



# **International Conflict Management**

## **“Analysis & Intervention”**

### **Training Manual**

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## Introduction

There is no standard formula for successful conflict management. Each conflict is unique and should be seen as such when providing analysis or designing possible strategies for resolution. Whereas conflicts in our private lives can easily become difficult to grasp, the field of International Relations often presents an even more complex picture. Historical perceptions, geopolitics, self-interest, *realpolitik* or personal behaviour make it difficult if not impossible to get a full understanding of a given problem. In addition, the international sphere knows a great number of active and potential actors and requires continuous reflection to the unfolding of events. In this context, practitioners are looking for the best possible ways to dealing with international conflicts. This manual aims to be a practical guide in doing so.

### What is this manual about?

Over time, various strategies have been developed to manage international conflicts. Some are of an academic nature, others focus on policy-making; again others follow a more philosophical line. This manual draws from various sources and provides a step-by-step approach, which leads the reader through some of the key dilemmas when working with conflicts in the international context the aim is not to be all inclusive but rather to touch upon key issues relevant for policy makers and practitioners in the field. In doing so, it splits into two modules: *Analysing* and *Intervening in International Conflicts*.

Each module consists of a series of steps; the reader could go through the steps simultaneously or draw from each individual step. Each of the individual steps should prove useful to the reader, even when leaving out the remaining steps. As it is impossible to provide clear answers on how to best deal with conflict, the objective is not to provide answers, but to portray the right questions.

### What is new?

The perception and practice of International Conflict Management has changed significantly over the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century marks a global recognition of an increasingly interconnected world order and – as a result – underlines a major shift in International Relations. Since the end of the Cold War the nature of conflict has been significantly altered, the number of intra state conflicts have increased dramatically and the notion of intervention has come centre stage since the beginning of the 1990s. As growing concerns over terrorist threats rise it is clear that there is a need for continuous reflection on our understanding of conflict in the international sphere.

Reflecting these alterations in foreign policy over the last decade, analysis and intervention strategies have changed, too. Whereas in 2005 the United Nations called for more strategies to resolve international conflicts (*A more secure world: our shared responsibility*), numerous efforts have already been undertaken in this regard. Various policy-experts and trainers have provided tools for a better understanding of international conflicts and the successful management thereof. The purpose of this manual is to combine some of these approaches and add new elements where deemed useful.

### Why Analysis and Intervention?

This document focuses on the need to react in the face of unfolding international conflict and to find constructive ways of dealing with the situation at hand. Analysis and Intervention are key elements and are central to this manual. Given the comprehensive nature of international conflict management, this includes issues such as preventing further escalation or economic measures to improve living conditions. This said, it should be mentioned that more structural strategies are beyond the scope of this specific manual.

### Who does this manual address?

You are a professional in the field of international relations. In your daily work, you are working in and dealing with an international environment – be it on policy, academic or corporate level. The relationships between states, organisations and people in different parts of the world affect you and your professional life and you are looking for ways to find resolves when these relationships turn sour. This training manual aims to provide you with inspiration and guidance in doing so.

# Part I: Analysing International Conflicts

## Before we start: Defining Conflict

Before turning towards the individual steps for an ANALYSIS of a given conflict, let us first get a common and pragmatic understanding about the phenomenon, by looking at different perspectives. For this purpose, let us look at different perspectives.

There are many different definitions of conflict. Definitions range from focusing on the individual (e.g. mother – child relation), to organisational (e.g. conflict between departments), to the interstate level (e.g. border disputes). Definitions can highlight different aspects of conflict, for example they can focus on the cultural/historical aspects, bring in an anthropological approach, or look at conflict from a more structural point of view.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of International Relations, most practitioners agree that it is necessary to consider this diverse set of perspectives. Even though a comprehensive definition of conflict is more often than not impossible to obtain. There are numerous definitions that highlight key elements worth exploring when understanding conflict.

...some definitions from various selected sources:

- *"Conflict is a form of competitive behaviour between people or groups. It occurs when two or more people compete over perceived or actual incompatible goals or limited resources."* (Boulding 1962)
- *"A social conflict is the belief in incompatible objectives."* (Kreisberg 1988)
- *"Conflict is an outgrowth of the diversity that characterises our thoughts, our attitudes, our beliefs, our perceptions, and our social systems and structures. It is as much a part of our existence as is evolution."* (Weeks 1994)
- *"The existence of social or political conflict is not in itself a cause for concern. Conflict is often a source of creativity and change."* (Rupesinghe 1998)
- *"Conflict is a state of human interaction where there is disharmony or a perceived divergence of interests, needs, and goals. There is a perception that interests, needs or goals cannot be achieved due to interference from the other person/s."* (ACCORD 2001)
- *"Conflict is a state of human interaction where there is disharmony."*
- *"Conflict is a situation arising from opposing actions and counter actions."*
- *"Conflict is an action aimed at beating an opponent."*
- *"Conflict is symptom of a system in change."*

### Exercise 1:

Take 5 minutes to come up with your own personal definition of conflict. Discuss the differences. Discuss the commonalities.

### Is Conflict BAD?

For most people, the word "conflict" implies negative associations. However, it is helpful to realise that conflict can be considered as part of human nature/reality or interaction: various actors ranging from individuals to socially constructed entities such as companies, organisation, and states regularly engage in some kind of conflict. For example, a disagreement between mother and child about what school to go to, or the European Union has had a clear conflict with the United States (US) with regards to the US Steel Tariffs policies.

In other words, conflict in itself is not negative or positive, it just "is". It is the way we deal with it, that gives conflict either a positive, or negative value.

For some possible views on how different people interpret conflict and society, consider the examples below:

following Hindu thought, remember:

**Conflict the Destroyer** and **Conflict the Creator**; conflict as a source of violence and conflict as a source of development. The conflict worker has the third role as **Preserver**, transforming the conflict by avoiding violence, promoting development.

following Buddhist thought, remember:

Codependent origination, everything grows together in mutual causation. Conflicts have no beginning and no end, we all share the responsibility; no single actor (like statesmen) carries all the responsibility (monopoly) and no single actor carries all the guilt.

following Christian thought, remember:

Ultimately, the responsibility for conflict transformation lies with individuals and their individual responsibility and decisions to act so as to promote peace rather than violence, and the principle of hope.

following Daoist thought, remember:

Everything is yin and yang, good and bad, there is the high likelihood that the action chosen also has negative consequences and that action not chosen may have positive consequences; hence the need for reversibility, only doing what can be undone.

following Islamic thought, remember:

The strength deriving from submitting together to a common goal, including the concrete responsibility for the well-being of all.

following Judaic thought, remember:

The truth lies less in a verbal formula than in the dialogue to arrive at the formula, and that dialogue has no beginning and no end.

(Source: UN Disaster Management Training Programme)

Conflict can:

- **Create an opportunity for (re-) balancing power**
- **Lead to greater understanding of diversity and differences between people, organisations and states**
- **Lead to growth**
- **Conflict can help bring problems to the front and resolve problems**
- **Foster unity within a group.**

(Source: Thinkteam 2005)

### Exercise 2:

Consider the following Chinese "words" for conflict. The Chinese language uses two distinct symbols instead of one single one. Take 5 minutes to brainstorm with 3 other participants about which two terms you would include to define conflict:

### Exercise 3:

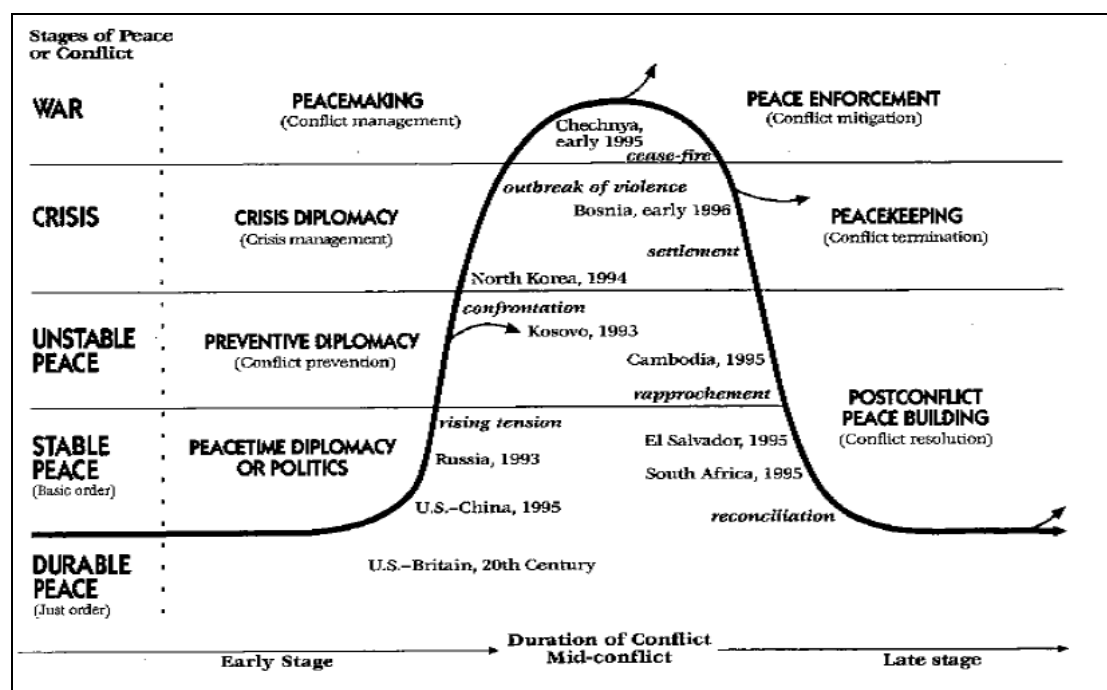
Read through some recent conflict analyses and rank them in order of "intractability", on a scale from 1 to 5: How difficult do you think it is to find a resolve to the conflict? Discuss the criteria (facts in text / interpretation of facts / own knowledge) you used when attributing 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 or 5. Did you consider actions to *resolve*, *contain* or *prevent* conflict when doing so?

## Step 1: The Conflict Cycle

Most experts agree that it is useful for conflict to be seen as a process, rather than a static state of affairs. We should recognise that every conflict alters over time delivering varying levels of intensity. Several theories identify the level to which a particular conflict situation is escalating, or declining. Although a single event or factor can ignite conflict, it is important to be aware that the conflict as a whole is the combination or culmination of many events and factors.

Most conflicts do not move smoothly from one level to another, especially when dealing with long enduring conflict situations. Therefore, categorising levels can be difficult when a situation does not fit neatly into one level or another.

Below you see a chart illustrating various stages of conflict moving from durable peace to times of war in a conflict timeline.



(Source: Lund 1996: 31)

### War:

sustained fighting between organised armed forces

### Crisis:

tense confrontation between armed forces that are mobilized and ready to fight and may engage in threats and occasional low-level fighting but to not deploy massive force. There is a high probability of war breaking out

