

Courier

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The
Stanley
Foundation

NUMBER 70 | Spring 2011



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Looking for help. *A child who fled Libya looks outside a tent at the Choucha refugee camp near the Tunisian border, one of two camps built to aid refugees displaced by fighting between pro-Muammar Gaddafi forces and rebel groups in Libya. (Photo by Dominique Faget/AFP/Getty Images)*

Cover.

Mass atrocities. *A protestor outside the US embassy in central London calls attention to mass atrocities committed by Muammar Gaddafi's regime, which cracked down on protestors by firing on them with heavy artillery and air strikes. (Photo by /AFP/Getty Images)*

Preventing Genocide

Making "Never Again" a Reality

Can the world stop genocide and other mass atrocities?

The phrase *never again* has been used for decades as a symbol of international resolve to never allow an abomination like the Holocaust to happen again. All nations seem to recognize an obligation to stop future Holocausts, even if it means violating the near-sacred sovereignty of another country.

That resolve has been tested many times, and too often it has failed (see Rwanda, Cambodia, Sudan, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and more). Yet we have seen a handful of success stories (see Kenya and Kyrgyzstan) and a certain amount of progress in how international law addresses these complex situations.

At the Stanley Foundation, we are committed to creating a world where the international community (with the full support of the United States) can halt genocide and mass atrocities at the earliest possible stages. We also want to see a world where no nation allows an environment to exist where genocide and mass atrocities are tolerated...and where no political leaders seriously contemplate these acts as political tools.

Make no mistake, genocide and mass atrocities are almost always the result of political calculations, not merely the inevitable result of violent conflict. Genocide can (and sometimes does) exist outside the realm of war. And even very brutal wars have avoided the dark fall into mass atrocities. If carrying out these crimes is indeed a calculated decision, the world can take steps to change the calculation, raise the consequences, and make "never again" a reality.

The Responsibility to Protect doctrine, introduced in 2001 and ratified by the world in 2005, reinforces the idea that nations must protect rather than harm their populations and the rest of the world has an obligation to help nations carry out this protection mandate and intervene when necessary to halt genocide and mass atrocities. The International Criminal Court, created in 1998, and other international tribunals can (and do) punish individuals found guilty of creating and/or car-

rying out genocide and mass atrocities. The new National Security Strategy of the United States elevates genocide prevention to new importance. New attention to the issue is being raised at the United Nations and within regional organizations including the African Union and others. But of course, much more remains to be done. We still seem to be closer to the start of our "never again" journey than the end.

In this issue of *Courier*, our program officer Rachel Gerber looks directly at the connection between armed conflict and genocide. If we can better understand the political decisions that lead to genocide (with or without war), we may raise our ability to stop it. Conflict prevention remains of paramount importance, but as Gerber explains, the foundation's work with Professor Alex Bellamy is beginning to show us how we can simultaneously work to prevent genocide and mass atrocities.

Foundation President Vlad Sambaiew made a ringing appeal to take atrocity prevention seriously in an opinion piece for *The Hill*, an influential newspaper covering the US Congress. Using current examples in Sudan and the Ivory Coast, he writes, "If we get it right, the next decades will not be a replay of earlier failures or indifference to protect populations at risk." Sambaiew's full essay is reprinted on page 6.

Finally, part of understanding genocide and mass atrocities involves getting a better handle on the triggers that can unleash these crimes. Elections without full participation and credible procedures can tempt leaders to use identity-based violence as a political tactic. Liberia, which has seen this ploy before, faces a critical test in 2011 as it prepares for what many hope will be its second peaceful presidential election since the end of 14 years of civil war. In this issue of *Courier*, our program officer Sean Harder looks ahead to this year's election in Liberia, and what it will mean for the UN mission there. His article is based on a recent fact-finding trip he made along with 11 US news editors and producers. The trip was organized, in collaboration with the Stanley Foundation, by the International Reporting Project of Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

—Keith Porter, Director of Policy and Outreach, The Stanley Foundation

Courier

No. 70 Spring 2011 | ISSN 1044-5900

Courier is published quarterly by the Stanley Foundation and mailed without charge to interested readers within the United States. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of the foundation.

