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Democratization

The prime objective of most nation-building missions is to make violent societies peaceful, not to make poor societies prosperous or authoritarian societies democratic. Nevertheless, the three are interconnected, and most successful missions accomplish all three, albeit to different degrees. Successful transformations of violent societies into peaceful ones are thus almost always accompanied by some degree of economic development and political reform. These missions invariably begin in circumstances in which existing systems of governance have largely or totally collapsed. In some cases, this is the result of civil war. In others, it is the result of the intervention itself. Whatever the cause of collapse, a new or renewed system has to be constructed. In rare cases, traditional nondemocratic institutions may retain enough local and international legitimacy to provide a viable basis for renewed governance, the 1991 restoration of Kuwait's monarchy being the prime example. In most instances, however, traditional alternatives to representative democracy will have disintegrated or been discredited beyond redemption. Thus in most cases, the creation or re-creation of institutions deriving their authority from popular suffrage offer the intervening authorities the only practical means of transferring power back to an indigenous government and leaving behind a peaceful society.

Liberal democracies are arguably more pacific than are other types of political systems. At least they seldom go to war with each other. Liberal democracies are also less likely to become embroiled in

civil war or perpetuate genocide.¹ Newly emerging democracies, on the other hand, are often prone to external aggression and internal conflict.² The quality and duration of the transition is thus quite important. So is the character of the newly introduced institutions. In societies sharply divided along ethnic, religious, or even economic lines, majority rule is likely to be hotly contested. Thus the design of any new institutional structure needs to be adapted to the unique characteristics of the society in question. Safeguards for minorities and checks on majorities need to be designed to ameliorate rather than exacerbate existing fissures.

Key Challenges

Understanding the Obstacles and Opportunities. Failed states would appear to be poor candidates for democratization, possessing few of the factors tending to favor the growth of representative government. They are likely to be poor, ethnically divided, socially stratified, and surrounded by other states in a similar condition. Nevertheless, unpromising candidates have made the transition, perhaps not all the way to liberal democracy, but to representative systems that hold reasonably fair elections on a regular basis and that alternate power among contesting parties. An understanding of the difficulties and a realistic assessment of the possibilities serve as the proper starting point for any effort to promote such a process.

Structuring Representative Institutions. In countries where democratic institutions are weak and few, building a representative system of government is a long, difficult process. In most postconflict societ-

¹ See, for example, Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1997; Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993; and Spencer R. Weart, *Never at War: Why Democracies Will Not Fight One Another*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998.

² Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005; Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2000.

ies, years of repression and violence have fostered a culture of “guns and greed,” which must be supplanted by a political culture that fosters public discourse rather than violence as the channel of competition for wealth and power. Political institutions and legal codes often need to be created from scratch. The flow of public information has often been usurped by warring factions and used to enforce divisions and strengthen political power. The maturation of political processes, civil society, and a media that ensures transparency and accountability is a prerequisite for durable political institutions and a viable peace.

Constitutional Design. Writing or revising a constitution is a significant challenge in postconflict countries. Since postconflict countries are in serious disarray not just physically but socially and ideologically, getting all factions to agree on the text of a new constitution often requires heavy external engagement. The process is marked not only by the debate and grave consideration inherent in such a solemn task, but also, and less inspiringly, by arm-twisting, threats, and behind-the-scenes horse-trading.

Developing Civil Society. Postconflict countries usually lack strong civil societies that can promote government accountability. During periods of conflict, civil society groups, to the extent that there are any, often go underground or into exile or they become targets of violence. Resuscitating, fostering, and protecting these groups while dampening ethnic or religious tensions is one of the most difficult tasks facing the intervening authorities.

Creating a Free Press. Free, independent, and professionally competent media are usually in short supply following a conflict. When Cambodian factions agreed to a peace settlement in 1991, for example, all journalists had been employed by the communist government, which imposed strict controls. Other journalists, part of the opposition press, worked out of refugee camps along the Thai-Cambodian border or from locations abroad. The press has to become emboldened to cover sensitive political issues while learning the importance of objectivity and accuracy.

Organizing Elections. Nothing short of elections is likely to provide a government with the broadly based support and generally accepted legitimacy needed to rule once the intervening authorities

have departed. On the other hand, premature elections can often reinforce ethnic and sectarian cleavages, promote divisive political positions, and even spur a return to violence. Elections do not necessarily produce governments committed to resolving disputes through negotiation and compromise—or, for that matter, governments committed to preserving democracy. If the parties that win these elections remain dedicated to the destruction of their rivals or if they seek to undermine the democratic institutions that brought them to power, elections may work against the goal of establishing a stable and peaceful society. If the parties that contest elections attempt to build popular support by appealing to intercommunal fears and hatreds, the election campaign can rekindle the very conflict that the intervening authorities sought to mitigate.

