



2

Peace and conflict

Learning outcomes

In this section, you will learn the following:

- The contested meanings of peace, conflict, violence and non-violence
- Interactions of political stakeholders and actors in peace and conflict
- The nature, practice and study of peace and conflict
- Debates on peace and conflict

Key questions

- How are peace and violence related?
- What are the main causes of conflict?
- Why do some non-state actors choose violent methods of protest and others non-violence?
- Can violence ever be justified, and if so, when?
- How can third parties successfully intervene in conflict?
- Are truth commissions more effective than criminal courts in peacebuilding?

Introduction

In global politics, interactions between conflict parties often evolve from a perceived or real clash of interests. As such, these interactions can be classified as either peaceful or conflictual, or a combination of both. Unpacking the dynamics between these parties is a challenging task. You must consider how history has shaped their relations and how an imbalance or balance of power influences them. Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and legal frameworks can enable or restrict the relations between these parties also.

It is important not to oversimplify the causes of conflict. There is never a single issue that motivates people in a conflict, for example, identity or **scarcity**. As a conflict moves further away from its initial **trigger**, many more issues will arise that increase the complexity of the conflict. Several **conflict models** are used to understand and unpack peace and conflict in global politics. Conflict models could be seen as a simplification of these conflicts, but they are useful tools that help to identify the root causes of a conflict and are a good starting point to further explore its intricacies.

An interdisciplinary approach is needed for the study of peace and conflict, using methods and knowledge from geography, history, politics, psychology, law, environmental studies, sciences, mathematics and more. For example, an analysis of a conflict may include geographical factors, such as borders between countries, but skills and knowledge from psychology may also be applied to understand the mindset of the actors involved.

Many professionals working in the field of peace studies are involved in organizations that value peace over violence and non-violent protest over violent protest. This **normative** approach is criticized from an academic standpoint: it is argued that a discipline should be unbiased in its understanding of the objects of study and should not promote particular worldviews over others. However, if someone is actively involved in organizations that promote peace it can be difficult to downplay these beliefs and principles.

Regardless of the criticism, the study of peace and conflict allows for a deeper understanding of human interactions and ways to resolve conflicts.

Key terms

Scarcity: the difference between what we need as a society and what is available.

Trigger: the immediate cause of a conflict, different from long-term and short-term causes.

Conflict models: the use of drawings and visuals to identify the relation between different conflict parties and the main issues in the conflict.

Normative: taking a particular position, favouring one thing over another, compared to a more descriptive, objective approach.

2.1 Contested meanings

Key terms

Positive peace: the absence of any form of violence, structural or direct, and the existence of social justice and harmonious relations among peoples and nations.

Structural violence: any human-made structure that prevents someone from achieving their full potential; in other words, any form of social injustice.

Concept: Equality

The emphasis on positive peace in peace and conflict reinforces the need for equality, to achieve a durable, sustainable peace.

In this section, you will explore key terminology related to peace and conflict and how these terms can be viewed from various perspectives. Definitions of key terms are often contested and depend on an individual's position. For example, an actor's political allegiance influences whether or not they see someone as a terrorist or a freedom fighter. There are also more specific definitions, such as **positive peace** and **structural violence** that incorporate discrimination, inequality and injustice in their definitions. Understanding these different interpretations can help to de-escalate violence and establish foundations for lasting peace.

Achieving universal acceptance of specific definitions has also proven to be challenging as various stakeholders have different interests. States might want to see a narrow definition of violence where they are not labelled violent themselves. Similarly, environmental NGOs may argue in favour of a broad definition of peace, to include sustainable and harmonious living with our environment. By this definition, they can claim that societies are not yet as peaceful as others think they are. There are also different cultural traditions that influence the understanding of these terms.

There are strong normative connections to peace and conflict terminology. Many of the main thinkers are driven by their personal aims and how they think the world should be. This greatly influences their definitions. Another complicating factor is that terms are often used differently in different contexts. For example, an aid worker describing their peacebuilding efforts is talking about a different form of peace compared to a historian talking about the Pax Romana. Key terms in peace and conflict are also interrelated—that is, the main concepts of peace, conflict, violence and non-violence seem to be undefinable without using one or more of the other concepts.

Peace and conflict does not begin and end with war. The conflicts discussed in this section range from the community level to the global level. Different types of conflict are discussed, from identity to territory. Finally, the ways in which violence is justified are explored alongside other debates surrounding peace and conflict.

TOK

Write down your definition of peace. Compare it to a classmate's definition. How different are your definitions? Why are they different? Are they related to Groff and Smoker's six stages of peace mentioned in figure 1?

Next, look up an NGO or IGO that claims to promote peace and go to the *mission* or *vision* section on their website. How do they interpret peace? What would have influenced their definition of peace? How different is it from yours? Does their interpretation fit into one of the six stages of peace?

2.1.1 Peace (including positive and negative)

The word "peace" is used in many different ways in many different contexts, from the casual, interpersonal Arabic greeting *As-salamu alaikum* (meaning "Peace be upon you") to more formal announcements, such as in a press conference for a peace treaty between two warring countries. Clearly both ways of using "peace" are not the same.

The word "peace" has different meanings to different people. For example, Leviticus, the third book of the Torah or Old Testament states: "*I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove savage beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country*". Religious texts have multiple possible interpretations, but one reading of this is that peace is a situation where one does not have to fear physical violence. Around 600 BCE, in China, the Tao Te Ching emerged. In chapter 37, it explains that there would be peace when: "[p]eople would be content with their simple, everyday lives, in harmony, and free of desire. When there is no desire, all things are at peace". So, it can be interpreted that the Tao Te Ching holds peace as a state of internal harmony, as opposed to the lack of physical violence described in Leviticus.

Linda Groff, Professor of Political Science and Future Studies at California State University, and the late Paul Smoker, formerly Professor of Peace Studies at Antioch University, argue that there are six stages in the evolution of the peace concept (figure 1). The use of the term *evolution* suggests that Groff and Smoker might regard the final interpretation of peace—*holistic inner-outer peace*—as the broadest definition and perhaps the most desirable.

Peace in its narrowest forms could be interpreted as *negative peace* (in figure 1 called *absence of war*) or the slightly broader *balance of forces*. Both interpretations define peace in relation to war: when there is no war, or a low chance of outbreak of war due to power imbalances, there is peace. Someone enduring the horrors of war is likely to share this point of view. For example, people experiencing aerial bombing campaigns might consider “the bombs no longer dropping” as peace. Groff and Smoker argue that this is the most widespread interpretation of peace. It also ties in with the original interpretation of **peacekeeping**—that is, to stop wars.

Case study

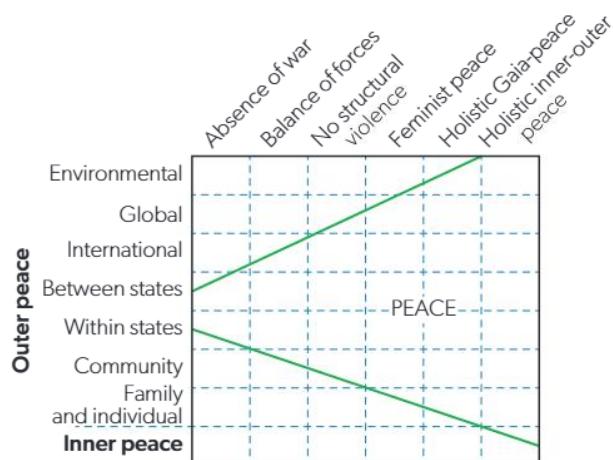
IGOs claiming to aim for peace: United Nations

In 1957, the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) deployed so-called peacekeepers to the border between Egypt and Israel. This was the first armed peacekeeping mission by the UN. The efforts established peace in the sense that they separated the two warring parties and prevented war between them for ten years. The withdrawal of UNEF in 1967 paved the way for the outbreak of the Six Day War between the two countries.



▲ Figure 2 UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld visits UNEF forces, the very first UN peacekeepers, in the Sinai Desert. This is the Brazilian contingent

Another use of this interpretation of peace to mean the *end of war* is when peace treaties are signed to end a war between two or more parties. Egypt and Israel eventually signed a peace treaty in 1979, signalling an end to their conflict. However, this treaty was in turn controversial with neighbouring Arab states, leading to further conflict between Egypt and these countries.



▲ Figure 1 From a narrow to a broad definition of peace. Adapted from *Creating global/local cultures of peace*, Linda Groff and Paul Smoker, 1996

Key term

Peacekeeping: the interposition of forces to stop two warring parties.



Assessment advice

Here we refer to a historical example to explain how peacekeeping was originally intended. In your paper 2 essays, you have to use contemporary case studies to show your understanding of global politics. The United Nations Peacekeeping website shows their current missions: go to <https://peacekeeping.un.org> and click on “Where we operate”.

Key terms

Hegemonic stability theory:

this perspective argues that global stability and lack of violent conflict might derive from one strong powerful country, the so-called "hegemon". Historically this may have been empires such as the Mogul Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire or the United States. When "the hegemon" is in decline, this could lead to the increase of violent conflict.

Proxy war: an armed conflict

between two actors who, in secret or openly, are supported by specific countries, serving as representatives or "proxies" of these parties on the battlefield. During the Cold War many armed conflicts were fought between different parties, from Vietnam to Afghanistan, with the United States and the Soviet Union providing support to one of the parties. More recently, Iran and Saudi Arabia have been on opposing sides of conflicts in Yemen and Syria.

Egalitarianism: the perspective that everyone in the world deserves equal rights and opportunities.

Holistic peace theory: this perspective argues that all human beings and animals should live in harmony together to achieve peace.

The *balance of forces* stage goes beyond this by also identifying how war could be prevented and including this in the interpretation of peace. Internationally, this refers to ensuring that power is balanced between various global power blocks and also preventing power vacuums. **Hegemonic stability theory** argues the opposite: that the existence of one global superpower furthers stability and hence peace. However, it can still be related to the *balance of forces* interpretation as it also interprets peace as the prevention of it through stability. During the Cold War there were two main global superpowers: the US and the USSR. The large number of **proxy wars** fought at this time would support hegemonic stability theory as the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union fuelled armed conflicts all around the world. At the same time, there was no direct engagement between the two superpowers, which could have been even more destructive, potentially involving nuclear war. Preventing nuclear war was a key focal point for peace activists in the 20th century. On a national level, *balance of forces* refers to the distribution of power between various factions within the country, preventing the outbreak of civil war.

Some argue the absence of war and internal and international stability cannot be interpreted as peace if people are still suffering from domestic violence, discrimination or other forms of oppression. Two wider interpretations of peace would be *positive peace*, introduced as *no structural violence* in figure 1, and *feminist peace*. Martin Luther King Jr equated *positive peace* with justice. One of the fathers of peace research, Professor Johan Galtung, further developed this idea. He argued that peace is the absence of violence, both physical (direct) violence and structural (indirect) violence, and that *positive peace* entails the equal or "**egalitarian** distribution of power and resources". This indicates that, without development in society, there would not be peace. And not just economic development, but the removal of any form of inequality.

Assessing the development of states, Economics Professor Paul Streeten suggested that "life expectancy and literacy could be quite high in a well-managed prison. Basic physical needs are well met in a zoo". What he meant was that countries with poor development and human rights records might be considered peaceful if the *balance of forces* interpretation is followed. They would be far from peaceful if *positive peace* is used as the correct interpretation of peace.

Feminist peace extends the interpretation of peace to the individual level by including the absence of any form of discrimination in its definition. Even though a lot of discrimination occurs based on gender, despite its name *feminist peace* includes all forms of discrimination, with none deemed more important than others. Its name refers to the peace researchers who put this interpretation forward, who were feminists.

Helen Kezie-Nwoha, Executive Director of the Women's International Peace Centre, says feminist peace "pays attention to gender justice; demands more prevention and challenges the practice of militarism and how military practices impact peace building. It advances that peace cannot be obtained by allowing militarised types of powers, which nurture environments where women suffer violence at home or in the society in the name of democracy".

These interpretations further stretch the definition of peace, but do not satisfy the belief that the definition of peace should include living in harmony with nature and ourselves. Perhaps the widest interpretations, *holistic gaia-peace* and *holistic inner-outer peace*, relate peace to living in harmony with the environment and being at ease with yourself.

Concept: Sustainability

With ever increasing pressure on land and resources, sustainability is an important factor for conflict prevention and some would argue humankind cannot truly be at peace if it does not live in harmony with "Mother Earth".

Groff and Smoker explain how *holistic gaia*-peace is a “**holistic peace theory**”, where human beings are seen as one of many species inhabiting the earth, and the fate of the planet is seen as the most important goal”. From this point of view, peace means living sustainably and harmoniously with the environment.

