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Armed Conflicts and Peace Agreements

2.1 The Concept of Conflict

A strong statement is that conflicts *are* solvable. This is not necessarily an idealistic or optimistic position. As this book will show, it is a realistic proposition. Most actors in conflicts will find themselves in need of negotiations at one time or another. Even if a conflict results in war and destruction, there may have been other options and alternative paths for the conflict. There are frequent statements on the inevitability of conflict, violence and war. Indeed, finding solutions may often be difficult. This difficulty not only arises out of political constraints, but can also be due to a lack of insight or imagination. There are also views of the desirability and even necessity of violence and war. Unbearable conditions or impossible threats may make such opinions understandable. Too often, however, the results of war negate the very hope for a better future that may initially have motivated the war. Few wars follow the paths anticipated by the actors. Short wars may avoid such pitfalls, but who is to guarantee that a war will be short? Many wars have started from this premise. Afterwards, it will be asked: were all avenues used to find a peaceful solution prior to the initiation of war? Only after this can be convincingly proven do the arguments of inevitability and desirability approach validity. Thus, the determined search for a solution is not only a moral question; it is also a rational one. This is the sole way in which a free society will be prepared to accept the strains of war. Indeed, if conflicts are exposed to such early challenges, solutions may actually be found, even in unexpected situations. Thus, conflicts are solvable and there are many and varied experiences of such solutions.

If conflicts are solvable is it also true that conflicts – sooner or later – *will be* solved? Clearly, once a conflict has developed into a war the options are fewer. At that moment, the primary actors will pursue victory rather than a joint solution. The victory of one side over the other is, then, a possible outcome, even to the point of the other's capitulation, dissolution and disappearance as

an actor. The record shows that this is what happens in some conflicts, but by no means all. Conflicts will come to an end at some point in time. Whether that ending is a solution, a victory or a stalemate has to be scrutinized. To this should be added the question of whether the conflict is likely again to be armed and violent.

Victory is the outcome preferred by most actors. If achieved, it may solve parts of an issue, but often not the entire problem at hand. The victory of the allied countries over Nazi Germany is a case in point. After the failure of the agreement reached in Munich in 1938, it was no longer possible for the Western powers to consider negotiations with Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime. The end of the Second World War meant the implementation of the demand for unconditional surrender and the elimination of the Nazis as an actor. This was as clear-cut a victory as can be. It did not, however, mean the end of Germany. The issue of Germany's position in the international system still had to be settled. Conflict among the victors arose over this question. It became one of the few core issues in the Cold War. A solution developed as new leaders emerged in West Germany. They were democratically inclined, conscientiously building on pre-1933 democratic traditions and new ideas from the Western powers. A reintegration of Germany into the international system took place, ultimately even allowing for its reunification in 1990, but only 45 years after the end of the Second World War. It was possible with a new Germany, willing to admit its responsibility for the past and able to accommodate to the present. If the Second World War had been a question solely of Germany's role in the international system, there was a route through peaceful dialogue and development. A solution within a democratic framework among democratic countries was found. It could have been found before the Nazis took power. For any country, there are, in other words, always alternatives to a war strategy for achieving goals. Regimes, however, may deliberately narrow those choices and construct situations where the outcome becomes only one: defeat or victory. Nazi Germany chose such a path.

Conflict precedes conflict resolution. There is already considerable analysis of the origin and the pursuit of conflict. Machiavelli and Clausewitz are important writers in one Western tradition of conflict analysis. Adam Smith and Karl Marx offered competition and class analysis as other tools for understanding. In classical Chinese discourse Sun Tzu is a central writer, as is Kautilya in India. Military-strategic thinking has become universally shared, and there is often, among military officers, a surprising degree of common understanding across battle lines. Also, the analysis of societal contradiction has such cross-cultural traits, Smith and Marx being influential in different quarters across the globe. The same, however, is not true for conflict resolution thinking. It is a novel topic. It is less developed and less coherent. Thus, it is important to introduce the ideas of modern thinkers. It is also necessary to relate them to trends of social science thinking.

'Conflict' has many meanings in everyday life. To some it refers to *behaviour* or *action*. There is conflict when a trade union goes on strike or an employer locks out its employees. It is also conflict when two states are at war with one another, and where battlefield events determine their relations. The actions constitute the conflict. If this were all, however, it would mean that a conflict ends once this behaviour ends. Few would agree to this. A cease-fire is not the end of a conflict. Even the cession of verbal statements, non-violent actions, the mobilization of petitions, demonstrations, boycotts and sanctions may only indicate that there is an interlude in the conflict. Actions may resume at some later stage. There may still be dissatisfaction. Obviously, conflict is more than the behaviour of the parties.

A closer look indicates that the parties in an industrial dispute will not cease their actions until there is some movement on the issues which sparked the dispute. The 'issue' refers to the incompatible positions taken by the parties, motivating their actions. This, then, is a deeper understanding of what a conflict is. It contains a severe disagreement between at least two sides, where their demands cannot be met by the same resources at the same time. This is an *incompatibility*. Positions are incompatible. There is some form of scarcity. If there is an abundance of resources, the demands from the various sides may easily be met. The incompatibility can be solved. If there are limited resources, however, problems will arise. The easy solutions are no longer available and more ingenious ways have to be found. How this can be done will be discussed later. For the time being it is sufficient to note that when the parties adjust their demands so that there is no longer scarcity, the conflict disappears. The incompatible demands have been handled. Incompatibility appears to be a key to the existence of conflict. If there are no actions although it is possible for an outsider to point to incompatibilities, there is a latent conflict. Manifest conflict requires both action and incompatibility.