Best Practices

Understanding Obstacles and Opportunities

There are a number of general factors that tend to make democratization more or less difficult. The first is the *regime type* in surrounding countries. Authoritarian regimes surrounded by democracies are more likely to democratize than are authoritarian regimes surrounded by other authoritarian regimes.³ The causal mechanisms underlying this tendency remain unclear. It may be caused by peer pressure or peer envy. Or it may be caused by democratic norms, which can take hold more rapidly if a culturally similar neighbor sets an example. The point, however, is that nation-building in countries surrounded by authoritarian regimes is likely to be more challenging than it would if neighboring countries were functioning democracies.

International pressure can play a significant role in creating a successful move to democracy.⁴ Pressure has been most effective when it

³ Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, *All International Politics Is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratization*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

⁴ Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1971, p. 197; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the*

has come from more powerful countries and international organizations such as the United Nations. Some authoritarian regimes have been supported by external assistance, especially from larger countries and through diaspora communities. Geopolitical shifts may alter these relationships by drying up sources of revenue or fostering new pressures toward political liberalization, leading to democracy.⁵ At the end of the Cold War, several states experienced pressures to democratize because of cuts in military aid from the United States or the former Soviet Union, accompanied by bilateral and multilateral pressures toward liberalization. The salience of this factor is likely to vary according to the degree of dependence on foreign support and the availability of compensatory sources of government revenues, such as those from natural resources or from other alternatives.

Democratization tends to occur in *waves*, with a series of clustered openings followed by a period of retrenchment.⁶ The causal mechanisms driving democratization waves are somewhat unclear. However, contagion effects may endow waves with a force of their own—opposition movements often draw inspiration or adopt strategies from recent international developments. The intervening authorities can sometimes ride the wave, propagating techniques and political measures that facilitated successful democratization in a different postconflict setting. The intervening authorities may also wish to bring officials and individuals who participated in a successful democratization effort in a neighboring state into the host country as advisors to institutions and politicians. In these ways, the presence of a broader democratic wave can increase the likelihood of democratization.

Theories of modernization posit that *economic development* promotes democracy by facilitating the emergence of a middle class with sufficient time and resources to push for more representative institutions. This suggests that intervening authorities involved in nation-building should view economic development as an opportunity for

Late Twentieth Century, Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 85–100.

⁵ Laurence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

⁶ Huntington (1991, pp. 3–30).

strengthening the democratization process. Seymour Lipset first noted in 1959 that, in both Europe and Latin America, democratic states tended to be more economically developed across a range of indicators, including per capita GDP, literacy, penetration of modern goods, and urbanization.⁷ Subsequent studies have indicated that this trend holds more globally and that economic growth tends to contribute to the creation of democracy, not vice versa.⁸ Other factors that have been cited as contributors to democratization include the strength of civil society, egalitarian income distribution, and a market-oriented economy.⁹

The perceived *legitimacy* of the regime is an important determinant of whether democratization will be successful. The imposition of a government by an intervening authority may result in its eventual overthrow if it is not viewed as legitimate over the long run. A government viewed as illegitimate by the population is a major obstacle to democratization no matter how fairly elected. While legitimacy itself is difficult to measure, the symptoms of failed legitimacy are well known: sagging support in public opinion surveys, rampant corruption, economic stagnation, unsuccessful foreign policy initiatives, and loss of support from domestic constituencies such as religious authorities.

A country cannot remain democratic without a *credible opposition movement*. The movement should have at least some semblance of organization and cohesion. The bargaining process that usually ensues between the government and a strong opposition movement is an important pathway to democratization.¹⁰

⁷ Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No. 1, March 1959, pp. 69–105.

⁸ See, for example, Robert J. Barro, "Democracy and Growth," *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1996, pp. 1–27; Ross E. Burkhardt and Michael Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Democracy: The Economic Development Thesis," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 4, December 1994, pp. 903–910.

⁹ Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 2, January 1997, pp. 155–183 [pp. 159–160]; see also, among others, Huntington (1991).