Lastly, *holistic inner-outer peace* also includes the spiritual and often religious dimension of peace. The often-heard phrase “if you don’t love yourself, you can’t love someone else” is applied to peace in this case. If you’re not at peace with yourself and your own life, it can be more challenging to further peace towards others. This can be related to the concept of the Greater Jihad in Islam, for example. The Greater Jihad entails the internal human struggle of dealing with disappointment, strong emotions and temptations.

Holistic inner-outer peace is also used in other ways. Former UN ambassador for Singapore Kishore Mahbubani argues that “first, introspection, reflection, humility, and innovation are needed to design new institutions or adapt current institutional arrangements and develop new financing mechanisms, with international solidarity and clear prioritization of objectives and goals”. Here he identifies “inner peace” as a catalyst for global human well-being.

Berta Cáceres was an indigenous Honduran human rights defender who was murdered because of her work for her fellow Lenca people. Cáceres connected all the aspects of peace in her acceptance speech for the 2015 Goldman Prize: “In our world-views, we are beings who come from the Earth, from the water, and from corn. The Lenca people are ancestral guardians of the rivers, in turn protected by the spirits of young girls, who teach us that giving our lives in various ways for the protection of the rivers is giving our lives for the well-being of humanity and of this planet. [...] Our Mother Earth—militarized, fenced in, poisoned, a place where basic rights are systematically violated—demands that we take action. Let us build societies that are able to coexist in a dignified way [...] in a way that protects life. Let us come together and remain hopeful as we defend and care for the blood of this earth and of its spirits.”

Case study

NGOs claiming to aim for peace: Greenpeace

Greenpeace is one of the most well-known NGOs, aiming “to expose global environmental problems, and to force the solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future”. The organization claims to be committed to non-violence, in line with Gandhi’s tactics of actively opposing and challenging one’s enemy. However, it has received some criticism for what some perceive as aggressive campaigns. Greenpeace itself has also suffered from violence (figure 3).

Greenpeace’s goal is to ensure the ability of the Earth to nurture life in all its diversity. It therefore seeks to

- protect biodiversity in all its forms
- prevent pollution and abuse of the Earth’s ocean, land, air and fresh water
- end all nuclear threats
- promote peace, global disarmament and non-violence.

What are the pros and cons of interpreting peace as *environmental peace* or *holistic gaia*-peace, as Greenpeace might be seen to do?

ATL Research skills

Visit the Global Peace Index website <https://visionofhumanity.org>. They interpret peace as “a process which underpins the optimal environment for human potential to flourish”.

- What indicators do they use to measure peace? Do you agree with them?
- Pick a country and apply narrower and broader interpretations of peace to it. Do you think that country would rank lower or higher on the peace index if a broader interpretation of peace was applied?



Assessment advice

For your internally assessed engagement project, make sure you include alternative views. If you were to engage with a local Greenpeace branch, you should also research critics of the organization. Perhaps you could even find someone who is opposed to their plans on a local level.



▲ Figure 3 Greenpeace’s flagship, the Rainbow Warrior, was sunk by agents of the French secret service in 1985, resulting in the death of a photographer. The recovered ship is pictured

2.1.2 Conflict (including latent and overt)

Similarly to Galtung and many other conflict theorists, the *University for Peace* defines conflict as “a confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends”. In addition to this simple definition, there are many misconceptions about the term that can further influence our interpretation of conflict. In this section, you will look at some of these common misconceptions.

The causes of conflict are often generalized. For example, over the past 40 years, the reason for external intervention in the Middle East is often reduced simply to access and control over oil. The causes of conflict are also frequently reduced to access to water, power politics or religion.

Key terms

Unitary actor: the perspective that the leader of a conflict party represents the entire group. From this perspective we argue that a prime minister or president of a country represents the entire country.

Latent conflict: the conflict phase where there is a situation of inequality or oppression, but this is not yet openly talked about or challenged through protests or other outings.

Overt conflict: the conflict phase where there is a visible clash between different groups.

While these aspects play an important role in many conflicts, it would be impossible to connect all conflict parties, their motivation and their goals to a single factor. Therefore, overgeneralizing causes of conflict also leads to another misconception that all conflict parties are **unitary actors**. This is the assumption that all the people within a conflict party are involved for the same reason and have the same goal. We have to appreciate conflicts as they are: incredibly complex issues that require deep analysis to unearth the various motives, links and roles of the parties involved in conflict.

Often, we only become aware of a conflict when people express their dissatisfaction with how they are being treated. For example, you might be unaware that two of your friends are feuding until one of them complains about it. Alternatively, a large demonstration for equal rights of indigenous people might draw your attention to their conflict with the state.

This fuels the misconception that only when the dissatisfaction between two parties becomes visible, can the wider public recognize the existence of a conflict. This stage is known as invisible conflict, or **latent conflict**. It is a crucial stage to understand how a seemingly peaceful situation turns into an outright clash: the transition from latent conflict into **overt conflict**.

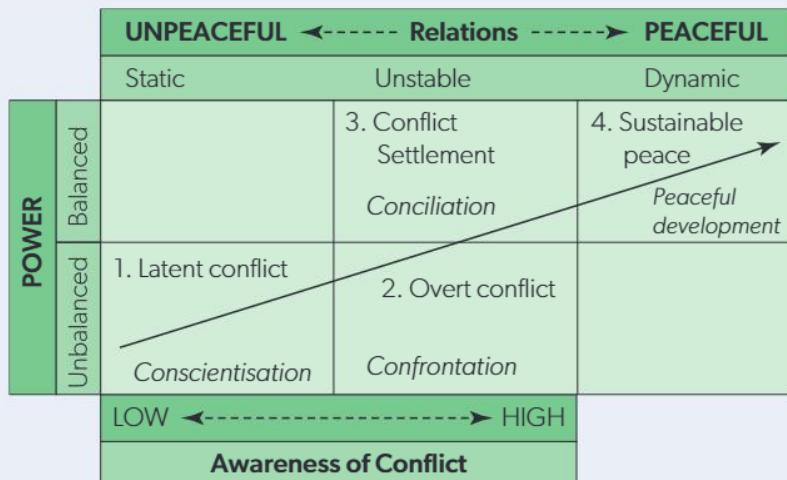


Communication skills

Figure 4 details the progression of conflict and the roles of latent and overt conflict in this progression. Using figure 4, identify one similarity and two differences between latent and overt conflict.

► **Figure 4** The progression of conflict in unbalanced and balanced relationships.

Adapted from *Making Peace*, Adam Curle, 1971



When conflict is associated with violence or at least disharmony—whether in personal relations or on an international level—it is often seen as something undesirable. When we see conflict associated with so much misery on the news, this interpretation is hard to avoid. The website of the International Crisis Group covers deadly conflicts in all continents. It details how many countries claim conflicts need to be “contained”, “resolved”, “neutralized” and “prevented”, which could lead you to think conflict is undesirable. However, is conflict necessarily bad?

Arundhati Roy, an Indian author, named three people as “the high priests of non-violent resistance”, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. All three actively pursued conflict in their pursuit of human rights, albeit non-violently. In the present day, Fridays For Future, an environment movement, and Black Lives Matter, an anti-racist movement, directly challenge states and intergovernmental organizations. In these cases, the argument is that conflict is not necessarily bad as it can also be seen as a road to **sustainable peace**.

Joe Gerstandt, a US war veteran, suggests there are three choices when two parties have a disagreement (figure 5).

Two parties can remain in the *latent conflict* phase by not raising the issue, which according to Gerstandt leads to “fake harmony”. Alternatively, the parties can opt for “destructive conflict”, by which they focus on their disagreements and differences, often making the conflict personal. The third option suggested is to find a way in which the differences can be addressed in a constructive way with a focus on sustainable peace, perhaps in the spirit of Mandela, Gandhi and King, or present-day protest movements like Fridays For Future and Black Lives Matter. Therefore, it’s difficult to claim conflict is always undesirable. It all depends on how the parties involved approach the conflict.

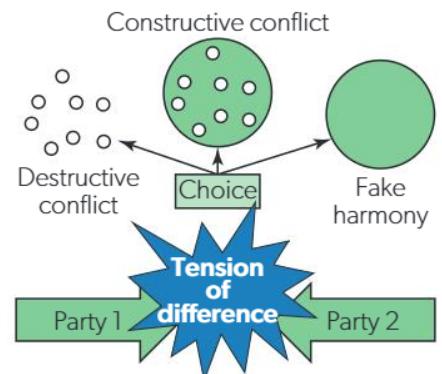
If conflict is perceived as something bad, it can lead you to think that it needs to be resolved immediately, with stability, order or harmony restored. This could mean that whichever tensions that have come to the forefront need to be contained or neutralized. For example, in 2015, there were widespread pro-democracy demonstrations in Bahrain. Major General Tariq al-Hassan responded by issuing a warning that “action would be taken against those who spread terror among citizens or residents, put the safety of others at risk or try to disrupt the nation’s security and stability”. “Security and stability” sounds more harmonious than “conflict” and “demonstrations”, but it could be argued that suppressing protesters is not a peaceful measure.

When **civil unrest** occurs between protesters and the government within a state, other countries might then express their worries and demand everything returns to stability. But in the case of Bahrain, the conflict can only really be resolved when the parties find a way to satisfy their respective aims. As long as the protests are met with violence and arrests, the conflict is not really “settled” and deeper lying issues are not addressed—the conflict is just pushed into a latent state or fake harmony. Therefore, before we rush to settle a conflict, it should be considered whether or not this would result in a legitimate claim being neutralized and pushed into a latent state.

Key terms

Neutralize: to make someone incapable of doing something.

Sustainable peace: long-lasting, durable and harmonious relations among groups and people.



▲ Figure 5 Our options when we are confronted with the “tension of difference”. Adapted from *Conflict: what is it good for?*, Joe Gerstandt, 2012

Key term

Civil unrest: a situation where there is a visible, overt conflict between large groups of civilians in a country and the government, resulting in confrontations between the two parties.

Key terms

Genocide: the intentional destruction of a whole people or a part thereof. Article 6 of the founding document of the International Criminal Court, the Rome Statute, specifically identifies (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Consensus: agreement about something among members of a particular group.

Another common assumption is that parties directly involved in the conflict cannot be trusted to find a constructive agreement and that a third party needs to intervene. For example, mediators are called in to resolve a marriage crisis, or the United Nations Security Council will meet to decide how to intervene in a civil war. But is the role of a third party always constructive and do we always need them to resolve the conflict?

Third parties can indeed play a very constructive role in bringing two conflict parties together. After the 2007 election violence in Kenya, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was able to successfully negotiate a deal between the opposition and the government, providing a path forward. However, third parties often have their own interests, and these might not necessarily lead to sustainable peace.

After the horrors of Rwandan and Srebrenica **genocides**, there was something of a **consensus** between world leaders that the international community should intervene when civilians are attacked by their own government forces. Critics voiced their concerns that this idea could be exploited for self-serving gains. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, a Nicaraguan priest and former President of the United Nations General Assembly, said that this agreement would be "misused, once more, to justify arbitrary and selective interventions against the weakest states".

Another drawback of having a third-party mediator is that it "inevitably causes delays [...] and carries the risk that messages may be garbled in translation" (Geoff Berridge, *Diplomacy*). Additionally, the conflicting parties themselves might want to resolve their conflict without external interference—some might argue that this is their right.

Case study

US involvement in Israel

The United States has a long history of involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was the first country to recognize Israel when it was founded on 14 May 1948. In 1978, US President Jimmy Carter offered the use of his summer house for 13 days of continuous negotiations, and promised billions of dollars to Egypt and Israel. This led to a peace treaty between



▲ Figure 6 US President Bill Clinton oversees the handshake between Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, 13 September 1993

the countries that still stands today. In 1993, the US facilitated peace agreements between Israel and Palestine, known as the Oslo Accords. This plan allowed for various forms of self-rule for the Palestinians but is also seen as a major obstacle for a definitive peace treaty.

In 1999, the United States Congress voted to move the United States embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, a territory claimed by both parties. Since then, US Presidents Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama have intervened to ensure the embassy would not actually move, as this could negatively impact the peace process and the position of the United States in it. In 2020, US President Donald Trump presented a plan for peace between Israel and Palestine, called *Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People*. He also decided to move the US embassy to Jerusalem. Trump's presentation of himself as a suitable mediator was met with a lot of scepticism by the Palestinians and the plan did not come to fruition. This makes it clear that third parties cannot always be trusted to intervene selflessly and constructively in a conflict.

ATL Research skills

The common misconceptions about conflict are summarized below.

1. Conflict is caused by single factors.
2. Conflict parties are (rational) unitary actors.
3. Conflict is always visible.
4. Conflict is always undesirable.
5. Conflict always needs to be settled.
6. Conflict always requires third-party intervention.

Open a paper or a digital copy of a recent newspaper. Look up an article that discusses a conflict. How objectively does the newspaper present the information? Do they use terms that show they have a specific bias, such as talking negatively about one party and more positively about another? Can you identify any of these misconceptions in how the newspaper presents the conflict?