This is still not enough to get an initial understanding of the concept of conflict. We need to include the actors as well. Many would say that trade unions are created to make conflict. This is why they have a membership. Members expect to be protected even to the point where a manifest conflict becomes a distinct possibility. This means that there is a tension built into the relationship between the employer and the employees. 'Conflict' does exist, even if there are no actions taken or demands formulated. The conflict is internal to the system. Similar descriptions also can be found for the interstate system. It is argued that sovereign states are inevitably locked into conflict with one another. States are continuously preparing to defend themselves from possible attack in order to protect their own survival. Such preparations only confirm to others that there are real dangers, thus they do the same. These are the dynamics of the well-known security dilemma (Herz 1950; Waltz 1959, 1979). This perspective suggests that the existence of one state is a danger to any other state. As long as there is unpredictability in the system, there will be

fear and, thus, conflict. For our purposes it means that *actors* or *parties* are fundamental for conflict to exist. If the actors are formed, and if they make an analysis where their needs for survival are in conflict with others, then there is conflict built into the system. This means that the history of the actors, the actors' understanding of their own role and their resources are important elements in conflict analysis.

From this we can conclude that conflict consists of three components: action, incompatibility and actors. Combining them, we arrive at a complete definition of a conflict as *a social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources*. This definition brings together essential elements from a number of commonly used definitions. It includes the actors or 'parties' in the definition which, as we have just seen, is basic. In many definitions the actor is left as a separate item. However, the preceding arguments make clear that it is integral to the analysis and to the definition.

The word 'strive' in the defining sentence requires a comment. It is a vague term, but the point is that when the parties are acting, they are doing something (however minimal) to acquire the resources. 'Strive' may even include warfare. It covers a wide range of activities.

An additional phrase needs a comment. It is said that the parties are striving to acquire the resources 'at the same moment in time'. This is sometimes overlooked in definitions and may, again, be self-evident. If one actor is satisfied with having its demands met a year from now, other actors may be able to meet their goals today. There is no conflict today. Perhaps the first actor will worry for the future – will there be anything left? – but if the party feels it has guarantees, the incompatibility is gone. It is clearly a different matter when the demands are geared to the same moment in time. It is conventional wisdom that only one person can be prime minister at a time and that only one country can have formal jurisdiction over a particular piece of territory at a time. These resources are regarded as indivisible, for the time being. If this is what the parties believe, then this is their reality. In actual life there are solutions even to such problems, for instance, the creation of posts as first and second prime minister (as in Cambodia in the 1990s) or finding forms of shared rule for a territory. Such solutions emerge only if the parties perceive an incompatibility to be divisible. Time, as we notice every day, is scarce but still has this quality of divisibility, something that our calendars make clear. Schedules may dissolve incompatibilities.

The notion of an 'available set of scarce resources' should not be taken to include only economic matters. The term 'resources' covers all kinds of positions that are of interest to an actor. To be a prime minister, to control a particular piece of territory, to be able to propagate a particular idea in the media can all be covered by the notion of 'available resources'. This definition demands that something is desired which is scarce, be it positions of power,

attractive land, or access to airwaves. Such resources can sometimes be estimated in money, square metres or other numbers, but often they are intangible. For instance, demands for recognition, acceptance of responsibility for destructive actions or psychological retribution exemplify intangible values. They are still highly important. They may involve admissions that have implications for an actor's standing nationally or internationally, but only indirectly relate to material resources. Thus, there are incompatibilities relating to matters of justice, moral norms and guilt.

With the conflict concept hopefully clarified, we move to the most difficult of all conflicts: wars. They are different from all other conflicts in that they are irreversible actions. Wars involve the taking of territory, the eviction of inhabitants, the death of soldiers and civilians, the destruction of property, resources and the environment, and the disruption of people's mental, physical, economic and cultural development. War is among the most destructive phenomena that one human group can inflict on another. In the same category of extreme conflict we also can locate systematic repression, totalitarianism and genocide. These are actions initiated by human beings. These are matters that can be ended and remedied by humans, but not undone. They become strong and conscious elements in the history of peoples, groups and individuals. Let us first look more closely at the exact meaning of war and then proceed to study recent trends in armed conflict and war.

2.2 Identifying Armed Conflict

Three projects

A commonly asked question is whether conflict and war have become more frequent and are more destructive today than they used to be. It is a question about quantity, where it is assumed that conflicts are easily comparable. The question is asked to reach an understanding of where the world is headed, as a whole, for a particular region or for a particular phenomenon (for instance, arms production). It is often a question about the future, not only about history. At the same time, there are those who resent having 'their' conflict compared to other situations. Each conflict is unique and has its own characteristics. There are qualities which make them different. The question of frequency makes little sense to those who are parties in conflict. Why should they worry, it is bad enough with one conflict, they would say.

