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WORKING PAPER

State Fragility

Dimensions of State Fragility: A Review of the Social Science Literature

USMAN HANNAN
HANY BESADA

Working Paper No. 33
November 2007

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TO SEND COMMENTS TO THE AUTHOR, PLEASE CONTACT:

Usman Hannan
Lecturer in Economics
University of Waterloo
uahannan@artsmail.uwaterloo.ca

Hany Besada
Senior Researcher, CIGI
hbesada@cigionline.org

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* This paper is based on the key findings of a year-long CIGI research project on fragile/failed states, with Dr. John Whalley as principal investigator (2005-2006). Special thanks go to Daniel Schwanen and Agata Antkiewicz for their valuable comments and suggestions. We also acknowledge the assistance of Weimin Zhou in the preparation of a number of figures and tables, as well as the Appendix to this paper.

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Thank you for your interest,

Author Biographies

Usman Hannan is a sessional lecturer at the Department of Economics, University of Waterloo, and an analyst at Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator. He holds a BA (Honours with High Distinction) from the University of Toronto in Economics, Mathematics and Middle Eastern Civilizations, as well as an MA in Economics from the University of Waterloo. Previously, he worked as a graduate research assistant to Professor John Whalley at the Centre for International Governance Innovation, looking at the dimensions of state fragility in low-income countries under stress. Prior to that, he worked as an undergraduate research assistant to Dr Sylvia Ostry at the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto.

Hany Besada is the senior researcher working on fragile states at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI). He holds an MA and a BA in International Relations from Alliant International University in San Diego, where he specialized in peace and security studies. Prior to joining CIGI, he worked as the Business in Africa Researcher at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. Prior to that, he worked a research manager at Africa Business Direct, an international trade and investment-consulting firm in Johannesburg. While studying in the United States, he worked as a policy analyst at a number of nongovernmental and governmental research institutes and offices, including Amnesty International, the office of US Senator Dianne Feinstein, United Nations Associations, and the Joan Kroc Institute of Peace and Justice.

Abstract

Failing, fragile or failed states have become part of the international relations and development lexicon since the early-1990s. These states are often associated with poor or unstable governance, persistent extreme poverty, and potential international security threats. Yet insufficient research has been done to understand and clarify the dimensions of state fragility and their implications. This paper reviews the extensive literature that has surrounded this topic.

The authors first draw attention to a host of definitional issues associated with the terminology of "fragile states" and "failed states." They emphasize the limitations inherent in the use of each term, and the differential implications for international peace and security. The paper then analyzes fragile states in terms of their economically destabilizing effects and real or perceived threats to security. The authors conclude that economic breakdown and political instability are far more serious consequences arising from state fragility than the security dangers posed to neighbouring countries and the broader international community.

The forces leading to the emergence of fragile states are seen as numerous and diverse. They encompass economic causes, intra-state conflict and international factors, among others. For this reason, the authors argue, simplistic responses to fragility almost never work. They conclude that changes in the regional geopolitical situation surrounding fragile states, and more equitable global trade and immigration policies, are likely to be more effective in reversing state fragility over the long run than approaches that emphasize aid, military intervention or "creative destruction."

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the fragility of states has become a strategic peace and development policy issue for policy makers in both fragile and stable states alike. Research on state fragility based on economic factors tends to be narrow in its focus and technical, largely due to the nature of modern economic theory's fundamental reliance on sophisticated mathematics and statistics. This paper, however, attempts to analyze the dimensions of state fragility from a social science perspective, without the burden of econometric analysis or comparative statistics, while ensuring that the relevant political and social issues remain in perspective. As a broad overview of the most critical aspects of the issue and policy implications of fragile states, the paper aims to shed light on potential research avenues on how to define and identify fragile states and how to ameliorate their condition.

Defining Fragile States: Problems and Methodology

In the North American literature, the terms "state failure" and "state collapse" have been used to describe cases of severe political crises in specific countries – including Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia, and Afghanistan – throughout the 1990s. The report of the State Failure Task Force (Esty et al. 1998)[1] identifies 18 instances of complete state collapse between 1950 and 1990, as well as other cases of partial and complete state failure. According to Carment (2003), state failure can refer

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[1] The State Failure Task Force was a group formed in response to a request from senior US policy makers to identify factors associated with serious internal political crises.

to a state's performance relative to that of other states, irrespective of region, at any given point in time, making "failure" a dynamic, curvilinear, and relative term (a state can be strong, weak, failed, or collapsed). Rotberg (2002) defines a collapsed state as an extreme version of a failed state, which is a mere geographical expression with a complete vacuum of authority. Zartman (1995) provides another definition of a failed or collapsed state that is often cited in the scholarly literature: one where "the basic functions of the state are no longer functioning." A collapsing state is therefore one that maintains few or no functioning state institutions, has lost its power to confer identity, can no longer assure security, and has lost its legitimacy (see also Helman and Ratner 1992-93).

Gros (1996), who notes that "failed state" is a term popularized by former US secretary of state Madeline Albright, proposes a taxonomy of observable failed states along the following lines (455, 458-61):

- *anarchic states:* states with no centralized government (such as Somalia);
- *phantom or mirage states:* states with only a semblance of authority (such as Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or DRC);
- *anemic states:* states whose energy has been sapped, either by counterinsurgency groups or by the absence of modernization of, for example, economics or democratic principles (such as Haiti);
- *captured states:* states that are centrally controlled by an insecure elite trying to frustrate or eradicate the rival elite (such as Rwanda); and
- *in vitro* failures (such as Bosnia).

In contrast to the North American literature, the European and institutional literature eschews the term "failed state." Sørensen (1999), for example, opts for the term "disrupted states" to refer to states that are unconsolidated at the periphery and are often in an ongoing state of entropy. Looking at ways to explain the degree of disruption within these "disrupted states," Saikal identifies such variables as national divisions, the personalization of politics, the degree to which the state is incapable of reflecting the complexity of its society, and the arbitrary imposition of ideologically driven values and practices. He refers to the argument, prevalent in academic circles, that disrupted states do not have to be failing or failed, but simply reflect signs of the incapacity to be governed.

In institutional research spearheaded by the World Bank, one encounters the term "low-income countries under stress" (LICUS), which the bank defines as countries that score below 3 on the Country Policy and Institutional Performance Assessment (CPIA) index.[2] These countries have exceptionally weak policies (socio-economic as well as political), institutions, and governance, and many are either conflict-vulnerable or post-conflict states. Currently, approximately 30 countries are on the LICUS list. The World Bank maintains, however, that since the characteristics defining such states constitute a continuum, it is impossible to compile a definitive LICUS list for any practical purposes. In its 2005 LICUS update report (World Bank 2005b), the bank proposes adopting the term "fragile states" in its own work.

[2] The CPIA index groups 20 indicators into four broad categories: economic management, structural policies, policies for social inclusion and equity, and public sector management and institutions. Countries are rated according to their current status in each of these performance criteria, with scores from 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest). The index is updated annually. For more information on the CPIA index and the LICUS initiative, see World Bank (2005a, 2005b).

Research by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), in partnership with the World Bank, addresses the issue from a humanitarian point of view, avoiding the term ”failed states.” Instead, DFID’s working definition of fragile states covers those states “where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor” (United Kingdom 2005). In the context of the endemic and pressing issue of poverty in the developing South, Torres and Anderson (2004) propose a definition of a fragile state based on “difficult environments,” which are “those areas where the state is unable or unwilling to harness domestic and international resources effectively to address poverty.”

A number of other definitions of fragile and failed states also exist (see the Appendix), most of which are based on state effectiveness. Chauvet and Collier (2005, 1), however, attach an economic meaning to the terminology by defining a fragile or failed state as:

> a low-income country in which economic policies, institutions and governance are so poor that growth is highly unlikely. The state is failing its citizens because even if there is peace they are stuck in poverty. The failure may well, however, be wider. Empirically the combination of poverty and stagnation substantially increases proneness to civil war.

