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Institutions to Manage Threats

Abstract A sequenced architecture of commitment can be a good way to strengthen peace agreements and confidence-building. Late twentieth-century drivers of declining armed conflict can be reenergized for future declines. Single thin reeds of war prevention snap, yet they work when local and international society invests to bind them together in a fabric of multidimensional peacebuilding. Just as market manipulators have progressively learnt new ways to game markets, over time democracy manipulators learnt how to game democracy. The best way to win elections became to misgovern. Earlier in democracy's evolution, the best way to win elections was to govern well. Democracy's virtues can be retrieved by investing in checks and balances that temper domination.

Keyword Peacebuilding · Democracy · Gaming · Checks and balances

Containment of Threats

Threats to human security that must be contained are many. This book considers recurrence of certain threats as acute dangers—new forms of financial engineering to game markets that risk financial crises, monopoly, and domination through social media platforms that launch

lies and hate more virulently than truths and empathy, environmental emissions that threaten ecosystem collapse, viruses that propagate globalization of disease, and WMDs. These are the big-ticket items for threat containment. Yet we can also understand much about the character of threats that call for containment by considering lesser, more banal, but ubiquitous threats like small arms proliferation.

Comparative and historical research does not suggest that a right to bear arms, as in the US Constitution, is a pathway to enhancing freedom. Societies that do away with gun and sword carrying reduce violent crime, particularly mass shootings and gang warfare in the era of automatic weapons (Braithwaite 2022, Chapters 9–10). It can leave schoolchildren less free from violence, terror, and trauma. When Beau Nash, patron of the British nightlife capital of Bath, announced that it no longer was fashionable for young men to attend balls with a sword adorning their thigh, fewer balls were ruined by alcohol-fueled male rage (Trevelyan 1985, 385). Banning duels was part of ‘the civilizing process’ in the writing of Norbert Elias (1969). Homicides kill a lot more people than wars, though wars cascade to higher rates of homicide, rape, and terrorist bombings, which themselves often cascade to war (Braithwaite 2022). Regulating access to small arms, such as through the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty, is therefore an important way of containing risks from both. It is not the only one where huge progress has been made by leadership from Nobel Laureates of civil society. Another is the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention that resulted in a Nobel Peace Prize for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. We must be careful to never lose sight of this in the next chapter as we prioritize catastrophic risks posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).

In 2001, when progress stalled on the weapons disposal process during the Bougainville peace, Australia funded income-generating projects for ex-combatant groups in communities where weapons disposal proceeded. The three stages of the agreed weapons disposal process were completed in 2005 (Reagan 2005). This involved collecting weapons into locked boxes that were regularly audited by the Peace Monitoring Group from other countries of the region (Spark and Bailey 2005). At first, ex-combatant commanders of units that surrendered weapons kept a key to the locked boxes. In the second stage, locally contained weapons

were consolidated into more centrally located double-locked containers. The UN observer mission held the second key. After UN verification of completion of the second stage, the third stage was destruction of the weapons.

Seven and a half years between truce and disposal of most weapons was a long and risky wait. It was a double-edged risk. One side of that risk was what Thomas Tari and his gang did: Tari refused to dispose weapons at the end of the agreed containment stage, and later broke open the containers. He created a certain amount of havoc with them as a post-conflict criminal entrepreneur. The larger risk was restarting the war. This did not happen. One risk was posed by the Me'ekamui Defense Force, which was not a party to the peace, nor to weapons containment. The Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Resistance, the major armed groups that did sign the agreement, could only credibly promise to protect the unarmed international peace monitors because in the circumstances of an attack on them by the Me'ekamui Defense Force, they could open the containers.

Locking weapons into boxes to which militant commanders retain a key seemed an extraordinarily weak form of containment! Something not so dissimilar, but of lower transparency and integrity, occurred with the disarming of the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland. When Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that the IRA were in the process of complying with the obligation to surrender arms in the 1998 Belfast Good Friday Agreement, what was happening for a long time was that the British state was looking the other way. The IRA was declining to disarm for long enough to ensure that the 'Real IRA' and other pro-war factions were unable to dominate the old IRA militarily to take over their movement.¹ With both the BRA and the IRA, weak containment of small arms was sufficient to prevent local disputes from escalating to shootouts. In both cases, imperfect containment proved steppingstones to total disarmament.

The lesson from stories of weak containment of threats is that the containment dial can be turned up. Containment of threats is a continuous improvement imperative. It is important to prevent the perfect being an enemy of the good of weak containment of threats. It is also

imperative not to neglect continuous improvement of weapons containment by settling for peacemaking that is good enough. Confidence-building is so critical because a recurrent success of many peace operations is that when continuous dampening of violence and threats of its escalation is highly visible to people, a virtuous circle of continuous improvement in threat containment is accomplished. This is a virtue of melting down surrendered weapons and great Indigenous artists molding them into public sculptures that celebrate peace in the public square.

Bougainvilleans could see and understand that Thomas Tari's patch was a place where violence was still rife because Tari was not honoring the containment obligations of the peace agreement. In the case of the Bougainville peace, the virtuous circle of threat and violence containment was accelerated by an architecture of commitment: when one side was certified by the United Nations as having completed one commitment in the peace agreement (like containment of weapons in boxes), the other side was required to reciprocate by completing a specified commitment as the next step, then a further commitment was required to be signed off for the first side. This was the explicit confidence-building dynamic of the architecture of commitment (Reagan 2010; Braithwaite et al. 2010a). It was the kind of architecture that was never nailed down in Ukraine and Russia's implementation of the Minsk ceasefire agreement of 2014 discussed in the last chapter: neither side was serious about making a reciprocal architecture of commitment work.

Weapons containment in the Bougainville civil war is used here simply to illustrate the potential for turning up the dial on weak containment that builds confidence and that builds the strengthening of containment into an architecture of commitment. In the next section, I retrieve the legacy of Andrew Mack to reveal a more systematic approach toward generalizing these principles.

Resurrecting Andrew Mack

Andrew Mack led the now defunct Peace Research Centre at the Australian National University and later was head of its distinguished International Relations Department, formerly headed by Hedley Bull.

He worked on the staff of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as Director of his Strategic Planning Office from 1998 to 2001. He spent the final part of his career at Simon Fraser University where he produced the Human Security Report. He died in 2021. This section is a tribute to how Andrew Mack's scholarship has grown in relevance.

Mack was well known for the Human Security Report conclusion that, contrary to common perceptions of the time, armed conflicts and war deaths declined considerably after the end of the Cold War (Human Security Center 2005). Many were cynical about how possible it was to count these things well. There is no doubt that those who control the process of counting sometimes have an interest in exaggerating war dead. More often their interest is in undercounting, especially states undercounting their extrajudicial assassinations of civilian leaders (and their families) and ethnic cleansing operations by state police and militaries. There is also a tendency to count conflicts between armed groups as terrorism, civilian, religious, or ethnic conflict, anything other than 'civil war'. All this, however, was no less true during the Cold War than after.

Most scholars of war and peace were persuaded that Mack's evidence was basically right for the two decades after the end of the Cold War. For more than a decade up to the time of writing this book, however, that became less true. Wars and war deaths started to rise again. The United Nations (2023, 4) counted 2022 as the worst year in conflict deaths for 28 years; 2023 and 2024 may prove worse again. More than that, as documented earlier, risks of massive wars between major powers became more acute during and since the 2010s than they had been for half a century. Mack himself came to agree with this in the final years of his life. State-based armed conflicts increased from a low of 31 in 2010 to 56 in 2020 (Smith et al. 2022, 20), added to which was a more macro level of geopolitical risk with the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. John Harriss's Memorium for Andrew Mack at Simon Fraser University said that the updated Human Security Report 'on which Andrew was working towards the end of his life would have shown up the more recent, very disturbing reversal of the twenty-year trend toward fewer and less deadly wars. Even then, Andrew was moderately optimistic'. Allansson et al. (2017) discuss this evidence for the upturn in armed violence during the second decade of this century.

