

Troubled States: *How Troubling, How Manageable?*

Troubled states lack either the capacity or intention to fulfill the basic needs of a substantial element of their population, often casting fundamental doubt on the legitimacy of the regime in power. Recent examples include the collapse of governmental institutions (Somalia), economic dysfunction coupled with brutal repression (Haiti, North Korea), and genocidal assault by the state on an entire segment of its own citizenry (Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo). The troubled state is at the root of many contemporary security challenges, causing considerable retooling of various instruments of national security policy.

Troubled states are not merely a temporary irritant associated with the transition from a bipolar world order. Indeed, they are a permanent feature of international politics, as indicated by their prominent role during the Cold War as the preferred terrain for conflict between the superpowers (Southeast Asia, postcolonial Africa, Central America, Afghanistan). Although fragile and dysfunctional states are not new, their strategic salience today differs fundamentally from previous eras.

In the past, troubled states were significant because of their potential to affect the balance of power, especially when turmoil in one state could be exploited to destabilize an entire region. In the absence of great power rivalries and the spheres of influence associated with them, however, troubled states are no longer very useful geopolitically. Nevertheless, fragile states continue to disintegrate, generating humanitarian catastrophes that tend to disrupt the social or political stability of their neighbors (Haiti, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo). The failure of their institutions of law and order, moreover, can convert them into an incubator for transnational threats, such as organized crime, terrorism, arms trafficking, and even the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Troubled states are strategically significant today, therefore, because they lie at the heart of many contemporary security challenges. Accordingly, the strategic focus has shifted to devising strategies to remedy rather than exploit vulnerable and failed states.

Converting a troubled state into a contributing member of the international community is a task that requires considerable retooling of various instruments of national security policy. The military must become adroit at nurturing peace while simultaneously maintaining its combat



AP/Wide World Photos

Demonstrators supporting Haitian President Rene Preval against Parliament

edge. Institutions constructed for collective defense against aggression, such as the United Nations and NATO, are being used today to orchestrate multilateral interventions to rescue states in distress. Adequate mechanisms still remain to be devised for effectively integrating the contributions of military actors with their civilian counterparts from international and nongovernmental organizations. At a systemic level, in sum, the contest is between the sources of disorder that render states ungovernable and the institutions of multilateral and civil-military cooperation required for remedy.

Key Trends

Weak States and Global Instability

Ironically, it is often the weakest states that are the source of disruption in global affairs today (Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Albania, Zaire, and the former Yugoslavia). In an era of permeable borders, free trade, and an omnipresent media, a state in chaos anywhere is apt to send reverberations across the globe. This is likely to continue to be the case, moreover, owing to the enduring consequences of nationalism and globalism.

Nationalism, taken to excess, contributes to the collapse of multiethnic states. The notion that

every nation or culturally distinct group deserves its own sovereign state has a visceral appeal. This sentiment is especially prone to trigger separatist movements when the minority involved suffers economic, political, and social deprivation. Additionally, autocratic rulers may opt to exploit societal divisions as a means of maintaining power by inciting popular passions against ethnic minorities (for example, Slobodan Milosevic in Yugoslavia). Although nationalism was a factor in the Cold War struggle between East and West, its impact was muted. The Soviet Union's disintegration has exposed the nationalism latent there, as well as among other members of the Second World and in former colonial areas of Africa and Asia. The ledger since 1989 has included brutal but futile repression in Chechnya, genocide in Rwanda, and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo. Rather than performing its most basic function—protecting its citizens—the state thus becomes a predatory threat to an entire segment of society. This can generate acts of wanton brutality, genocide, wholesale migration of internally displaced persons, massive flight of refugees, and destabilization of surrounding states.

Globalism is another enduring phenomenon that will inexorably contribute to the incidence of troubled states. The outcome of the Cold War demonstrated that command economies are less rational and efficient at organizing resources than competitive markets. To maximize the economic capacity of the state, interference with the invisible hand of the marketplace must be kept to a minimum. Not only commodities but investments and information must flow across international boundaries largely unimpeded if the benefits of this economic model are to be achieved. For states that either are unable or unwilling to compete, however, globalism will likely cause grave difficulties.

Even states that reject free trade will still be governed by the logic of the market, because their capacity to meet the needs of their citizens will in many cases decline. In particular, this will be the case where birth rates are high, which is often characteristic of the poorest countries.¹ For many states, the incapacity to satisfy basic human needs (jobs, food, shelter, health care, education) for their burgeoning populations is the real and present danger.

To retain power, rulers in such regimes typically opt to suppress demands levied against them. This may set in motion a downward spiral that ultimately concludes with the masses being driven to a subsistence level, or below. The international community may unintentionally abet this process by imposing economic sanctions aimed at pressuring repressive regimes. As seen in Haiti, those who have the means to do so will flee to neighboring states. If this is not possible, mass starvation may occur, as in North Korea, unless the regime collapses or is overthrown.

Globalism will also generate strains in states that are unsuccessful in their attempt to adapt to market economics. Former Communist states and other authoritarian regimes will be particularly vulnerable. They confront the dual challenges of privatizing their economies while pluralizing their political systems.² The pervasive internal security organizations that once ensured state control and public order tend to metastasize as these societies become exposed to global competition. The result has often been a bonanza for the criminal underworld as gangster elements insinuate themselves into emerging corporate and political power structures. The outcome has ranged from “cowboy capitalism” in Russia to “gangster communism” in the remnants of Yugoslavia. Once transnational criminal networks gain a foothold, they are extremely difficult to dislodge, undermining prospects for democratic consolidation and long-term economic vitality.

Transnational threats such as terrorism, organized crime, arms smuggling, and financial scams have become a severe challenge, because the combination of permeable borders and fragile institutions makes many weak states dangerously vulnerable. While the basic aim of criminal enterprises is not the overthrow of governments, they nevertheless neutralize such core institutions as the courts, police, and even the military, so as to facilitate their illicit operations. Control over entire regions of countries has been forfeited to drug lords as a result, and the tenacity of guerrilla movements has been accentuated by linkages with organized crime as in Colombia.³ Illicit contributions from the criminal underworld can pervert and delegitimize the electoral process, especially in newly democratizing states.⁴ Ultimately, the apparatus of the state may be suborned by international outlaws, converting national territory into a sanctuary for

transnational crime, as was the case with Panama under Manuel Noriega and Bolivia under General Garcia Meza. North Korea provides a variation on this theme; the government has resorted to trafficking in drugs as a means of generating revenue.

