## 1AC – INH

### Inherency

### The U.S. will provide direct aid to overthrow Assad.

Rogin, Foreign Policy, 3-6-12

Josh: “Obama administration moves to aid Syrian opposition,” The Cable - Foreign Policy, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/06/obama\_administration\_moves\_to\_aid\_syrian\_opposition [ACG CEDA 1]

The Obama administration is moving to provide direct assistance to the internal opposition in Syria for the first time, marking a shift in U.S. policy toward a more aggressive plan to help oust President Bashar al-Assad.

Last week, a group of senior Obama administration officials met to finalize a package of options for aiding both the internal and external Syrian opposition, to include providing direct humanitarian and communications assistance to the Syrian opposition, two administration officials confirmed to The Cable. This meeting of what's known as the Deputies Committee of the National Security Council set forth a new and assertive strategy for expanding U.S. engagement with Syrian activists and providing them with the means to organize themselves, but stops short of providing any direct military assistance to the armed opposition.

For now, riskier options, such as creating a no-fly zone in Syria, using U.S. military force there, or engaging directly with the Free Syrian Army, are all still off the table. But the administration has decided not to oppose, either in public or in private, the arming of the rebels by other countries, the officials said.

"These moves are going to invest the U.S. in a much deeper sense with the opposition," one administration official said. "U.S. policy is now aligned with enabling the opposition to overthrow the Assad regime. This codifies a significant change in our Syria policy."

### State has to determine how to program aid.

Rogin 3-6-12

Josh: “Obama administration moves to aid Syrian opposition,” The Cable - Foreign Policy, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/06/obama\_administration\_moves\_to\_aid\_syrian\_opposition [ACG CEDA 1]

As part of the new outreach, the State Department and USAID have been tasked with devising a plan to speed humanitarian and communications assistance to the internal Syrian civilian opposition, working through State's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) office. There is no concrete plan yet as to how to get the goods into Syria if the Assad regime doesn't grant access to affected areas.

"We're leaving State and USAID to work that out. That's the million-dollar question. We're working on that now," the official explained.

### Aid will likely target the SNC, despite divisions.

Bloomberg 1-31-12

Nicole Gaouette: “Syrian Opposition Council Backed by U.S. Hindered by Divisions,” Bloomberg, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-01-31/syrian-opposition-council-backed-by-u-s-hindered-by-divisions.html> [LVC D8T]

* US supports SNC
* “Differing strategies and goals.”

Title: Syrian Opposition Council Backed by U.S. Hindered by Divisions

Western plans to pressure [Syria](http://topics.bloomberg.com/syria/)’s regime to negotiate with the opposition are complicated by the differing short-term strategies and long-term political goals of the groups opposing President Bashar al-Assad.

While the U.S. has lined up behind the main opposition coalition, the Syrian National Council, analysts such as Joshua Landis say the group faces high hurdles.

“There are divisions between old and young, urban rich and rural poor, secularists and Islamists, the opposition inside and outside the country,” Landis, director of the Middle East studies program at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, said in an interview. “It’s not promising.”

**Assad’s fall is inevitable, but it will be violent now**

**Daily News & Analysis 3-10** “Syrian army close to collapse, says defecting top General,” <http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_syrian-army-close-to-collapse-says-defecting-top-general_1660585>

The days of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad are **numbered** with his powerful army **close to collapse**, the country's most senior defector has said, urging for an urgent need for outside intervention.

Giving an insider's view of the state of the regime, General Mustafa al-Sheikh, who has taken refuge in Turkey, said Assad's army is close to a collapse, but warned that could **plunge the Middle East into a nuclear reaction**.

In his first interview, the former top Syrian General told The Sunday Telegraph, "The situation is now very dangerous and threatens to explode across the whole region, like a nuclear reaction."

The General's grim picture of the happenings in Syria comes as US media reports said that all top Obama administration officials were now predicting that the Syrian regime's downfall could be near.

### Knowledge of many groups is limited.

Phillips, Heritage Foundation, 2-15-12

James, Senior Research Fellow for Middle Eastern Affairs, Heritage Foundation: “Next Steps for U.S. in Syria Crisis,” 2-15-12 http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/02/next-steps-for-us-in-syria-crisis [CEDA TRIP]

As Assad’s hold on the country slips, there will be opportunities to engage with and evaluate the efforts of those who are seeking to replace the regime. Right now, little is known about many of the diverse opposition groups that have emerged in recent months. Although they share the goal of overthrowing Assad, they appear to draw support from different political, sectarian, ethnic, and ideological constituencies and often operate independently of each other. The Syrian National Council, an umbrella group based in Istanbul, and the Syrian Coalition of Secular and Democratic Forces, based in Paris, have sought to unify the many disparate groups with uneven results. The Free Syrian Army has sought to provide an overarching chain of command for the increasingly militarized opposition, but most opposition efforts continue to be led by a decentralized network of Local Coordination Committees that operate in an ad hoc manner.

## 1AC – ADV

### Advantage - Syria

### Assad’s going “all-in” against the opposition.

White, Washington Institute, 2-14-12

Jeffrey, Defense Fellow, Washington Institute for Near East Policy: “Bashar al-Assad vs. the Syrian People,” PolicyWatch #1900, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3451 [ACG D8T]

As mentioned above, the war has become a matter of survival for the Assad regime. It is approaching the upper limit of violence it can employ, and if it is not yet "all in," it may soon be so, with potentially devastating effects on the population.

### Stability under Assad is impossible. Syria can’t revert to the way it was before the uprising.

* Takes out Kiss of Death: without legitimacy, Assad can’t portray opposition as tools of the U.S.

ICG 3-5-12  
International Crisis Group: “Now or Never: A Negotiated Transition for Syria,” Policy Briefing, Middle East Briefing N°32, Damascus/Brussels, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Syria/B032-now-or-never-a-negotiated-transition-for-syria.pdf [JPW CEDA 4]

Even if the regime can survive for some time, it has become virtually impossible to see how it can ultimately prevail or restore normalcy. It might not fall, but it would become a shadow of itself, an assortment of militias fighting a civil war. Today, it continues to enjoy substantial military superiority over the opposition (a reflection of its monopoly on heavy weaponry and a still substantial reservoir of troops, security officials and civilian proxies) and for the most part has succeeded in both containing peaceful protests and fending off armed groups. Yet, it has been unable to achieve sustained progress anywhere in the country. Its conduct on the ground – including excessive use of force by regular troops, the security sector’s sectarian behaviour, persistent resort to civilian proxies, horrendous treatment of detainees and indiscriminate punishment of entire swathes of the population – precludes even a semblance of normalisation.

Given enough time, the regime might be able to destroy the urban and social fabric of entire neighbourhoods, as it appears to have done in parts of Homs. But that will only reinvigorate protests and armed resistance elsewhere.

Politically, the regime has mobilised its narrowing, if still significant popular base; exacerbated and exploited the Alawite minority’s fears; but shirked serious outreach that could possibly appeal to the growing number of Syrians appalled by large-scale, brutal repression. As even the most pragmatic opposition members see it, the dialogue it proposes would be a pointless exercise designed to validate its pre-cooked, unilateral and limited reforms. The constitutional referendum on 26 February was a case in point: it touched on what mattered least (the status of the Baath party, already an empty shell) and ignored what mattered most (the security services’ sectarian make-up and shameful performance, and the nature of the country’s leadership). The latter is critical: President Assad retains significant backing but, having behaved as leader of one camp determined to crush the other, he has forfeited any claim to nationwide legitimacy.

### Delay risks escalation and a failed transition.

Alhomayed, Editor-in-Chief, Asharq Al-Awsat, 1-19-12

Tariq: “The cost of the fall of al-Assad,” Asharq Al-Awsat, http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=2&id=28152 [CEDA 6]

The true cost of delaying the fall of al-Assad is that the Syrian crisis will deepen, and a civil war will be fuelled. As one Western diplomat said in “The Guardian”: “if you shoot at people for months, you shouldn't be surprised when they start shooting back”, and this is what is happening in Syria today.

Prolonging the life of the al-Assad regime also means further complicating the solutions for the post al-Assad phase, and it is inevitable that those who will pay the highest price will be the Turks, not the Iraqis. The Baghdad regime, for example, has concerns regarding the Syrian revolution because it could awaken the Sunni giant, particularly as the Iraqi regime is a sectarian system par excellence. Whilst the Turks are concerned about the future of Syria following the revolution, out of fear for their commercial interests and security. Ankara is not a sectarian regime, it is a democracy, and the survival of the ruling elite there depends on providing economic accomplishments to the Turkish people, rather than sectarian promises cloaked in deceptive slogans such as “resistance” and so on, along the lines of what is repeated by the al-Assad regime and Iran’s allies in the region.

### Assad’s violence will produce sectarian wars throughout the Middle East and South Asia.

Nasr, International Politics Prof, Tufts, 11

Vali, Foreign Affairs Policy Advisory Board, State Department, Aug. 27: “If the Arab Spring Turns Ugly,” New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/28/opinion/sunday/the-dangers-lurking-in-the-arab-spring.html?pagewanted=1&\_r=2 [CEDA 8]

The Arab Spring is a hopeful chapter in Middle Eastern politics, but the region’s history points to darker outcomes. There are no recent examples of extended power-sharing or peaceful transitions to democracy in the Arab world. When dictatorships crack, budding democracies are more than likely to be greeted by violence and paralysis. Sectarian divisions — the bane of many Middle Eastern societies — will then emerge, as competing groups settle old scores and vie for power.

Syria today stands at the edge of such an upheaval. The brutality of Bashar al-Assad’s regime is opening a dangerous fissure between the Alawite minority, which rules the country, and the majority Sunni population. After Mr. Assad’s butchery in the largely Sunni city of Hama on July 31, on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan, the Muslim Brotherhood, a Sunni group, accused the regime of conducting “a war of sectarian cleansing.” It is now clear that Mr. Assad’s strategy is to **divide** the opposition by **stoking** sectarian conflict.

