effort at further peace building will be at risk. International actors wanting reform more than local elites do has always been a recipe for failure: what sounds like a sincere commitment is far too often a ruse to win international aid for patronage rather than the public good. It is not impossible in principle to encourage such actors to sincerely commit, but far more research is needed to understand how post-conflict actors and societies commit themselves to political inclusion. Meanwhile, resources should be focused on offices and institutions where evidence of commitment already exists.

Commitment to material progress. Unlike Laos, whose leaders implemented policies early on that exacerbated economic deprivations in the countryside, El Salvador and Mozambique both made real economic, human rights, and other improvements in the decade after their civil wars. In El Salvador, the gains did not give enough people an economic alternative to crime to have much of an effect on the growing gang problem, but its economy was also starting at a very low point—it was going to take many years for economic reforms to have significant effects under any circumstances. If made early in the post-conflict period, however, demonstrated commitments to making material improvements in the lives of residents can, perhaps, be taken as evidence that resources to be spent on peace building might not be wasted.

Commitments to material progress are, in some ways, easier to find and influence than commitments to political reform, because a great deal of social work and service provision takes place beyond the visibility of politicians. While it can be difficult to hold such institutions accountable, there are also, in most places, pockets of dedication and technical skill that could use more support. What seems to matter—although this is a hypothesis that should be tested—is that material progress *of some sort* affect as many people as possible as quickly as possible, to give people hope and reason to support the new post-conflict arrangements. This is especially important to populations who might be vulnerable to disruption or exploitation by potential spoilers. Unfortunately, many quick-impact projects are not well connected to broader efforts and so progress is not always sustained by well-managed medium- and long-term reform programs. Still, this is an area where progress is possible: there are many ways that people's lives can be improved materially—improved security, more jobs, better pay, better health and education, cleaner water, and so on—and progress does not need to be made in all of them at the same time.

These findings suggest a prioritization of effort. When a window of opportunity emerges—such as a recognized stalemate or an outright victory—the first question to ask is whether the combatants and their foreign patrons, if any, are willing and able to make and follow through on commitments to end fighting. If so, then the next question is whether the enforcement capacity exists (or can be bolstered quickly) to contain violence.

If so, the final question is whether there is any concrete evidence that the parties to the conflict are committed to political inclusion and material progress for others in their country. If the answers to these questions are negative, a resumption of violence is likely, and international assistance might be better focused elsewhere. If the answers to these questions are positive, that suggests a higher likelihood of moving that conflict out of a cycle of violence, a situation in which it is worth investing diplomatic energy and international resources into development and reconstruction.

Until reliable evidence emerges for how best to influence ripeness in these areas, peace building will need to rely on the tools available today—assessing needs across a range of sectors, identifying institutions with the capacity to absorb aid to help meet those needs, monitoring progress across as many indicators as data can be collected for, and adapting quickly to changing circumstances. The transition from conflict to peace is uncertain, and not all will make it. Efforts need to be prioritized. Those who wish to succeed need to find ways to strengthen diplomatic capacity, bolster violence containment, and support institutions that are positioned to meet needs and have the capacity to absorb the aid enabling them to do so.

1 Introduction

Conflicts exist in all human societies. At times such disagreements turn violent. Violent conflicts end when one party to the conflict defeats all others, when the main combatants fight themselves into a stalemate and determine that negotiating peace is preferable to continued violence, or when an outside party intervenes and provides incentives and mechanisms for a settlement of differences. Once the violence ends, the original conflict might have been resolved, or it might persist, and new conflicts might have emerged in the meantime. Violence might therefore return.

But sometimes peace persists. This report considers why that is and what the international community can do to help consolidate peace once a conflict has been stabilized.

Violence and Institutional Change

Almost all conflicts that turned violent during the first decade of the twenty-first century took place in countries that had experienced an earlier violent conflict in the previous 30 years. During the 2000s, the rate of "violence onset" in places with a previous internal war was 90 percent; only a tenth of new conflicts were in countries with no previous internal war. During the 1980s and 1990s, 62 to 67 percent of new conflicts were repeat offenders, and that rate was 57 percent in the 1970s and 43 percent in the 1960s. In other words, internal conflicts are increasingly concentrated in a subset of countries unable to break the cycle of violence.[1] What makes the difference between the countries that have recovered from violence and those that have not?

Research on why peace persists and why violence recurs points to a few key factors but leaves open important questions. The 2011 *World Development Report,* the most comprehensive review of the evidence on peace and conflict ever published, found that legitimate, capable, and accountable institutions are essential to preventing the onset or recurrence of violence. Where violent conflicts are ended through agreements among elites, for example, violence tends to recur if that elite pact is not "inclusive enough" or not accompanied by subsequent institutional improvements.[2] Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie's study of

1. World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011), 3.
2. Ibid., 84–89, 120–124.

38 civil wars that ended in negotiated agreements found that the more ways the agreements allowed power to be shared, the less likely violence was to recur. If power was shared between rivals in only the political dimension (e.g., proportional representation in government), settlements tended not to be as resilient as those settlements in which power was also shared across the military (e.g., membership in armed forces), economic (e.g., share of natural resources wealth), or territorial (e.g., regional autonomy) dimensions as well.[3] Charles Call's multiple-methods study of civil war recurrence similarly found that political exclusion is the most important contributor to recurrence, while political inclusion contributed to legitimacy and the consolidation of peace.[4]

These works and many others suggest the importance of inclusive and legitimate institutions through which power might be shared among former combatants (and the respective communities they presume to represent) whether conflicts end by victory or negotiation.[5] But while legitimacy, inclusion, and institutions are clearly important to consolidating peace, questions remain as to *how inclusive* such institutions need to be to legitimize the post-conflict arrangement so it endures. Offering too much of a share in power to war criminals and organized criminals could spark a backlash from victim communities. Offering too little could fail to give potential spoilers an adequate stake in stability. It is likely, unfortunately, that in some places there is no "right" level of inclusion, and in others there will remain actors who do not want to be included in a peaceful settlement. It is also likely that, in some places, sharing power with bad actors to end violence and begin recovery can undermine the longer-term development of legitimate institutions capable of maintaining peace, if those bad actors do not reform. It is a tragedy that some conflict situations simply will not stabilize, and some post-conflict situations will not consolidate peace, until some fundamental structural factors affecting the parties to the conflict change. Figuring out which situations are ripe for progress and which are amenable at best to mitigation can help those interested in building peace prioritize how to spend scarce resources.

Further questions remain regarding the circumstances under which external actors can and cannot succeed in supporting such structural changes or in supporting the establishment of "inclusive enough" power-sharing arrangements and guiding their development into peaceful institutions longer term. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) reviewed post-conflict lessons and research and identified five "pillars" (and dozens of associated tasks) that required attention and outside assistance for post-conflict transitions to succeed: security and public safety, justice and reconciliation, governance and participation, economic opportunity,

3. Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie, "Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post–Civil War Conflict Management," *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 2 (April 2003): 318–332.

4. Charles T. Call, *Why Peace Fails: The Causes and Prevention of Civil War Recurrence* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012).

5. For a thorough but succinct review of this research, see Bruce Jones, "No Development without Peace: Laying the Political and Security Foundations," in *The Last Mile in Ending Extreme Poverty*, ed. Laurence Chandy, Hiroshi Kato, and Homi Kharas (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, March 2015).

and social well-being.[6] More recently, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) ran tests of statistical correlations between an index of "peacefulness" and hundreds of country-level variables and identified eight pillars that undergird what IEP calls "positive peace": well-functioning government, sound business environment, equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, high levels of education, and low levels of corruption.[7] Such frameworks offer a way to identify key factors linked to the institutionalization of peace and as such are useful for benchmarking, collecting data, assessing needs, monitoring progress, and evaluating impact.

From situation to situation, however, each pillar will differ in initial strength, "ripeness" for strengthening, susceptibility to outside influence, and resistance to rapid reform. Effective, legitimate institutions take a long time to develop—improvements to just about any indicator can take decades or generations just to reach a threshold of tolerable.[8] Meanwhile, there is a need to keep violence contained and demonstrate to marginalized and victimized populations that their interests and security will be protected and that there is hope for real improvements in the future.

In other words, the challenge for policymakers and practitioners is that institutional change is slow while changes in various forms of violence can happen very quickly. That creates a tension between short-term efforts to reduce violence and long-term efforts to institutionalize peace. Resolving that tension is one of the most important challenges of this field.

Stabilization versus Peace Building

Peace building is the term usually used to describe this field, which attempts "to identify and support structures [that] tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict"[9] or "to foster the social, economic, and political institutions and attitudes that will prevent these conflicts from turning violent."[10] This is distinct from *stabilization*, a term that describes attempts "to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, [and] provide essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction,

6. Post-Conflict Reconstruction Commission, "Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework," CSIS and Association of the U.S. Army, May 2002, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/framework.pdf. See also Morgan Courtney et al., *In the Balance: Measuring Progress in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: CSIS, July 2005), http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/inthebalance.pdf.

7. See Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), *Pillars of Peace: Finding the Attitudes, Institutions, and Structures Most Closely Associated with Peace* (Sydney: IEP, 2013), http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Pillars-of-Peace.pdf.

8. Lant Pritchett and Frauke de Weijer, *Fragile States: Stuck in a Capability Trap?*, World Development Report 2011 Background Paper (Washington, DC: World Bank, November 2010), http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2011/05/30/000356161_20110530060400/Rendered/PDF/620080WP0Fragi0BOX0361475B00PUBLIC0.pdf.

9. Michael Barnett et al., "Peacebuilding: What Is in a Name?," *Global Governance* 13 (2007): 35–38.

10. Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 779–801.

and humanitarian relief."[11] For the purposes of this report, *stability* refers to a prolonged absence of violence, roughly equivalent to what IEP calls "negative" peace, while *peace* refers to the presence of institutions and attitudes capable of absorbing conflict, which IEP calls "positive" peace. Assessing stability is generally a matter of paying attention to patterns of violence or to dynamics related to its proximate causes. Assessing peace is a less straightforward matter of monitoring changes in societal attitudes, distributions of benefits, and institutional reforms, which are more complicated to identify and generally require sophisticated use of broad frameworks such as the CSIS or IEP pillars or measures of legitimacy.[12]

Successful stabilization is not simply ending violence; otherwise a cease-fire agreement that lasted only a few days or a peace agreement that lasted only a few months would be considered successful. Rather, success in stabilization is judged by whether any cessation in hostilities is sustained beyond the immediate cause of cessation. If a cease-fire emerges from a stalemate, it is not stable if a party to the conflict is quietly rearming with the intention of violating the agreement when strong enough. If a victory by one side is achieved with the support of an outside patron, it is stable only to the degree that violence continues to be contained after that patron withdraws support. At minimum, stability can be judged successful as long as violence continues to fall or if lower levels of violence are judged to have stabilized by those who would be affected by its recurrence.

Likewise, peace is not merely the absence of violence that comes as a result of a peace agreement. For there to be peace, there needs to be a structural change in the affected society that enables it to absorb violence or the grievances or criminal motives driving it. If the two strongest parties to the conflict agree to share power with each other but not with some other, weaker parties to the conflict, those weaker parties might choose to lay down arms and try to accomplish their unmet goals politically, if the circumstances are right, but they might equally likely choose to continue fighting. If one party to the conflict emerges from war victorious but fails to address the concerns that led to conflict in the first place, it is possible to maintain stability but far more difficult to say it is consolidating peace. Over time, however, the victors might take some steps to open up the political space, make its agencies more effective, or distribute the benefits of economic growth more broadly, and in that case those steps could arguably contribute to a consolidation of peace.

The remainder of this section illustrates the challenge of navigating between stability and peace and offers some preliminary evidence for paths to its resolution. The next section spells out the method used in this study to identify some factors that might make a country amenable to peace building despite weak institutions or high violence. After that is a series of cases followed by two analytic chapters meant to uncover factors that might make conflict situations ripe for stability and post-conflict situations ripe for peace.