¹⁰ Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

The effectiveness and role of the *security apparatus* affects the probability that a postconflict society will become a successful democracy. Low morale, high desertion rates, a history of military take-overs of government, or legal provisions providing the military with high levels of political autonomy are danger signs. An incompetent or excessively politicized security apparatus can be a major obstacle to democratization.

The intervening authorities can affect only some of these conditions. The authorities can bring international pressure to bear—and indeed this is often the manifestation of that pressure. They can provide security, thereby allowing goods, services, people, and ideas to circulate freely. They can provide assistance that can further accelerate economic growth. They can facilitate the emergence of an organized political opposition. They can reform the state's security apparatus. But they may not be able to transform the nature of neighboring regimes. They will not have the time or money needed to significantly enlarge the middle class. Nor, in a period of a few years, is the overall level of social development likely to be lifted very much. Aspirations for the society's political transformation need to be guided accordingly, recognizing the conditions of poverty, corruption, ignorance, and sectarian discord from which the new institutions will need to emerge and which they cannot entirely transcend.

Structuring Representative Institutions

In some cases, the intervening authorities will begin with sovereign powers, as was the case in Kosovo, East Timor, and Iraq. Alternatively, the intervening authorities may share oversight duties with an existent indigenous regime, one that will have agreed, perhaps as a condition for the intervention, to give way in due course to a more permanent government. Sometimes that transition can take place via elections held under existing constitutional arrangements. Frequently, however, that legal framework will have broken down or been discredited, necessitating the fashioning of new institutions.

In considering constitutional revision, the first step is to analyze the sources of violent competition in the society. Who is competing, and for what? How can that competition be diverted from violent

into peaceful channels? How can the contenders be brought into the new system? What institutional arrangements are most likely to enjoy broad public support while adequately accommodating the needs of the various power centers in the society, thereby reducing the prospect of violent resistance?

By its very presence, an intervening force will shift power relationships within the host society, strengthening some claimants and weakening others. If heavily committed and generously resourced, intervening authorities may occasionally be able to entirely dispossess one ruling elite and empower another in an enduring fashion. After World War II, the Nazi party was banned in Germany and thousands of its members were barred from political participation. An attempt to replicate this experience in postinvasion Iraq, where the U.S. troop presence was more than 20 times smaller in proportion to the population than it had been in Germany, proved less successful. Even after World War II in Japan, which was occupied much more lightly than Germany, the U.S.-led purge of officials associated with the wartime regime was much more modest and almost entirely reversed by the Japanese authorities as soon as the occupation ended.

In most circumstances, the intervening authorities will be better advised to try to bring all the claimants to power in the society into the political process. The threat of coercion may be employed for leverage, but the main objective in most cases should be to allow the main contenders to continue their competition under new rules that favor peaceful over violent means, giving all a chance for and, indeed, a share of, power.

There are many options for doing this. Democracy comes in a variety of shapes. There are federal and unitary states, parliamentary and presidential systems. Given free rein, intervening authorities will be tempted to replicate their own system of government rather than search for one most suitable to the recipient society. By the same token, local populations will often be inclined to opt for the system with which they are familiar, even if it has served them poorly in the past. In most cases, it will be better to adapt the familiar to new circumstances than to attempt to impose a wholly new construct. The Afghan constitutional process set out in the December 2001 Bonn Agreement, for

example, drew heavily on traditional Afghan modalities for national decisionmaking. This clearly enhanced the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of the population as it went forward. By contrast, the roadmap set out in 2004 for Iraq's transition to democracy new and unfamiliar concepts, most notably federalism. While a decentralized authority of that sort undoubtedly had a logic, and it was strongly demanded by the Kurdish minority, it has been violently resisted by the Sunnis and regarded with some suspicion by the Shiite majority.

In ideal circumstances, the march toward renewed sovereignty occurs in graduated stages. First, the contending forces are disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated. Then civil society and independent media are given resources and time to grow. Political parties are organized under new rules. Ministries are organized and staffed with professionals. Security forces are reorganized and trained. Local elections are held, and grassroots democracy takes hold. And then, as the capstone, national elections are held, and full sovereignty is returned to a freely elected government.

This ideal sequence is likely to be fully realizable only in circumstances in which the population is acquiescent and the intervening authorities are well resourced. More often, the intervening authorities will not be equipped to provide the full panoply of interim governance, while the interim indigenous regime, if there is one, will be weak, inept, and corrupt, else the intervention would not have been necessary in the first place. In some cases, the contending parties will not be ready to disarm and cannot be forced to do so. In such circumstances, elections may, in fact, be a requirement for forming a new government with adequate coherence and authority to deal with the society's most urgent problems.