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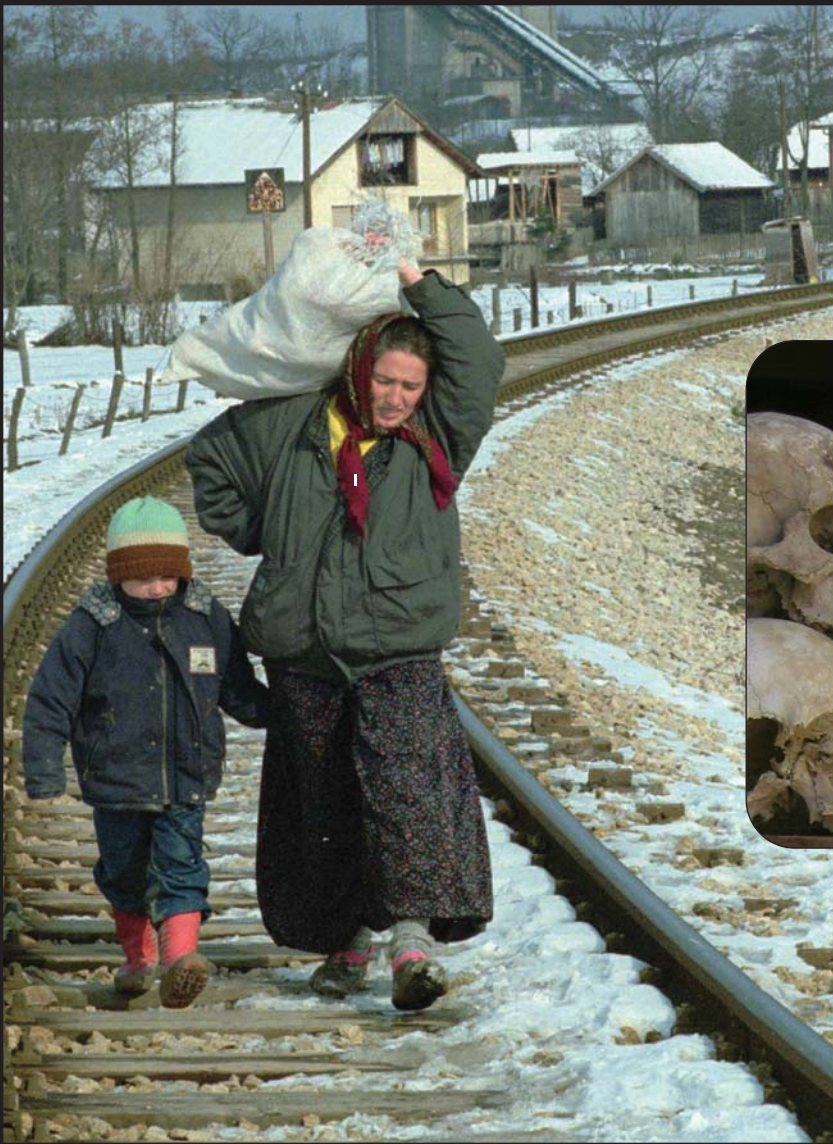
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Civilians Trapped by History. Too often, armed conflict provides the context for mass atrocities against civilians. In Cambodia, the genocide of the late 1970s (photos above) claimed 20 percent of the country's population. In Bosnia, these refugees (left) are among thousands who fled the town of Srebrenica in 1995. In 2001, a UN war crimes tribunal found Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic guilty of genocide for the killing of up to 8,000 Muslims there. (Photos by Kristin McHugh/Stanley Foundation and Vadim Ghirda/AP)

Preventing Genocide

More Than War *The complex relationship between mass atrocities and armed conflict*

For those of us whose understanding of history was born out of the horrors of the 20th century, the Holocaust remains the archetypal image of genocide—an image inextricably linked to the Second World War. In our minds, death camps overlay visions of Nazi goose step; Anshluss and annexation intertwine with flashes of empty ghettos.

The mass extermination of innocent civilians has become emblematic of the depravity of war. A deeper look into the dynamics of the Holocaust (and the many incidents of mass atrocities that preceded and followed), however, reveals a highly complex relationship between armed conflict and mass murder—one that is neither fully bound nor fully distinct.

