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Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Lessons and Recommendations for Policymakers

Stephen John Stedman

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Stedman is Senior Research Scholar, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University and with Elizabeth Cousens, IPA and Donald Rothchild, University of California at Davis, Co-Director of the CISAC-IPA Project on Implementation of Peace Agreements in Civil Wars.

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Preface

As a sub-field of conflict resolution, peace implementation has been more practiced than studied. Unlike either conflict mediation or long-term peacebuilding, very little analytical reflection has been devoted to the immediate challenges of implementing peace agreements once they are concluded. Too often, those responsible for translating these accords into meaningful action have had to proceed quickly, without either an accurate map of the hazards of the war-torn terrain in which they find themselves or a reliable plan for managing challenges when they do arise. At the most elementary level, what has been missing is clear knowledge of those factors that make the difference between successful peace implementation and failure, between the assurance of peace and the resumption of war.

That such analysis is needed, and needed urgently, becomes clear in surveying the experience of the 1990s. In Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Somalia, and twice in Angola, the failure to get warring parties to live up to their peace agreements not only restarted armed conflict, it also escalated the violence. The breakdown of the 1994 Arusha Accords in Rwanda led to a genocide of some 800,000 people: approximately fifty times more deaths than had occurred in the 1990-1993 civil war. As all of these tragedies suggest, the period immediately after the signing of a peace agreement is arguably the time of greatest uncertainty and danger. It is also the time when most peace agreements fail. Improving our knowledge of the specific challenges of peace implementation might help to improve the odds of success.

Between late 1997 and early 2000, Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) and the International Peace Academy (IPA) engaged over two dozen scholars to undertake a systematic study of the determinants of successful peace implementation. The project examined every peace agreement between 1980 and 1997 where international actors were prominently involved. The sixteen cases studied covered the full range of outcomes: from failure, to partial success, to success, thereby permitting a more rigorous investigation of what makes implementation work. To strengthen the policy relevance of the research, practitioners contributed to the design of the project and participated in the workshops, conferences, and policy fora in which preliminary findings were presented and discussed. It is our hope that the results of this research will help improve the design and practice of peace implementation.

With this goal in mind, I am pleased to introduce "Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Lessons and Recommendations for Policymakers", the first of our IPA Policy Paper Series on Peace Implementation. Written by project co-director Stephen Stedman, it summarizes the broad design of the research and distills its major findings. In evaluating implementation strategies, the relative importance of implementation sub-goals, and the linkages between negotiation, implementation and long-term peacebuilding, Stedman and his colleagues offer some important new insights as well as provide more solid corroboration for some conventional wisdom.

The full research of the project will be published in a forthcoming two-volume study, entitled Ending Civil Wars, co-edited by project directors Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens. On behalf of the project directors and authors, I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Ford Foundation and the Edward E. Hills Fund for their generous support of this project.

David M. Malone
President
International Peace Academy

Executive Summary

- *The greater the difficulty of the environment, the greater the likelihood that peace implementation will fail.* The two most important environmental sources of failure are the presence of spoilers—factions or leaders who oppose the peace agreement and use violence to undermine it—and neighboring states that oppose the peace agreement and assist the spoilers. *Given the importance of these findings, the United Nations needs to improve its capacities for strategically assessing the implementation environment, particularly the motives, intentions, and capabilities of peace parties and spoilers.*
- A third environmental determinant of implementation is the presence of valuable spoils. Our study found that no peace agreement has been successfully implemented where there are valuable, easily marketable commodities such as gems or timber. *In countries where there are easily marketed valuable commodities (spoils), implementers should have a developed strategy, the resources, and the commitment to counter those who profit from war.*
- Cases of peace implementation also differ in terms of the willingness of international actors to provide resources and risk troops. The most important variable is whether assisting the affected country is seen as vital to the national interests of a major or regional power; only when such interest is present has peace implementation succeeded in the most difficult environments, characterized by the presence of spoilers and hostile neighbors. Without great or regional power interest, the United Nations can only succeed in the least difficult environments. *When selecting what peace agreements the UN should implement, great power or regional power interest should be treated as a hard constraint.*
- That major and regional power interest plays a key role in implementation success creates *incompatibilities between the strategies that are needed for success and the incentives of the major powers to support those strategies.* As the difficulty of the implementation environment increases, there is a need for greater scope and assertiveness of the transitional authority that is supplied by international actors. Similarly, the more difficult the environment, the greater the need for coercive strategies of implementation. But, the strategies and resources available to international implementers are also a function of great and regional power interest. Unless their security interests are engaged, the resources and commitment necessary for coercive strategies to succeed will not be forthcoming. *Without great or regional power interest, the United Nations should not implement hard cases.*
- A second incentive compatibility issue concerns mechanisms for providing strategic coherence and coordination. *The more difficult the implementation environment, the greater the need for strategic coordination.* When international actors lack unity, spoilers can take advantage of international splits to attack the peace process and threaten peacemakers. Similarly, the more coercive the strategy, the greater the civil-military tensions in implementation, and the greater the need for strategic coordination. But, again, strategies available for international coordination, such as friends groups, are also a function of great and regional power interest. The willingness of states to join friends groups is indicative of a prior judgment that the specific case is in the state's interest. Such mechanisms for coordination will not always be available: there are no "friends of Somalia," as there are no great or regional powers who have security interests in a peaceful Somalia.
- *The gap between what is needed in some missions and what major or regional powers are willing to provide leads to organizational pathologies within the United Nations.* In some cases, the willingness of the Security Council to authorize peace missions stems from a perception that the case will be safe and easy; where threats are perceived, the reaction of the Security Council is to cut and run. Aware of this, UN officials are reluctant to share worrisome conflict assessments and tend to "ask only for what the traffic will bear." The need to present optimistic scenarios to the Security Council precludes realistic

contingency planning, since this signals that more dire scenarios are possible. On occasion, this tendency has led UN officials to ignore or play down blatant and destabilizing violations of peace agreements. *Given that such intelligence is fallible and that there will be missions where unanticipated violent challenges may erupt during implementation, there is a need for the United Nations to improve its contingency planning for peace operations.*

- From an examination of the relative importance of sub-goals (e.g. demobilization, disarmament, elections, human rights, and refugee repatriation) to overall implementation success, two major findings emerge:

- 1) For every sub-goal, *expectations must be commensurate with resources and permissible strategies.* In the absence of commitment of resources and troops, ambitious standards for sub-goals are symbolic statements of outside

virtue, not practical means of terminating wars.

- 2) When allocating investment to sub-goals, *priority should be given to demobilization of soldiers and demilitarization of politics, that is, the transformation of warring armies into political parties.* Unless these are achieved, civil wars cannot be brought to an end, and the consolidation of democracy and the protection of human rights have little chance of success.

- *Two low-cost opportunities that should be pursued during implementation are civilian security, through police and judicial reform, and local capacity-building for human rights and reconciliation.* Although the study did not identify a single case where a failure to pursue these opportunities undermined implementation, it found that the potential long-term benefits of security reform and local capacity-building for peacebuilding warrant the relatively inexpensive investments that such measures require.