There is thus some ambiguity in the terminology used to describe fragile or failed states. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) resolves this ambiguity to a certain extent by stating that it “uses the term fragile states to refer generally to a broad range of failing, failed, and recovering states” (USAID 2005) and, therefore, that some fragile states are in an upward trajectory while others are in a downward trajectory of fragility (USAID 2004, 27). In their definition, the emphasis of Chauvet and Collier (2005) on “failing” states also captures the dynamism that Carment (2003) highlights in his definition of "failure," supported by Rotberg (2002), where failed states represent just one point in a continuous curve of failure.

The characterization of a country as "failed" leads to a wider discussion pertaining to what economists refer to as the "cornered solution," whereby distinctive measures need to be taken – a situation that rarely exists for all practical purposes. The World Bank's proposed continuum of characteristics, which places a country at different points on a fragility curve, is more practical and suitable for analytical purposes. Indeed, although the US literature tends to to use the term "failed state," it is "fragile state" that best captures the dynamism of this process, including the two crucial phases: conflict-vulnerable and post-conflict states, which are analogous to incipient failure or emergence from incipient failure, respectively.

.In addition to ambiguous terminology, problems can arise with regard to the issue of state weakness without taking into consideration cross-border dimensions (see Torres and Anderson 2004, 10). A USAID White Paper intended to stimulate discussion about major policy issues surrounding development and foreign aid (USAID 2004) acknowledges that the boundaries between failing and recovering states inevitably are debatable, especially since some fragile states can appear to be stable while their political, economic, social, and security institutions continue to remain vulnerable to shocks, whether external or internal. For example, countries such as Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Nepal, Uganda, and Pakistan might appear to be enjoying fairly healthy economic growth,[3] while still being regarded as fragile states by

[3] In 2006, real growth rates in these countries were: Sri Lanka, 6.3 percent; Indonesia, 5.4 percent; Nepal, 2.4 percent; Uganda, 5 percent; Pakistan, 6.5 percent (Central Intelligence Agency 2007).

a number of nongovernmental think tanks and governmental agencies (including USAID) that work on economic and humanitarian assistance in developing states. As USAID (2004, 19, 26-27) indicates, the number of fragile states depends on the definitions and criteria one uses for fragile states. A very broad definition could result in an overgeneralization of the economic, political, and security dimensions that give rise to fragility in failing or failed states. An extreme example of such overgeneralization is Chomsky (2006), who suggests that the United States is a failed state and, therefore, a danger to its own people and to the world – although here he perhaps confuses "failed states" with "rogue states."

The Problem of State Fragility[4]

Ethnic or intercommunal hostilities, or the insecurity of the ruling elite, can result in the victimization of some or all of a country's citizens, as seen in Mobutu Sese Seko's Zaire or the Taliban's Afghanistan. There is a tendency for criminal violence to erupt with the weakening of state authority. As Rotberg (2003, 5-6) suggests, "[f]ailed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous and contested bitterly by warring factions." This breakdown of law and order can lead to humanitarian and economic disaster, which concerns not only the people directly affected but also others in the country, as well as people in neighbouring states. As Gros (1996, 465) notes, ethnic genocide in Rwanda and the Balkans or flight of Haitians to Florida can hardly be ignored by the international community (see also

[4] Throughout the paper, any mention of state failure denotes that we are citing from or referring to US-based literature. Any mention of fragile or failing states denotes that we are citing from the World Bank or its associated literature (including USAID, which forms a partnership with the World Bank) or giving our own opinion.

Crocker 2003, 34). Torres and Anderson (2004, 8) mention poverty, conflict and humanitarian crises, human rights violations, global security threats, organized crime, reduced global prosperity, and weakened international systems as constituting the global and local impact of fragile states. For the purposes of our discussion, however, we look at the economic destabilizing effect and the security threat that emanate from fragile states that affect global stability and economic prosperity.

The Economic Destabilizing Effect of Fragile States

Paul Collier et al. (2003) identify three ripple effects that emerge from civil war: internal, regional, and global. They find that foreign interventionists, ethnic loyalties, and the burden of refugees or economic costs can cause civil wars to spill over to neighbouring countries; they also mention health spillovers, such as spread of contagious diseases across the border, from the inflow of refugees. As Hentz (2004) notes, such spillovers have occurred in both West Africa (from Liberia) and East Africa (from the DRC).

Chauvet and Collier (2004) estimate that two-thirds of the economic damage from fragile states is the cost imposed on their neighbours, and that a typical country's economic growth rate declines by 1.6 percentage points – through, for example, capital flight and reduced investment flows – if its neighbour is a fragile state at peace. This makes the estimated cost to the typical neighbour 3.41 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), even without taking into account the noneconomic consequences of spillovers, such as violence, organized crime, contagious diseases, and the refugee burden.

Another spillover from civil wars, as Wise (2004, 6-8) notes, is the growth in the narcotics trade, estimated to be worth between

US$300 billion and US$500 billion worldwide. Wise points out that failed, failing, and weak states provide co-operative government officials, access to territory, and the means of transportation that narcotic traffickers need. Colombia and Afghanistan are often cited as examples of this discouraging development.

Moreover, as Sachs (2003) notes, indirect international economic losses emerge from Adam Smith's concept that a country's prosperity benefits directly from other nations' prosperity. In this respect, the negative economic ramifications of fragile or failed states are directly felt in neighbouring states and to some degree more globally as a result of the interdependent nature of the international system.

The Security Threat Posed by Fragile States

USAID (2005, 7) describes the global ramifications of weak states as the "dark side of globalization,", which poses a difficult security challenge for the United States. Takeyh and Gvosdev (2002, 96-97) suggest that failed states are a "global terrorist network's equivalent of an international corporate headquarters," offering terrorists the opportunity to acquire large-scale sites for training complexes, arms depots, and so on, the opportunity to smuggle and to use drug trafficking for funding, and to draw upon a pool of recruits and supporters. Indeed, failed states' external signs of sovereignty also enable terrorists to perform international transactions (96-102).

Such a characterization is, however, accurate only to a degree. Many observers once saw Al-Qaeda's strong base in Afghanistan, prior to the toppling of the Taliban regime by US forces in 2001, as a prime example of the link between failed/fragile states and global terrorist activities and Islamic extremism. In fact, Afghanistan might be the only example of such a link between a failed state and terrorism. Few would argue that Somalia or Rwanda, for example, housed such global terrorist networks, or that Egypt, Syria, or Libya are failed states simply because, in the view of many observers, they have housed terrorist activities. Thus, the assertions of Takeyh and Gvosdev (2002) might be viewed as essentially exaggeration and overgeneralization, although, as Helman and Ratner (1992-93, 8) point out, fragile states do pose risks to international peace and security.

Analysts also point to the potential of a failed state to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Although Wise (2004) suggests there is no clear relation between WMD proliferation and failed states such as North Korea, Patrick (2006, 34, 36-37) argues that there is empirical evidence that failed states are hotbeds of terrorism, and that WMD proliferation in weak states is a justifiable concern. Sachs (2003, 30) mentions that virtually every instance of US military intervention since the 1960s has taken place in developing countries that experienced state failure, which, ironically, could explain why weak states such as Libya, Iran, and Pakistan might want to develop WMD as a deterrent. However, most fragile states, and certainly not those in sub-Saharan Africa, have no such capacity.

Global threats from failed states also seem to emanate from indirect human activity. Sachs (2003, 30-31) mentions environmental degradation (tropical deforestation) and the spread of diseases; indeed, Patrick (2006, 40-42) thinks that the fear of the spread of diseases from failed states is well-founded, particularly with regard to HIV/AIDS.

The security threat emanating from fragile states demands further research, but this aspect is often politically skewed, making objective analysis difficult.

Analyzing Fragility: Sources and Indicators

Carment (2003, 408-10, 415, 416, 418) believes state failure can be explained by comparative case studies, historical trends, leading indicators, event-based data, field monitoring, and expert opinion – all considered simultaneously. He proposes a three-step analytical framework to detect state failure: 1) identify the relevant configurational and composite variables; 2) postulate thresholds of equilibrium shifts, and 3) determine the independence of variables. These steps call for a distinction between causality and correlation, and the need to avoid getting engrossed in issue-specific symptoms, such as the illicit gun trade, black market operations, or child soldiers. He mentions three general approaches to explain state failure: macro-level changes in the international system, intermediate state-society relations, and micro-level strategic interaction between groups that may also explain organized violence. Although Carment's proposal might seem sound, three general interrelated approaches could explain and indicate state fragility: economics-based, conflict-based, and international system-based approaches.

