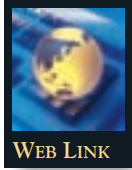


Means of Leverage



WEB LINK

Means of
Leverage

Conflicts are settled when some explicit or implicit bargaining process arrives at an outcome acceptable to both parties (see pp. 51–52). Acceptable does not mean that both parties are happy or that the outcome is fair—only that neither party is both willing and able to try to change the outcome. War and other violent actions taken in international conflicts are aimed at settling conflicts on favorable terms by inflicting violence as a negative form of leverage. States also have alternative means of leverage and strategies that sometimes work better than war in resolving conflicts.

Types of War

Many different activities are covered by the general term *war*. Consequently, it is not easy to say how many wars are going on in the world at the moment. But most lists of wars set some minimum criteria—for instance, a minimum of a thousand battle deaths—to distinguish war from lower-level violence.

Table 4.1 summarizes both active wars and those recently suspended by a formal peace process. Of the 14 wars, none is in North America, Western Europe, Japan/Pacific, or China. All but Chechnya are in the global South—mainly in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. The largest and most active wars in Spring 2006 were in Iraq, Sudan, and Colombia. Most recent wars have been internal (within a state). The first serious *interstate* war in years was the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Wars are sputtering on and off in Israel-Palestine, Burundi, Uganda, Democratic Congo, Somalia, Nigeria, Nepal, Burma, and Afghanistan.

TABLE 4.1 ■ Wars by Region

Region	Most Important Wars, May 2006
Africa	Dem. Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan, Somalia , Nigeria
South Asia	Afghanistan , India, Nepal, Burma
Middle East	Iraq , Israel-Palestine
Russia/E. Europe	Russia (Chechnya)
Latin America	Colombia
N. America, W. Europe, Japan/Pacific, China	None

Note: Bold face indicates reported fatalities of more than 100,000.

More importantly, a number of intense wars ended in the past decade, including those in Sierra Leone, Angola, East Timor, the former Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Guatemala, and Northern Ireland (following South Africa and Mozambique earlier in the 1990s). Just since 2003, notwithstanding the war in Iraq, settlements ended more of the world's remaining wars of greatest duration and lethality. Liberia, Ivory Coast, and Democratic Congo all established power-sharing governments and brought in international peacekeepers—following in the path of Sierra Leone (which in 2003 held democratic elections). In 2005, the Irish Republican Army finished permanently dismantling its weaponry. India and Pakistan began their first cease-fire in a decade, as did Burma's government and its largest rebel militia. In 2006, Democratic Congo voted for a new constitution, with presidential and parliamentary elections following. In Sri Lanka and Ivory Coast, cease-fires continued despite some lapses, and negotiations inched forward.

In Sudan, the warring sides signed a peace agreement that ended one of the world's last active wars that killed more than a million people. Unfortunately, in the immediate period following this peace agreement, rebels in the western region of the country, known as Darfur, began to protest their exclusion from the peace agreement. In response, the government helped militias raid western villages, committing what the United States and other states have labeled genocide. In late 2004, the government, the Darfur rebels, and the southern rebels reached a tentative peace agreement to be monitored by the African Union and the United Nations, but the war crimes in Darfur continued into 2006, and began to spill over the border into Chad. In 2005, the UN World Food Program had to cut rations to a million Darfur refugees because donor states had given barely half the money needed. The international community's ineffective response to the mass murders in Darfur, like that in Rwanda in 1994, shows the limited reach of international norms in today's state-based international systems.

Wars are very diverse. Several types of war tend to arise from different situations and play different sorts of roles in bargaining over conflicts. Starting from the largest wars, we may distinguish the following main categories.

Hegemonic war is a war over control of the entire *world order*—the rules of the international system as a whole, including the role of world hegemony (see p. 65). This class of wars (with variations in definition and conception) is also known as *world war*,

global war, *general war*, or *systemic war*. The last hegemonic war was World War II. This kind of war probably cannot occur any longer without destroying civilization.

Total war is warfare by one state waged to conquer and occupy another. The goal is to reach the capital city and force the surrender of the government, which can then be replaced with one of the victor's choosing. Total war as we know it began with the mass destruction of the Napoleonic Wars, which introduced large-scale conscription and geared the entire French national economy toward the war effort. In total war, with the entire society mobilized for the struggle, the entire society of the enemy is considered a legitimate target.

Limited war includes military actions carried out to gain some objective short of the surrender and occupation of the enemy. For instance, the U.S.-led war against Iraq in 1991 retook the territory of Kuwait but did not go on to Baghdad to topple Saddam Hussein's government. Many border wars have this character: after occupying the land it wants, a state may stop and defend its gains.

Raids are limited wars that consist of a single action—a bombing run or a quick incursion by land. In 1981, Israeli warplanes bombed an Iraqi nuclear research facility to stop Iraq from developing nuclear weapons. (Without this raid, Iraq would probably have had nuclear weapons when it invaded Kuwait in 1990.) The action had a narrow objective—destruction of the facility—and was over within hours. Raids fall into the gray area between wars and nonwars because their destruction is limited and they are over quickly. Raiding that is repeated or fuels a cycle of retaliation usually becomes a limited war or what is sometimes called “low-intensity conflict.”