### Unstable Peace:

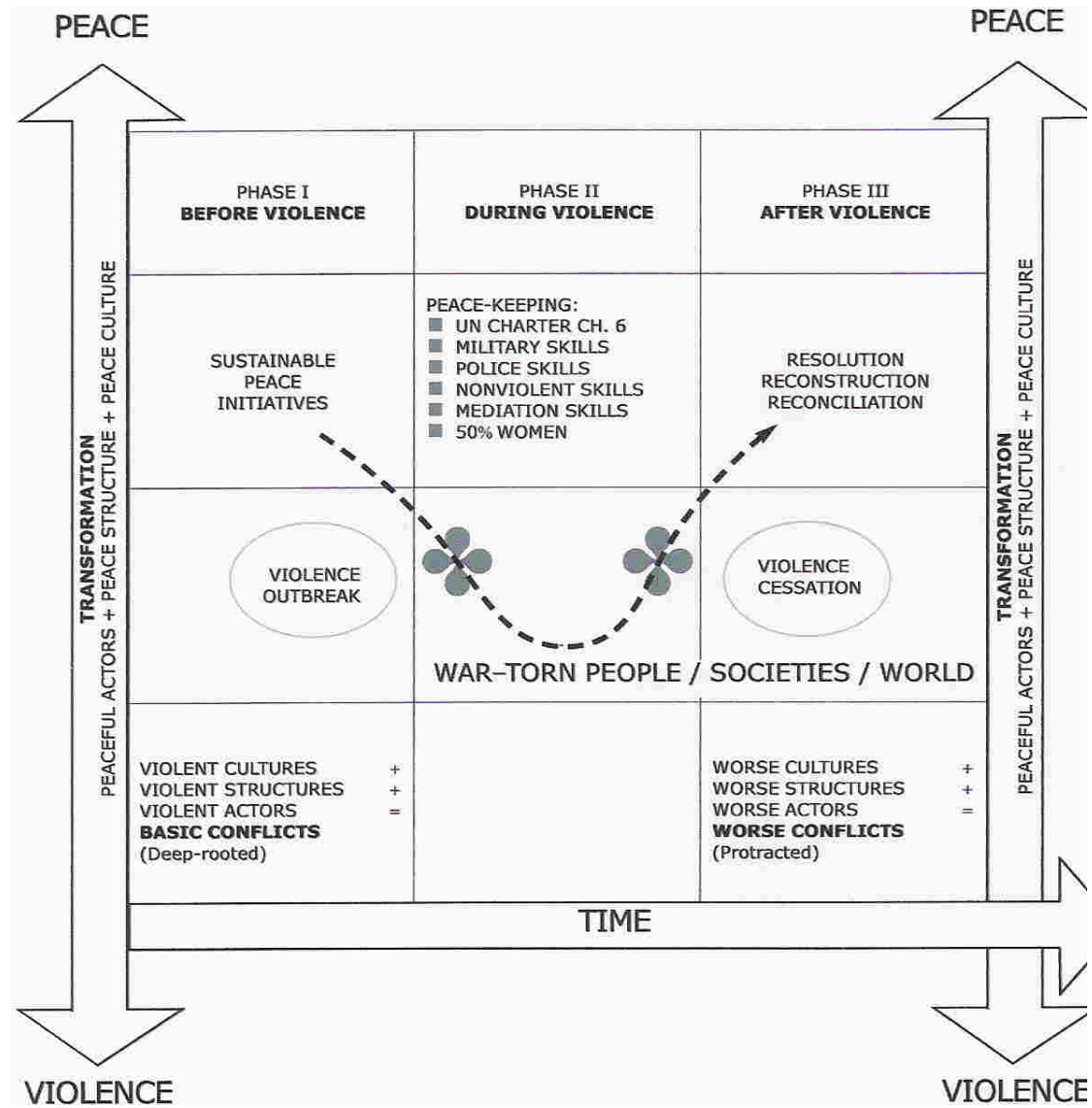
situation in which tension and suspicion among parties runs high but violence is either absent or sporadic. The parties conceive each other as enemies and maintain deterrent military capabilities; this is often referred to as *negative peace*. Examples are Israel-Syrian relations (international conflict) or Myanmar (internal conflict)

### Cold Peace:

relationship of wary communication and limited cooperation (e.g. trade) within an overall context of basic order or national stability

**Durable Peace:**

just order where issues at stake are being dealt with by and through non-violent means. Both minorities and majorities are being accepted and respected



(Source: UN Disaster Management Programme)

**Exercise 1:**

Compare the two distinct conflict cycle charts shown above. What are the commonalities, what are the key differences?

**Case Study: Sri Lanka**

After the advent of independence from Britain in 1948, ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhala Buddhists and the minority Hindu Tamils has long been a political feature of Sri Lanka. Although the conflict traces its roots back to the independence movement – where there were concerns for minority political representation – the conflict took on a new intensity in early 1983 when violent attacks on the military sparked riots in the capital, Colombo, where thousands of Tamils were killed or forced to flee.

Estimates talk about some 60,000 people dead since 1983, not to mention the negative impact to the country's economy and tourism sector. Peace talks held in 1985 between the government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) failed and the war continued. Though the fighting slowed 2001 – 2005, the assassination of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister in August 2005 has threatened to plunge the country back into intense violence.

**Exercise 2:**

By using the following labels, describe the escalation of a specific conflict over time using a graph:

- **pre-conflict**
- **confrontation**
- **crisis**
- **outcome / agreement / settlement**
- **post-conflict**

**Step 1 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Indicate the level of escalation for the case study at hand where  
1 = War and 5 = Durable Peace

[1      2      3      4      5]

## Step 2: Recounting the Past

In all conflict situations, history matters. Regardless of a conflict's scale or scope, the historical context will impact, *inter alia*, the interests, position, power and rights of the parties involved, as well as external responses. Personal experiences of the past combined with the collective social, political, economic and religious background are all factors, which must be taken into account.

**“History is a vast early warning system”**

- Norman Cousins

International conflicts do not happen randomly; they are often the result of deep-rooted and long-running conflict cycles. While a current conflict may be seemingly unique, with new parties and issues in play, it is often a new development of long-standing disputes; triggered by current events and circumstances.

Therefore, in order to understand the conflict at hand, it is crucial to get an understanding of its historical background. To what extent is the current situation disconnected from the past, or connected to historical events for one or more parties? In many instances, antagonists even portray different “histories” about the same event. Based on events of the past, parties to a conflict may strongly distrust each other, wish to retaliate, or hold deeply felt stereotypes of the character and behaviour of their counterpart(s) – all factors that must be considered in order to adequately deal with a current conflict situation.

If not addressed properly, history and its perception might cause conflict parties to deny viability to a possible resolution: “never underestimate the impact of life on life.”

### Case Study: RWANDA

Rwanda, first colonised by Germany in 1899, was taken over by Belgium in 1917. Traditionally, ethnic distinctions among Rwandan people were loose and negligible with various groups living peacefully together. However, the Belgian colonists institutionalised ethnicity by the (often arbitrary) dispersal of mandatory identification cards signifying a person's ethnicity as either Tutsi or Hutu. The colonists then chose to rule through the Tutsi minority by placing them in positions of political power, thus making ethnicity the key to social standing and advancement.

Rwanda gained its independence from Belgium in 1962, quickly followed by an abrupt power reversal with the Hutu majority taking control of the government (partially facilitated by the Belgians who anticipated imminent Hutu rule and therefore abandoned policies favouring Tutsis prior to leaving Rwanda). This power shift was accompanied by widespread persecution of the Tutsis and intermittent conflicts between the Hutus and Tutsis in the years leading up to 1990.

Full-scale conflict erupted in late 1990 after a successful attack by a Tutsi rebel group known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). In August 1993, the Arusha Accords were signed between the RPF and the Rwandan government, but did little to end antagonisms between the groups. Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, was killed when his plane was shot down in April 1994. The gruesome details of the genocide that followed are well known:

Approximately 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were systematically exterminated in less than nine weeks in the late spring and early summer of 1994, spearheaded by the Hutu Rwandan Army and carried out by countless Hutu citizens. In July 1994, RPF forces gained control of Rwanda, ending the genocide and prompting a mass exodus of Hutu refugees.

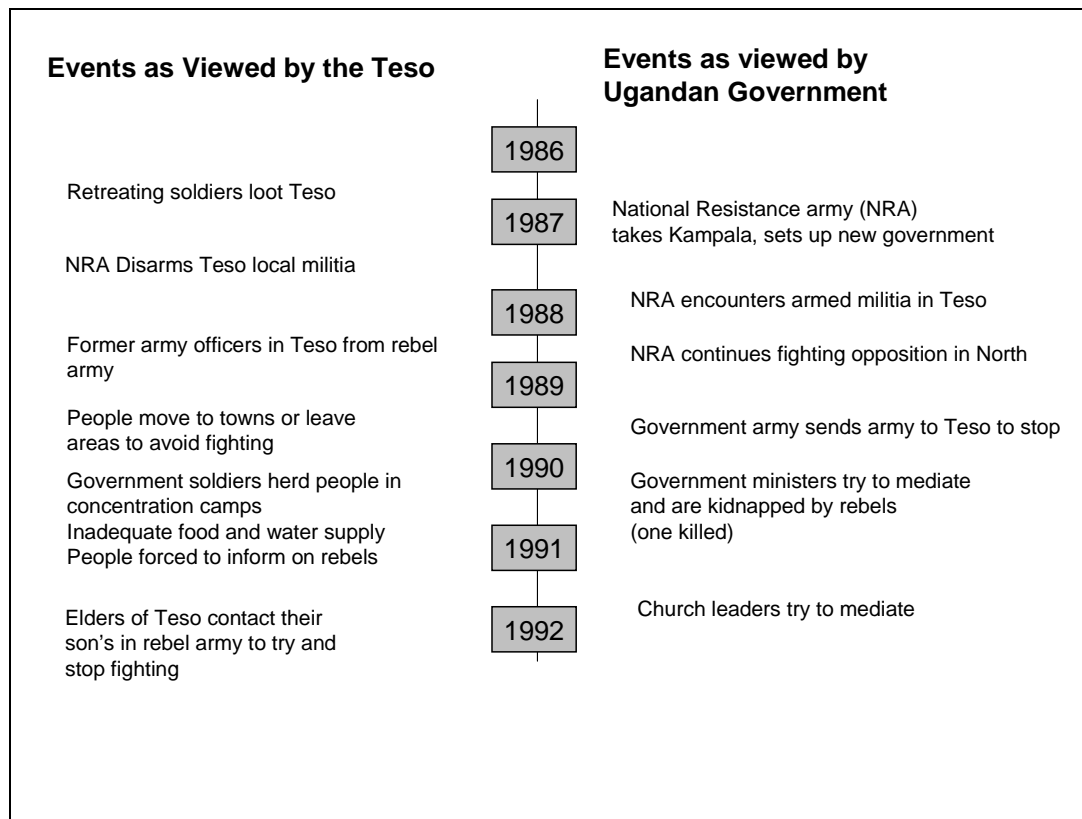
Under President Paul Kagame (former leader of the RPF), the Tutsis are once again in power in Rwanda today. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha Tanzania, established by the United Nations in 1994, is currently prosecuting perpetrators of the genocide, while at the same time Rwanda runs its own prosecutorial system through the national and local peoples' Gachacha court system. Although these judicial measures are important steps in the direction of reconciliation, Rwanda and its people are struggling to come to terms with the past, present and future.

**Time Line of Certain Events**

It can be helpful to create timelines, showing the key events that took place and their relevance for the different parties.

**Case Study: Uganda's different "histories"**

This timeline refers to the situation in Uganda, where rebels and government forces have been fighting for a long time. If you look at the events as the different parties see them, it is interesting to note how each side remembers different events and has a different interpretation of events.



(Source: RTC)

**Exercise 1:**

Consider the Iranian Nuclear programme in late 2005 and the history behind Iran's nuclear ambitions. Discuss the issue in four different groups: consider the different time lines / histories from a Iranian, Israeli, US and Chinese position.

**Step 2 Question for final Radar Chart:**

Indicate how good you think the chances are of overcoming historic differences, with 1 = no chance and 5 = very good chance:

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

### Step 3: Mapping the Actors

As part of the analysis, it is crucial to have a good understanding about the individual stakeholders that have to be taken into consideration. Most key actors are easy to identify, however some might be more difficult to determine.

- **Who is directly involved in the current situation?**
- **Who interferes from the outside?**
- **Are there certain actors who were crucial in the past?**

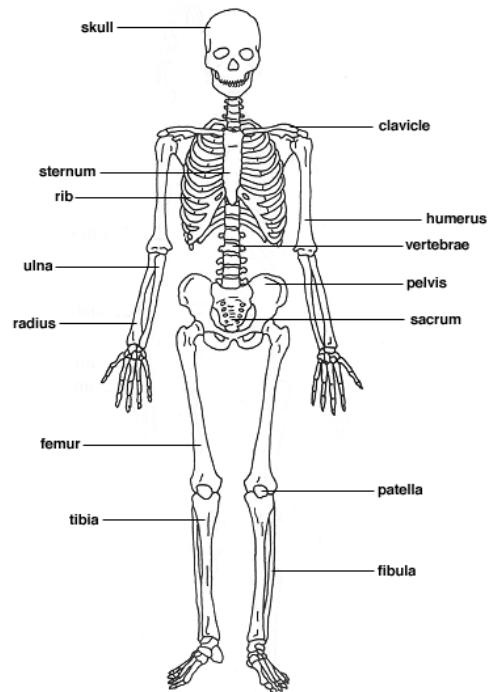
Creating a comprehensive "map" of a conflict is an extensive undertaking, however it is useful to spend a good amount of time to this step of the analysis.

Mapping the actors is more than identifying them by name alone. For a thorough "conflict map", it is useful to distinguish between several aspects:

- **Name** (organisation / person / state)
- **Position** (relationship vis-à-vis other stakeholders)
- **Interests** (goals, values, history)

#### Metaphor:

Just as a doctor would not perform an operation without knowing which elements of the body need to be fixed, resolving a conflict cannot be achieved without knowing who is involved and how. First appearances can be deceiving and careful examination of a conflict should be done before taking decisions.