An Economics-Based Analysis of Fragility

Sachs (2003) mentions four types of economic failure that generally lead to increased income inequality and that, in his opinion, could help to explain the root causes of state failure. The first is the *poverty trap,* as is seen in many African countries. The second is *state bankruptcy,* due to a failure to repay loans to foreign creditors, which may have serious destabilizing effects on society – historical examples include the French Revolution in 1789 and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1875. The third is a *liquidity crisis,* which is a sudden reverse of capital flows that could seriously contract the economy, often resulting in violence and a dramatic change in regime (as occurred in

Indonesia in the 1990s). The fourth is the *transition crisis* that can occur during a fundamental change in political and economic regimes, such as recovery from war or moving from colonial rule to sovereignty or from authoritarian rule to democratic rule, as in the case of eastern European states following the revolutionary wave in 1989 that led to the collapse of communist-led governments aligned to the Soviet Union.

The first two types of economic failure generally cause permanent or long-term state failure, while the effects of the last two types are perceived to be short term in nature, although they, too, can lead to permanent change. Although it is not clear what role increased income inequality plays in these four types of failure, it is apparent that the inequality of the distribution of political autonomy and economic goods within a society is the most potent path to conflict that could give rise to state fragility (see Gurr and Duvall 1973, 160). One way in which this might happen is through the absence of a middle class as a result of extreme income disparity between the very rich and the very poor, resulting in the two groups confronting each other directly (see Gros 1996).[5]

More analytical is the grievance-greed econometrics model of conflict, created by Collier and Hoeffler (2000), which predicts the outbreak of civil conflict and concludes that opportunities are more important than motives in explaining conflict (as political scientists often see). USAID (2006) uses this model to identify the indicators of fragility, as shown in Table 1. Here, macroeconomic performance includes a three-year change in GDP

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[5] Some academics would argue, however, that a semblance of a middle class can be found in even the most unequal of societies – for example, South Africa, Mexico, and Russia.

per capita, and a three-year average inflation rate, while the external sector performance comprises a change in the net inflow of foreign direct investment and the share of primary commodity exports in total exports. The inclusion of horizontal equity[6] probably stems from the concept of fairness that is supposed to exist between different regions or ethnic groups within a state. Prevailing opinion among policy makers, however, is that reducing vertical inequality by decreasing income disparity while increasing economic and social effectiveness are the key steps in ensuring horizontal equity.

Table 1: Broad Categories of Fragility Indicators

Economic Effectiveness	**Economic Legitimacy**	**SocialEffectiveness**
Macroeconomic performance	Government effectiveness	Education and Health
External sector performance	Horizontal equity	Demography and employment
Poverty	Business environment	Military

Source: USAID (2006, 9-11)

Proportionally high military spending, at the expense of severely underfunding key sectors such as health and education is a key feature of a fragile state in incipient failure or emerging from incipient failure. North Korea, for example, reportedly spends approximately 25 percent of its GDP on defence while a third of its population is undernourished.[7] Gros (1996, 463) thinks that militarism – which also refers to police and para-military gunmen who generally lack discipline and training and who tend to isolate themselves from factions – probably con-

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[6] Horizontal inequality generally refers to inequality among culturally defined groups, such as the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda. Vertical inequality is simply the difference between rich and poor.

[7] See the website: www.alertnet.org/db/cp/north_korea.htm.

stitutes the biggest threat to national stability and has played a significant role in the creation of contemporary failed states. In a number of so-called fragile states – such as in Eritrea under Isaias Afwerki or in Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe – the state often uses the police as part of its machinery to suppress political opposition groups.

Low-income countries with relatively weak policies and institutional performance often emerge as fragile states. The USAID White Paper (2004, 26) supports this view, and identifies a fairly high negative correlation between ratings of commitment and indicators of fragility.[8] Torres and Anderson (2004, 17) argue that a lack of competence in economic management (including physical and monetary policy) and administrative capacity, which results in a failure to translate goals into resource allocation, is probably the key contributing factor to state fragility. As some of the institutional characteristics of failed states, Rotberg (2002, 88-89) mentions weak or flawed institutions, as reflected by a noticeable absence of democratic debate, an inefficient bureaucracy, and a nonindependent judiciary that often serves the executive branch of the state, as well as a highly politicized military. Rotberg also identifies deteriorating or destroyed infrastructure, which may be due to the "siphoning off" of state funds by the ruling elites (in the form of currency speculation, arbitrage, and knowledge of regulatory advantages), as in the cases of Zambia under Frederick Chiluba or Nigeria under Sani Abacha. These and other types of corruption are preponderant in failed states. When a state's infrastructure is weak, the profit sharing of resources increases fragility – for example, the conflict in Sierra

[8] The White Paper considers development progress as a function of commitment and political will, directed at ruling justly, promoting economic freedom, and investing in people.

Leone and Liberia during the 1990s resulted largely from, and was financed by, the illegal diamond trade.[9] Weak infrastructure can also multiply the effects of natural disasters. Rotberg (p. 86) believes that a climatic disaster in an already-fragile state might result in an endless cycle of migration and displacement, food scarcity, and widespread famine, as was the case in Ethiopia during the mid-1980s and in Somalia during the mid-1990s.

In addition, basic educational institutions tend to become highly neglected in fragile states, as they are reduced to a desperate level of decrepitude due to a lack of funding or to the disruption of the economy resulting from civil war. The health care system suffers a similar fate. Sub-Saharan Africa, which hosts the largest cluster of fragile states, is a good example. The average person born in the subcontinent during the late 1970s enjoys only 5.4 years of primary education, compared with an average of 13.4 years in member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (World Bank 2006, 6). In the lowest-income countries of sub-Saharan Africa, spending on health amounted to only about 23 percent of total government budgets in 2003, leaving the rest to private, out-of-pocket expenses or external assistance (Sekhri 2003). In Liberia, for example, 85 percent of the people depend on nongovernmental organizations for their health care needs, resulting in a decrease in literacy, an increase in infant mortality, and the overwhelming problem of an HIV/AIDS epidemic. In Zimbabwe, one in four people have contracted HIV as a result of the lack of condom distribution, HIV/AIDS awareness programs, and adult public health education in rural areas.

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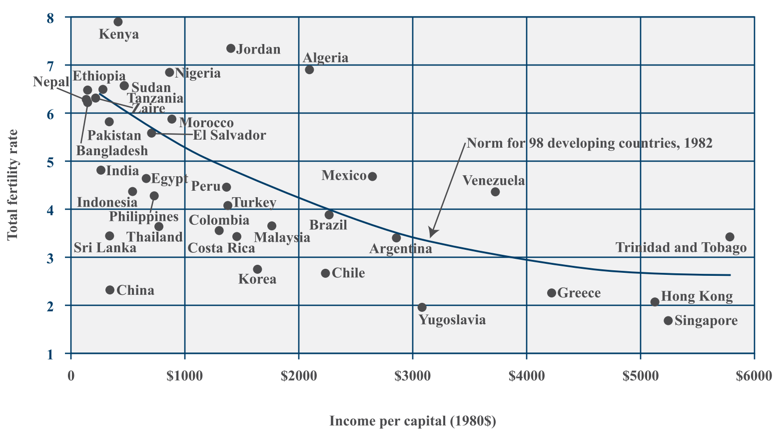
[9] One school of thought points out that the illegal diamond trade was facilitated by the indifference of governments in West Africa and that of international traders toward the plight of the people in those two countries.

Lack of education and a poor health care system also slow down growth in economic productivity, a feature common to a large number of fragile state that, in turn, helps to sustain the poverty trap that Sachs mentions. This also at least partially explains the negative correlation between total fertility rate and income per capita in many developing countries (see Figure 1). Here, some of the classic cases of fragile states, clustered together where the total fertility rate is at its highest and income per capita is at its lowest, show extremely poor performance in the education and health care sectors Furthermore, Gros (1996, 464) predicts, controversially, that a fast-growing population could result in neo-Malthusian problems, as in the case of Rwanda. In fact, there is little indication of such an outcome

Figure 1. Fertility in Relation to Income in Selected Developing Countries, 1982



Source: Birdsall (1988).