Most postconflict societies benefit from the development of new political leaders. Former leaders may have often based their power on armed gangs or may have come to power by manipulating ethnic or religious tensions. To create a durable political system under the new regime, new actors are needed. The intervening authorities can encourage the development of new local leaders by devolving responsibility for the provision of government services to local authorities and by encouraging local input into decisions. The intervening authorities must also

ensure that leadership develops among all factions. NGOs can be especially useful in developing leadership in local communities and among women and minority groups. Members of the diaspora can also be useful in developing or supplementing local talent.

Constitutional Design

It is important for long-term stability and societal reconciliation to have broad popular participation in—and legitimation of—the constitutional process. International intervention cannot succeed and the institutions it establishes cannot be viable unless there is participation and ownership on the part of the people. This is why the process of constitution-making should be democratic and broadly participatory. It should include not just the election of a constituent assembly or the penning of a constitutional referendum, but also the involvement of the widest possible range of stakeholders in the relevant discussions and in procedural planning. It should also include the organization of an extensive national dialogue on constitutional issues and principles.¹¹ As Jamal Benomar observes, “Constitutions produced without transparency and adequate public participation will lack legitimacy.”¹² And illegitimate constitutions bode poorly for future stability.

While there should be as much continuity as possible with pre-existing constitutional traditions, many conflicts are partly caused by the weakness or failure of the preceding institutional arrangements. Sometimes, significant innovation in institutional design is needed. In some cases, this means the devolution of power, if not federalism, to assure each group a stake in the system. It might also mean a new type of electoral system to ensure fair and balanced representation without too much fragmentation. The choice of executive structure (e.g., parliamentary or presidential), electoral system (e.g., proportional repre-

¹¹ Larry Diamond, “Promoting Democracy in Post-Conflict and Failed States: Lessons and Challenges,” paper presented at the National Policy Forum on Terrorism, Security, and America’s Purpose, Washington, D.C., September 6–7, 2005.

¹² Jamal Benomar, “Constitution-Making After Conflict: Lessons for Iraq,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 15, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 81–95 [p. 89]. An interesting exception to this rule is the Japanese constitution, which was written entirely by Americans and remains unamended to this day.

sentation, majoritarian, or a combination of both), and the degree of devolution of power have significant implications for future stability. Also important is the degree to which the constitution effectively constrains abuse of power and empowers an independent judiciary and other countervailing institutions.

There are at least two broad options for power-sharing that intervening authorities should consider during the constitutional process. One is the *consociational* approach.¹³ This has been employed by states that have internal divisions along ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other lines, yet nonetheless manage to remain stable due to consultation among the elites of each of its major social groups. Thus, consociational democracies are characterized by grand coalitions and proportionality in the electoral system, as well as in the distribution of public offices and scarce resources. Examples include Switzerland, India, the Netherlands, Lebanon, and Malaysia. The consociational approach assumes that, since ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other social divisions can be destabilizing, cooperation across these divisions can bring about long-term political stability. The other approach is to design a political system in which a majority of the population can be assured a certain degree of primacy in society, but to build in crosscutting limitations and incentives to ensure moderation.¹⁴ Both approaches have some merit. Intervening authorities in postconflict situations should push for political institutions that give each major contending group a stake in the future system (through some mechanism of sharing or devolving power) and that diminish the potential for one group (majority or plurality) to dominate the system indefinitely and abuse and aggrandize power.

¹³ See, for example, Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Democracy," *World Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 2, January 1969, pp. 207–225; and Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999.

¹⁴ See, for example, Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1985; and Donald L. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1991.

Developing a Civil Society

Civil society occupies the political space between the individual and the government. It includes NGOs, associations, and social groups that contribute to a democratic society and nonviolent political transition from war to peace. These organizations have several functions:

- They enable citizens to have an impact on government decisions without necessarily competing for political power or resorting to violence.
- They give a voice to minority and other marginalized groups.
- They help increase government transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.

In light of the significant role that civil society plays in supporting and monitoring both local and national governance, international and local authorities should establish legal regulations to protect and develop such organizations. Civil society development should be supported with funding, training, and advocacy. Civic education organizations should be equipped and trained to carry out voter education and get-out-the-vote campaigns. A strong, diverse civil society can provide the foundation for a viable postwar democratic transition that is just and sustainable. Its absence can result in the resurgence of conflict and repressive governance. Nation-building operations create a window of opportunity for international and domestic civil society organizations. They provide an opportunity to firmly establish civil society. But they can also create false expectations and undermine long-term reconstruction if the international community and international civil society organizations quickly withdraw support following the end of the conflict. A legal framework and a civil society that can exist without external support over time are required. In many postconflict societies, civil society organizations are at work prior to the war. When present, the international community should utilize already existing capacity and build on that foundation.