I too am optimistic with small and middling wars in the medium term, though not with long-run risks of accidental nuclear war unless the great powers reach consensus on a radical reset toward disarmament of WMDs and AI weapons. Even on the latter, however, Mack's conclusions are also supported by the steep reductions in nuclear weapons and improvements in mutual inspections and disarmament assurance documented in previous chapters, particularly for the decade after 1986. We saw as well that this has shunted into reverse since 2008. When we consider the places where war deaths are worst at the time of writing and during the past five years—Afghanistan, Yemen, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Myanmar, the Sahel, Sudan, now Gaza—these wars were a result of specific mistakes and specific ambitions. They were preventable by specific means of containment that are discussed in this book. Now I argue that the reversal of the Andrew Mack conclusion about twenty years of steep decline in war violence was particularly because of a rise in NATO militarism and in the militarism of other major powers. This began with the illegal bombing of Kosovo and the illegal invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and then an even more dangerous, even more criminal rise in Russian militarism from 2008.

Ukraine was the most disastrous element of this mutually militarist escalation, not only for the people of Ukraine. Ukraine was preventable by what Paul Keating described as the lesson from history that it is important to be magnanimous in victory, something NATO failed to be in refusing after 1990 to keep its *détente* promises and to find a place for Russia in a European security architecture. Likewise, the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan was a mistake of a 'do something' deterrence moment of American trauma. After routing the Taliban in 2001, the United States and its Northern Alliance allies doubled down on that mistake by again failing to be magnanimous with their enemies in defeat. In 2001, 2002, and 2005, large numbers of Taliban, including top-level leaders, were willing to come in from the mountains and surrender to find a peaceful place in post-war Afghanistan society.² Rather than treating them as Prisoners-of-War, or enemy forces ready to be reintegrated post-war, many of these surrendering Taliban were lied to and murdered between November 2001 and 2005. Their property was stolen, their families left destitute. The tide of surrender was turned by the stupidity of those

war crimes into a tide of rejoining and renewing the Taliban. A motivated Taliban consequently won the war against its powerful enemy two decades later.

Had the Trump Administration not made the specific mistake of renegeing on the Iran nuclear deal, it is plausible that confidence-building with Iran could have moved on to settling the war in Yemen years ago. This at least was what my conversations with staff of Iran's Council for National Security suggested. Finally, had NATO not made the mistake of seizing the Arab Spring uprising in Libya as an opportunity for regime change there, war and military coups would not have cascaded so disastrously with weapons looted from the Libyan arsenal spread right across Africa (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2018, 54–58). Today, largely thanks to instability in these countries, there are larger numbers of jihadists affiliated with Islamic State or Al Qaeda than there were on September 11, 2001, more of them than in the period after the initial military victories in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2003. And the world has more terrorist incidents and deaths than it had up to 2001; perhaps they have doubled, tripled, or worse (Kilkullen and Mills 2021). During the years between 2003 and 2017, Syria and Iraq were the largest contributors to war deaths. These wars likewise could have been avoided by rejecting the regime-change invasion of Iraq in 2003 that ultimately gave birth to Islamic State. Hence, it is not unreasonable to conjecture that had the United States behaved differently, had it rejected the geopolitics of regime change, had it not committed all the foregoing errors and war crimes, the worldwide downward trajectory of war deaths Andrew Mack correctly identified for the first twenty years from the end of the Cold War might have continued to the present and deeper into the twenty-first century.

All that said, it is complex to resolve how structural or how contingent downward shifts in the deadliness of armed violence might or might not be. What is most interesting and enduring about Mack's contribution was the reasons he gave for his optimism. Andrew Mack painted a target on himself when he boldly, influentially asserted that war violence was in sharp decline, particularly after this was taken up by a public intellectual with the profile of Harvard's Steven Pinker (Pinker and Mack 2014). The problem with the legitimate doubting reactions to Mack's

and Pinker's statistics was that the critics used them to discount the grounds for optimism that Mack articulated for what was undoubtedly substantial reduction in wars and war deaths from the end of the Cold War, even if the trend reversed this century. What we must do is diagnose whether there were drivers of the kind that Mack expressed that did explain a twenty-year decline from the end of the Cold War, and other drivers that explain the reversal. That is, scholars should resurrect a Mack analysis that may be fundamentally correct for that twenty-year period. My conclusion is that it is promising in its longer-term relevance.

Drivers of Optimism About Peace

Some of Mack's drivers of optimism were arresting. He argued that in the two decades after the Cold War there was a surge in refugee numbers. How could this be grounds for optimism? Scholars tend to use refugee numbers as an indicator of peacebuilding failure. Mack's reply was until the end of the Cold War it was rare for safe passage of refugee exit from fire zones to be opened, and for international protection of those refugees to then be provided. There is a profound counterpoint here about improved survival prospects in war by these means. At the end of the 1970s, there had been a little over 10 million refugees worldwide. This had increased to 40 million by 1992 (Mack 2007). There has been massive further growth in the past decade with the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide, hitting 108 million in 2022.³

I met with the leadership of the Carter Center in Atlanta at the height of the war in Syria. I commented that the United Nations had put its A team into Syrian peace diplomacy—Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi. In quick succession I lamented that your President Carter had also failed as a Syrian peacemaker. No, he had not failed, they insisted. Carter had helped negotiate local and temporary pauses to fighting that allowed the safe exit of hundreds of thousands of refugees from the warzone. This had made a deadly war much less deadly. That was why Syria was so much less deadly than conflicts that had started twenty years earlier in Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo. This was a true and arresting insight even though Russian air attacks struck fleeing Syrian refugees at times.

The terrible thing Syria and Congo had in common was that in the war that shifted from Rwanda to Congo, and from Iraq to Syria, many state militaries and non-state armed groups joined in, and when they did, their domestic enemies moved into the cockpit as well. Enemies seized cheap opportunities to target their domestic foe on a foreign battleground. Civil wars of six foreign countries were fought inside DRC (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2018, 84). Likewise in Syria, Israel seized opportunities to attack Hezbollah forces from Lebanon inside Syria without triggering a new Israel-Lebanon war, Turkey targeted Kurdish fighters who were backed by the United States, and the Kurds targeted Turkish-backed forces. Russian airstrikes sought to counter the influence of US airstrikes in steering the course of the war. China had some involvement too (with a particular interest in cleaning out Uyghur Islamic State fighting groups in Syria, and in supporting Russian influence on the battlefield in its diplomacy with Syria). There were even different Palestinian factions fighting one another. Fierce battles between Islamic State and Al Qaeda also raged in Syria. Various other cross-cutting conflicts cascaded into the Syrian cockpit beyond the founding three-way conflict between the Assad regime, Syrian democratic forces, and Islamic State. Then there was the Yazidi genocide of the cross-border Iraq-Syria conflicts (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2018, 84–89). The same cockpit dynamic that Syria and Congo suffered had been seen in the worst conflagration of early modernity, The Thirty Years War in central Europe.⁴

It is early days in the Ukraine war, but hopefully it will not become as deadly a cockpit as these three. Already, however, formidable Chechen brigades fight in Ukraine, rejoining the Chechen Civil War fighting Russians and Chechen warlord loyalists of Putin on Ukrainian soil. As of September 2023, even Ukraine's Defence Minister is a Tartar Crimean, doubtless motivated by Russia's wars against the Tartars, and Russian ethnic cleansing of Tartars from Crimea by Stalin. On Peacebuilding Compared fieldwork in Georgia in 2023 I was chatting on the street with a group of young Georgian men when we were directed to a poster to join to fight with Georgian units of the Azov Battallion in Ukraine to strike back at Russia for its 2008 invasion of Georgia. This is how

cascades of cockpit wars begin. They are hard to end once started; Mack prioritized prevention before they start.