#### Case Study: Somalia

Ever since the overthrow of President Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia has not had an effective central government. Plagued by countless powerful warlords, Somalia is perceived as a terrorist breeding ground and therefore considered a threat to the international community. When combined with the fact that northern Somalia has unilaterally declared its own independence as the Republic of Somaliland, brokering peace deals has been a highly complex state of affairs.

Somalia is now on its fourteenth attempt to produce a working government after the 2004 talks in Kenya with the central (local) warlords and (mostly exiled) politicians. The new parliament has struggled because they have no civil service or government buildings. Even more important, however, is the continuing power struggle between the various Somali warlords that could prevent a political solution to bear fruits.

**Who's in, who's out?**

Comprehensiveness is crucial to the mapping part of the analysis. If certain actors are left out in the analysis, this might later backfire during a given intervention. Limiting an analysis out of political considerations (i.e. ignoring the armed groupings in Iraq, alleged Mafia linkages of Ukraine's EU-minded presidential candidate), however risks a negative impact in the mid- and long-term. This aspect should not be underrated.

**Case Study: DR Congo's forgotten rebels**

During the second rebellion in the DR Congo from 1998 until 2002, most policy experts neglected the Mayi Mayi militias until mid-2002. Most core actors had a tight grip on the diplomatic negotiations and little was known at the time about the Mayi Mayi's structure, its goals and military capacity. Only after serious clashes with other armed groups and numerous attacks on the civilian population, the Mayi Mayi were considered an eligible (military and later political) force. Even though most actors were well aware about their existence, all policy reports refrained from identifying the Mayi Mayi as an actor in the conflict until it was too late for a non-violent solution.

**Exercise 1:**

Together with 6 other participants, take 30 minutes to identify all actors you can think of and write them down on a poster as big or small circles, corresponding to their relevance.

**Exercise 2:**

Place all actors in three concentric circles and differentiate between the 3 categories: "core actors", "secondary actors" and "outside actors". Discuss your motivations for the differences between the various groups.

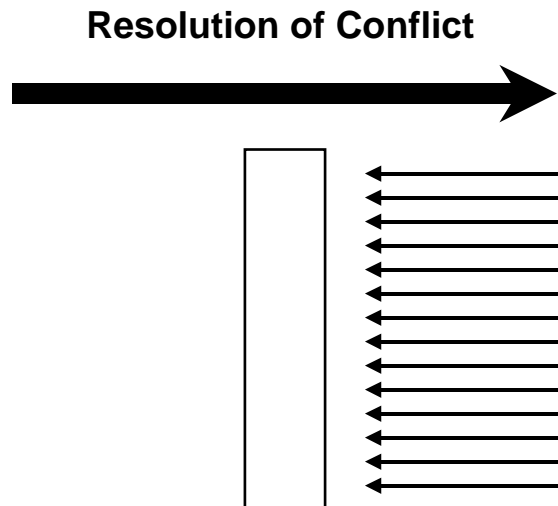
**Step 3 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Score the level of complexity of the conflict by ranking the inter-linkage between the various actors in the given case study where (1 = Highly Linked and 5 = Not Linked)

[1    2    3    4    5]

## Step 4: Opposing Forces

Conflict can create money, benefit certain elites and distract from other problems. On international level, great stakes often also mean great forces against a possible resolution of a conflict.



### Exercise 1:

Identify 5 opposing forces (i.e. actors, structures, but also external forces such as a natural disaster) and place these in order of relevance in the above graph.

#### Case Study: Afghanistan's Cocaine Industry

The NATO operation *Enduring Freedom* following the US invasion in 2001 is mandated to create stability in Southern Afghanistan. In addition to the (ideologically-driven) Taliban forces, there are countless businessmen (guarded by paramilitary groupings) engaged in cocaine production and – smuggling. This international network of criminal activities has no interest in changing the status quo and resists any attempt to (directly or indirectly) endanger their investment. Under these circumstances, even a humanitarian programme for local farmers to grow alternative crops might be considered a real threat – and could become a target as a consequence.

### Exercise 2:

As a next step (anticipating a possible intervention), look at possible ways for each of these forces a possible / feasible action to:

- **Reduce** their capacity to counteract a resolution (defensive strategy)
- **Encourage** their cooperation towards resolution (pro-active strategy)

#### Step 4 Question for Final Radar Chart:

How influential would you consider the opposing forces in resolving the conflict?  
(1=not influential and 5 = very influential).

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Step 5: Supporting Forces

More often than not, the value of supporting forces within a conflict is considered limited. As a result, the majority of policy analyses focus on a critical assessment of the opposing force often sidestepping forces that can contribute to solution of the conflict. Policy makers should make a critical effort looking into the positive dynamics – both the obvious and the understated.

- **Who is working (behind the scenes) against the opposing forces?**
- **Who within the authoritarian elite is willing to share power?**
- **Which outside actors supports certain "supportive" groupings?**

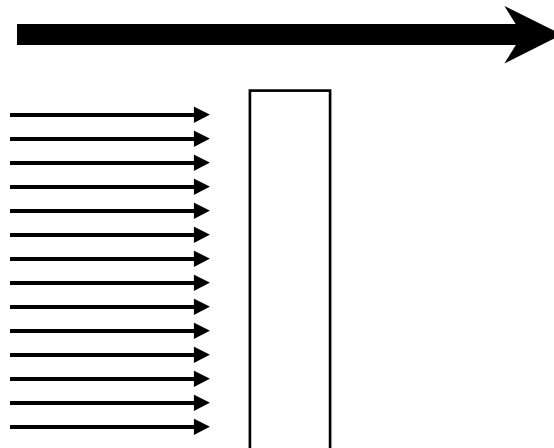
### Case Study: Zimbabwe's political decline

From 2000 onwards, Zimbabwe's leadership worked actively towards structural repression of the local citizenry. First, in a national campaign, white Zimbabwean farmers were disowned and evicted from the farms they had lived on all their lives – without compensation or political chance to claim it. In the following years, voting rights were manipulated, freedom of press limited and working in opposition made extremely difficult. The international community was rather quick in condemning these events. However, all outside actors preferred to emphasise on criticising the Zimbabwean leadership during public appearances. Only at a later stage there was an increasing effort to work closely together with the local opposition and other civil society groupings. Some effort was put into working with the moderate elements within the leadership – too late one might argue.

### Exercise 1:

Consider a case study in Latin or Central America. Identify 5 supportive forces (i.e. actors, structures, but also external forces such as a low/high oil prices) and place these in order of relevance in the graph below.

### Resolution of Conflict



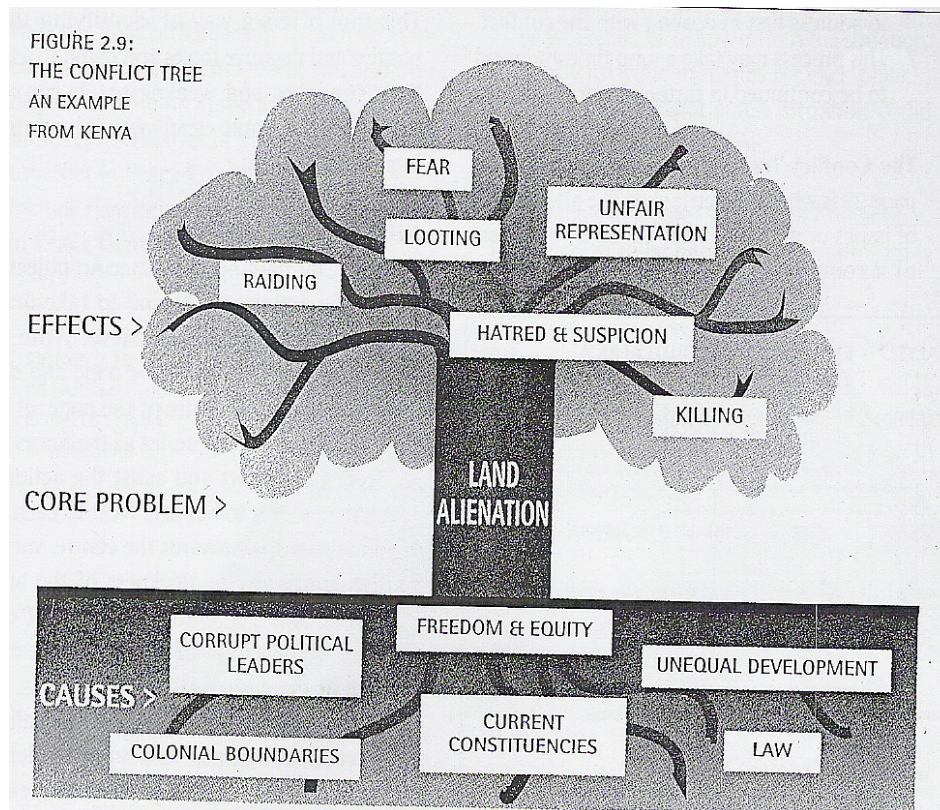
### Step 5 Question for Final Radar Chart:

How influential would you consider the supporting forces in resolving the conflict?  
(1=not influential and 5 = very influential).

[1    2    3    4    5]

## Step 6: Root Causes and possible Consequences

Many different disciplines highlight the importance of root causes. Anthropology firmly advocates a cultural emphasis, whereas economists would argue that poverty is the origin of conflict. In the field of international relations, it is useful to be aware of different perspectives.



The longer a conflict continues, the greater the discrepancy (i.e. time passed) between root causes and effects. In other words, some effects (such as poverty) might eventually become a root cause if not addressed. In turn, some root causes can at times resurface as negative effects.

Root causes are often structural by nature. Being aware of the way these structures operate can give valuable insights. It is important thus to know where to look: for examples political struggles are mediated by the institutional setting in which they take place (Bratton et al. 1997). Institutions shape the goals that political actors pursue and structure power relations between them, privileging some and putting others in disadvantage (see steps 4 and 5). This is exemplified in the old saying that people make their own history, but in conditions not of their own choosing. Institutions structure political battles and in doing so influence their outcomes (Shimshon 2004).

### Exercise 1:

Consider an imaginary case of desertification in a certain area. Local Farmers and pastoralists both need the limited land resources. Create a vicious circle: root causes – immediate effects – long-term consequences – root causes. Indicate at which points you expect major conflicts to occur.

**Looking ahead – Dangers for Intervention:**

Addressing root causes takes time. An intervention strategy to resolve some of the issues must therefore not lose sight of working towards positive short-term effects. In fact, sometimes it can be preferable to consider "current demands" of warring parties rather than looking for possible root causes. This holds particularly true for "free riders". (Source: *Solving Intractable Conflicts*, E. Rogier, Clingendael 2004)

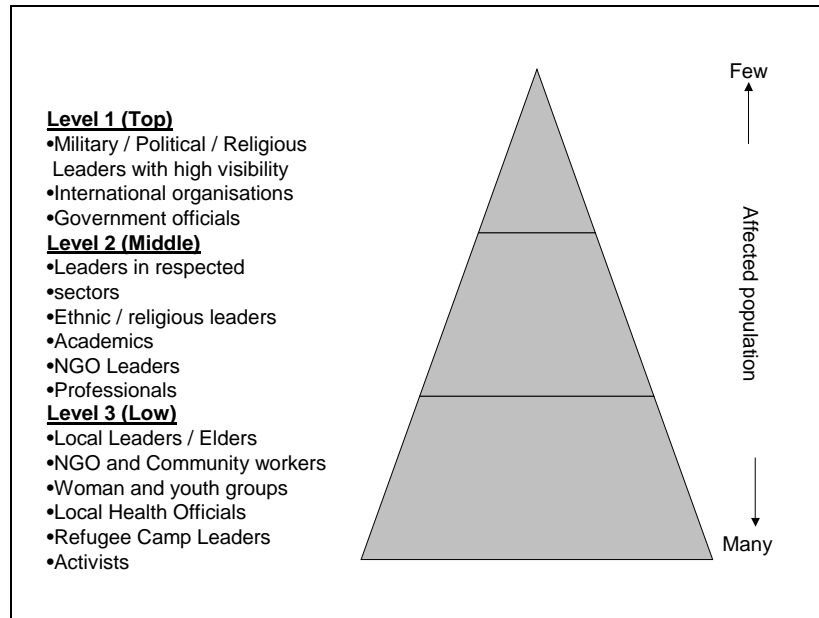
**Step 6 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

How relevant do you rank the distance between root causes and current consequences for the affected population?  
(1=very relevant and 5 = irrelevant).