Assistance to civil society often gains momentum late in the nation-building mission, since more immediate humanitarian needs may take precedence in the early stages. In Afghanistan, Counterpart

International conducted an assessment of civil society in 2005, four years into the mission, as part of the USAID-supported Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society. Key recommendations included the following:

Efforts to support civil society must take into account the diverse nature of Afghan [civil society organizations] and their varied needs, resulting in a flexible offering of capacity-building approaches;

Despite their limitations as non-representative, mostly male bodies, shuras and ulemas should be fostered because of their credibility with communities and the resulting potential for making important contributions to anchoring civil society as a force in Afghanistan.¹⁵

The capacity-building strategy should introduce graduated grants—starting with small “learning grants” for new organizations and building up to larger grants.¹⁶

Support for the adoption and implementation of an NGO Law should remain a high priority as it is a critical element of a functioning civil society in any country.¹⁷

These recommendations reflect familiar themes found in other nation-building operations. Legal foundations, capacity-building services, funding, and recognition of traditional structures are now key pillars of civil society development programs.

While law is important, civil society often functions well without regulation. In some cases, civil society may actually function in spite of regulations. In Cambodia, organizations mushroomed during the war

¹⁵ Counterpart International, *Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment*, Washington, D.C., June 3, 2005, p. 8.

¹⁶ Counterpart International (2005, p. 8).

¹⁷ Counterpart International (2005, p. 8).

and the postconflict UN operation. Many had been established in the refugee camps lining the Thai border. But they were not recognized by the government or by political parties, and they had no basis in law.

Many international NGOs entering postwar countries fail to create strong local capacity because they largely employ foreign personnel. The goal should be to foster and leave behind strong local organizations once they depart. Local civil society organizations should be trained, equipped, and supported. The international community should help create capacity within civil society organizations that allows them to function according to the rules and procedures set by their boards. Only well-structured organizations can survive “abandonment” once international organizations leave. Many civil society organizations face financial difficulties as a result of the departure of international partners. A package of incentives and programs may be required to ensure the financial health of such organizations. Speed of funding in the initial postconflict period is important. In the rapidly changing environment of postwar societies—which may include riots, elections, and humanitarian disasters—international donors should develop the capability to deliver rapid support to local civil society organizations. International and local authorities should also encourage citizens and local businesses to contribute to worthy organizations in cash or in kind.

While civil society can make an important contribution to the emergence of effective representative government, it cannot offer an alternative. Donors should be wary of using NGOs to deliver services that should be provided by the state. Working through such organizations may improve both the quality of the services delivered and accountability for the use of donor funds, but it will do nothing to enhance the capacity of the local government.

Creating a Free Press

Independent media play a key role in providing information and analysis of elections, candidates, parties, and platforms, as well as reports on problems during elections, offering a forum for alternative views, interpreting political or technical information for public consumption, helping the public make informed choices, holding public officials

accountable through responsible reporting, and serving as a forum for peaceful debate among those who might have resorted to violence. The intervening authorities may establish media outlets to meet the need to convey information to the public immediately, to dispel rumors, and to counteract the effects of hate speech and inflammatory propaganda. Outlets may take the form of radio stations, television stations, newspapers, or magazines. The establishment of an international media outlet does not replace the need to nurture indigenous media, but it acknowledges that the latter task may take a substantial amount of time.

The intervening authorities should gather information about the state of the media prior to and after the conflict, including media facilities. Television and radio studios, presses, and communication systems are often targeted and damaged during conflict. Donors require knowledge about who controls or supports the media, including outside countries, political parties or factions, warlords, and criminal organizations. These assessments need to take into consideration what is being broadcast from outside the state and from where. Examples include Iranian media campaigns in Iraq, Serbian and Croatian campaigns in Bosnia, and Albanian campaigns in Kosovo.

Once an adequate assessment has been made, international and local authorities can make decisions about how to develop the media, including whether to focus on private or public media outlets. A key issue is funding, as even private media outlets may not be able to support themselves. Key tasks include the creation of a legal framework for media operations, such as a licensing structure, professional standards, and associations for publishers, editors, and journalists; construction and rehabilitation of publishing houses, presses, transmitters, and other media equipment; and training and education programs for publishers, broadcasters, and journalists.