Mack concluded that increased investment in humanitarian intervention after the Cold War helped with the war death declines he documented. This in turn was enabled by increased investment in multi-dimensional UN peacekeeping during these two decades. The evidence is that peacekeeping contributed to the outcome of more than 20 years of reduced war deaths after the Cold War ended. This was also reinforced by the rapid growth in experience and competence of nonviolent civilian protection organizations like Nonviolent Peaceforce (Rosenblum-Kumar 2023), healing organizations such as Médecins sans Frontiers, growing access to Red Cross/Red Crescent and specialist refugee organizations like the International Rescue Committee and the Norwegian Refugee Council. Refugee camps supported and protected by the UN may not have been attractive places to live, nor safe, healthy places to survive, yet they tended to be safer spaces than living in the line of fire, or waiting to be found under the rubble by sniffer dogs.

Much more important in Andrew Mack's analysis than such improvements in mopping up at the back end of violence was progress in preventive diplomacy at the front end. He concluded that 'UN preventive diplomacy missions (i.e., those that seek to prevent wars from breaking out in the first place) increased sixfold between 1990 and 2002. UN peacemaking activities (those that seek to stop ongoing conflicts) also increased nearly fourfold - from four in 1990 to fifteen in 2002... The number of Friends of the Secretary-General, contact groups, and other mechanisms created by governments to support UN peacemaking activities and peace operations... increased from four in 1990 to more than twenty-eight in 2003, a sevenfold increase' (Mack 2007, 527). He pointed out that similar peacebuilding by regional organizations such as the African Union and the South Pacific Forum also increased, as did Track Three preventive diplomacy and peacemaking by international NGOs.

It is wrong to see UN and regional peacekeeping missions as simply engaged with securing a peace after a past war. Around half of post-conflict countries relapse into armed conflict within five years of war's end.

Hence, peace operations are centrally engaged with preventive diplomacy concerning the next war. Peacemaking with outbreaks of political violence that might be precursors to that next war are such an important part of the work of peace operations. Mack's data showed that UN peacekeeping missions were few—at or well under 5—for the first three decades of the United Nations. After 1988 they escalated rapidly to reach a peak of around 20 UN peace operations between 1993 and 2000 (Mack 2007, 529). These were complemented by many non-UN regional peace operations. At the time of writing, and for some years, UN peace operations have been down again to 14 missions. Their average size in personnel and budget also declined. UN peacekeepers have been absent from super-spreader conflicts like Libya, Sudan and the 2014 conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

African Union peace operations have increased to substitute for Western states and the UN walking away from peacekeeping deployments. Some successfully delivered peace. Others are peace enforcement operations against insurgencies that have been taken over in many parts of Africa by armed groups affiliated with Islamic State. The French military helped with support from US air bases that target Islamic State members. The Russian Wagner corporation also joined in this work, sometimes in deals that give them control of natural resource assets, or as a result of military coups they encouraged that displaced French and American military support with Wagner support. It is a stretch to describe this work as 'peacekeeping' to contain Islamic State by African, French, US, and Russian forces.

During the period of rapid UN peacekeeping escalation between 1989 and 1994, UN peacekeeper numbers increased sevenfold (Hille 2020). Like the number of missions, the number of UN peacekeepers, and especially peacekeepers from wealthy countries,⁵ has been in decline throughout this century, continuing to the 2015–2020 period when the number of UN peacekeepers declined by 20,000 (Hille 2020). The only positive quantitative trend is that China has greatly increased its financial contribution in recent years and is contributing far more Chinese peacekeepers than all other permanent members of the Security Council combined. On the negative side, China is interested in reducing the

importance of human rights work, democracy, and civil society development in UN peacekeeping (Fung 2023) when the evidence shows that it is multidimensionality in peace operations that includes these things that deliver peace maximally. International funding for UN peacekeeping plunged particularly steeply in the first two years of the Trump Administration, when United States support fell by 44% between 2016 and 2018. Most wealthy countries followed the US lead (Congressional Research Service 2021). Great power support for preventive diplomacy leavened by the staff of the UN Secretary-General has also declined. At the time of writing, there have been no high-profile peace initiatives by the Secretary-General that made a difference in Ukraine,⁶ as so many did with the wars of Kofi Annan's time as Secretary-General. More than ever, great powers want a weak UN Secretary-General who they can dominate.

Here is where we begin to see the power and paradox in the contribution of Andrew Mack. In the present period of history, as important contributors to peace such as peacekeeping were declining again, war and war deaths were increasing again. To sharpen the point of the reasons for Mack's optimistic analysis, the evidence for the effectiveness of UN-backed peace agreements and peacekeeping has become much stronger. One reason is that peacekeeping has become more effective in keeping the peace in recent decades compared with its quantitative success rate during the Cold War (Fortna 2004). The evidence has also become stronger in recent years that peace agreements are effective in preventing more deaths and more wars (Regan et al. 2009; Human Security Report 2013, 174–175; Karstedt 2017), one of the other key features of the international order that Mack revealed as improving during the 20 years after the Cold War. Peacekeeping is only one of Mack's reasons for the decline in the number and deadliness of armed conflicts during that 20 years from Cold War's end. I will show that a number of the factors that Mack found to be drivers of a more peaceful world in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century were put into reverse in recent years. This went hand in hand with the downturn of peacekeeping investments by wealthy countries. First, the next two pages detail the point that the evidence has become stronger that Mack was right in thinking, contrary to what most people believe, that UN peacekeeping does work in reducing wars and war deaths. Moreover, Mack proved right in his

argument that while all efforts to tackle root causes of conflicts are partial and flawed, the UN and other international institutions did successfully increase their investment in diagnosis of the root causes of conflicts and in multidimensional means of tackling them through peace operations and wider programs of peacebuilding (Mack 2007, 529).

One war mostly begets more wars: of 108 countries that experienced civil war between 1946 and 2017, only 27% avoided subsequent return to war (Walter et al. 2020, 7). While peacekeeping is well known to have failed catastrophically to prevent war in cases like Rwanda, the statistical impact across all cases demonstrates effectiveness. Collier's (2009, 96) program of empirical research concluded that US\$100 million spent on UN peacekeepers reduced the cumulative 10-year risk of reversion to conflict from 38 to 17%. That risk falls further to 13% if the investment in peacekeeping is scaled up to US\$200 million. Collier's team presented his evidence on the benefits and costs for the world economy of investment in peacekeeping to a panel of Nobel laureate economists for the Copenhagen Consensus. This involved ten rival research teams making a case for international public money to be spent on something. The Copenhagen Consensus panel's verdict selected peacekeeping as one of their endorsed public expenditures. Doyle and Sambanis (2006, 336) found that the greater effectiveness of a combination of treaties and transformational UN peacebuilding is particularly dramatic when local peacebuilding resources and capacities are low. In a follow-up of these data, Sambanis (2008, 23) found that UN peace operations reduce the risk of peace failure in the longer run by about 50%, as did Fortna (2008).