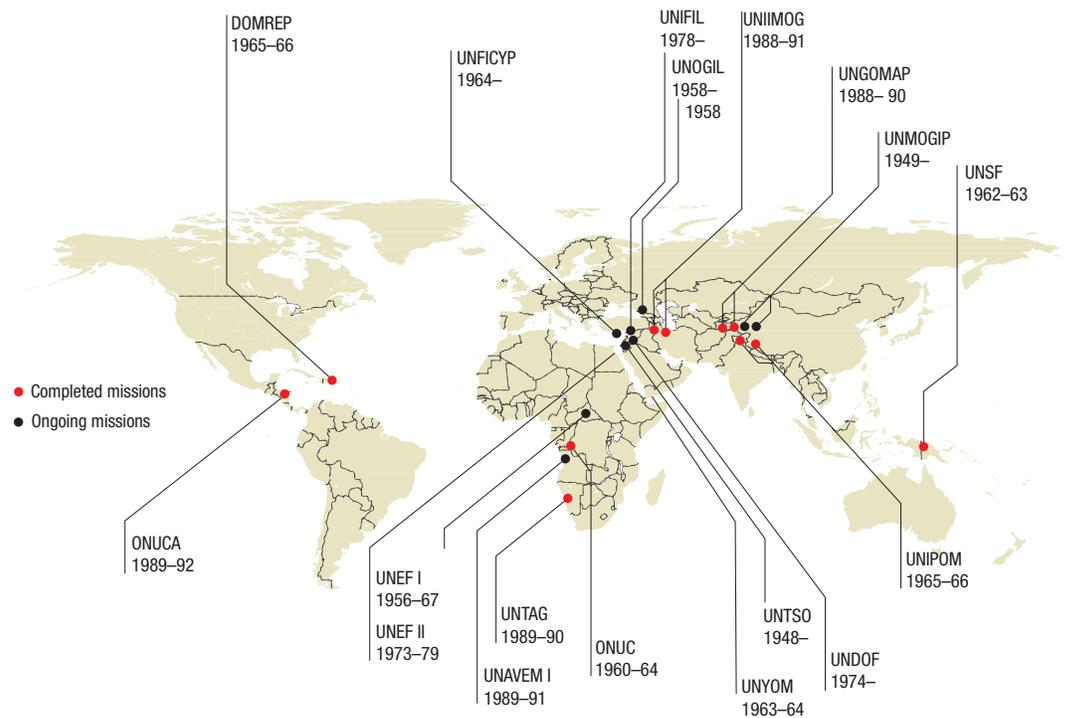
Another destabilizing consequence of globalism is the volatility of capital flows. For emerging economies, external investment is crucial if they are to become competitive globally. Without it, the process of opening protected internal markets can simply result in the loss of domestic sales to foreigners with no compensatory gains in penetration of external markets. International investors can be fickle, however, and the magnitude of daily international financial transactions dwarfs the annual gross national products of most states.⁵ The vulnerability this generates was demonstrated by the Mexican peso’s collapse in 1994 and more recently in Asia’s financial crisis. These events precipitated severe economic downturns in the surrounding region with damaging consequences for political stability (Indonesia and Malaysia), and the reverberations were felt in emerging markets worldwide.

The troubled state phenomenon is persistent, because the underlying dynamics of nationalism and globalism are enduring. Nationalism will continue to disrupt multiethnic states, especially those governed in a repressive and exclusionary manner. In such cases, the state is liable to be thrown into a crisis over its basic identity. Globalism, on the other hand, can lead to a crisis of governability. Economic survival and the resources available to the state have become increasingly dependent on vibrant trading relationships. This places immense strains on authoritarian regimes that refuse to open their economies to outside competition, and also on nascent democracies that mismanage the economic transition. States that are subjected to the disruptive implications of *both* nationalism and the failure to adapt to globalism will be particularly vulnerable to disintegration and collapse.

Capacity to Respond to Troubled States

Peacekeeping was an innovation during the Cold War that was intended to keep interstate conflict from spiraling out of control and sparking a superpower conflagration. During its first four decades, the United Nations was called upon to conduct 18 peacekeeping missions (an average of one new mission every other year), almost all of which resulted from conflict between

UN Peace Operations During the Cold War (1949–89)



Source: UN Department of Public Information.

states.⁶ Between 1990 and 1999, the United Nations conducted 31 peace operations, or an average of three per year. Almost all were in response to *internal* conflicts in troubled states. The UN has been unable to deal adequately with this surge of new missions. Contributing factors include the high cost in terms of financial assessments to member states as well as peacekeeping troops, a perceived lack of national interests, a limited understanding of how to rehabilitate a failed state, and embarrassment in Somalia and Bosnia. One consequence is that some failing states have been neglected, with dire consequences (Rwanda, Zaire).

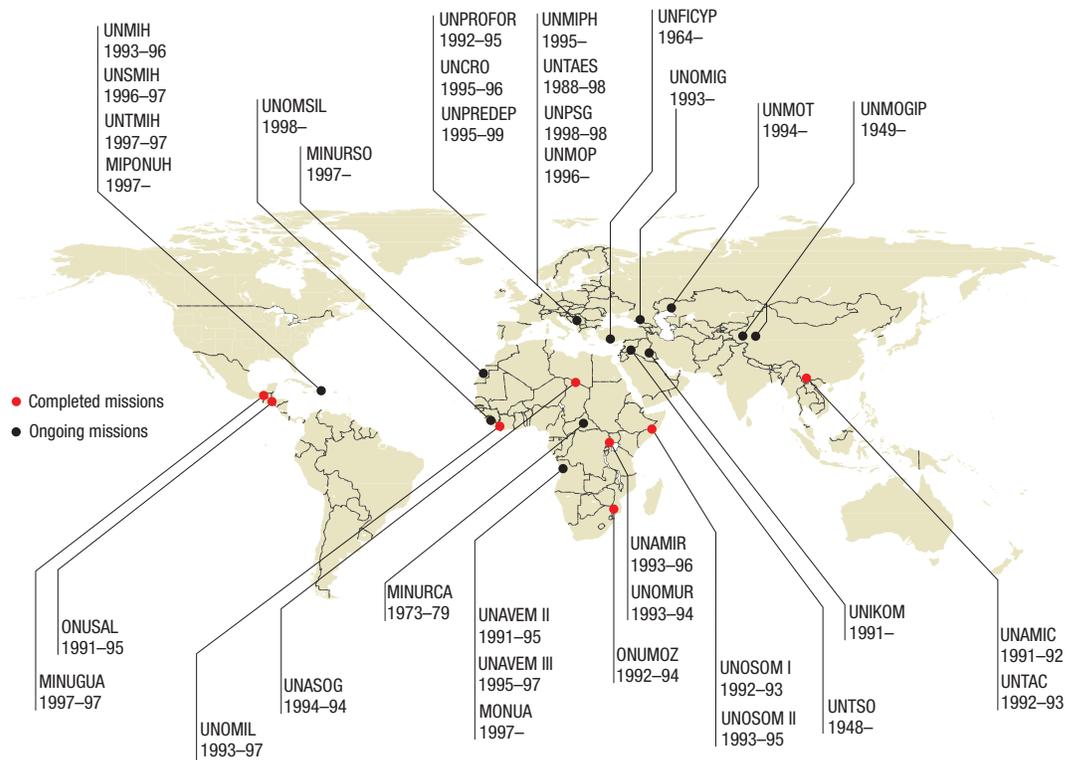
Another serious limiting factor is the incapacity of the UN to conduct the type of large-scale military operations that have often been required.⁷ The UN is well suited for peacekeeping activities, such as monitoring and verification, that are premised upon strategic consent among the disputants about the role of the intervening

force. These conditions characterized the traditional peacekeeping of interstate disputes during the Cold War. When consent was lost, UN forces withdrew, as occurred prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

