

Guatemala the Mayas constitute a majority. This group has thus far been repressed and neglected. The transition to a democratic polity provides them with the opportunity to become a major player on the political plane.

In Nicaragua two rapid power transitions can be identified, the Sandist military overthrow of the Somoza regime in 1979 and the 1990 power transition in which the political opposition democratically ousted the Sandinists from political power. The first power transition was accompanied by large-scale violent conflict, whereas the second transition was peaceful. With hindsight, the Nicaraguan case could be perceived as a long and gradual power transition in favor of the newly emerged middle-class, i.e. the economic elite that came forth during the economic expansion of the 1950s and 1960s. During the Somoza period, this group was co-opted by the Center through pacts and alliances. However, as soon as the Somoza-clan encroached upon the economic activities of these new elite groups, and excluded them from their already limited access to decision-making and certain allocations, they joined the insurrectionist opposition. The necessity of incorporating this political actor was recognized by the Sandinist movement. However, their incorporation remained only partially and temporary. As soon as the Somoza-dynasty was overthrown, the Sandinists started to grab for power, again excluding this economically important group from access to decision-making. Once more, the newly emerged economic elite joined the opposition forces, this time the ones that succeeded in overthrowing the Sandinists. Though the Sandinists obtained political power in 1979, they failed to achieve economic dominance, which proved to be fatal to their survival. The Contra war resulted in a virtual collapse of the economy for which the majority of the Nicaraguan electorate held the Sandinists accountable once a political settlement had been reached. Nevertheless, the Sandinists maintained a firm grip on the army and hence on military power.

The results in Central America clearly demonstrate the interdependence of the political and the economic domains of the polity involved in the dynamics of power transition.

4.5 Poverty

In general the long-term trends on poverty reveal different patterns for the regions under scrutiny. South Asia witnesses a long-term trend of at least marginally declining poverty. In West Africa, however, poverty tends to increase for the majority of the people. In this region pre-independence incomes were higher than incomes at present. In Central America the overall trend reveals a dynamic pattern of growth towards the 1970s and a sharp increase in levels of poverty in the 1980s followed by stagnation now.

The South Asian country studies do not demonstrate a clear and persistent relationship between poverty and conflict. Poverty per se cannot be labeled as a factor causing violent conflict in itself. (Violence within India, for example, occurs in both poverty-stricken areas (Bihar and the northeastern tribal belt) and economically advanced areas (Punjab)). Poverty, however, does function as a strong mobilizing factor, especially when poverty coincides with ethnic, linguistic, religious, regional or other characteristics of specific groups in society. Poverty may play an aggravating role with regard to the outbreak of violent political conflicts in a situation where people think they have nothing to lose. In many cases it is the combination of poverty with other factors that make the situation explosive. Examples of

these factors are discriminatory and exclusionary state policies and military repression. Also sudden natural disasters or economic crises may contribute to such a volatile situation.

In parts of India, extreme poverty in combination with severe political repression has provided a fertile breeding ground for violent peasant movements (Naxalite movement in West Bengal as well as the peasant uprisings in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh). In Bangladesh similar movements existed in the early 1940s (Teghaba movement), but nowadays poor segments of society appear less organized in their opposition to exploitation by landlords and their strongmen. The emancipation of the untouchables is based as much on cultural group identity and the struggle for self-esteem as on their poverty. These *harijans* are among the poorest in Indian society but it is the political-cultural dimension that mobilizes resistance, because democratic ideas and principles are 'trickling down'. The internal conflicts in Sri Lanka (JVP and LTTE) were partly motivated by poverty issues. The backbone of the JVP-movement can be traced back to specific low and middle caste Sinhalese youth. Here the perception on poverty and the lack of social mobility played a key role. The struggle of the Tamils started as a reaction towards their relative decline from an earlier, more privileged position. The majority of the LTTE fighters were allegedly recruited from the poorer segments of Tamil society, who saw this as an avenue to income and employment.