Sunni extremists have reacted by attacking Alawite families and businesses, especially in towns near the Iraq border. The potential for a broader clash between Alawites and Sunnis is clear, and it would probably not be confined to Syria. Instead, it would carry a risk of setting off a **regional dynamic** that could overwhelm the hopeful narrative **of** the Arab Spring itself, replacing it with a much **aggravated power struggle** along sectarian lines.

That is because throughout the Middle East there is a **strong** undercurrent of simmering sectarian tension between Sunnis and Shiites, of whom the Alawites are a subset. Shiites and Sunnis live cheek by jowl in the **long arc** that stretches from Lebanon to **Pakistan**, and the region’s two main power brokers, Shiite Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia, are already **jousting for power**.

In March, fearing a snowball effect from the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia drew a clear red line in Bahrain, where a Shiite majority would have been empowered had pro-democracy protests succeeded in ousting the Sunni monarchy. The Saudis rallied the Persian Gulf monarchies to support the Sunni monarchy in Bahrain in brutally suppressing the protests — and put Iran on notice that they were “ready to enter war with Iran and even with Iraq in defense of Bahrain.”

The Saudis are right to be worried about the outcome of sectarian fights in Lebanon and Bahrain, but in **Syria** it is Iran that stands to lose. Both sides understand that the final outcome will **decide the pecking order** in the region. Every struggle in this rivalry therefore matters, and every clash is pregnant with risk for regional stability.

The turn of events in **Syria** is **particularly important**, because Sunnis elsewhere see the Alawite government as the **linchpin** in the Shiite alliance of Iran and Hezbollah. The Alawite-Sunni clash there could quickly **draw in** both of the **major players** in the region and ignite a **broader** regional **sectarian conflict** among their local allies, from Lebanon to Iraq to the Persian Gulf and beyond.

The specter of **protracted bloody clashes**, assassinations and bombings, sectarian cleansing and refugee crises from Beirut to Manama, causing instability and feeding regional rivalry, could **put an end** to the hopeful Arab Spring. Radical voices on both sides would gain. In Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, it is **already happening**.

### Largest threat to one-fourth of the world

Shibil Sidiqqi, Fellow, Centre for the Study of Global Power and Politics, 4-15-10

“Terrorism: The nuclear summit's 'straw man',” <http://98.130.246.96/archive_articles_details.asp?articleid=1055&typeid=3>

However, the president's assessment of global nuclear threats paper over some basic realities. The threat of nuclear confrontation remains dangerously high despite the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) with Russia and America's passive-aggressive Nuclear Posture Review. This is particularly true along the nuclear fault-lines in the Middle East and South Asia which have existed since the Cold War. Perhaps a "dirty bomb" made out of a handful of plutonium or other radiological material forms the most significant "nuclear" threat to the US. But outside of this Western-centric world-view, it is the threat of nuclear attack or exchange in the Middle East and South Asia - home to nearly a fourth of the world's population - that clearly remains the largest global nuclear threat.

**Multiple factors make Syria the most likely scenario for global escalation.**

L.A. Times 3**-18**-12

Patrick J. McDonnell, “Syria's conflict has significance far beyond its borders,” http://articles.latimes.com/2012/mar/18/world/la-fg-syria-regional-stability-20120319 [CEDA 6]

The raging conflict in Syria that has left thousands dead and stymied all international peace entreaties is not just about the fate of President Bashar Assad.

Rather, the prospect for regional power shifts, **proxy** wars and spreading instability — along with a reprise of Cold War-style **great-power animosities** — goes far beyond Syria's borders.

That is the stern warning from international experts including former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who is now engaged in what many view as a last-chance bid to avert all-out civil war in Syria, long a bastion of police state stability in the heart of the turbulent Middle East.

"Yes, we tend to focus on Syria," a measured Annan said in Geneva after reporting to the U.N. Security Council on Friday about his inconclusive meetings with Assad in Damascus, the Syrian capital. "But any **miscalculation** that leads to **major escalation** will have [an] impact in the region which will be **extremely difficult to manage**."

With no end to the fighting imminent, a nation that declares itself "the beating heart of Arabism" seems poised to become the site of the longest and bloodiest of the so-called Arab Spring revolts.

But, as Annan noted, Syria represents much more: It is the arena for the region's most geopolitically significant conflict, and potentially the most disruptive one.

"Syria is unique because it is linked to so many players," said Rami G. Khouri, who directs the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut. "You have an internal conflict in Syria. But you also have a regional conflict and a global one. It exists at all three levels."

The probable impact on interlocking alliances and rivalries, as well as on long-running sectarian tensions, is almost dizzying to contemplate. Syria is a kind of strategic chessboard on which interests great and small are playing for their future advantage.

### Alliances embroil the U.S. in war.

Wood, Award-Winning Journalist, 1-4-12

David, 40 years reporting for Time, Los Angeles Times, Newhouse News Service, and The Baltimore Sun: “U.S.-Iran Tensions: Mideast Showdown Builds As United States Tightens Military Ties To Israel,” Huffington Post, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/04/us-iran-tensions-israel-joint-military-exercises\_n\_1183952.html [CEDA 6]

Storm clouds darkening over the Middle East suggest a growing peril for the United States and the possibility of a new **war** that could **embroil** the U.S., Israel, Iran and others in a bloody, costly fight.

Behind this week's exchange of threats between Iran and the United States over access to the Persian Gulf, seasoned analysts see a perfect storm of factors that could trigger armed conflict.

Iran's work on nuclear weapons is fast approaching a "red line," the crossing of which both the United States and Israel say is unacceptable and may have to be halted by force. Washington and European capitals are preparing new sanctions that would sever Iran from the international banking system, a move that would cripple its economy and that Tehran has said it would consider a provocation to war. Growing violence in **Syria** threatens to **spill over** its borders with Israel, Lebanon and Turkey, a **NATO ally**.

### Saudi Arabia will host Pakistani nuclear weapons in response to sectarian violence and deteriorating relations with the U.S.

Guzansky, Institute for National Security Studies,’11 **[Gender Modified]**

Yoel, 7-1, “Tehran tests Saudis’ nerve on nuclear weapons,” The Australian, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/tehran-tests-saudis-nerve-on-nuclear-weapons/story-e6frg6ux-1226085108555>

Until recently it appeared that US security guarantees would be a preferred alternative to Riyadh's pursuit of a nuclear option. However, the combination of Iran's steady nuclear progress and Riyadh's **growing frustration** with Washington's "Arab Spring" policies threaten to drive the Saudis in **precisely** this direction.

As a leading Arab state and as Iran's ideological-religious rival and main competitor for regional influence, Saudi Arabia will find it difficult to sit quietly should Iran obtain military nuclear capability. The same week that the UN nuclear watchdog raised new concerns of "undisclosed nuclear-related activities in Iran" it was reported that Saudi Arabia was to build 16 nuclear reactors at a cost of more than $US300 billion.

In light of the instability that is shaking the Arab world and the Saudi royal family's fear of similar riots, especially in the kingdom's Shia areas, Saudi Arabia may have turned to its longstanding ally Pakistan for assistance.

It has been reported that Saudi officials sought the help of Pakistan and that the latter had placed two divisions on alert to be sent to Saudi Arabia if security there deteriorates. Such co-operation has an important precedent: after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, and throughout the 1980s, Pakistan stationed military forces in Saudi Arabia and the two nations co-operated in assisting the Afghani mujaheddin.

Saudi-Pakistani co-operation extends to the nuclear realm as well. Over the decades Saudi Arabia has helped finance Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs and Saudi Arabia may seek to **capitalise** on its investment.

In terms of nuclear development, these two Sunni nations located on either side of Shia Iran have overlapping interests: Pakistan has knowledge and skilled [hu]manpower, but lacks cash, while Saudi Arabia has vast cash reserves but lacks the relevant infrastructures and skilled manpower. The two might seek to **balance Iran's power** by increasing co-operation, despite the political risks primarily to their already strained relations with the US and the fact that doing so would contradict Saudi international commitments and its own public position favouring a nuclear-free Middle East.

If Pakistan were to station some of its nuclear weapons in the kingdom, Saudi Arabia might argue that this is not an infringement of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty to which it is a signatory, especially if the weapons remain under Pakistani control. It will also be "cheaper" in terms of Saudi public opinion to host Muslim forces on Saudi soil than "infidels".

Compounding concerns regarding Saudi nuclear intentions are the kingdom's unwillingness to publicly give up the right to uranium enrichment and the fact that it is in fact exempt from intrusive International Atomic Energy Agency monitoring.

### South-Asian nuclear instability would result.

**Roberts**, History Prof, Cambridge, **’11**

Andrew, Also: Royal Society of Literature Fellow, Jan. 2, “Iran’s Nuclear Domino Effect,” THE DAILY BEAST, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/01/02/irans-nuclear-weapons-could-lead-to-a-saudi-and-pakistan-alliance.html [WFU]

Where Edelman goes an important stage further than anyone else is in considering the instability that would inevitably result in Southern Asia if Pakistan gained the capability in Saudi Arabia to withstand a first strike from India’s nuclear arsenal. “To have a second-strike capability against India would give Pakistan a huge benefit,” he told me. “It would be very troublesome for the Indians, who would face a far more complex nuclear picture. We in the West have gotten fat, dumb, and happy when contemplating a relatively stable nuclear Southern Asia over the past decade. It might not stay like that.” With Pakistan already ahead of India in nuclear weapons technology, especially in delivery capabilities, Edelman believes that the Islamabad option will make the nuclear situation in South Asia **significantly more dangerous**.