Quinn et al. (2007, 187) found the combination of a treaty and a peace operation reduced the probability of civil war recurrence by 54%. These peace impacts persist after peacekeepers leave. Many other studies confirm a big statistical contribution of peace operations to building peace (Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Walter 2002; Fortna 2003, 2004, 2008; Fortna and Howard 2008; Nilsson 2006; Quinn et al. 2007; Gilligan and Sergenti 2008; Call 2012; Hultman et al. 2013; Riordan 2013). Fortna (2003, 2008) also found a large tendency for ceasefires overseen by international peacekeepers to be more effective than those without peacekeepers. Hampson (1996) argues that peace agreements are

not self-executing: sustained third party leadership, mediation, problem-solving, and peacebuilding are needed as cement that holds a peace together. At least up to the undermining of the UN after 2011, wars that were more intractable and serious were the ones that attracted the investment in UN peace operations. Fortna's (2008) systematic quantitative data confirm this. When Gilligan and Sergenti (2008) corrected for the effects of non-random assignment with matching techniques, they found that the causal effect of UN peace operations in preventing war was even larger than would have been estimated had there been no correction for non-random assignment of UN missions.

Great power policy has undercut this evidence-based finding. Western powers decided that wars of regime change might be better ideas than UN peacekeeping in Libya and Syria. Russia made the same decision in Ukraine and Georgia. In 2014 none of the major powers pushed for UN peacekeeping to consolidate the Donbas ceasefire. Walter et al. (2020) completed the most systematic review of the evidence on peacekeeping, while in addition showing that the *mere promise*⁷ that peacekeepers will arrive can dampen violence and encourage mediation and signing of peace agreements. They were stuck by the consistency of study findings:

Almost all of them find that peacekeeping is highly effective at preventing violence before it begins, reducing violence in the midst of war and preventing violence from recurring once it has ended. All else equal, countries and regions that receive peacekeeping missions experience less armed conflict, fewer civilian and combatant deaths, fewer mass killings, longer periods of post-conflict peace and fewer repeat wars than those that do not receive peacekeepers. This relationship – between peacekeeping and lower levels of violence – is so consistent across large-n analyses that it has become one of the strongest findings in the international relations literature to date. The power of peacekeeping is all the more striking given that the UN tends to intervene in the toughest cases. Multiple scholarly studies have found that the UN Security Council tends to send peacekeepers to countries with more violence . . . (Walter et al. 2020, 2)

The last two sentences of this paragraph ceased being true a few years before they were written. Another qualification to the conclusion is that the UN does not send peacekeepers to countries that refused to accept

a UN peace operation, and this is a methodological bias that cuts in the opposite direction. Moreover, countries that received peacekeepers during the past three decades almost always got UN human rights, gender rights, child protection staff; they got UN humanitarian assistance, housing for refugees, assistance with economic development, with good governance, policing, and security sector reform, all rolled into a peace operation package. The evidence is that peacekeepers make the best contributions to preventing war when they are part of multidimensional peacebuilding that supportively delivers peace dividends (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Walter et al. 2020). Although military peacekeepers are effective in this mix, mostly unarmed UN police seem more so. In a multivariate and matching analysis by Hultman et al. (2013) across all African armed conflicts between 1991 and 2008, movement from zero to just 200 UN police in a peace operation, conditioned by controls on other variables, was associated with a reduction in the expected number of civilian killings from 96 per month to 14. Given that this is a per month estimate, and the average duration of deployments is 65 months, small contingents of UN police seem to save very large numbers of lives. This probably means it is a good idea to follow recommendations of successive Secretaries-General to establish a UN Emergency Police with diverse experience in prevention of ethnic and religious conflict, electoral violence, policing humanitarian corridors for fleeing civilians, and dousing sparks for violence (Johansen 2021, 272–275).

Andrew Mack conceived the end of the Cold War itself as another factor, indeed the most persuasive one, that explains the decline of civil wars. Containment was a doctrine that forbade direct military confrontation of other major powers on their own territory or that of their allies. Proxy wars in the Global South, however, became important ways for great powers to signal to each other that they were displeased with their adversary. Tit-for-tat cascades of proxy wars could occur when one great power fomented a proxy war that rattled the cage of its adversary; then the adversary would start a second proxy war that would displease the other great power. With the end of the Cold War, there was no longer reason for these expensive cascades of proxy conflicts. We have shown, however, that countries like Iran found new reasons to fester proxy conflicts. Moreover, there are NATO strategists today who do not

want to devote troops to fighting Russia directly but who think that supporting proxy war to the last Ukrainian is a good strategy for weakening Russia. That does not mean it is geostrategically smart. NATO might also be weakened in comparison to China, and Russia might join future wars on the side of China. Is it morally right to use the long-suffering people of Eastern Ukraine who have been endlessly bombarded by both sides since 2014 as pawns of the geopolitical ambitions of both sides?

Russia joined the largest civil war of the past decade in Syria on the side of a Syrian government that was adamantly opposed by the United States. It was consequential as a return to Cold War playbooks, as was Ukraine. Russia became the most decisive actor in shaping battlefields in Ukraine and Syria and the terms of peacemaking, as it did in the smaller 2020–2023 war between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Ngorno-Karabakh, and previous wars across the former Russian empire in Georgia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Tajikistan, and beyond. The trajectory of Russian war crime led from the razing of Grozny (Chechnya), to devastation of Aleppo (Syria), to the razing of Mariupol (Ukraine).

The dampening of ideological hostility Mack saw as a feature of the late 1980s and early 1990s that contributed to conflict reduction became a lost opportunity, as Henry Kissinger's revised views now also contend. Western hostility with Russia and China rose again. Russia and China increasingly voted together to veto resolutions proposed by the West, especially after Western members of the Security Council misled other countries on the intent of the 2011 resolutions on Libya, which was for regime change rather than for a responsibility to protect. In this, Russia and China count on support from many African states who also resented the way Western powers rode roughshod over their analysis of the responsibility to protect in Libya.

This tragic weakening of the peacemaking capabilities of the Security Council is evident in the numbers of vetoes. As the Cold War was ending between 1987 and 1990 Security Council vetoes more than halved compared to their level in 1985 and 1986. In 1990 and 1991 there were no vetoes at all. Transformatively, the Security Council was working with consensus. There were only two Russian and two Chinese vetoes throughout the 1990s and only four Russian and one Chinese veto

in the 2000s. Western reaction to the Arab Spring and Russian reactions to NATO expansion crossing its red lines were turning points. President Bush prepared the way with his 2008 announcement that a path would be opened to Ukraine and Georgia joining NATO. The consequences of this were much wider than simply the Russian-provoked war in Georgia of 2008. There were 11 Chinese and 20 Russian vetoes in the 2010s, a higher level than for nearly the entire Cold War.⁸ This was one factor that hobbled the launch of new UN peacekeeping operations and other forms of peacebuilding.

One of the most important of these other forms of peacemaking was reaching peace agreements. This was happening at almost three times the rate per annum in the 20 years after the end of the Cold War, compared to what had been happening during the Cold War. In the 2010s, geopolitically important implementation of peace agreements for places like Ukraine, Libya, and Syria was no longer happening. There was no semblance of progress anywhere that was hard, deep, or important, like Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, or Afghanistan. The great progress of decades up to 2011 even reversed in the deadliest conflict in Congo and across sub-Saharan Africa. Iraq returned to war during that decade as Islamic State conquered and occupied Iraq's second city, Mosul. Peace diplomacy brought meager returns in the Arab Spring cases. Even in Myanmar, which had seen a diplomatic triumph of movement toward democracy, China was not as helpful as it might have been hoped after 2010. Less progress toward peaceful resolutions with ethnic armies fighting with the state military was achieved during Myanmar's democratic period than in previous decades. When Myanmar's progress unraveled to genocide and finally a total explosion of state violence and tyranny in 2021, Myanmar's many ethnic wars re-kindled.