Troubled states have been the focus of post-Cold War peace operations, and consent has been more conditional and fragile. In successful cases like El Salvador and Mozambique, the conflict had been stimulated in part by superpower rivalry. Once this ceased to be a factor, local consent became obtainable. The UN has foundered when consent has been marginal and the requirement to wield force credibly has been high. Because the UN lacks a standing force, a viable command-and-control system, and consensus among UN Security Council (UNSC) members regarding use of coercive force in internal conflicts, it cannot manage the robust enforcement operations often required, at least initially, to deal with troubled states.

These deficiencies are unlikely to change. Many countries, including the United States, oppose an autonomous military capability for the

Post Cold-War UN Peace Operations (1990–99)



Source: UN Department of Public Information.

UN. Even such administrative initiatives as a Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters have been resisted. Measures to enhance the capabilities of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) have probably reached their high-water mark. The establishment of a 24-hour command post was an essential improvement, as was the development of a mechanism for mobilizing standby military forces from member states. Another crucial practice, the use of “gratis” military officers from willing member states, has been abolished within DPKO, however, at the behest of developing nations who insist that all positions be filled by paid UN personnel. Thus, DPKO capacity to conduct even its current missions is likely to diminish in the near term.

The UN has recognized its limitations in dealing with troubled states since the setbacks in Somalia and Bosnia. The Security Council has been willing to approve peace enforcement operations conducted by coalitions of the willing rather than the UN (like the Multinational Force in Haiti), and by competent regional security organizations (NATO in Bosnia, for example). As a practical matter, this has meant that only troubled states of importance to the members of the

Security Council can be managed. There has been little enthusiasm for large, expensive operations in regions of marginal strategic consequence, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. Overdue U.S. assessments from previous peacekeeping activities and a tendency to use the UN as a scapegoat for failed peacekeeping activities serve as further disincentives to undertake new operations.⁸ Even when the United States is willing to support new missions financially, other countries may be reluctant to participate unless the United States also takes the lead militarily.⁹

When a troubled state affects U.S. strategic interests, other UNSC members may be reluctant to provide an unambiguous mandate for intervention. This is especially true in cases where a brutal despot is suppressing his people (like Slobodan Milosevic in Kosovo), because some Security Council members find it vital to preserve sovereign prerogatives in this regard. Thus, there are regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where the UNSC has been unwilling to act. There are also circumstances, such as genocide, where the Security Council is likely to be paralyzed. The greatest

constraint, however, is the incapacity of the UN to manage the use of force credibly. Hence, future UN-led peace missions will likely be confined to relatively benign circumstances where the consent of the disputants is reasonably assured.

In spite of these limitations, the U.N. performs several essential functions in managing troubled states. No other international body possesses the same degree of legitimacy to issue a mandate for intervening in a sovereign but dysfunctional state. Various UN agencies, such as the High Commissioner for Refugees and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, make vital contributions to mitigating the consequences of state failure. The UN has also developed extensive expertise in electoral monitoring and civilian policing and has an established mechanism to fund peacekeeping activities through assessments on member states. Owing to these competencies, the United Nations is well suited for the later phases of a peace operation, when the emphasis is on long-term institution building as in Haiti.¹⁰ The United Nations also has the potential to prevent the regionalization of internal conflicts by mounting preventive deployments in areas bordering a troubled state (UNPREDEP in Macedonia).

The greatest deficiency, therefore, arises during the initial phases of an intervention, when a credible coercive capability may be essential for peacemaking or peace enforcement. The United Nations cannot be relied upon for this. Thus, this is another area where demand exceeds capacity, at least until other mechanisms are adapted or developed for this purpose.

Adapting Other Security Instruments

Although the United States cannot be the world's policeman, this proposition provides little insight into who should deal with troubled states. No amount of reform at the United Nations is likely to fully address this source of global instability. Two alternatives remain: regional security organizations and ad hoc coalitions of the willing.

Regional security organizations have made limited contributions to the management of troubled states in Africa and Latin America. The most significant operations in Africa have been carried out under the aegis of the Economic Organization of West African States. Dominated by Nigeria, which has supplied the bulk of the troops and material support, it has been involved in bringing

an end to the civil war in Liberia and is presently enmeshed as a protagonist in the civil war in Sierra Leone. The Organization of American States has also contributed to resolving regional security concerns in Nicaragua and Haiti.

In general, however, few regional security organizations have much potential to address the more demanding tasks of peacemaking and peace enforcement. Because they operate on consensus, they will often be paralyzed when faced with situations that might require using coercive force. Unlike the United Nations, where only five states wield a veto, any member can thwart action. Even if a mandate is forthcoming, member states are likely to have competing national interests in the troubled state that will militate against a coherent and constructive role. Thus, most regional organizations suffer from the same defects as the United Nations in dealing with the use of force. In more benign situations where the disputants provide their consent for an external intervention, the United Nations would normally be the preferred option, on the basis of its greater legitimacy, extensive experience, and established procedures for cost sharing.

NATO is qualitatively different, in large part because of U.S. leadership and the Alliance's demonstrated capacity to conduct multilateral operations. NATO allies share a set of values and interests that can be put at risk by a troubled state on their periphery, such as the former Yugoslavia. Indeed, this "non-Article 5" mission has provoked the Alliance's first operational use in Bosnia and first use of force in Kosovo. This issue is also a major component of the Alliance's revised "strategic concept." In addition, NATO continues to incorporate partner states into its operations in Bosnia and to develop civil affairs capabilities in many allied military establishments to facilitate collaboration with international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Despite considerable NATO advantages, its freedom to act will continue to be constrained by concerns about a mandate. Despite the precedent set by the use of air power against Serbia without an explicit mandate from the UN Security Council, many allies will be reluctant to undertake future interventions in the absence of a specific UN mandate. It remains possible for a regional body, such as the Organization for

Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to provide an alternative mechanism for legitimizing collective action. Unmandated NATO operations will remain a viable policy option, provided they are consistent with international law.

Another potential response to the troubled state phenomenon would be for European states to develop the capacity to act alone when the United States opts to remain on the sidelines. Although the UNPROFOR experience in Bosnia was unfavorable, the inefficacy of that mission had much to do with the unworkable "dual key" command and control arrangement with the UN. One avenue for development of an all-European capability would be the European Security and Defense Identity. Essentially, this would involve NATO capabilities without active U.S. participation. The other alternative would entail collaboration between the Western European Union and the EU.