In West Africa as well, the relationship between poverty and violent conflict is indirect at most. Here, access to natural resources appears to be a crucial issue when discussing poverty. Poverty may be widespread and all pervasive but if groups are alienated from their sources of income the propensity to rebel becomes much stronger. Furthermore, the inter-group perspective plays a crucial role. Groups living in poverty remain largely peaceful as long as other groups are experiencing similar standards of living. If this is not the case they may experience relative deprivation and come into action.

In Niger the Tamajaq revolt was the cumulative result of the first two tendencies described, combined with a profound sense of political marginalization. The agricultural crisis deprived the Tamajaq of their means of subsistence, whereas the French had destroyed their traditional coping strategies, thus enhancing their dependency on the state. The state, however, did not address the needs of the Tamajaq community. In Senegal the Jola population perceived market penetration and aquatic resource competition as a threat to their traditional livelihood strategies and went into armed resistance, partly out of fear for future economic decline. As in other cases the political element predominated their struggle. In North Nigeria the violent religious movement Yan Tatsine thrived on a combination of poverty, political exclusion and alienation from the state. Widespread poverty in Ghana did not result in conflict, but led many people to exploit alternative avenues to acquire income. Strategies included opting out of the formal economy, smuggling, migration and black marketing and associated criminal activities.

In Central America poverty has at most been a mobilizing factor but conflicts were more clearly related to political issues and the role of state. The case of the Maya population of Guatemala is a clear example of economic marginalization, but despite a history of almost five centuries of political, cultural and economic deprivation they did not rise to fight the dominant power structure.

Concluding, it can be said that poverty in and of itself is not related to violent conflict.

Conflicts emerge in poor and rich regions and among poor and better off sections of society. However, the combination of poverty with other factors, such as exclusion along identity-lines or discriminatory or repressive state policies, may lead to the outbreak of conflict. The lack of economic opportunities may propel people into resistance or rebellious movements as well.

4.6 Socioeconomic inequality

Income inequality does not show a direct relation with a higher incidence of violent conflict. Inequality is as pervasive a societal feature as poverty, and both are clearly linked to one another. In many developing countries there exists a strong inequality between urban and rural areas, as well as within the populations in these areas. More important is the degree to which socioeconomic categories overlap with specific ethno-linguistic communities or regional boundaries. Perceived inequality by specific groups, e.g. in comparison to other groups, may provide incentives for violent confrontation. Such mobilization can be contained when groups are tied to richer and more powerful segments of society through bonds of patronage. If traditional patronage linkages are firmly rooted in society, the social fabric ensures the implementation of mutual obligations. In Bangladesh this type of relationships is under enormous pressure as elite groups try to appropriate coastal lands for commercial shrimp farming through land grabbing and intimidation of powerless peasants and fishermen. Moreover, newly emerging lands in the delta, so-called 'kash' lands, officially attributed to land-less farmers are forcefully occupied by powerful landowners.

Competition for renewable resources, from which many people derive a livelihood, are at the center of the struggle between socioeconomic actors in South Asia as well as elsewhere. Such developments sometimes are the result of market forces, as the Punjab-case in India demonstrates. The Green Revolution created a lot of problems for the small peasantry and landless laborers. This, again, has created an agricultural proletariat among poor layers of the Sikh peasantry, and provided a powerful breeding ground for extremist movements.

In Sri Lanka, the state and the economy could not provide employment for young educated Sinhalese, who then joined the ranks of the JVP movement out of frustration. They were also partly mobilized on the basis of shared caste affiliation. In Pakistan the *mohajirs* contested the loss of jobs to their community despite the fact that previously they had held a disproportionate share of government offices. The same applied to the Sri Lankan Tamil community that long dominated the state sector. Because of their historical advantage as a result of earlier access to Western education Tamils acquired a dominant position in the British colonial administration. Post-independence attempts by the majority to reverse the situation were perceived as threatening to the economic survival of the Sri Lankan Tamils, and served as a powerful mobilizing factor.

