

Chapter 1

Introduction: Civil War Termination in Historical and Theoretical Context

CIVIL WARS ARE NASTY, brutish, and long. Sometimes, civil wars that seem ended recur. They are the most common sort of large-scale violence, resulting in massive and often catastrophic killing and destruction. The civil war in Rwanda was accompanied by genocide, and in Afghanistan, the Taliban are resurging against domestic and international opponents. Civil war plagues Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Sudan, while it threatens to reemerge in full force in Lebanon and Nigeria.

Why do some civil wars end, and stay ended, while others reignite? Under what conditions do civil wars end in an enduring and constructive peace—a peace that does not hamper positive postwar social, political, and economic development? Is it something in the nature of the agreements themselves, or perhaps in the nature of the way the war ends, that makes the crucial difference?

These questions are important because although much has been written about civil wars (how and why they start, how costly they are, when they are likely to expand across state boundaries, and how to end them), there has been little attention paid to the significant issue of the relationship between how a civil war ends and the likelihood that a constructive peace will be sustained. Furthermore, though recent works begin to explore the subject both empirically and qualitatively, we have yet to develop a general theoretical framework for understanding the conditions that lead to a stable, democratic, and prosperous peace.

Civil wars, especially those in the last sixty years, have most often ended in one of two ways: (1) with outright military victory by one side over its rival(s); or (2) with a negotiated settlement that preserves belligerents physically and undertakes to ratify by contract an acceptable postwar distribution of valued resources. I argue that each resolution type has its advantages and disadvantages, and that combining the stronger elements of each will make it possible to design civil war settlements that are both enduring and constructive. In sum, I offer a general explanation of civil war termination outcomes and introduce a strategy of “mutual benefit and mutual harm” for achieving durable peace.

Mutual Benefit, Mutual Harm

If we look at most negotiated settlements, we find that their chief strength lies in the promise of two sorts of direct benefit to former combatants. On the negative benefit side, combatants who contract to avoid further armed conflict immediately benefit by avoiding the risk of physical destruction (both of themselves and of their collective or private property), and by lifting the cloud of anxiety that invariably accompanies conflicts when pursued by violent means. On the positive benefit side, most negotiated settlements include provisions for development and reconstruction aid, and for the redistribution of offices in postwar government. Recent negotiated settlements to civil wars make it clear that, taken together, most well-meaning third parties tend to assume that the benefits of peace (narrowly defined), and the positive benefits promised following a cease-fire, are sufficient conditions for what they hope will become an enduring and constructive peace settlement. I disagree. I will show that a key weakness of negotiated settlements lies in their general lack of a credible guarantee to harm or punish defectors should one or more of the contracting parties renege on its commitments. In ending a civil war, the negotiated provision of a promised benefit without the provision of a credible threat of punishment leaves negotiated settlements vulnerable either to outright cheating or to tactical cease-fires in which one or all parties simply use the respite to rearm in hopes of achieving original or expanded political objectives. This may explain why negotiated settlements are both advocated more often as an ideal means to end civil wars, and why empirically they are more likely to break down, resulting in a renewed (and at times escalated) violent conflict.

In contrast, and again empirically, civil wars ended by military victory are much more likely to stay ended. This striking difference forces consideration of a number of important theoretical and policy questions. For example, when we want to know whether, as a matter of policy, we should work toward better-negotiated settlements or toward military support of one side that would hasten a military victory, we must closely examine questions of relative cost. This raises the immediate problem of which side to choose, and the question of whether there in fact exists a “good” side to aid over a “bad” or “worse” side. Most parties to a civil war have both legitimate and illegitimate grievances and motivations. Whereas negotiated settlements have the virtue of appearing to save lives (a crucial cost), military victories appear to suffer from the opposite drawback in that they imply greater loss of life. I use the word “appear” because, in many cases, the promise of an outright victory of arms by one side may actually save lives, either by forcing the losing side to surrender more quickly (once prospects of support or intervention by a third party

vanish) or by preserving peace over a longer period of time. At this juncture, two key questions thus follow: (1) Are lives the only or most crucial cost to take into consideration when evaluating the utility of outcomes? (2) By what mechanism do military victories tend to result in an enduring peace?