Introduction

When antagonists in civil war sign a peace agreement, what can international actors do to prevent a recurrence of that war? This is a life or death question for millions of people. The two worst outbreaks of massive violence in the 1990s – Angola in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994 – followed the failure of peace agreements to end those wars. In both cases, the death and destruction were staggering: an estimated 350,000 dead in Angola and 800,000 dead in Rwanda. War went on for eight years in Liberia and took 150,000 lives because multiple peace agreements failed to end the civil war there. In 2000, two more countries found themselves back in war after the failure of peace accords – Angola and Sierra Leone.

In all of these cases, international actors mediated the agreements and were given prominent roles in implementation. Why did they fail? What could they have done differently? Was implementation in these cases doomed by unworkable peace agreements? Was failure a question of unfulfilled mandates or mandates inappropriate to the task at hand? Or was failure caused by the lack of an appropriate strategy and/or the unwillingness to anticipate violent challenges and craft an effective response? How did these cases differ from successes such as Namibia, El Salvador, or Mozambique? Were these successes the result of less challenging environments or did international actors do things differently?

Between late 1997 and early 2000, Stanford University's Center for International Cooperation (CISAC) and the International Peace Academy (IPA) conducted research to better understand the determinants of successful peace implementation. The CISAC-IPA project on peace implementation focused on three primary issues:

- 1) An evaluation of international actors and their strategies of peace implementation;
- 2) An evaluation of various sub-goals of peace implementation (e.g., demobilization, disarmament, refugee repatriation, human rights, reconciliation etc.) and their relationship to overall implementation success;

- 3) A search for low-cost, possible high-payoff opportunities for linking short-term implementation success to long-term peacebuilding.

The project studied every peace agreement concluded between 1980 and 1997 in which international actors were assigned a prominent role in implementation (Table 1).

Table 1. *Cases Studied*

Case
1. Angola, 1992-93
2. Angola, 1994-98
3. Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1995-2000
4. Cambodia, 1991-93
5. El Salvador, 1993-95
6. Guatemala, 1992-98
7. Lebanon, 1991-2000
8. Liberia, 1990-99
9. Mozambique, 1992-94
10. Namibia, 1989
11. Nicaragua, 1989-91
12. Rwanda, 1993-94
13. Sierra Leone, 1998
14. Sri Lanka, 1987-88
15. Somalia, 1992-93
16. Zimbabwe, 1980

To strengthen the policy relevance of the research, practitioners and policymakers participated in every stage of the project. Appendix 1 lists all of the practitioners who shared in their time and energy to comment on memos and drafts.

The project found that cases of peace implementation differ dramatically in terms of the difficulty of the implementation environment and of the willingness of international actors to provide resources and risk troops, and also that these differences are predictable before a peace operation begins. These two findings mark a dramatic advance in our understanding of peace implementation in three fundamental ways. First, the CISAC-IPA results put to rest glib generalizations about peace operations based on one or few

cases. To put it bluntly, the results suggest that there is no reason to assume that actions and strategies that work in a more benign conflict environment such as Guatemala or Namibia will work in a much more demanding environment such as Bosnia or Sierra Leone.

Second, the results imply that implementation strategies must be designed based on the level of difficulty of the case. In certain limited situations, strategies that derive from traditional peacekeeping (with its underlying emphasis on confidence building) can be effective. In more challenging situations, however, when predation co-exists with fear, confidence building will prove inadequate, and implementers will need to compel and deter to insure compliance with a peace agreement. Third, the results raise the fundamental issue of what economists refer to as “incentive compatibility” or what we commonly know as “political feasibility”: that strategies must be in the self-interest of critical actors to implement. Difficult implementation environments require more resources, greater international involvement, and more coercive strategies, but often such resources, involvement, and strategies are not forthcoming because no major or regional power sees the relationship between peace and war in a given country to be in its own vital strategic interest. The problem of incentive compatibility usually is subsumed under arguments that a lack of political will is the problem—that if only more will were found, then tougher cases would receive the needed attention and resources. But the emphasis on political will misleads: it takes a relatively fixed variable – perception of vital national interest of regional and major powers – and treats it as if it were easily manipulated. The CISAC-IPA study argues that this is a vexing analytical error that overestimates the commitment of international actors to making peace in war-torn countries of peripheral security importance.

The project also scrutinized claims that are often made about the importance of various implementation sub-goals and their role in the overall success and failure of peace accords. Such claims grew in prominence in the 1990s, as various international non-governmental organizations lobbied publics and

governments, insisting that their single issue of concern—whether it be disarmament, elections, human rights, or refugee repatriation—was crucial to implementation success. Two major findings emerge from an examination of the sub-goals and the overall success of implementation. First, in terms of what can be achieved in the fulfillment of any sub-goal, the desires of implementers must be commensurate with allocated resources and permissible strategies. For example, one could argue that post-agreement elections should only be held under optimal conditions, or insist that every peace accord must include provisions for full accountability and prosecution for past atrocities and war crimes, or demand that all refugees be repatriated to their original homes. In the absence of commitment of adequate resources and troops, however, ambitious standards for sub-goals are symbolic statements of virtue, not practical means of terminating wars. Second, in terms of the degree of investment in sub-goals, priority should be given to the demobilization of soldiers and the demilitarization of politics, that is, the transformation of warring armies into political parties. Without achieving these two critical sub-goals, civil wars cannot be brought to an end, and important normative goals such as the creation and consolidation of democracy and the protection of human rights have little chance of success.

The project also identified two low-cost opportunities that should be pursued during implementation: 1) civilian security through police and judicial reform; and 2) local capacity-building for human rights and reconciliation. Although the study did not discover a single case of failed implementation that resulted from a failure to pursue these opportunities, we found that the potential long-term benefits of security reform and developing local capacities for peacebuilding warrant the relatively inexpensive investments that such measures require.

Several policy recommendations follow from our study. These recommendations cluster along three dimensions: 1) when international actors should get involved in attempting to implement peace; 2) the capabilities that are needed for international actors to succeed in peace implementation; and 3) priorities to be undertaken during peace implementation.

When To Get Involved

- When selecting which peace agreements the UN should implement, major powers or regional power interest should be treated as a hard constraint.
- Without great or regional power interest, the United Nations should not implement hard cases.
- Before attempting to implement a peace agreement in a country where there are easily marketed valuable commodities (spoils), potential spoilers, and hostile neighbors, the implementer should have the strategy, resources, and commitment to manage such challenges.

Needed Capabilities

- Given the importance of judgment about the difficulty of implementation environment, there is a need at the United Nations for better strategic assessment concerning possible peace implementation missions.
- Given the importance of the role that spoilers play

in implementation failure, there is a need for intelligence gathering and assessment concerning the motives, intentions, and capabilities of parties who sign peace agreements and parties who are omitted from peace agreements.

- Given that such intelligence is fallible and that there will be missions where unanticipated violent challenges may erupt during implementation, there is a need for the United Nations to improve its contingency planning for peace operations.

Priorities

- Emphasis must be given to the demilitarization of politics: demobilizing armies, disarming troops, returning soldiers to civilian life, and transforming armed factions into political parties.
- To create a bridge from short-term implementation to long-term peacebuilding, implementers should promote civilian security through police and judicial reform and build local capacity for human rights and reconciliation.

