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Research featured in the Peace Science Digest is selected based on its contribution to the field of Peace Science, and authenticated by the scientific integrity derived from the peer-review process. Peer-reviewed journals evaluate the quality and validity of a scientific study, giving us the freedom to focus on the articles’ relevance and potential contribution to the field and beyond. The editors of the Peace Science Digest do not claim their analysis is, or should be, the only way to approach any given issue. Our aim is to provide a responsible and ethical analysis of the research conducted by Peace and Conflict Studies academics through the operational lens of the War Prevention Initiative.

Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.

Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.

Patrick Hiller, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR

David Prater
PROGRAM MANAGER

Molly Wallace, Ph.D.
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Paloma Ayala
GRAPHIC DESIGN

221 NW Second Ave; Suite 204
Portland, Oregon 97209
United States

Phone: 503 505.5721
digest@warpreventioninitiative.org
www.warpreventioninitiative.org

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Peace and Conflict Studies (henceforth: Peace Science) has emerged as an academic discipline with its own graduate programs, handbooks, research tools, theories, associations, journals, and conferences. As with most scientific communities, the slow migration of academic knowledge into practical application becomes a limiting factor of a field’s growth, its impact, and the overall effectiveness of its practitioners.

The expanding academic field of Peace Science continues to produce high volumes of significant research that often goes unnoticed by practitioners, the media, activists, public policy-makers, and other possible beneficiaries. This is unfortunate, because Peace Science ultimately should inform the practice on how to bring about peace.

The research and theory needed to guide peace workers to produce more enduring and positive peace, not only more peace studies, have come to stay. Bridging the gap between the peace movement moralism and foreign policy pragmatism is a major challenge facing everyone who seeks to achieve peace on Earth. (Johan Galtung and Charles Webel)

To address this issue, the War Prevention Initiative has created the Peace Science Digest as a way to disseminate top selections of research and findings from the field’s academic community to its many beneficiaries.

The Peace Science Digest is formulated to enhance awareness of scholarship addressing the key issues of our time by making available an organized, condensed, and comprehensible summary of this important research as a resource for the practical application of the field’s current academic knowledge.
Dear Readers,

It is our pleasure to introduce Volume 3, Issue 3, of the Peace Science Digest.

At the War Prevention Initiative, we support the efforts of practitioners, activists, academics, and decision-makers working towards a more peaceful and just world. Based on this focus, we applaud the June 12, 2018, summit between the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea as a historic day for the future of the Korean Peninsula. Talks that broach the issues of denuclearization, the end of costly and provocative large-scale military exercises, and the demilitarization of the region should be supported. By reaching the summit, the countries have started the peace process. Descending safely from the summit is the long, hard work toward reconciliation. For this to be successful, not only the leaders but also groups in all sectors of society need be involved. We believe that insights from peace science are part of understanding the path toward successful and lasting peace agreements and peaceful conflict transformation. And, ultimately, that path must be guided by the needs expressed by the Korean people.

Inside this issue, you will find analysis of research highlighting the importance of one of the Digest’s primary goals: making academic research more accessible and relevant to those beyond the academic community. Next, we analyze a study that looks at the relationship between people’s beliefs on masculinity and honor, on the one hand, and their attitudes towards aggressive policies and war, on the other. Our third analysis explores the complex attitudes of people in a post-conflict setting “after the smoke clears” by looking at how different conflict narratives contribute to reconciliation. We then turn to research addressing a growing concern in the international community about how to influence nonstate actors to comply with humanitarian norms, laws, and treaties. Finally, we analyze a study examining the methods by which liberal democracies create and sustain militarism and hence enable war.

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As always, thank you for your support.

Your Peace Science Digest Editorial Team,

Patrick Hiller  David Prater  Molly Wallace
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This research examines one of the very concerns the *Peace Science Digest* was created to address: the difficulty of making academic scholarship accessible and useful to peace practitioners. Despite the expectation that scholars, especially in the field of peacebuilding, outline the practical implications of their research, there are numerous barriers to the successful transfer of knowledge to those who can use it. According to the author, scholars wishing to more effectively engage with the policy/practitioner community must do three things: 1) understand the barriers to such knowledge transfer, especially by engaging more directly with the “knowledge utilization” literature, 2) identify and employ research methodologies that can help overcome some of these barriers, and 3) find productive ways to share research findings with policymakers/practitioners. The present research focuses on the first two tasks by identifying the barriers to knowledge transfer between scholars and practitioners and then by introducing the ethnographic peace research (EPR) approach and demonstrating how it might overcome some of these barriers.

Before diving into these two tasks, the author starts by outlining the so-called “liberal peace,” the dominant peacebuilding intervention model employed by the international community since the end of the Cold War. Characterized by the “three pillars of democracy, free markets, and the rule of law,” the liberal peace has become the blueprint for presumably bringing stability to “post-conflict” countries around the world. A common scholarly critique of the liberal peacebuilding project is that this “cookie cutter” approach to peacebuilding has endowed international “intervention experts,” rather than local actors, with power over “post-conflict” decision-making processes and institutions—yet another form of western control at the expense of local ownership. These scholars have also drawn attention to the “complex social, economic, cultural and political environments” where peacebuilding interventions take place, which make it impossible for “intervention experts” to completely control the outcomes of their interventions, leading to numerous unintended effects. They therefore emphasize the importance of understanding local dynamics and prioritizing local knowledge in peacebuilding practice.
There is a concern, however, that such critical scholarly insights have had trouble finding their way into—and being used appropriately by—practitioner communities. It is here that the author outlines the many barriers to effective knowledge transfer, especially in the field of peacebuilding intervention, ultimately sorting these into five categories: institutional, ideological, cultural, practical, and academic (see table).