In West Africa socioeconomic inequality is all-pervasive. The overlap between patterns of economic inequality and ethnic identity may lead to tensions and eventually conflict. The limited capacity of the state to redistribute income and to provide services (or the unwillingness to do this more equally) has resulted in a widespread perception of the 'predator state'. Socioeconomic inequality is also important when distinct groups are confronted with economic developments, by which their means of existence are threatened, such as exploitation of resources by migrant groups. Under these circumstances the propensity to

violence augments significantly. The Jola in Senegal and the Tamajaq in Niger are examples of such developments. If hierarchical relationships between groups are changed in situations of scarcity or deprivation, violent conflict might be the result, such as in the north of Ghana.

In Central America socioeconomic inequality is mainly related to access to land. Consequently, land reform may contribute to social stability, but at times has contributed to the contrary as well. In Honduras throughout the last decades a gradual process of land reform has been implemented. This may have helped to avoid civil strife in that specific country as the citizens granted some legitimacy to the governments of the day. In El Salvador the erstwhile Christian Democrat president Duarte managed to wrestle a limited land reform scheme from the right wing elite, eventually leading to land transfer for a significant amount of rural families. In Nicaragua a land reform has been implemented during the Sandinist period. Much of this land was concentrated in the form of cooperative state-run farms and the land reform remained fiercely contested among segments of the population. In Costa Rica land reform has never been substantial, but nonetheless land transfer has been implemented. Many peasants have moved to the agricultural frontier and obtained a plot of land. Moreover, the state has institutionalized relationships between productive groups and between the rich elite and the poorer segments of society. It is also redistributing some of the national income through a system of targeted taxes. This greatly enhances the legitimacy of governments and prevents arbitrary and random distribution through patterns of alliance and exclusion. In Guatemala no land reforms have taken place.

Socioeconomic inequality in itself does not account for the outbreak of violent conflict. If, however, groups perceive the unequal situation as the result of a political process imposed upon them, the propensity to violence increases. Similar to the working hypothesis on poverty, access to important renewable resources such as agricultural lands, cattle or aquatic reserves, is an important intermediary variable. If resource competition is perceived in terms of enhancing a system of unequal rewards between contending groups, the propensity towards violence increases. Finally, if the state is able to distribute social services and state-sector jobs equitably, it will improve its performance and legitimacy. Therefore it is crucial to look at state policies with regard to alleviating socioeconomic inequality between distinct groups within society.

4.7 Economic performance (growth or decline)

Overall indicators for macro economic performance of states, such as those expressed in terms of income per capita, of course fail to take into account the complexity of economic dynamics within countries. However, at a first level of analysis, patterns of economic growth and decline have taken place unrelated to the conflict dynamics in the three regions. Moreover, it is important to make a distinction between economic dynamics as a possible causal factor accounting for the outbreak of violence and as a result of violent conflict. Clearly the conflicts in the Punjab (India), CHT area (Bangladesh), Kashmir (India), Guatemala, Contra War (Nicaragua), El Salvador, Biafra civil war (Nigeria), MFDC rebellion (Senegal) and the Tamajaq insurgency (Niger) have had devastating effects on the economic performance of the regional and sometimes the national level. In the case of Central America the negative economic effects of prolonged intrastate conflicts made that parties were prepared to consider peaceful settlements. Although there seems to be no direct causal linkage between economic

developments and conflict dynamics, indirect connections can be indicated. Economic decline can facilitate the mobilization of discontent among specific groups. Especially when only certain segments of society bear the consequences (e.g. ethnic groups). On the other hand, economic predominance may be translated in political power and vice versa.

In Sri Lanka the economic stagnation and lack of employment opportunities created a hotbed for discontent. In Pakistan, the economic domination of the Punjabis has also created preconditions for the predominance of Punjabis in the army and the state bureaucracy. Formerly influential groups have lost ground to them. The concomitant process of identification between the central state and Punjab has created enormous tensions between the state and regions with other ethno-linguistic groups. This phenomenon threatens the survival of the Pakistani state as its weak political legitimacy is eroded further by the lack of re-distributive capacity with regard to directing investments to such marginalized areas and peoples. In India similar forces are at work, depriving the Northeast and other peripheral areas of income and economic growth perspectives. Large countries, such as India, have become more centralized over the years despite proclaimed re-distributive policies. In the Punjab prices of inputs are decided upon by the Center, and free commodity flows of outputs were forbidden, thus relegating the Punjab to the status of a surplus producing agricultural area without political autonomy to promote its own development.