[1    2    3    4    5]

### Step 7: Scope of the Conflict

Usually there are various levels (of the state / area) involved in a conflict. At times, it suffices to address the high level officials, but sometimes they have no power to implement any lasting agreement without the local levels of the administration agreeing to such a settlement (i.e. Afghanistan). The more levels of society are involved and the more autonomous they can operate: the more complex a conflict becomes – and the more difficult it is to find an adequate resolve.



(Source: RTC originally from Lederach)

**Exercise 1:**

Consider a situation of civil unrest, for example in the aftermath of a allegedly fraud election. Locate critical resource people that are strategically placed in networks that connect them vertically

**Case Study: Regional interventions**

A number of Tutsi exiles from Rwanda helped President Museveni of Uganda in his bid for power, were integrated into the Ugandan army after 1986, and subsequently defected with their weapons to the mainly Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) forces which eventually seized control of Rwanda in 1994. This led to a consolidation of Tutsi control in Burundi and, in the autumn of 1996, to cross border action in what was then Zaire against the Hutu militia responsible for the 1994 Rwanda massacres, which were being sheltered by President Mobutu. With backing from the Zairean Tutsi Banyamulenge, who had been discriminated against by Mobutu’s western-based regime, this swelled into concerted military support for Laurent Kabila in his march on Kinshasha and eventual killing of Mobutu. This in turn had a knock out effect in Angola, where the UNITA (National Union for Total Independence of Angola) and its leader Jonas Savimbi was deprived of Mobutu’s support. This encouraged Angola to send troops to Congo Brazzaville to help reinstall Denis Sassou-Nguesso as President in October 1997. Meanwhile, similar incursions were beginning to tip the scale in the Sudan. In 1998 the escalating conflict in Zaire further internationalized as Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe backed Kabila while Rwanda and Uganda backed the rebels.

(Source: Maill, Hugh et al. 1999: 82)

**Step 7 Question for final Radar Chart:**

Score on a scale of 1 to 5 what percentage of the population is directly affected and involved in the conflict  
(1 = 100% and 5 = 5%)

[1      2      3      4      5]

## Step 8: The Importance of Perception

“Understanding the other” is not always easy. There are various narratives (the ways in which people define and understand the problem and give meaning to it) around a conflict, which often are in contradiction with each other. Different people have different views about a certain situation. A conflict comes with as many narratives as people involved.

- **Perception by individuals** (private stakeholders, politicians, etc)
- **Perception by a collective** (organisation, sub-grouping, etc)
- **Public Opinion** (organised by media organisations)

In reflecting on his diplomatic career of thirty-two years, former US Ambassador to Iraq Edward L. Peck postulates:

*“Perception is everything, there are no absolutes.”<sup>1</sup>*

What matters in international relations (in general) and conflict situations (in particular) is not necessarily what is said or done, but rather how what is said and done is *perceived*. Differing perceptions are not an indication of right or wrong, but are of crucial importance because perceptions control reactions and therefore play a powerful role dictating outcomes.

### My Wife and My Mother-in-law

This drawing demonstrates how perceptions can differ without being right or wrong. Some see a young woman, while others see an old woman; each person is viewing the same image, yet perceives it very differently. Typically, younger individuals will see the young woman first, while older individuals will first see an old woman – a further indication that perception is largely influenced not only by what is being perceived but also by whom. With some effort, it is possible to see both images: the young woman’s chin becomes the old woman’s nose; the old woman’s mouth becomes the band on the neck of the young woman.

*(first published in 1915 by cartoonist W.E. Hill)*



### Media & Truth & Perception

Differences in perception can be easily seen in reviewing media coverage of the same event from different sources. For example, in reporting on the 16 October 2005 US air strikes in Baghdad;

CNN headlines read:

**“US: Air Strikes Kill Seven Insurgents”**

The article leads by citing a statement from the US Marines claiming the air strikes “flattened insurgent safe houses used by militants linked to al Qaeda in western Iraq [...]”

<sup>1</sup> 2000 Security Cooperation Conference: “Perception is Everything”, DISAM Journal, 22 June 2000.

*Al Jazeera* headlines, on the other hand, read:

**"Dozens of Iraqis Die in US Air Strikes."**

In contrast to the *CNN* report, the *Al Jazeera* article opens by stating: "US warplanes and helicopters have bombed two villages near the city of Ramadi where witnesses say at least 39 civilians have been killed, while the US army says the air strike has killed an estimated 70 fighters."

**Case Study: Same news? *BBC* versus *Palestinian Chronicle***

**Bush renews Palestinian state vow**

Thursday, 20 October 2005, 16:53 GMT 17:53 UK

"US President George W Bush has told Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas that he will work to realise the vision of two states in the Middle East. 'I believe that two democratic states living side by side in peace is possible. I can't tell you when it's going to happen. It's happening,' Bush told a joint press conference with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas after their talks, reported Agence France-Presse (AFP)."

**Bush Evades Palestinian State Timetable**

Friday, October 21 2005 @ 10:13 AM EDT

"WASHINGTON - US President George W. Bush refused Thursday, October 20, to set a timetable for establishing peace between Palestinians and Israelis and establishing the long-awaited Palestinian state."

Differing perceptions are certainly not limited to the origin of a conflict, but can be found in virtually all aspects of any conflict situation. The potential for perception to impact both the course and outcome of a conflict exists on multiple levels.

- **Are state leaders perceived to be honest or evasive?**
- **Are they perceived weak or strong?**
- **Are they perceived compromising or inflexible?**
- **What is the perceived neutrality of mediating actors, such as the UN or the US?**
- **Are threats of intervening forces perceived as credible?**
- **How do various parties perceive the viability of possible solutions to the conflict?**

**Exercise 1:**

Take 10 minutes to discuss with 2 other participants how a schoolbook in the UK would define the 10 key events leading towards the unfolding of the US invasion in Iraq in 2003. Then spend another 10 minutes identifying 10 key events mentioned in a French and a Chinese schoolbook.

**Exercise 2:**

Count the F's: (see separate hand-out)

**Case Study: Bosnia's disputed legacy**

In the early 1990's several conflicts broke out following the dissolution of Yugoslavia, including the war in Bosnia. The causes of this war – i.e. how it began and by whom – remain highly contested to this day.

In December of 1990, democratic elections were held Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as the other five Republics composing the Yugoslav state, with Nationalist politicians gaining clear victory in all six. Bosnia-Herzegovina's declaration of sovereignty and subsequent referendum for independence in February 1992 prompted full-scale hostilities beginning the following April with Bosnian Serbs attempting to partition the Republic along ethnic lines forming a "Greater Serbia."<sup>1</sup>

Some argue that it was Bosnia-Herzegovina's attempt to disrupt the territorial integrity of the Yugoslav state instigated the conflict, while others argue that it was clearly the right of Bosnia-Herzegovina to claim sovereignty and self-determination. Others argue, however, that it was Serbian nationalism and its accompanying effort to create "Greater Serbia" which was at the root of the conflict, and indeed the reason Bosnia-Herzegovina originally sought independence. Still others contend the war in Bosnia resulted from the international community's ineptitude to adequately manage the fall-out of the Soviet Union's collapse. There are those who believe the international community wished to see yet another communist state crumble and therefore encouraged the conflict or, at the very least, did nothing to stop it.

**Step 8 Question for final Radar Chart:**

What is the level of disagreement between the various narratives of how the conflict began in this case study?

(1 = High Level of Disagreement and 5 = Low Level of Disagreement)

[ 1    2    3    4    5 ]

## Intermezzo

The past 8 steps have raised questions and provided some tools to analyse international conflicts. These steps provide a base line from which one can move towards finding solutions or developing strategies to deal with conflict. Interventions – be it direct or structural – have to be drafted with care. As a possible player in an intervention, it is important to keep your potential role in mind already when analysing the situation.

As a consequence, the following steps (9-11) of this manual address some specific questions that relate to conflict analysis while at the same time keeping an intervention in mind; and thinking about possible future scenarios. The following sections discuss the “ripeness” of the conflict and provide a toll for assessing possible entry points / windows of opportunity in order to become constructively involved.

### Step 9: Prognosis

It is important to contemplate various scenarios as to how a given conflict might develop. A correct assessment and a plausible prognosis are crucial elements in order to design possible interventions or an adequate *therapy* (the TRANSCEND method).

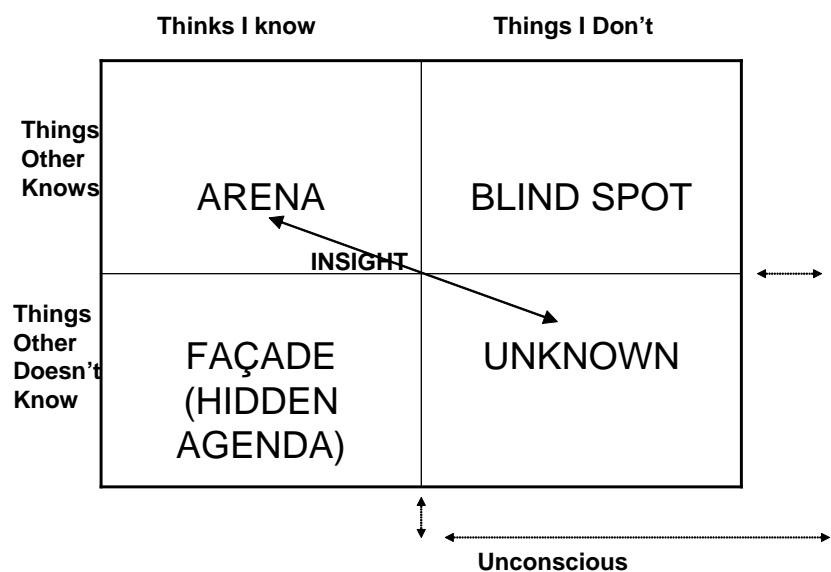
There are always a number of unknowns. We can define them in two ways:

- 1) *The Unknowns We Know*
- 2) *The Unknowns We Do Not Know*

*The Unknowns We Know:* this considers information we know we don't know. For example, we know that a meeting will be held between warring parties but we do not know the agenda, what parties will attend and what the outcome will be. We can take advantage of these known unknowns by anticipating (not predicting!) possible outcomes.

*The Unknowns We Do Not Know:* these are events or things that we do not know anything about, there is no way to approach them because we simply do not know they exist; a good example is an earthquake or the existence of a cure for a serious disease.

**The Yohari window** is an interesting way to bring to the fore elements that you can and cannot take into account in your prognosis:



Source:Meerts and Postma 2004

**Exercise 1:**

Define two key uncertainties in a given conflict (i.e. win / loose outcome of the re-election of a sitting president). Draw a 2 axes-model with the extreme values at the end of each axis. You find 4 different "scenarios", reflecting all possible 4 combinations of key uncertainties. Now divide in 4 groups and write each a short "future history" for 1 of the 4 scenarios.

**Step 9 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Score the degree of uncertainty in your prognosis  
(1= high level of uncertainty and 5 = low level of uncertainty)

[1    2    3    4    5]

## Step 10: Ripeness of Conflict

### Too Late?

As discussed before, intervention is likely to cause resistance. Some experts agree that the so-called:

*"Hurting Stalemate"* (Lund, Zartman)

...gives a clear indication to policy-makers: a conflict might not be *"ripe"* for intervention until all warring parties have reached a hurting stalemate – in other words, parties must see a clear benefit to leave the armed struggle and starting negotiations. Interventions should not be planned before this crucial point has been reached.

### Too Early?

Others argue that the abovementioned attitude might prove extremely counterproductive. In fact:

*"Waiting for the stalemate might be hurting"* (Rogier)

This argument is based on the assumption that the longer a conflict continues, the greater the risk that violence and grief become serious obstacles to finding a resolution: the more suffering occurs, the less likely it is for an intervention to succeed in facilitating a resolution.

### Exercise 1:

Discuss the two different arguments brought forward by Lund / Zartman and Rogier. How do you ensure, when anticipating an intervention, sufficient cooperation from the warring parties?

#### Case Study: World War II – US intervention on D-Day

History books glorify D-Day as the US inspired liberation of continental Europe from the Nazi terror. It is very plausible however, that US military planners refrained from intervening at an earlier stage – something which from a military point of view would have been possible – in order to guarantee the maximum effect (destroying the German forces and ending the war) by minimum risk.

### Exercise 2:

Discuss in teams of 5 about when the Israeli – Palestinian conflict reached a hurting stalemate. Compare your conclusions.

#### Step 10 Question for Final Radar Chart:

To what extent are the conflict parties ready for change?  
(1 = not ready and 5 = ready)

**[ 1    2    3    4    5 ]**

### Step 11: Possible Entry Points

Intervention requires risk assessment and the assessment of possible windows of opportunity. Entry points for intervention are crucial and play a significant role in determining realistic options for policy decisions regarding a given conflict.