Beyond these barriers, the author outlines barriers that have emerged in the “knowledge utilization” literature as its understanding of policy implementation has evolved. Previously, policy implementation was understood as a straightforward linear and hierarchical process, with top-level policymakers making decisions then directly carried out by others along the policy implementation chain, resulting in rational and predictable outcomes. More recently, the process has become understood as much more complex and contingent, with actors at various points in the implementation process “muddling through” (to use Lindblom’s term) and where decision-making power is located more with “street-level” implementers than with top-level policymakers. Despite this more recent perspective on policy implementation, many scholars and practitioners alike maintain a desire for predictable, top-down control over policy outcomes, courting the illusion that they can apply universal knowledge to different “post-conflict” contexts with predictable results.

Although the author remains skeptical of scholars’ ability to “influence policy in a predictable manner,” he proposes ethnographic peace research (EPR) as an approach to research that can overcome at least some of the identified barriers to effective knowledge transfer. EPR is characterized by both researcher reflexivity (the researcher’s willingness to consider her/his own position and identity vis-à-vis the research) and the use of such methods as “participant observation, semi-structured interviews and extensive qualitative field-notes.” According to the author, EPR is particularly well suited to overcoming the following barriers to knowledge transfer, among others: lack of contextual and cultural insight, lack of reliable measures, lack of practical recommendations, lack of clear communication to non-academic audiences, lack of personal engagement with policymakers, and the more general complexity of the policy implementation process. EPR can do so due to the following characteristics: its obvious focus on the local context, its capacity to generate locally meaningful indicators and recommendations through consultation with local actors, its highly accessible forms of data presentation (such as life histories and narratives), the ability of EPR researchers to build connections with on-the-ground practitioners during their research (with whom they can then share their findings), and its privileging of local voices and conflict experiences and thereby its “decentring [of] the intervention ‘experts’.”

*Ethnographic Peace Research (EPR):*
Any research that “seeks to understand and explain how and why certain phenomena or certain experiences emerge in relation to violence, conflict, transition or peace via ‘thick description’ and an engaged ‘ethnographic imagination’” (Millar, 2018).

More generally, ethnographic research looks to the meanings that people attribute to their activities in particular contexts and examines how they make sense of the world around them.

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Despite the expectation that peacebuilding scholars outline the practical implications of their research, there are numerous barriers to the successful transfer of this knowledge to those who can use it. Scholars wishing to engage with policy/practitioner communities must do three things: 1) understand the barriers to knowledge transfer; 2) identify and employ methodologies that help overcome these barriers; and 3) find productive ways to share research findings.

Policy implementation is not a linear process dictated by top-level policymakers but rather a more contingent process where decision-making power is distributed among “street-level” implementers—making the application of academic knowledge to specific contexts even more complex and challenging.

Ethnographic peace research (EPR) represents a promising approach to overcoming some barriers to effective knowledge transfer, in part through its ability to provide nuanced insight on particular cultural/political contexts, locally relevant measures and recommendations, accessible research findings, and an emphasis on local voices and perspectives.
As noted above, the focus of this research is highly relevant to the work of the Peace Science Digest, particularly its aim to help bridge the gap between scholars and practitioners in the peace studies field. There is a vast amount of interesting and important research that scholars are generating with regards to war/violence prevention and conflict transformation, which often does not reach the broader policy or activist communities that could effectively use it. So, although the Peace Science Digest was founded to address precisely this problem and make this research more accessible, this study can still contribute at least two additional insights for the Peace Science Digest’s work: First, it makes us critically aware of the numerous barriers to effective knowledge transfer between scholars and practitioners—not only the lack of clear and accessible communication—and also the impossibility of strictly linear implementation of this knowledge and control over its use and outcomes. Second, it draws attention to the real value of ethnographic approaches to knowledge generation, particularly when it comes to understanding specific conflict contexts—with an accompanying caution about applying research claims too broadly. As noted by the author, the further generalized the findings, the less useful they are likely to be in a specific conflict context.

Practically speaking, this research is most relevant for scholars as they consider how to make their research more useful to the world. For those scholars concerned with peacebuilding in “post-conflict” contexts, one way to do this is to employ grounded, ethnographic research that seeks to understand the experiences and perspectives of those who have lived through violence or are on the forefront of efforts to bring about reconciliation or justice—or, perhaps even more crucially, those who have felt sidelined by or disgruntled with these processes. This will be the kind of knowledge most useful to those interested in supporting peacebuilding efforts on the ground as effectively as possible—and as mindfully of the complex local conditions as possible. Treating this knowledge—rather than the imported, “cookie-cutter” knowledge of “intervention experts”—as expertise, furthermore, relocates power where it ought to be: in the hands of those who have to live with the consequences of the peacebuilding policies undertaken.

For practitioners in “post-conflict” contexts, the imperative is to pay more attention to such ethnographic analyses of the local contexts where peacebuilding activities are undertaken, rather than relying solely on the more abstract conflict transformation and peacebuilding models that inform the field’s practices. Of course, these are helpful frameworks, but practitioners should be wary about too readily importing and applying their categories and definitions to the local contexts in which they are working. Ethnographic analyses, as well as so-called “elicitive” conflict analysis techniques championed by scholar-practitioner John Paul Lederach and others, provide a far more accurate—and empowering—way of assessing the local political dynamics and needs of diverse community members in “post-conflict” settings. Furthermore, practitioners—like scholars—should be mindful of their limited ability to control the outcomes of peacebuilding interventions.
Masculine Honor Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Aggression, War, and Peace

Violence often occurs as a response to real or perceived threats, insults, or provocation, and an individual's beliefs about how her/his culture expects her/him to react to such threats often dictate the level of aggression in that response. As evident in the research below, there are cultural components that may condition individuals to behave more aggressively when threatened or provoked. Likewise, the aggressive response to an individual threat seems to translate into support for more aggressive policy or war. The authors use the example of the American South, where a culture of honor exists that is associated with greater rates of peer-to-peer aggression compared to the rest of the United States. As such, people in this culture are more sympathetic to the use of violence to defend or protect their loved ones, country, or way of life and more likely to believe that “aggression, by men, is both appropriate and necessary in response to insult, threat, and provocation.” However, the cultural and behavioral components that comprise honor beliefs, argue the authors, likely extend beyond the geographic boundaries of regions thought to possess “cultures of honor.”