Both perspectives are valid. The projects that exist within the peace research community all aim at understanding why conflicts occur or how they can be terminated. Their answers to the questions of frequency of wars are actually by-products of other ambitions. The questions are nevertheless important and contribute to the development of deeper answers. If there are general patterns

recurring over a large number of different conflicts, it suggests something that can possibly explain why wars begin. By implication it may yield ideas for improving the situation. Certain factors can be singled out for closer analysis. Questions of frequency interest the media and the public for other reasons. Today it is frequently asked if there is a difference between the post-Cold War years and the Cold War period. Changes in the international system or in domestic policies, associated with the ending of this confrontation, may explain our present predicament. There are many other candidates for possible causation, however, and the impact of each may be difficult to disentangle. In the analysis many factors are mentioned, such as bipolarity, deterrent effect of nuclear weapons, changed roles of international organizations, democratization, the spread of free market mechanisms, changes in media access, concern for human rights, growth of non-governmental organizations, etc. Comparisons across time can illustrate a number of effects. They do not necessarily prove them, however. To be scientific evidence, cases and periods have to be selected with rigour and there have to be many observations. For the purpose of this book it is important to have a general idea of the frequency and severity of armed conflicts in the world. It helps to set the topics of conflict resolution in perspective. Thus, let us review some ongoing efforts.

Armed conflict patterns are mapped continuously by several projects. This book uses the work of the Uppsala Conflict Data Project, based at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, in Sweden. Data are published by the department in the annual publication *States in Armed Conflict*. It is also available through the annual publications of SIPRI, The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (for major armed conflicts) and the *Journal of Peace Research (JPR)*, from the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, PRIO (all armed conflicts).

Second, there is the project on wars and armed conflict by the Causes of War project at the University of Hamburg (AKUF, from its name in German), mapping the global record of local wars since 1945. This is also published in annual reports and books (Gantzel and Schwinghammer 2000). The third enduring project is the Correlates of War project (known as COW), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, carrying information on wars since 1816. This information is normally available through databases, sometimes also in printed publications. It has found a wide use in research projects and the findings have been systematized (Geller and Singer 1998; Vasquez 2000). There are additional important projects that aim to highlight the present dilemmas of war and violence. Among these is PIOOM in Leiden, the Netherlands, which also includes human rights violations and produces global conflict maps. There is the Minorities at Risk project, University of Maryland, focusing on a subset of conflict: those involving ethnic minorities around the world. It contains data for 275 minority groups which have been involved in some form of conflict since 1945. It also includes systematic data on all

conflicts since the Second World War (Gurr 1993, 2000a; Gurr et al. 2001; Marshall 1999). Crisis behaviour between states can also be used to discuss questions of frequency (Brecher 1993). A number of researchers have their own systematic collections of conflict-related information which are reported in international journals (Bercovitch 1996; Carment 1993; Carment and James 1995; Gibler 1999a, 1999b; Goldstein 1992; Holsti 1991; Levy 1983; Licklider 1995; Luard 1986; Morton and Starr 2001; Tillema 1989).

The first three projects stand out, however, as the most consistent specifically addressing armed conflicts of all categories, whether between or within states. They contain additional information which is useful for theorizing on the war phenomenon. Two are oriented towards understanding the causes of conflict, as can be surmised from the names of the projects (the Hamburg and Michigan projects). One deals specifically with conflict resolution (the Uppsala project). What, for instance, do they tell us about trends in armed conflict and war?

The question is simple but requires an understanding of key definitions before an answer can be given. The definitions of conflict and war guide the types of information any project will collect. Conflict data projects can potentially show different global tendencies, depending on what categories of conflict they focus on. The comparability, in other words, can be limited. Furthermore, there are several criteria that have to be met for a conflict data set to be reliable. First, it must have a definition that is general, and goes beyond what is important only to a particular period in history. The definitions in these projects meet these criteria: they do not vary with time or with the phenomena studied. The projects may still be relevant for other concerns as well. For instance, although ethnic conflict is not used as a category in these three projects, it is possible to retrieve data from them which are relevant for the study of ethnic conflict. There are separate categories of internal war, for instance. In this way, the projects cover a wider range of conflict than does, for instance, the Minorities at Risk project.

Second, there has to be a definition that captures conflict between as well as within states. It means that it has to tap the general issue of violence, cutting across particular legal categories. This allows for an understanding of war beyond the category of interstate events. Clearly, data on interstate conflicts are more easily compiled. What two states do to one another that might lead to war is of interest to the surrounding community as well. Thus, such disputes will have more attention. Conflicts inside a state, however, are not as likely to affect neighbours, thus threatening to make the international recording of such conflicts more sporadic. A full study might require intimate knowledge of all countries in the world. Thus, it still has to be the ambition to include *all* conflicts. This is a third criterion which is necessary if changes in armed conflict over time are to be meaningfully discussed. Fourth, the definitions have to be precise, so as to guide data collection (operationalization) and

delimit a particular conflict in time and space (beginning, ending) from other conflicts. Finally, the data must be open to scrutiny by other researchers.