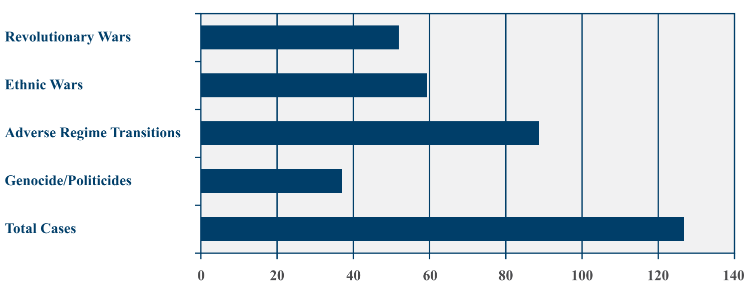
given the introduction of genetically modified food, mass immigration to northern states, the levelling off of population growth, and the continued high mortality rates in a large number of fragile states from preventable yet contagious diseases.

A Conflict-Based Analysis of Fragility

The World Bank's Conflict Analysis Framework (World Bank 2002, 1-2) identifies ethnic dominance, militarization, youth unemployment, differential social opportunities, and reliance on high-value commodities such as diamonds or oil as some of the sources of conflict in fragile states. Esty et al. (1998) argue that, generally, four types of conflict result in state failure: revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse or disruptive regime transitions, and genocide and politicide (see Figure 2).

Horowitz (1985) argues that colonial experience and outside influences determine the extent of communal tension historically, and Gros (1996) acknowledges that these factors generally have had a significant impact on the unravelling of political events in failed states. According to Rotberg (2002, 86-87), a nation fails when it loses its basic legitimacy, as citizens transfer their loyalties from the elected leader to clans or group leaders, resulting in the state's losing its authority over parts of its territory, with an accom-panying rise in intercommunal enmity, as was the case in Côte d'Ivoire when rebel forces occupied the northern part of the country while the government maintained control over the interior and southern regions.

Figure 2. Number of Global State Failures by Type, 1955-1996



Source: Esty et al. (1998, 33).

Esty et al. (1998, 14) find that, in sub-Saharan Africa, all countries with a colonial background have encountered problems (communal tension being is the most vivid among them) since gaining their independence. On average, however, the risk of failure among former French colonies is only one-third that of other African countries, which Esty et al. speculate might be due to the higher level of France's engagement in its former colonies. Herbst (1996-97, 120-22) argues that the replacement of Africa's diverse political systems (villages, city-states, nation-states, empires) with artificial state systems, by forging a common sense of citizenship between people who belong to different ethnic, political, and religious affiliations, is one cause of state weakness on that continent, an outcome Spanger (2001) calls "the tragic consequences of European models of governance" in Africa. This was also the case in southeast Asia and parts of Latin America, although these two regions have had a better record of uniting their peoples and forging a common sense of citizenship than have many parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

Esty et al. (1998, 15) also find that, other variables held constant, the presence of communal groups that are under significant economic and political constraints increases the probability of political failure by almost a factor of two – a result that is suggestive rather than conclusive. Rotberg (2003, 86) argues that disharmony among communities (ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other forms of intercommunal enmity), without exception, contributes to, but is not a root cause of, state failure; rather, narrow policies that favour one group over another are closely linked to the issue of state legitimacy (see Singh 1999). On the other hand, Carment (2003, 415) argues that such policies lead to the concentration of power in a potentially homogenous ethnic group, resulting in conflict between this and other groups that lack power. Rotberg (2003, 86-87, 90) points out that enduring violence is often justified by directing it against an existing government or regime via vigorous political or geographical demands aimed at shared power or autonomy. Gros (1996, 463) suggests that the presence of ethnic heterogeneity does not necessarily facilitate state failure, but its management might. He cites the examples of Rwanda and Somalia, two of the most ethnically homogenous countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which have nevertheless experienced severe ethnic conflict, while Cameroon, with over 150 ethnic groups and a dual colonial legacy (French and British) is one of the most stable countries on the continent (464-65).

Many institutional researchers argue that vertical and horizontal inequality in the distribution of wealth and power is the primary instigator of conflict among various ethnic groups. The existence of multi-ethnicity cannot be sited in isolation as a cause of conflict, but it might encourage narrow policies by one group in favour of itself, which could increase inequality and, in turn, increase the probability of conflict. Spanger's (2001) reference to the tragic consequences of colonialism might be correct, but it is probably not the direct or root cause of contemporary state fragility in Africa. The real cause, from the viewpoint of conflict, appears to be economic and policy related.

An International System-Based Analysis of Fragility

Hentz (2004, 1, 143-46) proposes inside-out and outside-in processes of state collapse. In the former, rulers lead the state to collapse through neopatrimonial rule; the latter includes colonialism and the Cold War. The post-1945 world order marked the end of colonialism,[10] but at the start of the Cold War, a number

[10] Some would argue that the postwar order led to the emergence of neo-colonialism in the Third World. For example, despite the hasty decolonization of

of newly independent nations allied themselves with either the United States or the Soviet Union and received patronage from them – what Sachs (2003,33) describes as "thank you" aid. The end of the Cold War ended the patronage that helped sustain these states while ignoring their inner weaknesses, which some analysts argue could be a major reason behind many states' failed or failing status (see Gros 1996, 455; Carment 2003, 407-27). It could also explain why there have been more civil wars and political turmoil during the post-Cold War period than in other periods in recent history. Zartman's (1995, 1-11) identification of a two-wave state collapse in Africa – the first coming after two decades of independence, the second after the Cold War – could indicate the significance of the effect of changes in the post-World War II and post-Cold War world system on developing state fragility.

It is tempting to investigate historical parallels to such assertions. The Indian subcontinent gained independence shortly following the end of World War II, and both India and Pakistan were aligned to two different axes during the Cold War era. Yet, unlike parts of sub-Saharan Africa, they were emerging states both militarily and economically (particularly in the case of India). Two decades after independence and soon after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, India managed to implement sufficient macroeconomic reforms to emerge as an important player in the world economic and political system. Few would argue that the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971

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the Belgian Congo, Belgium, through the Société Générale de Belgique, continued to control roughly 70 percent of the Congolese economy. Critics of neocolonialism contend that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are acting as agents of former colonial powers in terms of the power they hold over developing countries through the granting or refusing of concessionary loans.

was an incident of state collapse. If one is to assume that Zartman (1995) is correct in his identification of a pattern of state collapse in Africa, then the path of state development between Africa and South Asia, with respect to the end of colonialism and the Cold War, appears distinctive as far as state collapse is concerned.

The failure and dissolution of the Soviet empire at the end of the Cold War could be the most recent example of Sach's (1993) notion of state bankruptcy leading to state failure. With regard to other weak states, however, the withdrawal of super-power support could imply increased fragility due to sudden structural changes, but such withdrawal is unlikely to be the cause of state failure by itself. There appears to be some relevant empirical evidence of a correlation between the collapse of the Soviet Union and that of other fragile states in Africa and other developing regions. Esty et al. (1998, 20), for example, find that post-Cold War democratic transitions are more stable than earlier such transitions, although the result is not statistically significant. In an update to Esty et al., Goldstone et al. (2000, 6) find no substantial changes in the correlates of failure since the end of the Cold War, and conclude that post-Cold War state failures have been only short term in nature, with no long-lasting impact on the state of disorder. This finding seems plausible, but it needs time to be confirmed, depending on how one defines "long-lasting impact."

The USAID White Paper (2004, 33) points out that economic development varies from region to region, with the strongest growth taking place in East Asia and eastern Europe, followed by South Asia, with the poorest performance occurring in Africa, while Esty et al. (1998, 21) note the substantial difference in the success of democratic transitions in different regions of the world, suggesting that regional factors could be associated with state fragility.

Quantifying Fragility: Tests and Hypothesis

Is it possible to quantify the impact and general trend of state fragility by comparing fragile and nonfragile states and inferring from existing data? The UK Department for International Development (2005) estimates that, in 2002, 870 million people – 14 percent of the world's population and nearly 30 percent of those living on less than a dollar a day – were affected by fragile states. Yet policy makers continue to grapple with the question of the extent to which, and how, fragility affects people living in fragile states.

