LESSONS FROM CONTEMPORARY ARMED CONFLICT

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“Lessons from Contemporary Armed Conflict”
World War I and Contemporary Policy on War and Peace
Canadian War Museum, Sept 26-28, 2014
DEFINING “ARMED CONFLICT” OR WAR

Fighting is political

Engages security forces of a state

At least 1,000 cumulative combat deaths

At least 25 combat deaths per year

http://ploughshares.ca/programs/armed-conflict/
ARMED CONFLICTS 1989 - 2014

35  wars underway in 1989
64  new wars begun since end of Cold War (2.5 per year)
99  Wars (six inter-state, 93 intra-state)
70  of which ended during the same period
29  wars today (all intra-state) - a 17% decline from 1989
...post-Cold War military actions have been a succession of campaigns “that have in one way or another spectacularly failed to achieve the results intended, namely a decisive military victory which would in turn deliver a solution to the original problem, which is usually political.”

HOW 64 INTRA-STATE WARS ENDED
AFTER COLD WAR

14% militarily decisive (9)
  ▪ 6% government prevails (4)
  ▪ 8% insurgents prevail (5)

50% negotiated (32)

36% dissolved (23)
## HOW INTRA-STATE WARS ENDED

SINCE WW II
HUMAN SECURITY REPORT 2012, FIGURE 6.4, P. 176

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Victories</th>
<th>Negotiations</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000-04</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP (1989-2014)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HOW INTRA-STATE WARS END

BY TYPE

State Control/State Formation
17% militarily decisive
60% negotiated
23% dissolved

Failed State and Hybrid
0% militarily decisive
15% negotiated
85% dissolved
MULTILATERAL WARS

-seven of the 99 wars (6 inter-state, 93 intra-state) were multilateralized
-of which 2 were militarily decisive
   -Iraq/Kuwait
   -Haiti
   -Bosnia
   -Kosovo
   -Afghanistan
   -Iraq
   -Libya
   -Syria

-of the seven, one inter-state and six intra-state wars were multilateralized.
HOW WARS START

Grievance
Identity
Capacity
Lack of alternatives
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CONTEXT FOR COLLECTIVE FORCE

Strategic consent
Legitimacy
Restraint in the resort to force
Regional support
Lives improving
All Intra-State Wars.

- 34% less than 5 years
- 14% between 5 and 10 years
- 20% between 10 and 20 years
- 22% between 20 and 30 years
- 3% between 30 and 40 years
- 7% more than 40 years

Overall, 50% of intra-state wars have lasted more than 10 years.
All Inter-State Wars.

67% less than 5 years

33% between 5 and 10 years
ARMED CONFLICTS 1989 - 2014

35 wars underway in 1989
54 new wars begun since end of Cold War (just over 2 per year)
89 continuing and new wars
64 of which ended during the same period (72%)
25
10 wars restarted (recidivism rate of 16%)
06 of which subsequently ended (60%)
29 wars (all intra-state) currently underway (a 17% decline from 1989)
99 wars overall, of which 70 ended (6 interstate, 93 intrastate)