The Michigan and Hamburg projects

The Michigan project is the oldest and serves as a reference point for many projects. It was initiated in the middle of the 1960s by J. David Singer and Melvin Small and is still maintained, something which is an achievement in itself. It contains data on wars since 1816 and its record is constantly updated. Basic to COW is the delineation of an international system consisting of states. Thus, wars are conflicts between states where at least two are members of the international system. In addition, there are extra-systemic conflicts, where only one state is a member. The military hostilities that are included are those which have led to at least 1,000 combat fatalities during the course of the conflict. The ambition was to have a definition that captures all significant interstate wars. The civil war definition was developed later and is comparable, but not identical. It has a minimum of two parties where one is a government, but the 1,000 battle fatalities criterion is calculated per year and does include civilian casualties. It is more likely that, on the one hand, smaller interstate wars are entering into the statistics than civil wars. On the other hand, the categories of fatalities may mean that more casualties are reported for civil wars. The net effect of these differences is not simple to determine. From 1816 to 1992 it results in a total of 75 interstate conflicts, 134 extra-systemic wars and 151 civil wars (COW WebPages, 25 January 2001). It identifies a total of 360 wars for the period, an average of slightly more than two wars or civil wars starting somewhere in the world every year. War, in other words, is shown to be a pervasive and global phenomenon.

The Hamburg project was started by Istvan Kende in Budapest. It was later modified and developed at the University of Hamburg, through the efforts of Klaus Jürgen Gantzel. Its results are different. Its definition does not require that a party be a member in the international system for a conflict to be included. The AKUF project has, however, the criterion that a state should be the actor on one side in a conflict. The actors should have, at a minimum, central command and practical control over the fighting. It is also stipulated that there has to be a measure of continuity in battle. There is no requirement for a particular number of deaths, which is an important consideration in the Michigan project (and in the Uppsala project as well, as we shall see). The Hamburg project, in fact, regards this criterion as a questionable indicator for practical, theoretical and ethical reasons. For instance, it is argued that information on deaths is unreliable and that there is no reason to include only those who have died from battle, but not those who have suffered from other consequences of the war (Gantzel and Meyer-Stamer 1986: 4–5; Jung et al. 1996: 52). Instead, the ‘continuity’ in the struggle is decisive for inclusion of a

particular conflict. This criterion, of course, results in a problem of judging continuity in a reliable way.

These criteria mean that AKUF covers a broader set of cases than COW. The project has data on all wars since 1945. For the period to 1997 the project reported 197 wars (AKUF WebPages, 25 January 2001). On average this gives almost four new wars per year. The effect of the definitions can be seen more clearly by comparing the years where the projects overlap. For an almost identical period, that is 1945–92, COW reports 23 interstate wars, 24 extra-systemic conflicts and 80 civil wars, a total of 127 wars. It gives an average of close to three new wars per year. The two projects clearly overlap, but still AKUF reports more activity. It could mean that the projects do not include the same major conflicts, although this should not have such a strong impact, as the number is limited. More likely is that many armed conflicts are below the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths. Thus, a considerable number of conflicts are not covered in the COW project, although the difference might have been expected to be even larger.

In its studies of a separate category of conflicts, militarized interstate disputes, COW has accumulated information which corrects for this effect. This category, which is also of great theoretical significance, covers relations between states. It includes more confined events, such as military interventions, limited wars and threats of war. Together with the war data, this gives a more comprehensive picture for relations between states. If these data are added, the difference between COW and AKUF might be reduced. There is no record, however, in the COW project of militarized disputes *within* states. For both projects internal or civil conflicts take up a large percentage of all events recorded. To develop a definition that parallels militarized interstate disputes for intrastate conditions is a cumbersome task. A very large number of episodes would have to be scrutinized for possible inclusion. It would, needless to say, be difficult to make a global comparison, as unbiased information is harder to obtain the more limited the episodes are. For instance, threats to use force in internal affairs may involve military as well as police forces. Such threats can also be issued by opposition groups with limited credibility and representativity. Thus, drawing the lines of inclusion will require additional distinctions. It is, however, possible to do, for instance, by relying on data on human rights violations or other indicators of repression.

Both AKUF and COW are oriented to searching for the origins of violent conflict. The difference in approach is partly a reflection of distinct theoretical concerns. COW focuses on understanding interstate conflict, and particularly aims at questioning or modifying so-called realist thinking. This means it is designed to understand factors such as balance of power, military capabilities, interdependence and other variables of importance for the working of the international system. There is, deliberately, no coherent theoretical perspective guiding the project. Instead, there is a conscious methodological approach.

Reality, as expressed in the data, will speak for itself. It shows how the world actually functions: correlations are important, thus the name of the project. This is an empirical approach, where theory development will build on what has been proven to be repeated and verified ways in which states really behave. Theoretical assumptions that are common in realist thinking are tested against observable patterns of conduct. An advantage with this open position is that it also makes COW data useful for other purposes. The concepts and their operationalization are explicit and simple, constructed to reflect world developments over close to two hundred years. COW's information has been used for very different investigations. For instance, there is research on whether arms races lead to war (this can be studied by using the militarized disputes and comparing them to the war data, with the original work done by Michael Wallace in 1979). The data are also used for analysis of the hypothesis on peace among democratic states, resulting in the much-debated democratic peace proposition (a large number of articles is devoted to this puzzle, the early phases of which were crystallized in work by Bruce Russett in 1993).

The Hamburg project departs from a fairly coherent theoretical approach. It relates the onset of war to the development of capitalist societies, and sees conflict as a result of the new forms of production, monetarization of the economy and the resulting dissolution of traditional forms of social integration. The large number of conflicts in the Third World fits with this relationship. As the project reports that there is an increasing frequency of conflicts since 1945, researchers also conclude that 'the contradictions in world society are increasing'. In an interesting twist, relevant here, the authors point out that even a phenomenon such as 'ethnic' conflict is a result of processes in 'which all social mechanisms that previously allowed us to live together are destroyed' (Jung et al. 1996: 52–61). In other words, conflict resolution instruments are being eliminated and this makes armed conflict more frequent. The issue of such social breakdown has lately captured considerable attention, with the term 'state failure' as a central concept (Esty, et al. 1998; Zartman 1995b, 2000).