2.1.3 Violence (including direct, structural and cultural)

Like peace, the term violence has many possible interpretations. As previously discussed, peace is often equated with the absence of violence. So, if we widen our definition of peace, this could widen our definition of violence. However, the most widely used interpretation of violence is the most specific variant, **physical violence**—also known as **direct violence**. We normally associate violence with physical force and so do most dictionary definitions. This is generally the most visible form of violence and most people are directly or indirectly confronted with it at some point.

Some of the largest scale visible forms of physical violence are displayed in wars. Each party might justify their violence in one way or another, and they would acknowledge they have used some physical violence against, in their eyes, legitimate targets.

Many conflict theorists go beyond this narrow interpretation of violence and argue that discrimination and the unequal global distribution of power, resources and food should also be considered violence—which they call **structural violence**. Galtung argues in favour of broadening the definition of violence in this way. He acknowledges the widespread suffering from physical violence but argues there might be more people suffering from structural violence, also known as **social injustice** (figure 7).

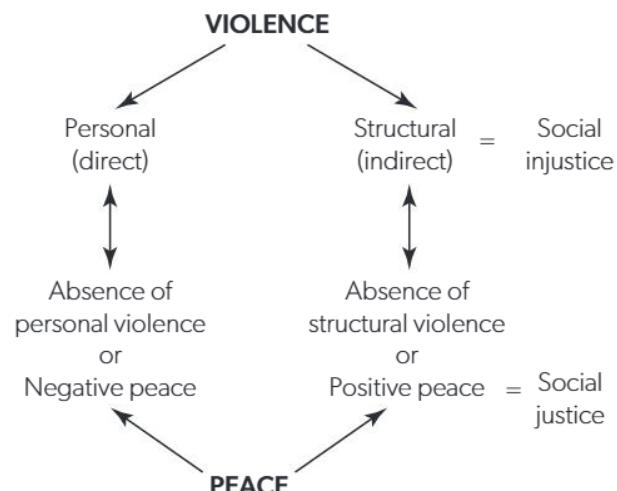
The suffering from structural violence might be less visible, as there is no clear perpetrator and not one obvious victim, but no less real than physical violence. For example, if there is enough food in the world, and we have the systems to distribute this food equally, how then can people still be dying from starvation? Perhaps the structures that society has built that cause this suffering can be considered violence.

Galtung states that “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations”. This means that any human-made societal structure that is preventing us from reaching our potential should be considered violence. An immigrant not invited for a job interview because of a “foreign-sounding name” and a HIV patient dying because of a lack of access to medication would both be considered violence according to this interpretation.

Key terms

Direct violence (physical violence): physical force inflicted upon another person.

Structural violence (social injustice): any human-made structure that prevents someone from achieving their full potential, in other words, any form of social injustice.



▲ **Figure 7** The extended concepts of violence and peace.
Adapted from *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research*, Johan Galtung, 1969

Concept: Human rights

Human rights are at the centre of many conflicts. Certain interpretations of violence, such as structural violence, include withholding rights from a person or group in their definition of violence.

Key term

Cultural violence: the way in which societies legitimize or justify any form of direct or structural violence.

Galtung did not stop there with broadening the interpretation of violence (and peace). He also coined the term **cultural violence**: William T Hathaway defines cultural violence as "the prevailing attitudes and beliefs that justify and legitimize the structural [and direct] violence, making it seem natural. Feelings of superiority/inferiority based on class, race, sex, religion, and nationality are inculcated [meaning taught/instilled] in us as children and shape our assumptions about us and the world. They convince us this is the way things are and they have to be".

Concept: Legitimacy

There are many ways in which direct or structural violence is justified, regardless of whether we agree with the arguments put forward. For example, you could refer to a state arguing they are using police force to suppress protesters to restore order, or Amnesty International's criticism of the EU for welcoming Ukrainian refugees while denying Syrians entry, or cultural traditions that encourage the belief that men and women have different roles. Whether or not you agree with a broad interpretation of violence to include social injustice and legitimization of violence, it is often used to further understand the complexities in conflict analysis.

ATL Research and communication skills

1. Find examples of each of the three types of violence discussed in this section (direct, structural and cultural).
2. Revisit your interpretation of peace and compare to your interpretation of violence. Which of your definitions is more detailed, or are they similar? Explain why your approaches were different (or similar) for the two definitions.

2.1.4 Non-violence

The term non-violence is not as contested as previous definitions—it relates to an absence of physical violence. However, theorists and practitioners of non-violence have often disagreed on the following questions about it.

- Can non-violence only be an active form of **resistance** or can it be passive? Can it be both?
- Does the practice of non-violence need to be fully integrated in one's life or can it be pragmatic?
- Can non-violent movements still be called non-violent if some of their members resort to violence?
- Can **sabotage** or destruction of property be a part of non-violence?

Key terms

Resistance: organized opposition against another party.

Sabotage: the deliberate destruction of property to weaken an opponent.

The late Gene Sharp was the founder of the Albert Einstein Institution, a non-profit organization which focuses on the study of non-violent action.

He wrote some of the seminal texts in non-violence and summarized the following misconceptions:

- It is widely believed that violence always works quickly, and nonviolent struggle always takes very long. Both of these beliefs are false.
- Nonviolent struggle is often believed to be weak, but in fact it can be very powerful. It can paralyze and even disintegrate a repressive regime.
- Nonviolent struggle does not need a charismatic leader.
- Nonviolent struggle is a cross-cultural phenomenon.
- Nonviolent struggle does not require any religious beliefs (certainly no specific religious beliefs), although at times it has been practiced with religious motives.
- Nonviolent struggle is not the same as religious or ethical principled non-violence, but a very different phenomenon. This distinction must be made clear and not downplayed.
- Although it is still widely believed that this technique can succeed only against humanitarian and democratic opponents, it has at times been successful against brutal regimes and dictatorships, including Nazi and Communist ones.
- It is said by some persons and groups that non-violent struggle only succeeds by melting the hearts of the oppressors. However, it has been coercive and even destroyed extreme dictatorships.

There are Realistic Alternatives, Gene Sharp, 2003

Non-violence is often practised in response to governments that push laws or practices that are deemed unjust. In 2020, *The Times of Israel* wrote about a 19-year-old woman who was detained in response to refusing to serve two years in the military. This is considered a form of passive resistance, because the woman did not actively challenge her government, but when ordered to serve in the military, she refused. Other forms of passive resistance include not paying taxes, going on a strike or not following orders from a governmental institution. If many people stop paying taxes or stop working, this could have a real impact on society.

Gene Sharp, in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, identified how passive resistance can be selective, in that someone may refuse to serve in the army but still pay taxes. The argument from Sharp is that if you truly disagree with your opponent you cannot just passively resist them, perhaps selectively, but have to actively oppose them on all fronts. However, Sharp disagreed with Gandhi in that he believed those who want to oppose a government or another political actor can simply make the pragmatic choice to practise non-violence, whereas Gandhi saw it as a principled way of life.

Many people find inspiration in religion or philosophy to conclude that they do not want to harm another human being. From Christianity to Hinduism to Islam, most religions have non-violent practices incorporated in their religious texts. For example, the Quakers and Mennonites, sects of Christianity, practise and teach non-violence through their religious beliefs. To some, these are considered “true non-violent practitioners”, because they have fully embraced the philosophy of non-violence.

To popularize and broaden the reach of non-violence, Sharp has emphasized that anyone can practise non-violence, even people who previously expressed themselves violently. Martin Luther King Jr, a Baptist minister, practised non-violence and spoke out against the war in Vietnam, but on very specific grounds, not based on religious pacifism. To King, Vietnam did not seem to be a war to defend people, but to expand American influence. He believed the billions spent on the war should be used on creating a more equal society in the United States.

Case study

Kick Out Zwarte Piet campaign

A key goal of many non-violent organizations is to “make their opponent show their true nature” and make them resort to violence, which hopefully leads to more local support and international condemnation. If parts of your own movement also resort to violence, it is difficult to achieve this.

In the Netherlands, the organization Kick Out Zwarte Piet (KOZP) has protested since 2014 against Dutch people wearing blackface during a national festivity. KOZP have made it an essential part of their struggle to remain non-violent, even when they faced violence from police and politically opposed civilians. The Dutch National Ombudsman, an officially appointed public advocate, considered the police response to

The Timor-Leste independence movement, in their long struggle for independence (which they achieved in 2002) used both violence and non-violence against Indonesia, even setting up a specific “armed front” and a “diplomatic front”. Elements of the movement engaged in non-violent protest in Indonesia and across the world. Some might argue this is not true non-violence considering it was part of a wider plan that included the use of violence.

the 2014 protests as a violation of the protesters’ right to freedom of expression and protest, and that some of the police violence was disproportionate.

KOZP’s commitment to non-violence coupled with the violent police and civilian response may have helped to turn public opinion in their favour and contributed to their success in their campaign against the use of blackface. Even though opinion polls indicated an overwhelming majority of Dutch people did not see their blackfacing tradition as racist, the phenomenon has largely disappeared. Even the Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, a longstanding advocate for blackfacing, came out in opposition against it in 2020. However, the government has not banned the practice and the tradition continues in some communities.



▲ **Figure 8** In 2020, non-violent KOZP protesters in Maastricht were attacked by counter-protesters, resulting in an intervention by the riot police

Non-violent theorists and practitioners do not seem to agree on whether sabotage or destruction of property can be part of non-violence. Sharp identified 198 methods of non-violent action, but none of them includes destruction of property. Others argue that non-violence means no physical harm to another human being, and destruction of property does not have to be physically harmful to others. Despite disagreements within non-violent movements, non-violence remains an instrumental tool to bring about political change.

ATL Thinking skills

Judith Butler is an author on gender and philosophical issues. The following is an interview excerpt of them explaining how aggression relates to non-violence:

If we think that all force is violence, or that only violence is truly force, then a forceful form of non-violence is a contradiction. My formulation, one that draws upon the traditions of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr, suggests that there are forceful and effective modes of action that gain their force precisely by refusing violence. We can think of force as strength, power, modes of effective transformation, none of which require violence and which, arguably gain their status as strength and power precisely by refusing to bring more violence into the world. The term "aggression" is central to the work of Melanie Klein and Freud, and it is also not the same as violence. Aggression can take non-violent forms. In my view, there is no reason to relinquish aggression, but there is every reason to cultivate aggression into non-violent forms.

On the Politics of Non-violence: An Interview with Judith Butler, Viktoria Huegel, 2020

Do you think aggression can be part of non-violence? Explain your answer.

Case study

2019 El Angel graffiti protest

In 2019, Mexican protesters spraypainted graffiti on a national monument called the Angel of Independence, referred to by locals as *El Ángel*. They were protesting gender-based violence and sexual assault carried out by the police in Mexico City. Their actions were condemned by mainstream media as "vandalism" or even "violence", but protesters were quick to point out the hypocrisy of people who seemed to care more about a national monument than about the women and girls suffering from violence. Publications spoke about the "defacing of our Angel" and zoomed in on protesters spray

painting men, and the mayor of Mexico City stated that "violence is not fought with violence".

The local government quickly erected wooden barriers to prevent any more damage and restore the monument. *Restauradoras con Glitter*, a collective of artists and historians, petitioned the government to keep a record of the graffiti messages, arguing they are a part of the history of the monument. An analysis of media articles before and after the protests indicated that there was seven times more attention given to the spray painting of the monument than to the acts of sexual violence that were being protested.



▲ Figure 9 Graffiti on Mexico City's Angel of Independence, 2019

2.2

Interactions of political stakeholders and actors

Conflict often starts with a limited amount of conflict parties, but it can draw in many others over time. A conflict between a protest group and the owners of a nuclear power plant can quickly involve local or national authorities, local residents and police forces. The roles of the actors in a conflict may also change over time. It is important to distinguish between state and non-state actors, as states may have moral and legal rights and responsibilities that non-state actors may not have.

Key terms

Intra-state conflict: Armed conflict that occurs within the borders of a single state.

Guerrillas: this refers to people fighting a Guerrilla, or “small war”, in smaller, more or less-organized groups against a more powerful opponent, usually the state. Guerrillas usually wear uniforms to be considered a legitimate actor.

The language used by parties can impact people's perception of a conflict.

Intra-state armed conflict is the most widespread variant of war, where violence occurs between governments and non-state actors, sometimes labelled terrorists or **guerrillas**. Commonly, a party uses positive language to describe itself and negative language to depict other parties in a conflict, in order to delegitimize the other party's actions and goals. It can make a difference whether reports refer to a party as rebels, dissidents, insurgents, terrorists, freedom fighters, armed resistance or militants.

Vivienne Jabri, a British professor, claims that in conflict situations people are expected to support their country: “As a conflict escalates towards violence and as the ‘war mood’ takes hold of entire populations, the dissident from either camp or the peacemaker from the onlooking external world can become subject to social contempt and censure rather than admiration”.