Implementation: The Link Between Mediation and Peacebuilding

For the most part analyses of conflict resolution and civil war have paid scant attention to the short-term implementation of peace agreements and have instead focused on the mediation of agreements and/or long-term peacebuilding. Because the negotiated settlement of civil wars was a relatively rare phenomenon in the Cold War era, studies in the 1980s focused primarily on the conditions and tools for getting parties in civil wars to sign agreements.¹ Rather legalistically, scholars assumed that a contract between state and insurgent leaders would remain binding in the post-agreement phase. There was also a tendency to conceive of conflict resolution in a linear fashion, where successful negotiation signaled an irreversible reduction in conflict. Successful cases in the 1980s—Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Nicaragua—reinforced these assumptions. Before long, however, several civil wars—Angola, Rwanda, and Liberia—defied the linear view of conflict resolution and brought attention to the difficulties of getting parties to live up to their commitments to peace.² Far from being a time of conflict reduction, the period immediately after the signing of a peace agreement seemed fraught with risk, uncertainty, and vulnerability for the warring parties and civilians caught in between.

We have rather thin knowledge of this dangerous period because, for the most part, scholars asked the wrong question of the cases. They asked: when antagonists in a civil war sign a peace agreement, what can international actors do to insure that the society will not experience war in the future? This is the wrong

question because it misses a prior question that is much more causally direct: when antagonists in civil war sign a peace agreement, what can international actors do to prevent a recurrence of that war? The difference between preventing the return of a specific war with roughly the same cast of characters and preventing forever the outbreak of war is crucial. The former, albeit extremely difficult, lies in the realm of possibility, while the latter is unachievable in the short-term. And it is usually in the short-term when combatants return to war and when hundreds of thousands die.

Peace implementation is the process of carrying out a specific peace agreement. It focuses on the narrow, relatively short-term (three months in the case of Zimbabwe, five years plus in the case of Bosnia) efforts to get warring parties to comply with their written commitments to peace. Success is measured in relation to the conclusion of the war on a self-enforcing basis: when the outsiders leave, do the former warring parties refrain from returning to war? The relevant evaluation criteria are much narrower than the basket of goods associated with peacebuilding (e.g. the amelioration of root causes of conflict, and the promotion of justice, positive peace, harmony, and reconciliation of enemies), but are broader than the accomplishment of specific, mandated tasks.³

Measures of peace implementation are narrower than indicators of peacebuilding because good things like reconciliation, justice, democracy, and the rule of law cannot be attained in the short-run. Moreover, measuring the effect of short-term action by outcomes 10-15 years in the future is problematic because the passage of time is the enemy of inference. As two of

¹ See, for example, I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Richard Haass, *Conflicts Unending* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); and Stephen John Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991).

² Stephen John Stedman, "UN Intervention in Civil Wars: Imperatives of Choice and Strategy," in Donald C.F. Daniel and Bradd C. Hayes, eds., *Beyond Traditional Peacekeeping* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 40-64; Fen Osler Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996); Stephen John Stedman, "Mediation and Negotiation in Internal Conflicts," in Michael Brown, ed., *International Dimensions of Internal Conflicts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 341-376; and Barbara Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization*, Vol. 51: No. 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 335-64.

³ For a critical but sympathetic review of the peacebuilding literature, see Elizabeth Cousens, "Introduction," in Elizabeth Cousens and Chetan Kumar, with Karin Wermester, eds., *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 1-20.

our authors argue, “The further away one gets in time from the conclusion of a peace mission, the more likely it is that any number of other extraneous factors (e.g. business cycles, famines, unusually good or bad weather, the policies of a neighboring state, the behavior of the first elected leaders) are what is actually responsible for what has taken place rather than the technology of the peace mission itself. As the potential impact of such exogenous factors increases, the quality of our inferences about the contribution of the peace operation itself tends to diminish until the point where it breaks down completely.”⁴

Some performance indicators, especially those suggested by scholars of peacebuilding, run the further danger of setting such high thresholds of success that we are left with a world of undifferentiated failure. For example, Roland Paris has argued that one should judge the success of peace operations in the 1990s by the standard of “creating conditions that will allow peace to endure long after the peacekeepers have left.” For Paris, such conditions include economic growth, equitable development, and good governance. By these standards, Paris asserts that only one peace operation in the 1990s—Namibia—can be judged a success.⁵ Correspondingly, the list of failures then includes not only unmitigated disasters such as Rwanda and Angola, but also operations where war has ended, such as Mozambique, El Salvador, Bosnia, and Nicaragua. By failing to discriminate between catastrophic failures such as Rwanda and Angola, and flawed successes such as El Salvador, Cambodia, and Mozambique, Paris holds evaluation hostage to an unreasonable standard of success and insures that it will yield very little information that can be used to improve future missions. Good things like economic growth, equitable development, and good governance should be striven for, but they form a useless standard for evaluating implementation actions that take place in a short period of time.

In our project we chose to operationalize mission success with reference to two variables: 1) whether the

specific war that the peace agreement was designed to address is brought to an end while the implementers are present; and 2) whether the war is terminated on a self-enforcing basis, so that the implementers can withdraw without fear of the war resuming. We assessed each case of peace implementation by these measures and then further subjected the cases to an informal, counterfactual analysis about the specific contribution of the implementers to the result. If the peacekeepers could not bring the war to a close, as in Rwanda, Angola, Somalia, or Sri Lanka, the mission was coded as a failure. If the peacekeepers brought the war to a close, but could not leave for fear of the war restarting as in Bosnia, we coded the case as a partial success. If the peacekeepers brought the war to a close and departed without the war restarting in a two year period, as in El Salvador, Mozambique, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, we coded the case as a success.

We then went further to ask what most likely would have occurred in the mission’s absence. It is the difference between this estimated outcome and what occurred in the presence of the mission that represents the basis for evaluating the mission’s impact. It makes no sense to credit outside implementers with achieving something that would have happened anyway or to blame them for being ineffective when the situation would very likely have gotten far worse in their absence. Without the estimate of the counterfactual, the researcher is implicitly taking the moment of the mission’s initiation as the status quo and benchmark for assessment and assuming that everything that happened afterwards was caused by the implementers.

Careful evaluation of the sixteen peace operations in the CISAC-IPA study led us to alter our initial estimates of two cases. The case of Liberia, which would have been coded as a success based on the criterion of ending the war on a self-sustaining basis, we downgraded to a partial success to take better account of evidence that the actions of the implementers actually delayed resolution of the war. The case of Cambodia, which would have been coded as a failure based on the criterion of

⁴ George Downs and Stephen John Stedman, “Evaluating the International Implementation of Peace Agreements in Civil Wars,” in Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elizabeth Cousens, eds., *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II: Implementation of Peace Agreements*, forthcoming.

⁵ Roland Paris, “Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism,” *International Security*, Vol. 22: No. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 54-89.

ending the war, we upgraded to a partial success because, although the country was still at war, the security situation of the country was much improved by the time the peace operation was terminated.

To address the gaps in our understanding of peace implementation, the CISAC-IPA project did not assume that all civil wars were equally difficult to end through negotiation. Our instinct was that some implementation environments were more difficult than others and that successful implementation of peace would be, in part, a function of easier environments. Second, we assumed that the greater amount of international commitment involved, the greater the likelihood that implementation would succeed. But we also assumed that all civil wars do not receive equal attention or resources. Here, we took a step back from the observation that robust international involvement per se favored success to ask which conflicts attract more

international involvement in peace implementation.⁶ Again, our instinct was that both the degree of international attention and the amount of resources devoted to peace implementation was a function of some other important variable, and that knowledge of that variable would allow us to specify when international commitment would be forthcoming. Third, we assumed that there were interaction effects between context and willingness: that more difficult cases would need greater international commitment and that, in the more difficult cases, international actors would have to do things differently than in easier cases. In essence, we felt that the strategies of international actors mattered – an insight that often gets lost in vague generalizations about international attention or guarantees. Fourth, given that international actors are called upon to do so much in peace implementation, we wanted to know which sub-goals contained in implementation mandates were more important to success.