In West Africa the general image is one of economic stagnation and decline. Economic growth, when it materialized in the 1960s, led to conspicuous consumption by the elite and to a boom in import substitution industries. When the macro economic parameters showed a decline in growth during the seventies, as a result of both climatic disasters and the oil crises, the state sector still continued absorbing upcoming groups to some extent. However, when structural adjustment measures were implemented in the 1990s after the concomitant devaluation of the CFA, followed by the Naira, most regional economies lapsed into crises.

In Ghana economic prospects were positive in the early 1960s. However, as Nkrumah embarked upon socialist projects the leading economic elite and foreign companies withdrew their support. Since then the economy of Ghana has decreased almost continuously leading to a fall in real income for the average citizen and widespread poverty. In addition, many Ghanaians opted out of the system through informal practices, migration or survival on remittances. The indirect effects of economic decline, notably through massive lay off of civil servants, were substantial.

Senegal provides a good example of the indirect relationship between economic hardship and the evolution of political dissent as opposition parties use such developments to make people rally to their cause. The events in Dakar in the aftermath of the 1989 elections can be linked directly to popular discontent about the economy, especially when subsidies for food or basic products such as kitchen oil and petrol were abandoned by the government of the day. Such protests, violent as they may be, do not necessarily lead to prolonged violent conflict between groups in society. Government policies can therefore at best be aggravating or de-aggravating a conflict, but they work usually alongside other factors that have a more structural character. In the Casamance region, outsiders dominate the modern economic sector and the local population resents this strongly, because for the exploitation of local resources no compensation is provided either through selective government investment schedules or through a system of channeling the benefits back into the local economy. A clear relationship

between economic growth or decline and the conflict history of Nigeria cannot be established. The economic success of oil-rich Biafra in relation to its relative political exclusion may have played an aggravating role in the process of mobilization. The case of Niger demonstrates that, indirectly, the overall weak economic structure, the feeble capacity of the state to foster economic growth and the gradual decline in economic performance of notably the pastoral sector has alienated specific groups from the state. Simultaneously, the dwindling resource base has led to intensified struggle for the allocation and redistribution of resources to groups and regions.

The economic dynamics of Central America overlap to a great extent. The 1960s were a period of economic growth, followed by stagnation in the 1970s, and economic decline in the 1980s. In Guatemala the pattern of economic decline on the country level shows no covariance with conflict. On the regional level the economic crises of the eighties had a disproportionate impact on the central highlands where the indigenous population is located. However, as they were at best only partially integrated into the formal economy the effects of stagnation should not be overestimated. As was the case in South Asia, modernization and industrialization has led to centralization of economic growth in large metropolitan areas attracting large numbers of migrants from the countryside, reinforcing existing patterns of development and underdevelopment. The Honduran case clearly demonstrates the dilemmas of economic growth, modernization and globalization. In a highly fragmented economy, characterized by the dichotomy between a modern export oriented agricultural sector and a large *campesino* subsistence sector, the performance of the national economy only partially reflects all economic activities. In El Salvador, important alternative strategies such as migration, prior to the Soccer War with Honduras and later during the civil war to other countries in the region and notably the United States, have presented an escape valve to alleviate the effects of war and economic crisis. In Nicaragua, during the Somoza period overall economic indicators showed a pattern of steady growth. This pattern underwent changes in the aftermath of the 1972 earthquake, also as a result of the international recession, the oil crises and the decline of the CACM. This, in combination with other political factors, may partly explain violent revolutionary opposition to the regime. During the Sandinist period, the economy experienced modest growth followed by a period of constant decline, due to the internal war against the Contra's and the external economic blockade by the United States. There was also little willingness to invest in the economy as the economic elite was excluded from the decision-making processes. In the end the economic collapse eroded the popular support of the government and led to its defeat in the elections.