### That ends the world

Alan **Robock** is professor of climatology at Rutgers University and associate director of the school's Center for Environmental Prediction, where he studies many aspects of climate change. He is a fellow of the American Meteorological Society and a participant in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, **and** Owen Brian **Toon** is chair of the department of atmospheric and oceanic sciences at the University of Colorado at Boulder and a fellow of the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics there. He is a fellow of the American Meteorological Society and the American Geophysical Union. “South Asian Threat? Local Nuclear War = Global Suffering”, from the January **2010** issue of Scientific American magazine

People have several incorrect impressions about nuclear winter. One is that the climatic effects were disproved; this is just not true. Another is that the world would experience “nuclear autumn” instead of winter. But our **new calculations show that the climate effects even of a regional conflict would be widespread and severe.** The models and computers used in the 1980s were not able to simulate the lofting and persistence of the smoke or the long time it would take oceans to warm back up as the smoke eventually dissipated; current models of a full-scale nuclear exchange predict a nuclear winter, not a nuclear fall. Another misimpression is that the problem, even if it existed, has been solved by the end of the nuclear arms race. In fact, a nuclear winter could readily be produced by the American and Russian nuclear arsenals that are slated to remain in 2012. Furthermore, the increasing number of nuclear states raises the chances of a war starting deliberately or by accident. For example, North Korea has threatened war should the world stop its ships and inspect them for transporting nuclear materials. Fortunately, North Korea does not now have a usable nuclear arsenal, but it may have one capable of global reach in the near future. Some extremist leaders in India advocated attacking Pakistan with nuclear weapons following recent terrorist attacks on India. Because India could rapidly overrun Pakistan with conventional forces, it would be conceivable for Pakistan to attack India with nuclear weapons if it thought that India was about to go on the offensive. Iran has threatened to destroy Israel, already a nuclear power, which in turn has vowed never to allow Iran to become a nuclear state. Each of these examples represent countries that imagine their existence to be threatened completely and with little warning. These points of conflict have the potential to erupt suddenly. The first nuclear war so shocked the world that in spite of the massive buildup of these weapons since then, they have never been used again. But the only way to eliminate the possibility of climatic catastrophe is to eliminate the weapons. Rapid reduction of the American and Russian arsenals would set an example for the rest of the world that nuclear weapons cannot be used and are not needed. Under the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, the U.S. and Russia both committed to reduce deployed strategic nuclear warheads down to between 1,700 to 2,200 apiece by the end of 2012. In July 2009 President Barack Obama and Russian president Dmitry Medvedev agreed to drop that range further, to 1,500 to 1,675 by 2016. Although smaller strategic arsenals are to be commended, our new results show that even the lower counts are far more than enough to destroy agriculture worldwide, as is a regional nuclear war. If this mother lode of weapons were used against urban targets, hundreds of millions of people would be killed and a whopping 180 Tg of smoke would be sent into the global stratosphere. Average temperatures would remain below freezing even in the summer for several years in major agricultural regions. Even the warheads on one missile-carrying submarine could produce enough smoke to create a global environmental disaster.

## 1AC – Plan

### Plan: The United States Department of State should commission participatory evaluations of State Department democracy assistance for Syria.

### The phrase “State Department democracy assistance” refers to programs classified by the State Department as “democracy assistance”.

## 1AC – Solvency

### State Department should evaluate assistance to the Syrian opposition.

Abdel ’11

Fattah Hussein, reporter in the Middle East for “All Voices,” Apr. 19: “From Bush, EU funded Syrian opposition WikiLeaks.” <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8832596-from-bush-eu-funded-syrian-opposition-wikileaks> [LVC D8T]

The U.S. State Department funded a secret Syrian opposition groups, according to diplomatic cables revealed by WikiLeaks, reported the Washington Post.

The cables show that the State Department funneled more than $ 6 million since 2006 to a group of Syrian exiles to operate a satellite channel based in London, Barada TV, and fund activities in Syria.

Barada TV began broadcasting in April 2009, but stepped up its operations to cover the massive protests in Syria started last month as part of a long campaign to topple President Bashar al Assad, the U.S. newspaper reported.

Support for Syrian opposition began to be sent during the term of former President GeorgeGeorge W. BushBush, after political relations with Damascus were frozen in 2005 and continued with President Barack ObamaBarack Obama, even though his administration tried to resume contacts with Assad, said the Washington Post.

In January, the White House sent an ambassador to Damascus for the first time in six years.

The article said it is unclear whether the United States still supports Syrian opposition groups, but the wires indicate that the funds were discontinued at least September 2010.

An uprising against the Assad government has spread over vast territories of Syria, where human rights groups say has killed more than 200 people.

An April 2009 cable, signed by a senior U.S. diplomat in Damascus said the Syrian authorities believed that any U.S. fund illegal political group is tantamount to supporting a regime change.

"It might be productive to re-evaluate thecurrent programs supported by the United States supporting anti-government factions, both inside and outside Syria," said the cable.

### Opportunities for evaluating diverse groups exist.

Phillips, Heritage Foundation, 2-15-12

James, Senior Research Fellow for Middle Eastern Affairs, Heritage Foundation: “Next Steps for U.S. in Syria Crisis,” 2-15-12 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/02/next-steps-for-us-in-syria-crisis> [CEDA TRIP]

As Assad’s hold on the country slips, there will be opportunities to engage with and evaluate the efforts of those who are seeking to replace the regime. Right now, little is known about many of the diverse opposition groups that have emerged in recent months. Although they share the goal of overthrowing Assad, they appear to draw support from different political, sectarian, ethnic, and ideological constituencies and often operate independently of each other. The Syrian National Council, an umbrella group based in Istanbul, and the Syrian Coalition of Secular and Democratic Forces, based in Paris, have sought to unify the many disparate groups with uneven results. The Free Syrian Army has sought to provide an overarching chain of command for the increasingly militarized opposition, but most opposition efforts continue to be led by a decentralized network of Local Coordination Committees that operate in an ad hoc manner.

### Meetings can take place in Lebanon.

**al-Khafaji**, MENA Fellow, NIMD, **’10**

Isam, NIMD = Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, “Prospects for Political Parties Assistance Project in the Middle East and North Africa,” Nov. 12, http://www.nimd.org/documents/P/prospects\_for\_political\_party\_assistance\_project\_in\_the\_middle\_east\_and\_north\_africa.pdf [ACG CEDA 6]

This welcome revival, however, is taking place at a time when political parties seem to be waning or losing the ground all together. It may not be an exaggeration to conclude that some MENA parties have lost the momentum to catch up with the pulse of their societies for good (the Moroccan Progress and Socialism party, the Egyptian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Syrian Communist parties, the Lebanese Phalanges and the Istiqlal (Independence) and National Union for Popular Forces in Morocco. In the meantime, other forces, whether in the form of parties or something different would evolve from the spontaneous political movements. The number of MENA political organizations that have clearly adopted democratic programs is on the rise. These range from the Movement for Democratic Left in Lebanon, to The People’s Party and The Democratic Union (FIDA) in Palestine, to the Movement of Justice and Equality in Morocco, and they require special assistance by Democracy assistance organizations. But although the mandate of NIMD focuses on working with political parties, working with embryonic groups that have not yet developed into fully-fledged political organizations may prove to be another fruitful path. Syrian democracy clubs that have flourished since 2000 provide an excellent case in point, where genuine democratic movements are on the rise. These Movements do not trust the existing parties, the “Washington-based” parties or the Paris-based “opposition” led by an ex- [34-35] henchman of the Syrian regime. Given the permeability of the Syrian-Lebanese borders, and the proximity between the two countries, it would be a very fruitful idea to organize exploratory meetings with these groups under the auspices of some Beirut–based international organizations, such as the Carnegie Endowment.

### The plan solves in three ways.

### A. Unity and social capital.

### Incorporating groups on the ground will increase unity.

Tabler & Pollack, Washington Institute, 3-26-12

Andrew J., Next Generation Fellow, and David, Kaufman Fellow, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, “Not Supporting the Opposition "Within Syria" Is Supporting Assad,” PolicyWatch #1914, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3465 [ACG NDT]

Although the United States, European Union, Arab League, and Turkey are privately helping exiled oppositionists, the main target of such assistance -- the Syrian National Council -- is rife with divisions. To repel the regime's vicious onslaught, groups on the ground such as the Revolutionary Councils and elements of the FSA "franchise" have begun to work together more effectively. Washington could use its aid to help deepen and accelerate the process of increasing unity among opposition elements.

### The plan promotes democratic learning and mutual understanding.

**Kushner**, Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, UNICEF, **’6**

Saville, Officer for Latin America & the Carribbean: “Democracy and Evaluation,” in New Trends in Development Evaluation (Segone, ed.), Evaluation Working Papers #5, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS and IPEN, http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/New\_trends\_Dev\_EValuation.pdf, p. 36

* ACG PLS: Re-check for solvency.

One of the reasons for seeking such inclusive approaches to evaluation has been that democratic evaluators express a view that evaluation could be contributing to the strength and the texture of democracy by helping different stakeholder groups to **learn** about each other, their diverse aims and their diverse values. In fact, democratic evaluators promote diversity as a principle. They place a high premium on information exchange between different groups, making more transparent programmes and the systems in which they exist, acknowledging difference, but seeking forms of social **consensus**.48 The sensitivity of exchanging information across different constituencies in a what is effectively a power system means that the evaluator has to be skilled in negotiation techniques, familiar with the give and take of making private lives public data in sensitive contexts. For example, a fair amount is known about how people fit into social programmes, but less is known about how programmes fit into people’s lives – and learning about this may even sometimes be an uncomfortable process needing careful negotiation. Nonetheless, the promises that are claimed are great, and democratic evaluators have argued that such approaches have a role to play in building public trust and social cohesion. Social fragmentation, they have said, arises partly, at least, out of unresolved tensions between different social and political groups based on lack of mutual understanding. The claim is that evaluation, insofar as it creates knowledge in key areas of social action, can build bridges of communication.