⁶Fen Hampson and Barbara Walter argue that international attention (Hampson) or international guarantees (Walter) are crucial for negotiated termination of civil wars. See Hampson, [Nurturing Peace](#), and Barbara Walter, “The Crucial Barrier.”

Determinants of Successful Implementation

Although not specifically concerned with civil war, peacekeeping, or war termination, the general literature on policy implementation provides crucial insight into the conditions under which a peace agreement might succeed or fail. A policy implementation perspective requires that we pay attention to the environment surrounding implementation and recognize that some environments are more conducive to implementation than others. Such a perspective also looks to the coalitions that support implementation and their willingness to invest resources. As a first cut, therefore, our project ascertained what makes some peace implementation environments more difficult and challenging than others. Our second cut was to determine which cases get the most resources.

Based on findings from the scholarly literature on peacemaking in civil war, we created a difficulty score for peace implementation based on the following eight variables:⁷ the number of warring parties; the lack of either a peace agreement before intervention or a coerced peace agreement; the likelihood of spoilers; a collapsed state; the number of soldiers; the presence of disposable natural resources; the presence of hostile neighboring states or networks; and demands for secession.

- The number of warring parties. The difficulty of implementation increases when there are more than two warring parties.⁸ Strategies become less predictable, balances of power become more tenuous, and alliances become more fluid. In Cambodia, for example, any action that the United Nations might have taken against the Khmer Rouge had to be weighed against the effects such action would have had on Funcinpec, which relied

on the Khmer Rouge to balance against the State of Cambodia.⁹ In cases where a proliferation of warring parties occurred, as in Somalia and Liberia, implementers constantly found it difficult to craft solutions that would address the concerns of all the warring factions. Where any factions found themselves excluded, the peace agreement faced their violent opposition.

- The absence of a peace agreement signed by all major warring parties before intervention and with a minimum of coercion. The United Nations has usually required a detailed peace agreement among the warring parties as a sign of their consent to a peace mission as a precondition for its involvement. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the United Nations intervened in many ongoing wars and, in several instances, either it or a regional organization or a state intervened in the hope of using force to compel a peace agreement: the UN in Somalia, ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone, India in Sri Lanka, NATO in Bosnia, and Syria in Lebanon. Intervention in the absence of a peace agreement likely will trigger violent opposition by parties who value the pre-intervention status quo. The absence of a peace agreement implies a lack of problem-solving, trust, and confidence-building among the warring factions, thus producing a more difficult implementation environment.
- The likelihood of spoilers. The presence of spoilers in peace agreements poses daunting challenges to implementation.¹⁰ One critique of the spoiler concept, however, is that spoilers are only recognized after the fact. This criticism can be addressed by attempting to gauge whether prospective implementers judged that they were likely to face violent challenges during implementation. A more sophisticated criticism of the spoiler concept is that potential spoilers are always present and whether an actor actually engages in spoiling behavior depends on the existence of a special opportunity structure.¹¹ There is, as we shall see, some evidence that this is at least partially the case.
- Collapsed State. The lack of state institutions and governing capacity places great demands on peace

⁷ This section draws from Downs and Stedman, "Evaluation of International Implementation."

⁸ Gerardo L. Munck and Chetan Kumar, "Civil Conflicts and the conditions for successful international intervention: a comparative study of Cambodia and El Salvador," *Review of International Studies* Vol. 21: No. 2 (1995), pp. 159-181 and Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94: No. 4, (December 2000).

⁹ Sorpong Peou, "Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement: Challenges, Strategy, and Outcome" in Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elizabeth Cousens, eds. *Ending Civil Wars, Volume I: From Mediation to Implementation*, forthcoming, and Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2, (Fall 1997), pp. 32-36.

¹⁰ Stedman, "Spoiler Problems."

implementers. In addition to bringing fighting to a close, the implementers must create and build up a modicum of state capacity in order for the peace to have a chance to sustain itself.

- Number of soldiers. At some level, numbers matter. High numbers of soldiers pose greater demands for verification and monitoring and, hence, a greater potential for successful cheating. Moreover, greater numbers of soldiers require more personnel for monitoring and more resources for demobilization. We scored cases where there were more than 50,000 soldiers as being difficult to implement.
- Disposable natural resources. If warring parties have access to disposable resources such as gems, minerals, or timber, implementation becomes more difficult. Such resources not only provide armies with a means for continued fighting, they also become the reward against which they weigh the benefits of peace.¹² A key difference between Mozambique and Angola is that, in the latter country, UNITA's access to diamonds emboldened their spoiler behavior, whereas RENAMO's lack of access to such resources effectively limited the benefits of returning to war.¹³
- Hostile Neighboring States or Networks. Civil wars rarely take place in otherwise stable regions. As Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg observe, many civil wars today intersect with regional conflicts and interstate competition.¹⁴ From this it would follow that the attitude of the surrounding states towards a peace agreement in a neighbor's civil war plays a key role in supporting or undermining the prospects of peace. Spoilers to a peace agreement, for example, are likely to be much stronger and more vocal if they are confident that they can count on neighboring states for sanctuary, guns, fuel, and capital.¹⁵ Likewise, in regions where weak states have little control over borders, well-organized private or semi-official networks can allow neighboring states to take advantage of such state decrepitude to support spoilers in the war-torn country.

- Wars of Secession. There is a plausible argument that negotiated settlements are more difficult to attain and implement where civil wars are fought over national sovereignty.¹⁶ Such conflicts often revert to all-or-nothing struggles that make the job of would-be implementers more difficult than in cases where warring parties share a common identity and at least agree on a unitary future for their country.

The more these indicators are present, the greater the difficulty of bringing the conflict to an end. The conflict environment, however, is only one aspect of implementation success or failure. International willingness is also crucial: low degrees of interest and commitment either lead to no intervention or, alternatively, to an intervention with an extremely limited strategy set in the sense that implementers will be constrained by the resources they can deploy and the range of sub-goals they can pursue. Constraints on the strategy set need not be a problem when the implementation environment is easy. But difficult environments and constrained strategies can be a recipe for disaster, as in the examples of Rwanda, Angola, Sierra Leone, where the Security Council authorized the UN to implement an agreement, but did not provide adequate resources.

We scored our cases on three indicators of interest and commitment, what we refer to as a "willingness score": 1) major or regional power interest; 2) commitment of resources; 3) and acceptance of risk of casualties to soldiers.

- Major or regional power interest. A key sign of a high commitment to a mission is whether large, powerful states support intervention and publicly define the conflict as important to their own vital security interests. The more remote that a mission is from a powerful state's vital security interests, the more likely it is being undertaken for symbolic reasons that are unlikely to

¹¹ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler have made a similar argument in connection with the factors that inspire rebellion in the first place. See Greed and Grievance, Policy Research Paper 2355, World Bank Development Group, May 2000.

¹² There is an emerging literature on the political economy of civil wars and its effect on prospects for war termination. See, for example, Mats Berdal and David M. Malone, eds., Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

¹³ Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," pp. 47-48.