Armed conflict provides an enticing enabling context for mass violence, creating incentives and opportunities that may not exist in times of peace. Systemic civilian-targeting, however, is not exclusive to war. Many atrocities have occurred in the absence of armed struggle. Russian pogroms beginning in the 19th century, China's Cultural Revolution, persecution of Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan, and Gaddafi's full-scale offensive against Libya's protesting public are only a few examples of "peacetime atrocities," occurring across a wide historical, cultural, and political spectrum. The Holocaust, itself, began with the persecution of German Jews and other minorities far from the battlefields Nazi troops hoped to conquer, and was pursued more for domestic political objectives than as a means to further the war effort.

Genocide and other mass atrocities are best understood as a particular type of conflict, not simply wars in which violence has spiraled out of control. The decision to target civilians en masse is a calculation made by rational elites who believe such tactics to be the most effective route to achieving specific strategic—sometimes military, but often political and economic—objectives.

Such decisions are often linked to war, but sometimes they are not.

This distinction and the complex relationship it implies have become particularly important for policymakers who seek to translate political commitment to prevent genocide and mass violence into effective policy and action.

Opposing Objectives?

Because of their frequent correlation and the similarity of many of their root causes and enabling factors, preventing armed conflict is—and should be—central to the efforts of those committed to preventing mass atrocities. Yet the two phenomena each entail unique dynamics that often force policymakers to choose between seemingly irreconcilable objectives.

Conflict prevention and resolution efforts ultimately seek a consensual agreement among adversaries that brings to an end (or, preferably, averts) hostilities and creates buy-in from all parties for a sustainable peace. Often, this requires a largely behavior-neutral approach to mediation that addresses the interests of all combatants who have the capacity to threaten the peace process.

In some cases, however, such an approach can inadvertently create incentives to attack civilians. Actors who seek a place at the table may attempt to prove their status as a party to the conflict by demonstrating their ability to cause damage. Soldiers and military installations may be too well protected for an effective show of force. Civilians, on the other hand, are rarely hard targets.

Preventing mass atrocities, or altering the *conduct* of combatants rather than addressing their interests and grievances, requires measures that persuade, deter, and (when necessary) impede or coerce elites intent on a civilian-targeted strategy. Doing so can frustrate, even derail, a negotiation-based peace process.

In a recent Stanley Foundation policy analysis brief, *Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict: Links, Distinctions, and Implications for the Responsibility to Prevent*, Professor Alex Bellamy argues that the collective set of measures that have been articulated to prevent genocide/mass atrocities and armed conflict—before crises emerge and when they become imminent—is appropriate to suit both objectives. These include efforts ranging from reducing inequalities and building local governance

capacity to diplomacy, sanctions, inducements, military measures, and legal recourse.

Tailoring the Tools of Prevention

The fact that we use the same generic tools whether we hope to prevent armed conflict or prevent mass violence, however, does not suggest that they should always be applied in the same way to achieve both goals. When mobilized to prevent atrocities, common prevention measures must target the specific risks associated with mass violence. They must also avoid the dangers of an exclusively conflict-focused mindset such as a blind culture of neutrality to the form of warfare that combatants wage.

Effectively preventing atrocities, therefore, does not require the development of a discrete agenda or an entirely new set of policy measures. There is a need, however, to more precisely focus the “atrocities prevention lens” through which policymakers design their approaches and methods.

We need a better understanding of the nature of atrocity risk and how its dynamics should tailor our efforts to buffer against it. We need to know more about the incentives that drive the calculus of perpetrators and the specific institutional weaknesses that most enable their ability to commit such crimes. Once we understand the true drivers of atrocity risk, we can better assess how the tools we possess to combat it can best be applied.

Risk of violence is highly contextual and results from the unique circumstances faced by individual states. Rather than supplanting more traditional conflict risk assessment and crisis management, this understanding would guide ongoing efforts to prevent crisis and, when necessary, prioritize atrocity prevention over irreconcilable objectives and direct international engagement entirely toward this goal.

By honing the tools at their disposal and determining how to apply them for maximum impact in specific contexts, policymakers can begin to design a prevention agenda that shoulders the complexity of the relationship between armed conflict and mass atrocities and better protects the populations they threaten.

—Rachel Gerber
Program Officer, The Stanley Foundation

Alex J. Bellamy is professor of international security at the Griffith Asia Institute/Centre for Governance and Public Policy, Griffith University, Australia.

Resource.

To receive a copy of *Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict: Links, Distinctions, and Implications for the Responsibility to Prevent*, see page 10 or visit www.stanleyfoundation.org.