### The process generates social capital.

**Kushner**, Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, UNICEF, **’6**

Saville, Officer for Latin America & the Carribbean: “Democracy and Evaluation,” in New Trends in Development Evaluation (Segone, ed.), Evaluation Working Papers #5, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS and IPEN, http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/New\_trends\_Dev\_EValuation.pdf, p. 36 [ACG CSU]

Most recently, concerns like this have embraced the concept of good governance, and democratic evaluation has been promoted as strategy for social cohesion, rebuilding bridges of mutual understanding between government, institutions and citizenry, principally by providing an information exchange service, treating reporting as a **process** of **negotiation** and **interaction** more than as a **one-off event**. Democratic evaluators claim their legitimacy on the basis that people have a right to know about programmes, and some have described the role of the democratic evaluator as a ‘broker’ of information. There are vigorous arguments in the USA, in particular, for evaluation to be seen as **social capital**, and that evaluators should strengthen their democratic base by extending their service to communities. In general, views on evaluation in a democracy tend to cohere around the following broad understandings: that evaluation should be defined as a *right* as well as a *service* – based on principles of inclusion; and that to *sponsor* evaluation is not necessarily to buy it – i.e. that the legitimate urgency of a sponsor’s or a programme manager’s concerns should not displace the concerns of other stakeholders.

### Social capital solves sectarian conflict and kiss of death.

Burnell, Democracy Assistance Guru, December

Peter, Politics & International Studies Prof, Warwick, 2011: Lessons of Experience in International Democracy Support: Implications for Supporting Democratic Change in North Africa, UNU-Wider (United Nations University - World Institute for Development Economics Research) Working Paper #2011/84, http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/working-papers/2011/en\_GB/wp2011-084/\_files/86687158764241318/default/wp2011-084.pdf, p. 6 [ACG CSU]

Democracy support both to civil society and the party sphere can continue to work hard on trying to **allay suspicions**, that are held both about foreign involvement and those that exist between different secular and non-secular groups. Diamond (2008: 286) rightly says 'one cannot know what evolution Islamic-oriented parties are capable of until they are tested with some degree of power'. In the meantime the building of trust or **social capital**—here meaning a shared acceptance of the rules of the game of democratic politics and willingness to play by those rules, plus a preparedness to believe that all competitors will keep to their commitments—could be **vital**. In Egypt the political manoeuvring by Islamist and secular political groupings over the timing of elections that will determine the assembly that decides a new constitution for the country show all too clearly the possibilities for suspicions to escalate. Outbreaks of inter-communal violence like those between Muslims and Christians in Cairo in May 2011 expose the risks. By destroying social peace they make it more likely that the authorities will return to former habits of strong-arm rule. By helping with the design and implementation of regulatory frameworks for media conduct and political competition that **maximize** the **stakeholders in peace**, international democracy support would be making a **more effective contribution** to building democracy than **any amount of direct aid** it chooses to give to individual parties or civic groups—especially if the allocation is done ill-advisedly along highly **partisan** and anti-Islamist **lines**, in other words taking sides. Where a decision to offer international financial or material support to groups is made then an approach worth considering is to charge local co-ordinating or umbrella organizations with the task of determining allocations that will be acceptable to local partners, after guidelines have been agreed, even if one consequence is some loss of direct accountability to the donors.

### Syrian unity and international support are the keys to a stable transition.

Byman, et al, Brookings, 3-15-12

Daniel L., Director of Research, Michael Doran, Roger Hertog Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Kenneth M. Pollack, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, all at Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings, and Salman Shaikh, Director, Brookings Doha Center, “Saving Syria: Assessing Options for Regime Change,” 3-15-12, <http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2012/0315_syria_saban.aspx> [CEDA]

Diplomatic “success,” moreover, may not be able to ensure a credible transition to a post-Asad Syria. There is a danger that diplomacy may achieve only a partial transition in the short term, with the prospect of durable stability in question, as has been the case in Yemen. As with other policy options, successful transition in the long term would therefore rest on the ability of Syrians to unite around a common vision for Syria and the continued role of key international actors in encouraging that transition. But the fact that the Syrian opposition are not united, arguing over issues of both substance and of leadership, may not bode well for a healthy political transition.

### A broader coalition is key to a transition.

Randa Slim, adjunct research fellow at the New America Foundation and a scholar at the Middle East Institute, ‘12  
“Unite Syria’s opposition first,” http://www.kurdnas.com/en/index.php?option=com\_content&view=article&id=320:unite-syrias-opposition-first&catid=36:reports1&Itemid=56

This coalition-building process should not be left to the SNC. Instead it should create a framework where all significant Syrian opposition groups have an equal weight in the decision-making process. This effort would aim at putting in place a larger opposition council, "a network of networks," composed of the SNC, the FSA, the NCC, the grass-roots activists leadership councils including the Local Coordinating Committees (LCCs), independent activists like Aref Dalila and Michel Kilo, Kurdish political parties that have embraced regime change including the KSNC, and leading business figures who are sympathetic to the opposition cause. Only a united opposition movement that provides a credible alternative to the Assad regime will hasten its demise.

### B. Delivery and implementation of democracy assistance.

### The plan fills information gaps.

**Grim**, Senior Researcher, Pew Forum on Religious and Public Life, **’6**

Brian J., et al., “Measuring International Socio-Religious Values and Conflict by Coding US State Department Reports,” JSM Proceedings, AAPOR-Section on Survey Research Methods, American Association of Public Opinion Researchers (AAPOR) annual conference, https://www.amstat.org/sections/srms/Proceedings/y2006/Files/JSM2006-000040.pdf, p. 4125

4. Conclusions

Cross-national data on religion and socio-religious conflict are deficient. One way to obtain data in a relatively cost- and time-effective way is to code existing government reports, such as the State Department’s International Religious Freedom Reports. This paper summarizes one such project. We were able to code 250 fairly sophisticated measures with a high degree of inter-rater reliability for 195 countries in less than nine months. The resulting data not only reliably make quantitative summaries of the Reports, but our data also relate to other external data sources in ways that suggest that they are valid indicators of the constructs underlying the measures.

We have used the Reports due to advantages they offer above other sources of data. First, the State Department officials who compile the Reports rely on a wide array of sources: Embassy personnel and other government and State Department employees, the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom, journalists, human rights organizations, religious groups, local government, and academics. Rather than relying entirely on local government reports or scattered journalist accounts, the reports are a **systematic** collection of information, taken from **diverse** sources, reported in a **standardized** format, and completed for 195 countries. Second, embassies follow a standardized format with similar information included for each country. Third, embassy representatives receive training in completing the forms and gathering the information. Fourth, the representatives assembling the data live in the country but are not representatives of the local government or long-term residents, giving a **positive balance** between **nearness and remoteness**. Fifth, these Reports are vetted by various State Department offices with **expertise** in regional affairs and human rights. Sixth, the Reports are getting richer over time. And most importantly, the State Department Reports allow coding of social regulation of religion and socio-religious conflict and violence—these are important measures that are absent in the Fox/Sandler data.

While we are not making any substantive or predictive claims in this paper, the types of measures we have developed beg for further analysis. How do different religions and religious regulation relate to violence? Does the relationship change according to the type of violence? Do some types of religious beliefs lead to more violence? Is it true that people fight for what they hold dear and believe in? Why are some societies plagued with socio-religious violence (e.g., Iraq and Israel), while others quite nearby are generally peaceful (e.g., the UAE and Kazakhstan)? With better data, such questions can be empirically explored.

**The plan’s effective. Statistics prove.**

**Cullen**, The Evaluation Center, **’11**

Anne E., Principal Research Associate, The Evaluation Center, Western Michigan University, et al. [Chris L. S. Coryn and Jim Rugh], Sep.: “The Politics and Consequences of Including Stakeholders in International Development Evaluation,” American Journal of Evaluation, 32 (3): 345 -361, DOI: 10.1177/1098214010396076, p. 353 [NDT]

According to the questionnaire responses, the highest rated positive consequences of participatory evaluation approaches included increased usefulness (e.g., practicality/relevance) of evaluation findings (93%), increased evaluation use (e.g., findings are acted upon/used; 88%), increased empowerment of stakeholders (88%), and increased stakeholder buy in (87%). However, in interviews different positive consequences were identified.

### Evaluation improves the effectiveness and efficiency of democracy assistance.

NRC Committee ’8 “DG” = “Democracy and Governance”

National Research Council Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs: *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge through Evaluations and Research*, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12164.html>, p. 27 [ACG]

It is therefore crucial, if USAID’s democracy assistance is to be more effective and make best use of scarce resources, that the agency (and other donors) be able to identify which elements of their complex and multifold democracy assistance projects are doing the most work to move democracy forward. Moreover, they would like to know which DG projects work best to accomplish specific goals in particular countries.

### Democracy assistance can be effective if it’s not overbearing. Evaluation and long-term planning are essential.

Lincoln A. Mitchell, International Politics Prof, Columbia, and David L. Phillips, Project Director, NCAFP (National Committee on American Foreign Policy), ’8

Enhancing Democracy Assistance: A Research Project of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy AND Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University AND The Atlantic Council of the United States, Jan., <http://www.acus.org/publication/enhancing-democracy-assistance>, p. 3 [WPT UPD]

Today's global setting poses several distinct challenges to democracy assistance. Countries such as China offer an alternative model of governance that promotes economic development without political reform, while wielding substantial economic leverage. Populist authoritarian regimes and illiberal democracies, such as those of Venezuela and Iran, claim popular legitimacy while cracking down on internal dissent. Challenges to democratization have also been exacerbated by the Iraq War and the Global War on Terror (GWOT), which have fueled anti-Americanism around the globe, undermined US credibility, overstretched US resources, and compromised domestic support for democracy assistance.

Democracy's foes maintain that US democracy assistance is merely a pretext for undermining governments hostile to America's interests. They have limited the activities of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), restricted the independence of the media, and impeded the flow of foreign resources to local pro-democracy groups. Many use counter-terrorism as justification for cracking down on dissent. At home, domestic critics of democracy assistance point to the ongoing problems in Iraq and the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority as evidence that democracy assistance is not in the interest of the United States.

But an assessment of several decades of successful democracy assistance reveals important lessons that can serve as guiding principles for making future efforts effective and pragmatic: (i) be patient, (ii) maintain modesty, (iii) tread softly, (iv) localize leadership, and (v) recognize the limits of military intervention. America's role should be to stand behind, not in front of democracy movements.