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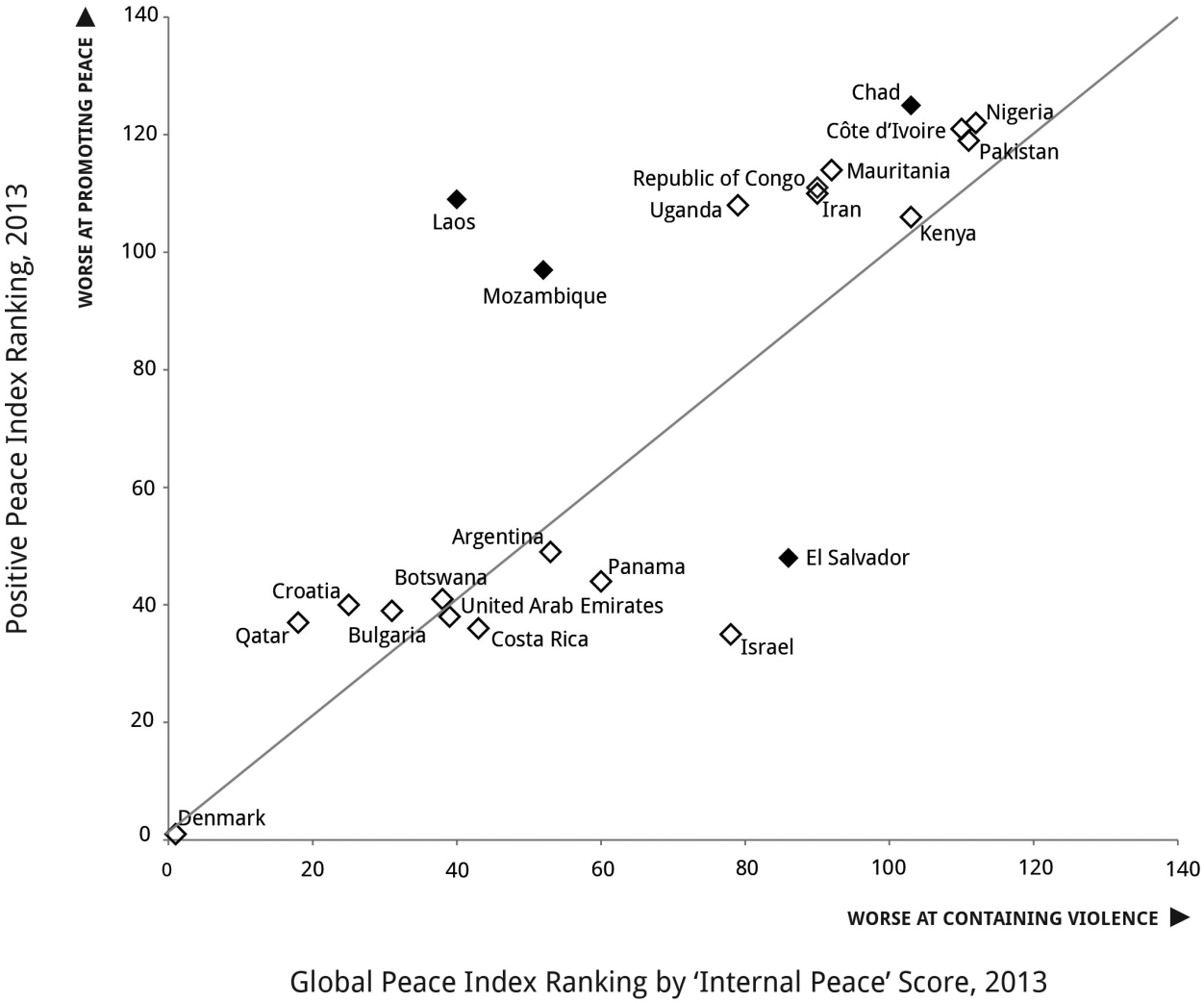
11. Dave Dilegge, "Stability Operations: DoD Instruction 3000.05," *Small Wars Journal* (blog), September 17, 2009, http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/stability-operations-dod-instruction-300005.

12. See, for example, Robert D. Lamb, *Rethinking Legitimacy and Illegitimacy: A New Approach to Assessing Support and Opposition across Disciplines* (Washington, DC: CSIS/Rowman & Littlefield, May 2014), http://csis.org/files/publication/140519_Lamb_RethinkingLegitmacy_Web.pdf.

Figure 1: Relative Capacities for Promoting Peace vs. Containing Violence of Selected Countries



To demonstrate the challenge of peace building, consider the two indices developed by IEP: the Global Peace Index (GPI), which measures the degree to which a country successfully contains different forms of violence, and the Positive Peace Index (PPI), which measures the strength of a country's "pillars" of peace, described earlier.[13] As Figure 1 shows, the two indices are strongly correlated with one another: strong institutions are present in countries that manage to contain violence and promote peacefulness, while countries with weak institutions are more volatile. The figure shows index rankings, with higher numbers suggesting poorer scores: farther to the right (GPI axis) indicates a lower capacity to contain internal violence; higher up on the chart (PPI axis) indicates a lower institutional capacity to promote peace.

13. Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), *Global Peace Index 2013: Measuring the State of Global Peace* (Sydney: IEP, 2013), http://www.visionofhumanity.org/pdf/gpi/2013_Global_Peace_Index_Report.pdf.

A comparison of two countries on the extremes of the diagonal line illustrates the correlation. Denmark (lower left) has the strongest institutions according to the 2013 PPI and ranks as the second most internally peaceful society according to the 2013 GPI, while Chad (upper right) ranks very poorly on both institutions and violence.

- During Denmark's early history, the Danes enjoyed relative dominance in the Nordic region, punctuated by intermittent power struggles with Sweden. However, the economic and political losses suffered at the end of the Napoleonic Wars severely damaged Denmark's regional influence.[14] Denmark turned inward to develop its institutions and maintained an isolationist stance through the next century's world wars. Throughout this time, the Danes developed proficiency for consensus and coalition building as Denmark lacked the will to dictate, internally or externally. In the mid-twentieth century, Denmark began joining international governing organizations and emerged as a proponent of international peacekeeping missions and a champion for human rights and democracy. Now Denmark is regarded as one of the most peaceful and stable societies, with high satisfaction ratings and welfare indicators.
- Since independence from France in 1960, Chad has been a stage for civil war, interethnic strife, and violent nonstate actors. Although the country's decades-long civil war ended in 2010, significant problems remain. For the past half-century, continuous dictatorial rule has stifled the development of healthy institutions and civil society. Furthermore, neighboring counties, such as Libya and Sudan, have historically attempted to exploit ethnic divisions within Chad to further their own interests, and France has maintained strategic ties with the central government to preserve its influence in the region.

Denmark, Chad, and the overall GPI-PPI correlation suggest that peace and good institutions tend to be mutually reinforcing. But there are hints that other factors might be at play as well. To take two possibilities, for example, Chad has meddling neighbors (which might be a cause or a consequence of its weak institutions), while Denmark has been at peace with its neighbors for decades, and Denmark is ethnically homogenous, while Chad has nearly 200 different ethnic groups.

Moreover, as Figure 1 shows, there are clear exceptions to the overall correlation: some countries (those below and to the right of the correlation line) have strong institutions but relatively high violence, while some have weak institutions but relatively low violence (above and to the left). Laos lies far away from the correlation line, ranking among the countries with the lowest scores for institutional strength (PPI) but around the middle of the pack in peacefulness (GPI). Israel, on the opposite side of the graph, has strong institutions (ranking well on PPI) but nonetheless ranks poorly on violence containment (GPI).

14. Michael Märcher, "Danish Banking Before and After the Napoleonic Wars: A Survey of Danish Banking, 1736–1857," in *Monetary Boundaries in Transition: A North European Economic History and the Finnish War 1808–1809*, ed. Tuukka Talvio and Cecilia von Heijne (Stockholm: Museum of National Antiquities, 2010), 127–143.

- Since Israel's establishment in 1948, it has witnessed remarkable democratic development, economic prosperity, and continuous violent conflict. A series of wars with its Arab neighbors has led to an ever-vigilant defense posture. However, security threats have not prevented Israel from developing vibrant high-technology, pharmaceutical, and banking industries, as well as quality health, education, and justice sectors. Meanwhile, the West Bank and Gaza—which are included in IEP's calculations for Israel's place on the GPI and PPI—have also experienced political and religious violence, but with significantly less development.

- Formerly a French protectorate and briefly occupied by Japan, Laos became an independent constitutional monarchy in 1954. The country was ravaged during the Vietnam War by heavy bombing of transit routes and intrastate conflict with a domestic Communist insurgency group that, in 1975, expelled the Hmong ruling class and consolidated power as the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP). With a closed political and economic system and occasional skirmishes with Hmong loyalists, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has been one of the poorest nations in the world. In addition to isolationist fiscal policies, expansive land mine fields left by U.S. and Vietnamese troops stunted the country's economic growth and human development.[15] Much of the population survives on subsistence agriculture, and delivery of services has been poor because infrastructure construction is marred by unexploded ordnance.[16] But relations with its neighbors are generally cordial.

These cases suggest that violence can be contained despite weak institutions, that strong institutions are not necessarily a guarantee against violence, and possibly that institutions can be developed even amid violence. In other words, there are factors at hand, other than poor institutions, that might contribute to nonpeaceful behaviors and, conversely, factors, aside from decent institutions, that could contribute to a more peaceful society.

A comparison of Laos with Chad and a few other countries might draw out some possibilities. Chad has about 150 to 200 ethnic groups (speaking about 130 languages), while Laos has about 130 to 160 ethnic groups (speaking about 80 languages). Territorially, Chad's Muslims are concentrated in the north, with Christians and animists in the south. Laos's Buddhists tend to live in the lowlands, with animists elsewhere. And both have similarly low levels of institutional development, ranking in the lowest quintile of the PPI. But Chad is significantly less capable of containing violence. Why might that be? A cursory look at both suggests two factors. Chad has undefeated rebel groups operating throughout its territory, while Laos's last major internal war ended in the Communists' victory over the Hmong regime in 1975 (vestiges of the Hmong insurgency ended by 2004). Chad also has neighbors that support rebel groups operating in its territory and that interfere in its

15. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Laos Country Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stuftung, 2012), http://www.bti-project.de/fileadmin/Inhalte/reports/2012/pdf/BTI%202012%20Laos.pdf; UNDP Evaluation Office, *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP's Contribution: Lao PDR* (New York: UN Development Program, May 2007), http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/ADR/ADR_Reports/ADR_Laos.pdf.

16. Lao Rehabilitation Foundation, "Unexploded Ordnance (Landmines)," 2010, http://lao-foundation.org/learn-about-laos/unexploded-ordnance-landmines.

domestic affairs in other ways. Laos's neighbors do not generally interfere and do not support small insurgent groups.

This demonstrates that the presence of internal threats and external interference undermine a country's ability to contain violence, regardless of institutional capacity. This is further supported by a comparison of Laos with eight countries that have close GPI rankings (i.e., as peaceful as Laos) but better PPI rankings (better institutions than Laos). Neither Laos nor any of the GPI cluster states—Argentina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Panama, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates—were experiencing any major internal rebellion or external attacks when the data underlying the two indices were collected. Laos's institutions would seem to be too weak to contain violence, but there are also no severe threats to contain.

Other possibilities emerge when comparing Laos with a cluster of eight countries that have close PPI scores (i.e., the same low level of institutions) but are less peaceful than Laos: Côte d'Ivoire, Iran, Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic of Congo, and Uganda. All the countries in this cluster have strong informal governance institutions (ethnic, tribal, or religious); in many areas in-group identity supersedes national identity or political affiliation; and there are disputes between many of the groups. But Laos's ethnic identities are much more nationalized. In addition, these countries have until recently had more access to small arms than in Laos and have tended to be wealthier on average.

This cursory review suggests that a country has more potential to be peaceful when it has fewer competing spheres of authority, fewer internal threats, less regional interference, less access to small arms, and more inclusive political or economic arrangements. The next section lays out this study's method of identifying factors that suggest which countries might be most "ripe" for peace building.

Method

This is an exploratory study. The correlation between effective institutions and positive peace implies that state building and peace building are mutually reinforcing processes. But that seems not to be the case universally—where long-standing tensions between state and nonstate actors are the source of conflict, for example, activities traditionally associated with state building can exacerbate tensions. State building is also a generations-long process, yet the need for arrangements that maintain stability is immediate.