World Needs Strategic Approach to Atrocity Prevention

Stopping deliberate and systemic murder recently became explicit US diplomatic priority

The recent referendum on independence in southern Sudan and mounting tensions over the presidential leadership stalemate in the Ivory Coast remind us once again that too many people around the world live their lives under threat of large-scale killing and atrocities. While the immediate vote was generally calm, much of the last decade in Sudan has been aptly described as “genocide in slow motion.” These crises and others (Congo is a prominent example) evoke the urgent need for a comprehensive international approach to prevent the use of mass violence as a political tool.

Encouragingly, putting a stop to deliberate and systematic murder recently became an explicit US diplomatic priority. Top policy directives now commit the United States to engage actively “in a strategic effort to prevent mass atrocities and genocide” and develop real-life plans to that effect. Senate Concurrent Resolution 71 was passed last year with strong bipartisan support and calls



for a “whole of government” approach to such prevention. These are major steps forward, yet still only a start. As always, translating good intentions into successful global action will be a long, hard slog.

The challenge for all of us is the same: survival. While some decry “human rights” as a Western construct, the fact is that surviving the day anywhere in the world should be the most basic and universal human right. And, unfortunately, the record of preventing deadly political violence during the last 100 years is not good.

The many democratic, economic, and technological achievements of the 20th century need to be contrasted with the tens of millions who died in wars, genocides, and other murderous campaigns. Rwanda, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, the Holocaust, and Soviet and Chinese Communist mass killings are only a sampling of a 20th century that may well be remembered more for its tragedies than its advances. In this century, many continue to face the threat of unnecessary victimization.



Protecting democracy. Police officers in Khartoum, Sudan, received training from UN Police in preparation for the January referenda in which Southern Sudanese voted for independence. Such training can help nations fulfill their responsibility to protect. (UN Photo/Paul Banks)

genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has spoken forcibly about R2P as “one of the more powerful ideas” of our time. R2P underscores that governments and the broader international community have a duty to provide basic protections to vulnerable groups.

Much remains to be done, but more governments, international organizations, and nongovernmental groups now actively seek practical approaches to prevent the use of mass murder and atrocities as a political strategy. Unlike during the period of the Rwandan genocide, willful ignorance is no longer viable policy. Today key international actors, including the United States, are actively engaged in efforts to avert deadly conflict in both Sudan and the Ivory Coast.

The expanding efforts to give actual meaning to the words *never again* assume that the worst is not inevitable, and that we can do better in the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities than we have in the past. The United States needs to build on its leadership in this critical area. Sustained high-level political will, stemming from all branches of government, is essential to success in these nascent but critical human protection initiatives.

If we get it right, the next decades will not be a replay of earlier failures or indifference to protect populations at risk. We might even do better than we think possible.

—Vlad Sambaiew
President, The Stanley Foundation

Editor's note.

This piece originally appeared in The Hill as an op-ed in January 2011.

On the positive side, concepts of basic human rights made great strides forward in the years after World War II. The Nuremberg trials were followed by adoption of the international convention against genocide in 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights came into force that same year, asserting that “everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.” While still controversial, an international treaty established the International Criminal Court late in the century. It provides a formal, rather than ad hoc, way to prosecute those who commit, order, or incite the worst human crimes.

A Responsibility to Protect

We continue to take other potentially constructive steps to stop mass killings. The principle of “responsibility to protect” (R2P) was adopted at the United Nations in 2005 by more than 170 national leaders, including then-President Bush. The R2P concept obligates nations to protect their populations—whether citizens or not—from

Liberia on the Brink...of Peace

With elections ahead, one small West African country will test the UN like never before

Monrovia, Liberia—Liberia, for all of its progress, remains largely defined by the civil war that ravaged it for 14 years. This small West African country of 3.5 million people, after all, was once infamous for child soldiers, blood diamonds, and Charles Taylor—the country’s former president now on trial for crimes against humanity in neighboring Sierra Leone.

More than 250,000 Liberians were killed in fighting that eventually ended in 2003. It left the country’s infrastructure in tatters. Today Liberia still lacks an electrical grid, leaving residents and businesses to rely on gas-powered generators. It has less than 500 miles of paved roads. The pockmarked dirt paths that lead into the countryside serve only to suppress economic recovery.