In all regions economic decline and stagnation have led to the mobilization of popular discontent. Short-term economic crises may also lead to spontaneous outbursts of public discontent and long-term stagnation may mobilize segments of the population into violent opposition to the state. This happens only in combination with other factors in the sense that economic growth is not always related to conflict or the absence thereof. In cases of severe economic decline population groups may massively opt out, as Ghana and El Salvador have experienced, or lead to the development of shadow and war economies. Afghanistan and regions within countries such as the Jaffna-peninsula in the Northeast of Sri Lanka indicate that in some cases groups can also move into criminal and illicit sectors of trade. In some cases the centralization of economic power and far reaching state interference may spawn political conflict with regions within states (India, Pakistan, Nigeria). Finally, socioeconomic development initiatives by the government may be perceived by ethno-linguistic groups as

efforts to annihilate their culture and hence may be resisted by them (CHT in Bangladesh, Maya population in Guatemala, Jola's in Senegal).

4.8 External military and political assistance

The extent to which foreign (i.e. extra-regional) powers have intervened militarily and politically differs from one region to another.

In South Asia foreign political intervention has never been an outstanding feature, with the notable exception of Afghanistan. Indeed, the contemporary history of the country cannot be written without taking into account the roles played by the superpowers. The Soviet intervention in 1979 started a period of escalation and civil war in the country. This intervention can be perceived as a belated effort of the communist regime to expand its sphere of influence at the expense of dwindling American presence in the region. The ousting of U.S. citizens and representatives from Iran after the Khomeiny takeover has been interpreted by the Soviet Union as an indication that military intervention was possible at that point in time. However, they failed to take into account the internal power relations between groups in Afghanistan. The Americans responded by supporting the *Mujahideen* movement among others through Zia Ul Haq in Pakistan.

In West Africa the Biafra war has been the only conflict situation in which external powers meddled directly. The British sided with the Federal Government, whereas France and Portugal gave support to the rebellious region. Huge quantities of military equipment were brought in to both sides prior to the outbreak of the civil war, the Soviet Union notably providing the Federal government. The war was probably prolonged as a result of this external intervention. While the Francophone countries are closely linked to France, there is scant evidence of French direct intervention in West Africa, with the exception of Chad. Some groups from France have actively supported the internal rebellion of the Tamajaq rebels, but there was no consensus on the issue within France.

Military support to specific regimes has been a continuous feature of U.S. policy in Central America. From the beginning of this century American influence grew steadily. Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala (prior to 1980) witnessed invasions or coups supported by U.S. troops or allies. In fact, the small states on the Isthmus appear to be predestined to dependency on their relationship with the superpower in the North from a geo-strategic point of view. The Cold War added an ideological dimension to the U.S. presence in the region. The stand off between the superpowers became more outspoken after the Cuban revolution and motivated U.S. backing of right wing governments and extensive military training by the U.S. army. Counterinsurgency became a vehicle for military intervention in politics and opposing the various left wing movements (Sandinists, URNG and FMLN). The Soviets have intervened only to give military support through delivery of weapons to Cuba and the Sandinist regime in Nicaragua. Their presence has been fragmentary and covert.

The hypothesis on external military and political intervention does not find strong empirical support with regard to the outbreak of large-scale violent conflict. In fact, we find evidence of only a limited number of cases in which external military support was given *prior* to the outbreak of conflict. Instead, most cases demonstrate that external military support was given

after conflict had escalated into violent confrontations. In the majority of cases military support only seems to have had an aggravating effect on the duration and on the intensity, and not on the outbreak of conflict.

4.9 External economic intervention

The main objective of this research question was to measure the possible impact from economic intervention by individual states and international agencies on conflict. The regional and country chapters provide only rudimentary and incomplete material against which to discuss the hypothesis. Whereas the South Asian analysis focuses on international development aid and aid dependency, and the West African one is based on a critical review of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), the Central American report discusses the instrumental role of economic intervention during a conflict.

In the cases of Ghana and Senegal SAPs are held responsible for the worsening macro-economic performance. Moreover, the massive lay off of government personnel and the forced privatization of some industries and services has had a detrimental effect on the state's capacity to absorb young well-educated newcomers to the labor market, subsequently leading to frustration and discontent. Also the services provided by the line ministries were affected. Although the lack of state resources did have some impact on the conflict cases of Senegal and Niger, there is not enough evidence to support the view that outside economic interference played a major role. The donor community moreover tends to encourage promising developments mostly during the post war periods. Niger has received additional relief funds for the nomadic Tamajaq at a point in time when the contending parties had reached a negotiated settlement. Benefits from such agreements, when explicitly mentioned by sponsors of a negotiation process tend to be important incentives for conflict parties during the military stalemate phase of a conflict.