In order to address negative perceptions of democracy assistance around the world and to rebuild bipartisan support at home, it is necessary to reframe the means and ends of assistance efforts. The democracy assistance community can maximize the impact of its activities by planning for the long term, insuring better training and preparation for field staff, and emphasizing more rigorous project evaluation.

### C. Political training for post-Assad government.

### **The plan promotes knowledge of participatory politics.**

Crawford and Kearton 1 [PE = Participatory Evaluation]

Gordon and Iain, Dec.: “Evaluating Democracy and Governance Assistance,” ESCOR Research Report No. 7894, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/PDF/Outputs/Mis_SPC/R7894-FinRep.pdf>, [CEDA TRIP]

PE provides the key input of local knowledge and analysis that is essential to an evaluation that provides a truly critical examination of external activities, in contrast to those studies that are congratulatory and even obsequious in tone (for instance, Sutherland 1999). In this way, the very process of a participatory evaluation becomes akin to the process of democratisation itself (at least from an actor-oriented perspective). The application of reflexivity in research and dialogue between actors are crucial to both processes. It is through reflection and dialogue that actors gain a critical awareness of the success and limitations of their efforts in relation to current social realities, and through which further action for change is stimulated. It is also through dialogue and negotiation that different interest positions can be resolved, with common value positions constructed across different social positions and identities. In this particular sphere, a participatory evaluation entails collective reflection by and dialogue between a range of well-informed domestic actors in order to appraise the efforts of external actors. The strengths and limitations of donor activities are examined in the context of the prospects for and constraints upon sustained democratisation in the particular country context. The anticipated outcome of such negotiation and consensus-seeking is a learning process for all. For donor agencies, their past and current efforts are subjected to critical reflection and appraisal, enabling objectives to be revisited and strategies refined, informed by internal perspectives. For participant evaluators, knowledge of processes of political change is enhanced, in turn informing and strengthening local action for democratic change. Thus, the act of evaluation becomes an act of democratisation.

### Evaluation builds capacity in democratic governance.

Peter **Burnell**, Politics and International Studies Prof, Warwick, **’8**.

“From Evaluating Democracy Assistance to Appraising Democracy Promotion,” Political Studies 56 (2) (June 1): 414-434. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00653.x

One view is that the **purpose** of assessing activities directed at supporting democratisation is not simply to learn how to do things better or, even, to make practitioners more accountable to the politicians and taxpayers who authorise and fund their work. Instead the point should be to exercise, display and share the democratic ethos. Assessment itself becomes a tool of socialisation into democratic values, by **setting an example** and through the chosen methods of involvement. The aim is to establish shared ownership of both process and results. **The act of evaluation becomes an act of** democratisation (Crawford, 2003, p. 17). It helps democratise the relationship between ‘donor’ and ‘recipient’, compelling both sides to commit more fully to such values as inclusiveness and mutual respect. In its more **technical** aspect it can be an exercise in **capacity building** in **democratic governance** too. The procedures for designing, implementing and analysing the results from assessments and for evaluating the assessment process itself may all be fashioned to reflect these high ambitions. In the words of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (2004, p. 19), participatory evaluation expresses the right for ordinary people to have a voice in matters that significantly affect their interest. If this is so important to assessing economic development cooperation then its relevance to external efforts to promote democracy can hardly be overstated. Indeed for Gordon Crawford (2003, pp. 8–10) democracy assistance misses both an opportunity and a democratic obligation if informed local actors do not control the impact evaluation and if their knowledge and understanding are not incorporated as key components. The fact that certain approaches to promoting democracy involve some measure of coercion, coupled with the idea that democratisation is not something that can be imposed from outside, suggests that the role of assessing democracy promotion cannot be left to the democracy promoters. As the construction of assessment methodologies must bear some relation to the policies and methods for promoting democracy, then the case for participant appraisal of strategies begins to look unassailable.

### Political inclusion and representation ensure a stable transition.

Danin, CFR, 2-21-12

Robert M., Eni Enrico Mattei Senior Fellow for Middle East and Africa Studies, Council on Foreign Relations: “Debating U.S. Options in Syria,” Council on Foreign Relations Expert Roundup, http://www.cfr.org/syria/debating-us-options-syria/p27402 [ACG CEDA 8]

The United States should pursue three parallel objectives in Syria: ending Assad's rule, halting the bloodshed, and working to unify the political opposition for the day after. Time is critical--continued violence means more lives lost and a greater risk of Syria's fragmentation. Syria's emerging power vacuum already allows al-Qaeda bombings, armed jihadist infiltrations from Iraq, and the flow of Iranian and Hezbollah arms and possibly fighters. Civil war dramatically increases the chances of violence spilling over into neighboring Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, or Israel, and increases the risk that Syrian Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) and weapons of mass destruction will fall into rogue hands.

The United States must sustain muscular diplomacy and active high-level attention. This means fortifying the emerging coalition encompassing the Arab League, Turkey, and others in the newly-formed "Friends of Syria" contact group. This grouping provides regional legitimacy and international unity. It should tighten economic sanctions, further increase Syria's isolation in all international fora, and help the opposition formulate a positive vision for an inclusive and representative post-Assad Syria.

Arab League leadership is key to sustaining a unified front opposing Assad's rule. Moscow, increasingly isolated, should be encouraged by contact-group diplomacy to effectuate Assad's transfer of power to a deputy, while initiating dialogue with the opposition coupled with an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire. This requires all to compromise, but it would safeguard Russia's interests. Meanwhile, the UN Secretary General should be encouraged to appoint a special envoy to Syria to advance diplomatic efforts.

### A commitment to evaluation by agency leadership inculcates a culture of learning and ensures effective democracy assistance.

**NRC Committee ’8** **“DG” = “Democracy and Governance”**

National Research Council Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs: *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge through Evaluations and Research*, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12164.html>, p. 220-221 [CEDA 4]

Providing Leadership and Strategic Vision

Obtaining more impact evaluations to determine the effects of DG programs is chiefly a matter of setting priorities, and that is the domain of leadership. Strong leadership is essential if USAID is to become an organization that prizes learning about the successes and failures of its DG projects, whether launched in the missions, regional bureaus, or the central DG office. Because DG programs are such an important—and often controversial—part of U.S. foreign policy, the committee recommends that leadership should come **from the top**—in the form of a DG evaluation initiative led by a senior USAID official. This initiative should be guided by a policy statement outlining the strategic role of investments in impact evaluations of DG programming. It is particularly important that the “vision” behind impact evaluations make clear that gaining knowledge of what works and what does not work is the primary goal. Impact evaluations should thus be targeted as far as possible to study projects as designed and carried out; the discussion in Chapters 6 and 7 [220-221] shows that actual projects—not just artificial or deceptively simple versions of them—could likely be given sound impact evaluations, including the most effective randomized designs. In addition, missions and implementers with generally good records will be positively recognized, and not sanctioned, if they uncover sound evidence that programs do not work or work poorly.

This statement would provide a valuable opportunity to adjust the balance of motivations that currently drive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in DG. The administrator should see the need for this initiative, both to ensure the **sound** and **effective** use of the considerable increases in budgetary resources going into DG programs in the past five years and to create a leading edge for revitalizing evaluation across the agency. The initiative would begin a conscious and deliberate effort to undertake the highest-quality impact evaluations (including randomized designs where possible), in order to restore a better balance among different types of M&E activities, which are now largely focused on tracking project outputs or very proximate outcomes. Impact evaluations would help USAID accumulate knowledge that would (1) distinguish project models that work from those that do not, (2) identify the conditions under which particular approaches are more or less effective, and (3) help USAID avoid **costly** investments that may **cause harm** or may simply be ineffective.

### Democracy assistance includes both process and product. What's more, it should, for both academics and practitioners. Participatory evaluation is central.

**Lappin**, Democracy Assistance Scholar and Practitioner, **’9**

Richard, Ph.D. Candidate, Center for Peace Research and Strategic Studies, Leuven (Belgium), Participated in over a dozen democracy assistance missions, July: “What Democracy? Exploring the Absent Centre of Post-Conflict Democracy Assistance,” Journal of Peace, Conflict, and Development, Issue 14, http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/dl/Issue%2014%20Article%203%20Final%20Version%201.pdf, pp. 23-26

Towards Democracy ‘as Process’ Assistance

Arguably, the whole democracy assistance project can be considered patronising insofar that it implies a transfer of enlightened knowledge to those who lack the capacity or fundamental understanding to reach peaceful democratic governance themselves. However, as Oliver Richmond has indicated, the alternative of complete non-engagement is much less palatable.76 Yet, this predicament is heightened because the solutions currently offered by democracy assistance often bear little relation to the lived realities of those seeking to reconstruct their society following violent conflict. This contradiction is increasingly recognised in the broader peacebuilding literature with John Paul Lederach, for example, arguing that peacebuilding must pay attention to stakeholders at a grassroots level as well as to elites.77 Engagement with a variety of stakeholders is important, as within a given [23-24] conflict each actor will come from a different background and, as such, will *see* the conflict differently.78 One of the core challenges of peacebuilding, therefore, is to create a social space where these contrasting perspectives can meet and where the actors can recognise their interdependency and negotiate a shared and mutually attractive peaceful future.79 Indeed, as each of these viewpoints interact conflict is transformed from being the *product* of broken relationships to the *process* of negotiating a peaceful future through interdependent relationships, joint participation and dialogue.

However, although these sentiments of negotiation, toleration and rational debate are echoed in the strategic rationale for post-conflict democracy assistance, they are also attributes that are blatantly excluded from the minimalist models of democracy that have dominated international assistance strategies. Indeed, it is precisely the **substantive** qualities – the very characteristics that make democracy so appealing to peacebuilding – which are ultimately neglected; a disjuncture which can be said to represent the absent **centre** of post-conflict democracy assistance. Boutros-Ghali once stated that “democratic culture is the culture of peace fundamentally.”80 Perhaps talk of a ‘**participatory** democratic culture’ would have been more accurate.