¹⁴ Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, "Armed Conflicts, Conflict Termination and Peace Agreements, 1989-96," Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 34: No. 3 (Fall 1997), pp. 339-358.

¹⁵ Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," p. 51.

¹⁶ Chaim Kaufman, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Civil Wars," International Security, Vol. 20: No. 4 (Spring 1996), pp. 136-175.

inspire the outlay of more than a very modest amount of resources.

- **Resource commitment.** Crucial for successful implementation is the willingness of states to provide adequate financial resources for a mission. But such resources vary by case, and this is often known before a mission even begins. In Cambodia, for example, the Security Council provided extreme leeway to planners to judge what resources were needed for a successful mission. In Rwanda, on the other hand, the Security Council rejected the figures provided by its own field mission, and instead imposed extreme limits on resources available.
- **Acceptance of risk to soldiers.** We scored this separately from financial resource commitment because policymakers evaluate the risk to their own troops differently than a judgment about financial resources.

Table 2 lists the cases in our study, the principal implementer, the conflict difficulty score, and the international willingness score. The higher the difficulty score, the more difficult the implementation environment; the higher the willingness score, the greater the willingness of international actors to commit to the effort.

Our analysis found that only four of the variables studied are statistically significant for explaining implementation success: 1) the existence of a spoiler; 2) the presence of disposable resources; 3) the presence of a neighboring state that is hostile to the peace agreement; 4) and the presence of major power interest. Consistent with our expectations, the first three factors reduce the chances of successful implementation, while the last improves it. The summary scores—conflict difficulty and international willingness—together explain about 65% of the variance in implementation outcomes. All of the other variables have an impact that is in the predicted direction but – given that we studied only sixteen cases – is not statistically significant.

Figure 1 illustrates the intersection of conflict difficulty, the degree of major or regional power interest, and implementation outcome. The cases of Guatemala, El Salvador, Namibia, and Nicaragua all scored as low on difficulty of implementation contexts and high in great or regional power interest. Not surprisingly, all were successful. Mozambique and Zimbabwe fell in the low-to-medium range of

Table 2. Peace Implementation Cases

<i>Case</i>	<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Principal Implementer</i>	<i>Difficulty Score*</i>	<i>Willingness Score*</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Zimbabwe	1980	Great Britain	4	1	Success
Sri Lanka	1987-89	India	6	1.7	Failure
Namibia	1989-90	UN	0	1.7	Success
Nicaragua	1989-90	UN	1	1.5	Success
Lebanon	1990-	Syria	5	2.7	Partial Success
Liberia	1990-98	ECOWAS	6	2.1	Partial Success
Angola I	1991-93	UN	4	.4	Failure
Cambodia	1991-94	UN	5	2.2	Partial Success
Mozambique	1992-95	UN	2	1.2	Success
El Salvador	1992-94	UN	1	1.5	Success
Somalia	1993	UN	5	1.4	Failure
Rwanda	1993-94	UN	3	.4	Failure
Angola II	1994-99	UN	4	.9	Failure
Bosnia	1995-	NATO	6	2.2	Partial Success
Guatemala	1996-97	UN	0	1.5	Success
Sierra Leone	1996-98	ECOWAS	6	.7	Failure

**Difficulty Score: 0 = lowest, 8 = highest*

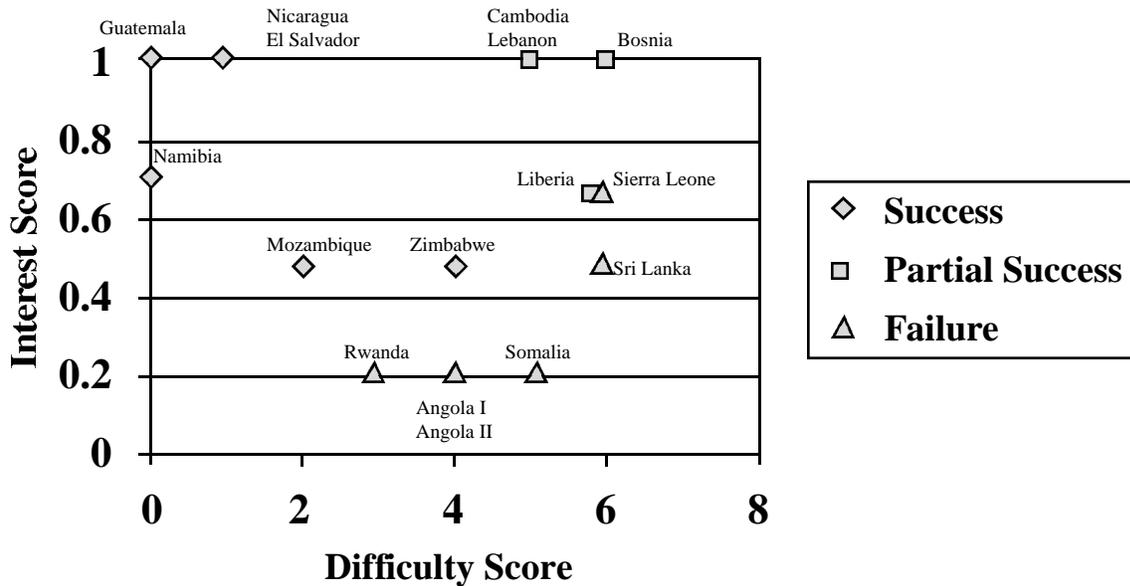
**Willingness Score: 0 = lowest, 3 = highest*

implementation difficulty and, although their interest scores were not as high as the cases mentioned above, their peace agreements were successfully implemented.

To the right of the graph are the more difficult cases. Where major or regional power interest was low, as in

Angola, Somalia, and Rwanda, or medium as in Sri Lanka, implementation failed. In the most difficult cases, substantial major or regional power interest was enough to compensate for the difficulty of environment to produce partial success in Cambodia, Lebanon, Bosnia, and Liberia, but was not enough to achieve success in Sierra Leone.

Figure 1: *Interest and Difficulty: Case Outcomes*



Strategies, Coordination, and Incentive Compatibility Issues

Our project found that as the difficulty of the implementation environment increases, there is a need for greater scope and assertiveness of the transitional authority that is supplied by international actors.¹⁷ Similarly, the greater the difficulty of the implementation environment, the greater the need for coercive strategies of implementation.¹⁸ Yet, the availability of more robust strategies to international implementers is a function of major and regional power interest. When major or regional powers do not see a particular conflict as affecting their vital security interests, they do not provide the resources and commitment necessary for more intrusive, coercive implementation strategies.

Incentive compatibility affects not only the choice of grand strategy, but also the availability of mechanisms that are needed to provide strategic coherence and coordination. As Bruce Jones argues, the more difficult the implementation environment, the greater the need for strategic coordination.¹⁹ When international actors suffer from a lack of unity or do not fully support an operation, would-be spoilers can take advantage of international splits to attack the peace process and threaten would-be peacemakers. Similarly, the more coercive the strategy, the greater the civil-military tensions that implementation will encounter.²⁰ When international troops are at risk, troop-donating states tend to insist on greater day-to-day management of the political conduct of the mission. Such interference can undermine the ability of the implementation force to diagnose and respond effectively to spoilers.