Civil war refers to war between factions within a state trying to create, or prevent, a new government for the entire state or some territorial part of it. (The aim may be to change the entire system of government, to merely replace the people in it, or to split a region off as a new state.) The U.S. Civil War of the 1860s is a good example of a secessionist civil war. The war in El Salvador in the 1980s is an example of a civil war for control of the entire state (not secessionist). Civil wars seem to be often among the most brutal wars. The 50,000 or more deaths in the civil war in El Salvador, including many from massacres and death squads, were not based on ethnic differences. (Of course, many of today's civil wars do contain ethnic conflicts as well.)

Guerrilla war, which includes certain kinds of civil wars, is warfare without front lines. Irregular forces operate in the midst of, and often hidden or protected by, civilian populations. The purpose is not to directly confront an enemy army but rather to harass and punish it so as to gradually limit its operation and effectively liberate territory from its control. Iraqi paramilitary forces used such methods during the Iraq War in 2003–2006. U.S. military forces in South Vietnam fought against Viet Cong guerrillas in the 1960s and 1970s, with rising frustration. Efforts to combat a guerrilla army—**counterinsurgency**—often include programs to “win the hearts and minds” of rural populations so that they stop sheltering the guerrillas.

In guerrilla war, without a fixed front line, there is much territory that neither side controls. Thus, guerrilla wars especially hurt civilians. The situation is doubly painful because conventional armies fighting against guerrillas often cannot distinguish them from civilians and punish both together. In one famous case in South Vietnam, a U.S. officer,

who had ordered an entire village burned to deny its use as a sanctuary by the Viet Cong, commented, “We had to destroy the village to save it.” Warfare increasingly is irregular and guerrilla-style; it is less and less often an open conventional clash of large state armies.

Terrorism

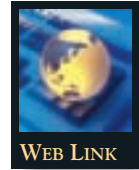
Since September 2001, governments and citizens have paid much more attention to terrorism than before. But terrorism itself is not new. Terrorism is basically just another step along the spectrum of violent leverage, from total war to guerrilla war. Indeed, terrorism and guerrilla war often occur together. Yet terrorism differs from other kinds of wars.

Terrorism refers to political violence that targets civilians deliberately and indiscriminately. Beyond this basic definition other criteria can be applied, but the definitions become politically motivated: one person’s freedom fighter is another’s terrorist. More than guerrilla warfare, terrorism is a shadowy world of faceless enemies and irregular tactics marked by extreme brutality.

In the past, most terrorism has occurred in the Middle East, Europe, and South Asia. Although U.S. interests and citizens abroad were repeatedly targeted, little international terrorism took place in the United States itself (the 1993 World Trade Center bombing being an exception). Because damage from these attacks was limited, the American public quickly forgot the terrorist threat.

But in an interdependent world, the United States can no longer keep global problems such as terrorism at a distance. For years before the 2001 attacks, the al Qaeda terrorist organization had thousands of members operating in dozens of countries, including the United States. The traditional sense of U.S. insularity behind great oceans, along with the relative lull in hijackings and terror actions in the United States in the 1990s, may have created a false sense of security. Since September 2001, isolationism has retreated and the U.S. government, supported by public opinion and Congress, has pursued a highly international agenda.

Generally, the purpose of terrorism is to demoralize a civilian population in order to use its discontent as leverage on national governments or other parties to a conflict. Related to this is the aim of creating drama in order to gain media attention for a cause. When the IRA planted bombs in London, it hoped to make life miserable enough for Londoners that they would insist their government settle the Northern Ireland issue. The bombing also sought to keep the issue of Northern Ireland in the news in the hope that the British government would then be pressured to



Terrorism

ASYMMETRICAL CONFLICT



Terrorist attacks often reflect the weakness of the perpetrators and their lack of access to other means of leverage. Terror can sometimes amplify a small group’s power and affect outcomes. Al Qaeda’s September 11, 2001, attacks, staged by a relatively small nonstate actor, ultimately led to the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Saudi Arabia, drew the United States into a counterinsurgency war in Iraq, and brought al Qaeda itself a surge of recruits for new attacks worldwide.

concede terms more favorable to the IRA than would otherwise be the case. Terrorism is seldom mindless; it is usually a calculated use of violence as leverage. However, motives and means of terrorism vary widely, having in common only that some actor is using violence to send a message to other actors.

Traditionally, the primary effect of terrorism is psychological. In part the effectiveness of terrorism in capturing attention is due to the dramatic nature of the incidents, especially as shown on television news. Terrorism also gains attention because of the randomness of victims. Although only a few dozen people may be injured by a bomb left in a market, millions of people realize “it could have been me,” because they, too, shop in markets. Attacks on airplanes augment this fear because many people already fear flying. Terrorism thus amplifies a small amount of power by its psychological effect on large populations; this is why it is usually a tool of the powerless. However, al Qaeda’s attacks follow a somewhat different pattern, planned less to create fear than simply to kill as many Americans and their allies as possible—and ultimately to touch off apocalyptic violence that al Qaeda followers believe will bring about God’s intervention. The psychological effect is aimed at Muslim populations worldwide rather than at Americans.