The first question must be answered in the negative: certainly, casualties involving both combatants and noncombatants are a crucial cost consideration, but so are quality-of-life issues. The latter category includes factors such as basic human rights, political liberties, and prospects for economic survival and prosperity after the immediate threat of physical violence has ebbed. Although the concern of preserving lives is surely a worthy goal and a necessary consideration, it should never serve as a sufficient consideration for evaluating the utility of potential policy options.

In contrast, several answers to the second question (concerning the mechanisms by which military victories result in enduring peace) seem appropriate. These answers involve issues that range from the nature of the political objectives sought, to the destructiveness of the war itself, to the relative power of the actors following the cessation of conflict. In fact, military victories have the advantages and disadvantages of negotiated settlements in an inverted form: while they excel in terms of the guarantee of providing harm to survivors on the losing side (potential defectors to the peace), they are weak in their promise of affording benefits to losers. Because the threat of physical harm in reprisal for violating the peace is generally a more immediate one than the threat of other harms (e.g., economic and social), military victories, *ceteris paribus*, result in a higher likelihood of enduring peace.

Two crucial issues follow from the argument above. First, we cannot infer from the strong correlation between (1) military victory as a civil war termination profile and (2) enduring peace as an outcome that military victory should be promoted *in general* as an ideal resolution to civil wars.¹ This is because victory is determined by legitimacy as well as by resources (e.g., access to cash, arms, and allies), and no necessary connection exists between possession of resources and legitimacy. Supporting military victory as a generally preferred civil war termination outcome would therefore sometimes result in a “better” outcome (greater justice alongside less loss of life and overall destruction) and sometimes produce a “worse” outcome (injustice, regardless of loss of life). This serves as another avenue by which one can question the practice of measuring the utility of a policy option only in terms of physical loss of life. Second, a large-*n* analysis of civil wars reveals an even more interesting empirical puzzle: when we disaggregate “military victory” and consider the impact of victories made by incumbents and rebels separately, military victories

by rebels tend to be far more stable. This clearly implies that, no matter how military victories achieve this effect, something more nuanced than “they save or cost more lives than negotiated settlements” must be at work.

In sum, negotiated settlements are stronger in their promise of benefits to former combatants but weaker in their promise of harm to those who violate the peace. Military victories are stronger in their promise of harm to former combatants on the losing side, and weaker in their promise of benefits. Empirically, military victories, as a war termination type, correlate strongly with enduring peace. As noted above, however, we cannot infer from this that of the two policy options, military victories are to be generally advocated, because they carry with them the promise of other costs that may outweigh the benefits of peace and savings in terms of lives lost and property destroyed.

The central argument of this book is that it is both possible and necessary to develop a hybrid strategy for ending civil wars in a constructive manner, one that incorporates the strengths of both the negotiated settlement and military victory termination profiles. While negotiated settlements tend to emphasize the provision of goods, such as political offices and the distribution of resources, credible mechanisms that establish the threat of harm to perpetrators of violence—and most notably reforming the security sector—are often given little to no consideration. There are several reasons for this. First, a credible threat of harm most often implies a credible threat of military intervention. As most military interventions since the end of the Cold War (save perhaps NATO’s intervention in Kosovo in 1999) have gone badly, negotiated settlements appear to offer the promise of halting violence without risking body bags. Second, rebuilding the armed forces and police of a state does not produce the same visceral appeal as does feeding starving children, housing returning refugees, or handling war crimes and human rights violations.² Third, the security sector may be implicated in the worst excesses of the war, in which case the people would be disinclined to reconstitute security institutions, thereby reempowering them with a capacity that could be used for future repression and civil war.

But by building on an existing collection of excellent and well-developed literature on the rise of the “state” as a form of political association, as well as literature on state- and nation-building, I show that security sector reform (SSR) offers the potential for both enduring and constructive peace.³

The next section presents an empirical overview of civil wars and the nature of their ends since 1940, and an explanation of why the study of civil wars and civil war termination is so important. Thereafter, the chapter introduces key terms and lays out the plan of the rest of the book.