The use of mechanisms such as “Friends of the Secretary General” are fundamentally a function of

great and regional power interest. The willingness of states to join a “Friends” group is indicative of a prior judgment that stabilizing a specific conflict is in the state’s interest.²¹ The result is that such mechanisms for coordination will be unavailable in cases where interest is low; for example, there was no “Friends of Somalia”, because there were no major or regional powers who had security interests enough to justify investing resources and effort in building a peaceful Somalia.

Incentive compatibility and the gap between what is needed in some missions and what the major or regional powers are willing to provide has led to organizational pathologies within the United Nations. Left unaddressed, these pathologies may lead to the end of UN involvement in making peace.²² The Secretariat seems to have learned that the Security Council will authorize a peace mission only if it perceives that the operation will be safe and easy. When threats or dangers have appeared, the reaction of the Security Council has been to cut and run. Faced with these constraints as early as Rwanda, UN bureaucrats have been reluctant to share worrisome conflict assessments and tend only to “ask for what the traffic will bear.” The need to present optimistic scenarios to the Security Council precludes contingency planning, since the basic premise of such planning signals that less than optimistic scenarios are possible. In some cases, pressures for the UN to present a successful face to its political masters have led missions such as Angola in 1997 and Sierra Leone in 1999 to ignore blatant non-compliance by the warring parties. At its worst, as in East Timor in 1999, the UN Secretariat engaged in a reckless gamble to sell the Security Council on the mission by downplaying its difficulty, hoping that, if things went bad, the Security Council and UN member-states would be embarrassed into a response.

¹⁷ Michael Doyle, “Transitional Authority,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

¹⁸ Stephen John Stedman, “From Mediation to Implementation: The Strategy Gap,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Volume I*.

¹⁹ Bruce Jones, “The Challenge of Strategic Coordination: Containing Opposition and Sustaining Implementation,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Vol. II*.

²⁰ Karen Guttieri, “Civil-Military Relations,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Vol. II*.

²¹ Jones, “The Challenge of Strategic Coordination,” *Ending Civil Wars: Vol. II*.

²² Downs and Stedman, “Evaluating the International Implementation,” *Ending Civil Wars: Vol. II*.

Evaluation of Sub-Goals

The CISAC-IPA project sought to shed light on the importance of various sub-goals in peace implementation. The reasons for doing so were twofold. First, when mandates contain multiple tasks and operations face constraints on resources, implementers will likely review the broad set of tasks that they are asked to accomplish and decide between those which are primary and those secondary to ending the war. In a complex environment, it is possible that any attempt to accomplish all tasks at once will produce incoherent policy and strategy that can severely undermine chances of success. In such circumstances, advice about which sub-goals to prioritize is of utmost importance. The second reason for our evaluation is the recent proliferation of implementation sub-goals. During the 1990s, a cottage industry developed around peace implementation as a greater number of non-governmental organizations argued for the overriding importance of an increasing number of particular sub-goals—human rights, disarmament, economic reconstruction, or civilian security—as critical to securing peace. Rarely were these claims subjected to empirical evaluation and, when they were, the findings were often flawed by basic errors. The threat of failure looms whenever the priorities of implementers are set by appeals to faith and sentiment, rather than by reference to a careful analysis of what will likely work in a given environment. This danger was underscored by one implementer who observed that, in his operation, the problem was not one of too few resources, but of resources being earmarked for activities that were either not essential to ending the war or unsustainable in the absence of ending the war.

Before proceeding to a discussion of individual sub-goals, several points require clarification. What has been said above concerning incentive compatibility and overall success also pertains to sub-goals. However noble they may be, ambitions concerning justice and accountability, or the ideal conditions for holding elections, or those for the repatriation of refugees to

their homes have to be commensurate with available resources and permissible strategies. A demand for some combatants to be tried as war criminals, for example, makes sense – indeed is only feasible—if implementers are willing to employ a robust, coercive strategy. But, as pointed out earlier, unless stabilizing the particular country is perceived by a regional or major power to be in its security interests, there will be little coercive capability or the will to prevail if a coercive strategy is challenged.

A second point concerns the difficulty of evaluating the relative contribution of various sub-goals to overall implementation success. Various sub-goals do interact; success in one area can affect success in another area. The importance of this interaction will be missed, however, if sub-goals are analyzed in isolation from one another, and this can lead to any number of mistaken inferences.²³ For example, Human Rights Watch asserts that the failure to protect and further human rights in Angola best explains the United Nations' failure to implement peace there.²⁴ But, as Tonya Putnam's contribution to our study demonstrates, the protection and furtherance of human rights during peace implementation depends completely on the ability of the implementers to persuade the warring parties to demobilize and disarm their soldiers and turn their armies into political parties.²⁵ In the absence of progress in demobilization and the demilitarization of politics, implementers have little hope of achieving improved observance of human rights standards.

Finally, the character of the implementation environment also matters in the evaluation of sub-goals. Again, to use the human rights example, the success of peacekeepers in promoting and protecting human rights during peace implementation can vary dramatically according to the conflict environment. Protecting human rights in Somalia, for example, where there was no existing rule of law, no civil society, no functioning state, and where spoilers sought to destroy the peace agreement, was much more difficult than protecting

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process* (NY: Human Rights Watch, 1999).

²⁵ Tonya Putnam, "Human Rights and Sustainable Peace," in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Vol. II*.

human rights in El Salvador, where the two warring parties agreed to make reform of the judiciary and policy institutions a key aspect of the peace agreement.

Demobilization and Reintegration of Combatants

Our study found that the demobilization of soldiers and their reintegration into civilian life is the single most important sub-goal of peace implementation.²⁶ The ending of a civil war hinges on the willingness of competing armies to relinquish self-help solutions to their insecurity, to demobilize their soldiers, and in most circumstances, to create a new, integrated army. These are processes, however, that are fraught with risks for antagonists. International implementers can reduce such risks by acting as guarantors—by deterring any party from taking advantage of their adversary’s vulnerability and by protecting any party that is taken advantage of during demobilization. Our study, however, found that such guarantees are seldom forthcoming from implementers. With the exceptions of NATO in Bosnia, Syria in Lebanon, and ECOWAS (on occasion) in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the implementers in our study did not commit to such guarantees. However understandable, this omission goes to the heart of incentive compatibility and the willingness of outsiders to undertake to implement a peace agreement: the costs of implementation and the risk of becoming a direct combatant in a civil war are very often more than implementers are willing to bear. Most of the implementers in the cases we examined limited their role to monitoring, verifying, and facilitating demobilization.

As practiced in most of the missions that we studied, such monitoring has been flawed by the lack of an intelligence capacity to assess the motives behind violations of demobilization agreements and by the unwillingness of implementers to set and maintain strict standards of compliance. An assessment of motives is important because cheating is pervasive in the demobilization of soldiers. Our study, however, found different motives for cheating – motives that

had important implications for the prospects of successful war termination. Starting with the most benign among them, warring parties may hold troops back from demobilization as a form of insurance against adversary attack. Less benignly, parties may keep troops in reserve in order to gain a potential advantage in elections, even deploying them for the purpose of electoral intimidation. Finally, the most malignant motive for cheating is a deliberate effort to sucker an opponent or take military advantage of a rival who, already having complied with demobilization accords, is strategically vulnerable.