The intervening authorities may establish or fund media outlets to counter hate propaganda and inflammatory statements, and disseminate critical information about transitional activities that affect the population. These efforts are often designed to preempt or compete with media outlets controlled by warlords, ethnic factions, or other opponents of peace. The intervening authorities may need to fill the vacuum in the provision of critical information to the population about

nation-building activities, especially when free and independent media are lacking. Examples include information on the movement of peace-keeping forces, land mine awareness, refugee returns, food and shelter programs, and voter registration and other election information. These media programs help counteract rumors that lead to violence and help expose the activities of those spoilers opposed to the peace process. They are now considered a permanent feature of the initial phase of nation-building operations. Additionally, the intervening authorities should strengthen local indigenous media outlets as part of a broader effort to build a vibrant civil society.

Media supported or controlled by the intervening authorities may be viewed as biased. In addition, media outlets run by the intervening authorities may attract local talent away from the local media, weakening these outlets and leaving a vacuum when the international intervention is over. At the same time, indigenous media outlets are likely to be associated with contending political factions. The challenge is to navigate between the short-term requirement for providing immediate, critical information to the public and the longer-term imperative of creating healthy, free, independent media.

The intervening authorities need to examine the current capacity of the media to print, distribute, and transmit news, as well as the capacity for media education and training. Before designing a media strategy, several questions must be answered. Who are the main actors in the crisis? Who are the opinion-makers? How does the population get information? Do the citizens have radios, televisions, and access to print media? What is the literacy rate among the population?

The control of transmitters after the conflict is a particularly sensitive issue. In Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia established separate units to help Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs begin broadcasting radio and television programs. The decision to help each community separately served to fuel further fragmentation of society in Bosnia following the conflict. The parties continued to spread their doctrines of intolerance and hate. In countries that had strong public broadcasting systems prior to the conflict, the intervening authorities should analyze the past role of these systems and make decisions about the continuation of funding and support. In some areas of conflict, public broadcasting agen-

cies were used as propaganda tools. In post-Taliban Afghanistan, parts of the population perceived the state media as biased in favor of the Northern Alliance. In postwar environments such as in Kosovo and Bosnia, the international community advocated the establishment of a public broadcasting corporation modeled after the BBC. A media strategy should address whether both private and public media are going to be promoted, developed, and funded. For the longer term, a media strategy must encompass how advertising and other revenue streams will create self-sustaining media. Revenues will reduce the dependence of the media on international donors or local political parties.

One of the main challenges in building free, independent media is establishing an impartial, transparent legal regime that upholds freedom of speech, establishes fair licensing practices, permits independent media to operate without harassment, and minimizes the advantages that public media may have over private providers. Laws and regulatory regimes often take longer to realize than other goals of donor activities affecting the media. In some cases, postwar governments fail to enact legal measures to support and guide media. In Bosnia, the OSCE was given responsibility for organizing the first postwar elections. Upon arrival, the OSCE discovered that the same leaders who had prosecuted the war remained in control of the media. To ensure fair elections, the OSCE established the Media Experts Commission as a subcommission to the Provisional Election Commission. It issued a set of rules and regulations that directed the media to publish accurate information and to refrain from broadcasting incendiary programming. The Media Experts Commission also ordered the three television systems, which were controlled by the ruling parties of Bosnia's three entities, to provide opposition political parties with the same amount of advertising time as they did the ruling parties and to run election notices and advertisements issued by the international community.

In many war-torn environments, journalists have worked only under authoritarian regimes and state-controlled media outlets. The business aspect of running sustainable media organizations may need to be taught through training courses. The establishment of a center that provides a variety of services and allows providers to coordinate their activities with the work of local journalists has been a successful

model for media development in postwar societies. In Afghanistan, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) helped establish a single independent media training and resource facility, the AINA Media and Culture Centre in Kabul, which improved coordination among donors and NGOs. Several organizations, such as the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, opened offices in this facility, as did local newspapers, magazines, and NGOs. UNESCO later funded an Internet connection and supplied computers. The BBC conducted a training program through its media training facility at Radio-TV Afghanistan. In Bosnia, the Open Society Institute and the BBC established a broadcast training school, where young journalists came from all over Bosnia to receive training from BBC producers and journalists.