TABLE 1.1
Number of Civil Wars Started in Each Decade, 1940–2000

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of all civil wars (1940–1990)</i>	<i>Cumulative total</i>
1940	21	16	16
1950	23	18	34
1960	23	18	52
1970	25	19	71
1980	17	13	84
1990	20	16	100
Total	129	100	

An Empirical Overview of Civil Wars and Their Termination

Perhaps the most common observation since the end of the Cold War has been that, while interstate wars continue to decline in frequency, civil wars and ethnic conflicts are on the rise. Examining the number of civil wars that began in each decade, as shown in Table 1.1, we find no real pattern of a decrease or increase in this type of conflict. Between 1940 and 2005 there were a total of 130 civil wars.⁴ Of these, 11 were ongoing as of 2008 and 2 (Sudan and the Philippines) “ended” only recently; these 13 cases were dropped from the statistical analysis.⁵ The average number of intrastate wars that started in each decade is about 22, with a high of 25 new wars in the 1970s and a low of 17 in the 1980s.

If we examine the number of civil wars ended per decade, we do see that the 1990s saw far more wars ending than in previous decades. Table 1.2 highlights the increase in peace that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of U.S.-Soviet rivalry. In the 1990s 37 civil wars, or one-third of all wars that began during the entire period (1940–1999), came to an end. Most civil wars were ended by a military victory (79 wars, or 70 percent), followed by negotiated settlements (22 wars, or 19 percent), with cease-fires/stalemates (12 wars, or 11 percent) accounting for the fewest terminations. During this period, military victories were nearly four times more common than negotiated settlements and seven times more common than cease-fires/stalemates. However, when civil war termination types are broken down by decade, some interesting trends emerge:⁶

TABLE 1.2
Number of Civil Wars Ended in Each Decade, 1940–1990

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of all civil wars (1940–1990)</i>	<i>Cumulative total</i>
1940	13	12	12
1950	20	18	30
1960	14	12	42
1970	21	19	61
1980	8	7	68
1990	37	33	101
Total	113	101	

Note: Due to rounding, the percent and cumulative totals exceed 100.

Figure 1.1 shows that the manner in which civil wars end has changed dramatically since 1940. Whereas military victory was the dominant mode of ending civil war for most of the period—ending from between three-fourths of and all wars up through the 1980s—by the 1990s military victory ended only four out of ten such conflicts. Moreover, while negotiated settlements ended only a handful of wars between 1940 and 1989 (a total of 7), by the 1990s they were just as common as victories, accounting for 41 percent of all civil wars ended in that decade. A total of 37 wars ended in the 1990s, including 15 ended by negotiated settlement, 15 by military victory, and 7 by a cease-fire/stalemate.

The data in table 1.2 and figure 1.1 raise two immediate questions. First, what was it about the 1990s that might account for the increase in civil wars ending by negotiated settlement? Second, if ending civil wars by negotiated settlement has become the preferred policy (as shown clearly in fig. 1.1), should it remain so?

Two factors can explain the increase in peace observed in the 1990s. First, the end of the Cold War deprived the United States and Soviet Union of the incentive to provide cheap (or free) arms to combatants in proxy wars. Even for those combatants who wished to continue fighting, this provided an unavoidable lull in hostility during which new sources of revenue to support further weapons acquisitions could be arranged (e.g., in Sierra Leone and Angola). Second, as the sole remaining superpower, the United States came under increasing pressure to take moral responsibility for ongoing civil wars, as it possessed the diplomatic, eco-

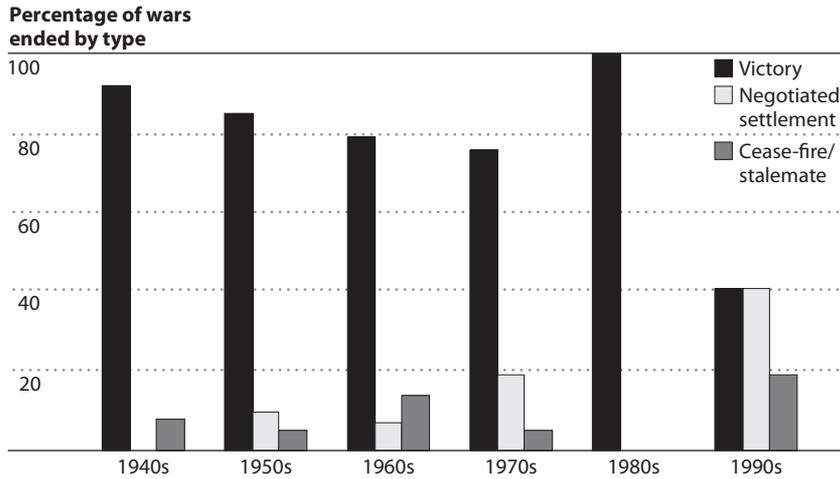


Figure 1.1. Percentage of Civil Wars Ended, by Termination Type, 1940–2000

conomic, or military capacity to halt many such conflicts outright. This pressure, which has continued to exist, encouraged the United States (and some of its allies) to intervene in order to stop the progress of ongoing civil wars. The positive case for intervention arose especially with regard to conflicts where the benefits of a resolution were expected to be high (e.g., those like the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, whose destructiveness threatened a U.S. national interest, such as stability in Europe), or to conflicts where the costs of achieving a resolution were expected to be low, such as Somalia in 1993.