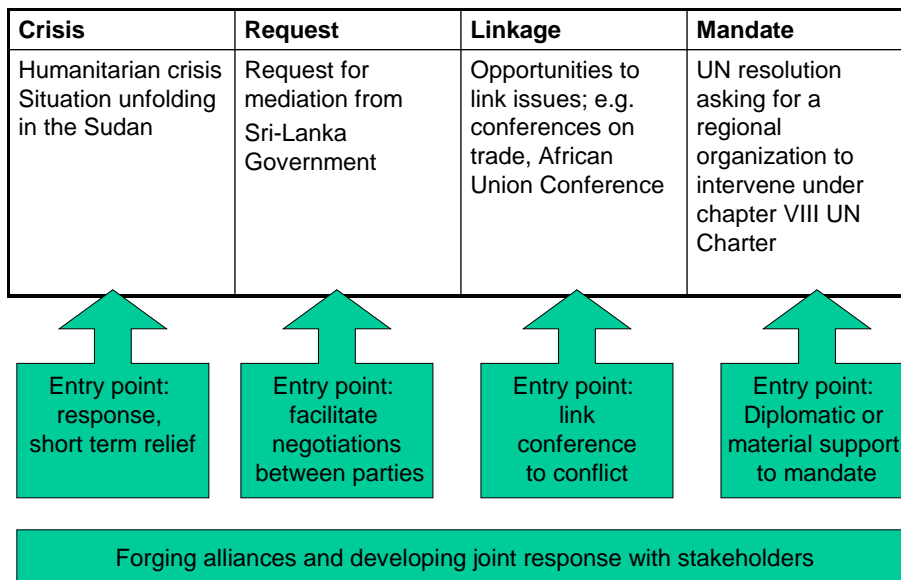
Windows of opportunity require the analyst to look at possible handles that will enable a certain amount of leverage in the conflict with a potential to result in a resolution. Here are some key guidelines for the discovery of entry points:

- What are the relations with the different parties like?
- How are you perceived as an outside player in the conflict by the parties
- What level of involvement are you willing to show?
- What are the possibilities at that level of involvement?

**Exercise 1:**

Discuss in a group of 5 whether a potential leadership change in Cuba would provide a likely entry point for US intervention in order to influence domestic Cuban affairs.

**Possible entry points:**



**Step 11 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Score the extend to which you consider the pursuit of the identified entry points realistic (1= unrealistic and 5 = realistic)

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Part II: Intervening in International Conflicts

## Step 1: Clear Vision – Clear Mission

Developing a clear vision on a particular conflict provides a good way to start developing an intervention strategy. It determines your view on the developments and provides a cadre for thinking about your possible involvement in any strategy to solve the conflict.

Ask the following questions:

1. Do you know what you want to achieve short-mid-long term?
2. Looking at the current analysis of a given conflict, what is the objective for you, your organization or your country?

### Is there a need for change?

The conflict regarding the status of Taiwan has been going on for about 60 years. Although many parties would like to see the issue resolved, there is a reluctance to proactively engage on this matter. This has to do with the vision countries have developed regarding this conflict. The vision: there is no need for active engagement, in this case is determined partly by the idea that maintaining status quo is the best way to go, a potential intervention could lead to serious escalation.

After answering these questions it is possible to identify a clear and feasible (!) strategy for intervention. Be aware of the probability of colonial, machismo, paternalizing attitudes towards other cultures.

### Exercise 1:

Discuss the possible visions of well-known state leaders underlying some specific interventions in history. Possible cases include: 1) NATO's decision to bomb Sarajevo 2) China's major investment in a main railway track from China's heartland into Tibet in 2005.

After a clear vision has been developed the mission follows which develops the desirable state of affairs after potential intervention. Many interventions in today's international conflict management have an ad-hoc character. Mandates remain vague and clear exit strategies are rare. Knowing what it is you would like to achieve is crucial, strategy starts with knowing what you want. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is it that you are addressing?
- What is the best possible outcome for you and the various parties involved?
- How do you fit in this process?
- Who benefits from what?
- Is it legitimate?

### Case Study: China-Taiwan continued:

In the China versus Taiwan case it is clear that the mission of the countries involved is aimed to maintain the status quo. Making sure that their relations with China are maintained and friendly while at the same time dealing with Taiwan through informal channels.

### Step 1 Question for Final Radar Chart:

To what extent can we talk about a clear vision for a potential intervention?  
(1= no clear vision and 5 = very clear vision)

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Step 2: Risks and Dangers

Any intervention involves a certain amount of risk, of which you have to be aware. To assess risk many elaborate models are available (especially from the business world dealing with varieties of financial risk all the time). Here we would like to list a number of crucial questions you could answer to assess the risks involved in intervention:

There are also a number of no go's, which might be useful to you:

Don't try and do too much, be moderate in your goals  
 Don't be unrealistic in your expectations  
 Don't try and force an agreement on parties  
 Don't ...

### **SMART model for making decisions:**

Goals have to be:

**S** = Specific  
**M** = Measurable  
**A** = Attainable  
**R** = Realistic  
**T** = Timely

### ***The law of unintended consequences;***

Often intervention has adverse effects; some can be foreseen others cannot. For example, according to Yannis, the Dayton Accords signed in 1995 brought an end to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina but led to major destabilization in Kosovo. The reasons were:

- The accords left the question of Kosovo's political future unresolved.
- the accords thus acted as a major disincentive to continue the pursuit of political solution to the situation
- This in turn strengthened the political commitment of radical Albanians to the use of force.

The aim of the international community was to settle the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict by securing Serb cooperation, sidestepping the Kosovo question.

**(Source: Yannis: Kosovo: the political economy of conflict and peacebuilding)**

When confronting other parties it is important to keep a number of do's and don'ts in mind. The way in which you are perceived can be crucial for the process of intervention, this ranges from the content you address, to the way you do it/practice it. In conflict the psychological aspects become very important. We have listed a number of issues below:

Ask questions:

- to probe for underlying interests, feelings, concerns, attitudes
- to check others' reactions
- to ensure that you or others have been understood

Listen carefully and paraphrase ("so your concern is that...")

Make a comprehensive list – the attributes of a good outcome, from all parties' perspectives

Redefine interests – so they can be stated as ends rather than means

Do joint fact-finding – identify assumptions and opinions, and agree on how to get beyond them

**SWOT analysis**

The SWOT model enables you to create an analysis of the external and internal forces that prevent or push for a desired outcome.

**Internal:*****Strengths***

What are your main strong points?

***Weaknesses***

What are your main weak points?

**External:*****Opportunities***

What are possible opportunities to reach our goals? (Entry points/positive forces)

***Threats***

What are possible threats or obstacles for reaching certain outcomes? (e.g. negative forces)

After having listed the internal and external factors that impact a projected intervention you will be able to mitigate risk and focus on the opportunities and strengths when designing an action plan (see step 7).

**Step 2 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

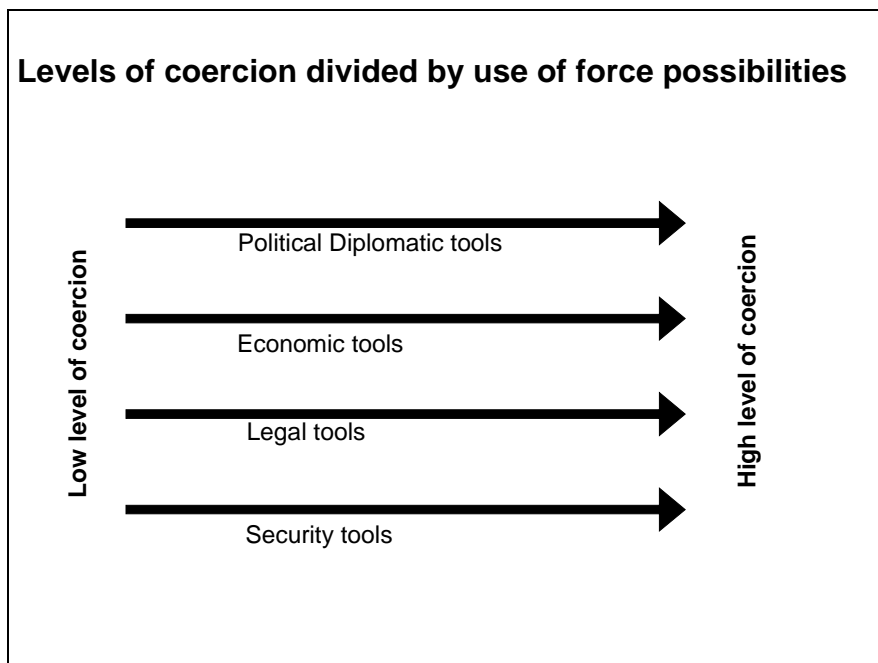
What is the level of risk involved in a potential intervention (given the above assessment of the case)

(1= high level risk and 5 = low level risk)

[1    2    3    4    5]

### Step 3: Deciding on Carrots & Sticks

There are a variety of tools available for external parties to address a conflict. These range from soft tools such as diplomacy, threat of sanctions to more hard tools such as economic boycott or the use of force.



#### **Examples:**

##### ***Political tools:***

The use of political means such as forging alliances or the use of diplomacy to achieve goals. For example the threat of use of force by China is the USA would formally recognise Taiwan, or the reconsideration of a trade agreement is a political way to achieve certain goals (Note: once implemented this becomes an economic tool), multi track and second track diplomacy.

##### ***Economic tools:***

The use of economic pressure to achieve goals. For example, stopping aid flows to Zimbabwe or establishing a boycott on Iraq is using economic power to pressure parties.

##### ***Legal tools:***

The use of legal instruments (e.g. UN system, international body of law, ICC etc.). For example the possible referral of Iran to the security council as a result of the reports of the IAEA on compliance with NPT regulations.

##### ***Security tools:***

The use of force to intervene in a country, e.g. the intervention in Kosovo by the US and the EU under the NATO charter.

Assignment 1

For each coercive strategy list the possible dangers and problems that can arise.

Political	Economic	Legal	Security

For all of the above-mentioned tools, it is helpful to be clear about the level of transparency: Are you planning to apply an open (public) intervention or do you prefer to get engaged behind the scenes?

**Step 3 Question for Final Radar Chart**

To what extent do you think your intervention credible to the warring parties  
(1 = not credible and 5 = very credible)

[1    2    3    4    5]

## Step 4: All-Inclusively and Exclusivity

International policy experts often refer to the term of "all-inclusivity" as a crucial prerequisite for successful peace efforts. While this is a worthwhile goal in itself any strategy that is aimed to resolve a conflict involves making a choice which parties are addressed and which ones are left out. In practice, the continuous search for the adequate representation of all involved parties can easily delay negotiations – and possibly derail a peace process even before it starts. Every party left out of a process should be regarded as a potential spoiler (opposing force) and interventions should therefore be comprehensive when planning substantial engagement.

### Case Study: Spoilers pouring into Sun City

In 2002, the so-called Sun City Talks in South Africa aimed to bring together all warring parties involved in the DR Congo war. All-inclusivity was a stated principle of the event. During the preparations, more and more parties expressed their right to participate, in some cases through violence. The organizers decided to open the doors for several additional parties, in turn encouraging other groupings to claim having been neglected.

When excluding individual parties in order to reach a certain objective, interventions should make a serious effort to actively engage with those parties. Building trust with those "marginalised" parties can be an effective way of preventing frustration and possibly the eruption of violence.

### Democratisation; all inclusively as a process?

The case for all-inclusively is often made by referring to the development of all-inclusive democratic institutions that channel the various interests in a peaceful way. This is easier said than done as we see for instance in Iraq. The problem with the development of democracy has to do with the difficulty to determine the rules of the game. Once rules are adapted there will be some losers and some winners, however marginal the differences might seem the result can be a return to violence by frustrated parties that do not feel included.

The Lebanese case is instructive one, where Hizbollah is part of the political process but does not trust it to the extent that they will give up their arms and become part of the Lebanese government army.

### Exercise 1:

Consider the current situation in Iraq and decide which parties are included and which are excluded. In the chart below please describe what could be the negative and positive for excluding a party from the negotiations during possible peace talks.

Quick look analysis	
+	-

At the same time try and assess why they are left out and discuss what it will take to include them in a peace process Is it worthwhile doing so? And if not what would be needed to prevent them from becoming/remaining opposing force in the conflict.