Indeed, if the true potential of democracy to peacebuilding is to be harnessed, the alternative is for democracy assistance organisations to embrace a ‘democracy as process’ approach that focuses on more participatory forms of governance through [24-25] greater collaboration with governments, political parties, the media, civil society organisations and academics.81 From this perspective, democracy is not seen as something that can be achieved through a single **event** such as a successful election, but rather as an iterative and gradual **process**. As such, **assistance** efforts should be **concentrated** on improving the foundations of democracy including civic involvement, improvement of wider socio-economic conditions and the promotion of civil liberties. This also requires an acknowledgement that democratic development cannot simply be equated to any movement away from the initial chaos of a post-conflict state and that democracy assistance can not be evaluated effectively through quantitative indicators. As Gordon Crawford and Iain Kearton have suggested, **donors** should adopt more **participatory** forms of **evaluation** and make more use of the perspectives of domestic actors on external actions.82 In a similar fashion, **academics** must embrace qualitative research into the interpretations, meanings and values attached to post-conflict democracy assistance. Indeed, one of the key challenges for democracy assistance practitioners and theorists alike is to not only to reconsider their own assumptions about democracy, but to explore how persons in the states they target perceive external efforts to assist democratisation. [25-26]

Conclusion

Associating democracy more closely with themes of participation, citizenship and political activity is no easy task and important discussions remain to be held over the exact relationship between participatory elements **(process)** and political decision-making **(product)**. This is **fundamental** and illustrates that democracy assistance predictably necessitates a balance between the **processes** and **products** of democracy; a balancing act that is ultimately dependent upon the country targeted. However, what is **vital** is that these questions receive the attention they deserve and are brought to the **forefront** of **academic** and **practitioner thinking** on the subject. The current lack of engagement with the values and assumptions that are attached to democracy by international organisations represents a debilitating absent centre of our understanding of post-conflict democratisation which has precipitated confusion over what exactly is being aimed for in a post-conflict country and, by implication, if this is indeed congruent with sustainable peacebuilding. Academics and practitioners should, therefore, take meaningful steps to explore the assumptions inherent in post-conflict democracy assistance programmes – both within the organisations and within the targeted states – so that steps can be taken to make the process more coherent, more comprehensible and more sustainable for all the actors involved.

### Only the U.S. can assist the Syrian transition – the plan will build leverage over time.

Michael **Young**, Opinion Page Editor, Lebanon Daily Star, 5-19-**11**

“An Obama road map to change in Syria.” Lebanon Daily Star, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/mobile/Article.aspx?id=139016.

We’ve heard Obama administration officials declare lately that they have little leverage over Syria. But nations build leverage, they don’t just pick it out of the ether. If there is one country that has the means to bring the Arab states, Europe, and Russia and China into some sort of concerted effort to hasten Assad’s exit from power, and more importantly, to help Syrians who oppose their regime organize a **smooth transition** to a democratic, pluralistic, order, it’s the United States. In fact **only** the **U**nited **S**tates can take such measures.

### Neutrality affirms the imperial status quo. Support for Syrian revolutionary claims to humanity affirms emancipatory potential.

Smolenski, Magister of Arts, Philosophy, Warsaw, ’11

Jan, May 29, “Reanimating human rights,” Critical Legal Thinking, http://www.criticallegalthinking.com/?p=3405 [ACG CST]

There is also another problem with the r2p-vs-national sovereignty model. R2p and sovereignty are two sides of the same coin, they operate in the same paradigm or, in other words: r2p questions the idea of state sovereignty but at the same time it feeds on it. The truth of both sovereignty and r2p is a good (?) old *protego ergo obligo*. The one that poses itself in the position of protector demands loyalty and obedience in terms of either giving up the right of self-determinacy (over political or economic organization of polity) or claims the right to draw strict divisions over who is to be protected and in what way. It is the idea of sovereign power protecting individuals under its jurisdiction that justifies European actions against refugees from North Africa and migrants from elsewhere: reintroduction of border controls in Schengen zone and Frontex-lead operation Hermes aimed at keeping fleeing North Africa off European shores. In fact concentrating on legality or righteousness of the intervention conceals the tragedy of the hundreds of thousands North African countries which still suffer from colonial and post-colonial exploitation fleeing to Europe. It conceals the situation of people in Bahrain, Syria and Yemen despite many invocations by “whattabouters”. One of Polish governmental officials already introduced a division into “good” and “bad” migrants. “The good” are those who are fleeing war zone – that is Libyans. “The bad” are those who want to make their life bearable in economic terms – Tunisians and alike – as if not all migrants from North Africa risking their lives on rafts and overcrowded boats were indirect victims of Western exploitation, mediated by regimes of Gaddafi, Ben Ali or Mubarak. R2p and state sovereignty – as two sides of sovereignty – claim the monopoly of interpretation of international law, monopoly to determine denotation of the concepts such as a migrant, refugee, human and citizen, to connect the words with things or in this context – human beings.

In this context the most important question is: how to grasp both issues – the problematic intervention and situation of the refugees and the oppressed – without resorting to the concept of sovereignty. In more practical terms, this question concerns how to connect the issue of resistance of a probable oil grab by Western powers with treating refugees not as bare life but as subjects. Maybe it is time to reanimate human rights and read them in a radical way. I expect to hear from the disciples of Hannah Arendt that the demise of national sovereignty caused the situation in which “human rights” are empty unless they assume a form of the rights of citizens of a concrete state and that refugees, people deprived of all but abstract humanity, are enjoying in fact no protection and are the perfect example of this emptiness. I expect to hear that human rights are a tool of dividing human being into those who count as humans and those who do not and are reduced to *homo sacer* 0 bare life, from *homo sapiens sapiens*. They are right. Rights do not describe humans, they create them. A yet another argument would state that protection of human rights was mentioned in Resolution 1973 and are used as a tool of Western imperialism. It is also right. Moreover – rights as a tool of protection of individuals and groups have become a vernacular and degenerated themselves (Costas Douzinas pointed at this fact many times). The “politics of rights” – if I might use such term – replaces politics, substitutes social and economic conflicts with technical problems over the meaning of the rules, and leads to biopolitical management of population. It is true that in such circumstances human rights lose their protective power.

Those two counterarguments are based on a presumption that practice of enforcing human rights contradicts their universal claim and thus the rights of man are *litera mortua*. One way or the other, the rights of man are the rights of white rich males and do not apply to those, who most desperately need their protection. But, and this is the most important point made by Douzinas, Jacques Ranciere and Slavoj Zizek for today, this gap between universal, utopian claim of human rights and imperfect, sometimes disappointing practice is absolutely constitutive of? their emancipatory potential. They are not ultimate principles to be violently imposed on those who do not accept Western lifestyle, neither are they the rules that generally guide (or at least should) the actions of governments. They are not only the written words. The kernel of human rights lies in the tension between the concrete and the universal. To use Ranciere’s expression, human rights “are the rights of those who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not.”[1] This is what Ranciere calls dissensus – not an opposition to agreement but the questioning of the established system of meanings and denotations. “Political names are litigious names, names whose extension and comprehension are uncertain and which open for that reason the space of a test or verification.”[2]. A verification, which is by all means political. And it is this concrete-and-imperfect-against-universal that gives political subjectivity to those, who are perceived only as and reduced to victims. To quote Ranciere once again, “[t]he subject of [human] rights is the subject, or more accurately the process of subjectivization, that bridges the interval between two forms of the existence of those rights”[[3]](http://www.criticallegalthinking.com/?p=3405" \l "_ftn3), the written text and rights-in-use, the questioning of the sociopolitical *status quo*. Human rights do not belong to fully formed human beings. They construct ‘humans’, they give identity and construct us as subjects.[4] In this sense, gesture of risking one’s life in an overcrowded raft to reach Lampedusa, throwing stones at armed governmental tanks in Syria, hunger striking in Greece – all of them are deeply political: they question the whole edifice of social, economic and political relations, they are a claim to become ‘human’. In Slavoj Zizek’s words “[f]ar from being pre-political, ‘universal human rights’ designate the precise space of politicization proper; what they amount to is the right to universality as such—the right of a political agent to assert its radical non-coincidence with itself (in its particular identity), to posit itself as the ‘supernumerary’, the one with no proper place in the social edifice; and thus as an agent of universality of the social itself.”[[5]](http://www.criticallegalthinking.com/?p=3405#_ftn5)

Human rights understood as a tension between particular and universal, as already always split between reality and idea(l) join the issues of refugees, rebels and NATO invasion. They are a tool for political subjectivization of those who ‘are not taken into account,’ whether it comes to national political self-determination (Syria), better life (refugees) or deciding about national resources (Libya). Human rights read in a truly radical way, with their emancipatory promise taken seriously, are not limited to a set of rules that should be ticked off to call a state democratic. Radicalism of human rights lies in a constant “why only this, why not that.” Why only the right to economic freedom, why not the right to economic welfare? Of course Douzinas warns us, that this “career” of rights leads to their dissolution in political and cultural discourse: “I have the right to X” became equal to “I want X.”[6] But the way out of this paradox is not to give up such claims but claim right things. Radical reading of human rights is to take them as a level struggle.

We must concentrate on human rights not despite intervention in Libya, but precisely *because* the intervention has already taken place. [Gaston Gordillo](http://www.criticallegalthinking.com/?p=2974) was right claiming that intervention in Libya is counter-revolutionary: its aim is not to fuel the radical changes in North Africa but rather to implement such changes, that imperial *status quo* remains intact. Human rights can sustain the revolutionary drive. We must concentrate on human rights because people leave North Africa on their rafts and die on the streets of Syrian cities and towns. We must concentrate on human rights, because their universality and their open dimension of “to come” point to other places that are not on newspapers’ headlines. Concentration on the formal aspect of Libyan intervention aims at finding a secure non-partisan position that enables condemning it without getting one’s hands dirty. The truth is that in a situation when people are dying and being killed in thousands per month there is no such position. If – as Derrida said – the innocence of victims of 9/11 was not so innocent itself, it means that our position is far more complicated: we, willingly or not benefited (as the European Union citizens, as inhabitants of the core of capitalist world-system) from Mubarak’s, Ben Ali’s, Assad’s and Gaddafi’s rule. In such situation we cannot have clear conscience whatsoever. What is at stake here is not a truly non-partisan position of an external spectator (in fact impossible) but rather a political resolution of a problem we are deeply involved in.