In Central America economic intervention took place during at least two civil wars. During the Sandinist period both the United States and the Soviet Union and its allies gave substantial economic support to the conflict parties. In fact the economic aid from the COMECON to the Sandinist government forestalled regime collapse for almost a decade. In El Salvador the government received military and economic aid from the USA to counter the insurgency movement. This became more pronounced during the Reagan administration in the 1980s. In fact both conflicts mentioned took place during the so-called lost decade when the economies of all the countries in the region experienced severe depression. The economic integration of the region itself had already come to a halt in the late 1960s in the aftermath of the 'Soccer War'. As such, however, external economic interference did not determine the outbreak of violent conflict, but certainly played an aggravating role. In El Salvador capital flight was taking place immediately after conflict broke out. Such phenomena usually should be put down as economic consequences of conflict rather than causal factors contributing to their outbreak.

In South Asia external economic aid flows tend to have a larger impact in the smaller economies of the region, such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. With regard to conflict only the case of Afghanistan is relevant as the various political actors in that country have maintained a rather pragmatic tradition of profiting on external powers with a vested

strategic interest. Such was the case during the British Empire, followed by the Tsarist and Soviet interventions and the USA covert support of the *mujahideen*. Therefore the elite in power has always tried to maintain a certain balance between contending powers, subtracting sufficient resources to cater for the needs of the state apparatus. Afghanistan was only able to develop by depending almost exclusively on commerce and external aid. The withdrawal of the Soviet forces has resulted simultaneously in the withdrawal of economic support from all sides, thus greatly complicating the recovery process. In such cases of extreme and prolonged dependency external economic support helps to sustain so-called quasi states and consequently helps to prolong internal conflicts.

External economic interference by major powers in conflicts in the regions and countries under study apparently never has led to the outbreak of violent conflict. In some conflict cases massive economic support has propped up conflict parties and led to a prolongation of the conflict. The IMF financial programs have had a severe impact on the state sector of some countries, in turn leading to economic hardship for segments of the population. A direct link with violent conflicts cannot be established, despite the occurrence of violent incidents due to sudden price fluctuations for staple food and subsidy cuts on imported goods.

4.10 Regional security setting

The hypothesis on the regional security setting establishes a relationship between the stability or instability of neighboring states and the outbreak of violent conflicts in specific countries.

In the post colonial period the West African region remained relatively free from interstate conflict, with the exception of the Biafra war and some minor border skirmishes between Mali and Burkina, and Niger and Benin. While the period until the late 1980s was characterized by a rather peaceful regional context, after this period several violent intrastate conflicts emerged (the civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Chad, the Casamance insurgency, and the Tamajaq rebellion). Only in a limited number of cases the internal conflicts triggered conflicts in neighboring countries. In our sample, for instance, only the Casamance conflict may be related to the unstable relationships between Senegal and its neighbors Mauritania, Gambia and Guinea Bissau in 1989. Moreover, the MFDC chose to escalate the conflict at a moment in time when the Senegalese state seemed at its weakest, due to conflicts with neighboring countries. Thus, a relationship between internal conflict and the external security situation appears to exist in the sense that if a government is pinned down in an external conflict situation, an opportunity for successful escalation is created for internal opponents. A direct connection between the outbreak of violent conflict and instability in surrounding countries, however, cannot be established. Both the Biafra conflict and the Tamajaq rebellion, for example, took place in a relatively stable and peaceful regional setting.