Past research has identified a connection between cultures with strong beliefs in this type of honor and the support for violent responses to foreign attacks, and for war more generally. In this study, the authors are interested in the role honor beliefs play in an individual's attitude towards collective violence—thus extending past research on the subject by measuring honor as an individual rather than a cultural difference. Specifically, this study asks if a person's beliefs on how individuals use aggression to protect themselves or their families, communities, and reputations impact their views on issues of war, peace, or aggressive security policies. It also examines to what extent individual beliefs about masculinity and honor influence their behavior.

In an attempt to answer these questions, the authors created a two-part study to identify and analyze relationships between an individual's honor beliefs and their perceptions of war, aggressive security policies, peace, and human nature as a whole. First, the authors used an established behavior model that identifies and measures masculine honor beliefs (MHBs).
Individual MHB levels were measured through a series of questions where respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with statements such as “a man should protect his wife.” The respondents were then given a different survey asking about their views on aggressive behavior or traits, and certain real or hypothetical policy decisions regarding war, use of a military, or decisions to resolve conflict through more peaceful means (diplomacy). Both studies administered surveys to groups of around 140 male and female undergraduate students from a university in the United States.

In the first study, the respondents began with a survey measuring their individual MHB levels. Next, a different survey measured their levels of aggression; their political views; their perceptions of war as an appropriate response to hypothetical scenarios such as revenge, gaining territory, protecting one’s own country, ally, or an oppressed people, or spreading worldviews or democracy; their perceptions of whether the U.S. role in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars was justified; and their views on various examples of aggressive or restrictive policy: domestic spying, torture, foreign military action, government-sanctioned assassinations, and laws about immigration, airport security, and gun control. In the second study, the respondents similarly began with the assessment of their individual MHB levels, and then were asked questions about their beliefs on whether the world, or the people in it, can be “pure evil” or “pure good”; their perceptions of the world as a competitive, dangerous, or unpredictable place; and their views on a series of hypothetical U.S. responses to terrorism including extreme and preemptive force to attack terrorism around the world, the use of torture to get information, and the use of diplomacy to address the causes of terrorism.

For both studies, the survey responses to foreign policy questions were analyzed in relation to individual MHB levels, revealing that individuals with higher MHB levels had more positive perceptions of war, higher levels of support for aggressive security policies, lower support for peacebuilding and diplomacy, and a more pessimistic perception of the world—including the capacity for “pure evil.” The first study found that high MHB levels were directly related both to a person’s belief that war is an appropriate way to seek revenge, protect one’s country or others, and spread worldviews, and to a person’s support for restrictive polices such as spying, immigration restrictions, torture, and assassination. Individual MHB levels were not, however, associated with political conservatism, the justifiability of U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, or support for an increase in foreign spying, airport security, or gun control. The second study found that individuals with higher MHB levels were more likely to hold pessimistic worldviews and to endorse the use of violence to protect their place in the world; showed greater support for extreme or preemptive militarism and torture; and exhibited lower levels of support for peacebuilding, diplomacy, or other nonviolent efforts to reduce war and manage conflict. MHB levels were not related to an individual’s support for humanitarian wars.
In the past decade, especially during more recent years, public attention has shifted towards examining many of the norms and institutions that protected much of the “toxic masculinity” that has plagued our workplaces, universities, classrooms, homes, and broader society. Recent movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp, and many more less-popularized but equally important movements throughout history, have brought attention to the way some men, as well as antiquated conceptions of masculinity or excuses of manly banter or “locker room talk,” have created toxic environments where inequality and sexual harassment have become commonplace. Additionally, as society begins to acknowledge the widespread mistreatment of women, past behavior deemed acceptable under the pretense of chivalry, protection, or honor can begin to be addressed as well. Often overlooked or underappreciated, compared to the more blatant acts of sexual assault/harassment/discrimination, is behavior attributed to seemingly “benign” masculinity that can also function in destructive ways. The author’s MHB question of “a man should protect his wife” may seem harmless to some, but it perpetuates the belief that women are in need of constant protection by men—and provides a rich cultural resource for justifying war. As this research has shown, masculine beliefs about protection and honor can carry over from the individual level to the global level, through increased support for aggressive policy and war.

**CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE**

- Individuals with high levels of masculine honor beliefs have more positive perceptions of war, higher levels of support for aggressive security policies, and lower levels of support for peacebuilding and diplomacy.
- Masculine honor beliefs are related to a person’s belief that war is an appropriate way to protect one’s country, seek revenge, or spread worldviews.
- Masculine honor beliefs are related to the support for restrictive policies such as spying, immigration restrictions, torture, and government-sanctioned assassination.
- Masculine honor beliefs are not associated with political conservatism or support for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, gun control, or wars fought on humanitarian grounds.