As a regional organization, NATO cannot address troubled states everywhere. Nevertheless, it has given itself a measure of flexibility, because it has refrained from defining its "out of area" interests in geographic terms. This theoretically allows the Alliance to mount operations anywhere, if there is a consensus that its security interests are sufficiently threatened. Realistically, however, this is likely to be confined to Europe's periphery. NATO also is limited in its ability to address the nonmilitary aspects of rehabilitating a dysfunctional state. The United Nations remains the leading potential partner for this; however, the OSCE was called upon to conduct the Kosovo Verification Mission and could be a major participant in any future peace implementation mission in Kosovo involving such activities as restructuring the public security apparatus and organizing elections.

To cope with troubled states beyond the penumbra of the NATO security umbrella, "coalitions of the willing" may be the only other alternative. For situations with a potential for high-intensity combat, or at least forcible entry, the United States undoubtedly will be indispensable, as it was for the Multinational Force in Haiti. If the scenario is more permissive, such as the lawless conditions encountered after a nationwide financial scam produced anarchy in Albania, then an operation might be built around another lead nation, as Italy demonstrated in that case. Use of ad hoc coalitions will be contingent on the availability of capable coalition partners and a mandate from the UN or an appropriate regional security organization.

Since Africa has the greatest concentration of fragile states, the United States (via the African Crisis Response Initiative), France, and the U.K. have all undertaken programs to train and equip chosen African military forces to enhance their peacekeeping capabilities. The operational use of this capability, however, is liable to be confined to the more benign peacekeeping activities under the UN banner or a UN-mandated ad hoc coalition.

Asia is the other major region with a potential to experience serious instability from future troubled states. To date, the only major post-Cold War peace operation in the region occurred in Cambodia. Consequently, Asian nations have been involved primarily as troop contributors for missions in other regions. Future developments in North Korea, or deterioration in fragile regimes like Indonesia or Malaysia, could provide an incentive to develop a collective regional capacity to respond to failing states.

Intervention Before Peace

While the international community continues to search for the proper set of tools to manage troubled states, the task has simultaneously become more demanding, because the threshold for intervention has been lowered. Until recently, there was a sense that a peace mission should occur only after a dispute had become "ripe" for resolution. That is, the parties should have first exhausted themselves, moderated their war aims, and demonstrated a willingness to adhere to a peace accord. By following this prescription, the international community can avoid prolonged entanglements in violent conflicts; however, it also means that instances of genocide would be allowed to unfold and surrounding regions might be destabilized before effective action is taken. By the time such situations become ripe for intervention on the ground, the cost in terms of lives and resources can burgeon. Having learned the price of delay in Bosnia and Rwanda, the United States and its European allies sought to avoid a repetition in Kosovo. Consequently, the OSCE fielded the unarmed Kosovo Verification Mission in late 1998 with merely the promise of a final agreement between the government of Yugoslavia and representatives of the Kosovar community. When this effort failed, NATO became enmeshed in a war with Yugoslavia to stop its assault on the ethnic Albanian population.

Two factors contribute to this trend. First, many wars are now internal to the state, and it is these conflicts that have increasingly become the focus of international interventions. Second, many of these internal conflicts involve wanton use of force by armed elements against civilian masses. As in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo, humanitarian catastrophes are a likely result. Indicative of this trend, civilians today suffer the preponderance of casualties from armed conflict, whereas at the turn of the last century, 85 to 90 percent of casualties were military combatants.¹¹

When a humanitarian calamity looms, immense pressure will be brought to bear from the media and concerned interest groups to “do something.” Aware of this, secessionist forces, such as the Kosovo Liberation Army, are as likely to pursue a media “war of attention” as they are to conduct a guerrilla war of attrition. As a result, sovereignty no longer confers an absolute right on autocratic rulers to wield unbridled violence against their own people. By the action that has been taken on behalf of the Kurds in Iraq and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, the international community has begun to establish a tenuous, countervailing right to intervene to prevent wholesale slaughter and displacement of civilian populations. Thus by lowering the threshold for intervention, it has become easier to get involved but more difficult to get out and riskier to remain. The policy dilemmas associated with management of this aspect of the troubled state will not disappear, making the outcome of the action in Kosovo a watershed event for many reasons.

U.S. Interests

As a global power, the United States has a stake in avoiding or alleviating the chaos caused by troubled states. Owing to the increasing permeability of national borders, moreover, the pathologies that contribute to their demise can affect our domestic welfare, as well. As the October 1998 *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* states:

*Globalization—the process of accelerating economic, technological, cultural and political integration—means that more and more we as a nation are affected by events beyond our borders. Outlaw states and ethnic conflicts threaten regional stability and economic progress in many important areas of the world. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime are global concerns that transcend national borders.*¹²

To shape the international environment in a manner conducive to democratic polities and

free market economies, it will be necessary to mitigate the consequences of chaotic states.

If a troubled state were to collapse in an area of strategic consequence, vital interests could be endangered in various ways:

- When collapse of a state could precipitate the use of or loss of control over WMD or intercontinental delivery systems (examples are North Korea, Russia, or China)

- When access to strategic minerals might be denied or severely restricted, for example, by a major oil-producing nation

- When domestic turmoil might stimulate a massive exodus of refugees to the United States (seen recently in Haiti and Cuba).

Even when vital U.S. interests are not involved, the rationale for intervention can still be compelling, if other strategic concerns are at risk. While the United States is unlikely to intervene when only peripheral interests are at stake, pressures to intervene will mount if major interests can be preserved at acceptable risk and cost.

Regional Instability

When an oppressed domestic group becomes the target of systematic violence, this inevitably spawns a mass migration in search of safe haven, either internally or in a foreign land. If the turmoil persists, the prospect of a destabilizing exodus of refugees will increase. Regional stability will be especially precarious if rebel groups become mingled with the flood of refugees. This often happens, because refugee camps offer sanctuary and a ready source of recruits. In response, opposing government forces will be tempted to conduct operations across international boundaries. The state receiving these refugee flows may be further destabilized because of cultural links between the refugees and a restive population of its own, and other regional powers will predictably act to protect their interests as this chain of events unfolds. As a global power, the United States clearly has a substantial stake in preserving regional stability. It is not in the national interest to permit this escalatory cycle to unfold to the point that an entire region is in turmoil.