Since motives are important for outcomes, a premium should be placed on the robust monitoring and verification of demobilization. We found that the greatest danger stems from implementers who are lax in acknowledging, reporting, or responding to violations of demobilization agreements. In Angola, implementers did not call the parties to account for such violations for fear that condemnation would hinder the implementers’ ability to act as impartial brokers. Worse, the implementers would later falsely verify UNITA’s demobilization in order to claim the mission as a success. In Rwanda, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) prohibited its peacekeepers from aggressively investigating reports of hidden arms caches for fear that such investigation might provoke violence by extremists.

Disarmament

Unlike the demobilization of soldiers, the accomplishment of large-scale disarmament does not appear to be as crucial to implementation success.²⁷ Disarmament, when it occurred, followed demobilization; conversely, in the absence of demobilization, disarmament did not occur. Further, there were cases, such as Mozambique, where demobilization was largely successful but disarmament was a failure; hundreds of thousands of weapons were said to have been cached by the warring sides and these weapons were not eliminated by ONUMOZ.

²⁶ Joanna Spear, “Demobilization and Disarmament: Key Implementation Issues,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Successful disarmament is greatly affected by the implementation environment. Where there is a lack of a functioning state to provide individual security, or where the police is believed to be “owned” by particular groups and is unwilling to provide impartial justice, then disarmament will be extremely difficult. In such circumstances, individuals and groups turn to gun ownership as a means of self-protection.

Elections

Our study found that implementers often hold elections for multiple, sometimes contradictory goals: war termination, democratization, and for their own organizational purposes.²⁸ When such goals are in conflict, as they often are, our study advocates the priority of war termination. Critics of these so-called “settlement elections” often compare the results of such elections against impossibly high standards or against alternatives that are not politically feasible. The problem for implementers is to gauge what is possible to achieve from holding elections and to consider what alternatives may be available.

In terms of the process of carrying out elections, our study emphasizes the need for substantial investment in demilitarizing politics. A concerted effort to transform armies into viable political parties can play a crucial role in persuading rebels to compete for power peaceably within the political arena, thereby strengthening the prospects for war termination. Even in elections whose short-term results are unlikely to further democratization, the process can matter. The construction of electoral authorities and institutions with legitimacy and effectiveness can serve as a bridge to long-term democratization.

Elections decide who will rule in a country emerging from civil war and how power will be concentrated. These are fundamental conditions for war termination. But what might be necessary to bring a war to a close may or may not forward the goal of democracy, depending primarily on who wins the election, how it

is carried out, and the legitimacy that is accorded to both the process and the winner by the new electorate. Liberia is a case in point. Most international observers believed that the election of Charles Taylor in 1998 was necessary to bring the country’s civil war to a close. Given Taylor’s authoritarian and corrupt behavior both before and during the war, however, few observers saw those elections as holding out much hope for democracy in Liberia. Indeed, many Liberians saw the election as a referendum on the terms of bringing the war to an end: a vote for Taylor was a vote for ending the war.

Conversely, elections may produce results that are favorable for democracy in the longer run – the opportunity for citizens to express preferences over who should rule – but may also prove antithetical to war termination. Where a losing party, such as Jonas Savimbi’s UNITA, is committed to returning to war if it loses an election, then the war will not end, no matter how legitimate the election is regarded by the citizenry.

Human Rights

Our study found that international human rights organizations have paradoxically asked for both too much and too little with regards to human rights and peace implementation.²⁹ They have asked for too much by insisting on a doctrinaire approach to human rights protection in environments that are ill-suited for such an approach. They have asked for too little by dogmatically refusing to assist new governments in working toward improved human rights performance and to see that all sub-goals of peace implementation have a human rights component.

Although the promotion of human rights and the establishment of institutions capable of advocating and protecting human rights are desirable for societies emerging from civil war, the demands and challenges of implementing peace in war-torn countries require more nuanced strategies than those typically chosen by

²⁸ Terrence Lyons, “Implementing Peace and Building Democracy: The Role of Elections,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, [Ending Civil Wars: Volume II](#).

²⁹ Tonya L. Putnam, “Human Rights and Sustainable Peace,” [Ending Civil Wars: Volume II](#).

international human rights organizations (IHROs). The CISAC-IPA study argues that an “exclusive reliance on the enforcement approach to human rights protection is entirely unsuited to the early stages of peace implementation.”³⁰ Typically, IHROs have failed to appreciate the specific challenges posed by war-torn societies and have used strategies designed for environments where functioning governments and rule of law already exist. This has led IHROs to three common errors: 1) to place undue importance on achieving a formal expression of human rights provisions in the main texts of peace settlements; 2) to demand individual responsibility for human rights violations in societies that lack even rudimentary investigative, adjudicative, and compensatory institutions; and 3) to isolate human rights concerns by eschewing direct involvement with post-settlement governments and by failing to integrate human rights concerns with other key tasks of peace implementation.

Evidence from our cases of peace implementation suggests that “the formal enumeration of human rights provisions in peace settlements correlates only weakly, if at all, with the quantity and quality of human rights protection during and after peace implementation.” Moreover, the ability of mediators to insist on the inclusion of human rights language in peace agreements is extremely constrained.

The findings in our study do not imply that human rights are irrelevant to the achievement of peace. Rather, they point to the need for a different approach by those who care about the promotion and protection of human rights. First, human rights objectives must be linked to other instrumental tasks of peace implementation. Second, human rights groups must work to build the capacity of locally based human rights advocates, who will have to do the heavy lifting over the long haul.

Refugee Repatriation

Our study challenged two strongly held—if contending—beliefs concerning the relationship between refugee repatriation and reintegration and the successful implementation of peace: the belief that there can be no peace without repatriation and, conversely, the view that dismisses refugee concerns as peripheral to war termination.³¹ Instead, we found that there is a complicated relationship between refugee repatriation and successful peace implementation, one that depends greatly on the conflict environment and the rhetoric of the implementers. In some cases, for example, El Salvador, the fact that many refugees were resettled in other countries and were not repatriated contributed to successful implementation of the peace accords. Refugees who were resettled became a crucial source of needed capital at home through remittances of income. And because so many refugees were resettled, those who did repatriate faced less competition for scarce jobs and land.

We also found that the relationship between refugee repatriation and implementation success was affected by the type of civil war. In wars concerning the exclusion of groups, as in Bosnia, an insistence on repatriation to areas that had been ethnically cleansed during wartime can lead to a resumption of violence. This, of course, creates a daunting ethical dilemma: where implementation success is measured simply by the absence of war, the surest way to avoid new hostilities is to avoid repatriation. Yet, in practice, at least in Bosnia, the reluctance of policy-makers to repatriate refugees to their original homes and their unease with the ethical implications of that choice has led to a worse outcome: a proclaimed right to return without enforcement, which, in the words of Howard Adelman, “is no real right to return and leads...to no repatriation and no resettlement.”³²

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Howard Adelman, “Peace Agreements: Refugee Repatriation and Reintegration,” *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

³² Ibid.

Bridges to Peacebuilding

Although our study focused on the short-term efforts of international implementers and judged their performance accordingly, we sought to identify recommendations for policies that could bridge the gap between peace implementation and peacebuilding. Our study identified two important contributions that implementers can make in the short-term and with relatively low costs that could prove to have large payoffs for longer-term peacebuilding: the reform of civilian police and judiciaries and the strengthening of local civil society organizations.