Intervening authorities can revive or create university programs that provide professional education for students in journalism and communications. In Cambodia, the Asia Foundation initiated a one-year certificate program in journalism at the University of Phnom Penh. Two of Cambodia's most respected journalists taught a new generation of aspiring journalists. The Institute for War and Peace assisted Kabul University in developing a journalism program. In Rwanda, the National University of Rwanda's School of Journalism contributed to the development of professional journalism following the conflict. In Kosovo, Press Now and Internews provided training on how to cover elections to local radio journalists. In East Timor, Internews conducted hands-on media training, mentoring, management programs, and technical assistance inside media outlets across the country.

Building and supporting associations for media professionals is another critical tool to encourage media development, promote professional standards, and encourage continuing education in a postconflict setting. In Cambodia, the Asia Foundation worked with the Khmer Journalists Association to promote professionalism and ethical standards. In Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists and the Guild of Newspaper Editors received training and help in building their associations.

Finally, intervening authorities may have to discourage or prevent indigenous media outlets from broadcasting propaganda that increases

ethnic tensions and raises the likelihood of conflict. After early efforts failed to prevent ethnically slanted and inflammatory media broadcasts in Bosnia, NATO troops seized television broadcast towers in Serb-controlled areas of the country. In this case, the show of force succeeded in moderating the future behavior of Serb broadcasters.

Organizing Elections

One highly desirable prerequisite for elections is the completion of the DDR of former combatants, which is explored in more detail in Chapter Two. Whenever possible, design and implementation of a DDR program should be among the earliest priorities of any nation-building mission. Cases may arise, nevertheless, in which the intervening authorities lack the power and the contending parties the will to disarm, as was the case in Cambodia in 1991 and in Iraq beginning in 2003. In such circumstances, the only option may be to hold the elections and hope for the best.

Under ideal circumstances, it is preferable to postpone national elections until security has been established, the contending parties have been disarmed, political parties have been organized, civil society developed, and local elections held. By holding local elections first, national political parties and their leadership have time to mature. The population has time to develop trust in and experience with the political system. New leadership has an opportunity to emerge and gain experience. On the other hand, empowering local officials before doing the same at the national level can be problematic when the proper relationship between the central and local governments is in dispute or where strong sectarian differences have contributed to civil strife.

Several questions are worth asking in seeking to determine the ideal time for elections. First, can the society be governed adequately without early elections? In situations in which the indigenous elements pressing for early elections are strong and the intervening authorities' capacity to govern is weak, as was the case in Iraq in 2004, there may be little choice but to accede to those demands. Second, will the government likely to emerge from the elections be more or less effective than whatever government currently exists? Third, is the result of the election likely to be stabilizing or destabilizing? In societies badly divided

along ethnic, religious, or class lines, elections are likely to increase polarization. In such cases, provisions for protection of minorities and limitations on the power of the majority may need to be put in place before the balloting commences.

Intervening authorities will need to provide a budget for elections and help raise the necessary funds. Both local and international observers should be recruited and trained to monitor elections to diminish the incidence of fraud and mismanagement. Information about the voting process and on the results of the election should be disseminated across the country in a fashion that is accessible to all people. Two goals drive this process: the encouragement of peaceful participation and the engagement of previously disenfranchised or marginalized sectors of society. By making the election process and results transparent and public, accusations and misconceptions of fraud or other problems can be minimized. The intervening authorities should also help establish electoral commissions to adjudicate disputes that may arise over elections.

Robust security is important to the successful conduct of elections. Elections provide targets of opportunity for opponents of the peace process. Voter and candidate intimidation, threats and violence against election workers, and other forms of violent protest routinely occur in postconflict states. International and local authorities should deploy enough military and police personnel to ensure a secure environment for elections and election campaigns.

Afghanistan's Electoral Work Plan, prepared by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, offers one template for setting conditions for what turned out to be rather successful elections. It linked the achievement of elections to the larger state-building mission in Afghanistan. The plan delineated a series of tasks that had to be undertaken and completed in advance of elections, such as

- ensuring a credible political environment, including legislation on elections, political parties, access to media, and monitoring and reporting on human rights

- establishing a reasonable degree of security, including the training of 30,000 Afghan police officers and coordination between national and international military forces
- specifying targets for the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants before the elections, including demobilization of at least 40 percent of the estimated 100,000 ex-combatants and cantonment of all heavy weapons
- completing key technical preparations for each phase of the electoral process.