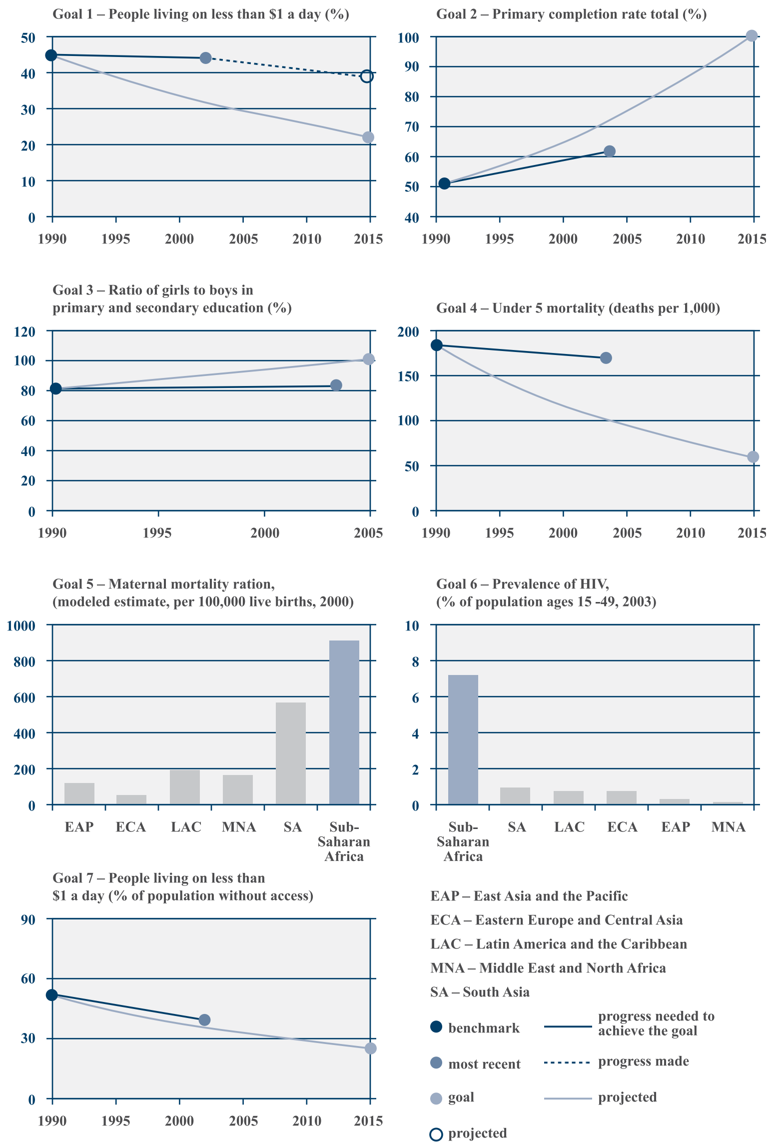
One way to compare fragile and nonfragile states is to look at their progress in reaching the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as shown in Table 2 – although it should be noted that the table, by including middle-income states, does not strictly compare two groups of low-income countries, one fragile and the other not.

Table 2: Progress toward the UN Millennium Development Goals in Fragile States and Other Poor Countries, 2000

Millennium Development Goal		Low-income fragile state	High-income middle-income states
Population		871m	4,361m
MDG 1	Number living on less than $1 a day	343m	821m
	Proportion of undernourished (mean 1999-2001)	33%	15%
MDG 2	Primary education enrolment	70%	86%
MDG 3	Primary education female:male enrolment ratio	0.84	0.92
MDG 4	Child mortality rate per 1,000 (2002)	138	56
MDG 5	Maternal mortality rate per 100,000	734	270
MDG 6	Number of people living with HIV/AIDS (2001)	17.1m	21.4m
	Malaria death rate per 100,000	90	7
MDG 7	Proportion of population without access to safe water	38%	18%
MDG 8	Telephone and cellphone subscriptions per 100 people	4.5	18.8

Source: United Kingdom (2005, 9)

Figure 3. Progress toward the UN Millennium Development Goals, Sub-Saharan Africa, 2015



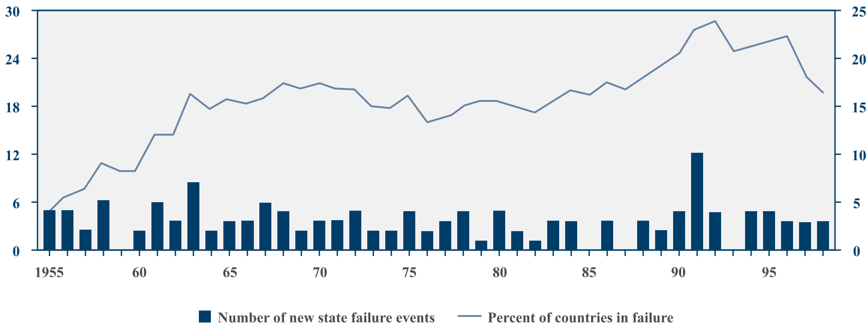
Source: World Bank; Available at:
<http://devdata.worldbank.org/gmis/mdg/Sub-Saharan_Africa.htm>

Perhaps a more valid comparison of fragile and nonfragile states is shown in Figure 3. Although the figure looks primarily at sub-Saharan Africa, this is the region in which the largest cluster of fragile states can be found. The figure clearly shows sub-Saharan Africa's deviant trajectory from the MDGs, a deviation mirrored in DFID's comparison in Table 2. The implication is that state fragility significantly hinders the achievement of MDGs. It is noteworthy that both the World Bank and DFID indicate a very high child mortality rate and a major proportion of the population with no access to safe water as outstanding features of fragile states. Indeed, according to DFID, an astonishing 41 percent all infant deaths take place in fragile states, a finding that aligns with Esty et al. (1998, 2, 24-27), who note that a high infant mortality rate is consistently linked to state failure, and that environmental change is significantly linked to changes in infant mortality.

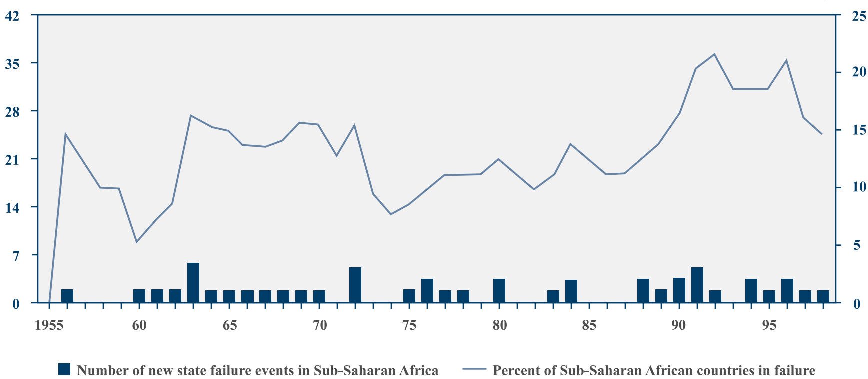
Another useful comparison is provided by Goldstone et al. (2000), who analyze the incidence of state failure around the globe, in sub-Saharan Africa, and in Muslim countries during the 1955-1998 period (see Figure 4). The top panel of the figure seems to indicate a correlation between state failure and the Cold War – particularly striking is the sharp peak in the global incidence of state failure around 1992, following the end of the Cold War. Also noticeable are the two waves of state collapse in Africa – following independence and the end of the Cold War – that Zartman (1995) mentions. It should be noted, however, that the first wave, which occurred during the peak of the Cold War in the 1960s, is much less than the second wave, which weakens the assumption that the Cold War played a stabilizing role in newly independent fragile states. The lessening of the incidence of state failure in the later 1990s also appears to supports the finding of Goldstone et al. (2000) that the effect of the end of the Cold War was merely temporary.