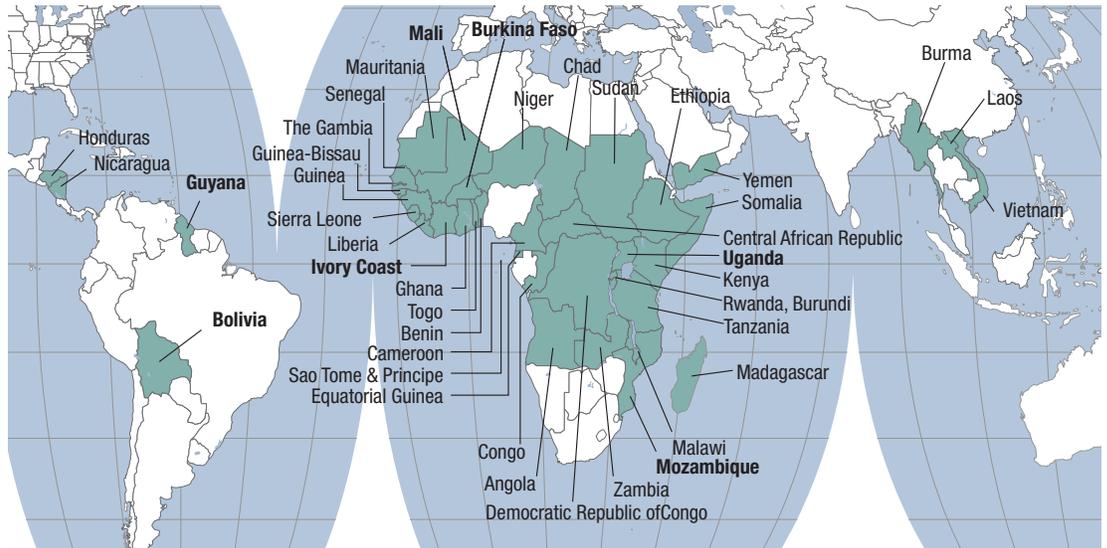
Transnational Threats

Transnational security threats are a major factor in the institutional deterioration that produces dysfunctional states. The relationship cuts the other way as well, because the failure of a state creates an institutional void that may be exploited by transnational actors of various sorts. Osama

Most Heavily Indebted Nations

Country	Accumulated debt per person	Debt * service per person	Annual income per person	Country	Accumulated debt per person	Debt * service per person	Annual income per person
Congo Republic	\$2,278	\$147	\$817	Guinea-Bissau	852	10	242
Guyana	2,039	131	829	Zambia	757	35	350
Sao Tome/Principe	2,008	22	315	Liberia	753	1	351
Ivory Coast	1,332	91	662	Honduras	730	92	657
Nicaragua	1,318	49	372	Cameroon	715	40	634
Mauritania	985	50	433	Equatorial Guinea	705	12	608
Angola	983	64	320				

People in other highly indebted nations owe between \$100 and \$700 each, and in about half of these countries, people produce less per capita than what each person owes, theoretically. Bold type indicates countries that have qualified for debt relief under the World Bank program.



* Payment of interest and principal due annually, when calculated per person. Source: World Bank, Oxfam International, Jubilee 2000, *The Washington Post*.

bin Laden’s terrorist network, for example, exploited turbulent conditions in Afghanistan to establish a base of operations. The absence of law enforcement in Albania, moreover, was used to project his operation throughout Western Europe and to support activities against U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Drug traffickers have also exploited anarchy in the Balkans, expanding their smuggling networks across Europe to Scandinavia, where half the heroin traffickers currently in Swedish jails and 80 percent in Norwegian prisons originated in Kosovo and Albania.¹³ The well being and social order of the U.S. homeland is similarly vulnerable to troubled states, even those

in remote and obscure locations. In an era where continued prosperity depends on the international movement of products, money, and information, sealing U.S. borders is not a realistic option. While economic globalism is a boon for U.S. consumers, its corollary will be domestic insecurity, unless transnational threats emanating from troubled states can be contained.

Humanitarian Concerns

An enduring feature of the American character is a desire to assist victims of major international calamities. When natural disasters strike,

the United States contributes its fair share and more. Man-made disasters, however, are more complex, because there can be a considerable risk that U.S. lives will be lost, especially if the United States becomes enmeshed in an internal conflict. As Somalia demonstrated, the public will not permit the shedding of American blood unless substantial national interests are at stake. Humanitarian impulses alone, therefore, will not justify U.S. intervention when the costs are likely to be denominated in lost U.S. lives.

The most intractable situations entail *internally displaced persons* (IDPs). In this case, the victims remain under the sovereign jurisdiction of the same regime that has caused their displacement. IDPs may assert a right to independence and seek recognition for a sovereign state of their own, and their cause will invariably be supported by international human rights organizations. Intervention will be opposed by governments interested in preserving the primacy of national sovereignty, and by concerns about altering of national borders through force. As a result, a clear international mandate for intervention is not likely. Resistance can also be expected from the state involved, especially if it views the displaced masses as the center of gravity for eradicating an opposition movement. Unless other strategic interests are also at stake, therefore, it would normally not be prudent to use U.S. forces to protect the delivery of humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons.

Most of these impediments do not arise when dealing with *refugees* who, in contrast to IDPs, have fled their native land. The crucial difference is that international assistance is likely to be sought by states that are the recipients of refugee migrations. If decisive action is taken at the earliest stages, it should also be possible to maximize prospects for preventing the spread of instability throughout the surrounding region. This would involve developing a capability to provide a secure environment for refugees and relief activities. Additionally, this would likely entail controlling the same rogue elements—guerrillas, local gangs, arms smugglers, and criminal syndicates—that would spread disorder transnationally, as well. Since protecting humanitarian assistance for refugees would typically serve both U.S. humanitarian values *and* identifiable national security interests, it provides a more prudent basis for action by the United States

Consequences for U.S. Policy

The demands on the United States and the international community will vary as a troubled state degenerates toward chaos, becomes the subject of multilateral intervention and, under favorable circumstances, is nurtured back to responsible membership in the community of nations. At the earliest stage, statesmen may be able to avert a crisis or, if they fail, they may be able to prevent the internationalization of the domestic conflict. If a major intervention is warranted, there will be the complex task of laying the foundation for stable governance. The response to a dysfunctional state, therefore, involves a broad spectrum of overlapping security challenges associated with conflict prevention and mitigation, full-scale peace operations, and peace building.

Averting Collapse of Troubled States

The fundamental challenge is not early warning, nor is it simply a matter of early response. The most vital requirement is to identify cases where preventive action can make a difference and where it is in our interest to try. The criteria suggested below would limit the number of potential cases as follows:

- Democratic regimes under extreme duress (an example being Colombia)
- Countries aspiring to a democratic transition that falter, in part because of external or transnational sources of instability (Macedonia, Indonesia)
- Countries where larger U.S. geostrategic interests are at stake.

Preventive action normally begins with a traditional package of diplomatic, military, and economic assistance programs. If one source of instability is the spillover of conflict from a neighboring state, then the international community might mount a preventive peace operation similar to UNPREDEP in Macedonia. If these efforts fail and a general climate of lawlessness develops, there would not be time to await the results of typical training and assistance programs. To reverse this downward spiral, the performance and legitimacy of state institutions must be reinforced quickly, especially those dedicated to providing law, order, and justice.

