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of New York

Vol. 1/No. 2
Summer 2003

CARNEGIE Results

# Peace and Conflict 2003:
## A Surprising Trend Emerges

*A new report from the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management finds warfare on the decline across the globe, but warns that this is a fragile trend.*

There's war in Iraq, preceded by a war in Afghanistan, prompted by terrorist attacks in America. North Korea has restarted its nuclear program and threatened a "sea of fire" across the Korean peninsula. A bomb attack on Westerners in Bali kills hundreds. Many more have died in conflicts between Russia and ethnic Chechens. Violence continues to flare across Africa and parts of Europe, and the death toll in the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians exceeds 2,000 in the last few years alone.

A casual observer would not be faulted for thinking the world was witness to more conflict and strife today than in the past half century. However, despite a rash of high-profile international crises, the number of regional and civil wars around the world has declined to unprecedented levels over the past two years, according to a new report from the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM; www.cidcm.umd.edu).

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*Editor's Note: Andrew Carnegie created Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1911 to "promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding," a mission that has often led the foundation to support in-depth research and analysis of issues that affect the life of our nation and*

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*our interactions with other countries in an increasingly globalizing world. But we are also concerned with funding projects that can help us understand, in a more immediate way, trends and changes that may influence both domestic policy and international relationships. This issue of Carnegie Results highlights three current Corporation grantees whose efforts illustrate how scholarship and dialogue can add breadth to our perspective on current events while also contributing to our ongoing struggle to understand the roots of conflict and explore solutions that may lead to peace. Work is ongoing at all three organizations, but as these profiles suggest, the results are already having an impact on those at the frontlines of policymaking.*

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The report, *Peace and Conflict 2003*, developed with funding from Carnegie Corporation of New York, says that warfare has decreased 60 percent globally since 1991. International crises have dropped nearly 50 percent, and the number of democracies has doubled since 1985. In just the last two years, nine separatist wars have moved from the battlefield to the negotiating table.

But the report warns that this new stability in former trouble spots is fragile. The war with Iraq and nuclear tensions with North Korea head the list of challenges that cast a shadow over the recent increase in peace and security. Others include the ongoing struggle against terrorism, unresolved tensions in Afghanistan and the former Yugoslavia, increasing violence in Colombia, and continuing tensions between nuclear powers India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

The new global peace still reigns uneasily over “48 [unstable] regimes, 33 societies recovering from recently ended wars, and 25 societies still locked in violent struggles,” the report states. In a world of increasing tension, these poor and war-ravaged societies are prone to instability and state failure. This combination of growing tension and vulnerable societies presents crucial challenges to U.S. policymakers.

The report cautions against “the perception, increasingly influential in the U.S., that some security threats are impervious to peaceful or multilateral solutions,” a clear reference not only to the clash among nations like France, Germany and the U.S. over America’s Iraq policy but to a growing trend toward unilateral action in U.S. foreign policy that is at odds with the world view of the majority of European countries and others in regions around the globe.

Military force may be necessary to contain some crises, says Ted Gurr, one of two principal authors of the report and a University of Maryland professor of government and politics, but war shifts international attention and resources away from long-term constructive efforts at conflict management. And it risks spillover effects that destabilize other areas.

The centerpiece of *Peace and Conflict 2003* is a catalog and ranking of conflict within nations—what the report calls a “peace and conflict ledger.” It rates 158 countries using eight measures of capacity for building peace and avoiding armed conflict. Among them are: avoidance of recent armed conflict; successfully managing movements

for self-determination; maintaining stable democratic institutions; attaining substantial material resources; and being free of serious threats from neighboring countries. Based on whether a country has successfully achieved those parameters or not, the ledger assigns red or yellow flags to mark weak or vulnerable situations, and green flags for countries with the capacity to effectively manage internal conflicts.

"For many scholars, the reports produced by CIDCM encourage scrutiny of its key online databases on ethnic and other conflict-related issues," says Stephen Del Rosso, senior program officer in the Corporation's International Peace and Security program. "These databases have a multiplier effect because scores of experts in this field rely on this information to help inform their own work. There is no more comprehensive data set on these issues. It provides a jumping-off point that allows scholars to fill in any perceived gaps or focus on analysis without having to engage in the time-consuming task of data gathering. In addition, CIDCM's reports put the organization's own data into a policy-relevant framework and reach conclusions that can be either challenged or expanded upon. Before you can have good policy you need good ideas, and they need to be backed up with empirical data rather than anecdotal evidence."