The question of whether a general policy of intervening to halt civil wars by negotiation is good policy is at the center of the present inquiry. While there are a number of arguments for ending civil wars by negotiated settlement, two in particular stand out: a negotiated settlement would result in (1) fewer deaths than a war ended by decisive victory,⁷ and (2) a reduced likelihood of the need for military intervention by third parties facilitating the negotiations (and for volunteering postwar reconstruction resources). According to the logic of the first argument, without a settlement the combatants would go on killing each other, perhaps even escalating the quality of violence along with the quantity. By negotiating an armistice followed by settlement, negotiated settlements should therefore save a greater number of lives than could be preserved by allowing combatants to fight to a decisive outcome. The logic of the second argument is that the economic costs of postwar reconstruction can be shared more easily—and sustained without a loss of public support—than can the costs in soldiers' lives. Although both cash and lives represent real

costs, citizens experience the price of lost loved ones in a much more intense and direct manner than they experience the opportunity costs associated with a larger aid package. States therefore have a strong interest in limiting costs to those of an economic sort (and perhaps a risk of diplomatic prestige or reputation) and will be more loath to risk the lives of soldiers, except in cases where leaders have calculated that a military operation will be low-risk (again, as the United States did in Somalia in 1993).

But there are problems with both arguments. If it is true, for example, that a war interrupted may save lives, it is equally true that combatants have strong incentives to avoid sharing power or other values with their adversaries. Furthermore, in the absence of committed intervention by a third party, combatants may simply use an armistice as an opportunity to recover and rearm in preparation for a future fight. In other words, negotiated settlements may have an increased likelihood of saving lives in the short term, but they may cost more lives in the long term. By contrast, decisive victories make rearming by the losing side improbable. In addition, if combatants nearing defeat cannot assume that a third party will be available to save them, they may give up sooner, thus sparing lives by shortening the war.⁸

The second argument for negotiated settlements as a preferred policy—regarding the reduced likelihood of the need for a third-party military force—seems stronger.⁹ Nonetheless, the problem has been well canvassed both in theory¹⁰ and in empirical studies: after an armistice is signed, combatants are sensitive not simply to the factual elements of commitments but also to their *credibility*. Because former combatants also understand the relative priority of lives over cash, this “commitment problem” focuses on each postwar actor’s assessment of the likelihood that third parties will risk lives as well as cash in order to deter or punish defection from the terms of the settlement. It seems likely, in other words, that interested third parties who take measures to lower their risk of military intervention may, ipso facto, signal their lack of commitment and, again ipso facto, increase the likelihood of defection from the contract and reignition of the war. It is important to note that this is not tantamount to saying that a credible commitment to risk lives is sufficient to bring about enduring peace; rather, it is one necessary factor in doing so.

The data analysis presented in chapter 4 lends considerable support to my critique of negotiated settlements as a default policy option, which holds that they do not in fact save lives as compared to decisive military victories.¹¹ Wars ended by military victory were nearly twice as likely to remain settled as those ended by a negotiated settlement or a cease-fire/

stalemate. Whereas only 13 percent (ten out of seventy-nine) of wars between 1940 and 2000 ending in military victories recurred, 23 percent (five out of twenty-two) of wars ending in negotiated settlements recurred, and 33 percent (four out of twelve) of wars that ended in cease-fires/stalemates recurred. Put differently, wars ended by negotiated settlement are two times more likely to reignite than those ended by military victory.