In sum, the thawing of Cold War conditions that Mack concluded had enabled so much progress on so many peacebuilding fronts since the 1980s was refreezing progress with peace again after 2011.

Another Mack positive was that wars of struggle against colonialism were mostly over before the end of the Cold War. This continued to be true after 2011, though Islamic State, the Taliban, and some other important combatants of this era continued to see themselves as fighting against Western colonialism. Fighting in Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan,

and Armenia can also be read as intentional disruption by Russia to reassert Russian imperium over its periphery.

The Minorities at Risk Project had shown that high levels of state-sanctioned discrimination is a key driver of ethnic armed conflict (Gurr 2000; Goldstone 2008). Mack (2007, 526) emphasized the conclusion from the Minorities at Risk Project that there had been a 'steady decline in political discrimination by governments around the world since 1950' that almost halved by 2003 and also a substantial fall in ethnic economic discrimination. Since then we have seen how NATO-Russian tensions produced a resurgence of two-way discrimination against ethnic Russians and Ukrainians alike inside Ukraine. The Yazidi genocide occurred in Iraq, the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar, the incipient Uyghur genocide in China, and steps were taken toward renewal of the longstanding Armenian genocide. Ethnic Chinese were targeted with violence during the covid crisis in the United States and Australia as hard as these states worked at trying to cover up this truth. The violence between Muslims and Judeo-Christians of the 2010s morphed to more extreme forms after 2010 with the rise of neo-Nazi anti-Muslim terror and Islamic State beheadings.

Resurgent racism and religious discrimination were stoked by new social media platforms that maximized advertising revenue by spreading lies and vilification rather than quality journalism, truth, and reconciliation. Another of Mack's points was that the years after the end of the Cold War saw a surge of reconciliation across many fronts with many truth or reconciliation commissions established in the aftermath of violence. Takeoff of a restorative justice movement was championed by Desmond Tutu (1999, 1) with the words 'No Future Without Forgiveness'. It spread to other African peace processes, such as Sierra Leone. A great deal of evidence suggests that Mack was right that such reconciliation increased quantitatively as well as in quality between 1989 and the early years of the 2000s. Tutu and Mandela are no longer shaping hearts and minds in the way they were before 2011. Forgiveness does not flourish in the Twittersphere. This was not helped by the reality that after 2008 Russia decided to move away from reconciliation and turn to divide the United States against itself, Britain against the EU, West against West. Donald Trump was one leader that Putin secretly supported

in this project. Putin saw this as payback for the way the United States had sought to divide Russia against Putin, and the old communist world against Russia, through willfully fomenting color revolutions. The payback was executed by a new form of ideological cyberwarfare.

China learnt from both the United States and Russia. China's cyber-warriors took the tactics to new levels of global capability and danger. Arab and Jewish fundamentalists also wage cyberwar in social media to widen schisms in the aftermath of the peace politics of the Arab Spring turning sour and the Israel-Palestine Track II peace diplomacy of the 1990s turning sour. This befell Eastern European color revolutions, where the reconciliation started by Cold War *détente* soured. This now happens across many other religious, racial, and political intra-national divides at the hands of people who want to be 'influencers'. Structurally, platform capitalism is important for understanding why the virtuous trends identified by Andrew Mark unraveled and reversed.

After the Cold War there was also a transitional justice cascade (Sikkink 2011; Olsen et al 2010) of war crimes prosecutions and other forms of human rights enforcement, truth-telling, and reconciliation which have been shown to be more effective in reducing war crimes in combination than separately. The International Criminal Court was established, something that could never have been possible during the Cold War. President Clinton wanted to ratify its Rome statute but by the end of his administration neocons and hawks were already becoming ascendant again. On the Mack analysis, increased institutionalization of truth, justice, and reconciliation was also backed by growing use of sanctions to underwrite what I call restorative and responsive regulation of war and peace. I would say that in this era the sanctions regime was purely punitive at times, but for the most part embedded in more restorative and responsive institutions of diplomacy than the present more narrowly punitive use of sanctions. The Security Council increased more than fivefold the deployment of sanction regimes between 1990 and 2000 (Mack 2007, 528).

Concern has grown about the hypocrisy of great powers not ratifying the Rome statute to make their troops and leaders vulnerable to the International Criminal Court while they call upon the ICC to prosecute their adversaries. The invasion of Ukraine was a war crime; this view should be

independently tested by an international court. According to the United States, the view that the 2001 and 2003 invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were war crimes should never be so tested. The peace movement seeks to persuade international society to look back to Pearl Harbor as indeed a war crime, but why was Hiroshima not a crime against civilians? The blitz in which Hitler killed so many civilians in British cities was a war crime. Perhaps the fire-bombing of Dresden and Hamburg were as well? The Allied powers' World War II generation never thought that way. Their children did.

Mack pointed out that UN authorizations for robust use of force to protect civilians, or such authorizations when spoilers threaten a peace agreement with brutal force, gradually became stronger in the decades after the end of the Cold War, particularly after Rwanda and the counter-genocide against Hutus in Congo. Neither Andrew Mack nor I would interpret UN sanctions or peacekeeper use of force as clearly effective on their own. On the contrary, they are thin reeds, which on their own can be counterproductive in militarizing peacebuilding.

Sanctioning capabilities that are bound together with the other variables of the Mack analysis, in a judicious peacebuilding mix where coercion is an absolute last resort, is effective as a mix with capabilities to escalate interventionism that heals. This at least is what the theory and evidence for restorative and responsive regulation and meta regulation of violence concludes (Braithwaite 2022).

Mack also points out that from the end of the Cold War peacebuilding NGOs became important in Track II and III mediation and reconciliation of conflicts, in truth-telling, in transitional justice which became an increasingly more restorative form of justice across all dimensions of peacebuilding.

Although international support is so often state-to-state, NGO support can be people-to-people, especially at more local levels in an era where the evidence has become clearer that the local turn is important to the effectiveness of peacebuilding (Mac Ginty 2021; Kalyvas 2006). Put another way, the evidence is that local fissures and grievances connect up with national ones to foment armed violence; local units with fighting capacity draw strength from national ones, and vice versa. Peacebuilding

must therefore reinforce local, national, and international capabilities to work with one another.

Mack found democratization to be something that contributed to peace, the more so the deeper the democratic roots. The democracy effect sharply improved at Cold War's end, and in the 20 years after (Johansen 2021). Not only has the rise in the number of democracies and the quality of democratic institutions ceased this century. Democracy increasingly has become a cause of war as well as an institution that prevents it in other cases. One reason is that elected leaders have become more adept at gaming democratic institutions to keep up appearances of democracy, rather than planting deeply rooted democratic institutions. An adept practitioner of this is Vladimir Putin.

Braithwaite and D'Costa (2018) and the Peacebuilding Compared data since then found empirically that democracy has progressively become more gamed to the point where it is a driver of domination and violence. Electoral competition can widen cleavages and create niches for violent groups to be enrolled by political parties to intimidate voters and opponents. Peacebuilding Compared found this to be happening to some degree in 52 of the first 73 armed conflicts to be coded. Braithwaite and D'Costa rediscovered in modern South Asia Roland Paris's (2004) conclusion on the limits of a liberal peace and on the virtues of institutionalization that ground and temper the power of democracy and markets. This is also Mansfield and Snyder's (2007) and Collier's (2009) empirical conclusion—that when domestic institutions are weak, the process of democratization promotes war. The empirical research of Collier's team and other evidence argues that checks and balances in institutions—such as the rule of law—are what help democracies prevent civil war (Hegre and Nygård 2015). However, 'it has proved much easier to introduce elections than checks and balances' (Collier 2009, 44). This is a particular example of a more general conclusion we have already reached—single thin reeds of war prevention that snap on their own often work when local and international society invests to bind them together in a fabric of multidimensional peacebuilding.