Expanding on how his interest in this work intersects with the wider concerns of the Corporation's International Peace and Security program, Del Rosso says, "I was originally interested in supporting CIDCM because I was intrigued by some of its counterintuitive conclusions about the decline in ethnic conflict in the world, and how they challenged much of the conventional wisdom in both the scholarly and policy communities about this phenomenon. Similarly, work being done by The Carr Center and The Fund for Peace (Ed. Note: see the following stories) both offered unique and important perspectives on conflict issues that seemed to be missing from the debate in both communities just when the sets of issues under examination were becoming most relevant."

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Of the 158 countries monitored in *Peace and Conflict 2003*, 34 received red flags, including Afghanistan, Egypt and Kenya. Africa has the greatest concentration of red flags with a total of 26 (plus 14 yellow-flagged countries), with the ledger indicating that Nigeria and Congo-Kinshasa are among the most critical countries in the region. There is little good news across the African continent, with only six (green-flagged) countries identified as having the capacity to manage internal strife: Benin, Botswana, Mali, Namibia and South Africa in sub-Saharan Africa, and Libya in North Africa.

Red flags also ring the Middle East from North Africa to the Caucasus and Afghanistan. There, the tangle of threatening crises is topped by the nuclear threat in the India-Pakistan conflict—which caps the world's second most serious crisis zone, the Asian heartland.

The majority of the world's major armed societal conflicts have been concentrated in the Asian and African continents since the end of the Cold War, and, with Asia home to about half the world's population, this crisis zone is of particular concern. Problems are most prevalent in three regions: (1) a south-central complex centered on the red-flagged countries of Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan; (2) a Middle East complex with red-flagged countries in the Caucasus, Armenia and Azerbaijan; and (3) a southeastern complex where green-flagged Thailand finds itself sandwiched between red-flagged Myanmar (Burma) and Cambodia.

There are 50 yellow-flagged countries with a mix of positive and negative factors. One yellow-flagged country, India, for example, has stable democratic political institutions but poor human security and limited resources. Russia also falls into this category, with positives for democracy, resources and its neighboring environment, but has just-established democratic institutions, poor human security and a mixed record for managing self-determination.

Just under half of all countries are green-flagged, including the well-established Western democracies, most of Latin America and the Caribbean (except for yellow-flagged Peru and Haiti), and most of the former Socialist countries of Europe (with the notable exceptions of yellow-flagged Belarus, Bosnia, Croatia, Russia and Yugoslavia). In fact, the number of fully democratic states in the world has nearly doubled according to the report, jumping from 42 in 1985 to 83 last year.

Those successes are counterbalanced somewhat by the still unfolding confrontation between terrorist acts and the U.S.-led war against terrorism. “This high profile confrontation has contributed strongly to the polarization of forces and the development of a ‘siege mentality’ in both ‘camps’ as many believe their most personal, core values to be under assault by the ‘other,’” states the report. It goes on to say that these conditions contribute to “persistent tensions between Muslim and non-Muslim populations in places like Sudan, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Bosnia, the Caucasus, South Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines.”

CIDCM issued a similar report in 2001. As noted earlier, *Peace and Conflict 2003* says gains in peace and democracy have been sustained over the past two years and in some instances improved. During 2002, peace accords were reached in two of the world’s longest and deadliest civil wars—in Angola and Sudan. Also, international diplomatic pressure helped push India and Pakistan back from the brink of nuclear war.

Still, the report indicates that the world now finds itself at a crossroads of sorts. Global warfare has been reduced by more than 60 percent since 1991, according to the authors, but what remains are, in many cases, the most intractable conflicts. Monty Marshall, the other principal author of the report, and Gurr are concerned that the U.S. and other countries will disengage from the most difficult conflicts and instead rest on their laurels, convinced that partial success is the best that can be achieved in some cases.

“Just as protracted societal conflicts tend to spread ill effects when they are ‘in bloom,’” the report states, “the insidious qualities of past and future conflicts tend to contract and withdraw into the most ‘intractable’ conflicts. These are the linchpins of regional and global security. Peace is a social process, not simply a goal or an accomplishment.”