Conflict mapping is a process where various dimensions of conflict are analysed, from causes to conflict behaviour to outcomes. An important element within this is gaining understanding of the various parties involved in a conflict, their role, and the relations between various parties. However, relations are not always obvious and the way in which parties influence a conflict may not always be visible.

Concept: Development

In the wider interpretations of peace and conflict, development plays an important role. This is because the systems—through which some countries appear to have become more developed than others—are considered structurally violent.

Key term

Fundamental attribution error: a term from sociology, used to explain how if a party in a conflict feels wronged by another actor, they will often attribute this to the personality or nature of the actor, as opposed to examining the context for the actor's actions. In addition, this party may not blame their own personality or nature for their own acts and instead focus on the context of their own actions.

2.2.1 Parties to conflict

Many conflicts are about perception. How parties perceive each other affects their attitude and behaviour towards each other. Whether someone is actually to blame for this situation is not always clear. In the case of structural violence, sometimes there is no clear actor who decides to harm someone else directly. For example, societal or global structures can impact whether someone has somewhere to live or can attend school. It is then more challenging to point at one clear actor as a conflict party, and instead we often talk about inequality or injustice. In other cases, structural violence can be deliberate and attributed to an actor. For example, in 2023, Police Scotland was found to be institutionally racist.

We could even ask ourselves whether we are party to these injustices. If there is enough food in the world, and we throw away a quarter of our food while others are starving, does that make us part of the problem and in extension, a conflict party?

If a party in a conflict feels wronged by another actor, they will often attribute this to the personality or nature of the actor, as opposed to examining the context for the actor's actions. In sociology, this is called **fundamental attribution error**. Someone may receive a low grade for a test and blame this on the teacher and even think the teacher does not like them, without having clear proof that indicates this.

Conversely, parties will often explain their own mistakes using context. For example, if the student took some of the blame for the low grade, they would attribute this to the context rather than a personality flaw. For example, there was not enough quiet space to study or too many other tasks on their agenda.

Key term

Partisanship: the support for a particular party.

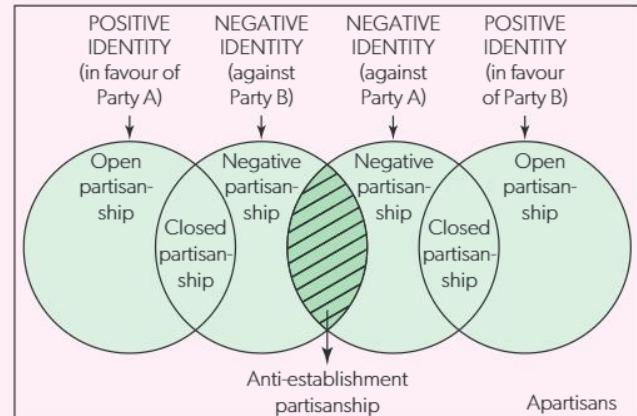
TOK

In their analysis of populism, Carlos Meléndez and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser examine different types of **partisanship** (figure 10). In open partisanship, someone supports a particular political party, but is open and unhostile to other political parties. In closed partisanship, someone has positive views about their political party's identity and negative views about the other party. If someone has negative views about all political parties, this is known as anti-establishment partisanship.

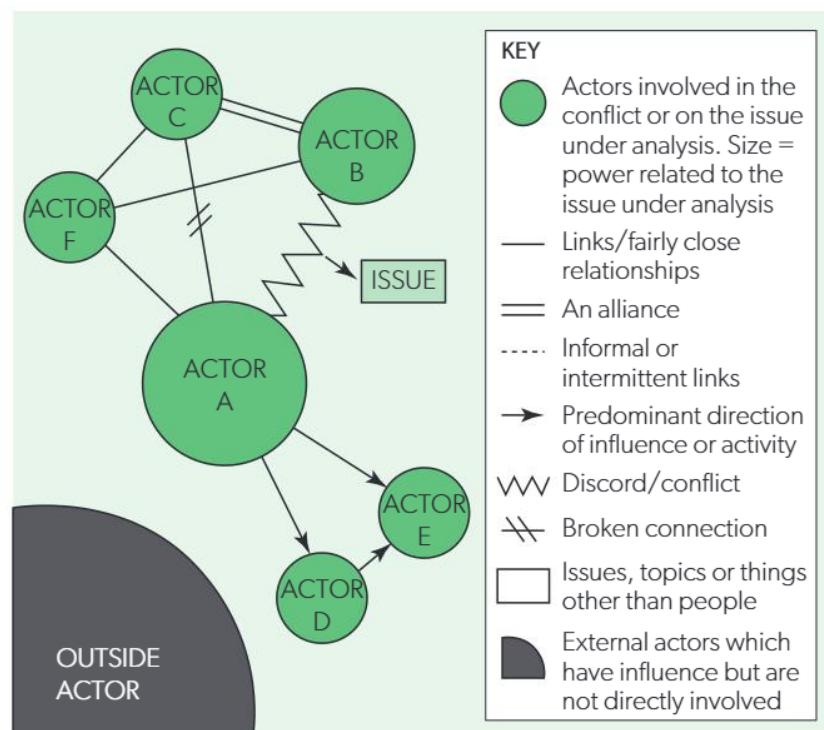
The 2023 elections for the Brazilian presidency had two candidates: Jair Bolsonaro and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Supporters of both candidates used social media to blame the other candidate for the state of the country but relate any mistakes made by their own party to the context or the situation. This is an example of closed partisanship.

Apply this model to party politics in a country you know well. Can you find examples of "closed partisanship", "open partisanship" and "anti-establishment partisanship"?

Conflict mapping allows conflict analysts to identify which parties are involved in a conflict and their connections to each other. It can be used to detail any negative or positive relationships, their relative size and influence in the conflict, and relationships that have broken down. Conflict mapping is not an exact science as it only presents the perspective of the person who draws it at a given point in time. Simon Fisher proposed a model for conflict mapping that is used widely (see figure 11).



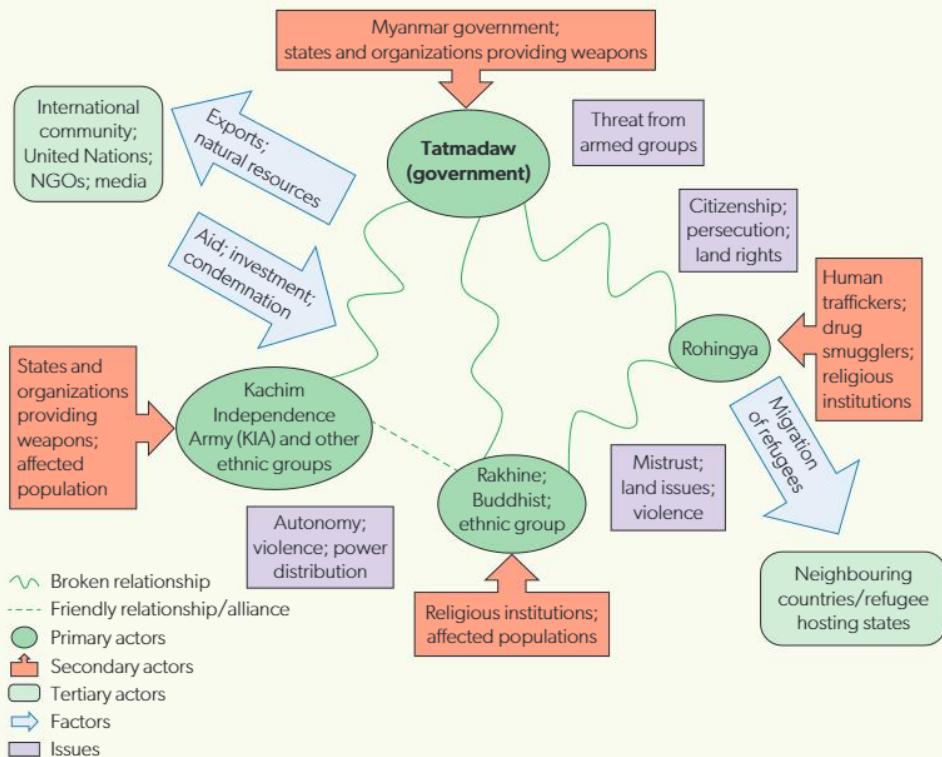
▲ Figure 10 Different types of partisanship. Adapted from *Political identities: The missing link in the study of populism*, Meléndez and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019



► Figure 11 Fisher's model for conflict mapping. Adapted from *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*, Simon Fisher, 2000

Case study**Conflict map of Myanmar**

A conflict map detailing the primary actors involved in the conflict in Myanmar is shown in figure 12.



▲ Figure 12 Conflict map of Myanmar. Adapted from *Conflict Map of Myanmar and the Rohingya*, Marie Hoffmann, 2018

Key term

Coup d'état: a seizure and removal of a government and its powers by another party, such as a political faction, a rebel group or the military.

Since Myanmar's independence in 1948, its military (the Tatmadaw) has had a very influential role in politics and has controlled the government since its **coup d'état** in 2021. In figure 12, the Tatmadaw is indicated as the main conflict party. The Tatmadaw have largely separated themselves from the wider society with separate schools for their children, separate compounds to live in and they even built a new capital city, fully planned to their wishes. The Tatmadaw controls a large portion of the country's economy, indicated in the arrow that states "exports; natural resources". International actors, who meet the Tatmadaw with aid, investment or condemnation are identified in the left-hand green box.

The Tatmadaw is largely made up of the Buddhist Bamar people, but there are over 130 other ethnic groups in Myanmar. The other green circles indicate actors the Tatmadaw is in conflict with, such as the Muslim Rohingya minority and the Kachins. The Rohingya are victims of "persecution" and killings by the Myanmar military, labelled a genocide by various governments and NGOs. Some of the main issues pertaining to the Rohingya are their lack of "citizenship" (the government does not recognize them as citizens of Myanmar) and, as a consequence, "land rights". Many have fled to Bangladesh (identified in the arrow as "migration of refugees"), with up to a million living in the largest refugee camp in the world.

2.2.2 Violent and non-violent state and non-state actors

Violence generated from conflict can be in the form of conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare or terrorism. These can be differentiated in a variety of ways, summarized in table 1. However, it is difficult to define terrorism and it is often used by one conflict party to discredit another.

	Conventional war	Guerrilla	Terrorism
Unit size in battle	large (armies, corps, division)	medium (platoons, companies, battalions)	small (usually less than 10 persons)
Weapons	full range of military hardware (air force, armour, artillery, etc.)	mostly infantry-type light weapons but sometimes artillery pieces as well	handguns, hand grenades, assault rifles and specialized weapons, e.g., car bombs, barometric pressure bombs
Tactics	usually joint operation involving several military branches	commando-type tactics	specialized tactics: kidnapping, assassinations, car-bombing, hijacking, barricade, hostage, etc.
Targets	mostly military units, industrial and transportation infrastructure	mostly military, police and administration staff, as well as political opponents	state symbols, political opponents and the public at large
Intended impact	physical destruction	mainly physical attrition of enemy	psychological coercion
Control of territory	yes	yes	no
Uniform	wear uniform	often wear uniform	do not wear uniform
Recognition of war zones	war limited to recognized geographical zones	war limited to one country	no recognized war zones, operations can be carried out worldwide
International legality	yes, if conducted by rules	yes, if conducted by rules	no
Domestic legality	yes	no	no

▲ Table 1 General characteristics of war, conventional, guerrilla and terrorism. Adapted from *Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency*, Ariel Merari, 1993

Guerrilla warfare shares characteristics with conventional warfare, as guerrillas usually seek recognition as an official army. However, they often also employ similar tactics to terrorists, and governments that are targeted by guerrillas generally label them as terrorists.

The increase in size of violent non-state actors and their control of large territories sometimes make it difficult to label them. Violent protest groups generally claim they have the right to use violence as they are often fighting a stronger opponent with more resources, weaponry and financial support, such as the state.

TOK

Alex Schmid defines the following as the key characteristic elements of terrorism:

1. The demonstrative use of violence against human beings;
2. The (conditional) threat of (more) violence;
3. The deliberate production of terror/fear in a target group;
4. The targeting of civilians, non-combatants and innocents;
5. The purpose of intimidation, coercion and **propaganda**;
6. The fact that it is a method, tactic or strategy of conflict waging;
7. The importance of communicating the act(s) of violence to larger audiences;
8. The illegal, criminal and immoral nature of the act(s) of violence;
9. The predominantly political character of the act;
10. Its use as a tool of **psychological warfare** to mobilize or immobilize sectors of the public.

Terrorism – The Definitional Problem, Alex Schmid, 2004

Which characteristics are highly debatable and difficult to apply? Look up a recent act of violence that was labelled as terrorism. Do all the characteristics apply to that case?

Key terms

Propaganda: a biased form of communication, pushing one particular perspective and misrepresenting others.