This perspective points to the difference between the two projects. The Correlates of War project departs from the notion of a system that consists of a larger number of independent states. It is a system that does not have central institutions and lacks means to maintain or enforce decisions for all. Thus, it is a picture of an uncoordinated world that is the point of departure. In this world states maintain some predictability through their actions. When war breaks out, it is not the result of an international society breaking down, as there is no assumption about such a society in the first place. The problem is found in the strategies for survival used by different states. War is a result of failed choices, but also the conditions, which make it difficult for states to pursue other options. In some writings inspired by the project, the importance

of norms comes forth as an important conclusion, based on the experiences that peace nevertheless exists in the system (Vasquez 2000). An implication may eventually be the need for constructing an organized international order.

The Hamburg project, on the contrary, departs from an understanding of an international system that is fairly integrated, almost having a purpose of its own, which is to promote market economy and democracy. It is a highly hierarchical world, centring on the strongest actors in the system, the Western countries. These actors are also influenced by the strength of the system. They are all capitalist, market-oriented and expansive, furthering a system of asymmetrical linkages. This international system penetrates into all parts of the world, creating instability and pushing aside traditional forms of social relations. There is an asymmetry between stronger actors that benefit from this development, and weaker actors that risk becoming marginalized. The project has a critical attitude to the basis of the existing international system. In this way, the disagreement on whether fatalities should be used as a criterion has a deeper meaning. The Hamburg project could argue as follows: if one side is vastly superior, it can win an armed conflict within a short period of time, and thus the casualties will be limited. It is still a military operation for purposes that might be the same as those found in more protracted and devastating conflicts. From the point of view of causes of war, in other words, the magnitude may not be so significant. For the Michigan project, with its elaborate levels of battle-related deaths per month, for instance, very large confrontations are the most interesting. The destruction in itself makes them more important. They suggest inadequacies in balance of power thinking and deterrence strategies. Such realist theories are developed exactly to prevent major disasters. If these still occur, the project can show this, and take a critical attitude to this particular aspect of the international system and its interpreters. The two projects contrast on important points of departure, their epistemology. This affects their definitions for data collection and interpretation of the resulting data. Thus, both projects are needed and valuable. Together they highlight different sides of the contemporary global system.

2.3 Trends in Armed Conflicts

The Uppsala Conflict Data Project

The Uppsala project uses the concept of ‘armed conflict’ and focuses on conflict resolution. Like AKUF, it reports annually on ongoing conflicts and has much current information. Its definitions and understandings of conflict put it somewhere between the Michigan and Hamburg projects. It treats, as does the Hamburg project, all conflicts in an identical way, whether they take place between or within states. The same definition applies to both situations.

It means that the distinction between an international system and an intrastate system is not of primary importance. What counts is the use of violence. The conflicts included are those that have at least one state or government as a party. This is also the case for the other two projects. It covers conflicts from a threshold level of 25 battle-related deaths in a conflict in a year. This is an easily identifiable criterion and requires less evaluation by the researchers than, for instance, the continuity criterion used in the Hamburg project. It means also that there is a way of discussing intensity in conflict, as is done in the Michigan project. There are two thresholds (25 and 1,000 battle-related deaths, respectively), resulting in three categories of intensity: *minor armed conflicts*, conflicts with more than 25 deaths, but less than 1,000 for the year and for the duration of the conflict; *intermediate armed conflicts*, conflicts with more than 25 deaths, less than 1,000 for a year, but more than 1,000 for the duration of the conflict; and *wars*, conflicts with more than 1,000 battle-related deaths in one year. The casualties are significant in a study of conflict resolution. The more destruction, the more difficult will be peacemaking, reconstruction and the creation of a new post-war relationship. These distinctions are also relevant from a conflict prevention perspective. It is a common belief that it is in the early phases of a conflict that it can be brought to an end most successfully. Thus, conflicts with lower levels of casualties may reflect preventive efforts, not just superiority. It becomes important to understand which conflicts remain on a low level and which ones do not. The criteria make this possible.

The Uppsala project adds an element which is found neither in COW nor in AKUF, and it is introduced for theoretical as well as practical reasons. It requires that the conflict should have an issue, an incompatibility. This is derived from the theoretical considerations that guide this book. In the definition of conflict given in Section 2.1 this is an important element, and it is, as a consequence, reflected in the data collection. The two other projects are satisfied once they have identified the actors and the actions. Still, there is an implicit understanding that only political violence is included. The Uppsala project handles this openly by requiring that there should be an explicit issue of contention, defined in political terms. In this way, a clear line is drawn between political and non-political violence.