Liberia, however, is turning a corner. It is host to a successful United Nations peacekeeping mission. It has elected Africa’s first female president: Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. It has attracted billions in foreign aid and investment. And visitors flying into Monrovia might read about the country’s superior surfing waters in the in-flight magazine.

And while it may not yet be a popular surfing destination, many hope Liberia will serve as a model for how to build a sustained peace and prevent future atrocities. This year’s coming presidential elections will serve as a true test of Liberia’s commitment to peace, as well as the United Nations’ ability to shepherd such a process through to success.

Johnson-Sirleaf, the 72-year-old grandmother credited with the country’s recovery thus far, is running for a second term.

“We have come a long way since 2006, when this administration, this government started, because what we met was a truly dysfunctional system, col-



Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
President of Liberia

lapsed economy, lack of credit worthiness, bad reputation for the country, a failed state, a pariah state, as we were all characterized,” she said. “I think we can say today that Liberia is functioning again.”

All Eyes on the Election

Elections can often be trigger points for violence. Observers say if Liberia can carry out its scheduled October elections peacefully, the second since the war ended, then it will mark a true commitment to peace and the country’s recovery will only accelerate.

“In Liberia the people are peace-loving,” said Brigadier General Mozammel Hossain, who commands a Bangladeshi battalion of UN peacekeepers in the country’s north. “They don’t want any more war. Hopefully with the next election, they will be able to stand on their own feet. That’s my wish. That’s what I hope.”

There’s clearly a sense that Liberians are tired of war and ready to rebuild. That was evident during a November peace rally that brought together previous rivals from Liberia’s Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties, which sparked the civil war.

Aagon Tingva, one of the rally’s organizers, said the civil war left an entire generation of Liberia’s children uneducated. He sees that as one of the country’s central challenges moving forward, but notes that the youngest of Liberians refuse to be defined by the conflict and are taking their future in their own hands.

“I see a very bright future for Liberia,” he said. “I see this generation doing far much better than the previous one. Twenty-five years ago you couldn’t find young Liberians undertaking business projects, or constructing a home for themselves.”

The election “is really the moment for Liberians to show that they want peace,” said Ellen Margrethe Loj, head of the UN Mission in Liberia.

The United Nations still maintains a force of 8,000 peacekeepers and 1,300 police stationed in Liberia. That force, however, will be drawn down significantly provided the elections are peaceful.



Celebrating Peace. A group of Liberian women dance in celebration during a peace rally in November 2010 that brought together residents of Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties to sign a peace accord between two historically rival populations in the country. Liberia is still recovering from a 14-year civil war that ended in 2003. (Photo by Sean Harder/Stanley Foundation)

“When you look around the country, when you talk with the people...you see the eagerness of the Liberians in sending their children to school,” Loj said. “If you see how they are really, really trying to build a future for their children, I sure hope it’s a sign that they want peace, and they don’t want to get back to the atrocities that happened during the civil war.”

A Test for Peacebuilding

Provided the elections go off smoothly, Liberia will continue to receive capacity-building assistance under the UN’s Peacebuilding Commission. Peacebuilding, a five-year-old experiment that focuses on building a country’s capacity to deliver basic services and maintain security, is being put to the test.

Liberia will be the first country to transition from UN peacekeeping assistance to a peacebuilding process. That has UN officials focusing their attention on a seamless transition to demonstrate the program’s effectiveness at preventing atrocities.

“You can keep the peace, but if you don’t build the peace, then history has shown us from so many other theaters that the moment you withdraw the peacekeeping mission—if underlying issues for the conflict have not been addressed—the risk of conflict erupting again is very high,” Loj said.

The Peacebuilding Commission will focus its efforts on reforming Liberia’s security sector and rule of law. It will also work to reconcile the historic rift between indigenous Liberians and “Americo-Liberians.”

Colonized by freed American slaves who founded the republic in 1947, Liberia has a history unique among African nations. It has a special relationship with the United States and is sometimes characterized as America’s “stepchild.” Even today, a new tension is evolving between Liberians who stayed during the war, and those who fled, often to the United States, only to return for senior-level jobs in the government.

The “stepchild” label no longer applies, Johnson-Sirleaf said. With recently discovered oil off its coast and a recovering rubber and mineral industry, Liberia has the natural resource wealth it needs to become independent of foreign aid in ten years.

“We’ve grown up. We’re no longer a stepchild,” she said. “If Liberia continues on the path on which it is right now, given our relatively small population and our ample natural resource, Liberia will not need foreign assistance in ten years. We should be able to manage our own matters and to achieve our development goals by our own resources.”