Moreover, 'taken together, the results on elections and democratization are consistent: if democracy means little more than elections, it is damaging to the [good government] reform process' (Collier 2009, 45).

The reason is that good government is not the most cost-effective way of benefiting from power. If you can get away with buying elections, corrupting an electoral commission, intimidating or killing opponents, scapegoating a minority to cultivate majoritarian support, jailing strong opponents on trumped up charges and running against weaker ones, or simply miscounting votes, once in government you can reimburse these costs by pillaging the state. That is the reality of the twentieth-century history of Ukraine, Russia, and so much of the world that was newly democratizing in the 1990s. Incumbents corrupt democracies by embezzling billions from state coffers, favoring oligarchs (Russian, Ukrainian, or Burmese) and ruling families with government contracts, welcoming foreign investors when they donate to the incumbent party. If politicians try to win elections with good government, their capacity to benefit from power is reduced. This is because good government means the rule of law and checks and balances on abuse of power that place limits on their pillaging of the state (Braithwaite 2022, Chapter 5).

The best way to accumulate power and money is to win elections by methods that require the winner to misgovern. Once in place—with the rule of law and checks and balances such as parliamentary committees, audit offices, electoral commissions, anti-corruption commissions, ombudsmen, human rights commissions, civil service commissions, and independent judges and prosecutors—good government does become a good way to win elections. Checks and balances can create resilient path dependency to both democracy and economic growth. Until the nineteenth century, the best way to win power for rulers of almost all societies was without democracy at all. The monarch would hold most of the society down in poverty after wealth was extracted from them. Unpopularity did not matter so long as the king was adept at paying off as small a ruling coalition of supporters that the king could get away with to defend his rule (De Mesquita et al. 2011). Much of the world has reversed backwards toward that world before the cascading democracy revolutions of the 1800s and 1900s.

Being cursed with lootable natural resources can increase a country's susceptibility to corruption, civil war, and many other problems. Yet, for countries with democratic institutions that include strong checks on the executive, resource rents do not predict corruption (Bhattacharyya and

Hodler 2009). This means there is something the international community can do about these problems. After civil wars that tear a country apart, international society can put in place a UN transitional administration that is a hybrid of local, national, UN, and broadly participatory deliberative governance wherein both the local and the international install checks and balances and the rule of law. Today, most influential US commentators reject this view. Their analysis is that Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine demonstrate that US nation building does not work. It certainly does not work when the United States indulges in militarized gameplaying, pretending to create democracies by force of arms after which it sought to dictate who should win their elections.

The brute reality, however, is that once great powers have broken societies like Ukraine, Afghanistan, or Iraq they experience pressure to help put them together again. Nation rebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq was not a choice after the United States had broken those societies, or broken Islamic State in Syria, unless it wanted to leave that task to Russian or Chinese leadership. Peacebuilding can be done well, as it increasingly was during those 20 years that grabbed the imagination of Andrew Mack in important places like Indonesia and Timor-Leste, that became genuine democracies and experienced steep downward trajectories in violence. If the United States persists in doing the work of healing nations in militarized and incompetent ways as it did in Afghanistan, of course Russia and China will step into that challenge and become more influential in that region. In Iraq (and Syria and Lebanon), it should have expected that Iran, that was always a more geostrategically important and potent adversary than Iraq, would step in to become more influential over Iraq's post-war governments than the United States. Nationbuilding nihilism is more than wrongheaded; it is not even a choice for countries intent on being globally influential.

Many levels of governance can create the virtuous path dependency toward peace and democracy detected in the work of Mack. Few of today's emerging democracies have had reversals as bad as the reversals of most of the greatest powers of the Western alliance—Germany and Japan in the 1930s and 1940s, France with Robespierre's bloody tyranny, the Napoleonic wars after the French Revolution, and America's terrible civil war seven decades after its inspiring republican revolution. Nation

building never enjoys linear progress. The Peacebuilding Compared project reveals that success at peacebuilding and building democracies with separated powers is difficult and a matter of degree (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2018). It is least likely when nation building is militarized, as in Afghanistan and Iraq, as opposed to a humanitarian journey of human development. Once good transitional institutions for peace take root, pillaging the state through bad governance becomes a way to lose elections. Opposition political parties then acquire enough clout—with support from the separation of powers, from a semi-autonomous legal profession, accounting profession, a civil service, and a vibrant civil society—to protect the established checks and balances against political leaders who seek advantage by corroding them. The hard part is the transition to bedding down path dependency on a polity with checks and balances.

Other elements of Collier's (2009) work suggest that we can get better at that hard part. Indeed, as discussed earlier, Collier is convincing that it is in the economic interests of rich countries to invest in checks and balances for societies recovering from wars. The empirical work shows that the costs to the world economy of spending on peacekeeping are a quarter of the benefits and, indeed, that post-conflict aid has a significantly stronger economic benefit than foreign aid at other times (Collier 2007, 2009, 83–92).

The Big Picture of Catastrophe Prevention

The conclusion for our historical period is that longer-term containment of states is generally not a good strategy. Containment is impossible with China. Containment was a successful alternative to confrontation with a Soviet Union that was never on a trajectory to becoming the dominant world economy. China, in contrast, owns a large part of the US national debt and controls a quantum of trade which the United States and EU could never afford to sever. Dollarization of the world economy can last a considerable time, but the United States can only sustain these advantages through an interdependence with China that it currently puts at

risk. Containment can be useful as a short-term strategy when fundamental international obligations are breached, as with the 2021 military coup in Myanmar. In the longer run, principled engagement is normally the better strategy, as it was in motivating the old military junta to democratize Myanmar in the first place in 2011. Short-term containment of states is more likely to succeed when there is strong signaling that there will be principled engagement when despots soften their domination. When international society is generous with hands of help, when despotism is on a trajectory toward being dismantled, collaboration can deliver mutual protection from all manner of global catastrophes.

The reason for this being so was developed in Chapter 2. Because global crises cascade faster and in more tightly coupled ways than they did during the Cold War, Washington needs Moscow and Beijing, Moscow and Beijing need Washington, today more than during the Cold War. In all eras of recorded human history before the Cold War, military domination of the world overwhelmed all considerations. Realism worked as it delivered both great good and great evil. Moscow and Washington both learned in Afghanistan that seeking to expand domination of the world by military means no longer made sense in the way it once did. Global capabilities of one's enemies to cascade proxy insurgents and supply them with drones and guns make contemporary attempts at military domination difficult. Some would say war has become rather obsolescent in terms of realist empirical efficacy (Johansen 2021). China is right to believe that political legitimacy at home can unravel when a great power loses wars to lesser powers or occupies them but fails to subdue them. Impatiently flexing military muscle undercuts soft power of a great power globally. Increasingly, great powers cut and run in ways that weaken them. The United States learnt this in more than Iraq, Libya, and Vietnam. Russia learnt it in Afghanistan and one day it will learn this in Ukraine. Like Spain and Britain, France learnt this with many cut and run wars in old colonies that became ungovernable for France, from Vietnam to Algeria.