In the short term, the authors of *Peace and Conflict 2003* believe that this process will continue on a worldwide basis, as will the downward trend in the total magnitude of global warfare. Nevertheless, they feel that the best that can be expected is for the trend to level off in the foreseeable future. “The threat of violence and war has been a major instrument in both international and domestic politics for a very long time and it would be naïve to think that the option of force would suddenly cease to be used,” the authors write.

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After assessing how political and diplomatic efforts, as well as military force, have affected ethnic conflicts and self-determination movements, the report recommends a three-step mix of: (1) containment to check war-making capacity; (2) low-key diplomatic and humanitarian engagement; and (3) assistance to neighboring states to help protect them from spillover effects.

The report also identifies some counter-trends that it says are cause for concern. One of the most important is the general deterioration of local and regional societal systems as a result of the high magnitude of warfare during most of the 20th century. Weakened and divided societies are both more vulnerable and more volatile, and as a result are more crisis prone, which means that negative change can occur quickly. One facet of that trend has been the extraordinary concentration of health, wealth and power in what the report calls “zones of peace” and the concentration of all that is bad in the “zones of disorder.” If what might be termed a vast “gap of instability” between the world’s haves and have-nots continues to grow, it could lead to increasing tensions and dangerous consequences for those at both ends of the spectrum.

Finally, the authors acknowledge that the world’s ongoing processes of economic and technological globalization are creating a complex and largely ad hoc open societal system, which seriously challenges the traditional state system of government. Globalization was one of the deadly complaints of the September 11th terrorists, and an anti-globalization trend is becoming evident even among citizens of the world’s most successful nations practicing global trade and economics.

This could be a sign of danger to come: according to the authors of *Peace and Conflict 2003*, “The transformation of the ‘global war on terrorism’ to a ‘clash of civilizations’ would most certainly lead to a major reversal of established trends in warfare, democratization, and prosperity,” says Marshall. “Initial victories are often followed by costly obligations and long-term risks.”

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# *Searching for Solutions to International Unrest: The Carr Center for Human Rights Policy and The Fund for Peace*

## THE CARR CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY
### Finding the overlap between military issues and human rights concerns

The way that military force is used receives far less attention in policy circles than does the question of when states should intervene militarily. Yet, as we have seen in the recent war with Iraq, the means of military intervention—in other words, the where and how bullets fly and bombs drop—have dramatic implications for the security of civilians in the target country, the security of intervening forces and the effectiveness of the intervention itself.

To explore those issues, the Project on the Means of Intervention, within the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government (www.ksg.harvard.edu/cchrp), has brought together active and retired officers from the U.S. military and other security specialists with members of the human rights and humanitarian communities in a series of workshops that have explored how human rights issues are considered, if at all, during military conflicts and how military interventions are influenced by concern, or lack thereof, for collateral damage—particularly civilian deaths. Those workshops and their resultant papers are supported by Carnegie Corporation of New York.

"There is no venue for humanitarian and human rights organizations to get together with the military," says Stephen Del Rosso, senior program officer at Carnegie Corporation, discussing the void that The Carr Center has filled in that respect. "The U.S. military is very sensitive to issues of collateral damage, and there is a desire for humanitarian concerns to be melded with operational requirements."

The issue of collateral damage is particularly polarizing, with some

military officials believing that mission objective is all that matters, and some humanitarians believing that even one civilian casualty is too many. By bringing these perspectives together in what to this date are six separate workshops on the issue, the project has worked to illuminate a range of topics while exposing participants to competing views.

“There is a great deal of overlap between the traditional military concepts of precision and economy of force and the human rights goal of not killing civilians,” says Carr Center program director Sarah Sewall. “Where is the overlap and how do we expand it? We try to get participants to think differently in the sense that there are very few opportunities for military and humanitarian communities to be exposed to the viewpoint of the other in a non-confrontational way.” The point, she adds, is to move beyond the “blame game” and open up the frames of reference instead of narrowing them.

And why should the military care about reducing collateral damage, i.e., deaths of innocent people? After all, success in attaining military objectives seems tantamount when looking at the big picture and the scope of history. Sewall offered an answer in a recent opinion piece in the *Boston Globe*, published before the beginning of the Iraq war.