Here, then, is the crux of the challenge for policymakers: Post-conflict stabilization arrangements can act as a foundation on which to build the attitudes, behaviors, and institutions that contribute to lasting peace. But in some places, as we have seen, such arrangements are sometimes simply a necessary evil, capable of reducing violence in the immediate term but not well suited to building long-lasting peace. This study asks, under what circumstances is a post-conflict arrangement "ripe" for peace building?

To that end, this study examined four cases of countries that have experienced violent conflict but have had different experiences emerging from it: Chad, El Salvador, Laos, and Mozambique. Chad is stuck in a cycle of violence. The other three have emerged from violence into stability, but with different results on the path to peace. El Salvador ended its civil war with a political settlement that brought rebels into the political process, which has largely succeeded, but the country was soon beset by significant criminal violence. Mozambique likewise had a political settlement with rebels, and while that settlement did less to share political power than El Salvador's did (the incumbent government has won all elections), violence remained largely under control in Mozambique for quite a while despite growing political tensions, until a recent rise in criminal violence. Laos's stability came about by a rebel victory followed by repression and, later, economic and political reforms that increased inclusion, with low-level violent conflict against loyalists of the deposed regime continuing until 2004. Because they have traveled different paths on the journey out of violence, with some similarities and some differences in circumstances, these four countries have potential lessons about the conditions under which stabilization and peace building are feasible.

Each of these cases is therefore studied along a number of dimensions: the conflicts and patterns of violence themselves and the nature and evolution of the settlements and other post-conflict arrangements; any stabilization or peace-building efforts that were undertaken; basic demographic, economic, geographic, cultural, and developmental facts and indicators, including institutions of governance (formal, informal, illicit, and hybrid) in each country as they existed during the conflict and their evolution since; and the nature of their foreign relations during and since their major wars. Chapter 2 summarizes these dimensions for each country.

The outcomes of interest are success at containing violence and consolidating peace. In Chapters 3 and 4, the countries are compared pairwise (six pairs of comparisons) to identify similarities and differences across the various dimensions. For example, Laos and Chad have similar demographics (e.g., variety of ethnic groups) and institutional capacity (low) but different violence outcomes; that pair is studied to identify other ways that they differ (e.g., foreign interference). The differences are analyzed to determine whether a credible case can be made that the differing factor made a material contribution to the outcome in question (i.e., stability in Chapter 3, peace in Chapter 4). At the end of both analytic chapters, the factors found to be credible indicators of ripeness are discussed in the context of the policy tools available to foster them.

2 Case Histories

The four case histories are structured as follows:

- conflict and violence—the original and evolution of the main conflict or conflicts that have affected the country in recent decades and how violence associated with the conflict has changed over time
- stabilization efforts—the main efforts undertaken by the internal actors or the international community to contain violence or achieve a peace agreement
- peace-building efforts—the main efforts undertaken by the government, civil society, and the international community to consolidate peace and improve social, political, and economic institutions capable of maintaining peace
- internal dynamics—the basic demographic, economic, geographic, cultural, and developmental facts and indicators and the internal structures of governance (formal, informal, illicit, and hybrid) in each country as they existed during the conflict and their evolution since
- foreign relations—each country's relationships with its neighbors during and since their major wars

Chad

CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

Chad has been a stage for civil war, interethnic strife, and regional instability since gaining independence from France in 1960.[1] The outbreak of the first civil war in 1965 has

1. Much of the information in this section comes from common knowledge and Marielle Debos, "Living by the Gun in Chad: Armed Violence as a Practical Occupation," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 49, no. 3 (2011): 409–428; Jerome Tubiana, "Renouncing the Rebels: Local and Regional Dimensions of Chad-Sudan Rapprochement," *Small Arms Survey* (2011), http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBA-WP-25-Local-and-Regional-Dimensions-Chad-Sudan-Rapprochement.pdf; Roland Marchal, "The Roots of the Darfur Conflict and the Chadian Civil War," *Public Culture* 20, no. 3 (2008): 429–436, http://publicculture.org/articles/view/20/3/the-roots-of-the-darfur-conflict-and-the-chadian-c; The Enough Project, "Chad's Domestic Crisis: The Achilles Hell for Peacemaking in Darfur," July 2009, http://www.enoughproject.org/files/Chad_Domestic_Crisis.pdf; Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: Chad Country Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stuftung, 2014), http://www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/reports/2014/pdf/BTI%202014%20Chad.pdf; Lauren Ploch, "Instability and Humanitarian Conditions in Chad," Congressional Research Service, July 1, 2010, http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22798.pdf.

origins in the postindependence authoritarian governance structure. Colonial government leader François Tombalbaye retained power following independence and quickly consolidated his authority. He banned political parties and passed policies that tended to favor the regions of the country dominated by Christians and animists, alienating the mainly Muslim Chadians in the center and northern regions of the country. After violent suppression of riots, a number of northerners took up arms, mostly prominently the Chadian National Liberation Front (FROLINAT). The rebellion spread quickly but, with assistance from first France then Libya, Tombalbaye's regime was able to suppress much of it by 1973. His rule continued to be widely unpopular, however, and in 1975, the Chadian army, unhappy with Tombalbaye's treatment of the military, ousted him in a coup and installed imprisoned army chief of staff Felix Malloum as president and prime minister.

Malloum's efforts to reconcile the rebellious northern region of the country ultimately failed. The rebel leader he had installed as prime minister, Hissène Habré, soon turned against him, setting off a new round of violence that led to Malloum's exile and an Organization of African Unity–led effort to form a transitional government, with Habré named minister of defense and Muslim northerner Goukouni Oueddei as president. Further fighting among different government factions led to Habré seizing power from Oueddei in 1982 and Oueddei returning to the north to continue fighting the regime with assistance from Libya. Habré was toppled in 1990 by one of his own general officers, Idriss Déby, who faced coup attempts and continuing unrest from armed groups based in the south. He did introduce some political reforms, including multiparty elections, and attempted reconciliation with rebels. But the elections were marred by irregularities and most of the peace agreements failed quickly.

Tensions escalated between Chad and Sudan around 2004 during the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Sudan backed and funded several rebel groups that were seeking to overthrow the Chadian government, while Chad supported opposition and rebel groups in Darfur. In 2005, rebels attacked the town of Adre on the border with Sudan, and Chad accused the Sudanese of assisting and coordinating the rebel attack. Chad cut diplomatic ties with Sudan in April 2006 and economic ties in May 2008, but in 2010 the two countries signed a peace agreement and violence has since fallen significantly.

STABILIZATION EFFORTS

France has intervened militarily in Chad numerous times. Libya and Sudan have repeatedly armed rebels in Chad for decades. These were generally efforts to help one side or the other to win, not efforts to stabilize the country. In 1979, however, the Organization of African Unity began working to end fighting in Chad, and in 1981 and 1982 it fielded a peacekeeping mission to maintain stability during the ultimately failed transitional government led by Oueddei. In 2002, Libya brokered a short-lived peace deal between the government of Chad and the Movement for Democracy and Justice (MDJT). The peace deal was unsuccessful and the MDJT rebels and government forces continued to clash in the north throughout 2002 and into 2003. Another peace deal was signed between the MDJT and government in December 2003, but some of the more extreme segments of the rebel

group rejected the agreement. In January 2003, the government signed a peace deal with the National Resistance Army rebels who were active in the eastern region of Chad. In October 2007 the government and the main rebel groups operating in eastern Chad signed the Sirte Agreement brokered by Libya, but fighting continued on an intermittent basis.

In addition to the deals between various rebel groups and the government, there were a number of efforts to negotiate an end to the proxy conflict between Chad and Sudan. The Tripoli Agreement in February 2006 created the groundwork for establishing a joint security force to police the Chad-Sudan border. The United Nations Security Council agreed to intervene in 2007 and authorized a UN-EU peacekeeping force to protect civilians from violence spilling over from Darfur. Resolution 1778 established a UN presence in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR), known as the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), with the mandate to protect refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and civilians; facilitate access for humanitarian assistance; and create favorable conditions for economic and social reconstruction and development. The UN-EU mission operated from March 2008 to December 2010. In 2008, the presidents of Chad and Sudan signed a peace accord that aimed to halt hostilities between the two countries, but this agreement was not effectively implemented, and more rebel attacks occurred in 2009. Peace talks were held again in 2010 between Déby and Omar al-Bashir in which they agreed to deploy joint forces to monitor the shared border. Shortly after this agreement, the Chad-Sudan border was reopened and tensions diminished.

PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS

Peace building is difficult in the absence of stability, and Chad has not managed to remain stable long enough to have experienced effective peace-building efforts. The UN-EU peacekeeping presence was limited primarily to civilian protection and did not provide provisions for rebel reintegration or economic reconstruction. Shortages of troops and equipment over the course of MINURCAT impeded the ability of the peacekeeping effort to meet the needs of IDPs, refugees, and humanitarian staff, which left little room for any efforts to expand the original mandate. Humanitarian concerns tended to dominate international assistance to the country. There have been some political and economic reforms by the Déby government, but Déby remains in power and many Chadians remain alienated from their government; the 2011 elections were boycotted by opposition parties.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS

The security situation in Chad has significantly improved since 2012, but violence continued through 2013, particularly on Chad's border with Darfur and in the south where refugees from CAR have established camps. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) there are over 90,000 IDPs, 91,000 returned IDPs, and an estimated 345,000 refugees from Darfur and CAR within Chad.[2]

2. Freedom House, "Chad," 2013, http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/chad.

There are more than 200 ethnic groups and more than 100 languages spoken in Chad.[3] There is a sizable Arab Muslim population in the north of the country, the country's second-largest ethnic group at 12.4 percent of the population.[4]

Chad's economy is indigenously driven by the agriculture sector. An estimated 80 percent of Chad's population relies on subsistence farming, and a significant number of Chadians work in surrounding countries and send remittances back to Chad. Chad remains an impoverished country with a poverty rate of 46.7 percent and a Human Development Index ranking of 184 out of 186 countries.[5] Urban unemployment is more profound than rural unemployment because of reliance on agriculture. Urban unemployment is estimated to be 34 percent and rural unemployment 1.3 percent, but the accuracy of those numbers is questionable.[6]

Chad has recently benefited from foreign direct investment in the oil sector, which has contributed to economic growth. GDP grew by 8.9 percent in 2012, and the national poverty rate fell from 55 percent to 47 percent between 2003 and 2011.[7] Chad has the 10th largest oil reserve in Africa. As a result the international private sector is strongly involved in Chad's oil and petroleum industry. ExxonMobil was the first international company to begin operations in Chad.[8] Oil production started in 2003 with an investment of $3.7 billion of a consortium of foreign oil companies and the World Bank. The project has suffered from massive corruption, and in 2008 the World Bank froze funding and withdrew support of the oil pipeline after failed implementation of the formal agreement.[9]

Governance is generally poor and rural areas frequently rely on tribal governance. In some regions of the country there is a near absence of formal government structures. The southern part of the country is more densely populated and better connected to the central government, while the northern part of the country is sparsely populated, decentralized, and home to nomadic herders.[10] The main source of formal authority in Chad is the president, and there is little power in any other branches of government. Chad held a National Sovereign Conference in 1993 that was supposed to serve as a transition to democratic rule, but efforts by the president to consolidate power limited the effectiveness of democratization. There is no effective system for checks and balances on presidential power in the government. Chad has never experienced a free and fair election or transfer of power as the result of an election. Chad has been governed by Déby of the Patriotic Salvation Movement since 1990. Presidential elections were held in 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011, and Déby won all of

3. Counterpart International, "Promoting Democracy and Increasing Political Participation: The Role of Civil Society in Chad," 2011, http://www.counterpart.org/images/uploads/Chad%20Civil%20Society%20Assessment%20Public%20Report%20FINAL-%20approved.pdf.

4. CIA, *World Factbook*, "Chad," 2013, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cd.html.

5. Ibid.; and World Bank, "Chad Data," 2014, http://data.worldbank.org/country/chad.

6. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: Chad Country Report*.

7. World Bank, "Chad Overview," 2014, http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/chad/overview.

8. International Finance Corporation, "Chad-Cameroon Pipeline Project," 2012, http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region__ext_content/regions/sub-saharan+africa/investments/chadcameroon.