Psychological warfare: a method in a violent conflict where the intent is to mentally impact others.

Manifesto: a released statement or founding document that indicates what a political actor strives for and why they use particular methods.

One of Schmid's characteristics of terrorism is the "importance of communicating the act(s) of violence to larger audiences". A commonality between a violent and non-violent protester is that both are seeking attention for their cause from the media and the general public. The **manifestos** of violent and non-violent protesters often provide justifications or explanations for their decision to use violence or not. Violent protesters may refer to religious or ideological texts that justify the use of violence, or they may claim they should be able to use similar methods to their opponents, often the state. Non-violent protesters may also use religious or ideological texts to justify their actions, or they may argue that non-violent protest is more effective.

The effectiveness of protest was researched by Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth. In their research, they state that 53% of all non-violent campaigns were successful, compared to 26% of all violent campaigns. They outlined a number of reasons why they consider non-violent protest to be the logical choice for the protester.

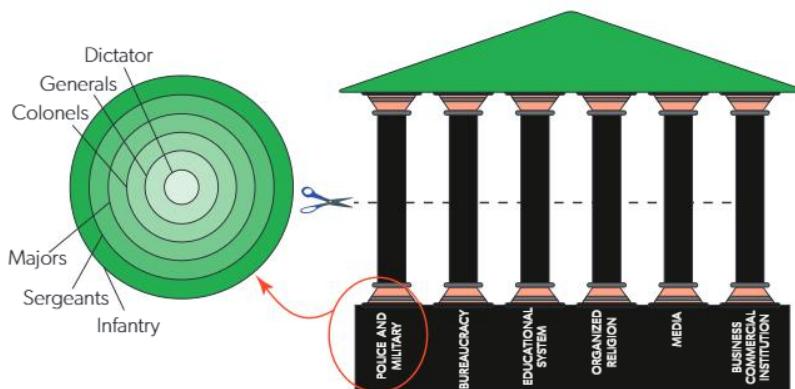
One could argue that non-violent protest is normally only used against democratic or weak regimes and that this is the reason for its success, but according to Gene Sharp (2003) this is one of the many misconceptions about non-violent protest.

1. It enhances domestic and international legitimacy which increases pressure on the target
2. Regime violence against non-violent movements is more likely to backfire against it
 - a. it can result in the breakdown of obedience among regime supporters [and] mobilization of the population against the regime
 - b. and can lead to international condemnation of the regime, leading to **sanctions** or aid for the non-violent campaign
3. Non-violent resistance campaigns appear to be more open to negotiation and bargaining because they do not threaten the lives or well-being of members of the target regime
 - a. the public views non-violent campaigns as physically nonthreatening and violent campaigns as threatening
 - b. when violent insurgents threaten the lives of regime members and security forces, they greatly reduce the possibility of **loyalty shifts**

Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict, Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, 2008

As non-violent protesters are often faced with an opponent with superior power in terms of weaponry, forces and finances, they need to find ways to undermine that power without using violence. For example, they could find ways of discouraging people's obedience to the opponent, to weaken their financial support (for example, through not paying taxes) and numerical superiority by convincing the general population or security forces to withdraw their support for the government.

The so-called **pillars of support** are the elements upon which a regime's power is based. These can range from businesses to education to the military. In their handbook for non-violent struggle, Popović, Milivojević and Đinović visualized these pillars (figure 13). As student leaders, they were involved in the non-violent protests against Slobodan Milošević's regime in former Yugoslavia. Since then, they have trained various groups in organizing non-violent campaigns.



▲ Figure 13 The pillars of support. Adapted from Srđa Popović, Andrej Milivojević, Slobodan Đinović, *Nonviolent Struggle: 50 Crucial Points*, 2006

Nelson Mandela's political party, the African National Congress (ANC), had the central goal of ending the South African government's **apartheid** policy. Though initially committed to non-violent forms of protests, Mandela founded a **paramilitary** wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK, Spear of the Nation), to fight the South African government through violent means. MK identified themselves as freedom fighters, but the US, UK and South African governments branded the ANC as a terrorist organization. In 1962, Mandela was arrested and imprisoned for conspiring to overthrow the state with MK. However, once released from prison, Mandela can be largely credited for South Africa's non-violent transition from apartheid to democracy. Despite this, the US government officially considered Mandela a terrorist until 2008.

ATL Thinking skills

1. Identify an **authoritarian** regime. What are its "pillars of support" and how do they support the regime?
2. How could a non-violent protest group win those pillars over to remove their support to the regime?
3. Extinction Rebellion is a protest movement with environmental causes. Research their methods and explain whether you think they are violent or non-violent.

Key terms

Sanctions: a method to punish or isolate another party by limiting goods or financial resources.

Loyalty shifts: changing support or obedience from one group to another.

Pillars of support: the elements upon which a regime's power is based. These can range from businesses to education to the military.

Authoritarian: a system of governance where power is concentrated in the hands of an individual or small group, and the citizens are expected to uncritically obey the government.

Apartheid: the system of racial segregation in South Africa during the second half of the 20th century. It allowed the minority white population to control and oppress the majority black population. In the present day, it is sometimes also used to refer to other systems of oppression and is identified as a crime against humanity in the founding document of the International Criminal Court, the Rome Statute.

Paramilitary: an organized armed group with a military structure, sometimes supported by the government of a country, but not officially part of a country's military.

Case study

Peaceful protests in Sudan

In 2018, protesters in Sudan flooded the streets demanding the removal of Omar al-Bashir, Sudan's head of state and dictator of 30 years. Freedom House, a non-profit organization based in the US, identified a number of reasons for the mass protests, including Bashir's decision to ignore the constitutional limit to his rule, the internet shutdown and disagreement within the government. The protesters practised non-violence and the violent response from the government led to many soldiers joining the protests and guarding the protesters. A system of "decentralized leadership" within the protest movement meant that if particular people were targeted by the regime, others could easily replace them.

Bashir was finally removed from office in 2019 by fellow generals. Negotiations then began between the military factions in Sudan and civilians to establish a democratic government. This was interrupted in 2023, when civil war broke out between the military factions, undoing the efforts of the non-violent protests. Sudan is an example of how non-violent protest sometimes takes a long time to succeed and how conflict can turn violent despite the best efforts.



▲ Figure 14 Sudanese protesters often included visual art, poetry and music in their methods of protest

2.2.3 Third parties (including mediation processes, negotiation processes and interventions)

Key term

Humanitarian intervention: military intervention by a state or intergovernmental organization such as the United Nations or NATO in order to protect citizens who are targeted by their own state or are not safeguarded by it. Actors sometimes claim their intervention is for humanitarian reasons, but this may not always be the case.

A conflict can become more complex when third parties get involved. One type of third-party intervention is called **humanitarian intervention**: this is the idea that the international community should protect citizens who are targeted by their own state or are not safeguarded by it. However, a third party intervening for humanitarian reasons could make the situation worse despite having good intentions. Alternatively, they may be hiding a less well-intentioned reason for getting involved with the conflict, using the idea of humanitarian intervention as an excuse.

These third parties can have a large influence on the conflict. Generally, the closer they are to the core parties, the better their understanding of the conflict. However, they may also be more biased towards one of the core parties. Sometimes it might be useful for a mediator to be as uninvolved as possible, in order to be neutral.

In other cases, it might be useful for the mediator to be as close as possible to the conflict parties, as this may give them more power to push for a solution, or their knowledge of the conflict parties can be used to resolve the issue.

Third parties can be involved in conflicts in many different ways, both violent and non-violent. Violent interventions could arguably turn a third party into a core party, as they actively engage in the conflict with force. The way in which a third party gets involved often depends on their own interest in the conflict and the power they have over the conflict parties.

Ronald J. Fisher and Loraleigh Keashly have identified six common ways of third-party intervention that they consider pacific (non-violent):

Types of pacific third-party interventions

1. Conciliation, in which a trusted third-party provides an informal communicative link between the antagonists for the purposes of identifying the issues, lowering tension and encouraging direct interaction, usually in the form of negotiation.
2. Consultation, in which the third-party works to facilitate creative problem-solving through communication and analysis, making use of human relations skills and social-scientific understanding of conflict etiology [i.e. causes] and dynamics.
3. Pure mediation, in which the third-party works to facilitate a negotiated settlement on substantive issues through the use of reasoning, persuasion, effective control of information, and the suggestion of alternatives.
4. Power mediation, which encompasses pure mediation but also moves beyond it to include the use of leverage or coercion on the part of the mediator in the form of promised rewards or threatened punishments, and may also involve the third-party as monitor and guarantor of the agreement.
5. Arbitration, wherein the third-party renders a binding judgment arrived at through consideration of the individual merits of the opposing positions and then imposes a settlement which is deemed to be fair and just.
6. Peacekeeping, in which the third-party provides military personnel in order to monitor a ceasefire or an agreement between antagonists, and may also engage in humanitarian activities designed to restore normalcy in concert with civilian personnel, who may also assist in the management of political decision-making processes such as elections.

Methods of Third-Party Intervention, Ronald J. Fisher, 2001

Concept: Realism and sovereignty

There are only a limited number of justifications for military intervention. The United Nations Security Council may sanction it under Article 42 of the UN Charter, but only if "international peace and security" are under threat. The emergence of humanitarian intervention has undermined the realist principle of state sovereignty. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is the belief that states forego the right to full sovereignty if they "fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity".

Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility and support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.

The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity (2005 World Summit Outcome), United Nations, 2005

With so many examples of states failing to protect their citizens, it may seem that the international community should unanimously support humanitarian intervention under R2P. However, many individuals and organizations argue against it, including the humanitarian charity, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). So, the issue is more complex than initially thought.

One of the obvious arguments in favour of intervention is the moral case. If we have the media to become aware of whatever is happening in all parts of the world, and the international community has the means to intervene, why should it not protect civilians from genocide and mass killings?

Another argument put forward is the legal case. The United Nations Charter “highlight[s] the importance of human rights”, which would provide some justification for Security Council sanctioned intervention. There are historical cases of what could be considered legal humanitarian intervention, such as NATO’s military intervention in Libya in 2011, which was based on UN Security Council Resolution 1973.

The opponents of humanitarian intervention argue that R2P can be abused, used selectively, interpreted in many different ways. They also argue that military intervention does not work and that the legal basis is lacking. For example, NATO’s intervention in Libya, although justified through Resolution 1973, was criticized by various countries’ heads of states, from South Africa to India. They argued that NATO was not interested in pursuing the protection of civilians but just wanted the removal of Libya’s dictator, Muammar Gaddafi, and that the limited deployment of forces on the ground violated Resolution 1973. Since the removal of Gaddafi, Libya has seen various groups fighting for control over the country.

2.2.4 Marginalized, vulnerable and most affected groups and individuals

The position of an individual in society can be impacted by their identity. Psychologist John Berry observed how flows of migration impact societies and how migrants and societies have various options in how they approach each other. Berry’s model of **acculturation** (figure 15) explains the choices that **ethnocultural groups** and larger societies have when engaging with different cultures.

It asks two fundamental questions:

1. Does the group/society want to maintain their own heritage culture and identity?
2. Does the group/society seek a relationship between their own group and another cultural group?

The answers to these questions affect the approach that the group/society takes. For example, if a society answers yes to question 1, but no to question 2, this results in a policy of segregation.

Key terms

Acculturation: the degree to which groups want to seek a relationship between their own group and another cultural group and maintain their own heritage culture and identity.

Ethnocultural groups: groups based on one’s culture and ethnicity.

Strategies of ethnocultural groups				Strategies of larger society			
		Does the group want to maintain their own heritage culture and identity?				Does society want to maintain their own heritage culture and identity?	
		Yes	No			Yes	No
Does the group seek a relationship between their own group and another cultural group?	Yes	Integration	Assimilation	Does society seek a relationship between their own group and another cultural group?		Multiculturalism	Melting pot
	No	Separation	Marginalization			Segregation	Exclusion

▲ **Figure 15** Acculturation strategies in ethnocultural groups and the larger society. Adapted from *Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures*, John Berry, 2005

If a migrant group maintains elements of their own culture and seeks a relation with the dominant cultural group, this leads to integration. *Foreign Policy* wrote how the Social Democrats party in Denmark have adopted a “far right immigration policy”. Sometimes, politicians talking about “integration” actually mean “assimilation”, which means that immigrants let go of their heritage culture and identity and fully absorb the dominant culture. Danish authorities are rightly identifying the need for integration to be a two-way street, with the need for more “ethnic Danes” to enrol in schools that are predominantly serving migrant communities. This is meant to counter what Danish NGO The Hechinger Report calls the risk of “parallel societies” or according to Berry’s model, separation.

With many refugees suffering from trauma due to fleeing war or experiencing hardship on the refugee trail, there is also a threat of marginalization. This is when migrants reject their own heritage culture and identity, but also do not seek a relationship with the dominant society.