Important factors:

1. Vested interests engendered by the war itself e.g. Kradzic in Bosnia, Savimbi in Angola, Vellupillai Probhakaran in Sri Lanka
2. Make sure large part of population benefits from the end of violence.
3. Be aware of shared interests

#### Step 4 Question for Final Radar Chart

To what extent do you think your intervention has to deal with active spoilers that should be excluded at certain stages of the process?

(1 = many spoilers and 5 = no spoilers)

[1    2    3    4    5]

## Step 5: Forging Alliances

When looking at the conflict map, it is important to make sure you are coordinating with various other involved parties. Often conflict is dealt with in a unilateral way without enough coordination. Sometimes coordination is even impossible because of internal conflicts between external parties about the proper approach.

### The role of NGO’s

Today more than ever before, civil society is experiencing a proliferation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in which individuals can engage in non-violent action for peace and justice. Especially in this time the number of parties involved increased tremendously, we have to pay special attention to the third space. Often these organisations have a lot of experience in the conflict areas and are able to provide useful insights as to how to deal with it. At the same time they are engaged in various projects that aim to restore part of the social fabric themselves. Increasingly the energy and scope of NGOs is linked directly to the UN, both as a source of ideas and inspiration, and as a powerful multiplier for the universal principles of the organization.

Effective conflict resolution is based on partnership; a partnership between international institutions, Governments, NGO’s, and the private sector. These groups should work together on cross-sectoral networks. The challenge is to bridge the gap between policy makers, citizens, entrepreneurs, and activists seeking to demonstrate that successful collective action is possible in an ever more complex and inter-dependend world. But, and this is crucial, partnerships fail when there is lack of accountability and legitimacy. Effective partnerships depend on transparency and trust.

When trust brakes down as happens in conflict situations it is very difficult to regain it, this is a key challenge.

### Assignment 1:

What would you consider the key prerequisites for a good alliance for external parties and the conflicting parties?

External parties	Conflicting parties
Governments, International Organizations, influential networks (e.g. ethnic groups, military, universities, business groups etc.) Non Governmental Organizations, Media etc.	

### Case Study: External chess play in the Middle East peace process

A good example of failing coordination is the Quartet which is responsible for the Israeli – Palestinian conflict and consists of the US, Russia, EU, and the UN who all have a different interest in the way they deal with the conflict. Due to internal divisions: The EU is considered incapable by the US and not able by the Israelis; the UN is unable to pull parties together. Most actors circumvent the Quartet and try and go it alone leading to a complicated playing field with various incoherent initiatives.

### Step 5 Question for Final Radar Chart

How do you value the working relationship between you and your partners in the intervention efforts

(1= not good and 5 = excellent)

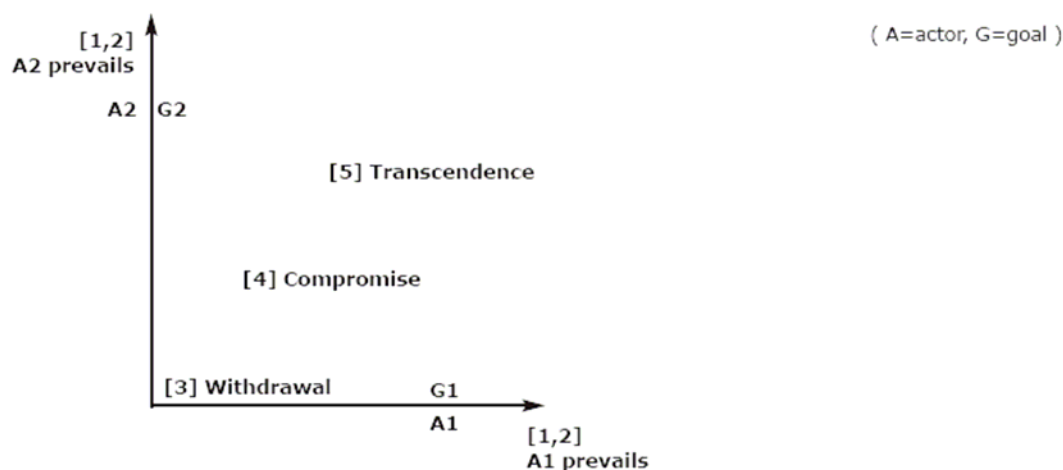
[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Step 6: Finding Creative Solutions

Good solutions are usually quite simple but require one to make a jump in thoughts, which is referred to as being creative. Often when dealing with a problem for a very long time people are unable to take a step back, they lose overview of the situation and it becomes very difficult to think of new ways to deal with the problem. Lets examine some ways to overcome this problem:

*The "Transcend" Method:*

Conflict – The five basic outcomes



The above diagram presents the five general types of outcomes in a conflict with two parties.

Here [1] and [2] are the same; they both mean that one party prevails. In a concrete conflict each general type has several specific interpretations, let us assume that the conflict involves two parties and one Orange which each party would like to have, here are the possible outcomes:

### **[1,2] One Party Prevails**

The Rule of Man: Fight it out, might is right (to be avoided)

The Rule of Law: Adjudicate, some principle (like need, taste)

The Rule of Chance: Some random method

Compensation: Broadening (triangle), deepening (double conflict)

### **[3] Withdrawal**

Walk away from the situation

Destroy or give away the orange

Just watch the orange

Put it in the freezer

### **[4] Compromise**

Cut the orange

Squeeze the orange

Peel the orange; divide the slices

Any other division

### **[5] Transcendence**

Get one more orange

Get more people to share the orange

Bake an orange cake, have a lottery, divide the proceeds

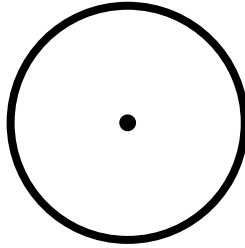
Sow the seeds, make a plantation, and take over the market

The transcend method shows that through creative solutions one can overcome problems and achieve results that go beyond (Transcend) the wishes of the parties. The term "break-through" is used for negotiations; reflecting the sense of relief of a rat struggling in a maze to

find an exit, and then suddenly finding an exit (the small solution), or jumping out, discovering that the mace has no ceiling (the big solution).

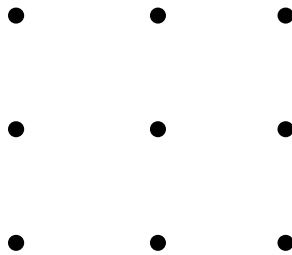
### Exercise 1: Circle and Dot

The challenge here is to create a circle with a dot in the middle (see example) without raising your pen from the paper.



### Exercise 2: Nine Dots

Take a pen and connect all nine dots above by using no more than four straight, connected lines. Once you begin drawing your lines, you should not lift your pen off the paper, and you are not allowed to retrace your lines.



### XY-Exercise

The aim is to win as many points as you can. For each of the eight successive rounds, you can play the "X" or "Y". Each round's payoff depends on the pattern of choices made in your team. Place your score for each round on the score sheet. During this exercise, you cannot talk to other players in your group, except before you play rounds 5 and 8, when you may speak with the other players before deciding how you will play.

#### PAYOFF SCHEDULE

4 X's: Lose 1 each 3 X's: Win 1 each  
 1 Y: Lose 3 2 X's: Win 2 each  
 2 Y's: Lose 2 each 1 X: Win 3  
 3 Y's: Lose 1 each 4 Y's: Win 1 each

**SCORECARD**

<i>Round</i>	<i>Your choice</i>	<i>Group's pattern of choices</i>	<i>Payoff (use schedule on preceding page)</i>	<i>Balance</i>
1	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
2	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
3 (bonus payoff x3)	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
4	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
5	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
6 (bonus payoff x5)	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
7	X Y	___ X ___ Y		
8 (bonus payoff x10)	X Y	___ X ___ Y		

**Step 6 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

To what extent are parties willing to accept your alternative suggestions?  
(1= not at all, 5 = willing)

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Step 7: Plan of Action

In order to plan a possible intervention you need to take some things into consideration and keep asking yourself specific question such as: what are we trying to achieve? what are our options? who can help us? what is the problem that we are trying to solve? Etc. To structure the different ideas we provide a chart, which can be filled in (see below).

The action plans can touch upon various topics relating to a conflict; it can be an advise for the government, for a specific minister, an awareness raising campaign, a specific education project, a mediation effort etc.

The key questions that need to be answered when starting to formulate an action plan are the so-called WWWWW questions; What? Where? How? Who? When?

Identifying a problem: What is the problem?  
 Proposing solutions:  
 Can we break the problem down into smaller parts?  
 How to solve the problem?  
 What are the possible solutions to the different problems described above?  
 Who should be involved?  
 When can it be solved?

Action: What can we do/what is our action?

Evaluation: How are we planning to stay involved and to monitor progress?

When structuring action plans one should keep the following in mind:

Decide on the goal of your action; make sure that your goals are attainable and achievable:

Define the issues and the goals

Ideas: Educating, mobilizing, publicizing.

Your goals have to be clear and require further definition. The scope of your action plan, the issues, the delegation of work and the budget depend on what you seek to achieve.

You should look carefully at how your goals are relevant to your community and establish a basis of consensus between all those participating, if you wish to work effectively.

Make sure you set a time limit for achieving your goals

Vision is long term, goals are short term!

When starting to action plan start by brainstorming on your overall approach and then all your ideas, from the bizarre to the obvious.

### Reminder:

- Develop a proper understanding of the political forces affecting the conflict and, related, the set of required institutional incentives for progress.
- Collective action should be taken; the issue of partnership: which stakeholders should be involved at what level and at what stage?
- Political leadership should be strengthened through mechanisms designed to instil integrity, amongst others through voice and external checks and balances.
- Political will is an often-heard prerequisite for a successful intervention.
- Influence and capture should be addressed; who is able to threaten the intervention, who will be trying to capture the process?

**Action planning tool:**

What is the problem; describe the problem and break it down	
Proposed solution: clearly state what the solution should look like	
Who should deal with the problem; who can implement the proposed solutions?	
Action: what can we do to promote the solution we have proposed?	
How can we monitor progress and keep /stay involved?	
What are the benchmarks for successful intervention?	
What are the risks for taking this action?	
What are the costs (material, financial, human) for you?	
What are the costs for other parties?	

**Exercise: Create a Grid**

This exercise identifies a list of multiple possibilities for action on conflict. Begin by listing the kinds of work in the situation you are working in which target the conflict itself, entering them on the top row of your grid. These can range from sending additional troops to a region, entering into unilateral negotiations with a party, and developing confidence-building measures.

On the left column of the grid list the sectors/locations, levels, sectors, target groups/people, locations where the work on conflict might be done.

Then mark the grid using the following categories:

- Available
- Available but needs improvement (ineffective)
- Do not need
- Not available but necessary

You use these marks to indicate what work is already being done to improve the situation, in each case including the program and/or agency that is carrying out the work.

Note empty boxes and ask yourself why they are open, whether it is necessary to do something. Also consider boxes where work is ineffective.

**Example:**

Kinds of Work				
Strategies				

- |        |                            |   |                             |
|--------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| ✓      | Available                  | ✗ | Not necessary               |
| +<br>✓ | Available but insufficient | □ | Necessary but not available |

Source: RTC

**Step 7 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Assess your action plan and give it a rating from 1 to 5  
(1= very unlikely to achieve set benchmarks and 5 very likely to achieve set benchmarks)

**[ 1    2    3    4    5 ]**

## Intermezzo

As discussed in the previous sections (steps 1-8), any given intervention from outside generally reflects the political will by the intervening party or a vested interest in achieving a certain outcome.

When considering a mediation effort to facilitate a resolution, there is the general notion of moral and good will. Despite being widely accepted, this is a grey area. The complex realities of today’s interconnected political landscape make it difficult to distinguish between outsiders and insiders.

### What is mediation?

In the classic sense, mediation must take place under invitation of the parties to a conflict. As there is no “official” leverage over the conflict parties, mediators must limit their actions to convincing by arguments. Yet, it is rather difficult to draw the line. In most cases, mediators do have some form of leverage (money, diplomatic might, historical ties) over the parties they engage with.