Embedded within this finding about the relative stability of military victories is another striking fact: victories achieved by rebels (as opposed to governments) are the most stable. In other words, if enduring peace is to be preferred as an outcome, the winning party matters. While 17 percent of wars (eight out of forty-seven) ending in a government victory recurred (less than negotiated settlements and cease-fires/stalemates), only 6 percent of wars (two out of thirty-two) won by rebels recurred. While we should logically expect cease-fires/stalemates to be the most precarious of all termination profiles, surprisingly, the data show that there is no statistical difference between a negotiated settlement and a stalemate breaking down. This is not to say that the terms of negotiated settlements are evolving and improving, or that this finding may not change. Nevertheless, the results of the present study and of others confirm this state of affairs.¹²

Definitions

This section introduces the key terms of the book, including both what is meant and what is *not* meant by my use of the expressions “civil war,” “military victory,” “negotiated settlement,” “security sector,” “enduring peace,” and others.

Civil War

A civil war is a fight that occurs within the boundaries of an internationally recognized state. There must be at least two sets of organized combatants with the capacity to physically harm one another. According to these parameters, genocide, in which one side murders the other (where the “other” is generally unarmed—or armed but not organized), would thus not be considered a civil war in this analysis. In addition, one of the combatants must be a state (since the focus of analysis here is the civil war, I typically refer to the state as either the “incumbent government” or the “center”). This would preclude consideration of communal conflicts in which the state is not involved in the actual fighting (although it might

be involved in trying to end the fighting). Finally, there must be a substantial number of deaths over a defined period. The threshold of deaths used here—at one thousand battle-related deaths per year on average—is that used by the Correlates of War Data Set.¹³ Thus, to cite one important example, the conflict in Northern Ireland would not be included in the analysis, although lessons about terminating violence might nevertheless be learned from that case.

Military Victory

Military victories are situations in which one side in a war is defeated, with the other party emerging as the victor. Although the losing side is not necessarily required to formally accept defeat, there is nevertheless an understanding that it will not have the privilege to be part of the government unless the victor allows it to do so. The victor, in other words, determines the type and composition of any postwar government and will determine whether and how survivors on the defeated side will participate.

My analysis further disaggregates military victory into two types: rebel victory and government victory. Rebel victories occur when the opposition defeats the incumbent government, as in the case of Bangladesh when it successfully seceded from Pakistan. In contrast, government victories involve cases in which the state defeats an opposition group. China's defeat of Tibet, the Greek government's defeat of communist rebels, and Sri Lanka's recent triumph over the Tamil Tigers are examples of this type.

Negotiated Settlement

While military victories leave governance to the winning side, negotiated settlements allow both sides to participate and call for a permanent cessation of violence. Negotiated settlements involve agreement on how the parties will “explicitly regulate or resolve their basic incompatibility.”¹⁴ They typically include provisions about the future composition of the government, elections, disarmament and demobilization of the fighters, refugee repatriation, and issues of justice, human rights, and accountability during the course of the war. Not all peace agreements contain all of these provisions. In fact, most do not. What they have in common, however, is a shared agreement to end the fighting and an understanding that each party will participate in a future government. Examples of civil wars ended by negotiated settlements include the Salvadoran civil war, which was ended by the Chapultepec Accords, and the first Lebanese civil war, which was ended by the Tai'f Accords.

Cease-fire/Stalemate

Similar to negotiated settlements, cease-fires/stalemates involve a common understanding and agreement that the violence must be halted. However, whereas negotiated settlements aim to establish a permanent cessation of hostilities, cease-fires/stalemates are nothing more than an agreement to stop the violence. Although one or both sides might desire a permanent end, the agreement does not stipulate this. Rather, it simply states that each side will cease firing on the enemy. In some instances, this might require handing in weapons or disclosing caches in close proximity to the battlefields, but it also might not. Each side may retain the capacity to reengage in battle should conditions warrant such action. Furthermore, cease-fires/stalemates stipulate nothing about the postwar environment, largely because the war has not formally ended. Cases of this sort include the two wars fought in the early 1990s in Georgia between the Georgian government and proponents of independence for Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Both wars were ended by formal cease-fires.