Although the hypothesis did not explicitly take covert actions by neighboring states into account such actions may indeed have strong destabilizing effects. Here, the political indoctrination of Tamajaq youth in exile provides an example, as a large number of insurgents was recruited under precisely these youths. Further, the objectives of the Khadafi regime have long focused on weakening its southern neighbors, Chad and Niger, in order to acquire part of the mineral rich areas in the northern desert mountain ranges. In sub-Sahara Africa the relationships between the various political leaders and power elites may indicate possible

hotbeds for political conflict. External relations of contending elite groups or the prevailing animosity between political leaders may have an impact on the beginning or course of a conflict. When a conflict emerges, leaders from different countries may offer overt and covert support to belligerent parties, thus aggravating a conflict situation and facilitating its duration in time. During the Biafra war, some Francophone (Ivory Coast) and Lusophone (Equatorial Guinea) countries gave support and even politically recognized the secessionist republic.

In Central America, various conflicts have had a profound impact on interstate relationships. The Arbenz period in Guatemala, for instance, forced neighboring countries to choose sides, Nicaragua and Honduras opposing the regime and Costa Rica supporting it. Throughout the contemporary history of the region such alliances can be observed. Another case in point is the Costa Rican revolution. Here, Nicaragua intervened to support the counterrevolutionary movement. The most outstanding cases, however, are the Cuban Revolution and the Sandinist Revolution. The former led to superpower engagement in the region, and the latter to the application of the U.S. 'National Security Doctrine' via counterinsurgency. The regional security setting in the Central American region has thus been profoundly shaped by the Cold War.

Instability due to internal conflicts has been a salient feature of the region, with the notable exception of Costa Rica. In Guatemala there was clearly a relationship between the Cuban Revolution and subsequent waves of insurrection. In El Salvador, civil war flared up in the aftermath of the Sandinist takeover in neighboring Nicaragua. Furthermore, Honduras had condoned the presence of the Contra movement on its territory, thus facilitating its destabilizing military campaigns and contributing to an unstable security setting in the region. These examples all point to a strong external engagement from neighboring countries in specific conflict situations. Throughout the period the sharp divisions between coalitions have been motivated by the ideological debate animating the cold war.

The regional security setting in South Asia is clearly centered around the regional hegemonic power, India, and the on-going rivalry between India and Pakistan. The three wars that have been fought over Kashmir have loomed large over interstate relations in the sub-region. For Pakistan Kashmir should be integrated in its territory as the ultimate recognition of the principles underlying the Partition. For India losing Kashmir would entail a blow to the unitary and secular character of the state. The rivalry between both states has resulted in an arms race of enormous proportions. This protracted conflict has survived all major political changes of the last forty years and is the only regional security problem within our research sample with a potential global significance. The superpower rivalry regarding Afghanistan was also reflected in the position of India and Pakistan respectively. India condoned the Soviet invasion, whereas Pakistan hosted most of the Afghan refugees and actively supported *mujahideen* forces in the conflict.

The independence of Bangladesh as well is related to the regional rivalry between India and Pakistan, as Indian forces intervened on the side of the Bengali independence movement to ensure victory. Hence, regional security seems to depend on the development of more peaceful relationships between India and Pakistan.

On several occasions India imposed its force on smaller neighbors, such as the annexation of Sikkim and the intervention in Sri Lanka (Indian Peace-Keeping Forces). These actions are

perceived as the military component of Indian superpower politics towards small neighboring states. Diplomatically, India always aims to negotiate issues on a bilateral basis, such as the immigration issue with Nepal and the Brahmaputra water distribution with Bangladesh.

Instability within the sub-region and within individual states has been substantial as several intra- and interstate conflicts testify. Correlation between instability in neighboring states and the outbreak of intrastate conflict within a specific country, however, cannot easily be established. Nevertheless, indirect interference in internal affairs does take place, notably between India and Pakistan and certainly has had an impact on the stability of the regional security setting.

In general we conclude that, in case a regional security setting is unstable and if it is actively manipulated by outside superpowers, proxy conflicts are likely to materialize. Afghanistan and the Contra war against the Sandinists are examples. Yet, if active superpower meddling is absent, the impact of unstable regional security settings is more diffuse. However, outside intervention (India in Sri Lanka), and other types of military engagement in a tensed situation (MFDC in Senegal) can have aggravating effects on the duration of conflicts. Covert actions have had a strong destabilizing effect inside some countries, such as the activities of Libya and Algeria on Niger.