Figure 4. The Incidence of State Failure, 1955–1998

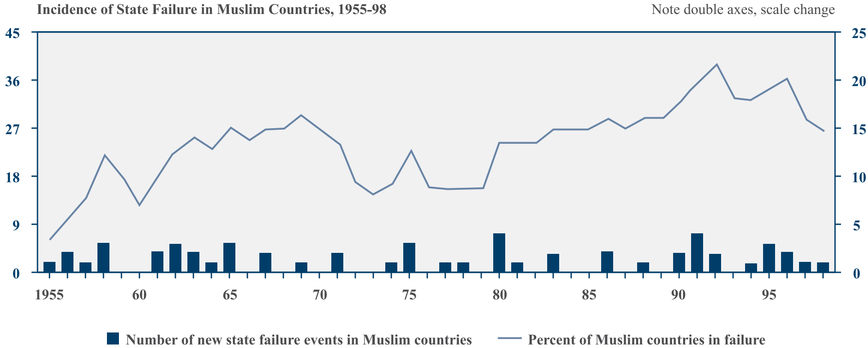
Global Incidence of State Failure, 1955-98 Note double axes, scale change



Incidence of State Failure in Muslim Countries, 1955-98 Note double axes, scale change



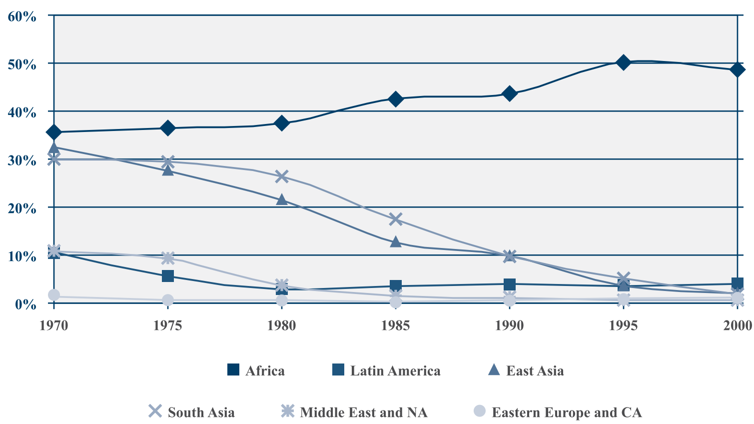
Incidence of State Failure in Muslim Countries, 1955-98 Note double axes, scale change



Source: Goldstone et al. (2000).

Also noticeable in Figure 4 is a lessening of state collapse during the 1970s. A possible explanation of this phenomenon is provided by Sala-i-Martin (2006), who notes that, outside North America and western Europe, other regions experienced a relatively steady poverty rate throughout the 1970s (Figure 5). Figure 6 also indicates that growth per capita in Africa remained quite steady throughout the 1970s, a period in which oil shocks

Figure 5. Poverty Rates by Region, 1970-2000. Poverty Rates ($570)

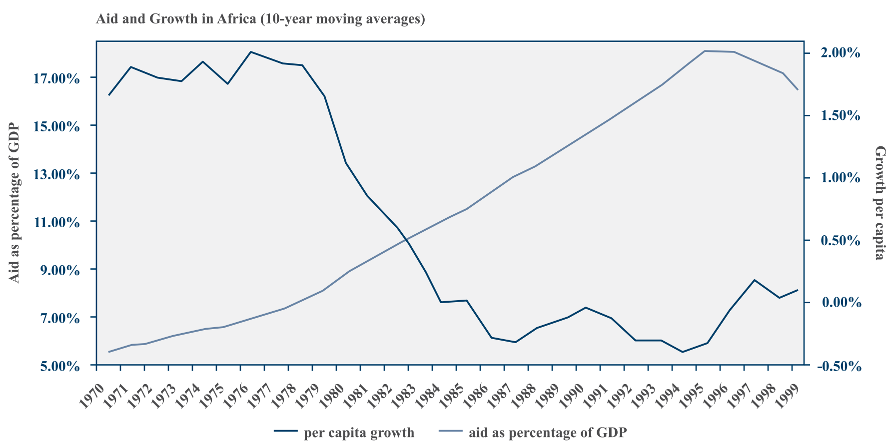


Source: Sala-i-Martin (2006).

and the ending of the post-World War II economic growth miracle negatively affected western Europe and the United States. Low-income states, particularly fragile states, emerged largely unaffected by these shocks, perhaps because their largely agricultural economies were far less reliant on oil imports from the Middle East. (Indeed, the possibility that the oil shocks of the 1970s played a stabilizing role in weak states could be a topic for further research.) During the decade from 1985 to 1995, the sharp rise in the poverty rate in Africa, accompanied by a sharp decline in per capita growth, is associated with a marked increase in the incidence of state failure, which highlights the importance of economic stability in avoiding state fragility.

This broad analysis suggests that economic forces and geopolitics constitute a driving force behind the incidence of state fragility. The effect of the Cold War is noticeable, but whether it played a stabilizing or destabilizing role in weak states is not

Figure 6. Aid and Growth in Africa, 1970–1999



Source: Easterly (2003).

clear. Moreover, it seems likely that the implications of the end of the Cold War for increased state fragility are short term, rather than long-term, in nature.

Approaches to Dealing with Fragility

Existing approaches to dealing with state failure include diplomacy, development and trade policy, and conflict-related operations. Since the end of the Cold war, the last approach has mostly taken the form of post-conflict reconstruction, characterized by multilateral, UN-sanctioned interventions, which have been either downright failures (Somalia) or partial successes (East Timor, Sierra Leone) – see Klotzle 2006. An example is the Kimberley Process, an innovative initiative among governments, the international diamond industry, and civil society groups to stem the flow of "conflict diamonds" – rough diamonds that rebel movements use to finance wars against legitimate governments; the trade in these illicit stones has contributed to devastating conflicts in countries such as Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, and Sierra Leone.

Today, there is a growing emphasis on how multilateral institutions and governments can respond more effectively to the challenges posed by fragile states to regional political stability as a way of ensuring the containment of conflicts within national boundaries. There is also a growing demand to draw on previous lessons of failed policy responses to conflict situations – such as Rwanda in 1994 – to avert future large-scale acts of violence.

Reversing state failure has been the main approach of the international community since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. As Chauvet and Collier (2005) find, however, donor aid has been largely ineffective in inducing policy reforms or in generating a sustained turnaround of failed states, although such aid has been more effective in increasing the chances of a sustained turnaround in post-conflict situations. Rajan and Subramanian (2005, 1-9, 22-24) find evidence that the inflow of foreign aid causes the overvaluation of real exchange rates, resulting in a decline in the share of labour-intensive and tradable industries in the manufacturing sector. This suggests that corruption and mismanagement are not necessarily the sole reasons for the failure of vast amounts of foreign aid to boost growth in the long run, although it might do so in the short run. In contrast, Chauvet and Collier (2005) find that technical assistance has been both significantly useful and cost effective during incipient reform efforts. There is also considerable empirical evidence of the value of official development assistance and aid when properly used over the short term as part of the reconstruction period in post-conflict situations.

Rajan and Subramanian (2005) also highlight the growing awareness of the importance of post-aid macroeconomic management – including the implementation of monetary policy aimed at reducing the effects of foreign exchange intervention – as well as the need for a clear understanding of the tradeoffs between short-term commitments (to relieve humanitarian suffering, for example) and longer-term goals (such as empowering the poor to demand their rights; see also Berry et al. 2005). Esty et al. (1998) also note that policy makers need to be particularly careful with regard to "partial" democracies – states in the process of establishing a democracy following a civil war or the end of an autocratic regime – since such states are highly vulnerable to economic shocks and the external political dynamics of the international system. According to Rajan and Subramanian (2005, 1-9, 22-24), the goal should be assistance toward full democracy and the development of polices that help to grow international trade., which is expected to contribute to the alleviation of poverty and the growth of income as a part of a comprehensive strategy to build capacity for economic growth over the long term.

Reversing failure aside, the prevention of state failure in the first place is receiving increasing attention, particularly in the United States. For example, Richard N. Haass (2003), former director of planning at the US Department of State, credits the United States with offering economic, technical, and military assistance toward the goal of preventing state failure. Hoping to invigorate Sudan's peace process, the United States has earmarked more than US$1.7 billion in humanitarian and reconstruction aid for the war-ravaged African country.[11] This, in the opinion of Rotberg (2002, 94-95) is a prudent policy, since reversing failure is an extremely expensive, rigorous, and complicated process.