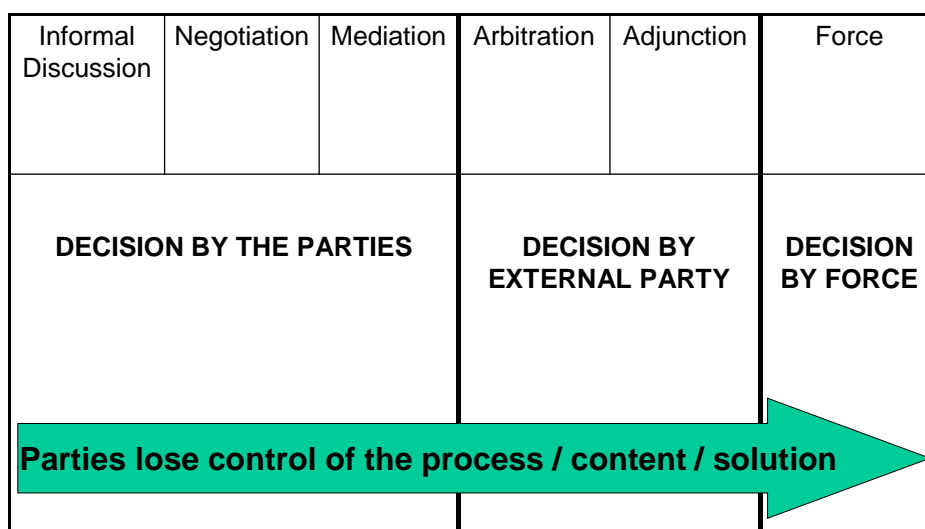
### When can a third party claim to be a mediator?

Intervening in a given conflict never occurs in a vacuum. The context, timing, capacity and interests all shape the engagement by a certain outside actor. As a consequence, it is difficult to determine whether an external stakeholder takes the role of a “pure” mediator.

Some questions arise:

- How much distance to the conflict parties is needed (and possible) in order to talk about a “mediator”?
- What happens if there are more mediators involved in finding a solution?
- What about local ownership to the process?

By including the following three sections on mediation strategies in international conflict management, this manual emphasises the need to acknowledge the existing overlap between third party intervention and mediation efforts to the conflict parties.



(Source: ThinkTeam 2005)

## Step 8: Position of the Mediator

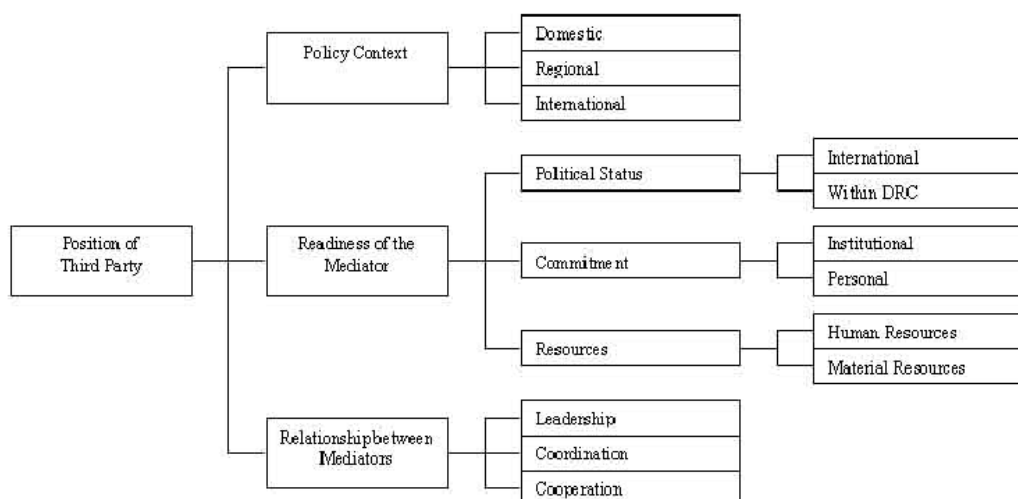
Mediation does not happen in a vacuum. In order to assess possible mediation strategies (either for yourself or others' possible activities), it is helpful to consider the position of a mediating party. This assessment ranges from a more general indication about the political context to a detailed enquiry into a mediator's political standing, the commitment and the capacity made available for the intervention (see illustrative graph below).

In addition, there is the crucial issue of multiparty mediation. You might not be the only party involved in facilitating a resolve; and in fact most conflicts know a range of stakeholders acting as mediators. These mediating parties can be states, individual leaders or organisations (UN, NGO's, religious organisations).

Whereas additional mediators create more options for possible solutions, multiparty mediation can have disastrous effects if not well-orchestrated,

Consider the following questions:

- At what stage of the political process does a mediator start its engagement?
- Is the mediator “ready” to mediate in the given conflict?
- Do mediators cooperate / coordinate their activities?



(Source: Multiparty Mediation in the DRC: Mans 2003)

### Exercise 1:

Using the above graph, discuss the position of a third party / mediator in a given conflict (e.g. the position of the UN in the case of Cyprus).

- 1) Define the *policy context* first if necessary
- 2) Discuss the *readiness* of the mediator by answering the following questions:
  - What is the political status (reputation, etc) of the third party?
  - How committed is that third party, and does this reflect a personal or institutional commitment (e.g. because of personal affiliation or foreign policy priority?)
  - What resources are available to the third party (money, personnel, etc)?
- 3) Discuss the relationship between the various mediators. Who is in charge, do they coordinate their activities and how – if at all – do they cooperate?

**Case Study: Delaying Sudan's Peace Process**

In 2004-2005, the Darfur crisis in Western Sudan featured in all international newspapers. Two local rebel forces had taken up arms against the government in Khartoum and waves of violence between rebels and pro-government militias followed in the course of 2004-2005. Massive human rights violations left tens of thousand people dead and created a staggering number of refugees. The international community even investigated on the grounds of genocide committed against the Darfur people. At the same time, a 10-year old peace process was well under way in neighbouring Kenya, where the Khartoum government negotiated a deal for power-sharing with the Southern Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The international community had great interest to see this peace process succeed and was therefore reluctant to put pressure on Khartoum regarding the situation in Darfur. As a consequence, mediation efforts on Darfur (first in France-sponsored Chad, later orchestrated by the African Union in Nigeria) proved cumbersome. Major Western powers were directly involved in the mediation process (Norway, UK, US, France) however these countries could no decide on a joint strategy. Should Darfur be solved first by pressuring Khartoum or should the peace agreement between Khartoum and SPLM be used as a driving force to solve Darfur by the anticipated Transitional Government? While mediating parties were divided on this issue, the situation in Darfur worsened by the day. Multiparty mediation in fact delayed a possible resolution.

**Exercise 2:**

Consider the Israel-Palestine conflict (alternatively China-Taiwan) and "map" the mediators. Who is engaged in facilitating a resolution and what are the issues at stake for the individual third parties?

**Case Study: UN versus South African Mediation in the DR Congo**

MONUC is one of the most expensive UN peacekeeping missions in the world. The UN has been present on Congolese soil since 1999. Without a strong mandate and too little manpower however, the UN mission failed to make a difference until 2002. At that time, South Africa was chairing the newly established African Union; and President Mbeki was eager to prove Africa's readiness to mediate on the continent. Following his own agenda, he brokered a deal between Rwanda and DR Congo about the repatriation of Rwandan *Interahamwe* rebels from Congolese territory. In doing so, South Africa bypassed the UN and its MONUC mission. For the implementation of the agreement however, South Africa had to rely on the UN infrastructure. While a workable solution in theory, the implementation proved impossible. The UN had a mandate to facilitate "voluntary" repatriation, whereas South Africa envisioned the rebels' forceful return if necessary. When the UN became aware of the South African agenda, international law and the neutral stand of the UN were at stake. The UN-South Africa cooperation project was abandoned as a consequence.

**Step 8 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

Score the level of un-ambiguity of the mediator in the conflict  
(1= ambiguous and 5 unambiguous)

[1      2      3      4      5]

## Step 9: Neutrality

The ideal mediator portrays a neutral, objective stand in the conflict. If mediators fail to be (perceived as) neutral, conflict parties can voice their discontent; and have a potential excuse not to comply with certain demands or neglect an otherwise justified critique. Neutrality is crucial.

Yet, there is an important counter argument to the notion of neutrality. In order to retain a sufficient amount of legitimacy by all stakeholders, a mediator must be ready not to take the position of the "impartial" as a pretext for vague and ineffective engagement.

Often, mediators have to address key players' misbehaviour, like human rights violations or other non-permittable actions (behind the scenes or in public). An overly neutral stance can damage the legitimacy of a mediator and opens the door to further manipulation by the conflict parties. A firm, and therefore partial stand can at times be the only way to maintain the leverage over the parties. Crucial in this, however is the mediator's level of trust given and sincerity perceived by others.

### Does neutrality exist at all?

There is a common concern about the question whether a mediator can be truly neutral in any given situation. Conflict situations often are complex and change continuously and it can prove impossible for mediators to maintain a neutral stand: the more parties involved in a given conflict, the greater the chance that mediators offend minorities by certain remarks / actions.

In addition, perception about a mediator (sometimes even manipulated through partial media) is far more important than an "objective" assessment of the mediation effort. Mediators have to take into account that some conflict parties might benefit from portraying mediators as partial.

#### Case Study: US soldiers killed in Somalia

When the US was part of the UN mission in Somalia in 1993, the international community had a mandate to restore order in the country. Even though the UN portrayed a neutral stand in the conflict, the organisation was a clear threat to individual warlords. When the US send special forces (with CIA support) to eliminate a war lord in the capital, rebels shot down the US helicopter and dragged the body of the "peacekeepers" through the main street. The local population cheered in the streets – the pictures were televised all over the world.

#### Exercise 1:

Discuss how neutrality becomes partiality in the following examples:

- Delivery of food aid by the WFP to farmers in a civil war.
- International Red Cross operating a field hospital in a war zone.
- A Chapter VI UN Mission in face of massive human rights violations in their presence

#### Step 9 Question for Final Radar Chart:

How easy is it for a mediator to maintain a neutral stance in this conflict?

(1= impossible and 5 = not a problem)

[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Step 10: Ownership versus Leadership

Durable solutions need the support of the involved parties and should not be implanted from the outside.

History shows that successful mediation efforts (e.g. the signing of a peace deal) do not necessarily lead to an agreement that enjoys sufficient support among the parties. In many of these cases, implementation proves cumbersome, if not impossible.

On the other hand however, mediation strategies should be careful not to let them lead by local ownership only. Mediators have to keep in mind that ownership can also stand in the way of a resolution. In order to break an impasse, a mediator might be well advised to take the lead according to a personal assessment; and denying the parties ownership as a consequence.

### What is the Role of a Mediator?

Mediation knows many different faces. Depending on the case at hand, a mediator can be required to take a passive or proactive stance in a conflict. The list below shows some key tasks of a mediating party.

to inform	to be present
to listen	to suggest
to find alternatives	to record
to provide space	to convince
to remind	to facilitate
to pressure	to translate
to clarify	to formulate
...	...
...	...

### Exercise 1:

Discuss the above roles of a mediator. What roles are more passive, what roles are of a proactive nature? Rank them in a corresponding order.

### Case Study: UN Good Offices

The former UN Special Representative in Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto once remarked in an interview that he considers himself not as a mediator. Rather, he views his role – as well as the activities of his UN colleagues in similar positions – as a “good-office” function. Providing channels for communication between the different parties, these good offices can take a passive (receiving information) or proactive (gathering information) stance. As the UN often has limited means to make parties move towards a resolution, the attitude of Alvaro de Soto reflects the need for a facilitating mandate when the mediator only has limited leverage over the conflict parties.

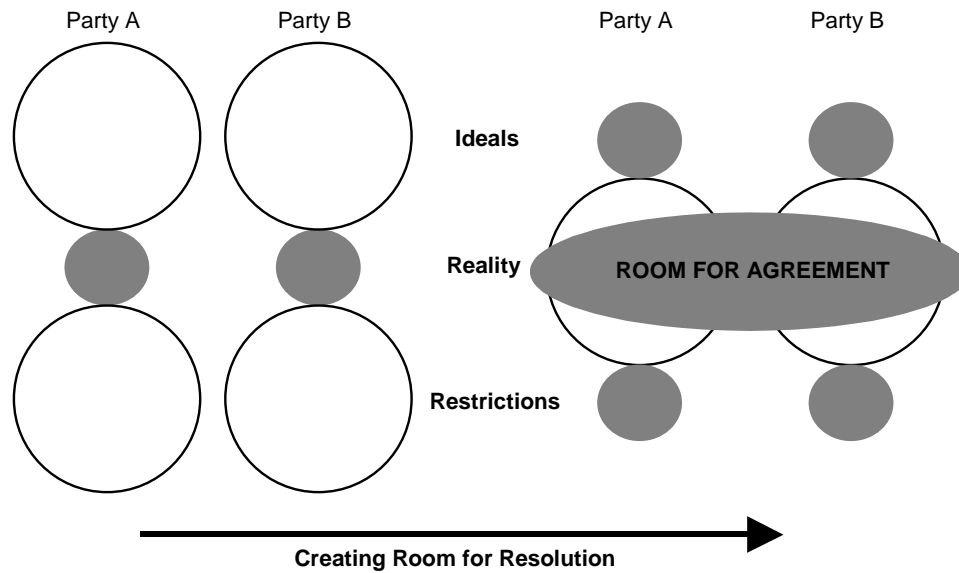
### Exercise 2:

Discuss whether you consider the following statements true or false:

- Mediation is appropriate when there is an uneven power balance.
- Mediation can only succeed if there is an understanding by the conflict party that a resolution is beneficial to all.
- A Mediator listens more than he / she talks.