Historically, many migrants have also chosen to assimilate and fully adopt the dominant culture. However, there are also some examples of migrant groups being forced to adopt dominant cultures on a societal level, which is known as **forced assimilation**.

There is a danger of assuming a normative approach with these classifications, with multiculturalism being the ideal option and the others as less ideal. In some scenarios it could be argued that this is not the ideal approach. For example, if an ethnocultural group is rather small, but has a strong and distinct cultural identity, it may make sense to have a degree of separation from the wider dominant society so as not to lose their identity. Immigrants of all nationalities often gravitate towards each other in new locations. For example, there is a community of English-speaking immigrants in Kemang district, Jakarta.

Key term

Forced assimilation: societal and/or governmental pressure on groups to adopt the dominant culture in a particular country or region and let go of their own heritage culture.

Genocide

Dr Gregory Stanton, founding president of Genocide Watch, developed a model that analyses the stages societies go through before behaviour turns genocidal:

The first process is Classification, when we classify the world into us versus them.

The second is Symbolization, when we give names to those classifications like Jew and Aryan, Hutu and Tutsi, Turk and Armenian, Bengali and Pashtun. Sometimes the symbols are physical, like the Nazi yellow star.

The third is Discrimination, when laws and customs prevent groups of people from exercising their full rights as citizens or as human beings.

The fourth is Dehumanization, when perpetrators call their victims rats, or cockroaches, cancer, or disease. Portraying them as non-human makes eliminating them a "cleansing" of the society, rather than murder.

These first four processes taken together result in what James Waller calls "Othering."

The fifth process is Organization, when hate groups, armies, and militias organize.

The Logic of the Ten Stages of Genocide, Dr Gregory Stanton

The sixth is Polarization, when moderates are targeted who could stop the process of division, especially moderates from the perpetrators' group.

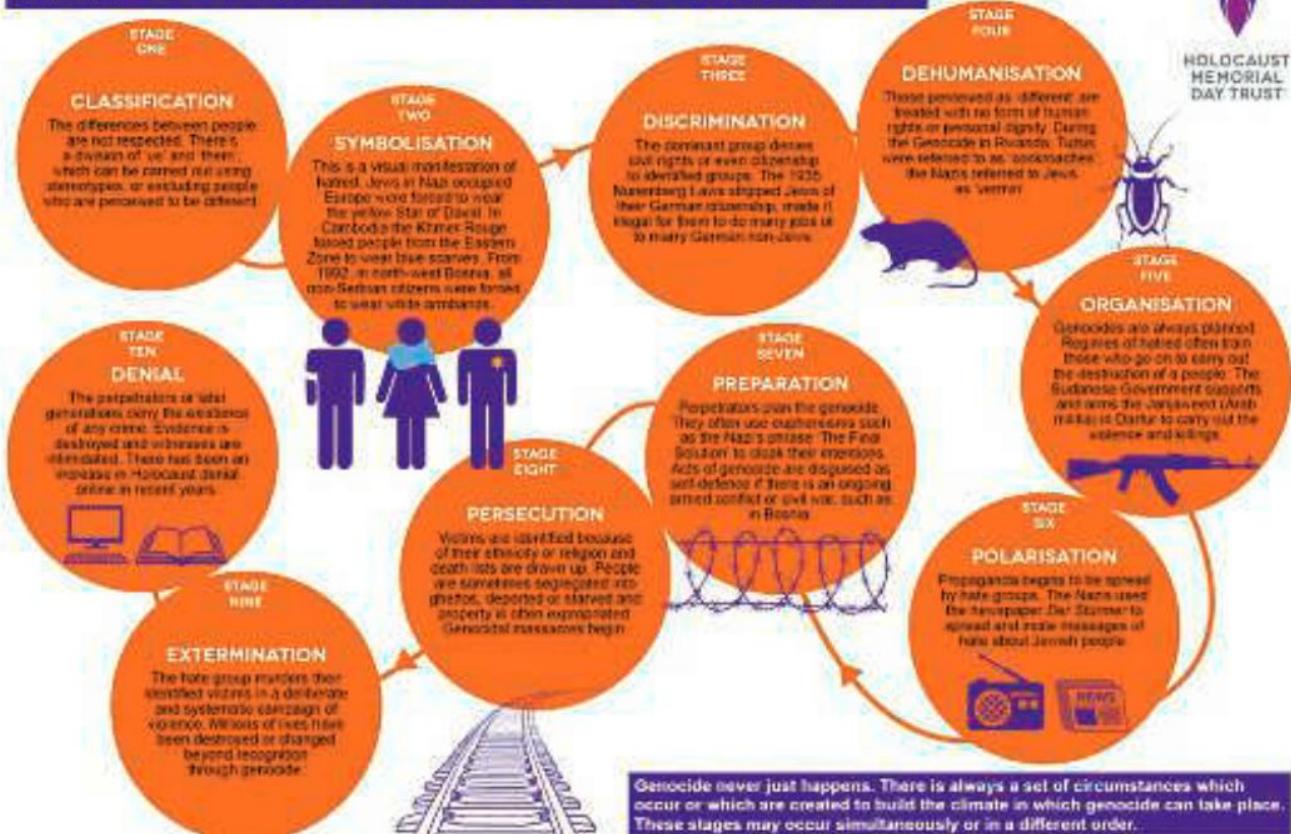
The seventh process is Preparation, when plans for killing and deportation are made by leaders, and perpetrators are trained and armed.

The eighth process is Persecution, when victims are identified, arrested, transported, and concentrated into prisons, ghettos, or concentration camps, where they are tortured and murdered.

The ninth process is Extermination, what lawyers define as genocide, the intentional destruction, in whole or in part, of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. [...]

[The tenth process, denial,] is a continuation of a genocide, because it is a continuing attempt to destroy the victim group psychologically and culturally, to deny its members even the memory of the murders of their relatives.

THE TEN STAGES OF GENOCIDE



▲ Figure 16 The ten stages of genocide

Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a US civil rights advocate and Professor of Race and Gender Studies, initially developed the theory of **intersectionality** to address the plight of black women in the United States and the injustices they were suffering. She argues that various aspects of identity, such as race and gender, and the societal systems in place can intersect to shape an individual's experience. This in turn impacts their position of privilege or oppression in society.

In its model of intersectionality, the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW-ICREF) has identified various factors that can play a role, from the language one speaks, to sexuality, religion and age (figure 17).

In August 2016, various French local governments, such as those in Cannes and Nice, banned the use of burkinis on beaches, with the penalty of a fine in some cases. A burkini is a swimsuit that covers most of the body, worn by some Muslim women. This is an example of the intersectionality of gender and religion: in this case, if an individual's identity intersects with being a woman and a Muslim, this could impact their ability to go to the beach. If Berry's model of acculturation is applied, a Muslim woman wearing a burkini on a beach is an example of integration: maintaining her own heritage culture and identity and seeking a relation with the dominant society by visiting a popular beach.

Children in conflict

The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) conducts research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups and people. They conduct an annual report about children in conflict, and in 2021, they reported the following data:

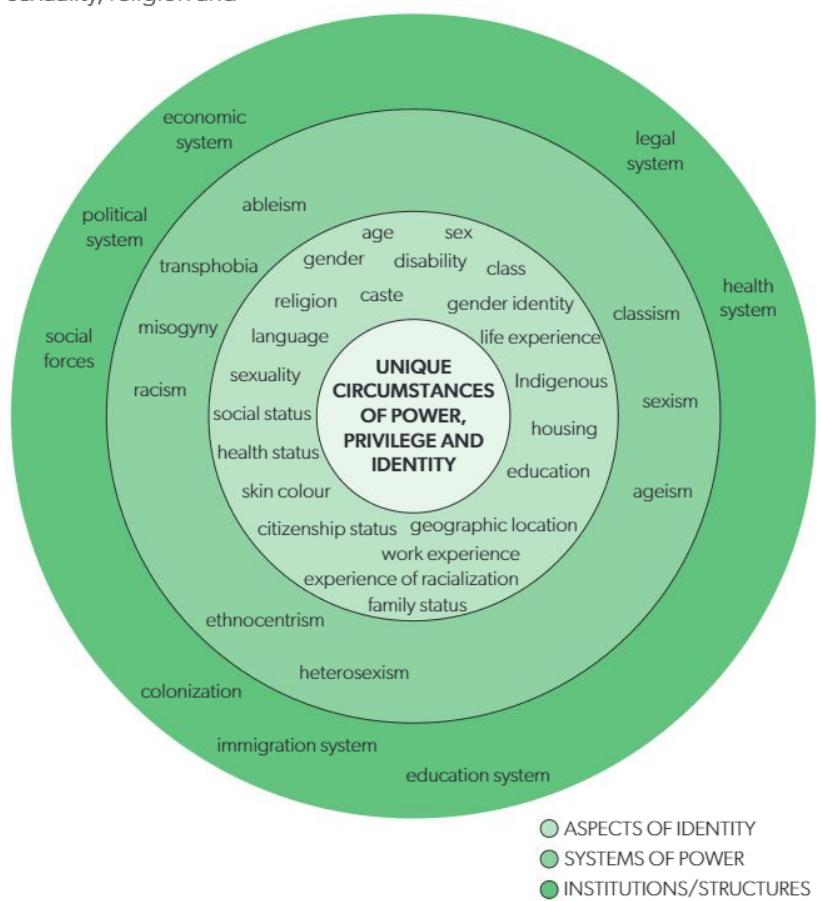
In 2021, approx. 1.65 billion children (about two-thirds) were living in a conflict-affected country and approx. 449 million children (more than 1 in 6) were living in a conflict zone – i.e. 50 km or less away from one or more conflict events. [...]

In 2021, Africa was the world region with the highest total number of children living in a conflict zone (180 million children), followed by Asia (152 million). The Middle East continues to have the highest share of children living in conflict zones (31% of all children in the region).

Fewer Children Affected by Conflict, but Conflict Intensity is on the Rise, PRIO, 2022

Key term

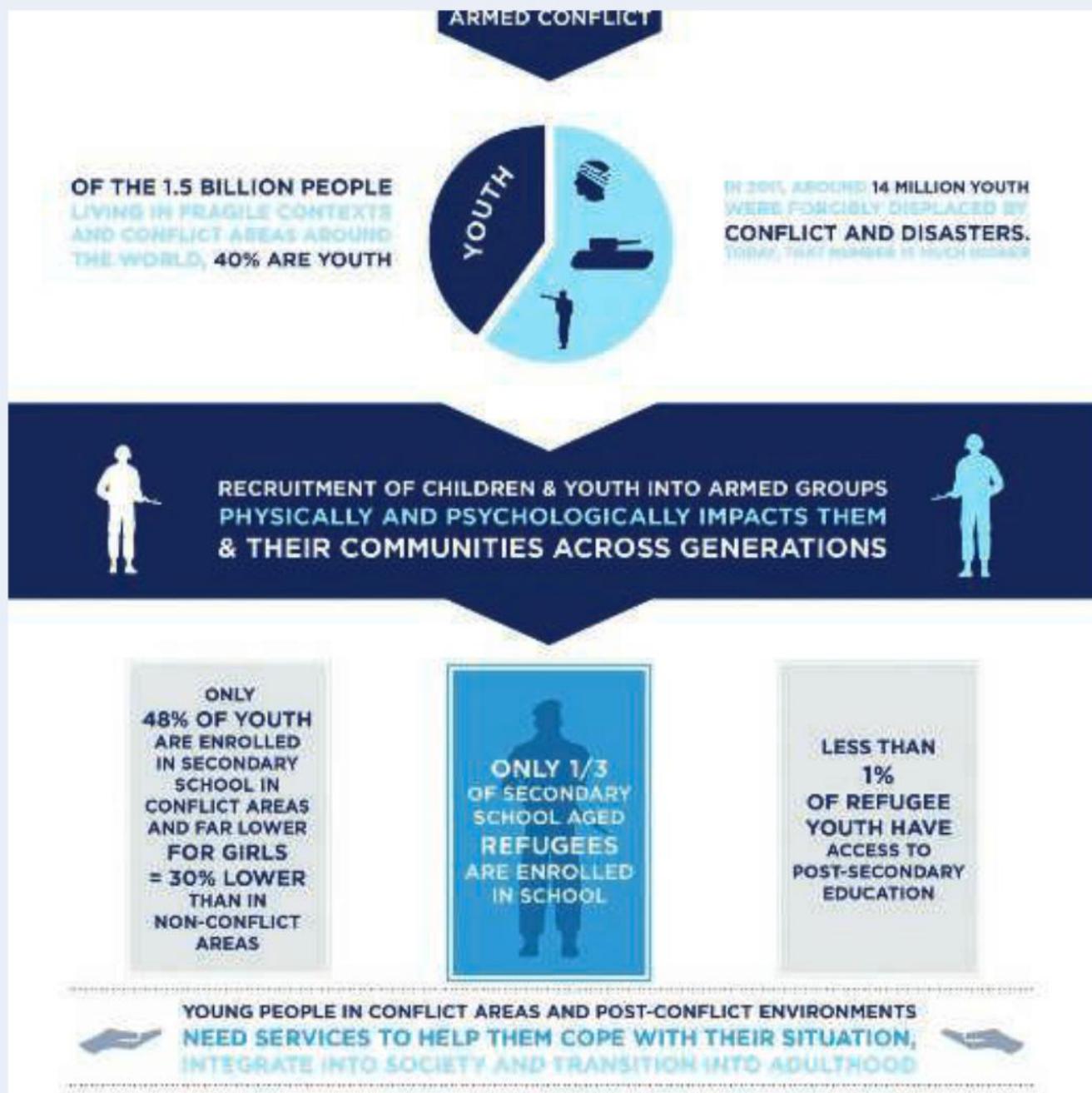
Intersectionality: the perspective that various aspects of identity, such as race and gender, and the societal systems in place can intersect to shape an individual's experience. This in turn impacts their position of privilege or oppression in society.