“Repeated ‘regrettable tragedies’ can turn a liberator into an oppressor and jeopardize an intervention’s larger military and political objectives. The risk is greater than fueling hatred in hostile quarters. Arab governments and NATO partners, the very players we’ll need should war come in Iraq, remain concerned about how the United States applies its military power. If the human costs alone fail to convince, U.S. leaders should recognize that collateral damage is a potential public relations nightmare with strategic implications.”

Sewall’s words could be prophetic if America’s Arab allies in the Middle East are reluctant to help in the reconstruction of Iraq should the price of the battle and its aftermath be too high for acceptance by Arab citizens. However, she believes Pentagon leaders from both the civil and military sectors take such concerns very seriously. Interviewed before the Iraq war she said, “The extent to which the administration is talking about avoiding casualties is unprecedented,” a trend that continues to be apparent in the military’s comments about both the war and the post-conflict period.

Going back a couple years, the need for bringing together military officials and human rights experts was demonstrated by the polarizing debate concerning the strategy and tactics of U.S. and NATO forces in the Balkans. Many in the human rights community argued that the bombing campaign unnecessarily endangered Serb civilians and Kosovars on whose behalf force was used. In contrast, Western political and military leaders asserted that the intervention was groundbreaking in its success in minimizing collateral damage while achieving operational objectives.

According to a Carr Center workshop paper on the matter, the apparent

disconnect between the military and human rights presented an opportunity to begin a dialogue, which continues today on that issue and other military interventions.

A variety of common interests are now on the table in discussions of these types. One centers on the importance of continuing adjustments in how the U.S. military evaluates the effects of force (e.g., improving bomb damage assessment and empirical analysis of the value of strategic targeting), or what Sewall says is "studying the effects of their intentions." Another is in shared interest in improving public understanding of the humanitarian implications of alternative military and non-military strategies of intervention, and in defining and helping to create "realistic" public expectations on the use of force.

Finally, for nongovernmental organizations all over the world, the greatest fear is arguably that their work goes unnoticed—policymakers don't pay attention, important data is ignored and meetings and conferences occur in a vacuum.

That's not been the case for The Carr Center's work in the areas of collateral damage and humanitarian issues in military targeting. In March, a senior military planner discussing the issue of civilian casualties publicly credited the work of The Carr Center in a Pentagon briefing.

"One of the issues that I think routinely comes up for folks who are not involved in military operations and have not been involved in the extensive planning is to understand the difficult and really comprehensive process we use to mitigate collateral damage," said Col. Gary L. Crowder, chief, Strategy, Concepts and Doctrine, Air Combat Command, at the briefing. "[The] Air Combat Command, the United States Air Force, and I personally have been working with The Carr Center for Human Rights at Harvard University, [which] brings nongovernmental organizations, military officers, policymakers, [and] media into a forum in which we can discuss these issues and better understand each of our requirements.

"And in the end, all of our requirements are the same. If we're required to conduct military operations, we would desire to conduct those while minimizing collateral damage and unintended damage."

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# *The Fund For Peace*
## Regional responses to internal war

*When outside* military intervention in internal wars is called for to stem a humanitarian emergency, many feel that the preferred authorizing body for that intervention should be the United Nations. Questions remain, however, as to who should step in to support U.N. authorized action on the ground or who might respond when the U.N. fails to act to stop mass violence. This dilemma has highlighted a number of controversial issues:

- When do atrocities reach the point where military intervention is necessary?
- Who can legitimately authorize military intervention?
- Who should make up the intervening force?
- How should an intervention be conducted?
- What are the implications of such intervention for redefining sovereignty?

The trend has been towards increased regional participation in responding to humanitarian crises but no internationally agreed upon criteria yet exists. Nor has there been agreement on the proper relationship between the U.N. and regional organizations, when the latter do take the lead in responding. Each crisis is dealt with in an ad hoc manner.

To address this problem, The Fund for Peace (www.fundforpeace.org) is exploring regional criteria for military intervention to stop mass killings, atrocities and/or ethnic cleansing. Over the past two years, the organization has convened four conferences, each focused on one of four regions—Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas—and aimed at exploring differing regional perspectives on preventing and responding to humanitarian crises. Policy recommendations resulting from conference deliberations were brought by The Fund for Peace to U.S. government officials. In addition, a series of reports and position papers were issued by the Fund, stimulating further discussion, debate

and press coverage of this highly controversial set of issues.