Enduring Peace

Peace is a tricky concept, much like power. One knows it when one sees it, but it is difficult to define generally or theoretically. In this book, when I refer to peace I mean (1) a cessation of violence, but I add (2) a general lack of willingness to pursue economic, political, or social objectives by means of violence. A cease-fire or stalemate would therefore not be the same thing as peace because one or both parties remain willing to pursue their objectives by means of organized violence, although the capability to do so may be temporarily lacking.¹⁵

By extension, then, enduring peace would be a peace that lasts at least ten or, ideally, twenty years. Similar to “peace” as defined above, however, I add a second condition or meaning to the term “enduring” (which in general implies only a duration or time component). An “enduring peace” in this analysis means not only peace that lasts a long time, but also peace that holds the possibility of an improved quality of life for *all* survivors of a civil war. By quality of life I mean minimalist conceptions of personal security and sustenance. This definition makes sense because a lack of the means to achieve personal security and sustenance perhaps stands as the most common reason individuals (followed by groups) choose to take up arms in the first place. War is a nasty, dirty, difficult business, and rational human beings seek to avoid it when possible. But when faced with the threat of death or arbitrary imprisonment or starvation, they will often pursue a small chance at winning a violent contest

rather than refuse to take up arms while still suffering death or the loss of loved ones as a consequence.

Enduring peace is therefore the goal an ancient philosopher such as Plato might have identified as “the good life.” It is an ambitious goal in many cases, not least because people often group themselves into imaginary communities and arrogate *only* to those communities the right to obtain such security and prosperity as is available. But it is the only goal that makes sense to pursue because, as will become clear as we proceed, falling short of enduring peace involves the prospect of recurring war. And the destructive consequences of civil wars today—even wars in distant, underdeveloped countries—can no longer be contained. Their impact causes harm far beyond the conflict zone in both time and space.

What Is the “Security Sector”?

While there is no common definition of the security sector, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the security sector refers to institutions that have the authority to order the threat of force or use force to protect the state and civilians.¹⁶

When the security sector is discussed, it is usually referenced in tandem with the justice sector. So, for example, a recent working paper highlighted six different categories of actors that fall under the justice and security sectors. These include (1) criminal justice organizations; (2) management and oversight bodies; (3) military and intelligence services; (4) noncore institutions (e.g., customs agencies); (5) nonstatutory security forces (militias not sponsored by the state); and (6) civil society.¹⁷ Other publications do not include the fifth and sixth elements, yet they claim that the nonstatutory forces are nevertheless “very relevant to SSR priorities in many countries.”¹⁸

As is evident, security sector reform (SSR) is often linked with institutions that “as one integrated whole are responsible for the provision of an accountable, equitable, effective, and rights respecting public service for the state and the people living in it.”¹⁹

To date, policy makers attempting to undertake SSR have sought three objectives. The first task is to restore order and neutralize nonlegal, nonstatutory insurgents. The second task is to rebuild the security forces such that these forces can take responsibility for the maintenance of public order. The third task is to build security-related institutions that monitor and support the security forces. These include interior and defense ministries, national and local police agencies, and an effective judicial sector. The ultimate goal of SSR is governance and, at a minimum, the ability to maintain order through the use of force, if necessary. Furthermore, SSR

is in general envisioned as a long-term development project, one that extends well past one round of elections, resulting in the “building up of accountable, efficient and effective security forces.”²⁰

Although SSR has been conceptualized and promoted as part of a comprehensive effort to mitigate violence and promote development and good governance, in this book I define the security sector in a narrower manner. I focus on the armed elements of the security sector, especially the agents capable of imposing order *by force*. Depending on the particular historical and institutional exigencies in a given state, these might include military, paramilitary, and police forces (those authorized to bear arms).

In terms of defining SSR for the analysis, this is done in one of two ways, depending on the method at hand. For the statistical analysis, I relied mainly on data compiled by Barbara Walter for her data set on third-party guarantees.²¹ These data include whether a given negotiated settlement provided for the reconstitution and restructuring of a country’s armed forces, while in others it might include the full (re)constitution and training of forces, in essence reform of the security sector. Each of the cases and its respective security forces were assessed independently and then coded for (1) whether the agreement included provisions for a military pact, and (2) whether that pact was implemented. In Mozambique, a new national army was created that included equal numbers of forces from each side, while in Cambodia, the Paris Peace Agreement mandated troop and equipment reductions on both sides. The second way SSR is defined and operationalized is more particular to the case studies themselves. In the four case studies, SSR is assessed in terms of the forces that were in place and those that were being demanded by the combatants at the end of the war. So, for example, in the case of the El Salvador, security sector reform involved dismantling the repressive government security forces that were loyal to the government and creating a new national police force; in Sudan, reform of the existing army was seen as crucial (yet did not happen). The point here is that different states have different configurations for which institutions are responsible for imposing order, and therefore which aspects of the security sector need to be reformed. As noted above, the security sector is often bundled up with judicial institutions and, to the extent that we have seen SSR in action, the lines between sectors have been blurred. By restricting analysis to the core of the security sector—the capacity to prevent and cause physical harm—we obtain a clearer picture of the relative utility of different institutional actors at various times in the reconstruction process. We may think of post-war environments as the first stage in a long process that may eventually eliminate many of the soldiers and police necessary or useful at this early stage.