The project includes only conflicts which concern control over government or control over territory. These are in turn defined as two exclusive categories. Control over government means that the issue is who should rule a particular state, and that demands for change include the change of rulers. The incumbents are not likely to abide by such a demand easily. Thus, an incompatibility exists. This means that interventions from abroad to remove a leadership in a country are recorded as armed conflicts (for instance, the United States intervening in Panama in 1989). So are rebellions against a government by internal forces (for instance, the uprising against the Mobutu regime in Zaire in 1997 or against the successor Kabila regime a year later). Control over

territory means that demands by one state for territory in another state, even the occupation of another state, are included. So are rebellions inside a state to achieve autonomy, independence or the joining of a particular territory to the neighbouring state. This has an international dimension (for instance, Iraq's claim on Kuwait, occupying the country in 1990 and being forced out by 1991) as well as an intrastate one (Kosovo Albanians aspiring to leave the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, since 1997 expressed also in violent form).

There are theoretical reasons for bringing incompatibility into the conflict definition. Conflict theory suggests that parties act for particular purposes. Thus, they need initially to be taken at face value. In other analyses such purposes are regarded as secondary. The Correlates of War project is focused on armed behaviour, the war. It aims at understanding what triggers this particular type of behaviour. The project design focuses on structural conditions as potential explanations, such as balance of power and other elements in the international system. It does not include the party's own perception of why the conflict is there. Thus, COW reduces the complexity of the situation to certain important variables. The same is true for the Hamburg project and its perspective is equally structural (notably, capitalism or globalization) as are those of COW (the international system). However, if the focus is shifted to conflict resolution, as is the case for the Uppsala project, the parties' intentions become more important. Conflict exists, the parties will say, because there are particular grievances and, thus, the conflict cannot end until such grievances are resolved, ended or at least attended to. With its categories, the Uppsala project attempts to capture some such basic grievances. This approach receives interesting support from other studies, pointing to the importance of territory, for instance, by Holsti (1991) and Vasquez (1993, 1995). The Uppsala project aims at connecting its data to the development of conflict theory, in particular, theories of conflict resolution.

There is also a practical consideration, alluded to in the Hamburg project (Jung et al. 1996: 51), that a line has to be drawn between political violence and sheer banditry, mutinies and other forms of collective violence. There are cases where drug dealers clearly are behind the assassination of presidential candidates. Colombia had such an experience in the 1990s. However, the purpose is seldom for the assassin and his/her bosses to take control of the government. The aim is rather to prevent actors from taking power, if they might affect the government's policy on drug trade (changes in laws, operations and effectiveness of the policy). This type of violence is different, as it reflects criminal concerns. Such matters require police strategies, not peace research. There are delicate borderlines to observe, however. It is known that regular armed services, grey-zone paramilitary groups as well as many so-called liberation movements sustain themselves through the drug trade or other smuggling operations. There are also warlords who draw a thin line between politics and commerce.

Patterns of armed conflict

The number of armed conflicts for the period 1989–99 with the Uppsala definition is 110. For the eleven-year period, this means that the average conflicts per year is about ten, a much higher ratio than reported in the two other projects. A comparison made for an overlapping period shows the same, although not in as striking a manner. For instance, AKUF reports a total of 43 armed conflicts in 1994 (as of May that year, Jung et al. 1996: 52–54), while Uppsala reports 42. Table 2.1 shows the development of armed conflict during the recent period, building on the Uppsala conflict data.

Given the discussion on wars, the two bottom rows of Table 2.1 are most interesting to follow. The trends are not linear. The immediate post-Cold War period showed an increase in overall conflict frequency. The number of about twenty ongoing wars also parallels what is reported by the Correlates of War for earlier years. By the middle of the 1990s the total numbers as well as the numbers of wars declined somewhat. Several wars were brought to a halt or settled by peace agreements. However, by the late 1990s the number of severe conflicts was again higher.

This pattern is even more pronounced when studying different regions. Europe, which for a large part of the Cold War saw little manifest armed conflict, was the first region to experience a sharp rise in conflicts. These were associated with the break-up of the Soviet and Yugoslav unions. The numbers went from two armed conflicts in 1989 to ten by 1993, by 1997 they were down to zero, only to see two conflicts in 1998 (Northern Ireland and Kosovo) and three in 1999 (Kosovo, Dagestan and Chechnya). It meant conflicts rebounded by the end of this period in the same volatile regions (Balkans, Caucasus) as well as in a very protracted conflict (Northern Ireland). For the coming years, the Balkans and the Caucasus stand out as the areas most in need of conflict resolution arrangements and political solutions.

For Africa, there is another pattern. By the middle of the 1990s, this continent appeared to be a chief beneficiary of the end of the Cold War. Wars on the continent that had been sustained by the Cold War, as well as by South

TABLE 2.1 NUMBER OF ARMED CONFLICTS IN THE WORLD, 1989–99, ANNUALLY

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Minor	15	16	18	23	15	16	12	17	13	10	10
Intermediate	14	14	13	12	17	19	17	13	14	13	13
Wars	18	19	20	20	14	7	6	6	7	14	14
All	47	49	51	55	46	42	35	36	34	37	37

Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Project, Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2000

Note: Among the 110 armed conflicts, the highest level reached during the period was for 50 conflicts to be a minor armed conflict, for 12 to be on the intermediate level, whereas 48 reached the level of war. See text for definitions.

African polarization, were on the verge of ending. This could be observed for the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa. West Africa and the Sudan seemed to be the only conflict areas left. From fourteen wars in 1989 and seventeen in 1990 and 1991 the numbers were down to nine in 1995, only to be back to fourteen by 1998. New wars were experienced in the Horn of Africa (Eritrea vs. Ethiopia) and, most challenging, in Central Africa, connecting conflicts over a vast, highly populated and resource-rich region. Conflicts in this area became increasingly difficult to disentangle. A regional conflict complex was created, initially centring on the Hutu–Tutsi conflict which, by way of refugee flows, guerrilla movements and interventions, came to engulf a number of states.¹ The high hopes for Africa were dashed, and the optimistic slogan of ‘African Renaissance’ was challenged.