## 1AC- Underview

### The US has actively opposed Assad and pressured his allies for decades.

### 1. Years of covert support for opposition groups.

Deutsche Welle 4-20-11

“US funding of opposition complicates Obama's Damascus policy,” <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,14996885,00.html>

The cables produced by WikiLeaks showed that while some US officials suggested that the State Department should reconsider its involvement as the Syrian authorities "would undoubtedly view any US funds going to illegal political groups as tantamount to supporting regime change," the funding continued under current President Barack Obama's administration. The cables did not reveal if financial support to Syrian opposition groups is on-going.

For regional analysts, however, the revelations are of **little surprise** and some believe that while such actions could complicate already fraught relations between the two countries, the leaked cables and the information they contain are of **little significance**. "The US and the Syrian groups have never hidden this funding and cooperation; a number of opposition figures even met Bush in Washington when he was president," Middle East expert and author Rime Allaf told Deutsche Welle. "It's normal for the US to do this as part of their brand of democracy promotion. Look at the amount of funding though; it's a **pathetic** amount compared to how much the US is willing to spend when it really means business."

Allaf believes that the US funding of Barada TV, which has been covering the mass protests in Syria since they began last month as well as increasing its anti-regime propaganda, should also not be overestimated. "Barada is not an influential component in the opposition movement," she said.

"US support seems to have been minimal and part of the Bush Administration's democratization programs," Nadim Shehadi, associate fellow with the Middle East and North Africa Program at Chatham House, told Deutsche Welle. "If you compare that to the visits by US politicians and the engagement with the regime, on balance the US administration has been more supportive of Assad than of the opposition."

### The U.S. funds opposition groups in Syria.

Toner, Spokesman, State Department, ’11

Mark, Apr. 18: “Daily Press Briefing,” Middle East Digest, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/mideastdigest/janapr/161155.htm [ACG UTA 7]

QUESTION: Is the United States funding opposition groups in Syria?

MR. TONER: Well, again, we are – we’re working with a variety of civil society actors in Syria, with the goal here of strengthening freedom of expression and the kind of institutions that we believe are going to be vital to a possible democratic future in Syria.

### Assad perceives this assistance as a threat.

Toner, Again

Mark, 4-18-11: “Daily Press Briefing,” Middle East Digest, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/mideastdigest/janapr/161155.htm [ACG UTA 7]

QUESTION: Is the United States Government, through any programs or means, trying to destabilize the Asad regime in Syria?

MR. TONER: Well, the premise of your question is whether we are engaged in --

QUESTION: There was no premise. There was no premise. It was a flat-out question. There was no predicate; there was no premise.

MR. TONER: Yes, but, as you know, James, we need to be careful in – to identify what we’re talking about because if you’re talking about a news story based on the contents of – or the alleged contents of classified cables, then I can’t speak to the specific substance of that.

QUESTION: I didn’t ask you to speak to anything specific. My question was, very broadly, is the United States Government, through any programs or means, presently working to destabilize the Asad regime in Syria? If the answer is no, you should feel free to say so.

MR. TONER: Well, we do – and look, this is a – to talk about Syria, but we should also talk globally here. The U.S. democracy and governance programs in Syria, it’s no different than programs that the United States has in many other democratic governments around the world – or countries around the world. This is part of our support for civil society and nongovernmental organizations. What’s different, I think, in this situation is that the Syrian Government perceives this kind of assistance as a threat to its control over the Syrian people.

### 2. Economic sanctions.

RTT News 2-6

“US to Tighten Syria Sanctions.” Global Financial Newswires, February 6, 2012. <http://www.rttnews.com/1813218/us-to-tighten-syria-sanctions.aspx?type=usp&pageNum=1> [LVC UTA]

The United States has said that it will work to seek regional and national sanctions against Syria and strengthen the ones it already announced.

This was stated by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in a joint press conference with Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov after their meeting in Bulgarian capital Sofia on Sunday.

Russia and China Saturday vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution that called for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to cede power following fatal suppression of protests in that nation.

Clinton termed what happened at the United Nations as "a travesty." Those countries that refuse to support the Arab League plan bear full responsibly for protecting the brutal regime in Damascus. And it is tragic that after all the work that the Security Council did, they had a 13-2 vote, she told reporters.

Clinton said the 13 countries that voted in favor of the Arab League plan were primed to start a process for political engagement that will lead to a transition. She expressed fear that "the failure to do so will actually increase the chances for a brutal civil war. Many Syrians, under attack from their own government, are moving to defend themselves, which is to be expected."

"Faced with a neutered Security Council," she stressed the need to "redouble our efforts outside of the United Nations with those allies and partners who support the Syrian people's right to have a better future. We have to increase diplomatic pressure on the Assad regime and work to convince those people around President Assad that he must go, and that there has to be a recognition of that and a new start to try to form a government that will represent all of the people of Syria."

The top US diplomat vowed that sanctions against Syria will be "implemented to the fullest to dry up the sources of funding and the arms shipments that are keeping the regime's war machine going. We will work to expose those who are still are funding the regime and sending them weapons that are used against defenseless Syrians, including women and children. And we will work with the friends of a democratic Syria around the world to support the opposition's peaceful political plans for change. We will work to provide what humanitarian relief we are able to do so."

### The UN resolution increased pressure on Assad and support for the opposition.

AFP, citing Clinton, Secretary of State, 2-17-12

“Clinton welcomes 'overwhelming' consensus on Syria,” Agence France Presse, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jQMTSNJCUkagiXVPDtb_O2n5BEUQ?docId=CNG.4a4d727e25cca96e6035c2b7cee70153.1f1>

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Friday that the UN General Assembly has shown an "overwhelming international consensus" to demand the Syrian regime end its bloody crackdown.

The UN General Assembly demanded an immediate halt to the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's brutal crackdown on dissent, in a strongly worded resolution adopted on Thursday by a 137-12 vote.

The vote "demonstrated an overwhelming international consensus that the bloody assaults must end," Clinton said at a press conference with EU Foreign Policy chief Cathy Ashton.

"In the face of this global condemnation the regime in Damascus, however, appears to be escalating its assaults on civilians, and those who are suffering cannot get access to the humanitarian assistance they need and deserve," she said.

"So we will keep working to pressure and isolate the regime, to support the opposition and to provide relief to the people of Syria."

### “Friends of Syria” conference.

AFP, citing Clinton, 2-17-12

Secretary of State: “Clinton welcomes 'overwhelming' consensus on Syria,” Agence France Presse, http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jQMTSNJCUkagiXVPDtb\_O2n5BEUQ?docId=CNG.4a4d727e25cca96e6035c2b7cee70153.1f1

Clinton recalled she will attend a "Friends of Syria" conference on February 24 in Tunis, "where a number of nations will work to intensify pressure on the regime and to mobilize the humanitarian relief that is needed."

"We also hope to coordinate efforts to enable a Syrian-led transition before the regime's actions tear the country apart. We're looking for an inclusive democratic process," Clinton said.

### Drones

MSNBC 2-17-12

Jim Miklaszewski: “Officials: US drones monitoring clashes in Syria,” http://worldnews.msnbc.msn.com/\_news/2012/02/17/10435915-officials-us-drones-monitoring-clashes-in-syria [D8T]

"A good number" of unmanned U.S. military and intelligence drones are operating in the skies over Syria, monitoring the Syrian military's attacks against opposition forces and innocent civilians alike, U.S. defense officials tell NBC News' Jim Miklaszewski.

### The U.S. is planning military strikes.

Press TV 12-29-11

http://presstv.com/detail/218384.html

The United States has instructed the National Security Council to begin seeking options for Washington's intervention in Syria, especially through the Syrian opposition.

The options for US interference include what American officials have called the “unlikely” option of imposing a no-fly zone over the Arab country.

The process led by US National Security Council Director Steve Simon is expected to involve top members of the State, Defense and Treasury Departments and focus on ways to “aid” the Syrian opposition.

Other possibilities include providing “humanitarian aid” to rebel forces and establishing a “safe zone” inside Syrian territory, presumably through military means, near the Turkish border.

Establishing a no-fly zone over parts of Syria would likely involve large-scale attacks on the Syrian air defense and military command-and-control systems.

### Senate Resolution

### A. It supports the opposition.

ABC News 2-10-12

Sunlen Miller: “Senators Introduce Syrian Resolution to Aid, Not Arm, Opposition,” http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/02/senators-introduce-syrian-resolution-to-aid-not-arm-opposition/ [ACG D8T]

Amid the [violence in Syria](http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/syria-crisis-government-attacks-continue-15528025), Sens. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., introduced a resolution today calling for the departure of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and calling on the Obama administration to start providing “substantial material and technical support,” to the Syrian opposition.

### B. It passed.

AP 2-17-12

“Senate passes resolution condemning Syrian government’s violence against its people,” Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/congress/senate-passes-resolution-condemning-syrian-governments-violence-against-its-people/2012/02/17/gIQAiHiEKR\_story.html [ACG D8T]

The Senate has approved a resolution condemning the Syrian government for violence against its people.

The Senate backed the non-binding measure Friday on a voice vote. The resolution also expresses disappointment with China and Russia for vetoing a U.N. Security Council resolution to condemn Syrian President Bashar Assad, urging the two countries to reconsider.

The resolution cites Syria’s “brutal and unjustifiable use of force against civilians.” The U.N. says more than 5,400 people have been killed since March in the regime’s crackdown.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman John Kerry, D-Mass., says there is consensus in the Middle East that Assad is doomed, but the end could be many months away in a likely civil war.