The option of using an unarmed international civilian police (CIVPOL) organization would probably be inappropriate, because it

A soldier of the Kosovo Liberation Army



AP/Wide Photos

would be incapable of self-defense. An international constabulary or armed police organization, however, could be mobilized to monitor, train, and operationally assist local police and judicial authorities. The guiding principle would be to inculcate in the local public security establishment principles of democratic policing and equality before the law. In extreme cases, a constabulary force might also require reinforcement by an international military contingent. Mounting an effective border patrol could also be extremely important in such situations. Over the long term, public security assistance offered by international organizations, individual governments, and NGOs would play a valuable role in the evolution of stable governance.

Mitigating the Humanitarian Consequences

Relief workers have traditionally depended on neutrality and an unarmed, nonthreatening posture as their primary means of defense. These principles lose their protective value, however, when the relief community is seeking to assist a population that has itself become a primary target in the domestic conflict (for example the “ethnic cleansing” of Albanians in Kosovo). The risks will be compounded if refugee camps become safe havens for rebel forces. Under such circumstances, humanitarian workers may be targeted for kidnapping or assassination (the International Committee of the Red Cross, in particular, has suffered deadly

consequences in recent years in Rwanda and the Chechen Republic). Rival groups may commandeer relief supplies. Order at warehouses and distribution centers may also be precarious owing to food riots and the activities of armed gangs. Unless security can be provided, relief activities may need to be suspended, or the situation may even be too perilous to mount relief activities in the first place.

Protecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance could entail a range of tasks, including:

- Security for convoys, warehouses, and living quarters of humanitarian workers
- Protection of refugees and safe areas
- Demilitarization and disarmament of combatants
- Public security within refugee camps.

Each of these tasks may require a different combination of capabilities, because none of these protection options is available without significant liabilities.

Standard *military combat units* are not well suited for the task of protecting humanitarian assistance. Without nonlethal force options, the danger of excessive use of force can be high when they are thrust into a situation where petty crime and gang activity are rampant (as befell the elite Canadian airborne brigade during UNITAF in Somalia). Military units can perform a crucial function, however, by ensuring that legitimate law enforcement agencies are able to establish their writ over throngs of refugees.

One way to address the public security void in refugee camps might be to deploy units of *constabulary or armed police* to work with the international relief community. Operating in concert with local security forces to the maximum extent possible, they could keep armed elements (gangs or guerrillas) away from refugee camps and help to maintain order at food distribution points. The mere presence of a capable international security force of this sort would tend to encourage local civilian and military security forces to perform their duties more responsibly. A constabulary force might help local authorities curtail the activities of armed gangs inside refugee camps using investigative techniques, expertise at community policing, and, when confronted, nonlethal control measures. This would improve the security climate within the camps and increase the likelihood that humanitarian assistance would arrive in the hands of the neediest rather than the most heavily armed.



AP/Wide World Photos

Refugees at a nutrition center in Acucareira, Angola

Civilian Police units typically comprise individual volunteers from various countries. Thus, they do not have an organized capability to conduct operations, such as demilitarizing refugee camps; moreover, they traditionally are unarmed. Once a secure environment has been established, however, they can cull out abusive personnel from existing police forces, recruit trainees, establish training programs, and monitor the performance of the entire public security apparatus. Bilateral assistance programs, coordinated with or managed by CIVPOL, provide the bulk of financial and technical support for retraining of domestic police forces.

One common alternative, especially for humanitarian organizations dealing with IDPs, has been to hire *local security guards*. This can be risky, however, because these personnel may be aligned with one of the warring factions, which could invite retaliation from their rivals. Private international security firms are another alternative. They may be cheaper than a military intervention force, but quality control and adherence to human rights standards could be compromised.

Governments hosting refugees have the obligation to provide for their security. In reality, however, they often lack the capability to do so.

One attractive option, therefore, is to provide international assistance, through CIVPOL and bilateral assistance programs, to *local security forces* so they can perform this mission more competently. Local governments will be more likely to cooperate with the relief effort, moreover, if they receive something in the bargain. International monitoring would also be required to prevent further victimization of refugees by a police force that would be alien to them.

Another promising option would be to train *cadres from the refugee community* itself to maintain law and order inside the camps. Known as "encadrement," this would provide employment for military-age males who might otherwise cause problems and also create a security force familiar with the refugees' distinctive legal traditions. This option would require international training assistance and monitoring and would probably work best if implemented in concert with local police, judicial, and penal systems.

In general, humanitarian protection missions that are the least reliant on military resources are the most likely to receive an international mandate. Nevertheless, there remains a need to develop concepts and coordination mechanisms that integrate military quick reaction forces effectively with constabulary units, international civilian police monitors, and local authorities. One way to promote this sort of collaborative effort would be to establish a protection coordinator for every situation requiring protection of humanitarian relief.

Developing Nonlethal Capabilities

Normally, an international mandate directs a peace mission to establish a safe and secure internal environment. During the initial phase of an intervention, the military contingent often will be the only source of order and is apt to be tested by civil disturbances, violent clashes between antagonistic local factions, and theft of its resources. The military can be a blunt instrument, however, and if even a single incident is mishandled through the use of excessive force, the entire mission can suffer because local consent will be squandered. Inaction, on the other hand, can risk the loss of credibility (the disorder that accompanied transfer of the Sarajevo suburbs under IFOR, for instance). The media spotlight will be unavoidable, and the consequences for the success of the peace mission can be enduring.

To limit loss of life and destruction of property in the anarchic circumstances often encountered at the outset of a peace mission, nonlethal capabilities should be included in the initial force mix. Constabulary have training and expertise in crowd control, nonlethal force options, and general experience in policing and could be deployed simultaneously with the military contingent. Until the CIVPOL contingent becomes operational, the constabulary could also begin organizing an interim local security cadre and monitoring its performance.¹⁴ In this manner, a constabulary presence could help to accelerate the process of reconstituting the local police force.

In addition to reestablishing order, a multi-lateral peace operation must also shape the political context in a manner favorable to the peace process. Unless this is done successfully and peace becomes self-sustaining, other reconstruction and peace-building activities will be still-born.¹⁵ Since disgruntled political elites or “spoilers” may attempt to disrupt the peace process, military peacekeepers may be required to respond to various forms of violent resistance, including civil disturbances.