In comparison to the dramatic developments in Europe and Africa, other regions show a surprisingly permanent pattern of conflict. Since the Gulf War, there has been no other war in the Middle East, albeit armed conflict on lower levels of intensity. The tensions in South Asia between India and Pakistan have gradually increased, adding a nuclear dimension, and the conflict continues to be active in Sri Lanka as well. The Asian economic crisis was influential in the fall of the old regime in Indonesia and may have stimulated efforts to settle the conflict around East Timor. There were tensions between China and Taiwan as well as on the Korean peninsula, but they are hard to attribute to the economic crisis. Instead, they repeat a pattern that has been familiar for many decades. South America has seen a reduction of conflicts compared to the 1980s when there were full-scale civil wars going on in Central America and Peru. These are now either settled or at a low intensity level. Colombia remains the major exception.

For the world as a whole, the total number of armed conflicts going on is staggering. In spite of great efforts at conflict resolution, it appears that for each conflict solved between the parties with international efforts, a new one emerges, requiring the same mix of improvisation and standard operating procedures by the international community. This repeated experience of inadequacy fuels the interest in preventive conflict management. Also, it shows the need to search for the underlying causes in order to find remedies that combine conflict prevention with social change and popular participation. In a longer perspective, none of the armed conflicts initiated in the 1990s has been as devastating as some of the older conflicts. The protracted war in Afghanistan, which began in 1978, has more than 1 million deaths. The 1980s also witnessed the Iran–Iraq War with 1.2 million deaths. The Vietnam War, or, more appropriately, the Second Indochina War, ended in 1975, with possibly 2 million deaths. The Nigerian Civil War in the 1960s was a disaster with 1 million deaths. The Korean War in the 1950s reportedly led to 2 million deaths. The civil war in the 1940s in China, ending with the Communist Party taking control, saw 1 million battle-related deaths (Singer 1991; Small and Singer

1982). The war scenarios since the Cold War are serious enough. Still, it might be suggested that there is a greater ambition to reduce human suffering. There are examples of humanitarian support even in the midst of war, in Bosnia, for instance. Perhaps there is also a willingness from the outside community to act earlier in a serious conflict to prevent it from become more destructive.

2.4 Outcomes of Armed Conflict

The concept of conflict resolution was given a preliminary definition in Chapter 1. It will be further refined in Chapter 3. Having delineated armed conflict and war, peacemaking is easier to encircle. It is something done by the warring parties, expressed in the form of an agreement, implemented by first ending the fighting and then followed through in all other respects. The value of agreements has been challenged. It is, however, not easy to end a war and start a process of forging a post-war order without having some shared awareness of what the new arrangement should look like. An agreement expresses such a joint understanding. It may not include everything that needs settlement, and there are likely to develop different interpretations of what has been concluded. Still, an agreement provides a basis for a new relationship. It is not easy to make accords after a war, even when the parties have been allies, as was the case of the USA, Britain and the Soviet Union during the Second World War. Even before the war ended, the allies had serious disagreements on the post-war world, although they had made agreements (in Yalta in January 1945, for instance). If victors cannot agree among themselves, it is probably even more difficult for enemies to develop a shared document on the future of their interaction. A peace agreement, in other words, is a particular result in a process that began before the agreement was signed and continues after the ink has dried.

The Uppsala project is collecting data on peace agreements. It makes possible closer scrutiny of frequencies of different types of war ending. For instance, for the period 1989–99, with a total of 110 armed conflicts, it was recorded that 75 had actually been terminated by the end of 1999, that is more than two-thirds of the total (Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2000). This supports the statement in section 2.1 that conflicts and wars actually do end.

The endings vary, however. Armed conflicts may, according to the Uppsala project, end in (1) victory, meaning the capitulation of one side to the other in the form of an agreement, a withdrawal from the battle or in other ways. The conflict may also (2) continue at such a low level of action that it does not reach the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths. It might return after some time which means that what was recorded was only a lull when the parties were recuperating. In some cases of little recorded violence, there might be a clandestine capitulation agreement, a hidden peace treaty or a cease-fire

TABLE 2.2 OUTCOMES OF ARMED CONFLICTS, 1989–99, BY THE END OF 1999

	(1) Victory	(2) Other Outcomes	(3) Peace Agreements	(1)+(2)+(3) Total Terminated	(4) Not Terminated	All
Europe	8	7	4	19	2	21
Middle East	3	5	1	9	2	11
Asia	2	10	5	17	13	30
Africa	3	9	7	19	16	35
The Americas	6	1	4	11	2	13
All regions	22	32	21	75	35	110

Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Project

arrangement. This is defined as ‘other outcomes’. However, the most interesting, in view of our discussion, is (3) the peace agreement, openly acknowledged, negotiated between the parties and explained by them to their own followers and public. Finally, at any moment in time, some conflicts might still be ongoing, constituting an additional category (4) of non-terminated conflicts. Placing the 110 conflicts in these categories, Table 2.2 emerges, also displaying a regional breakdown of the outcomes. Note that the three columns to the left add to make the fourth column. Adding this column to the fifth one gives us the total number of conflicts in the region for these eleven years.