9. Micah Albert, "Chad: A Country in Crisis," *World Policy Journal* 25, no. 3 (2008): 196–202.

10. Counterpart International, "Promoting Democracy and Increasing Political Participation."

them.[11] In 2005 Chad passed a constitutional referendum of questionable integrity that resulted in the lifting of the two-term limit for presidential contenders, enabling Déby to continue to run and hold the presidency.[12] Political parties are frequently aligned along regional and ethnic bases. The current government is aligned with the Zaghawa ethnic group and has excluded other ethnic groups and minorities from reliable representation in government.[13] The state is largely unresponsive to the needs of citizens and many view the government as a mechanism for elite self-interest and enrichment.[14] The distribution of power, access to resources, and economic development are largely dependent on ethnic and religious identities. Preferential treatment is typically provided for members of ruling clan and families.[15]

Beyond the central government, Chad heavily relies on traditional, local, informal forms of governance. Rural areas in particular frequently rely on traditional chiefs and elders as political leaders in communities. The role of traditional leaders is more dominant in rural areas compared with urban centers.[16] In general northern and eastern Chad are more isolated from the capital, N'Djamena, and therefore rely more heavily on traditional and local forms of governance.

Although the constitution states that the Chadian judicial branch should be independent, the president names most key judicial officials. Citizens often avoid the formal justice system because of mistrust and a fear of backlash if they were to file any complaints or charges in the court.[17]

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Chad is located in central Africa and is bordered by Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, CAR, and Sudan. Many of these countries have themselves experienced persistent conflict, including Sudan, Nigeria, CAR, and Libya, and different regimes in Chad have alternately fought against or cooperated with some of them. In addition, Chad hosts approximately 346,000 Sudanese refugees and 78,950 CAR refugees. It is likely that these numbers have increased as a result of escalations of violence in CAR and South Sudan. More recently, Chad has been involved in several efforts to stabilize countries in the broader region. In March 2013 Chadian troops assisted the French intervention in northern Mali, and in April 2013 Chad sent troops to CAR to stabilize the situation following a coup there.

11. BBC News, "Chad Profile," January 15, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13164686.
12. Dorina Bekoe, "Stabilizing Chad: Security, Governance and Development Challenges," *USIP Peace Brief* 62 (October 2010), http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PB%2062%20-%20Stabilizing%20Chad.pdf.
13. U.S. Department of State, "Chad 2012 Human Rights Report," 2012, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204315.pdf.
14. ACORD, "Societies Caught in the Conflict Trap," 2013, http://www.acordinternational.org/silo/files/conflict-research-chad-car-sudan-south-sudan.pdf.
15. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: Chad Country Report*.
16. Counterpart International, "Promoting Democracy and Increasing Political Participation."
17. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: Chad Country Report*.

Laos

CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

The territory today known as Laos was long the subject of competition between neighboring regimes, including Vietnam, Thailand, and China, before becoming part of French Indochina in the late nineteenth century. After decades of unrest among peripheral ethnic groups in the territory, the French made an effort to foster a Laotian national identity that had not theretofore been strong. With France's fall to the axis powers in 1940 and neighboring Thailand under the control of a fascist regime, both Japan and Thailand made successful forays into Laos, while French colonials continued to encourage Laotian nationalism in an effort to expel them. At the end of World War II, Japan was expelled, and France regained control of Laos, later giving the Royal Lao Government more (but not complete) independence and military support against attacks from the Pathet Lao Communist rebel movement, who were closely aligned with the Viet Minh rebels fighting for independence from the French in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.[18]

In September 1954, an accord was signed in Geneva setting the terms of cease-fires in all three of those countries, giving Laos and Cambodia full (formal) independence and splitting control of Vietnam between North (controlled by the Viet Minh and supported by China and the Soviet Union) and South (supported by the United States, France, and other European powers). The cease-fire was broken as the Viet Minh supported the Communist rebels in South Vietnam, the Viet Cong, through a network of paths and roads known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, through the eastern and southern portions of Laos, allowing troops and supplies to avoid the demilitarized zone separating North and South Vietnam. This route was heavily bombed by the United States, which additionally trained and supported ethnic Hmong in Laos to fight a guerrilla war against the Viet Cong. Hostilities between the royalist government and Communist rebels continued, despite a short-lived cease-fire agreement, and in 1975, as the United States withdrew from Vietnam and North Vietnamese forces overran the south, the royal regime in Laos—similarly losing its U.S. support—was soon overthrown. The Pathet Lao managed a decisive victory against royalist and Hmong fighters in the end, and a significant portion of the Hmong population in Laos fled to Thailand. The new regime, led by Pathet Lao's political wing, the LPRP, set about consolidating repressive control throughout the country, imprisoning and "reeducating" thousands, with the assistance of North Vietnamese troops.

18. Information in this section is derived from common knowledge and Ted Paterson and Erik Tollefsen, *Lao PDR Country Mission Report: Evaluation of EC-Funded Mine Action* (Geneva: Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, December 2008), http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/evaluations/database/EvaluationEC-Laos-GICHD-December2008.pdf; Vatthana Pholsena and Oliver Tappe, *Interactions with a Violent Past: Reading Post-Conflict Landscape in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013); Thomas Lum, "Laos: Background and U.S. Relations," Congressional Research Service, January 4, 2010, http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34320.pdf; Bounlonh J. Soukamneuth, "The Political Economy of Transition in Laos: From Peripheral Socialism to the Margins of Global Capital" (PhD diss., Cornell University, August 2006), https://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/3430/1/The%20Political%20Economy%20of%20Transition%20in%20Laos.pdf; and Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Laos Country Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012), http://www.bti-project.de/uploads/tx_itao_download/BTI_2012_Laos.pdf.

STABILIZATION EFFORTS

International efforts to stabilize Laos coincided with processes to address the conflict in Vietnam. Laos participated in the Geneva Accords, which generated an agreement that attempted to end hostilities in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos and giving independence to the latter two. The agreement also established the International Control Commission to monitor the execution of the agreement, but the commission was largely ineffective. A second accord in 1962 also included provisions to keep Laos as a neutral territory, but these attempts ultimately failed. In 1973 the Paris Accords were signed with the intention of ending the Vietnam War. The accords also reconfirmed the neutrality of Laos. Following the Paris Accords, the Communist and royalist factions in Laos signed a cease-fire agreement that divided Laos between the two groups. The cease-fire did not hold, and in 1975, as Western powers withdrew from the region, the Pathet Lao seized power and held onto it with significant assistance from Communist bloc countries and, later, international development donors.

PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS

Post-conflict Laos has been dominated by repressive state institutions that have created a version of stability. Laos remains a one-party autocracy, a system in which there is economic liberalization without political freedoms, pluralism, or civil rights. Immediately after the civil war ended, Laos instituted nationalized and cooperative industrial and financial institutions. However, by the 1980s the economy was in disarray and Laos was under pressure to implement free-market reforms, which it did beginning in 1986, and in 1989 signed onto reforms supported by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. A constitution was adopted in 1991 and an elected National Assembly was formed the following year and expanded in 1997. Over time, the reeducation camps were closed, thousands of political prisoners were freed, and refugees were allowed to return home. Nonetheless, repressive capacity remains strong and the country remains a one-party state.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS

An extensive security apparatus has enabled the LPRP to maintain a hold on the government, legislature, courts, media, and general society.[19] The government places severe restrictions on human rights and repression is common against public dissent. Freedom of the press is restricted and all media organizations are controlled by the government.[20] Political institutions in Laos are highly exclusive because of the dominance of the one-party state, and only 2 percent of the population are members of the LPRP.

There are officially 49 recognized ethnic groups in Laos, but there are more than 200 subgroups. This makes Laos the most ethnically diverse country in Southeast Asia. Buddhism is the dominant religion, but there are minority populations of other religions including Christians, Muslims, and Baha'i.

19. Lum, "Laos: Background and U.S. Relations."
20. Freedom House, "Laos," 2013, http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/laos#.UwZ27fldXms.

The economic reforms of Laos that began a decade after the end of the civil war dramatically improved the situation of the country over time. The reforms corresponded with a significant rise in public and private investment, which contributed to annual GDP growth of 7 percent from 2006 to 2009.[21] The country's rapid economic growth has led to some poverty reduction but has also resulted in the increase of inequality, particularly between rural and urban areas. The gains of economic growth have not been equally distributed and those closely associated with the LPRP have tended to benefit disproportionately.[22]

Despite the post-conflict economic reforms, Laos remains one of the poorest countries in Asia. Its economy is driven primarily by subsistence agriculture, which accounts for half of the GDP and employs about 80 percent of the population.[23] Although there has been economic growth in recent years, Laos remains highly dependent on foreign aid and foreign investment, receiving approximately $400 million in bilateral and multilateral aid annually.[24] The main sources of foreign assistance are the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, UN Development Program (UNDP), the European Union, Japan, Australia, and China. Laos and China have developed a stronger relationship exemplified by China's $4 billion investment in mining, hydropower, and agriculture.[25] The reported unemployment rate in 2009 was 2.5 percent; however, it is difficult to gauge the exact number.[26] Poverty rates have been reduced from 46 percent in 1992 to 26 percent in 2010.[27]

Despite economic liberalization, there have been few efforts at broader political reform beyond a decline in political repression and a slight opening of the political system in the form of a national assembly. The members of the National Assembly are elected by popular vote from a list of candidates selected by the LPRP. Subsequently the president and vice president are elected by the National Assembly. There are no local elections held in Laos. There are no opposition parties and the ability to run for government is limited because of hand selection by the LPRP. Senior political leaders have developed a patronage system that redirects state resources for personal gain. Anticorruption legislation has been enacted but implementation has not occurred.[28]

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21. Hatthachan Phimphanthavong, "Economic Reform and Regional Development of Laos," *Modern Economy* 3 (2012): 179–186.

22. Government of the Lao PDR and the United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals: Progress Report for Lao PDR 2013* (New York: UNDP, 2013), http://www.us.undp.org/content/dam/laopdr/docs/Reports%20and%20publications/2013/MDGR_2013.pdf.

23. Mark McGillivray, David Carpenter, and Stewart Norup, *Evaluation Study of Long-Term Development Co-operation between Laos and Sweden* (Stockholm: Sida, 2012), http://www.oecd.org/countries/laopeoplesdemocraticrepublic/laos.pdf.

24. Lum, "Laos: Background and U.S. Relations."

25. Jane Perlez, "Vietnam War's Legacy Is Vivid as Clinton Visits Laos," *New York Times*, July 11, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/12/world/asia/on-visit-to-laos-clinton-is-reminded-of-vietnam-war.html?_r=0.

26. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Laos Country Report*.

27. CIA, *World Factbook*, "Laos," 2013, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/la.html.

28. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Laos Country Report*.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Laos is a landlocked country bordered by Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, China, Thailand, and Vietnam. Its civil war was a direct result of regional and colonial competition involving some of its neighbors as well as France and the United States, among others. After the Western-supported monarchy was overthrown, the government had its closest relations with the Communist regimes of the Soviet Union and Vietnam but not China. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Laos sought to improve its relations with both Thailand and China. With economic liberalization in the 1990s, its relations improved as well with Western countries, and its improvement in ties with countries in the broader region was reflected in its 1997 admission into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mozambique

CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

After decades of Portuguese colonial rulers' neglect of nonwhite groups in Mozambique, some tribal and ethnic rebel groups formed to fight for independence. The largest of these groups, the Marxist Frende de Libertacao de Mozambique (FRELIMO), formed in the early 1960s and launched a largely rural insurgency that succeeded in displacing colonial influence in some tribal areas. After a coup in Portugal installed a leftist regime in 1974, Mozambique was given its independence and FRELIMO took control of the country. A hurried departure by the Portuguese colonists left behind poor infrastructure, race- and class-based subjugation, and a weak economy.[29] FRELIMO did not come to power entirely unopposed; several small opposition groups vied for control, some funded by the white South Rhodesian and South African governments. The Resistencia Nacional Mozambique (RENAMO), initially antigovernment street protesters, emerged as the strongest opposition group and was receiving support from Rhodesia, South Africa, and Kenya by mid-1977.

The conflict escalated in the early 1980s, with RENAMO stepping up its campaign in the Mozambican countryside, targeting infrastructure and agricultural production and driving thousands of peasants into the cities to escape fighting. After failed peace talks in 1984, the conflict against intensified in the late 1980s. By 1987, RENAMO controlled a significant portion of the country, but news of its brutal tactics had started to reach European powers and the United States, ending the chances that the anti-Communist group would receive Western support. The war killed an estimated one million people, and another five million were displaced.