Methods

Two primary methods are used to assess postwar environments and enduring peace. First, I employ statistical methods, using a variety of well-vetted databases (some “off the shelf” and others compiled by me) to both explore and test key propositions regarding civil war terminations and long-term outcomes since 1940. The statistical analysis performs three functions. First, it assesses the type of termination in relation to the durability of peace: negotiated settlements correlate with war recurrence, while military victories by rebels do not. It also assesses whether there is a correlation between different types of outcomes in relation to longer-term changes in levels of autocracy and democracy, as well as economic growth, over two decades. Finally, the statistical analysis gives a preliminary assessment of whether reforms to the security sector provide a plausible alternative to third-party guarantees in relation to war recurrence. These series of tests are not to be taken as proving causality, so much as to see whether there is a positive correlation in support of the proposition that a settlement needs to promise credibly both benefits and harms to sustain peace.

Although we can infer causality from these, statistical associations by themselves are not definitive. I therefore use a series of qualitative case studies to assess further the causal logic of my argument regarding durable peace following civil war.²² Part of the statistical analysis sets up a three-cornered fight in which third-party guarantees are compared with SSR against the empirical data, while the case studies are structured as two-cornered fights with the argument about security sector reform and the need for a balance of harm and benefit set against historical evidence. These case studies do not constitute three-cornered fights because none of the selected cases involves third parties tasked with the job of enforcing the peace (as a way to control for this factor). In sum, because SSR is such a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, for which there are no direct indicators available in any existing data set, the statistical analysis and its use of proxies should be seen as a plausibility probe, while the case studies allow for the study of SSR in particular, but controlled, historical contexts. The combination of both suggests that the argument advanced here about security sector reform and the notion of benefits and harms is productive for further scholarly analysis and policy in keeping civil wars ended. In other words, SSR should be seen as a policy recommendation strongly supported by the available evidence.

The chosen case studies focus on how civil war ended and what occurred after the initial fighting stopped. They include three countries and four cases: El Salvador (1980–1992), Uganda (1980–1984), and Sudan (1955–1972 and 1983–2005). They were chosen because they include

variation on both independent (type of termination) and dependent (recurrence) variables. Additionally, third parties were not involved in enforcing the peace. I chose the Salvadoran civil war as a “least likely” case because it ended in a negotiated settlement that has, in fact, endured. This case study is crucial because the negotiated settlement in question contained comprehensive provisions for SSR, including the building of a new national police force. What is striking about this case is that although economic grievances over land distribution and poverty were key to this fight, these issues were not central features of the settlement. The new government guaranteed a sufficient balance of benefit and harm to former combatants. Uganda is a case in which enduring peace resulted from a rebel victory. This case is crucial because it demonstrates that despite being victorious over its opponent, the new government gradually opened the political space. Consequently, not only did peace emerge, but the government also became less autocratic over time, inviting former combatants into the administration. Sudan is the most complicated case in the study. Not only is it the longest and most brutal of the conflicts examined here, but its civil war also reignited. I contend that the breakdown was due in part to a lack of SSR (i.e., no mutual harm) and argue that the most recent settlement (the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2005) is in danger of failing, in part because the provisions outlining the reform of the security sector are not being carried out.

I do not examine cases of cease-fire/stalemate, for two reasons. First, there are so few cases of cease-fires/stalemates that it is difficult to generalize about them either statistically or theoretically. Focusing on cases of military victory and negotiated settlements therefore seemed more useful, both on a theoretical level and in terms of generating policy recommendations. Second, because length is an issue, I felt that the combination of a statistical analysis and four cases would sufficiently test the validity of my theory as compared to competing arguments.

Data used in the case studies come from secondary and some primary sources. All four cases are old enough that there are now excellent secondary historical accounts of their events. Yet each case remains sufficiently contemporary that accounts of events in local newspapers, speeches of key actors, and other sorts of data that might be needed are readily accessible.

Why Study Civil War Outcomes?