**TALKING POINTS**

- Individuals with high levels of masculine honor beliefs have more positive perceptions of war, higher levels of support for aggressive security policies, and lower levels of support for peacebuilding and diplomacy.
- Masculine honor beliefs are related to a person’s belief that war is an appropriate way to protect one’s country, seek revenge, or spread worldviews.
- Masculine honor beliefs are related to the support for restrictive policies such as spying, immigration restrictions, torture, and government-sanctioned assassination.
- Masculine honor beliefs are not associated with political conservatism or support for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, gun control, or wars fought on humanitarian grounds.
This research leads us to critically examine a common belief that the capacity for violence, military might, nuclear weapons, etc., is necessary to maintain safety and security. By identifying the connection between an individual’s masculine honor beliefs (MHBs) and support for war and aggressive security policies, these findings teach us more about why some individuals support violence and war, and why others are more opposed. With this new understanding, concerned parties can work towards identifying traits associated with MHBs and address their causes. We can then begin to reshape the cultural and individual belief systems around honor and masculinity by directing attitudes away from violence and sexism, towards the constructive qualities of equality and strength found in all people. Many of these problems begin with how masculinity is defined as the possession of certain qualities or traits traditionally associated with men—and then how these traits are generally valued more highly than those so-called feminine traits traditionally associated with women. Instead, our qualities and traits should be ungendered, non-binary, not associated with men or women. The further we can untether personal traits (negative and positive) from their associations with masculinity and femininity, and in the process re-value those traditionally associated with femininity, the more likely it will become that people of all genders will feel free to endorse behaviors like empathy and diplomacy and nonviolence in the face of threats—behaviors that have as much of a chance, if not a greater chance, of providing safety and security. We will then also take away one more cultural resource for the justification of war, what Iris Marion Young calls the “logic of masculinist protection,” by pulling conceptions of “honor” away from the masculine protector/feminine protected dynamic.
In the trajectory of a conflict, the post-violence (also: post-climax or post-war) phase is crucial in that it will determine how the conflict progresses. Will there be a path toward reconciliation or regression back toward destructive conflict? The author of this article asks how easy it is for people in a post-war setting to change their attitudes toward former enemies. The article aims to understand what takes place “after the smoke clears” by looking at how individual and collective memories are an impediment to reconciliation for many years, sometimes across generations. These kinds of collective memories are often created and upheld by one-sided nationalist narratives about the conflict, including victimization of the self and blame of the other. The “other” of the conflict then is often viewed through a negative stereotypical lens as a threat, and often dehumanized. It is in this context that the author investigates whether discussing the dominant conflict narratives can influence such attitudes. In other words, the author tests theories of prejudice reduction in post-war societies.

The study specifically looks at the neighboring countries of Azerbaijan and Armenia, who fought a war in the 1990s characterized by intergroup animosity. The research experiment involved identifying a sample of 308 adults from Azerbaijan with different demographic characteristics and then randomly assigning them to three different narratives about the conflict. The first narrative emphasized placing blame on Armenia for its role in the conflict. The second one emphasized a common identity between the two sides based on their commonalities. The third one deflected blame onto a credible third party, in this case Russia. In addition, the participants were then assigned either to deliberate on their respective narratives alone in written form or to participate in small group discussions on their respective narratives with others. Attitudes were then measured by evaluating the participants’ beliefs about Armenians (common interests as well as stereotypes) and policies relating to reconciliation.

The following are key findings of the study. Contrary to what one might expect, not the tolerant but the blame-ridden narratives produced the most conciliatory attitudes. In addition, the group discussion setting...
was influential in impacting people's perceptions. The research thus has shown that even in engrained conflict situations, people can change their attitudes. The two main conditions for this to happen are: (1) the narrative gives people a source of blame they can identify with; and (2) this narrative is discussed openly in a group setting. The combination of what was said (blame-ridden narrative) with how it was processed (group discussion) allowed people to step outside the officially sanctioned narratives. Given that the blame and deflection narratives were consistent with previous beliefs and thereby validated these, people felt safe enough to elaborate on and develop more conciliatory attitudes. Moreover, the people in the group discussion were all from the same ethnicity in Azerbaijan. This suggests that there was a basic presumption of like-mindedness and mutual support, leading to an environment of trust in the discussion. This in turn can allow for deeper and broader engagement with the issue rather than resorting to the usual talking points directed at an outgroup. Such discussions then can influence attitudes in a more conciliatory direction.
At first glance, a study on a past conflict between the countries of Armenia and Azerbaijan might seem of little relevance to those not directly affected. The focus of this study, however, is crucial: what happens after the smoke clears? Most attention is given to conflicts when they are at their highest levels of escalation, namely war. However, with the cessation of hostilities and the signing of formal peace agreements, conflicts are far from resolved. The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is a so-called "frozen" ethnic conflict, resulting from the fall of the Soviet Union, where the relationships and attitudes between many of the people who experienced it are likewise frozen in a state of animosity and distrust. Normalizing relationships and reconciliation are at the far end of the conflict transformation spectrum and require deeper processes of structural and cultural peacebuilding. Insights, like those provided in this research, on how to foster attitude changes toward adversaries are exactly the ones that can contribute to these peacebuilding efforts. In this sense, the lessons from this study apply to many post-conflict situations, whether between nations or ethnic groups, or any other context where polarization has created hostile "us" and "them" groups. On a cautionary note, however, we need to be careful with generalizations to avoid "cookie-cutter" solutions as discussed in our analysis Overcoming Barriers to Effective Knowledge Sharing in Peace Research and Policy (in this issue). These findings come out of a particular historical/political/cultural context which always needs to be placed at the core of any resolution approach. Nonetheless, these findings can still make us think twice in other post-war contexts about simply assuming that conciliatory narratives will be those most conducive to conciliatory outcomes.

### Talking Points

- Conflict narratives emphasizing blame or deflection can, counterintuitively, contribute to more conciliatory attitudes, especially if individuals have an opportunity to discuss them with others they trust.
- Conflict narratives emphasizing common identity between enemy groups do not necessarily contribute to more conciliatory attitudes, especially if they make individuals feel like their pre-existing conflict narratives are not being recognized.
- By validating previous beliefs blaming the "other," group discussions can enable like-minded people to feel safe enough to reflect inwardly and develop more conciliatory attitudes.
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The insights from this study are useful for practitioners in the applied peacebuilding community. Whether involved as mediators or process facilitators, peacebuilding practitioners can adopt some clear steps in their work with stakeholders in conflict. First, contrary to the intuition of most conflict resolution professionals, conflict parties should be allowed to openly discuss blame (on the “other”) or deflection of blame (onto a third party) for the conflict. In doing so, conflict parties are not forced into another narrative that seems more conciliatory—that of a common identity among conflict adversaries—but instead are validated in their existing beliefs. This, according to the study, allows for greater introspection and deliberation on the existing narrative, leading to more conciliatory attitudes. Second, according to the findings of this study, conflict parties should be given the opportunity to deliberate on their dominant conflict narratives in discussions with other like-minded individuals, which can open up space for more conciliatory attitudes to emerge. As with any other conflict resolution attempts, a clear and ongoing assessment of the conflict context must come before any approaches like these are brought to the table (see Overcoming Barriers to Effective Knowledge Sharing in Peace Research and Policy in this issue).
Influencing Armed Nonstate Actors to Comply with Humanitarian Norms