▲ Figure 17 Various aspects of identity, power systems and institutions that can affect an individual's experience. Adapted from CRIAW-ICREFE.

ATL Communication skills

The office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth published the following statistics about young people in conflict in 2015.



▲ Figure 18 Youth statistics infographic by the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

The Envoy on Youth has tried to present the data in a visual way, rather than just text or a diagram. To what extent does the presentation of data impact how you view the message and how seriously you take it?

2.3

Nature, practice and study of peace and conflict

Conflict parties have several options for actions they can take in the interest of pursuing their goals, from terror tactics to non-violent protest. The intensity of a conflict can also change over time. The dynamism of conflict adds to its complexity as conflict parties' attitudes and behaviour evolve. There are often deeper lying issues behind the statements of conflict parties that are either covered up or have not yet been unearthed by the conflict party itself.

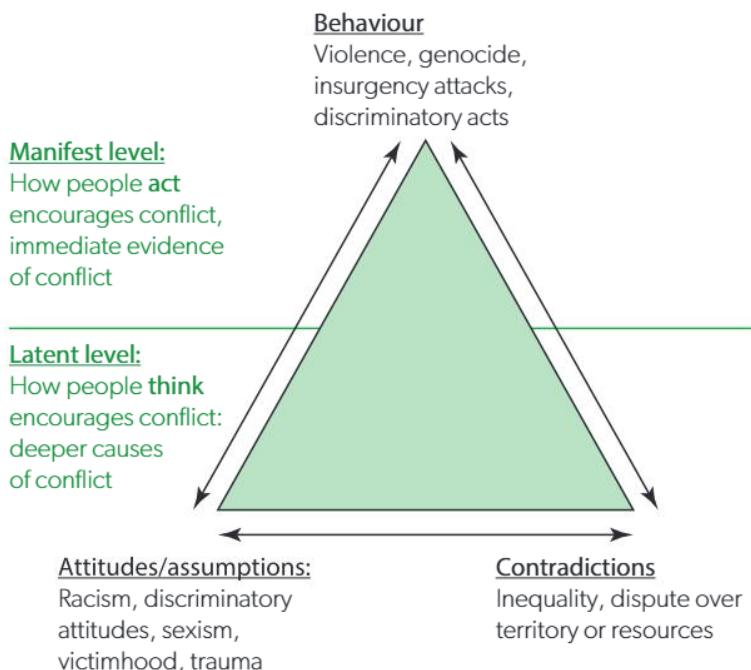
2.3.1 Conflict dynamics

The dynamic nature of conflict makes it difficult to fully understand the parties' motivations, actions and impact. Conflict models offer support by allowing the conflict analyst to focus on key elements in conflict, but also can oversimplify a conflict. Curle's asymmetric conflict model provides insight into how a conflict can progress from less visible, "latent" stages to a more visible clash between parties (figure 4). Gerstandt's approaches to conflict models allow us to see what conflict parties' options are when they are faced with a "tension of difference" (figure 5). Here you will look at four more conflict models: Galtung's conflict triangle, the positions-interests-needs model, the conflict cycle and Allport's scales of prejudice.

Galtung separates the conflicts into three parts:

1. contradictions: the **incompatibility** of the conflict parties' goals
2. attitudes/assumptions: the opinions conflict parties have about each other
3. behaviour: the actions that the conflict parties carry out on each other.

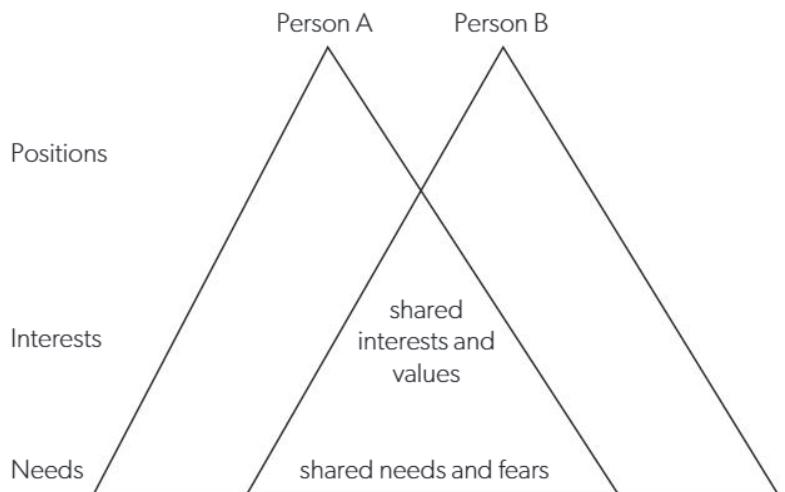
These three elements can influence each other in what Galtung calls "an ever escalating spiral" (figure 19). For example, one can look at how the parties' actions have been influenced by their attitudes towards each other, and vice versa. These together influence the core elements of the conflict, the contradictions.



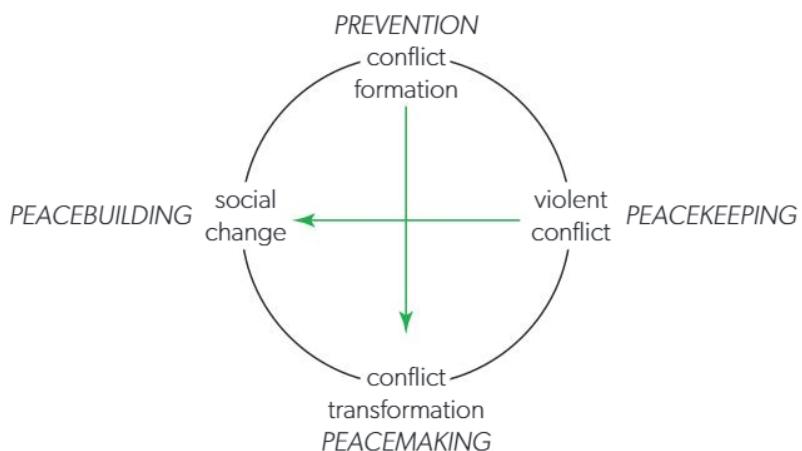
Key term

Incompatibility of goals: the situation where two or more conflict parties aim for something, but all parties' aims cannot be met at the same time.

◀ Figure 19 Galtung's conflict triangle.
Adapted from *Theories of conflict*, Johan Galtung, 1958



▲ Figure 20 The positions, interests, needs model



▲ Figure 21 The conflict cycle

Antilocution	hostile talking, including jokes
Avoidance	keeping a distance, but without actively inflicting harm
Discrimination	active exclusion from rights
Physical attack	violence against the person
Extermination	indiscriminate violence against the entire group

▲ Table 2 Allport's scales of prejudice.
Based on Allport (1954), from Richard Gross, *Psychology the Science of Mind and Behaviour* 7th edition

The conflict triangle can be a cycle. If a group starts demonstrating for the closure of nuclear power plant, the original contradiction might be that the local or national authorities would like it to remain open and the protesters would like to see it closed. If a demonstration is met with violence, then this will influence the attitudes the parties hold of each other. These attitudes will further influence their subsequent behaviour. It could introduce a new contradiction where the conflict parties disagree over what rights the demonstrators have to protest, such as in Myanmar where the government outlawed any form of protest. It could also draw attention from other groups who might join the conflict, such as in Sudan where initial protests were conducted by students, who were ultimately joined by other age groups.

The positions, interests, needs model (figure 20) is sometimes compared with an iceberg. You usually only see the tip of an iceberg, with most of it hiding below sea level. Similarly in conflicts, we mainly see the position of a party, or what they claim to be pursuing. However, the reasoning behind this claim, or the interest, is often hidden.

The positions, interests, needs model is also often used to find "shared interests and needs" between two parties, which can be used to resolve a conflict. This model can be applied to all levels of conflict: global, local and personal.

The conflict cycle visualizes the dynamics of conflict by showing the different phases that a conflict can go through (see figure 21). The incompatibility of goals results in the formation of conflict, which may then turn violent, then be transformed over time into different forms of conflict and then ultimately a social change may occur. Many conflicts, however, are stuck in the vicious cycle of formation and violence. In some conflicts, the outright victory of a party will result in the conflict moving straight from the violent phase to the social change phase.

The conflict cycle also details the appropriate response to establish peace for each stage in the conflict cycle. If a conflict is just beginning, methods to prevent the conflict escalating should be implemented (prevention). If physical violence is occurring between the conflict parties, you must separate them (peacekeeping), before negotiations can occur between the parties (peacemaking) and then the structural inequalities between them can be addressed (peacebuilding).

According to Allport's scales of prejudice, prejudiced behaviour from an in-group to an out-group can manifest itself in increasingly severe ways (table 2).

The first stage is antilocution, which is based on the pre-judgements different groups make about each other. We probably all know jokes about the inhabitants of our neighbouring country, or about particular minorities in our country, or about ourselves by neighbouring countries and other groups. These **microaggressions** might seem harmless to the person saying them, but they can create an atmosphere where it is socially accepted for an in-group to ridicule an out-group.

The prejudiced behaviour can further progress to the avoidance stage (e.g., "I never go to that part of town as it is entirely inhabited by that group") or the discrimination stage, where the out-group is actively given fewer rights. These first three stages can be considered forms of structural violence and can lay the foundations for the final two stages, physical attack and extermination. From Allport's model, you can see that if prejudiced behaviour is addressed at an earlier stage, it might prevent greater suffering in the future.

Key term

Microaggressions: expressions that show a bias against someone based on their identity through jokes or casual remarks, but with a potentially strong impact on those intentionally or unintentionally targeted by the remarks.

Case study

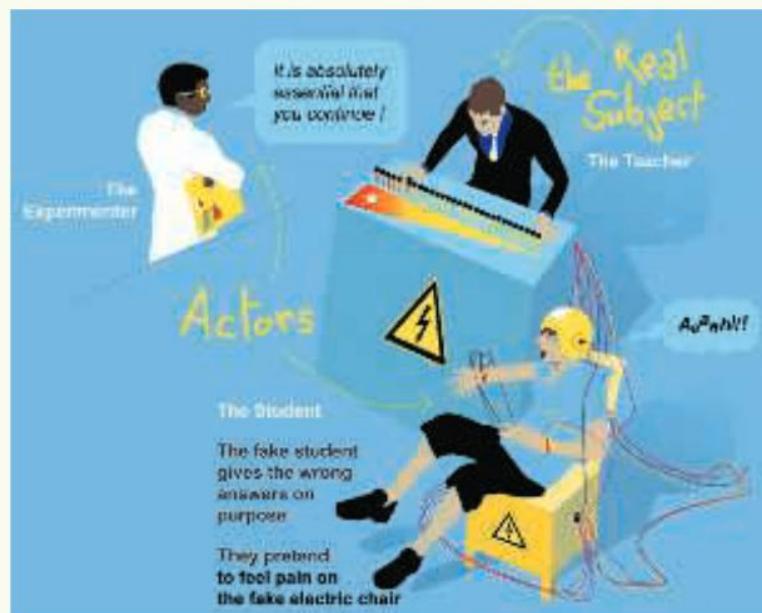
The Milgram experiment

It may seem like a big leap from a joke to a genocide, but prejudice can go unnoticed if behaviour starts off as harmless but gradually becomes more and more extreme. This so-called "foot in the door" principle explains how we might refuse an outrageous request if it comes out of the blue, but if we are gradually drawn into a system we might end up fulfilling that same request.

Stanley Milgram demonstrated this principle in the famous Milgram experiment. In the experiment, subjects were asked to inflict increasingly severe electric shocks on another participant under the pretence of assisting with an unrelated experiment (figure 22). The shocks were not real, unbeknownst to the subject. The majority of subjects increased the shocks to a level that

would have been lethal. However, every increase of voltage did not seem that bad compared to the previous level. If the experimenters had asked the subjects to perform a lethal shock on the other participant straight away, it is quite likely none of them would have continued.