In the shockingly destructive attack on the World Trade Center, tangible damage was far greater than in previous terrorist attacks—reaching into thousands of lives and tens of billions of dollars. The psychological impact was even stronger than the physical damage—changing the U.S. political and cultural landscape instantly. But in contrast to historical instances of terrorism, real costs began to loom large. The same terrorist network was trying to obtain nuclear weapons (see pp. 160–161) with which to kill not thousands but hundreds of thousands of Americans. Similarly, although the mailed anthrax attacks in the autumn of 2001 killed only a few people and had far more psychological than physical effect, the door had been opened to a new bioterrorism that could kill thousands.

The classic cases of terrorism—from the 1970s to the 2001 attacks—are those in which a *nonstate* actor uses attacks against *civilians* by secret *nonuniformed* forces, operating across *international borders*, as a leverage against state actors. Radical political factions or separatist groups hijack or blow up airplanes, or plant bombs in cafés, clubs, or other crowded places. For example, Chechen radicals seized a school in Beslan, a small city in the Caucasus region in 2004. For three days, nearly 1,200 children, parents, and teachers were held without food or water. When Russian troops stormed the school, they detonated many traps set by the terrorists, setting off explosions. In the end, more than 300 people died, including 172 children. Such tactics create spectacular incidents that draw attention to the terrorists’ cause. Often terrorism is used by radical factions of movements that have not been able to get attention or develop other effective means of leverage. It is often a tactic of desperation, and it almost always reflects weakness in the power position of the attacker.

Terrorists are more willing than states are to violate the norms of the international system because, unlike states, they do not have a stake in that system. Conversely, when a political group gains some power or legitimacy, its use of terrorism usually diminishes.

States themselves carry out acts designed to terrorize their own populations or those of other states, but scholars tend to avoid the label “terrorism” for such acts, preferring to call it repression or war. Russia’s indiscriminate attacks in Chechnya province in 1995 are an example. In fact, no violent act taken during a civil or international war—by or toward a warring party—can necessarily fit neatly into the category of terrorism.

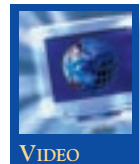
The narrowest definition of terrorism would exclude acts either by or against *uniformed military forces* rather than civilians. This definition would exclude the killing of 243 U.S. Marines by a car bomb in Lebanon in 1983, and the 2001 attack on the Pentagon, because they were directed at military targets. It would also exclude the bombing of German cities in World War II although the purpose was to terrorize civilians. But in today’s world of undeclared war, guerrilla war, civil war, and ethnic violence, there is a large gray zone around clear cases of terrorism. Disagreements about whether terrorism included Palestinian attacks on Israel, and Pakistani attacks in Kashmir, scuttled efforts to pass a UN treaty on terrorism in late 2001.

State-sponsored terrorism refers to the use of terrorist groups by states—usually under control of the state’s intelligence agency—to achieve political aims. In 1988, a bomb scattered pieces of Pan Am flight 103 over the Scottish countryside. Combing the fields for debris, investigators found fragments of a tape recorder with a sophisticated plastic-explosive bomb. A tiny strand of wire from the triggering device turned out to be a rare variety, through which the investigators traced the origins of the bomb. The U.S. and British governments identified two Libyan intelligence agents who had smuggled the tape recorder onto flight 103 in Frankfurt. In 1992, backed by the UN Security Council, they demanded that Libya turn over the two agents for trial. When Libya refused, the UN imposed economic sanctions. In 1999, Libya turned over the suspects for trial—two received life in prison while a third was acquitted—and the UN suspended its sanctions. In 2003, Libya formally took responsibility for the bombing, struck a multibillion dollar compensation deal with victims’ families, and regained a normal place in the international community. In 2006, full U.S.-Libyan diplomatic relations resumed.

The United States accuses five states of supporting international terrorism, as of 2006—North Korea, Iran, Syria, Sudan, and Cuba—and has barred U.S. companies from doing business in those states. However, these kinds of unilateral U.S. sanctions are of limited effect. Cuba can do business with Canada, and Iran with Russia. The U.S. position was also undermined when it carved an exception in its rule to allow a U.S. oil company to bid on a lucrative pipeline project in Sudan.

Counterterrorism has become a sophisticated operation as well as a big business—a trend that accelerated after September 2001. International agencies, notably the *Interpol* police agency (and in Europe, *Euroapol*), coordinate the actions of states in tracking and apprehending suspected terrorists (as well as drug traffickers and other criminals).

Just as there are many possible outcomes of conflict, many types of war, and varied propensities for violence among different states, so too is there great diversity in how force is used if conflict leads to violence. States develop a wide array of military forces, which vary tremendously in their purposes and capabilities.



VIDEO

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