With the increasingly prominent role that armed nonstate actors (ANSAs) play in violent conflict today—posing a threat, along with state actors, to civilian communities in war zones worldwide—more attention is being devoted to strategies for influencing their wartime behavior. The fact that states are the official parties to the international conventions that together constitute international humanitarian law (the so-called “laws of war,” which aim to limit the methods of warfare and protect non-combatants during war) complicates these efforts, as it is debatable to what extent these conventions apply to ANSAs. To address this problem, the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Geneva Call has pioneered a mechanism called a “deed of commitment”—an agreement that ANSAs can sign to publicly declare their support for a particular humanitarian norm (e.g., the non-use of landmines, protection of children, or prohibition of sexual violence), thereby providing them with the opportunity to demonstrate their status as norm-abiding actors.

This research aims to contribute to the growing body of scholarship on such mechanisms for strengthening ANSAs’ adherence to humanitarian norms, while also refining our understanding of governments’ behaviors concerning similar humanitarian commitments. According to the authors, most studies looking at state and non-state actors’ behavior in relation to signing onto and complying with such conventions and/or deeds of commitment examine their behavior in isolation. Consequently, they fail to account for the interaction between these actors and their opponents and the bearing it might have on decisions to sign and/or comply. This study, therefore, keeps this interactive element in focus as it asks two questions: “why would state and [armed nonstate actors] sign a constraining convention that limits their tactical repertoire,” and “what effects do such conventions have on the subsequent behavior of the signing parties?”

Focusing on the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty and Geneva Call’s parallel 2000 Mine Ban Deed of Commitment, the authors generate several hypotheses based on rational choice and game theoretic assumptions about the strategic behavior of state and nonstate actors. They then test these hypotheses statistically to see what accounts for, first, their signing behavior and, second, their compliance behavior.
With the first, they find only mixed support for their hypotheses. With regards to states’ decisions to sign, they find that domestic and international reputation costs failed to have a significant effect but that military costs associated with signing (namely, previous use of landmines) did have a significant negative effect on decisions to sign. Only one ANSA characteristic—higher troop size, a measure of lower utility of landmines to ANSAs—had a significant (positive) effect on governments’ decisions to sign. When the authors examine states’ decisions to sign in relation to whether or not related ANSAs had yet signed, one finding is especially notable: while a government’s previous use of landmines still had a significant negative effect on its decision to sign if related ANSAs had not yet signed, this effect disappeared if related ANSAs had already signed, implying that an ANSA signing the deed of commitment might neutralize the government’s concern about losing the military advantage of itself using landmines. With regards to ANSAs’ decisions to sign, the results are again inconclusive, with the only significant finding being the bigger the ANSA troop size, the lower the expected utility of landmines and therefore the more likely the group was to sign on.

Turning to the question of compliance, the authors employ a simple model and a complex model for both states and ANSAs. The simple models analyze the likelihood of state and ANSA compliance in light of signing the treaty/deed of commitment, while the complex models take into consideration the fact that the same variables that might cause an actor to sign a treaty/deed may also influence whether it complies or not. In both models, governments were more likely to use landmines if they had used landmines in the past or if they were democracies. Governments were less likely to use landmines when the number of ratifying countries was high, presumably because the more widely the treaty was supported internationally, the higher the reputation costs of using landmines/not complying would be. The one important difference between the two models for states is that signing the treaty had a significant effect on state compliance in the simple model (signing made landmine use less likely), while this significant effect fell away in the more complex model—meaning that, since countries who did not already use landmines were both more likely to sign the treaty and more likely to comply with it, signing was only superficially related to compliance and had no independent effect on it. The opposite is true for ANSAs: although signing the deed of commitment initially seems to have had no effect on whether they would use landmines (in the simple model), the complex model, by controlling for other factors, shows that an ANSA was in fact less likely to use landmines once it had signed.
• Signing a commitment banning landmines appears to influence armed nonstate actors (ANSAs) away from the use of landmines, suggesting that deeds of commitment can influence ANSAs’ behavior.

• The same factor that may account for a government signing the Mine Ban Treaty—its previous non-use of landmines—may also account for its compliance with that treaty, suggesting that signing itself does not exercise any independent effect on state behavior.

• State and nonstate actors’ behavior with regards to signing and complying with humanitarian treaties should be viewed as interdependent, where actors make decisions based in part on what their opponents do.

De-mining technicians from the UK charity HALO Trust at work early in the morning, on the edges of a paddy field near Thunukkai, northern Sri Lanka.

Around 300,000 people were displaced in the latter stage of stages of the conflict (between the forces of the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE ‘Tamil Tiger’ movement) in 2008-2009.
CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