The concept of prevention also seems to be acquiring support due to the fact that failed states can have a contagious effect that, at times, can be threatening even to a superpower like the United States. Carment (2003, 407) notes, for example, that the George W. Bush administration considers simple containment to be ineffective in dealing with state failure. Haas (2003) explicitly mentions the switch of the US focus on failed/fragile states from a "humanitarian lens" to one of strategic relevance. Indeed, Klotzle (2006, 5) believes that the 9/11 attack on the United States constitutes a critical turning point, linking state failure to international security. In addition to direct intervention, the current US approach to curb the negative impact of failed states is directed toward regulating threats, including arms control and nonproliferation efforts, initiatives to curb money laundering by criminals and terrorists, as well as controlling the spread of infectious diseases.

In a world in which states fall under the UN umbrella and in which the Westphalian model of the rights of nation-states still holds, 12 however vaguely, the issue of intervention is a sensitive one and generates vigorous debate. Toward that end, Haas (2003)

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[11] See the website: www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article22110. But compare this amount with the US$2 billion in annual aid the United States has given to the Egyptian government since 1979 to prop up the secular regime of Hosni Mubarak and to secure its support for an Arab-Israeli peace accord to solve the long-standing dispute over the Palestinian territories.

mentions three situations that he feels would justify forcible intervention by a foreign country and that might result in a loss of sovereignty:

- where a state commits genocide or crimes against humanity in its territory;
- where a fragile state harbours terrorists that are a threat to another country's citizens; and
- in the case of "anticipatory self-defence" against the unique dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Along the same lines as Haas, Stephen Krasner (1995-96, 151; 2004), the current director of the US State Department's Policy Planning Staff, elaborates on the idea of imposing shared or conditional sovereignty on a state that fails to fulfill its obligations. Indeed, Krasner is a strong advocate of abandoning the Westphalian model of sovereignty in Third World countries, including large Arab states. His approach would involve targeted assistance, where international players work with domestic officials in key policy areas such as natural resources management, the maintenance of security, and oversight of the judicial system, and would require long-term monitoring and support. Two existing examples of shared sovereignty are the Kosovo and Chad oil pipeline projects. Problems with such an approach, however, include the possibility of imposition by force and a lack of legitimacy (see Klotzle 2006, 12-13).

Recognizing new states – in other words, allowing the creative destruction of states that are not viable – is another nonconventional approach that scholars and policy makers have considered and widely debated in recent times. This approach appears to be most suitable in Africa, where the nature of borders is often arbitrary, a legacy that continues to haunt the continent since the end colonialism during the 1960s and 1970s. The successful emergence of Somaliland as an autonomous body after the breakup of Somalia into warring factions in 1991 following the toppling of the regime of Siad Barre is often seen as a representative case of creative destruction (Klotzle 2006, 15-16). The emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 from the former label of East Pakistan constitutes another example of such a development. Modification of the environment around fragile states is also seen as a feasible option.

Hentz (2004, 155-56) proposes that the international community focus equally on inside-out and outside-in causes of state failure in Africa, so as to deal adequately with the complexities involved. Since state collapse is highly contagious in Africa, it would be useful to pay attention to cross-border networks and to deploy more UN peacekeeping forces on the periphery of failing states. Klotzle (2006, 17-19) suggests an increased emphasis on regional solutions to deal with failure, including increasing regional state-building capacity, economic integration, development programs, and peace-building conferences. It is worth mentioning existing efforts by African states to bring and maintain peace on their continent: African Union forces in Sierra Leone were headed at one point by Nigerian peacekeepers, while African Union forces in Somalia were largely composed of Ugandans.

Pressures on the autonomy of nation-states come from other sources as well. Gros (1996) notes that many developing states are assuming the role of dumping grounds for surplus weapons – during the 1980s and early 1990s, for example, Nigeria, Angola, Mozambique, and Somalia were among the countries in which toxic materials from the West were dumped. Stedman (1996) mentions that loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to developing nations come with free-market policy prescriptions and conditions that may “cut at the heart of the [African] patrimonial state.” Other analysts argue, however, that, in some African states – Ghana, Senegal, Egypt, Tanzania, and Botswana, to name a few – such loans have had a positive impact on economic growth.

Still more pressure comes from the decline in the prices of many agricultural commodities since their highs of the 1960s and 1970s. Ellis (2005, 4) argues that this decline might be irreversible, and sees it as an obstacle to most African nations’ being able to accelerate their economic growth since they still depend so heavily on such commodities while remaining incapable of industrializing. At the same time, however, African states are currently enjoying unprecedented economic growth, averaging more than 5 percent annually, due to high commodity prices, largely thanks to rising Chinese demand and prudent macroeconomic policies undertaken by African states during the mid-1990s, which are now bearing fruit. Indeed, Esty et al. (1998, 29) find that involvement in international trade, in terms of trade openness, is associated with a lower risk of state failure in all contexts.

From this perspective, the report of the L20 group of world leaders (2005) – which asserts that effective state building requires both a departure from the conventional Bretton Woods structures and changes in the international trading system that favour diversified economies with established institutions – seems timely and relevant. So does the recommendation by Rajan and Subramanian (2005) to remove export restrictions on poor nations. There are solid examples to support their recommendation: the Multi-Fibre Agreement on world trade in textiles and garments, which has helped to promote Africa’s textile exports; the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement, which encompasses aid and trade between African, Caribbean, and Pacific nations and the European Union; and the US *African Growth and Opportunity Act* (AGOA), which provides trade preferences for quota- and duty-free entry from eligible African states into the United States for certain goods.

In addition, Hamilton and Whalley (1984) have analyzed the implications of labour mobility restrictions from low-income countries to developed nations. Although their analysis was done more than 20 years ago, their findings are still relevant today. They suggest that, leaving aside brain-drain issues, removing restrictions on the inward migration of labour from South to North would result in striking annual worldwide efficiency gains. In the context of fragile/failed states, their findings imply that removing or modifying migration restrictions to the richer countries could substantially promote the aggregate welfare of the remaining citizens of fragile/failed states. In practice, the benefits of so-called brain circulation – that is, when talented persons return to their home countries, importing new ideas about business and technology or when they send money home through remittances – are apparent in countries such as Bangladesh and Uganda, which many consider to be successful examples of reverse fragility. It is also true, however, that the exodus of health care workers and teachers from countries such as Zambia, Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, and Zimbabwe to Western states – particularly the UK, Canada, the US, New Zealand, and Australia – is robbing Africa of expertise that it badly needs; moreover, many of these professionals indicate that they will not return to their homelands in the near future.

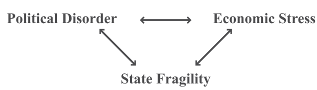
Importantly, in considering intervention in, or the creative destruction of, nonviable states, the existing literature lacks an "inner voice" – that is, what respective target countries themselves have to say about their fate. Yet, without such a voice, intervention, however it is justified, would appear to be little more than an ill-advised Western solution. Furthermore, any intervention changes the rules of state operations. Different levels of threats to target countries – ranging from economic sanctions to political intervention to outright occupation – can result in distinctive nonco-operative bargaining situations, where failure to reach an equilibrium might give rise to further civil strife and state fragility. Carment (2003), for example, points out that the legitimization of the demands of minority groups by supranational organizations and international norms (such as the recognition of human rights) can lead to further violence and warfare.

Thus, from a theoretical point of view, intervention is an extremely complex and sensitive issue, and solutions are difficult to find – witness the recent cases of Iraq and Afghanistan. Even the allocation of aid among conflicting groups could have repercussions, further increasing intergroup tensions, creating hazardous moral problems, and perpetuating dependency on aid in recipient states. On the other hand, a credible threat from the international community could prove an effective deterrent to genocide. Indeed, Carment (2003, 412-13, 417) suggests that weak threats from international bodies promote violence, suggesting that the genocide in Rwanda was a direct consequence of the UN Security Council's lack of a proper response to the mass killings that were taking place in 1994.

Concluding Remarks

The key to reversing state fragility is embedded in many factors, such as economics, culture, and the global situation. Rotberg (2002, 93-94) believes that state failure is essentially manmade – that is, a failure of leadership. Gros (1996, 465), however, considers society-centered internal analysis to be more fruitful than dwelling on world-system and dependency theories. Nevertheless, the literature identifies aid as an effective short-term emergency measure and modification of the political and economic environment as the most viable long-term option that the international community can use to reverse state fragility, even though some modifications (such as lowering or removing migration restrictions) might be politically nonsalable in Western countries. Changing the internal structure of a state invariably involves complexities with often undesirable consequences, as this paper has attempted to reveal.