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29. Lise Morje Howard, *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Camino Kavanagh, ed., *Getting Smart and Scaling Up: Responding to the Impact of Organized Crime on Governance in Developing Countries* (New York: NYU Center on International Cooperation, June 2013), http://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/kavanagh_crime_developing_countries_report_w_annexes.pdf; UNDP Evaluation Office, *Country Evaluation: Assessment of Development Results—Mozambique* (New York: UNDP, 2004), http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/ADR/ADR_Reports/ADR-Mozambique.pdf.

STABILIZATION EFFORTS

Cease-fire talks began as early as 1984, first brokered by the Mozambican Christian Council (MCC) and then led by the United Nations. The 1984 talks led to the Nkomati Accord, under which FRELIMO was to drop support for the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa. South Africa, in turn, would withdraw support for RENAMO. However, neither country met its commitments; South Africa continued to supply the rebel group with rations, medical supplies, and land mines.

By the late 1980s, it was clear that neither side would achieve a military victory. A new peace process lasted two years and involved 12 rounds of talks between the FRELIMO government representatives and the RENAMO rebels. The General Peace Agreement was signed in Rome in 1992 and a cease-fire was declared.

The settlement addressed military, electoral, and governance matters. It established the conditions and mechanisms for demobilization and social reintegration of ex-combatants and provided the framework for a transition into democracy with multiparty elections. RENAMO was transitioned from a rebel movement into a political party. The peace agreement did not include provisions for justice systems and police reforms, human rights protections, economic rehabilitation of people other than former combatants, or a resolution to the issue of dual civil administrations. A UN peacekeeping mission was established to oversee the cease-fire and elections and assist with the demobilization process. In total, more than 100,000 combatants were demobilized, drawn equally from RENAMO and FRELIMO forces, but there was no real effort at disarmament, primarily because UN and government officials were more concerned with demobilization.[30] The United Nations observed that the fragile Mozambican economy would not have the capacity to absorb all of the former fighters, and so encouraged ex-combatants to work in agriculture. The United Nations implemented no long-term effort to prevent former combatants from returning to illicit activity.[31] Additionally, South Africa's apartheid regime fell soon after the peace agreement, dramatically changing that country's regional priorities (e.g., from intervention to investment).

PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS

The Mozambican peace process did not include provisions for transitional justice or judicial reform, and the judicial system continues to face challenges such as corruption, scarcity of training and resources, and high rates of impunity for crimes.[32] The short-term priorities for reconstruction were primarily focused on rebuilding physical infrastructure, health systems, and schools. Many early projects were completed within four years

30. Howard, *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*.

31. "Overview: DDR Processes in Africa" (Second International Conference on DDR and Stability in Africa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, June 12–14, 2007), http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/speeches/overview.pdf.

32. Freedom House, "Mozambique," 2013, http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/mozambique#.U3uZ-_ldXms.

of the end of the civil war.[33] The economy of Mozambique grew dramatically in the decade after the civil war with increasing investment in natural resources. However, the national-level economic growth has not translated to widespread prosperity for the majority of the population. The political developments in the immediate post-conflict period were successful because of the transformation of RENAMO into a political opposition party, but this has not led to a transfer of power, as FRELIMO continues to control 75 percent of the legislature and 99 percent of municipal assemblies and mayoral positions.[34]

INTERNAL DYNAMICS

When Mozambique gained independence in 1975, it was one of the world's poorest countries. Economic reforms after the civil war ended made Mozambique one of the world's fastest-growing economies.[35] The main sources of economic growth are from natural resources, particularly coal and natural gas. Subsistence agriculture employs over 80 percent of the population, and the economic growth from natural resources and industry development has not reached this population.[36] In 2013 Mozambique was ranked 185 out of 187 on the Human Development Index.[37] In 2012 the poverty rate was 54.7 percent, which indicates that over half of the population lives on less than one dollar a day.[38] The significantly large poverty rate emphasizes the fact that the progress in economic growth in the country has not translated to poverty alleviation, economic equality, or increased opportunities for a large portion of the population. Additionally, Mozambique's government is heavily dependent on external aid: nearly half of Mozambique's expenditures are financed through development assistance.[39]

Since independence and continuing after the civil war, FRELIMO has dominated the political system and has won all presidential elections and maintained a majority in parliament. There is concern that the FRELIMO's dominance has weakened the democratic process and effectively turned Mozambique into a one-party, semiauthoritarian state. Mozambique has experienced an overall drop in voter turnout since the transition to democracy, which potentially corresponds to the continued dominance by one party.[40]

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33. Luisa Diogo, "Post-Conflict Mozambique's Reconstruction: A Transferable Strategy in Africa," *World Bank Findings* 260 (March 2006), https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9624/355270rev0find260.pdf?sequence=1.

34. Carrie Manning, "Mozambique's Slide into One-Party Rule," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (2010): 151–165.

35. BBC News, "Mozambique Profile," 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13890416.

36. Tony Vaux, Amandio Mavela, Toao Pereira, and Jennifer Stuttle, "Strategic Conflict Assessment: Mozambique," UK Department for International Development, April 2006, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMOZAMBIQUE/Resources/DFID_governance_0406.pdf.

37. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Mozambique Country Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012), http://www.bti-project.de/fileadmin/Inhalte/reports/2012/pdf/BTI%202012%20Mozambique.pdf.

38. Ibid.

39. UNDP Evaluation Office, *Country Evaluation: Assessment of Development Results—Mozambique*.

40. Robert J. Groelsema, J. Michael Turner, and Carlos Shenga, "Mozambique Democracy and Governance Assessment," USAID (2009).

Corruption and crime continued to be significant problems after the war. The country ranks 116 out of 178 in the Transparency International Corruption Index and is defined as highly corrupt, with patronage taking place at all levels of society.[41] Mozambique has experienced an increase in crime rates and instances of fighting between rebels and the state in several regions. Between 2004 and 2008 crime increased by approximately 15 percent per year.[42] Between 2006 and 2007, crime rose from 38,547 criminal offenses to 42,467 cases, an increase of 17 percent.[43] Sixteen years of armed conflict resulted in the proliferation of arms throughout the country, which has further fueled the rising problem of criminal violence.[44] There has been an increase in drug trafficking, arms trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, and illicit resource extraction.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mozambique is located in sub-Saharan Africa and is bordered by South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia. Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), Kenya, and South Africa all had a substantial role in Mozambique's civil war. When FRELIMO took power in 1975, it chose not to pursue relationships with the IMF and World Bank or to join the Lomé Convention. FRELIMO also chose antiapartheid and nonalignment stances, which initially complicated its relations with the United States (which, however, is today its largest aid provider). Over time, the FRELIMO government has built stable relations with its neighbors and the international community, and is a member of the African Union (AU), the AU Southern African Development Community, and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), among others.

El Salvador

CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

Faced with a brutal military dictatorship, severe economic hardship, violent suppression of popular protests, and a coup in 1979 whose leaders failed to enact effective reforms, a number of leftist opposition movements formed an armed guerrilla organization, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), named after a Communist Party founder executed in the 1930s by the military after a failed peasant uprising. The FMLN, with Cuban and Soviet support, used guerrilla tactics. The state benefited from significant military support from the United States, but was brutal, often using paramilitaries (or "death squads") to assassinate suspected guerrillas and sympathizers. More than 70,000 Salvadorans were killed during the civil war, with growing

41. Lainie Reisman and Aly Lalá, *Assessment of Crime and Violence in Mozambique* (Rosebank, South Africa: Open Society Institute for Southern Africa, 2012), http://www.osisa.org/sites/default/files/cvpi_mozambique_report_-_final_english.pdf.

42. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: Mozambique Country Report*.

43. Loro Horta, "The Bite of Mamba: Mozambique's Bloody War against Crime," CSIS, n.d., http://csis.org/story/bite-mamba-mozambique%E2%80%99s-bloody-war-against-crime.

44. Small Arms Survey, *Firearm-Related Violence in Mozambique* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, June 2009), http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/C-Special-reports/SAS-SR10-Mozambique.pdf.

international concerns over severe human rights violations, mostly by state forces and paramilitaries.[45]

With neither side gaining ground, civilian casualties mounting, the state under diplomatic pressure from the United States to stem human rights violations, and the FMLN under pressure from its supporters to negotiate a settlement, the United Nations initiated peace talks in 1990. An accord signed that year, in which both sides agreed to limit human rights abuses, was violated repeatedly. But talks resumed in 1991, and with both sides recognizing the stalemate, the Chapultepac Accord was signed in early 1992, ending the civil war for good.

STABILIZATION EFFORTS

The Chapultepac Accord primarily addressed the military and security dimensions of ending the war. The agreement provided for demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, the establishment of a truth commission, replacement of military forces with a national civilian police force, constitutional reforms, and judicial reform to promote independence from political influence. The United Nations established a peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), to monitor implementation and facilitate the truth commission. The cease-fire between the state and FMLN was never broken.

PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS

In many ways El Salvador is considered a successful model for implementing a peace agreement and transitioning from war to peace, but there were shortfalls. Given the deep disagreements between the state and rebels over the proper role of the state in the economy, the Chapultepac Accord did not delve into socioeconomic grievances, focusing (sensibly) on the short-term imperative of finding enough agreement to enable the cease-fire to hold. Stabilization succeeded. Economic progress was left to the processes of normal politics that followed.

Immediately after the civil war, the government lacked the capacity to promote economic development or contain criminal violence and international support was not adequate to make rapid gains. As a result, many Salvadorans continued to face economic, social, and political exclusion along with high levels of poverty, entrenched socioeconomic inequalities, low rates of development, and high dependency on remittances. Indigenous

45. Information in this section is derived from common knowledge and Diana Villiers Negroponte, *Seeking Peace in El Salvador: The Struggle to Reconstruct a Nation at the End of the Civil War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Clare Ribando Seelke, "El Salvador: Political and Economic Conditions and U.S. Relations," Congressional Research Service, April 5, 2013, http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21655.pdf; Howard, *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*; Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "El Salvador 2012 Human Rights Report," U.S. Department of State, 2012; Margarita S. Studemeister, *El Salvador: Implementation of the Peace Accords* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2001); Nazih Richani, "State Capacity in Post-Conflict Settings: Explaining Criminal Violence in El Salvador and Guatemala," *Civil Wars* 12, no. 4 (2010): 431–455; Laura Pedraza Farina, Spring Miller, and James L. Cavallaro, *No Place to Hide: Gang, State, and Clandestine Violence in El Salvador* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010); and other sources as cited.

populations in particular faced severe exclusion and stigmatization, with some estimates of 99 percent of the indigenous population living below the poverty line. But in subsequent years, the country's economy grew significantly, about 2 percent GDP growth per year through 2007, and poverty declined 27 percentage points between 1991 and 2002, while other socioeconomic indicators improved as well.[46] El Salvador's political party system became one of the most stable in Central America.[47] More space was created for freedom of the press along with greater opportunity for mobilizing a robust civil society.[48] Civil society grew significantly, with organizations focusing on human rights, political accountability, and environmental causes.[49] El Salvador today has the third largest economy in Central America.[50]

Still, significant social and economic hurdles remain. The Salvadoran economy has increasingly become dependent on remittances since the end of the civil war. When the war officially ended in 1992, remittances totaled $858 million but by 2006 reached $3.3 billion, about 20 percent of GDP.[51] The Salvadoran economy has struggled to create enough jobs for young people entering the labor market, increasing dependency on remittances.[52] Almost seven out of ten adolescents are not enrolled in secondary education, with a higher rate of non-enrollment among males. This has left adolescents vulnerable to recruitment by gangs (see below).[53] Additionally, the economy was severely affected by the global financial crisis and the recession in the United States, where most of El Salvador's remittances originate. The Salvadoran economy contracted 3.1 percent in 2009.[54] The poverty rate is estimated to be 41 percent of the population, and poverty is more pronounced in rural areas.[55] In 2009 illiteracy rates were significantly higher in rural areas, 22 percent, compared to urban areas, 9.2 percent.[56]

There was also less progress in improving judicial institutions than had been envisioned. After the civil war, the courts remained open to political influence, and the National Assembly passed an amnesty for crimes that took place during the war. There continued to be widespread impunity for common crime as well. The judicial system has been plagued by

46. World Bank, "El Salvador Overview," http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/elsalvador/overview.

47. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: El Salvador Country Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2014), http://www.bti-project.org/uploads/tx_itao_download/BTI_2014_El_Salvador.pdf.