International humanitarian law has a complicated relationship with war prevention, the substantive focus of the Peace Science Digest. On the one hand, anything that limits the methods of warfare or the “acceptable” targets of war’s violence must be seen as an undeniable good. The presence of the various conventions that make up international humanitarian law provide a tool for concerned global actors to rein in the atrocities of warfare. On the other hand, one could argue that the existence of international humanitarian law (as well as its philosophical underpinnings in just war theory) enables humanity to draw a line between “good” violence and “bad” violence—and that the very drawing of that line can facilitate our ability to feel okay about our use of some forms of violence, thus making the use of such violence possible. In other words, should we feel uneasy about the fact that a state or armed group that signs and then abides by an international convention or deed of commitment banning landmines then gains legitimacy from its status as a signatory, even as it engages in myriad other forms of killing in the context of an armed conflict? Even if a state or armed group only targets combatants in its military operations—thereby engaging in “acceptable” wartime violence—we still must contend with the fact not only that non-combatants are regularly killed or hurt in the crossfire or that the combatants being targeted may themselves only be young people caught up in the power plays of their commanders’ strategies but also that the very “acceptability” of this sort of violence is what enables commanders to justify it to themselves and to their soldiers and supporters in the first place. It is unclear, therefore, what bearing such prohibitions against particular kinds of violence have on the broader practice of warfare. But we can certainly celebrate the more immediate effects of presumably fewer landmines in countries where ANSAs and/or governments have signed their respective convention or deed of commitment. We can also condemn those ANSAs and governments—including the U.S.—which have not yet signed on, or who do not adhere to their obligations once signing on. More work remains to be done: in the last couple years, despite a previous drop in the number of casualties due to landmines after the adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty (and subsequent Deed of Commitment), casualties worldwide have begun to climb again, reaching 8,605 in 2016, mainly due to armed conflict in Afghanistan, Libya, Ukraine, and Yemen. (See New York Times article under Continued Reading).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Taking into consideration the ambivalent relationship between international humanitarian law and war prevention outlined above, it is still heartening to note the main finding of this study: that many armed nonstate actors (ANSAs) appear to care about their reputations and their perceived legitimacy and that once they have signed a deed of commitment (at least in the case of landmines) this signature exercises an independent influence on their behavior. In short, ANSAs are subject to non-military forms of influence. This has enormous implications for thinking about the range of tools available for confronting these armed actors. Most importantly for war prevention, it suggests that the old adage, “all they understand is force,” does not hold up to scrutiny. ANSAs, like states, care about how they are perceived because they know that much of their power comes from the support they receive from surrounding communities, as well as from the international community in some cases. The more their actions align with the high-minded ideologies or self-proclaimed honorable identities that justify their existence, the more credence local and international communities will give to them and their objectives. This concern for reputation and legitimacy, however, may even go beyond this sort of instrumental concern, whereby a good reputation is only as good as the material benefits it provides. It is also possible that some individuals within an armed group genuinely see themselves in this noble light, and the existence of deeds of commitment provides an opportunity for them to live up to their stated ideals. Or, at the very least, it puts them in the position of having to come down on one side or the other of these normative commitments. Whatever the motivation—material or moral—having a non-military tool for influencing ANSA behavior makes governments’ arguments for the necessity of military force to stop an ANSA’s war crimes or other violations much less credible. Concerned global actors should therefore remind states about this policy tool and, in cases where an ANSA has already signed a deed of commitment, publicize this fact so more pressure is put on the ANSA to comply. Furthermore, even if a deed of commitment does not exist in a certain issue area, the findings from this study suggest that other forms of pressure linked to reputation and legitimacy may exercise some effect on ANSAs.
Sustaining Militarism and Enabling War in Liberal Societies


War is usually explained with reference to the ends it is purported to achieve—as a tool for defending one’s territory and/or ensuring the security of one’s population. The use of war for these instrumental purposes, however, depends on far more fundamental factors like widespread societal beliefs about the necessity and legitimacy of military force. To understand what makes war possible, we must first, therefore, understand how militarism is created and sustained. Liberal democracies present a puzzle when it comes to the emergence and maintenance of militarist ideology, as their emphasis on the importance of individual freedom appears to contradict reliance on a tool that limits this freedom—both for those who participate in the military and for those who are militarily targeted. Often this means that liberal democracies will justify their reliance on military force as necessary to maintaining freedom. It also means that, for individuals to be willing to give up some freedom for personal security, the threats to which military force is portrayed as a response must be framed in terms of the dangers they pose for the everyday lives of regular people, rather than for abstractions like the “state,” “nation,” or “economy.”

The author therefore explores how militarism is reproduced in liberal democracies—in the United Kingdom (U.K.), in particular—and, by extension, what enables such countries to wage war. To anchor this exploration, she looks at the case of British airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria (authorized in December 2015) and related debates over Syrian refugees in the U.K., paying close attention to the language used by Prime Minister David Cameron to justify the U.K.’s policies. Through this analysis she finds that, to gain a full picture of how liberal militarism is sustained, we must consider the ways in which military force is made to seem normal and rational at the level of both geopolitics and everyday experience.

At the level of geopolitics, the author finds two ways that U.K. state narratives make military force the “rational” response to insecurity. First, the British state—through Cameron’s speeches—casts itself as having a moral responsibility to respond to threats to its allies (the terrorist attacks on Paris in late 2015) and thereby reassert itself as a global power. This responsibility stems, in part, from the U.K.’s self-proclaimed impressive military capabili-
ties—the obsession with which can be attributed to the masculine credentials they provide to political leaders—and, in part, from what Young calls the “logic of masculinist protection,” whereby military action is justified in terms echoing the need for men to protect their women. Furthermore, residual racism from British colonialism ensures that military action paired with humanitarian aid—and not more welcoming policies for Syrian refugees—is presented as the appropriate policy response. While this approach is a way of responding to the “threat” multiculturalism is seen by some to present to an idealized white Britain, Cameron justifies it in humanitarian terms by stating that by “help[ing] refugees closer to their homes... [we will prevent them from] having that terrible journey across the Mediterranean.” Second, the British state represents ISIS as a threat to the U.K. and the “British way of life” and then presents military action as the logical response to that threat, reinforcing the widespread notion that military action equals security. This conflation of military action with security, however, eclipses the ways in which military action can make Syrians and also some British citizens—through the “economic trade-offs between warfare and welfare”—less secure.