“Traditionally, you don’t see regional groups helping to solve regional problems,” says Stephen Del Rosso, senior program officer for Carnegie Corporation of New York, which supports The Fund for Peace efforts, though he adds that the trend is starting to turn with the Australians taking the lead on problems in East Timor and the European involvement in Bosnia, for example. “The Fund for Peace brings together senior regional leaders who then hash out intervention questions in their own regions without U.S. participation.”

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This focus on a new international architecture that may give a more prominent role to regional actors in humanitarian crises is a relatively new development that, for the most part, only bubbled to the surface after the end of the Cold War. Previously, Cold War issues dominated most discussions related to military interventions, many potentially explosive ethnic conflicts had been suppressed by authoritarian leaders and the two superpowers—the U.S. and Soviet Union—often determined the manner in which such disputes were handled. In addition, the U.N. is wary of meddling in the internal affairs of states. Its structure and mandate have traditionally been devoted to settling conflicts between nations, not within them.

The Fund for Peace is seeking to move beyond the search for a universal consensus on this set of issues, which may not be possible at this time. Instead, it is assessing the potential for regional criteria in different conflict zones that would identify when and how regional actors may prevent or stop genocide and mass killings in their own neighborhoods. "We thought there was a need to extend the debate by getting voices from different regions to think about when it is legitimate to intervene and how international law and practice should evolve when faced with genocide and mass killings," says Fund for Peace president Pauline H. Baker.

Surprisingly, the Fund found that regional leaders were able to reach consensus on these controversial issues through structured dialogue that brought all views into account. Not surprisingly, however, each region had widely differing approaches.

Africans participating in the Africa-region conference felt that sovereignty was not absolute and should not be a shield for committing human rights violations. "Coming from the most conflicted continent in the world, they felt there needed to be regional and subregional organizations that had the authority to deal with these problems," says Baker, citing the roles that subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have already played in Africa.

On the other hand, representatives from the Americas, not including the U.S., were more cautious in approaching the issue, in part because of the region's traditional avoidance of interfering in the internal affairs of other states, and in part because of the long history of American

dominance in the region. “There was a lot of suspicion on the part of participants that a regional response to humanitarian crises could possibly be used as justification for U.S. intervention in Latin America,” says Fund for Peace associate director Jason Ladnier. However, participants acknowledged that the region has failed in the past to properly address gross violations of human rights and that there is great reluctance to openly discuss internal crises in the region.

Participants in the Asia conference had the least sense of regional cohesion but the strongest sense of sovereignty, arguing that this principle should not be breached, even in the face of dire circumstances. According to Baker, this is due to a “regional preference for not discussing the internal problems of their neighbors publicly.” Regional efforts to respond to internal crises are more likely to take the form of private diplomatic pressure.

The Fund for Peace Asia conference also offered a rare opportunity for countries in Northeast Asia, such as Japan, China and Korea, to find common ground with Southeast Asian countries, such as Indonesia and the Philippines. A variety of cooperative measures among many of those countries already exists, such as in combating drug trafficking. Participants agreed that establishing criteria for military intervention in humanitarian crises should build on the linkages that have already been established in such cooperative programs.

Regarding the European region, it was not surprising that nations such as France and Germany insisted that only the U.N. could authorize the use of force in humanitarian emergencies—echoing their arguments against the U.S. intervention in Iraq. The Fund for Peace organizers found that, in general, European participants tended to be the most rigid interpreters of international law, leaving little room for possible regional intervention within states—even when genocide is threatened. There were divergences, however. Representatives from the recent or soon-to-be members of the European Union were more inclined to accept the evolving norm of a responsibility to protect civilians, and those who came from conflict zones, such as the Balkans, called for earlier and more effective intervention.

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Having established consensus within the regions on criteria for intervention to stop mass killing, ethnic cleansing and genocide, The Fund for Peace now plans to analyze the actual capacities of regional organizations to act on these criteria and to mount robust responses to humanitarian crises. Working with regional partners it will:

1) Assess regional capacities for humanitarian intervention
2) Examine the role of civic organizations in shaping more effective regional responses on security matters
3) Develop concrete policy recommendations to strengthen the capacity of the international community to protect civilians

It is not clear yet what may evolve, but there is growing support for a new norm of international responsibility to protect civilians, and for new roles for regional and subregional organizations in “neighborhood watches” that can promote peace and security within their own regions.