Military forces are reluctant to engage in confrontations with civilians, because they generally are not trained in the measured use of force, riot control, negotiating techniques, or deescalation of conflict. Unarmed CIVPOL personnel are not capable of handling such violent challenges, either. Constabulary forces can counter this vulnerability to stage-managed civil unrest, as demonstrated by the deployment of the Multinational Specialized Unit (MSU) as a part of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia in mid-1998.¹⁶ Composed initially of Italian carabinieri and Argentine gendarmes, the MSU has given SFOR the information-gathering capability to detect incipient unrest and to deter it by concentrating MSU patrols in restive areas. The MSU has also successfully defused potentially violent confrontations through negotiation. Only very rarely has the MSU actually had to use force, suggesting that by eliminating this gap in SFOR capabilities, the likelihood that the peace force will be challenged in this manner has been greatly diminished.¹⁷

Building Sustainable Peace

For peace to be sustainable, core institutions such as the courts, prisons, and police require

more than training and restructuring; their fundamental mode of operation must be transformed. Indigenous institutions must be coaxed into functioning in rough accordance with internationally acceptable standards. This will usually entail a radical transformation of the culture of law enforcement. The public security system often will have operated as an instrument of state repression; it must begin to serve the public interest instead, functioning in a manner that respects the political and human rights of members of all groups, whether they wield political power or not. This transformation requires time.

Training a new police force is regarded as a multiyear project. Subsequently, the conduct of police, judges, and jailers must be effectively monitored and supervised. Without such oversight, the training and assistance that the international community provides could merely result in making these forces more competent at repressing their own people. Reconciliation will never happen under such conditions.

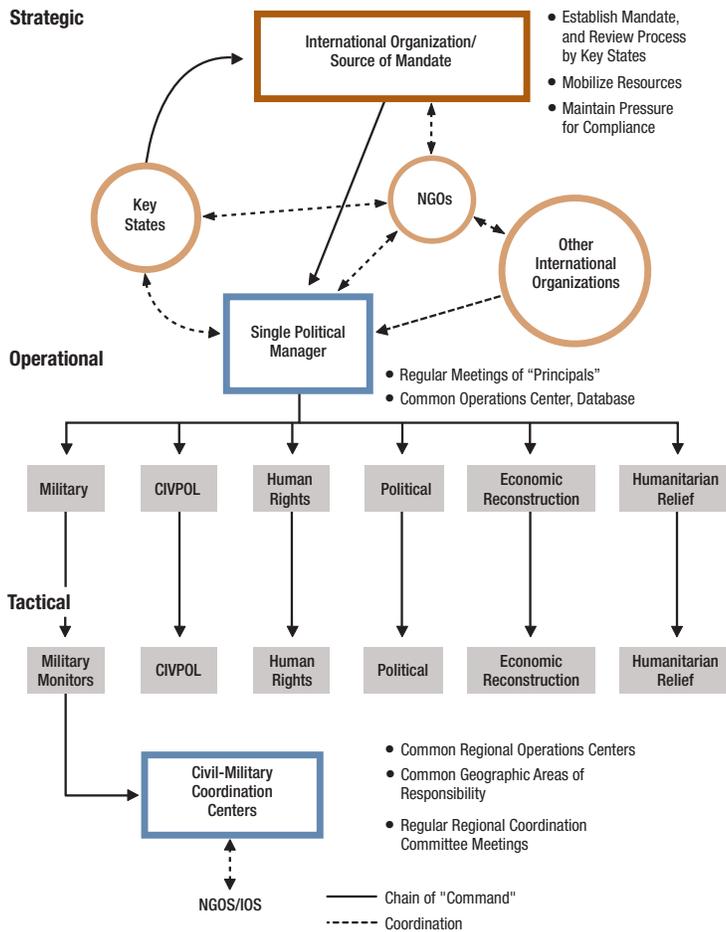
Innovative approaches to this challenge have been attempted in Bosnia by the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The concept developed there, termed “co-location,” entails placing seasoned IPTF police officers alongside local police chiefs and senior Interior Ministry officials. Similar programs would also be warranted for the courts and penal systems. One of the primary constraints on implementing such a transitional phase is lack of an adequate international mechanism to mobilize and field sufficient numbers of highly qualified personnel.

Assessing Impact on Military Readiness

The post-Cold War “peace dividend” has now been collected, and the U.S. defense establishment is scarcely two-thirds the size it was at the end of the 1980s. Operational deployments, however, have tripled. Not all this increase is attributable to the exigencies of troubled states, of course, because natural disasters and more conventional security challenges, such as Iraq and North Korea, account for much of this. Nevertheless, there are serious concerns whether the armed forces can retain their fighting edge while engaged in continuous operations aimed at managing troubled states.

The experiences of the 25th Infantry Division in Haiti (as part of the Multinational Force) and the 1st Armored Division in Bosnia (as part of the Implementation Force) provide invaluable insights. In both cases, a minor but temporary

A Generic Structure for Peacekeeping



NOTE: For peace enforcement operations, the military commander may be co-equal to the political manager, and the success of the mission will be dependent on their capacity to cooperate.

Source: INSS

degradation of some perishable combat skills (gunnery, for example) occurred. However, these skills were quickly restored, and within a couple months were at predeployment levels. The positive impact on leadership skills and organizational proficiency for complex warfighting tasks, in contrast, was significant and enduring. Daily patrolling in the challenging and unpredictable environments of Haiti and Bosnia placed a premium on decentralized decisionmaking and small-unit leadership. Such maturation could not have been achieved in artificial training environments. These are capabilities that will be central, moreover, to the decentralized and digitized battlefields envisioned in the future. After refreshing perishable skill sets, therefore, both

units were more combat capable after the peace operation than before.

To achieve this outcome, certain essential steps had to be taken. Unit integrity was maintained,¹⁸ and commanders conducted an active training program throughout the deployment. Finally, they deployed with overwhelming strength, so as to be prepared for a worst case scenario. Under the more benign circumstances actually encountered, it was possible to satisfy requirements both of the mission and an active training program.¹⁹

While the direct impact of peace missions on readiness is not necessarily negative, the cumulative impact, along with numerous other smaller-scale contingencies and continuing exercise commitments, has been an unacceptably high tempo of operations and level of personnel turbulence. This is having a major impact on quality of life and contributes to a severe retention problem. In sum, the recent tempo of operations cannot be sustained with the present force posture and is having a particularly harsh impact on specialized career fields, such as military police and civil affairs, that have uniquely valuable skills for managing troubled states.

Integrating Civil and Military Contributions

Troubled states are distinguished by their failure to perform such essential functions as sustaining life, resolving political conflict, maintaining public order, and generating employment.²⁰ Mounting an effective response to such abysmal political, social, and economic conditions requires the integration of a wide array of both military and civilian specialties.²¹ The need for the international community to act, however, is more apparent than the proper formula for response. The key is to be found in recognizing the interdependent relationship between military and civil components of contemporary peace missions and constructing effective regimes for their collaboration.