Figure 7. The Triangle of Fragility



Our analysis of the considerable literature on state fragility leads us to depict the driving forces of the phenomenon in a dynamic triangle (see Figure 7). In low-income states, economic development is obviously the main focus of overall development. In fragile states, too, economic development, not political intervention, should be the main focus of the international community. This is because the people in a fragile state are extremely sensitive about political analysis and intervention. Intervention is also prone to exhibit the subjective bias of the nations or individuals that propose to intervene. Furthermore, political intervention has widespread repercussions that are more likely to have an overall negative impact on the intervened state. On the other hand, economic analysis, and intervention based on such analysis, can be general rather than issue-specific, as well as objective and relatively less judgmental. Thus, "economic stress" is the most tangible and easy-to-manipulate node in the triangle (see Figure 7) that both the international community and the fragile state itself can use in their pursuit of a strong and viable state.

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Appendix

(Some definitions of failing states, fragile states, and weak states)

United Nations

- Failed states are "[t]hose that generally cannot provide security for their citizens or their territory, and that are corrupt and illegitimate in the eyes of their citizens." See: <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrlls/NewsArchive/09%20June%20NYT-%20Report%20Says%20Aid%20to%20Weak%20States%20Is%20Inadequate.htm>
- "A capable state is one in which peace and security are guaranteed and sustained. There are also weak states, with the poorest performance in countries in conflict." See: <http://www.uneca.org/agr/foreward.pdf>

World Bank

- Fragile states are "[t]hose with weak institutions, either unable or unwilling to provide basic social services for their poor – provide fertile ground for many emerging global and security threats." See: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20314398~menuPK:34457~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>
- "Fragile states are characterized by a debilitating combination of weak governance, policies and institutions, indicated by ranking among the lowest (< 3.0) on the Country Policies and Institutional Performance Assessment." See: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20127382~menuPK:34480~pagePK:34370~theSitePK:4607,00.html>
- "Fragile states are defined as 'difficult environments' grounded in the role of the state in development effectiveness. Difficult environments are defined as those areas where the state is unable or unwilling to harness domestic and international resources effectively for poverty

reduction." See: <http://web.worldbank.org/servlets/ECR?contentMDK=20357055&sitePK=388759>

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

- "Fragile states are countries affected by weak governance and institutions where delivering aid is difficult but critical to support peace and stability, and to improve the lives of the millions of their citizens who are mired in a vicious circle of conflict, poor governance and poverty." See: <http://www.oecd.org/document/ 15/0,2340,en_2649_201185_34407567_1_1_1_1,00.html>

United States Agency for International Development (US government)

- "USAID uses the term fragile states to refer generally to a broad range of failing, failed, and recovering states. However, the distinction among them is not always clear in practice, as fragile states rarely travel a predictable path of failure and recovery, and the labels may mask substate and regional conditions (insurgencies, factions, etc.) that may be important factors in conflict and fragility. It is more important to understand how far and quickly a country is moving from or toward stability than it is to categorize a state as failed or not."
- "USAID is using vulnerable to refer to those states unable or unwilling to adequately assure the provision of security and basic services to significant portions of their populations and where the legitimacy of the government is in question. This includes states that are failing or recovering from crisis."
- "USAID is using crisis to refer to those states where the central government does not exert effective control over its own territory or is unable or unwilling to assure the provision of vital services to significant parts of its territory, where legitimacy of the government is weak or non-existent, and where violent conflict is reality or a great risk."

All of the above are from: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/2005_fragile_states_strategy.pdf>

UK Department for International Development

- Fragile states are "[t]he future risk of conflict and political instability around the world." See: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/Nl1/Newsroom/NewsroomArticles/fs/ en?CONTENT_ID=10016979&chk=9n6/DH>
- "DFID's working definition of fragile states covers those where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor. The most important functions of the state for poverty reduction are territorial control, safety and security, capacity to manage public resources, delivery of basic services, and the ability to protect and support the ways in which the poorest people sustain themselves. DFID does not limit its definition of fragile states to those affected by conflict. Some states are fragile because of weak capacity or lack of political will – or both." See: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/fragilestates-paper.pdf>

Australian Government Overseas Aid

- "Fragile states are countries that face particularly grave poverty and development challenges and are at high risk of further decline – or even failure. Government and state structures lack the capacity (or, in some cases, the political will) to provide public safety and security, good governance and economic growth for their citizens."
- "All fragile states are different and many reasons can cause their fragility but features they share are weak governance, failing public institutions, instability or conflict – all of which contribute to dismal growth prospects. People living in fragile states are more likely to die early or suffer from chronic illnesses, and less likely to receive a basic education or essential health services."

Both of the above are from: <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/fragile_states.cfm>

International Development Research Centre (Canadian government)

- "In an interdependent world, in which security depends on a framework of stable sovereign entities, the existence of fragile states, failing states, states who through weakness or ill-will harbour those dangerous to others, or states that can only maintain internal order by means of gross human rights violations, can constitute a risk to people everywhere." See: <http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-28736-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html>

Brooking Institution (United States)

- "Among the most important elements of President [George W.] Bush's first National Security Strategy… is its focus on failed states. The president is wise to draw attention to the significant threats to our national security posed by failed and failing states. Such states can and often do serve as safe havens and staging grounds for terrorist organizations. Failed states create environments that spur wider regional conflicts with significant economic and security costs to neighbouring states. They pose serious challenges to U.S. interests in terms of refugee flows, trafficking in illicit goods, peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, and lost trade and investment opportunities." See: <http://www.brookings.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb116.htm>
- "From its first page, the National Security Strategy focuses attention on the dangers posed by failed states: 'America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.' In his letter, introducing the NSS, President Bush elaborates: 'The events of September 11, 2001, taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet, poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders.'" See: <http://www.brookings.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb116.pdf>
- "Failed states are countries in which the central government does not exert effective control over, nor is it able to deliver

vital services to, significant parts of its own territory due to conflict, ineffective governance or state collapse. Current examples include Afghanistan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. Failing states – those in which the central government's hold on power and/or territory is tenuous – also pose a serious threat. They are often countries emerging from, or on the brink of, conflict, such as Angola, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Burundi, and Côte d'Ivoire. Others, like Colombia, have relatively strong central governments but are cause for concern, due to their lack of control over parts of their territory. Still others, including Pakistan, Georgia, Albania, Yemen, Nigeria, and Indonesia, are weak, if not yet clearly failing states." See: <http://www.brookings.edu/views/papers/rice/20021125.htm>

University of Victoria, Centre for Global Studies (Canada)

- "Failed and fragile states are posited as harbours for terrorists; investment in counter-terrorism is significantly increased to reduce vulnerability to terrorism; weapons of mass destruction are a concern because of the potential for terrorists to get a hold of them." See: <http://oia.uvic.ca/feature/11_2005>

Overseas Development Institution (United Kingdom)

- "[T]erms used to describe fragile states [range] from weak, failed, failing, crisis, (rogue) states, poor performers, low income countries under stress, difficult environments, difficult partnerships, thugocracies and so on. There [has] however been coalescence around the term fragile states in the last 6 months." See: <http://www.odi.org.uk/speeches/MDGs_2005/meeting_2March/meeting_report.html>

Centre for Global Development (United States)

- "A 'failing state' can be defined in various ways. In political science it has come to mean a state which is not able to maintain internal security. We give the term an economic meaning: a failing state is a low-income country in which economic policies, institutions and governance are so poor that growth is highly unlikely. The state is failing its citizens because even if there is peace they are stuck in poverty. The failure may well, however, be wider. Empirically the combination of poverty and stagnation substantially increases proneness to civil war. Through various routes the state may become a hazard to its neighbours and conceivably to the world." See: <http://www.cgdev.org/content/calendar/detail/3080>

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The Centre for International Governance Innovation
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57 Erb Street West
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 6C2
tel +1.519.885.2444 fax +1.519.885.5450
www.cigionline.org