Civilian Security

For good reasons, international implementers of peace agreements focus on assuring the security of ex-combatants. But our study found that assuring the security of the general population is a neglected aspect of peace implementation.³³ This is problematic, however, given that many civil war settlements are based on liberal norms and institutions which depend on citizens' foregoing group-based protections and accepting individual assurances of security by the newly reformed state. In the absence of a police force which can effectively provide those assurances, new post-war arrangements seem unjust and in violation of group rights. In an insecure environment, political entrepreneurs can engage in protection racketeering that undermines the credibility and authority of the new state.

As Charles Call and William Stanley observe, "virtually all post-1989 cases of negotiated civil war termination experienced perceptions of heightened public insecurity, often as a result of documented increases in violent crime."³⁴ As they point out, civil war settlements offer unique opportunities for redesigning and reforming civilian security institutions. The inclusion of civilian security reform into peace agreements provides implementers with clear guidelines for assistance programs. Our cases suggest important lessons for such programs: the need to design and implement judicial, penal, and police reforms in tandem; and the importance of creating specialized police units, especially Criminal Investigative units and oversight offices (e.g. Internal Affairs, Inspectors-General, and Civilian Commissions).

Local Capacity Building: Civil Society Organizations

At a relatively low cost, implementers can support local civil society organizations that can play key roles in sustaining peace after the implementers leave.³⁵ Civil society organizations can help to sustain peace agreements by working at the grassroots level to legitimize peace and make it more than an elite concern. Local organizations can address key issues such as reconciliation, justice, and human rights—issues that go to the heart of what many consider to be the root causes of civil wars. Moreover, local organizations tend to have a longer time horizon and are more adept at sustaining long term processes that are integral to peacebuilding.

³³ Charles Call and William Stanley, "A Sacrifice for Peace? Security for the General Public During Implementation of Peace Agreements," *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ John Prendergast and Emily Plumb, "Civil Society Organizations and Peace Agreement Implementation," *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

Conclusion

The two worst humanitarian emergencies of the 1990s—Angola in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994—followed the failure of international actors to implement peace agreements. In those countries, far more people died in the aftermath of failed peace implementation than had died from the preceding years of civil war. When combatants in civil wars sign a peace agreement, there is potential for progress: long-standing wars with staggering costs can be brought to an end and people can gain the opportunity to rebuild shattered lives and societies. But the potential for harm is also great: fear and predation are potent threats to peace. As our project demonstrates, however, appropriate strategies and adequate resources can help to counter these threats.

Our findings provide prospective implementers with useful knowledge. Employing the findings of our research, they will be better equipped to gauge the likely difficulty of the implementation environment and to make accurate assessments of whether necessary resources and correct strategies will be provided. They can also improve the allocation of the resources they have at their disposal. Our findings also help policymakers to better identify the gaps in how peace agreements are currently being implemented—in information gathering, analysis, and sharing, and in contingency planning.

This said, our findings also present a daunting dilemma: to the extent that past behavior predicts future behavior, there will be more occasions where implementers face highly difficult environments with the knowledge that commensurate resources will not be forthcoming. Throughout the 1990s, the signing of

a peace agreement has been sufficient to trigger international involvement to implement that agreement, but nowhere near sufficient to ensure the international commitment to do the job right. Our research began with the ethical concern of how best to save lives and end deadly civil wars; it concludes with a more circumspect but more daunting challenge: how best to save lives and end deadly civil wars in a world where there are limited resources and multiple civil wars—some of which pose far greater challenges to prospective implementers than others. We urge would-be implementers to remain attentive to this dilemma, to the fact that major and regional powers treat different civil wars differently, such that their commitment to making peace in war-torn countries is much greater when their motives are based on vital security interests, rather than on humanitarian concerns alone.

What, then, is to be done about the tough cases of peace agreements in countries that are clearly peripheral to those vital interests? Should the UN decline the challenge of assisting peace implementation in such circumstances? In lieu of a definitive answer, we offer the advice of two of our project's authors:

Is this a sensible strategy? On the one hand, the answer seems obviously no. It seems like the equivalent of a hospital choosing to turn away cancer patients and people in need of transplants in favor of orthopedic procedures and gall bladder operations. On the other hand, if the UN is under constant financial pressure and there are situations where the probability of success is virtually nonexistent, there is no more to be gained by ignoring these facts in the context of peace implementation than there is in the context of healthcare.³⁶

³⁶ Downs and Stedman, "Evaluating the International Implementation," *Ending Civil Wars: Volume II*.

APPENDIX I

List of Project Contributors

Aldo Ajello
Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Mozambique
EU Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region

Dame Margaret Anstee
Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Angola

Reginal Austin
Former Head of Elections Department, UNTAG and UNTAC Director, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Jean Arnault
Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Guatemala
Head, MINUGUA

Derek Boothby
Former Deputy Transitional Administrator, UNTAES

Michael Brown
Georgetown University

William Durch
The Henry L. Stimson Center

James Fearon
Stanford University

Shepard Forman
Director, Center for International Cooperation,
New York University

Sir Marrack Goulding
Former Undersecretary-General of the United Nations

David Hamburg
President Emeritus, Carnegie Corporation

Jeffrey Herbst
Princeton University

Terry Karl
Stanford University

Odin Knudsen
Former Country Director and
Resident Representative for the World Bank in West Bank/Gaza;
Senior Adviser, The World Bank

Chetan Kumar
Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict

Andrew Mack
Former Director of Policy Planning, United Nations
Fellow, Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research

David M. Malone
President, International Peace Academy

Stephen Marks
Harvard University

Eric Morris
Former Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Bosnia

Stephen Morrison
Former Director, African Affairs, Policy Planning Staff,
U.S. Department of State
Director, Africa Program, Center for Security and Strategic Studies

Michael O'Hanlon
Brookings Institution

Olara A. Otunnu
Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Amb. Frank Ruddy
Former Deputy Chairman, Referendum for MINURSO

Brig. Gen. Y. Saksena
Former Deputy Force Commander with the UN in Angola

James Schear
Former consultant to UN missions Cambodia and the former Yugoslavia
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs

Alvaro de Soto
UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs

Chandra Sriram
International Peace Academy

Mark Taylor
Peace Implementation Network, Fafo

Christine Wallich
Former Country Director for Bosnia-Herzegovina
Director, Strategy Group, The World Bank

Robert Wasserman
Former Deputy Police Commissioner, UNMIBH

Teresa Whitfield
Department of Political Affairs, United Nations

APPENDIX II

Ending Civil Wars: Volume 1. From Mediation to Implementation

Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens, Editors

A Project of the Center for International Security and Cooperation and the International Peace Academy

Introduction

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Stephen John Stedman

2. *The Nexus Between Mediation and Implementation*

Donald Rothchild

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Caroline Hartzell

4. *Everyone Participates, No One is Responsible: Peace Implementation in Guatemala*

William Stanley

David Holliday

5. *Implementing the Arusha Peace Accords in Rwanda: The Problem of Myopic Strategy*

Gilbert Khadiagala

Case Studies: Coercive Implementation Strategies

6. *Flawed Mediation, Chaotic Implementation: The 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Agreement*

Sumantra Bose

7. *Peace By Unconventional Means: Lebanon's Ta'if Agreement*

Marie-Joëlle Zahar

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Adekeye Adebajo

Reflections on Strategy

9. *Settlement Terms and Post-Agreement Stability*

Donald Rothchild

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Michael Doyle

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Donald Rothchild

International Peace Academy

777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
Tel: (212) 687-4300
Fax: (212) 983-8246
E-mail: ipa@ipacademy.org