Integration of effort always will be imperfect, because the array of states, international organizations, and NGOs involved will each have its own interests in a given troubled state. Nevertheless, U.S. leadership often is essential to mounting an international response. It may be possible to leverage this need to ensure that mechanisms conducive to an integrated effort are established. Among these would be to designate a single political manager (such as a Special Representative of the Secretary General for a UN-led

operation) to oversee implementation of the peace process and a common operations center for key international agencies involved. More fully exploiting the integrative potential of information technology (such as Geographic Information Systems) could greatly facilitate information sharing, which is the first step toward task sharing and coordinated planning. Additionally, military civil affairs officers (also known as civil-military cooperation, or CIMIC, in NATO) perform an invaluable integrative function during interventions of this sort, and proper account needs to be made for this in military force structure.

The other key to unity of effort is to rectify the many missing links in global capacity for addressing troubled states. Some have been suggested, such as availability of constabulary forces and senior police administrators. Various other areas require attention if a cost-effective transition from the military phase of an intervention is to be made to one where international civilian efforts predominate, followed ultimately by return of control to indigenous authorities. Improvement is needed, for example, in the capacity to mobilize CIVPOL personnel, to address the judicial reform issue, and to disperse funds for reconstruction activities during the early stage of an intervention.

Net Assessment

Bismarck once observed that there was no interest in the Balkans “worth the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier.”²² By the calculus of his day, there was little utility in seeking to “manage” a troubled state such as Bosnia. The costs, measured in units of national power such as Pomeranian grenadiers, would have been substantial, yet the gain would have been nil. Nothing has happened since Bismarck’s time to make Bosnia a more lucrative strategic asset. The international calculus about the utility of managing troubled states like Bosnia, however, has changed.

The most troublesome cleavage future soldiers and statesmen may confront internationally is not likely to be East-West or North-South; rather, the schism that is apt to be most problematic is the divide between governments that function and those that do not. Weak, dysfunctional, and failed states are at least as likely to threaten global stability and domestic tranquility in the years ahead as are the powerful.

In this global context, the national security of the United States is most effectively buttressed by the consolidation of democratic regimes and

by expansion of the realm of prosperous market economies.²³ U.S. policy seeks, therefore, to encourage the democratization of tyrannical regimes and to strengthen emerging democracies. Autocratic rulers, however, sensing that power is slipping from their grasp, will be far more likely to go down with a bang than a wimper. As Slobodan Milosovic has demonstrated in Kosovo, the internal humanitarian consequences of these ruthless attempts to cling to power can be abhorrent, and the destabilizing impact on surrounding states can directly imperil prominent U.S. interests. Democratic regimes, moreover, are at their weakest in their infancy, and it will be during the desired transition to democracy that many regimes will be prone to failure.²⁴ In contrast to Bismarck’s world, therefore, there is little virtue today in disregarding all weak and troubled states.

At the moment, the trend is not positive with regard to international capacity to cope with this recurring phenomenon. The United Nations is at a low ebb, there is a serious rift among the permanent members of the Security Council about its role in addressing this issue, and there is not sufficient enthusiasm within the United States at the moment to revitalize the body. Somewhat by default, NATO became the preferred option, but its capacity to deal with anything but the Balkans will be negligible until that region is stabilized. That leaves the residual UN capability, a few regional organizations, and ad hoc coalitions as options to deal with the collapse of future troubled states. The outcome of the intervention of Kosovo will have a major bearing on the capability and willingness of other members of the international community to continue to join with the United States in seeking to shape a more democratic, prosperous, and benign global environment. Because troubled states are not a transitory phenomenon, coping with them will be one of the leading security conundrums of the coming age.

NOTES

¹ One path-breaking study of the incidence of state failure found that among nondemocratic states, in particular, the factors most closely linked to breakdown are a low level of trade and a demographic bulge in the number of youths age 15–29.

² In general, new regimes are at a considerably higher risk of failure than those with greater longevity.

³ The Government of Colombia has effectively lost control of a vast portion of its interior bordering on Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador.

⁴ The Samper government in Colombia (1994–98) was irreparably tainted by well-founded allegations that his campaign accepted a \$6 million contribution from a local drug trafficker.

⁵ Some \$800 billion worth of transactions take place each day.

⁶ The Congo operation was the major exception.

⁷ See John Hillen, *The Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations* (New York: Brassey's, 1998).

⁸ The United States is responsible for funding 30.7 percent of each peace operation, and the costs associated with intervening in an internal conflict vastly exceed those involved in a simple monitoring mission between two rival states.

⁹ For example, none of the 19 states that had designated standby forces was willing to make them available to the United Nations when a mission was proposed for Rwanda.

¹⁰ The Haiti mission transitioned from a coalition of the willing—the Multinational Force—to the UN Mission in Haiti.

¹¹ Dan Smith, *The State of War and Peace Atlas* (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1997), 14.

¹² *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington: The White House), 1.

¹³ Swedish Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson pointed this out in a conversation with Amb. Robert Oakley and Col. Michael Dziedzic, USAF, on March 6, 1998, in the Swedish Foreign Ministry.

¹⁴ The rules of engagement would be identical to those of the military force, most likely authorizing use of force to prevent loss of life or serious injury to members of the international community and, if indigenous authorities are unresponsive, innocent local civilians as well.

¹⁵ If the peace process falters, refugees will be extremely reluctant to return to their homes; private investors will assuredly calculate that the risk to their venture capital outweighs any potential gain; the outcome of future elections could easily be determined more by bullets than ballots; and resources spent on

relief and reconstruction could merely result in a prolongation of the conflict. Transnational criminal organizations, moreover, are prone to seize upon such openings to intimidate or suborn even the most senior government officials and insinuate themselves into positions of influence.

¹⁶ This does not negate the overarching objective of placing the burden of policing on local authorities. Until the dominant sources of political resistance have been quashed, however, it would be unwise to rely totally on a politically motivated police establishment to maintain order.

¹⁷ The controversial decision regarding the status of Brcko was announced in March 1999, and in spite of Serb verbal protests about the outcome, there was no orchestrated campaign of public disturbances.

¹⁸ If units had been formed from individuals drawn from across the Army, the impact on readiness would have been decidedly negative.

¹⁹ The 1st Armored Division in Bosnia had an advantage in this regard, because ranges were available in theater for periodic use by their units.

²⁰ "Essential functions" are defined as clusters of related activities (political, social, or economic) that must be performed at least at some minimal level to preclude a return to conditions that originally provoked the international intervention.

²¹ In cases where a peace operation is undertaken, the extent to which "essential functions" are regenerated will vary. Some may not be addressed at all (with likely implications for achieving a stable outcome). However, all peace operations will address at least some of the areas.

²² Edward Crankshaw, *Bismarck* (Middlesex, United Kingdom: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1981), 348.

²³ The fundamental economic law of comparative advantage that provides the rationale for free market economics is clearly a "positive sum" concept. The notion that democracies are not prone to wage war on each other also is conducive to a "positive sum" conclusion that the United States will be more secure in a global environment populated by increasing numbers of stable, consolidated democracies.

²⁴ Unpublished U.S. Government study on troubled states.