During the decades of successful Soviet containment, NATO did not need Moscow's cooperation in conquering financial crises because Moscow had no banks that were tightly coupled with NATO banks. None of the ecological crises of the Soviet era were so dire that NATO

could not deal with them without Soviet cooperation. Ironically, this imperative first became deep in the year when Cold War containment ended—1987—the year the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting substances was signed to save hundreds of thousands of human lives across the planet. The end of the Cold War coincided with the strongest, most effective environmental treaty ever signed. As good as Soviet and Chinese scientists were, during Cold War containment, no pandemic was so severe that collaboration with Soviet and Chinese scientists and epidemiologists to find and diffuse ways to conquer the crises were indispensable. While there were epidemics, none were as demanding of collaboration with Russia and China as the COVID-19 crisis. 1918 was not a year of extraordinary takeoff in levels of influenza in Russia; it was a low influenza year (Kolosova et al. 2019). Russian troops had exited World War I early and, in any case, had been fighting on the Western front rather than the Eastern front where the great influenza was spreading. Russia experienced a lower death rate from the great influenza than any country, while India suffered because it had so many troops transit through Etaples; 17 million Indians may have died, five percent of the population (Mayor 2000). The greatest suffering of World War I was not born of bullets in Europe but of virus in India.

International society must be assiduous in containing the multitudes of specific and widely diffused threats to peace today. Containing small arms complements nuclear weapons containment as an imperative because small arms wars might one day inadvertently lay tripwires for sleepwalkers into nuclear war. A legacy of Andrew Mack is showing that multidimensional progress on multiple threats was enabled by the lifting of containment of the Soviet Union. It ended great power resistance to vetoing Security Council resolutions proposed by enemies that in the past contained them and fought proxy wars against them. This accomplished substantial decline in wars and war deaths. A decline in war deaths results in a decline in crime deaths and suicide deaths, and both crime and suicide take more lives globally than war (Braithwaite 2022, Chapter 11). Hunger and disease accounts for more deaths than war and deaths from domestic crime combined. A decline in war, however, drives a decline in deaths from disease, from ecosystem collapse, and from famine and poverty. The 20 years after the Cold War surged the

effectiveness of peacemaking and peacebuilding and a healthier world of less poverty. The United States might be the most powerful economy, but it is not immune from these trends. America's war against communism in Latin America morphed into a war on drugs after armed groups split from insurgencies to militarize the drug trade. The war on drugs elevated deaths from crime and opiate overdose in the United States as well as Latin America. Years before the Fentanyl epidemic and covid, life expectancy was declining in the United States for the first time in a century. Fentanyl and COVID-19 accelerated that new trend further after 2019.

The progress that excited Andrew Mack has now reversed with mutual brooding, butting, and subverting toward something worse than a new kind of Cold War that ran hot in Ukraine and Syria. The world worries perhaps more than it should that China could go that way in Taiwan, the south China Sea, or elsewhere. Cyber ops and space ops became proxies that can substitute for the proxy wars in the Global South during the Cold War. Cyberspace and outer space became new worlds for proxy jostling between great powers. Decline in state-based discrimination that was a legacy of the 1986–2011 period no longer declines.

Germany and Japan opted for followership of the United States at the end of World War II. Russia and China did not at Cold War's end because American magnanimity with the vanquished was shallower than it was with the Marshall Plan, indeed at every stage of its reconciliation with Germany and Japan. The United States disliked Russian and Chinese contempt for submission to US global hegemony, their sympathy with Middle Eastern resentment over a century of Western humiliation. In response, America veered back toward toying with containment of its great power rivals. This backfired when recontainment began in 2014 over Ukraine and trade war with China blew up during the Trump Administration, then festering to an open wound under Biden. The post-cold-war progress toward a more peaceful world, a world with lowered risk of nuclear devastation was further reversed by populist posturing.

A world that had been growing its capability to collaborate on climate change suddenly was churning out tanks and missiles to pour carbon into the atmosphere; collaboration between Western and Chinese climate

scientists fell in a hole. Progress and goodwill faltered on greenhouse gas reductions. A world that had been growing its capabilities to collaborate on pandemic prevention was only up for finger pointing when a huge pandemic hit. A world economy that was learning how one part of the world system (China) could help another part (the United States and EU) out of a hole after the Global Financial Crisis now saw the economy of the West undermine the East, and vice-versa. Global inflation, a global housing shortage, descent of many of the poorest countries into hunger, recession, or debt default were harvests of opting for populist diplomacy over restorative diplomacy.

Hence this book argues for rejecting long-run containment of all states; containing instead all threats to peace. Instead of containing states, help them to flourish so we can work together with them to contain the long list of Andrew Mack factors that endanger peace for all of us, and to contain threats of economic crises, climate crises, and pandemics that shackle us all. Long-serving Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans points to the advantages for states of sometimes elevating ‘reciprocity’ above self-interest: ‘If I take your problems seriously, you are much more likely to help me solve mine’ (Evans 2022, 16). Evans was a Foreign Minister and a President of the International Crisis Group who believed in a diplomacy of caring, of states being concerned about their ‘reputation’, especially of taboos like the taboo on using or threatening WMDs. This is what social theorists call indirect reciprocity: even if an actor has never benefitted from our help, if they see us as someone who has helped many others in the past, they are more likely to help us if we are in trouble (Hong 2016). The Golden Rule is a simple rule and one that found its way into the Bible and the writings of Confucius. It seems to have been embraced because of its simplicity throughout the ancient world.

Andrew Mack may have had too rosy a view of how sustained was the post-cold-war blossoming of the better angels of our nature. But Mack and the Human Security Report were repeatedly right in their diagnosis of what are drivers that can suppress violence, and did suppress violence from 1986 until 2011. Over time the evidence became even stronger on the power of those drivers than it was when Andrew Mack was writing.

What is more, the politics of replacing containment of states with principled engagement and international cooperation to tackle one risk factor after another achieves outcomes with wide ripples of import beyond a more peaceful world. It can achieve a world with less poverty, less shackled by the mass unemployment and hyperinflation that arises when economic crises cascade into security crises. The 2013 Human Security Report paid particular attention to the fact that inequality has been a much bigger threat to human life than war. When local and international societies become progressively more effective in tackling not just inequality at local and international levels but all forms of domination, even bigger reductions in outcomes like poor health, suicide, crime, and all forms of violence can be secured (Braithwaite 2022).

It is no longer enough to get European states working cooperatively with the United States and Japan to solve global economic crises. An objective could be to move toward abolition of the G-7 and NATO in favor of more inclusive meetings of major powers to tackle big crises. It seems utopian to advocate abolition of NATO at the time that it is growing because of fear stoked by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The realistic step by step path here may be first for large regional groupings in Asia (particularly ASEAN—680 million people) to continue to assure China that it will not follow the path of NATO to become a military alliance against Chinese influence in Asia. In return ASEAN might request continued assurances from China that it will eschew the ambition of gradually building a Chinese equivalent of the Warsaw pact with perhaps Myanmar, Afghanistan, North Korea, and Cambodia as initial members.⁹ This continues to be an easy assurance for China to give because it is probably reluctant to bring such unstable countries under guarantees of its nuclear umbrella. With big ASEAN reaching an anti-alliance understanding with big China, it is easier for the little South Pacific Forum, whose members have recently been approached by China to consider security collaboration to say ‘No, let’s not have security collaboration with great powers, but collaborate with all countries on human development’. Let the Pacific leave no stone unturned to preserve a nuclear-weapons-free South Pacific under the Treaty of Rarotonga.

Cooperation with China on adjusting and adapting global economic and regulatory institutions is imperative. So is cooperation with China

on the globalization of disease. Crises like covid will continue to take terrible tolls unless China and states that currently seek to contain it learn to cooperate with all societies on global institutions of health. Likewise with institutions of the earth that international collaboration has so far failed to build for environmental challenges (Haas et al. 1993). Likewise with crime that cascades to war, war to more war, war that cascades to crime, and crime to more crime. This takes us back to the Chapter 2 conclusion that war cascades to ecological crises, ecological crises to war and that these cascading risks must be contained because they become more tightly coupled. War cascades to economic crises and economic crises to war. War cascades to health crises and health crises in future may cascade to war as well. As each of these kinds of globalizing crises cascades faster, risks from them cascading into one another grow.