**Creating Room for Resolution**

Consider the following illustration for a facilitating role of a mediator:



Life / Reality is a continuous struggle between ideals and (external) restrictions. The figure above illustrates this approach by using small and big circles. In a situation where conflict parties are unable to find common ground – and where perception of reality provides little room for other views – the mediator can act to make parties become aware of alternative solutions (enlarging the centre circle).

**Step 10 Question for Final Radar Chart:**

To what extent do parties feel ownership over the mediation process and to what extent are they willing to participate?

(1= no ownership and 5 = full ownership and participation)

[ 1    2    3    4    5 ]

## Step 11: Sustained Engagement & Exit Strategies

"Dropping the ball" is a serious concern within international conflict management. Third parties often focus on a diplomatic solution and have limited capacities to sustain their engagement beyond the signing ceremonies of a peace agreement.

It could be argued that mediators in general have the obligation to continue their efforts until settlements have been implemented according to the negotiated plan. In reality, diplomatic successes are readily embraced and made public; and the necessary aftercare more often than not suffers from limited resources.

This danger is even greater when various mediators are involved in a peace process. A multiparty mediation setting allows for individual withdrawal for all mediators without an explicit need for justification.

### Case: Kosovo – staying engaged

The involved parties in rehabilitation in Kosovo are the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). Both have proven (in-) adequate to address the conflict's underlying causes. Division and rivalry between groups still remain and informal and criminal economies continue to flourish. The unfolding situation during the post-intervention phase therefore led to political extremism and resulted in a significant decay of formal institutions.

The UN mission was overwhelmed by the challenge at hand: establish functioning administration, restore law and order, establish self government and elections, facilitate the process to reach final status for Kosovo. UNMIK and KFOR were operationally unprepared and insufficiently backed by the member states to fulfill these tasks especially in the light of increasing violence after the Serb withdrawal.

It should be noted however, that in spite of all the problems, the international intervention has been relatively successful in alleviating the immediate humanitarian needs and bringing peace to the region, but long-term stability remains elusive. Rehabilitation and reconciliation in Kosovo will require a more sustained commitment by the international community.

(Source: Yannis: Kosovo: the political economy of conflict and peace building peace process 166-200)

### When to end an Intervention?

The formulation of exit strategies has always played a key role in interventionist policy-making. Whereas planning can anticipate a possible scenario, more often than not exit strategies are based on ad-hoc developments and reflect a cost-benefit analysis at the given time.

When considering possible exit strategies, it is crucial to safeguard sustainability. Has the ongoing intervention reached a final stage? What are the consequences of (diplomatic, economic, military) withdrawal? To what extent is it possible to fully withdraw from the situation at hand?

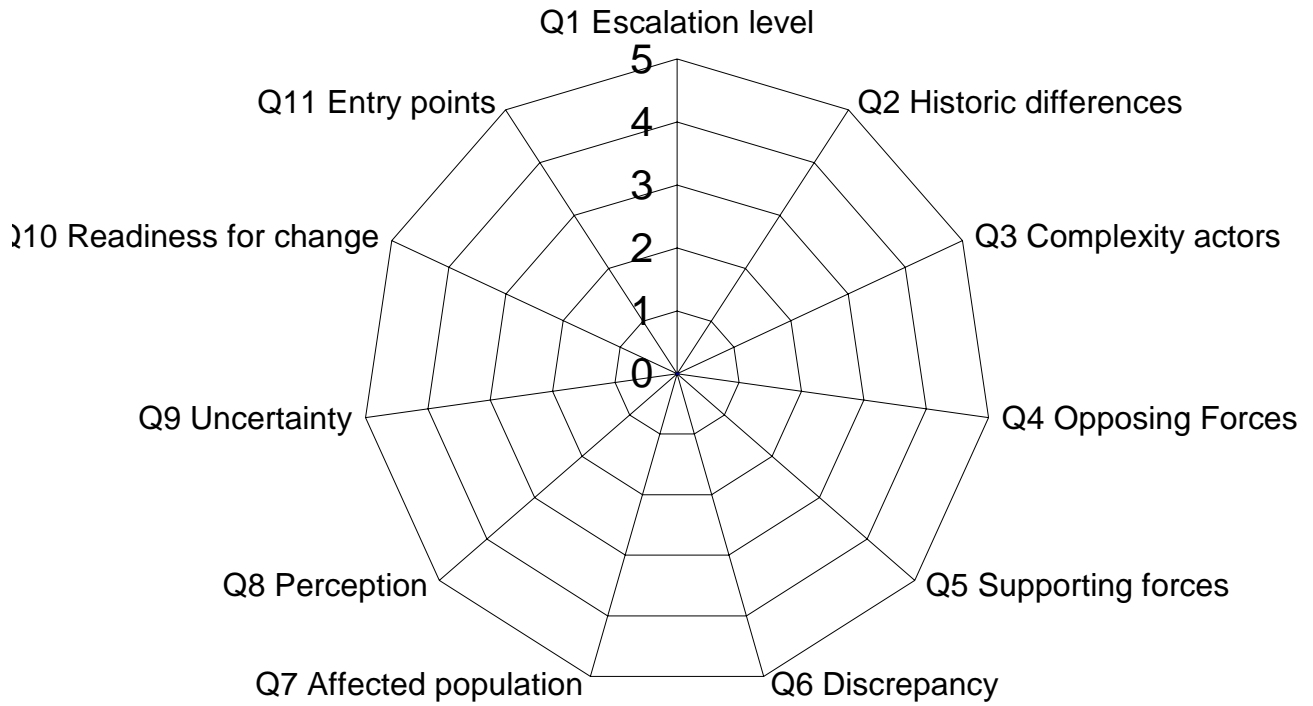
### Step 11 Question for Final Radar Chart:

Score the level of commitment to sustain the intervention effort  
(1 = minimal commitment and 5 = fully committed)

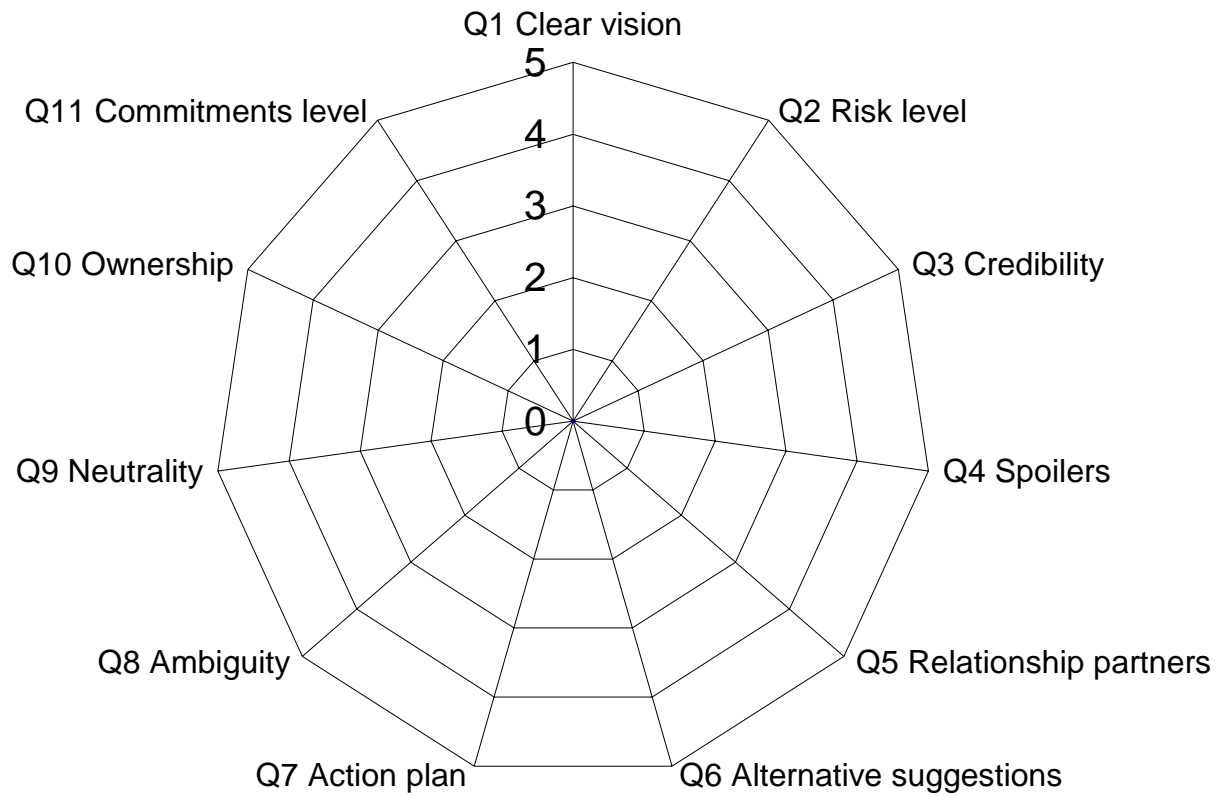
[ 1      2      3      4      5 ]

## Part III: Tying it all together

### Analysis Radar Chart



# Intervention Radar Chart



## About the Authors

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Ulrich Mans is Fellow for Security Studies at Clingendael's Conflict and Security Programme (CSCP). He joined the Clingendael Institute in 2004 and organises various training programmes on international conflict management for diplomats and military officers. In addition he is responsible for research on peace processes and international mediation.

Ulrich Mans holds a MA from the Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen (CIDIN) in the Netherlands. Having spend some two years of his studies and professional life in Central and Southern Africa, his field of expertise lies with international security in Africa and UN peacekeeping on the continent. Before coming to Clingendael, he worked on several projects for the Africa Institute of South Africa, the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria and for the International Crisis Group's Africa Program in Brussels.

### Drs. Gideon J. Shimshon

Gideon Shimshon has been involved with the World Bank Institute Governance Unit as a consultant since 2002, focusing on developing educational material on corruption and good governance for the Youth for Good Governance Program. Graduating from the University of Amsterdam, he has an MA for Political Sciences and International Relations. During his studies, Mr. Shimshon attended the International Institute of Political and Economic Studies in Greece, organized in cooperation with Harvard and Georgetown Universities.

He has been involved in creating and managing various international programs with a special interest in corruption and governance issues, particularly conflict resolution in the development and political economy sectors. Working closely with Dr. Suransky over the last two years, he has been an integral part in implementing ICT developments to simulation methodology. Mr. Shimshon also co-teaches at Webster University, Leiden, University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University; and is the founder and the current director of *Pax Ludens*.

### The Clingendael Institute

#### Objective:

The objective of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, known as 'Clingendael', is to promote the understanding of international affairs. Special attention is devoted to European integration, transatlantic relations, international security, conflict studies, policy making on national and international energy markets, negotiations and diplomacy, and to the United Nations and other international organisations.

#### Activities:

Clingendael seeks to achieve this objective through research, by publishing studies, organising courses and training programmes, and by providing information. The Institute acts in an advisory capacity to the government, parliament and social organisations, holds conferences and seminars, maintains a library and documentation centre, and publishes a Dutch language monthly on international politics as well as a newsletter. Clingendael currently employs some 75 staff, the majority of whom are researchers and training staff.



The Institute provides training courses in European relations and other subjects for diplomats from Central and Eastern Europe, the now independent states of the former Soviet Union, and Southern Africa, and assists in the training of specialists in various countries. Clingendael maintains regular contact with other major research institutes throughout Europe and the United States and, together with similar institutes in Western Europe, prepares studies for the European Commission.

### Pax Ludens Foundation for Training and Research in Conflict Resolution

Pax Ludens is a non-corporate organization specialized in training and research in international conflict and crisis management. A team composed of professionals from the fields of International Relations (IR), Internet & Communication Technologies (ICT), Conflict Management and Psychology provide expert training programs in international conflict and crisis management for public, academic and corporate target groups. Core activities include developing and executing seminars and/or simulation exercises based on real and current case studies. Website: [www.paxludens.org](http://www.paxludens.org).



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