In Table 2.2 it can be seen that peace agreements are almost as frequent an outcome as are victories, and other outcomes. Victory, in fact, does not occur in more than around one-fifth of all conflicts going on in this period.

Table 2.2 shows that the outcomes vary and that there are no simple explanations for one type of ending. All regions have experienced a mixture of victory, defeat, peace agreements and other outcomes. There is a possible tendency that conflicts in Asia and Africa are terminated less quickly than those in Europe, for instance, but the meaning of this observation is not clear. It is safer to say that the variety of outcomes often is not what the initiators have normally expected. The preference is for victory within a reasonably short period. However, the largest single category is actually the one of continued conflicts. Many conflicts are deeply entrenched, have witnessed broken negotiations, failed cease-fire arrangements, and abandoned peace agreements. They are probably increasingly difficult to settle. For many initiators, however, what was originally planned may no longer be possible to accomplish. One of the most protracted conflicts is the one in Afghanistan. The war began as an attempt by a Communist Party to reform the feudal society, change the land distribution and give women a stronger standing. After twenty years of war with many special features – Soviet invasion, US support to opposition movements and involvement from a host of neighbouring and Middle Eastern countries – the Communist Party was eliminated and many of its leaders brutally murdered. The conflict was then pursued along

traditional divisions, and the dominating group until November 2001 (the Taliban) was unusually Islamic and anti-women. The conflict dynamics have become entirely different from what the originators had anticipated.

Victory is difficult to achieve. It does occur, however. The most obvious example is the USA intervening in Panama, capturing the 'strongman' of the leadership, General Noriega, bringing him to trial in Florida, convicting him for drug trade offences and putting him in a US prison for 30 years. The Gulf War is also a victory: Iraqi forces had to withdraw, and Kuwait was restored as a sovereign country. In 1997 a rebellion against the incumbent regime in Zaire ended with victory. The war lasted eight months. The new regime faced another rebellion less than nine months later. A peace agreement concluded in July 1999 and signed in September the same year, was meant to end the war, without accomplishing this by the end of 2000.

The dynamics of victory and defeat are known from history. The large number of peace agreements is a more novel aspect, and part of the experience since the Cold War. Table 2.2 includes 21 such agreements. There are additional agreements. For instance, there are accords concerning wars that went on before 1989 (for instance, Chad vs. Libya 1990, Israel vs. Jordan 1994, South Africa with Angola and Namibia 1988, implemented in the years thereafter). Also there are treaties in conflicts that were limited (Central African Republic in 1997). Furthermore, some agreements outlined processes towards a solution (Israel vs. Palestine since 1993) where other parties nevertheless pursued a violent ending. There are even cases of a complete settlement concluded between the main parties, where other actors took up or continued armed struggle nevertheless (Mindanao in 1996). Of course, there are also agreements that have been functioning for a period of time, but then have been undermined by the parties. This is true for the settlements for Angola in 1991 and 1994, Chechnya in 1996 and Sierra Leone 1996 and again in 1999. The record of successful peacemaking is as varied as can be expected from the difficulties of ending long-lasting wars. Still, the ambition to do so with the help of negotiation and agreement makes the period since the end of the Cold War an interesting object of study.

The developments of the post-Cold War period can legitimately be compared to the very few peace agreements ending wars that were concluded during the entirety of the Cold War. There were cease-fire agreements, no doubt, but very few peace agreements. As we noted already in Chapter 1, some of the cease-fire lines drawn during the Cold War still constitute the main territorial divisions in many conflicts. To the cases mentioned previously we can also add the territorial division between India and Pakistan in Kashmir in 1949 that ended their first war. New wars in the area in 1965 and 1971 led to a return to the previous cease-fire lines. The conflict remains unresolved.

Among the few real peace agreements concluded during the Cold War, the Geneva peace agreement for Indochina in 1954 was effectively undermined

within two years. The war between Malaysia and Indonesia, which began in 1963, was concluded through a peace pact in 1966, and the conflict has not resumed. A short war in 1963 between Algeria and Morocco found a mediated agreement the same year. An agreement in 1972 to end the war in the Sudan was shattered in 1983 and war returned. The Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt in 1979 has stood the test of time. For the 45 years of Cold War, the peace agreements are few, probably not more than ten if we apply the definition introduced here (Licklider 1995; Mason and Fett 1996; Stedman 1991). This is not a particularly striking record at peacemaking. It contrasts the many arms control agreements made, where one source lists 27 international accords from 1963 to 1991 (Goldstein 1992). This also makes the large number of peace agreements during the turbulent period of the 1990s valuable and worth a close analysis.

Table 2.2 demonstrates that peace agreements have been concluded in all regions of the world. This means that peacemaking has taken on a global meaning. Without the peacemaking efforts the number of wars would probably increase significantly. The agreements may have been concluded between parties too exhausted to find resources to win the wars, but sometimes also not capable of concluding agreements on their own (The Dayton Agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina may fit in this category, as the warring parties only accepted the deal under strong international pressure). Thus, we will proceed into the theme of conflict resolution by departing from the peace agreements concluded or implemented since 1989. With this in mind, it is first necessary to turn to a more theoretical discussion on conflict theory and its implications for conflict resolution. This is done in Chapter 3.