What is admirable about Andrew Mack's legacy is that he demonstrated the reversibility of all of this, using the twenty years after the Cold War as a case study of a period of history when poverty and unemployment could decline massively and globally; human health and life expectancy could improve; freedom and nonviolent democracy could flourish in more places, including geopolitically important ones like Indonesia, fourth largest country in the world; human rights and gender equality institutions could grow their sway globally; peacemaking and peacebuilding could learn to be more effective (Howard 2008); and even environmental regulatory institutions could grow, close the Ozone hole, and gradually become more effective on a wide front. The two decades after the Korean war, when confrontation with Moscow was rejected in favor of containment had many of these features as well. Both 20-year periods saw remarkable accomplishments in growing a nuclear non-proliferation regime, a regime to widen bans on chemical and biological weapons, and a human rights regime. There is no impossibilism of the world rediscovering how to have a future two decades of growing equality, freedom, democracy, health, environmentalism, nonviolence, and peace where crime and suicide rates fall again. What may prove impossible in future is growing them fast enough to save the planet from destabilizing ecosystems through global warming or nuclear winter, or a complex mix of catastrophes.

We learn again from Ukraine that preventing wars is easier than ending them. The Russia-Ukraine war was preventable by simple virtues of honest diplomacy, apologizing for broken promises, finding better ways to heal their hurts, alternative more just pathways to security guarantees and missiles mutually pulled back from proximity to their targets, and scrupulous aversion to covert regime-change diplomacy.

The next chapter expands the analysis on containment of risks to give special prominence to prevention of great power wars, and most specifically containment of Weapons of Mass Destruction that could produce a nuclear conflagration. This chapter has shown that smaller wars destabilize the simple institutions needed to prevent global health crises, environmental crises, and global economic crises.

Notes

1. Peacebuilding Compared interviews in Northern Ireland.
2. See Kilkullen and Mills (2021) and Braithwaite and D’Costa (2018, 402–403):

In 2002, President Karzai was appealing constructively to the Pashtun tradition of the Taliban to acknowledge the defeats it had suffered on the battlefield in 2001 and reach an accommodation with his government. Vindictive elements among his Northern Alliance coalition partners and in the Bush administration that had swept Karzai to power frustrated this sensible work. Many Taliban figures with whom Karzai reconciled and who were welcomed back in peace to Afghanistan from Pakistan in 2002 were murdered when they returned. They also had their land and property stolen. This included people as senior as the Taliban military commander and the Taliban minister of defense (Afghan 2011, 308–309; ICG 2011, 6; Ruttig 2011, 6). Michael Semple (2011, 2) argued that, in 2002, many “senior Taliban figures attempted to pledge loyalty to the new order but were hunted down. The US sent to Guantanamo Bay many people who could have been far more useful if they had been given a chance to participate”. Likewise in 2005, in advance of the insurgency spinning out of control, Karzai sought to initiate

talks and amnesties with the Taliban through a peace and reconciliation commission. Again, this was opposed by some Northern Alliance loyalists. It was viewed as appeasement by the Bush administration (Rashid 2010, 228). This persuaded the Taliban that accommodation with the new regime was a door their enemies had slammed in their face. Their only option was to train a new generation of fighters for a long haul of insurgency. (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2018, 402–403).

We learnt from Karzai himself in a 16 September, 2021 BBC World Service interview ('A Wish for Afghanistan') that the first negotiations on behalf of the most senior group offering to surrender was earlier, in late 2001:

Lyse Doucet (BBC): 'Washington's first envoy Zalmay Khalizad [talked to me] about a letter, in effect an offer of surrender, handed to Hamid Karzai by the Taliban [leadership] in late 2001. They were on the run then, a broken force'. President Karzai: '10 or 15 of them came and they brought me a letter saying that we accept the legitimacy of your government, and we transfer power to you'. BBC: 'But you never responded to that letter. It was a letter of surrender that they were ready to give up their weapons, hand them over to you, because their Islamic Emirate was finished. But you never accepted it'. [Up to this last sentence Karzai repeatedly agreed, interjecting 'yes' with the facts behind the question. Then he disagreed]: 'No, I accepted. I accepted the letter. I, naïve as I was, I gave it back to them to say, well, thank you for this letter transferring power to my government, now take this and announce it on the radios tonight... I did say that the country now belongs to all Afghans and all Afghans should live peacefully. And they did go and begin living peacefully in their country'. BBC: 'Do you think the Americans put pressure on you? [The suggestion documented during interview with former US Ambassador Zalmay Khalizad was that US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld rejected any such peace agreement and wanted to continue the hunt and kill of the Taliban leadership militarily]. Karzai: 'No, nobody put pressure on me, but

the opportunity was lost because night raids [targeted killings of alleged Taliban in their homes by NATO Special Forces] and all those other things'. Karzai then ended the interview.

3. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/> (accessed September 29, 2023).
4. Braithwaite and D'Costa (2018, 89): 'In sum, Syria is like the DRC in the way more than a dozen foreign armies have been attracted by the opportunities to fight hot wars with each other on Syrian soil, while indulging only in Cold Wars on their own soil. Syria is unlike the DRC in that so many major powers have at least special forces on the ground: Russia, the United States, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and perhaps even China has more than just intelligence officers in the country, as do probably some more major powers. Syria is also unlike the DRC in that the air forces of so many countries have massively hit targets in Syria with horrific consequences for civilians—including the air forces of Syria itself, Turkey, Israel, Russia, the United States, Jordan, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Australia and probably others. On further reflection, we must conclude that seemingly never-ending wars such as those in the DRC and Syria, where many other countries are attracted to fight their own proxy wars on the soil of a battle-torn country, are not so unique in human history. The Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) involved many European states fighting one another in a war fought almost totally on the soil of what came to be known as Germany'.
5. By 2021, the largest Western contributor of UN peacekeepers was Italy, which was ranked 22nd among countries contributing most. My beloved Australia, with such a noble history of UN peacekeeping contributions, was contributing zero troops and zero police by 2021.
6. An exception was the resumption of Ukraine grain exports to feed a world in which starvation of the planet's poorest people was becoming an increasingly serious problem. Since it lapsed, it has been Turkish President Erdogan rather than the UN doing the

heavy diplomatic lifting to attempt to secure its renewal, so far unsuccessfully.

7. Peacebuilding Compared has confirmed this result with ethnographic causal process tracing. In both Timor-Leste (Braithwaite et al. 2012) and Guadalcanal Braithwaite et al. (2010b) early this century, for example, are cases where naval ships carrying peacekeepers loomed on the horizon, and combatants literally started retreating and surrendering their weapons in droves.
8. Security Council—Quick Links: Dag Hammarskhold Library 2021. <https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick> (accessed September 20, 2022).
9. Africa, Asia, and Latin America have mostly avoided ‘world wars’. There is therefore merit in citizens of these continents believing that they want to keep it this way; they want nuclear weapons free zones to expand and consolidate across their continents. Gwynne Dyer (2021, 117) concludes that ‘world wars have always been based on alliances assembled by European powers’. He defines a ‘world war’ as a war in which all the great powers join together in two great rival alliances. By this criterion, Dyer finds six world wars in modern history: the Thirty Years’ War of 1618–1648, the War of the Spanish Succession of 1702–1714, the Seven Years’ War of 1756–1763, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars of 1791–1815, World War I and World War II.

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