48. Sonja Wolf, "Subverting Democracy: Elite Rule and the Limits of Political Participation in Post-War El Salvador," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41, no. 3 (2009): 429–465.

49. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: El Salvador Country Report*.

50. CIA, *World Factbook*, "El Salvador," 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/es.html.

51. Christine J. Wade, "El Salvador: Contradictions of Neoliberalism and Building Sustainable Peace," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 13, no. 2 (2008): 15–32.

52. Alberto Martín Álvarez, *From Revolutionary War to Democratic Revolution: The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador* (Berlin: Berghof Conflict Research, 2010), http://www.berghof-conflictresearch.org/documents/publications/transitions9_elsalvador.pdf.

53. UNICEF, "UNICEF Annual Report for El Salvador," 2010, http://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/El_Salvador_COAR_2010.pdf.

54. Seelke, "El Salvador."

55. Freedom House, "El Salvador," 2013, http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/el-salvador#.Uvp9G_ldXms.

56. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: El Salvador Country Report*.

inefficiency, corruption, and inactivity. Meanwhile, there were shortcomings in police training and the general development of the security forces.

In short, despite the great strides made in political inclusion and the moderate strides made in economic development, El Salvador for years continued to have difficulties that left it poorly positioned to address the problem of gang-related criminal violence when it exploded during the 1990s. The evolution of the gang problem, and the stabilization and peace-building efforts made to counter it, is discussed in the next section.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS

Most of the key internal dynamics at the end of the civil war were discussed in the previous section, to illustrate the successes and shortcomings of post-conflict reconstruction. After the civil war, however, El Salvador also struggled with growing levels of criminal violence. In the 12 years immediately following the signing of the peace agreement in 1992, nearly 50,000 people were killed, about two-thirds of the deaths that occurred during the civil war.[57] By 2011, the country had one of the highest murder rates in the world, 69 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, declining in 2012 to 42 per 100,000 inhabitants.[58] One of the causes of the proliferation of criminal violence was the growth of gangs, the two largest being Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and 18th Street (M-18). Today it is estimated that between 20,000 and 35,000 Salvadoran youth belong to a street gang.[59]

The proliferation of gang violence is frequently attributed to legacies of the civil war, the widespread availability of small arms, the impunity afforded to perpetrators of criminal acts, the country's placement along Central America's drug transit route, continued poverty, widespread unemployment, and socioeconomic inequalities that were never adequately addressed after the civil war. A survey of incarcerated criminals conducted in the late 1990s found that being a former combatant was positively correlated with the probability of committing a homicide after the civil war; however, the survey also found that 70 percent of El Salvador's prison population did not participate in the civil war.[60] This suggests that if criminal violence was linked to the civil war, it was through the long-term exposure to and normalization of violence. Salvadoran youth had long faced exclusion and been exposed to high levels of social, political, economic, and personal violence. Surveys of gang members indicate that young people who join gangs have experienced high levels of violence at home and in their communities.[61]

In addition, El Salvador's emergence from civil war took place during a time when U.S. domestic politics led to the deportation of Central American gangsters—many of whom had gone to the United States as children, illegally, with their parents, and so had

57. Richani, "State Capacity in Post-Conflict Settings," 431–455.
58. Seelke, "El Salvador."
59. Ibid.
60. Richani, "State Capacity in Post-Conflict Settings," 431–455.
61. Mo Hume, "Mano Dura: El Salvador Responds to Gangs," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 6 (2007): 739–751.

no family or friends in El Salvador once they were deported. Their fellow gangster deportees provided moral and practical support, and the gangs' growth coincided with the availability of poor and marginalized young people and former combatants who had not been successfully demobilized and reintegrated and so were recruited into the gangs.

In short, bad luck associated with U.S. domestic politics resulting in the deportation of experienced gang members to El Salvador combined with the availability of former combatants who didn't reintegrate and of young people who had few economic opportunities and had been desensitized by long-term exposure to violence, resulting in the rapid growth of gangs and gang-related criminal violence during the decade or so following the successful end of the civil war.

There have been multiple efforts by the state to address the gang and criminal violence problem, many inconsistent and ineffective. The government introduced an "iron fist" or *mano dura* policy in 2003 in an attempt to handle the gang problem through force.[62] Initially the *mano dura* policy was widely supported by the general population because they were tired of constant fear and insecurity; however, attitudes changed as the policy became highly repressive and resembled some of the authoritarian tendencies from before the civil war. Under this policy gang members or even those suspected of membership were rounded up and placed in jail. Specialized military antigang units were assembled and deployed to neighborhoods. Citizens feared that this was a new generation of death squads.[63] Ultimately, prisons were overcrowded, homicide rates continued to escalate, and the government concluded that the *mano dura* policy was ineffective and expensive.

Another approach was attempted in 2012 to contain gang violence. A gang truce was brokered between MS-13, M-18, and the government. Gang leaders agreed to a cease-fire in exchange for improved prison conditions. Following the truce there was an immediate reduction in violence and the Salvadoran government reported that homicide rates declined by 40 percent.[64] While the murder rate dropped, skepticism remains as to how long the truce will be sustained.[65] According to reports, the public remains skeptical that overall violence and the murder rate have decreased or that conditions will improve without other government interventions. Additionally, it is unclear how the gang truce affected other criminal activity beyond murder rates such as drug trafficking. Despite some skepticism, the truce has sparked debate concerning the possibility of further negotiations and a potential long-term agreement between the government and the gangs.[66] Additionally the immediate reduction in homicide rates corresponded with an increase in international confidence in

62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Seelke, "El Salvador: Political and Economic Conditions and U.S. Relations."
65. Freedom House, "El Salvador."
66. Michael Shifter and Rachel Schwartz, "Democracy in Progress: El Salvador's Unfinished Transition," *World Politics Review* (2012), http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12369/democracy-in-progress-el-salvadors-unfinished-transition.

El Salvador's government.[67] Some programs for rehabilitation, crime prevention, and social programs have been introduced, but they are infrequent.[68]

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Throughout El Salvador's civil war, the United States supported and advised the Salvadoran state. U.S. involvement in El Salvador was tied to Cold War tensions and a desire to stem the spread of communism.[69] The FMLN had support from the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua, with some Eastern European countries providing training. With the United States pressuring the Salvadoran state to mind its human rights abuses, the Soviet Union pressuring FMLN to negotiate a settlement, and no victory in sight for either of the direct parties to the conflict, the conditions were ripe for a negotiated settlement. Since the end of the war, the largest international contributor to El Salvador has been the United States, which also provides support to combating and criminal networks and has appropriated $803.6 million to address security concerns relating to gangs and criminal networks in Central America since 2008.[70]

67. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2014: El Salvador Country Report*.

68. Nina Lakhani, "El Salvador's Post-Pull Challenges," Al Jazeera, March 17, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/03/el-salvador-post-election-challenges-20143161842163903 74.html.

69. Mark Peceny and William D. Stanley, "Counterinsurgency in El Salvador," *Politics and Society* 38, no. 1 (2010): 67–94.

70. Clare Ribando Seelke, "Gangs in Central America," Congressional Research Service, February 20, 2014, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34112.pdf.

3 From Violence to Stability

How does violent conflict end? How does peace persist?

This chapter and the one that follows explore the differences and similarities between the four cases introduced in the last chapter, to compare factors that might have made contributions to the more successful transitions from violence to stability and stability to peace. As this was an exploratory study, a wide range of issues were considered in all six comparisons, including patterns of violence, peace agreements, foreign influence, foreign intervention, peace-building efforts, fragmentation, informal governance, criminality, security and justice, formal governance, business climate, equality, rights, relations with neighbors, information flows, education, corruption, economy, and natural resources, among others.

The first three comparisons, discussed here, all involve Chad: with Laos, with Mozambique, and with El Salvador. Chad has been stuck in a cycle of violence for decades. The other cases have had greater but varying degrees of success emerging from violence. These comparisons therefore offer hints about the emergence and consolidation of stability out of violence. (The remaining three comparisons—Laos with Mozambique, Laos with El Salvador, and Mozambique with El Salvador—are discussed in the next chapter.)

Chad-Laos

Why did the civil war in Laos end so definitively, leading to a long period of stability, while Chad has remained stuck in a cycle of violence? Both countries have a large number of ethnic groups and languages spoken and some concentration of religious groups in different parts of the country (with some overlap). Both have historically had poor institutional development. Both fought guerrilla wars during the 1970s that ended with a rebel victory. Yet the Chad rebels' short-lived victory in 1979 was never consolidated, followed instead by several coups and renewed civil war; peace agreements in 2001, 2003, and 2007 likewise did not stick; and it took several agreements with Sudan before the proxy war cooled in 2010, and it is not yet clear whether that is sustainable. By contrast, after Laos's rebels took control of the state in 1975, they managed to consolidate control and suppress a low-level insurgency led by the ousted regime. What made the difference?

First, in Laos, the rebel victory was decisive. With support from their Communist neighbors, the rebels defeated the royal family and forced its supporters into hiding, with very little popular support. In Chad, the deposed regime in 1979 was able to regroup; it hadn't been thoroughly defeated. Second, the rebels in Laos were a unified group, so that once it took power, its leaders were confident that their policies could immediately be implemented. In Chad, there were multiple rebel factions, and even when the leaders of some signed on to different peace accords, the more extreme factions did not always follow suit. Third, the rebel victory in Laos coincided with a Communist victory in Vietnam and the departure of the military forces allied with the defeated regime there—so the Laotian rebels no longer had a neighbor or a great power at war with them but did continue to have foreign support once they took power, while the royals and the Hmong guerrillas no longer had foreign support. By contrast, as Chad's various combatants came into power and were deposed in turn, neighboring states continued to encourage and enable the different parties to keep fighting, at least until the past few years. Fourth, the Communist regime in Laos had a (repressive) state presence throughout the country, bolstered by North Vietnamese troops, while Chad's state institutions barely extended beyond the capital. Finally, the various ethnic groups in Laos had a stronger national identity than those in Chad, who in the absence of the state tended to identify more strongly with their ethnic and linguistic groups than they did as citizens of Chad. In other words, the state, the nation, and the rebels were significantly fragmented in Chad but more unified in Laos.

The peace agreements Chad has entered into the past few years have so far managed to hold, and violence has fallen. It remains to be seen how long this stability will last and whether efforts to consolidate peace might be taken seriously enough to succeed.

Chad-Mozambique

While Chad's early civil violence was well under way, Mozambique's was just getting started. As in Chad (especially during the 1980s and 1990s), Mozambique had neighboring countries that provided covert support to combatants (South Africa, Rhodesia, and Kenya supported the rebels). But in Mozambique, the FRELIMO government and the RENAMO rebels fought each other to a stalemate, with both sides recognizing neither would win. A peace agreement was brokered in 1992.

Why did Mozambique's agreement stick, but Chad's early agreements never did? First, Mozambique's neighbors respected the agreement. It helped that South Africa's apartheid regime fell soon after the peace agreement and that country turned from political interference to trade and investment. Chad's neighbors, by contrast, became increasingly involved in its civil war over time. Second, once Mozambique had stabilized, the government began significant reforms, many successful. The reforms included integration of RENAMO into the political system as an opposition party (albeit one that has generally done poorly in elections). Efforts to improve infrastructure and services had an effect over time on Mozambique's economic growth as well, although it continued to be highly dependent on foreign aid. Chad's economy struggled until oil was discovered (which then

gave the government the resources it needed to strengthen its military and force its adversaries to negotiate).

Chad–El Salvador

El Salvador's civil war began just as Chad's rebels took power in 1979. In both countries, combatants turned to outside support. El Salvador's combatants received support not from its immediate neighbors but from great powers: the United States supporting the government, the Soviet Union (and Cuba) supporting the FMLN rebels. Over 13 years, the Salvadoran combatants fought each other to a stalemate and both sides agreed to UN-brokered peace negotiations. The political settlement stuck, political and economic reforms were carried out, and the FMLN was integrated into the political system as an opposition—and, later, ruling—party.