—Sean Harder
Program Officer, The Stanley Foundation

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Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict: Links, Distinctions, and Implications for the Responsibility to Prevent

Alex Bellamy considers the dynamics of the relationship between conflict and atrocity prevention. He stresses that, while conflict prevention is central to preventing mass atrocities, effective atrocity prevention demands something more—tailored

engagement targeting both peacetime atrocities and those committed within a context of armed conflict. January 2011 policy analysis brief.

PREVENTING GENOCIDE

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Atrocity Prevention and US National Security: Implementing the Responsibility to Protect

As part of its 51st annual Strategy for Peace Conference, the Stanley Foundation convened approximately 25 UN officials, diplomats, and mass atrocity specialists to discuss ongoing efforts to elaborate the US government's strategic approach to genocide and mass atrocities, explore next steps for effective institutional

development, and encourage strategic dialogue between US institutions and their multilateral partners at the United Nations. January 2011 analysis brief.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Evolution of the G Groupings—A Progress Check As part of its 51st annual Strategy for Peace

Conference, the Stanley Foundation brought experts together for a discussion that focused on whether the G-20 fell short of the expectations set for it. In that spirit, participants tried to clarify the proper function, focus, and operating mode for this still-young multilateral forum. A set of G-20 distinguishing characteristics was identified: that it convenes heads of state, brings together countries that are key players in global affairs, and functions with a degree of informality. December 2010 dialogue brief.

Making Multilateralism Work: How the G-20 Can Help the United Nations

Our world confronts a growing range of global and transnational problems. It is also home to a diverse ecosystem of multilateral institutions. Yet the instruments of international cooperation have not matched up to the task of solving the problems. Bruce Jones, of New York University, says one place to look for help is the G-20. April 2010 analysis brief.

Making Sense of Multilateralism

The United States and rising powers is the subject of this article from the Great Decisions 2011 briefing book. Stanley Foundation program officer David Shorr

draws a picture of a multilateral “ecosystem” with a lot of biodiversity among the forums where US officials work with their counterparts.

Learn more about the briefing book used by hundreds as the basis of group discussion on US foreign policy issues or order your copy of the *Great Decisions 2011* briefing book. Available at www.fpa.org.

NUCLEAR MATERIAL SECURITY

The Road to Korea 2012: Nuclear Security Summits and Global Efforts to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

This brief, from the Stanley Foundation 51st Strategy for Peace Conference, captures the discussion of roundtable participants. It includes key recommendations related to the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit; broader efforts to combat nuclear terrorism, including building international consensus on the threat; and taking additional measures necessary to meet the four-year goal and to sustain nuclear security efforts. January 2011 dialogue brief.

The IAEA and Nuclear Security: Trends and Prospects

Despite nuclear security having emerged at the top of the international security agenda, and even with the world-wide interest in developing nuclear power capabilities, the standards for preventing, detecting, and responding to nuclear terrorist activities remain quite poorly defined. Greater coordination, direction, and clarity of the task ahead are needed. Jack Boureston and Andrew Semmel argue that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—because of its established track record, its programs already in practice, its independence, integrity, and confidentiality—is best suited to take that leadership role. Making that a reality, however, will not be easy. December 2101 analysis brief.

Beyond Boundaries in Eastern Africa: Bridging the Security/Development Divide With International Security Assistance

The authors hone in on the Eastern African subregion and propose an innovative “whole of society” approach that seeks to better leverage existing resources, identify new streams of assistance, and bridge the divide between security and development.

The report is the third in a series that seeks innovative approaches to implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 1540 and 1373 by pragmatically pairing states in need of development assistance with those states willing to offer such assistance under the auspices of national security. March 2011 project report.

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Our UN Issues Conference reflected on the evolution of UNSCR 1540 since its adoption, and broader issues related to implementation and prospects for renewal of the resolution in April 2011. UN Photo/Garten

G20-G8 FRANCE 2011
Making Sense of Multilateralism
Looking at four issues—nuclear proliferation, climate change, global economy and human rights—David Shorr examines a multilateral “ecosystem” of forums where US officials work with counterparts.

Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict
Alex Bellamy considers the dynamics of the relationship between conflict and atrocity prevention. UN Photo/Paul Banks

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