Elections are commonly administered and overseen by election commissions. Transparent, impartial operation of these bodies is a critical factor in the success of elections, especially in states where there has been little experience with elections and where there is significant ethnic, religious, or tribal friction. The intervening authorities should strive to include representatives of disenfranchised groups on the electoral commission, including women. In some cases, the commission may also include international members in an effort to enhance its impartiality and expertise. The intervening authorities should act to protect the independence of the electoral committee from outside control or manipulation; take measures to facilitate voter and candidate registration, including among displaced persons; and provide information on voting procedures and other information about the election in all major languages and using radio broadcasts and placards where illiteracy rates are high. The intervening authorities should also help design rules regarding permissible sources of financing for elections.

Key Actors

The United Nations is the best source of expertise on the development of transitional and permanent political systems. The OSCE has developed considerable expertise in the promotion of civil society, the establishment of independent media, and the development of political parties, though its activities have so far been limited to Eurasia. Several nations, including the United States and Germany, maintain organiza-

tions affiliated with their own political parties that specialize in helping to set up political parties in emerging democracies. The IFES (formerly the International Federation for Election Systems) has organized elections in dozens of countries around the world under the most challenging of conditions.

Costs

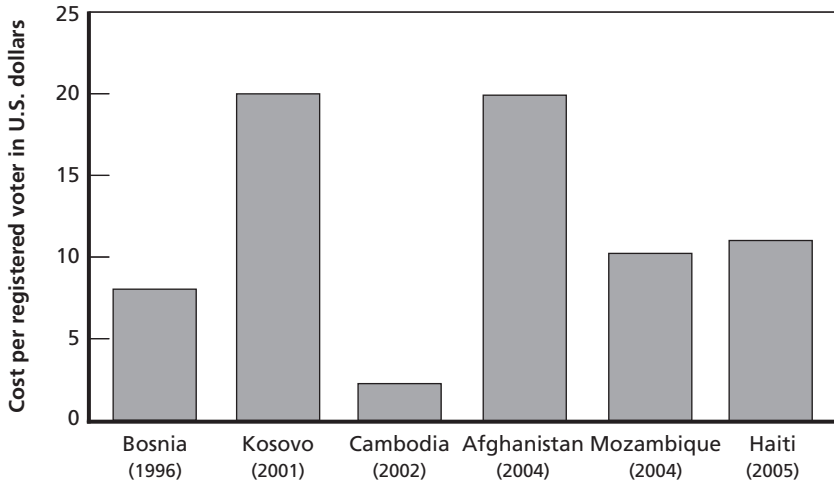
Intervening powers are likely to be called on to fund some or most of the expenses for elections, including the costs of helping build political parties, providing voter information, and organizing caucuses or primaries for the first several years following an intervention. The indigenous government, if there is one, is likely to lack sufficient funds to cover the costs of designing, securing, and holding elections. Of these costs, providing protection for voters and candidates typically accounts for approximately half of the total. Raising the funds necessary to mount elections should begin well in advance of the date on which voters go to the polls. A United Nations trust fund has often been the most effective way to provide funding.

The cost of organizing elections has historically varied from a high of \$20 per registered voter for the 2004 presidential elections in Afghanistan and the 2001 local municipal elections in Kosovo to a low of \$2.20 per registered voter for the 2002 local commune elections in Cambodia. Figure 8.1 illustrates the costs of running elections in six postconflict societies: Afghanistan, Kosovo, Haiti, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Bosnia.¹⁸ The average cost is \$12 per registered voter.

For planning purposes, we recommend that the intervening authority plan to spend the average of these past costs: \$12 per voter. Actual costs would be subject to several variables, such as the level of violence. To illustrate, we evaluated the hypothetical costs of holding an election in Macedonia following an intervention. In 2006,

¹⁸ The elections were the 2004 presidential elections in Afghanistan, the 2001 local municipal elections in Kosovo, the 2005 local municipal elections in Haiti, the 2002 local "commune" elections in Cambodia, the 2004 presidential elections in Mozambique, and the 1996 national elections in Bosnia.

Figure 8.1
Cost of Organizing Elections



SOURCE: IFES and United Nations Development Programme, *Getting to the Core: A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections*, Madrid and Washington, D.C., 2006.

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Macedonia had a population of 2 million and approximately 1,741,449 registered voters.¹⁹ Using an average of \$12 per registered voter, we estimate that it would cost approximately \$21 million to design, secure, and implement countrywide elections in Macedonia.

¹⁹ IFES, Election Guide: Macedonia, guide for 2006 Macedonia parliamentary elections, Washington, D.C., 2006.