Civil wars generally do not concentrate their destructive impact to the same degree that the world wars of the last century did. Moreover, they are unlikely to involve the use of nuclear weapons, though chemical have

been used in some civil wars, including conflicts that took place recently. Yet, collectively and over time, the civil wars that began and ended in the twentieth century are just as deadly, and in some cases, more so.

Civil wars cannot be dismissed as mere “remnants of war.”²³ They have been and continue to be by far the most common type of large-scale killing among humans and have demonstrated the capacity to cause disruption not only on the local level (as in the Great Lakes region of Africa) but also in the global arena (as in Afghanistan). Although contrary to some conventional wisdom, the number of civil wars has not increased precipitously since the end of the Cold War. Rather, what has increased is our awareness of the particularly destructive nature of civil wars. This comes alongside an understanding that technology has made the world smaller and closer, a situation that allows more people in more regions to feel the effects of civil wars. We now recognize that, although some civil wars take place far from the advanced-industrial world, those distant locales are much closer today for all intents and purposes, and that the violence coming from far away can have a serious impact on our own health and well-being.²⁴ Afghanistan is the most obvious example. After decades of violence that pitted the Cold War blocs against one another, the end of the Cold War allowed the rise of an extremist and isolated government that harbored terrorists bent on destroying those it viewed as enemies to its beliefs and traditions. The global war on terrorism is rooted in what was once a local fight that became international, then local, and then international again.

Given that civil wars have the capacity to disrupt regional and even international stability, it is incumbent upon us to understand how to end these wars—to end them constructively and to end them for good. This book is dedicated to that understanding.

Conclusion

In sum, this book is about how civil wars end, and what both combatants and interested or well-meaning third parties can do to facilitate enduring peace. A small amount of the large body of literature on civil wars focuses on a possible connection between how a war is ended (e.g., by outright victory of one side or another, or by negotiated settlement) and whether an initial peace endures. My argument is that most of the work done toward theorizing about the likelihood that civil wars will stay ended has been initiated by policy makers who are either too busy solving immediate problems to generalize the solutions they innovate or too institutionally or organizationally unfamiliar with the security sector to develop and execute an ideal termination and reconstruction strategy.

The theory presented here as vital to enduring peace is a settlement that provides in the first place a credible threat of harm or punishment to those who defect from the treaty, and in the second place a credible delivery of benefits. This represents the theory of “mutual benefit and mutual harm.” As such, my policy recommendations focus on SSR first, followed by a closely linked and targeted set of economic, political, and perhaps even social reforms.

Plan of the Book

Chapter 2 introduces both a brief history of SSR to date as well as an analysis of competing explanations for why negotiated settlements might fail. I outline the logic of competing arguments and then present my own explanation for why negotiated settlements have tended to fail, and why military victories have tended to succeed in producing enduring peace.

Chapter 3 introduces the theory of mutual benefits and mutual harms and spells out the logic behind why some settlements are more stable than others.

Chapter 4 focuses on broad empirical features of civil wars, including how to think about what civil wars cost and a large-n analysis of the relationship between civil war termination profiles and the duration, reignition intensity, widening potential, postconflict political liberalization, and post-conflict economic development associated with civil wars. The book’s main hypotheses are given an initial, large-n test here.

Chapters 5–8 explore four historical cases of civil war and trace key actors, conflict issues, conflict terminations, and postconflict outcomes. Chapter 5 includes a study of El Salvador from 1980 to 1992. Uganda is examined in chapter 6. In chapter 7 I analyze the civil war in Sudan that took place from 1955 to 1972, and in chapter 8 I examine Sudan’s relapse into civil war from 1983 to 2005. Taken together, the case study analyses provide a second test of my theory of mutual harm and mutual benefit. On balance, SSR emerges as a clear policy option where enduring peace is the desired outcome.

Finally, chapter 9 presents the conclusions of the book. It includes a discussion of the theoretical and policy implications of the findings as well as practical analyses of the U.S. engagement in Iraq. Not only does this case have significant importance to policymaking in the United States and elsewhere, but it also offers additional insights into and support of the theory that the other cases do not. The discussion of Iraq shows the centrality of security in why and how that country succumbed to civil war after Saddam Hussein was ousted from power. It further shows how the United States and its coalition allies attempted security

sector reform, and how concern for the immediate short-term security environment overwhelmed the struggle for establishing more permanent security institutions. In addition, the conclusion includes my thoughts on the future prospects of stability, democracy, and prosperity in Sudan.