At the level of everyday experience, the author finds that fear, desire for normalcy, and ambivalence about military action combine to reproduce liberal militarism and ultimately normalize and enable war. First, fear of a the racial “other,” in the form of Syrian refugees crossing the border and threatening “our way of life” with terrorism—a fear itself dependent on a clear-cut conception of what is inside a country’s borders as stable/safe and what is outside those borders as dangerous/threatening—creates a level of everyday insecurity conducive to support for militarism. Second, this feeling of insecurity and fear is heightened by the desire and general expectation in liberal societies for normalcy and an ordinary everyday. Third, this widespread (though by no means universal) enjoyment of an ordinary everyday is what makes ambivalence about military action possible for many; most British citizens can afford to be ambivalent about the military policies of their government, leaving these policies unchallenged, as long as they don’t disrupt their “worry-free” everyday life. In the end, although the liberal state clearly attempts to equate military action with security, bolstering its legitimacy in the process, the author highlights the multiple ways in which liberal militarism actually produces insecurity for many, both inside and beyond the liberal state’s borders—those whose everyday are sacrificed so that some can continue enjoying their normal everyday undisturbed.

Continued Reading:


**The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State** By Iris Marion Young. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, Vol. 29, No. 1, 2003. [http://www.signs.rutgers.edu/content/Young%20Logic%20of%20Masculinist%20Protection.pdf](http://www.signs.rutgers.edu/content/Young%20Logic%20of%20Masculinist%20Protection.pdf)


This research helps us think through some of the strategies liberal societies employ more broadly for managing insecurity and justifying military action, especially in the post-9/11 world—in the process revealing some of the assumptions upon which these policies are based, as well as their often obscured effects. Although this research is focused on the U.K., we can see similar processes occurring in other liberal democratic countries that have been threatened with terrorism. In the wake of 9/11, the Bush administration in the U.S. capitalized on the fear Americans were feeling—a kind of vulnerability new to many of them who were used to going about their daily lives in relative security—to launch, first, the war in Afghanistan and then, a year and a half later, the war in Iraq. As with the analysis here, employing gender and racial lenses helps us see some of the legitimation strategies at work in building public support for these wars: the oppressed women the U.S. was “saving” in Afghanistan (see Young under Continued Reading); the evil male rival who must be eliminated as the symbolic stand-in for an entire country, Saddam Hussein for Iraq, Osama bin Laden for Afghanistan (what Cohn calls the “unitary masculine actor problem”—see Continued Reading); the obsession with weaponry as proof of masculinity (again, see Cohn); the racist dehumanization of Afghans or Iraqis or anyone seen to be vaguely Middle Eastern as “ragheads;” making violence against them seem somehow less troubling (see Herbert under Continued Reading). Similarly, there was also the unquestioned conflation of military action with security—the framing of military action as the appropriate, indeed the only viable, response to insecurity, whether terrorism or weapons of mass destruction, and the associated assumption that military action is effective and decisive. Yet, 17 years later, there is still intense instability and violence in Afghanistan where the Taliban still holds vast swaths of territory; and the war in Iraq sparked a bloody military occupation, insurgency, and civil war, leading to the formation of a new terrorist organization that itself became the target of military action and was the subject of the research presented here. So, the cycle of violence and insecurity continues. This research makes us more alert to the ways in which those of us living fairly comfortably in liberal democracies can be complicit in the steady reproduction of militarism in our daily lives, leaving these assumptions unchallenged, normalizing military action, and thereby making war—and these cycles of insecurity—possible.

**CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE**

- Liberal democracies often justify their reliance on military force as necessary to maintaining freedom, as well as frame security threats in terms of the dangers posed to the everyday lives of regular people, such that individuals will be willing to give up some freedom for personal security.
- To understand how liberal militarism is sustained, we must consider the ways military force is made to seem normal and rational in terms of both geopolitics and everyday experience.
- At the geopolitical level, the British state justifies military action by identifying its moral responsibility to respond to threats to its allies and by equating military action with security—despite the fact that it ends up producing insecurity for many, both inside and beyond its borders.
- As part of everyday experience in some liberal democracies, a racist fear of refugees, the desire for normalcy, and ambivalence about military action combine to reproduce liberal militarism and ultimately normalize and enable war.
As this research demonstrates, militarism is not necessarily fervent or flashy, nor is it dictated from the top-down; rather, it is embedded in our everyday lives and emerges through how we construct (and consume constructions of) threats, how we privilege our own daily comfort and normalcy, and not least of all how we accept—or at the very least remain ambivalent towards and don’t challenge—narratives about the effectiveness and necessity of military action for security. The good news is that if we reproduce militarism in our everyday experiences, that is also where we can resist it. Military action can only happen if these narratives remain intact and if the targets of military action are understood as appropriate targets of violence. Those of us concerned with preventing war must therefore push up against the everyday practices and narratives that reinforce and enable it: the taken-for-grantedness around how military action is supposed to be decisive and effective; the celebration of military sacrifice over other forms of communal sacrifice/service (for instance, firefighters, civil rights activists, police officers, teachers, AmeriCorps/Peace Corps volunteers, etc.); the simplistic representation of what is inside the country as safe and what is outside as dangerous; sometimes subtle and sometimes overt forms of racism that end up separating some out of the human community; the machismo competition that somehow gets mistaken for rationality in the lead-up to war; and so on. One way to enact this resistance is simply to think and speak critically about the way your government justifies its calls to military action and about the assumptions it’s relying on: Do these military policies attain their objectives? Have they in the past? Do they stop or do they reinvigorate terrorist organizations? Do they actually create security? For whom? And for whom do they create insecurity? Whose lives are valued over others?

Bringing up such questions may make us feel uneasy, especially those of us in liberal societies who like to think of ourselves as valuing human life and individual freedom and human rights the world over—but it is a productive uneasiness, as it forces us to consider whether our actions actually align with our supposed values. Is supporting a war that kills the same number of civilians in the first few months that were killed in the terrorist attack it was a response to consistent with these values? [See Carl Conetta’s Afghan civilian casualty estimates in his Project on Defense Alternatives report here: http://www.comw.org/pda/0201strangevic.html#appendix1]. How can we instead choose policies that actually do align with our liberal democratic values? There are of course no easy answers, but such questions are a start—exercises in resisting the impulse towards ambivalence, normalization, and complicity that makes war possible.
[TESTIMONIALS]

This Magazine is where the academic field and the practitioners meet. It is the ideal source for the Talkers, the Writers and the Doers who need to inform and educate themselves about the fast growing field of Peace Science for War Prevention Initiatives!