What made El Salvador ripe for consolidating political stability but not Chad? First, the stalemate clearly helped, as it did in Mozambique, too. Second, the Soviet Union fell, which dramatically changed the geopolitical (and conflict-funding) landscape and therefore incentives. Third, El Salvador, with only a small indigenous population, did not have nearly the ethnic or religious divisions of Chad. El Salvador was relatively homogenous, with the main disagreement being between the political Left and Right and the economic haves and have-nots, but there was still a national identity as Salvadorans. What customary authority existed was small and generally nonthreatening to the state. Fourth, the ONUSAL peacekeeping effort was more robust than any such effort in Chad ever had the chance to be. And fifth, education was much better in El Salvador than in Chad, and more of the political elite seem to have been able to see far enough beyond immediate concerns to plan for a long-term outcome. That meant a growing willingness to respect human rights, the ability to recognize the importance of a strong economy and business climate, and the self-confidence to allow for a relatively free media. (El Salvador did later suffer a dramatic increase in criminal violence during an otherwise successful consolidation of the political settlement, for reasons discussed in Chapter 2.)

Conclusions: Ripeness and Stabilization

What did Laos, Mozambique, and El Salvador have that Chad did not? What enabled them to move from violence to stability? Two factors were clearest: internal cohesion and external pressure.

- **Internal cohesion.** In all three cases, the conflict involved two main parties: the state and the rebels. That is not to say there were not other parties or there were no splinters. It is only to say that each side to the conflict was reasonably cohesive—one might say "cohesive enough"—and so could be counted on to meet commitments its leaders might agree to. In El Salvador, it was the state against the FMLN; the state could not always control the paramilitaries, and some "death squad" members later

joined gangs, but when the state agreed to peace, most of the paramilitaries demobilized, and the two main parties to the conflict became the two main political parties in the country. In Mozambique, the dynamic was similar: there were two main parties—FRELIMO and RENAMO—and when they agreed to peace, each side had enough internal cohesion to make the agreement stick, turning a violent conflict into normal politics. In Laos, the rebels were part of a regional Communist movement that was sophisticated and disciplined enough to make and meet shared goals. When they defeated the state forces, that cohesion and regional support enabled them to make an immediate transition to governing. In Chad, however, there were multiple rebel factions and extremist splinter groups, and the government was often itself a coalition of rivals who alternately tried politics and violence as their calculations shifted in response to changing conditions on the ground; with so many actors pursuing so many different agendas, the probability of stability was naturally low.

- **External pressure.** In all three cases, foreign supporters of one or both sides either withdrew support or put pressure on their clients to negotiate a settlement. The royal government in Laos lost Western support, tilting the balance strongly in favor of the rebels, who continued to receive Communist support during and after their victory. The apartheid government in South Africa fell soon after the peace agreement in Mozambique, and that country's policy priorities quickly shifted away from supporting foreign rebels. The Soviet Union fell, dramatically reducing the financing available to Communist rebel movements worldwide, giving Salvadoran rebels an incentive to negotiate peace. By contrast, in Chad, neighboring countries did not respect the peace agreements, continuing instead to fund their client groups when it fit their interests, until the 2010 agreement.

An argument could be made (or a hypothesis proposed) that a conflict situation might not be ripe for stabilization if the direct parties to the conflict remain severely fragmented—that is, if a key party has poor internal cohesion or if there are a large number of conflict actors with unstable alliances or contradictory motives—or if the external patrons of those conflict parties remain committed to violence. A window of opportunity to reduce violence—such as a recognized stalemate or an outright victory—might be judged ripe for stability if the direct parties to the conflict are internally unified (i.e., decent command and control, no significant extremist factions, etc.) and if the indirect parties to the conflict change the nature of their support in a way that obviates violence. A victor, especially, would require, at the least, enough internal cohesion so that if its leaders decide on mercy over vengeance its decision would have a chance of being implemented. In other words, a conflict situation is ripe for stability if a window of opportunity opens and there are no significant internal or external spoilers actively excluding themselves from a potential settlement.

This is relevant to peace building because if there is no temporary negative peace to consolidate then there can be no long-term positive peace to build. These two criteria for ripeness would seem to be among the most basic conditions for building peace, but they clearly are not sufficient. The next and final chapter takes up ripeness for peace.

4 From Stability to Peace

What makes a country in a post-conflict situation "ripe" for long-term peace building? Chapter 3 compared three cases of successful stabilization to the unsuccessful case of Chad to identify factors contributing to a successful transition from violence to stability. The remaining three comparisons—Laos with Mozambique, Laos with El Salvador, and Mozambique with El Salvador—offer hints about what makes a post-conflict situation ripe for a transition from stability to peace. This concluding chapter ends with thoughts on whether factors associated with ripeness can be influenced.

Laos-Mozambique

Both Laos and Mozambique experienced conflicts emerging from postcolonial disagreements between the political Left and the political Right. In both cases, the United Nations attempted to broker peace talks; in Laos, talks associated with the Vietnam War led to agreements that did not stick, while in Mozambique, talks never gained traction until the combatants themselves agreed they were needed. Both conflicts had foreign involvement, with support to combatants coming from neighboring countries, Western powers, or Communist regimes, and upon the conclusion of both conflicts, those foreign powers stopped supporting armed groups, switching instead to support for governing. Afterward, both countries undertook economic reforms that improved the quality of life of their residents to some degree, and both were able to maintain an impressive degree of post-conflict stability despite generally weak institutions. But Mozambique made much more progress on political reform than Laos. Why?

First, the conflicts ended in very different ways: in Laos, a definitive rebel victory; in Mozambique, a stalemate leading to peace negotiations. Perhaps political reforms are more likely to be undertaken when both sides in the conflict recognize that politics can substitute for violence when violence is not succeeding, something that happened in Mozambique (where violence did not lead to power) but not in Laos (where it did).

Second, and consequently, Mozambique has made more space for pluralism—far from perfect, but more than in Laos. For example, national authorities in Mozambique have recognized that where the central state has no local capacity, subnational and informal governance can substitute for formal national governance. And while RENAMO has not been very successful electorally, its issues are included to some degree in political dialogues

and it remains a loyal opposition. Laos has governed with repressive state authority and legitimized itself more through national identity and economic reform than political accommodation. Both countries have very little press freedom, but information is controlled much more tightly in Laos than in Mozambique. Both countries have high levels of corruption, but it is worse in Laos.

Third, Mozambique seemed to have had more of a need to engage constructively with other countries. Constructive engagement with its neighbors began soon after the peace agreements held. It also had a more diverse economy, with less dependence on natural resources extraction. Laos is only starting to emerge from isolation, and half of its GDP depends on natural resources. Other countries, therefore, have had more of a stake in Mozambique's stability and development than in Laos's.

How has Laos managed to control criminal violence more than Mozambique? Despite there being more pluralism in Mozambique, there was more national-level repressive capacity in Laos. For example, the security and justice system in Laos is corrupt, but it is clearly controlled by the national government, while in Mozambique it is both corrupt and ineffective, a difference in enforcement capacity that seems to contribute to the difference in the experience of crime.

Laos–El Salvador

El Salvador's civil war began a few years after the conflict ended in Laos, but both involved leftist rebels fighting against an elite in control of the state, with foreign powers supporting internal combatants. In Laos the rebels won and immediately consolidated control over the country. In El Salvador, the combatants fought each other into a stalemate and subsequently negotiated a peace agreement that not only held but set the conditions for significant political and economic reforms. By most measures, El Salvador has been much more successful than Laos: whereas Laos is a one-party Communist state, El Salvador is a representative democracy in which the main parties have won and lost elections and transferred power peacefully. The Salvadoran security and justice forces are controlled by the state, whereas the Laotian forces are controlled by a party (both have capacity problems). Post-conflict El Salvador has a stronger economy, a better business climate, a better human rights record, freer media, less corruption, and lower dependency on foreign aid and natural resources extraction. The story is mixed on inequality and education. But overall, El Salvador has emerged from its civil war with a strong political system, a growing economy, and in most sectors better institutions.

Yet crime and violence became significantly worse in El Salvador during its post-conflict period than they did in Laos. Why?

Reintegration of former combatants was incomplete, so there were thousands of trained fighters looking for something more rewarding to do than wait for government help. Socio-economic improvements did not happen quickly enough, so there were thousands of

marginalized young people, many inured to violence, looking for economic opportunity and respect. And the United States deported U.S.-based gang members whose parents were Salvadoran but who themselves had not grown up in El Salvador, so there were hundreds of experienced gangsters looking for a way of life that was familiar. And the security and justice reforms envisioned as part of the peace agreement were incomplete as well. All of these factors combined with El Salvador's location on an illegal narcotics trafficking route, resulting in a massive increase in criminal violence. Laos did not face such dynamics nearly to the same degree, and its repressive capacity was far stronger than El Salvador's.

Mozambique–El Salvador

As in Mozambique, El Salvador's combatants received support from foreign countries, but in this case it was not its immediate neighbors but nearby countries (Cuba and Nicaragua) and great powers (the United States and the Soviet Union). Also as in Mozambique, the Salvadoran combatants fought each other to a stalemate and both sides agreed to UN-brokered peace negotiations. In both cases, the peace accords stuck and the opposition forces were integrated into the political system as opposition parties. Both enjoyed international support for post-conflict peace building, though the effort in El Salvador was stronger. El Salvador's political reforms were much more comprehensive and successful than in Mozambique, where the political opposition has not enjoyed electoral success and human rights abuses by the state continue to be a concern. There seems to be nearly no risk of a resurgence of violent conflict between the Left and the Right in El Salvador, where the opposition has won elections at all levels, but in Mozambique, renewed conflict, while not necessarily likely, is not inconceivable. And El Salvador is stronger in literacy, business climate, human rights, and its economy.

If El Salvador's institutions are generally stronger than Mozambique's, why is criminal violence significantly worse in El Salvador than in Mozambique? In both countries, the security forces and justice system lack capacity and are not as effective as needed. Both are territory for drug trafficking, Mozambique increasingly so. And both have large youth populations and nonintegrated former combatants marginalized from economic opportunity and inured to violence. But Mozambique did not have the misfortune, as El Salvador did, of being the recipient of gang members deported into its territory without any social networks or institutions prepared to integrate them into peaceful society at the very time when those other dynamics were present. In a sense, this is a matter of bad luck on El Salvador's part.

Conclusions: Ripeness and Peace Building

What makes a country in a post-conflict situation "ripe" for long-term peace building? The three comparisons made in this chapter—Laos with Mozambique, Laos with El Salvador, and Mozambique with El Salvador—offer hints about the transition from stability to peace, teasing out some of the more subtle influences on ripeness. The goal, obviously, is to

sustain stability—to contain violence—long enough for political and other reforms to have concrete effects on people who might otherwise turn or return to violence. Those concrete effects could be positive (improving political inclusion and economic opportunity) or they could be negative (improving capacity, mainly in the security and justice sectors, to deter and punish violent behavior). Either way, peace building cannot be considered wholly successful if one form of mass violence (political) is reduced only to be replaced later by a different form of mass violence (criminal)—but nor can it be judged a failure simply because all societal problems were not solved with the resolution of the political conflict.

Each of the cases and case comparisons, therefore, have lessons to impart. Stability in Laos came from victory, not negotiation, but the victors had the capacity to contain violence (as a result of internal cohesion and foreign support) and, after a long period of stagnation, introduced economic reforms that provided concrete benefits to at least some of its population. In other words, it was more successful at stabilization than at peace building. Stability in El Salvador and Mozambique came from stalemate and negotiation leading to settlements that opened their political systems to rebel participation as opposition figures. El Salvador was more successful than Mozambique at peace building in the traditional sense—implementing political and institutional reforms—but less successful at stabilization in the sense of containing violence, albeit of a different form. As the previous section suggested, that resulted in no small part from bad luck, as both countries had problems with marginalized youth, former combatants, and security and justice capacity, but only El Salvador had a gang-deportation problem. It would be too facile to say that El Salvador was better at peace building than stabilization, while Mozambique was better at stabilization than El Salvador was and at peace building than Laos was. But it would not be too far from the truth. What are the lessons?