## 1AC—Optional Additional Cards

### Normative commitment to democracy prevents re-appropriation to support war.

Piki Ish-Shalom, International Relations Prof, Hebrew U, ’9

“Theorizing Politics, Politicizing Theory, and the Responsibility That Runs Between,” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (02-Jul): 303-316, doi:10.1017/S1537592709090811

Committing theorists morally and explicating the moral groundwork of theory constitute what can be called a normative ethic. Such a normative ethic further includes the derivative principles of evaluating theories according to their moral standards and according to the morality of their possible ramifications in the real world (imperfect as such evaluation is). In other words, the customary evaluation of theory, which is limited to appraising theory’s explanatory strength, parsimonious properties, and prospects of additional hypotheses, is not enough. It should be supplemented by moral evaluation. Moreover, a normative ethic involves the commitment of theorists to contribute to society, to guarantee that their theories benefit society. The possibility that a theory will be abused politically will decrease to the extent that theorists renounce the principle of objectivity and acknowledge the moral groundwork as well as the moral implication of their theory. Abuses will become more evident. It is not that politicians will stop attempting to exploit the rhetorical capital of theories, but they may find it harder once the theorists openly explicate the moral groundwork of theories and their moral implications. Moreover, the overt moral groundwork will commit the theorists to stand up against a distorting abuse of their creation, i.e., the theory. They would not be shielded by moral dodging explicated, for example, by Waltz, Fleurbaey, and Lucas.

Introducing social science with this normative ethic as a substitute for the existing objective ethic will answer the theorists’ task responsibility to modify theorizing so as to protect against political and rhetorical abuses of theories, and against the resulting undesired ramifications. Moralizing theory would not only diminish the possibility of political abuse, it would also enable academia to contribute more fruitfully to public deliberation. By dismantling theory’s vulnerability to political abuse, academia will be able to contribute to political deliberation in more reasonable and beneficial ways. It may enable theorists to bring theoretical insights to political deliberation which, being based on rigorous research, intellectualism, scholarship, knowledge, and sound logic of inference, may help to elucidate ends and means, and hence promote rational deliberations. Moreover, and as has been explored here, objectivity is not realized (or rejected) exclusively in the epistemic realm. Objectivity stands and falls on the two senses of epistemology and ontology. Henceforth, renouncing the principle of objectivity for the sake of normative ethic carries with it an ontological equivalent. In the social world, truth is not an object-like entity. Truth is not external to the way we explore, understand, and theorize it. To some extent, truth is constructed theoretically, and to theorize about reality is to participate in reality’s construction, and hence to be implicated in moral consequence. By shielding theory from misrepresentation, theorists ensure that their contribution to the construction of the social world is as close as it can be to what they intend it to be; that when identifying democracy as a “force for peace,” their theories would not be mobilized to rationalize and legitimize war—not commandeered in war’s service.

### Learning from past mistakes is critical to new, informed perspectives.

Ken BOOTH International Politics, Aberystywth, ’5

Critical Security Studies and World Politics, pp. 272-276

If a critical theory of security is to reverse the “escape from the real” that has characterized so much academic writing about international rela­tions,42 then it is essential to ask what it means for real people in real places. What, for example, does one's theorizing mean for the people(s) of the Balkans, women in east Africa, the prospects for the poorest classes in some region, the war on terror, the future of the Middle East, the likelihood of resource wars, or the possibility of nuclear weapons being used some­where? It has only been constraints on space that have prevented more case studies being offered in this volume, to illustrate what critically informed empirical studies might look like. Such an engagement with the real should be the heart of the next stage in the growth of critically informed security studies.43 Another central task is that of trying to learn lessons, in the hope of contributing to the prevention of oppressive structures and situations devel­oping in the first place. In this respect, the U.S.-led war on Iraq in 2003 will provide fertile ground for lessons. While President George W. Bush and his allies, notably Prime Minister Tony Blair, argued that the war made the world a safer place, critics argue that U.S. and UK leaders and policies over the years contributed significantly to creating the dangerous regional situa­tion in the first place, while their policies in 2002-2004 made the situation less rather than more secure. In light of this record, critics maintain that nobody could have confidence that U.S.-UK policies in Iraq would create post-conflict harmony in the region. Critics point out that different attitudes to building up local strongmen, supplying arms to human rights abusers, pursuing nuclear disarmament, strengthening the UN, and the more vigor­ous (and less partisan) search for a just and lasting peace between Palestine and Israel—to mention only headline items—would have helped create a different relationship between Iraq and the West. The war against Iraq in 2003, according to this argument, has made the world a more dangerous place, not only by exacerbating the situation in the Middle East but also by replicating policies that legitimize violence and that reject multilateral international bodies. Meanwhile, as leaders of many states focus on the war on terror, more important long-term threats to human security and regional order—poverty, disease, environmental decay—remain marginal or ignored. Remembering Camus, we should understand that human society will never achieve tomorrow what its most powerful do not choose to begin to practice today. There are, however, resources for benevolent change. *Immanent cri­tique* points to the growing voice of global civil society, for example, though the obstacles to benign change should not be underestimated.44 Where one stands on these matters is a scholarly responsibility to be considered with utmost seriousness because somewhere, some people, as these very words are being read, are being starved, oppressed, threatened, or killed in the name of some theory of international politics or economics— or security. The framework of critical security theory outlined above is policy-rele­vant, concerned with improving the conditions of political possibility in the issue area of security. One familiar difficulty from any critical perspective in this respect is the fact that current crises are the symptoms of particular structural wrongs and so are deeply embedded in the workings of society. In order to deal with such difficulties, as the old saying goes, one would not want to start from here. When one is already embroiled in a crisis, realistic options are massively reduced. The main contribution of critical approach­es must therefore be precrisis, to help us think more constructively about ethical commitments, policies, agents, and sites of change. to help humankind, in whole and in part, to move away from the structural wrongs that ensure that crises, like earthquakes, will periodically rent the political landscape. The critical theory project in security studies—committed to the devel­opment of scholarship relating to the in/security of real people in real places—can be translated into the two tasks of critique and reconstruction. Critique entails critical explorations of what is real (ontology), what is reli­able knowledge (epistemology), and what can be done (praxis). Reconstruction requires engagement with concrete issues in world politics, with the aim of maximizing the opportunities for enhancing security, commu­nity, and emancipation in the human interest. Hayward Alker in Chapter 8 showed why, despite everything, there is reason for rational hope. Not only is there Kenneth Boulding's argument about the possibilities revealed by histor­ical actualities, but also Alker's suggestion about the scope for pragmatic concrete projects that are possible across cultures and political theories (what he calls "existential *redemptions* from the violence of the past"). The one world in which we all live is getting smaller, more overheated, and increasingly overcrowded. Meanwhile, the realities of security are becoming more complex as politico-economic and technocultural global­ization interacts with traditional conflicts arising out of international com­petition and mistrust. Runaway science, irrationalities and extremisms of one sort or another, and growing pressures on resources threaten to add more combustible fuel to the already dangerous global situation. Human society in the decades to come is threatened by a future of complex insecu­rity. The outcome for world society is as uncertain as it has ever been—per­haps even more so, given current and future destructive capabilities. Confronted by the threat of complex insecurity, human society needs a the­ory of world security that is ontologically inclusive, epistemologically sophisticated, and praxeologically varied. Old thinking is guaranteed to replicate: Can a critical theory move beyond this and help to emancipate? Security studies will contribute-however remotely or indirectly-to repli­cating or changing peoples' conditions of existence. As students of security, whether one is new to the subject or has been studying it for decades, we have a choice: we can decide to study in ways that replicate a world politics that does not work for countless millions of our fellow human beings; or we can decide to study in ways that seek to help to lift the strains of life- determining insecurity from the bodies and minds of people in real villages and cities, regions and states. The stakes could not be higher.

Jordan Times 2-9-12

“Watershed in Campaign against Damascus,” MENAFN - Jordan Times, http://www.menafn.com/qn\_news\_story\_s.asp?StoryId=1093481710 [ACG D8T]

The most important tool in the struggle is, for the moment, the Syrian National Council, which has been told firmly by Washington to reject any negotiations with Assad.

The US, in particular, is in a strong position because it helped create the National Council, a body modelled on the Iraqi National Council. Since 2006, the State Department has financed the Syrian political opposition to the tune of at least $6 million. The money has gone to the Movement for Justice and Development and Barada TV, which began broadcasting in April 2009. The money began flowing during the Bush administration after it pulled out the ambassador in Damascus following the February assassination of former Lebanese premier Rafiq Hariri, which the US and its Arab allies blamed on the Assad regime. The money continued to be paid during the Obama administration.

In an April 2009 cable published by WikiLeaks, a top ranking US diplomat in Damascus wrote that the authorities "would undoubtedly view any US funds going to illegal political groups as tantamount to supporting regime change".

The cable also said: "A reassessment of current US-sponsored programming that supports anti-[government] factions, both inside and outside Syria, may prove productive."

The money was reportedly flowing until September 2010. While some of the money is said to have supported some dissidents and programmes in Syria, those in the country eventually shunned US aid. At that time the Movement for Justice and Development was established. Its leaders were described in US diplomatic cables as liberals and moderate "Islamists", former members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Syrian exiles received money from the State Department via the Los Angeles-based Democracy Council which donated $6.3 million to fund Syria-related programmes. However, another cable suggests the sum was $12 million.

Since the Russians and Chinese cast vetoes against the resolution the US and its allies tried to sneak through the Security Council, there have been two important developments.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has proposed adopting a "Friends of Syria" approach, involving support for the National Council, the spawn of the Justice and Development Movement, and defecting General Ahmad Al Shaikh has formed a Higher Revolutionary Council to supercede the rebel "Free Syrian Army" as the main force fighting the regime. Ultimately, it can be expected that the US and its allies will press for recognition of the National Council and the provision of arms and training, and logistical support, to the rebel Syrian armed forces. This could eventually lead to the creation of "save havens" for rebel fighters in regions along the border with Turkey.

The result is **certain** to be prolongation of the unrest in Syria, the accelerated destruction of the country's economy, communal conflict and even **all-out civil war**.