**John W. McDonald**  
U.S. Ambassador, ret.  
Chairman and CEO, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

As a longtime peace activist, I’ve grown weary of the mainstream perception that “peace is for dreamers.” That’s why the Peace Science Digest is such as useful tool; it gives me easy access to the data and the science to make the case for peacebuilding and war prevention as both practical and possible. This is a wonderful new resource for all who seek peaceful solutions in the real world.

**Kelly Campbell**  
Executive Director, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility Co-founder, 9/11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows

The Peace Science Digest is the right approach to an ever-present challenge: how do you get cutting-edge peace research that is often hidden in hard-to-access academic journals into the hands of a broader audience? With its attractive on-line format, easy to digest graphics and useful short summaries, the Peace Science Digest is a critically important tool for anyone who cares about peace — as well as a delight to read.

**Aubrey Fox**  
Executive Director (FMR), Institute for Economics and Peace

The field of peace science has long suffered from a needless disconnect between current scholarship and relevant practice. The Peace Science Digest serves as a vital bridge. By regularly communicating cutting-edge peace research to a general audience, this publication promises to advance contemporary practice of peace and nonviolent action. I don’t know of any other outlet that has developed such an efficient forum for distilling the key insights from the latest scholarly innovations for anyone who wants to know more about this crucial subject. I won’t miss an issue.

**Erica Chenoweth**  
Professor & Associate Dean for Research at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver

Peace Science Digest is a valuable tool for translating scholarly research into practical conclusions in support of evidence-based approaches to preventing armed conflict.

**David Cortright**  
Director of Policy Studies at the Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame

How many times are we asked about the effectiveness of alternatives to violent conflict? Reading Peace Science Digest offers a quick read on some of the best research focused on that important question. It offers talking points and summarizes practical implications. Readers are provided with clear, accessible explanations of theories and key concepts. It is a valuable resource for policy-makers, activists and scholars. It is a major step in filling the gap between research findings and application.

**Joseph Bock**  
Director, School of Conflict Management, Peacebuilding and Development

We must welcome the expansion of peace awareness into any and every area of our lives, in most of which it must supplant the domination of war and violence long established there. The long-overdue and much appreciated Digest is filling an important niche in that ‘peace invasion.’ No longer will anyone be able to deny that peace is a science that can be studied and practiced.

**Michael Nagler**  
Founder of the Metta Center for Nonviolence

The Peace Science Digest is a major contribution to the peace and security field. It makes complex issues more understandable, enabling professional outfits like ours to be more effective in our global work. The Digest underscores that preventing war is about more than good intentions or power; it is also about transferrable knowledge and science.

**Mark Freeman**  
Founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Integrated Transitions (IFIT).

The distillation of the latest academic studies offered by the Peace Science Digest is not only an invaluable time-saving resource for scholars and policymakers concerned with preventing the next war, but for journalists and organizers on the front lines, who can put their findings to good use as they struggle to hold the powerful accountable and to build a more just and peaceful world.

**Eric Stoner**  
Co-founder and Editor, Waging Nonviolence

Peace Science Digest is an invaluable tool for advocates for peace, as much as for educators. In it one quickly finds the talking points needed to persuade others, and the research to back those points up.

**David Swanson**  
Director, World Beyond War

“The Digest is smartly organized, engaging, and provides a nice synthesis of key research on conflict, war, and peace with practical and policy relevance. The Digest’s emphasis on “contemporary relevance,” “talking points,” and “practical implications” is a breath of fresh air for those of us trying to bridge the academic-policy-practitioner divides. Highly recommended reading.”

**Maria J. Stephan**  
Senior Advisor, United States Institute of Peace
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<th>Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.</th>
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<td>OUR MISSION</td>
<td>Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.</td>
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<td>OUR CORE VALUES</td>
<td>Nonviolence – We promote strategic and principled nonviolent solutions over any kind of armed conflict.</td>
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<td>Empathy – We view social problems through the eyes of others and respectfully communicate with each other in the pursuit of mutual understanding.</td>
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<td>Planetary loyalty – We consider ourselves global citizens, living in harmony with humanity and nature.</td>
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<td>Moral imagination – We strive for a moral perception of the world in that we: (1) imagine people in a web of relationships including their enemies; (2) foster the understanding of others as an opportunity rather than a threat; (3) pursue the creative process as the wellspring that feeds the building of peace; and (4) risk stepping into the unknown landscape beyond violence.</td>
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<td>WE SUPPORT</td>
<td>Support Rotary International’s focus on peace by aiding the Rotarian Action Group for Peace with human, logistical and content-related resources.</td>
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<td>Support development of effective strategies to convince Americans that the United States should not promote war, militarism or weapons proliferation, but rather embrace conflict resolution practices that have been shown to prevent, shorten, and eliminate war as viable alternatives to local, regional and global conflicts.</td>
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<td>Support building grassroots social movements seeking a world beyond war.</td>
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<td>WE EDUCATE</td>
<td>Actively contribute to peace science and public scholarship on war prevention issues.</td>
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<td>Share information and resources with multiple constituencies in an understandable manner.</td>
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<td>Provide evidence-based information on peace and conflict issues with immediately potential doable policy advice to public policy makers.</td>
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<td>Advance the understanding and growth of the Global Peace System.</td>
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<td>WE ENGAGE</td>
<td>Convene national and international experts in ongoing constructive dialog on war prevention issues via our Parkdale Peace Gatherings.</td>
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<td>Connect likely and unlikely allies to create new opportunities.</td>
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<td>Participate in peacebuilding networks and membership organizations.</td>
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<td>UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS</td>
<td>We are at a stage in human history where we can say with confidence that there are better and more effective alternatives to war and violence.</td>
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<td>Peace Science and Peace Education provide a path to a more just and peaceful world.</td>
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<td>Multi-track diplomacy offers a sectoral framework for creating peacebuilding opportunities.</td>
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