As Chapter 3 showed, it is a good sign that progress is possible if the direct parties to the conflict are cohesive enough to command their combatants to stop fighting and if their foreign patrons are pressuring them to do so. More complex conflicts, involving many fragmented parties whose alliances are unstable and whose motives for fighting are unclear or mutually contradictory, are less likely to be ripe for stabilizing. And conflicts with significant foreign meddling are notoriously difficult to resolve. All else equal, therefore, any reductions in violence in those situations are less likely to be sustained, and resources put toward reforming institutions or addressing underlying drivers of conflict are more likely to be wasted, compared to situations characterized by internal cohesion and foreign pressure for peace.

A more cynical version of this observation is that repressive states propped up by foreign powers are good at containing criminal violence (and maintaining a monopoly over political violence and corruption) for long periods of time, as the Laos case amply demonstrates. In fact, from a peace-building perspective, one might make the uncomfortable observation that the most politically inclusive case, El Salvador, is also the case that suffered the most post-conflict criminal violence, while the least politically inclusive case, Laos, suffered the

least criminal violence, with Mozambique falling in between on both counts. This is, of course, a matter of sampling bias: these cases were chosen in part to question how countries that score so low on institutional quality can score so highly on violence containment and vice versa. What we would want to see in the future are post-conflict situations that blend the Laotian success at containing violence with the Salvadoran success at improving political inclusion and economic opportunity.

From that perspective, the factors that seem, from this study, most likely to contribute to a successful transition from stability to (relative) peace include the following:

- **Enforcement capacity.** Laos cannot be said to have built peace, but it was extremely successful at stabilization, mainly because of its high level of enforcement capacity. El Salvador and Mozambique made real progress in political and institutional reform, but it is clear that among their shortcomings was their inadequate capacity to contain violence; the police forces and justice system simply were not up to the task as the criminal violence problem emerged and quickly grew. There is no logical reason enforcement capacity in the immediate post-conflict period needs to be entirely domestically derived; in principle, international forces could be used to bolster security until domestic capacity increases. Laos had strong North Vietnamese forces bolstering its own troops, and Mozambique had multinational forces (albeit with a weaker mission). In El Salvador, when criminal violence skyrocketed, international forces did not have the mandate and domestic forces did not have the capacity to contain it. Enforcement capacity needs to be available in case subnational or regional actors emerge with a new or renewed commitment to violence.
- **Commitment to political inclusion.** The main difference between Laos on the one hand and El Salvador and Mozambique on the other is that the post-conflict government of the latter two made political space for former opponents immediately following the settlement. In El Salvador, that space grew faster, such that the opposition won the 2009 and 2014 presidential elections. Mozambique's opposition still has not won a national-level election, two decades on. But Laos has remained a closed, one-party state for nearly four decades. A sincere willingness of the ruling party at the beginning of the post-conflict period to be politically inclusive suggests a degree of ripeness for peace building: national or international efforts to support political, economic, institutional, and social reforms will be more likely to succeed when the political will to implement them is demonstrated early on.
- **Commitment to material progress.** Unlike Laos, whose leaders implemented policies early on that exacerbated economic deprivations in the countryside, El Salvador and Mozambique both made real economic, human rights, and other improvements in the decade after their civil wars. In El Salvador, the gains did not give enough people an economic alternative to crime to have much of an effect on the growing gang problem, but its economy was also starting at a very low point—it was going to take many years for economic reforms to have significant effects under any circumstances. If made early in the post-conflict period, however, demonstrated commitments to

making material improvements in the lives of residents can, perhaps, be taken as evidence that resources to be spent on peace building might not be wasted.

In short, conflicts without internal cohesion of combatants or pressure from foreign patrons to stop fighting are probably not ripe for stabilizing. And where subnational or regional actors committed to violence might emerge or reemerge, post-conflict peace building is not likely to succeed without enforcement capacity to contain violence or demonstrated commitments to increasing political inclusion and making material improvements in the lives of residents.

When a window of opportunity emerges—such as a recognized stalemate or an outright victory—the first question to ask is whether the combatants and their foreign patrons, if any, are willing and able to make and follow through on commitments to end fighting. If so, then the next question to ask is whether the enforcement capacity exists (or can be bolstered quickly) to contain violence. If so, the final question is whether there is any concrete evidence that the parties to the conflict are committed to political inclusion and material progress for others. Such evidence can be embedded in the agreed political settlement, or it can emerge in the substance of early policy proposals offered as part of normal politics.

To the degree these findings are generalizable—and it is important to be modest, given the limited scope of this study—the answers to these questions suggest a prioritization of effort. In a given case, if the answers are negative, the evidence from the present study suggests a resumption of violence is likely and that energy and resources might be better spent elsewhere. If the answers to these questions are positive, that suggests a higher likelihood of moving that conflict out of the cycle of violence and thereby shrinking the set of protracted conflicts in the world by one, a situation worth investing diplomatic energy and international resources into its development and reconstruction.

Influencing the Transition from Stability to Peace

As conflicts become increasingly concentrated in places already suffering cycles of violence, it seems likely that fewer and fewer will meet the criteria for ripeness identified in this study. In that case, it will be increasingly unacceptable to suggest that a conflict or post-conflict situation is simply not ripe for progress and that peace-building resources should therefore be spent elsewhere. The demand already exists to find ways to influence unripe situations, like putting a hard peach in a paper bag to speed its becoming sweet and juicy. The question is whether the knowledge and capability exist to meet that demand. And on this count, for most of the five criteria discussed in this report, the news is fairly discouraging:

- **Internal cohesion.** The international community is not well positioned to understand, much less influence, conflicts with complex mixes of actors, alliances, and motives. The authors have found no evidence that foreign peacemakers can improve the internal coherence of a deeply fragmented opposition movement or a deeply

divided society. Significantly more research is needed on how complex conflicts are influenced.

- **External pressure.** Discouraging states from engaging in unconventional warfare (subsidizing combatants in other countries) falls into the realm of international diplomacy, where success has historically been limited. States make their own calculations of their own self-interests, and are generally immune to efforts by other states to convince them otherwise. Usually, states stop supporting armed proxies when the structure of the situation changes. Muammar Gadhafi's death and subsequent leadership changes in Libya, the impending breakup of Sudan, the U.S. decision to end its involvement in the Vietnam War, the end of apartheid in South Africa, Soviet reforms of the 1980s, and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union all were significant regional or global events that had nothing to do with the four conflicts studied here—but all significantly changed the funding and support structures available to combatants in those conflicts in ways that had significant, even decisive, effects on their outcomes. Diplomacy is severely undercultivated as a tool for stabilization and peace building.

- **Enforcement capacity.** Enforcement capacity, as the Laos case demonstrates, can substitute for political inclusion and economic opportunity as a means of containing violence for long periods. But cases outside of those studied here—Communist-era Yugoslavia, Baathist Iraq, and Libya under Gadhafi are good examples—suggest that a political decapitation in those "strong" societies can quickly break stability if there are not strong civilian institutions or a societal consensus on state legitimacy in place. Perhaps if a society is lucky enough not to have subnational or regional actors emerge who commit violence, then strong enforcement capacity might be less important to peace building than, say, improvements in political inclusion and economic opportunity. But one should not count on that. Security and justice sector reform is difficult and not always successful. In places where the security and justice institutions have limited capacity, multinational forces might have to play a bigger role in bolstering law enforcement, protecting civilians against criminal violence, as well as their more traditional mandates. El Salvador, for example, needed effective policing, not (only) international observers.

- **Commitment to political inclusion.** In the absence of evidence that the parties to a settlement are committed to political reform, any effort at further peace building will be at risk. International actors wanting reform more than local elites do has always been a recipe for failure: what sounds like a sincere commitment is far too often a ruse to win international aid for patronage rather than the public good. It is not impossible in principle to encourage such actors to sincerely commit, but far more research is needed to understand how post-conflict actors and societies commit themselves to political inclusion.[1] Meanwhile, resources should be focused on offices and institutions where evidence of commitment already exists.

1. Bruce Jones and Molly Elgin-Cossart, *Development in the Shadow of Violence: A Knowledge Agenda for Policy* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, November 2011), 11, http://www.idrc.ca/en/documents/development-in-the-shadow-of-violence.pdf.

- **Commitment to material progress.** More research is also needed to understand prioritization and sequencing of the many possible tools for improving the lives of people living in post-conflict societies. Commitments to material progress are, in some ways, easier to find and influence than commitments to political reform, because a great deal of social work and service provision take place beyond the visibility of politicians. While it can be difficult to hold such institutions accountable, there are also, in most places, pockets of dedication and technical skill that could use more support. What seems to matter—although this is a hypothesis that should be tested—is that material progress *of some sort* affects as many people as possible as quickly as possible, to give people hope and reason to support the new post-conflict arrangements. This is especially important to populations who might be vulnerable to disruption or exploitation by potential spoilers. Unfortunately, many quick-impact projects are not well connected to broader efforts, and so progress is not always sustained by well-managed medium- and long-term reform programs. Still, this is an area where progress is possible: there are many ways that people's lives can be improved materially—improved security, more jobs, better pay, better health and education, cleaner water, and so on—and progress does not need to be made in all of them at the same time.

The transition from conflict to peace is never certain, and not all will make it in our lifetimes; sometimes, there is nothing you can do. Efforts need to be prioritized. Knowing where peace builders might throw good money after bad can help shift attention to those situations most ripe for peace. Knowing how to ripen the rest will take time and significantly more research. Until reliable evidence emerges for how best to influence ripeness, peace building will need to rely on the tools available today. Frameworks for post-conflict reconstruction (such as the "five pillars" of CSIS-AUSA mentioned in Chapter 1) and for peace building (such as the "eight pillars" of IEP, also in Chapter 1) are useful for organizing research on needs, and in fact the five factors found here overlap somewhat with both the CSIS and IEP frameworks. Where progress needs to be made quickly, it will be important to be able to assess needs across a range of sectors and then identify institutions with the capacity to absorb aid to help meet those needs. More research is needed on absorptive capacity, since overwhelming local institutions and staff with aid they cannot use constructively can facilitate corruption and undermine progress.[2] Finding institutions, offices, and individuals who are capable and committed to progress is not easy, but it is possible—and it is necessary for making material progress in the lives of the people most directly affected by conflicts.

2. Robert D. Lamb, "Measuring Absorptive Capacity: A New Framework for Estimating Constraints," CSIS, May 2013, http://csis.org/files/publication/130517_Lamb_MAC_policyreport.pdf.

About the Authors

Robert D. Lamb is a visiting research professor at the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute, where he is researching hybrid governance in fragile and conflict environments and the effectiveness of donor activities. He is also a nonresident senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where he formerly directed the Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation, and a nonresident research scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland.

A former Defense Department strategist, Dr. Lamb studies development, governance, and conflict with an emphasis on complex crises, informal processes, and hybrid political and economic systems. His research has included the effectiveness of civilian assistance, private-sector development, and stabilization programs in complex environments; gang governance, violence, and legitimacy in the stateless slums of Medellín, Colombia; and subnational governance and stability in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Dr. Lamb owns a private consultancy (RD Lamb LLC) and is an adviser to a sustainable investment firm (Cornerstone Capital). He earned a PhD in policy studies from the University of Maryland School of Public Policy in a program combining security, economics, and ethics. He received a BA from Gettysburg College, evaluated microdevelopment projects in Nicaragua, covered business and finance as a journalist, and won a 2001 National Press Club award before changing careers after 9/11. He tweets as @robertdalelamb and can be reached at bob@rdlamb.com.

Kathryn Mixon was a program coordinator and research assistant with the Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation at CSIS from 2012 to 2014, where she researched absorptive capacity, nonstate-controlled areas, resilience, and international development policy. Before joining CSIS, she conducted research for the Council on Foreign Relations and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee under Senator Richard Lugar, where she focused on crises in Belarus, Russia, and the European Union. Ms. Mixon earned a BA from the George Washington University in international affairs with a concentration in conflict and security and a minor in religion. Ms. Mixon currently works in the international development industry in Washington, DC.

Sarah Minot is the program coordinator and research associate for the Project on Nuclear Issues (PONI) at CSIS. She holds an MA in conflict resolution from Georgetown University and a BA in political science and international relations from the College of Wooster.

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