Milgram did his experiments in the 1960s, but the methods have been replicated many times since. In 2015, a similar study by Polish psychologists showed even higher levels of obedience than Milgram.



▲ Figure 22 The Milgram experiment

TOK

The Milgram experiment was criticized for its supposedly unethical methods of creating an impression on subjects that they were shocking someone to death. The United States no longer allows the conducting of such an experiment. To what extent does the ethical context within which knowledge is obtained impact the validity of this knowledge?

As mentioned before, conflict models may provide clarity in conflicts, but they should be used with caution so as not to overgeneralize or simplify complex conflicts.

2.3.2 Causes of conflict: identity, ideological, interests, resources, socio-economic divisions, institutional arrangements

Key term

Interpersonal conflict: conflict between two or more persons on a personal, direct level, compared to intercommunal or international conflict, which is between communities or nations.

Concept: Realism

Traditionally, conflict analysis has largely focused on the state and any conflicts it had with other states, or alliances of states. This realist focus on the state is increasingly difficult to maintain with so many non-state actors actively engaged in conflict, from terrorist organizations to non-violent protest groups.

The causes of conflict are sometimes generalized through comments such as “it’s all about oil or power” or “religion is the cause of most conflicts”. While oversimplifying may make things easier, it does not necessarily bring us closer to the truth, which is often more complex. To be able to understand the intricacies of a conflict, you have to go back many years to unearth the deeper roots behind a situation. Whether it’s an **interpersonal** or interstate conflict, there are multiple contextual factors that influence the setting, the parties’ attitudes, their behaviour and the outcome of their actions. It is possible to identify these factors that often seem to influence conflict, with the caveat that the causes and parties are not fixed and that they constantly require further study.

The main misconceptions made about conflict are around what causes it. Galtung defines conflict as “actors in pursuit of incompatible goals”. When the aims of two or more parties do not seem to match, if they seek to achieve these aims, they clash.

There are various factors that can influence a conflict, but it is often difficult to pinpoint exactly what the role and significance of each factor is. Even 100 years after the start of the First World War, we are still debating the importance and effect of the various potential causes. Sometimes it is easier to instead look at a variety of conflicts and to identify similarities between them.

Key term

Dehumanization: the process within which a person or a group of people are no longer considered as human and are placed below other parties in a social hierarchy. In this process, references to animals or objects are often made, to deny the person or the group human characteristics.

Jabri argues that conflict is defined “in terms of inclusion and exclusion”. The creation of in- and out-groups is one of the psychological factors that influences conflict. In the *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, it is argued people categorize others in “almost automatic fashion” and that “their similarity to their fellow in-group members and the dissimilarity of in-group members to out-group members will be exaggerated”. In-groups can range from religions and nationalities to football clubs and hobbies. The perception of dissimilarity can result in conflict and depending on the circumstances, this can take more or less violent forms.

In-group/out-group hostility can lead to **dehumanization**. If an out-group is not seen as human anymore, then they might not be treated as such. This opens up the possibility of violence. Studies show that the perceived level of “humanness” of another can vary depending on their social status.

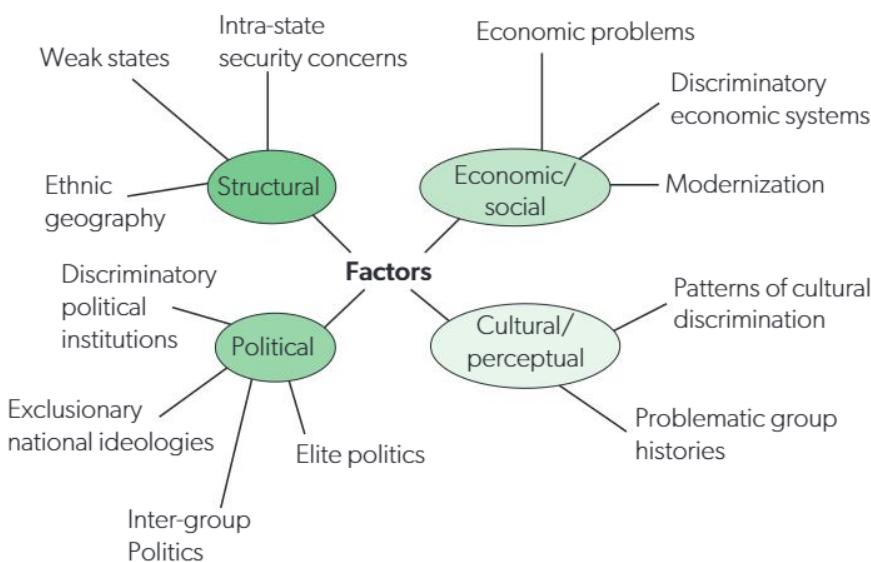
Case study

Dehumanization of homeless people

In the US, a 2006 study by Harris and Fiske used brain scans to show that many people do not see homeless and substance-dependent people as real humans. When shown a picture of homeless person, areas of participants’ brains that would usually light up when seeing another person did not. In fact, areas of the brain sometimes associated with “disgust” lit up instead.

In 2023, major news outlets started writing about a drug epidemic in the United States due to the spread of an animal tranquilizer called xylazine or “tranq”. Both media and government officials have been using the term “zombie drug”, due to its symptoms, such as slower breathing and skin sores. Describing substance-dependent people as “zombies” is an example of dehumanization. It allows government officials and members of the public to distance themselves from the issue and can make them feel less responsible for tackling the root causes of the issue.

Propaganda can further strengthen dehumanization, such as hate speeches and discriminatory practices that reinforce the idea that the other is not of similar status to oneself. We also often fear what we don't know, so separation can also reinforce the process of dehumanization. Michael E. Brown (1996) argues that attributing religious or ethnic **ancient hatreds** as the cause of a conflict is too simple. He states that "it cannot explain why some disputes are more violent and harder to resolve than others". He identifies four groups of factors that increase the likelihood of conflict: structural, economic/social, political and cultural/perceptual (figure 23).



▲ **Figure 23** The underlying causes of internal conflict. Adapted from *International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Michael E. Brown, 1996

If a country's government has a lack of control over all or parts of the country it can be classified as a **weak state**, or **fragile state**. This lack of governmental control can then lead to groups providing for their own security or vice versa. Brown also argues that states that lack homogeneity and have "ethnic minorities are more prone to conflict than others". Brown provides the example of Somalia as a country with a weak central government with many groups that provide for their own security. However, in terms of ethnic geography, it could be argued that Somalia is homogeneous though there are many complex social groupings.

The type and fairness of the political system within a state can be a cause of conflict. If groups have opportunities to represent themselves through the political system, and if the political system does not value a certain group over another, it's less likely conflict will lead to direct violence. Economic and social factors play another role. Economic difficulties can often be a bigger influence than political discrimination. The rapid process of modernization, the introduction of new technologies and new forms of industrialization also has a huge impact on societies. Old elites are sometimes struggling to keep up with the latest developments and this can lead to tensions. Modernization has also empowered groups who may have felt powerless before. For example, the use of social media played an important role in many recent revolutions, such as the Arab Spring.

The cultural/perceptual factors are related to the ancient hatreds mentioned earlier. Brown acknowledges that many groups have legitimate grievances. He states that "however, it is also true that groups tend to whitewash and glorify their own histories, and they often demonize their neighbors, rivals, and adversaries".

Key terms

Ancient hatred: historical disagreements and clashes that have led to mutually negative feelings between groups or individuals.

Weak state/fragile state: a country within which the government has a lack of control over all or parts of the country.

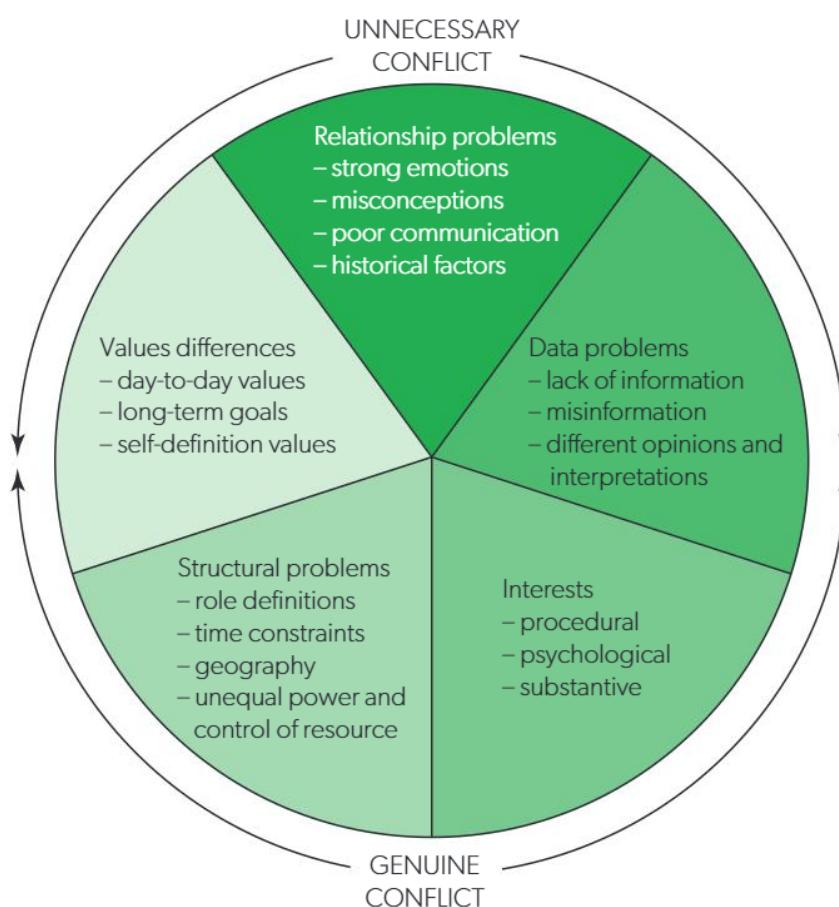
Concept: Globalization

The media and transport developments related to globalization impact on how much we know about conflicts across the globe, and how quickly certain nations and organizations can respond to them.

Key terms

Stereotypes: generalized perceptions of other people based on their identity.

Ethnic violence: physical violence afflicted from one ethnic group upon another ethnic group.



▲ Figure 24 Moore's five categories of conflict. Adapted from *The Mediation Process*, Christopher W. Moore, 1996

Key term

Status quo: the current situation, structures and systems.

The factors identified by Brown show that it is never just one element (for example, oil prices, discrimination, dictatorship) that causes conflict, but rather a melting pot of various factors that lead to a civil conflict turning violent.

Dr Christopher Moore, a US conflict mediator, identified five common problems around which conflicts are often centred: data, interests, values, relationship and structural (see figure 24). Conflicts can easily revolve around a combination of these factors, but they don't all have to be central to the conflict.

Moore states that "relationship conflicts can arise when parties are deeply upset with each other, cling to destructive misperceptions or **stereotypes** of each other, or suffer from poor communications". For example, a conflict between a married couple might carry the historical context of initially positive relations breaking down and turning sour. In other cases, conflict parties could have a long history of problematic relations, or a particularly painful memory of the past, such as cases of **ethnic violence**.

In conflicts, there are often disagreements about what actually happened, known as data conflict. For example, in interpersonal non-violent conflicts, during an argument, and in state-based conflicts, the events of a battle or massacre. Information can be distorted by emotions of the parties involved, or parties could have an interest in hiding information or downplaying its importance. Parties often highlight the events that were particularly painful for them, without acknowledging the other party's strong feelings about other events.

Many other conflicts revolve around competitive interests, whether actual or perceived. An example of this is Ethiopia's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in the Nile River, which aims to provide sustainable electricity for Ethiopia, but may impact agriculture and water access downstream in Sudan and Egypt.

Structural conflicts are caused by "destructive patterns of behaviour or interaction, unequal control, ownership or distribution of resources [and] unequal power and authority". Inequality in itself can be seen as a form of conflict (structural violence) and it can often lead to tensions between those who aim to create more equality and those who might protect the **status quo**.

Value conflicts revolve around different ways of life, ideology and religion. Samuel P. Huntington, a US political scientist, argued that in the post-Cold War world, wars would be fought based on cultural and religious identities, rather than between countries. He published his theory in *The Clash of Civilizations*, which was met with criticism from various academic writers. For example, Edward Said wrote

that Huntington failed to account for the interdependency and interactions of different cultures and he manipulated historic events to suit his argument. However, Huntington's work struck a chord with those who think about cultures in general terms, such as "East versus West" or "Islam versus Western liberalism".

For a mediator like Moore, it is important to identify the main area of conflict as that is where real progress can be made in solving a conflict. However, people's feelings, memories and goals evolve as a conflict progresses, and therefore causes of conflict can change over time.

ATL Thinking skills

1. Can you think of a conflict that is mainly structural and one that is mainly based on values and identities?
2. Why is it important to identify the main area of conflict?

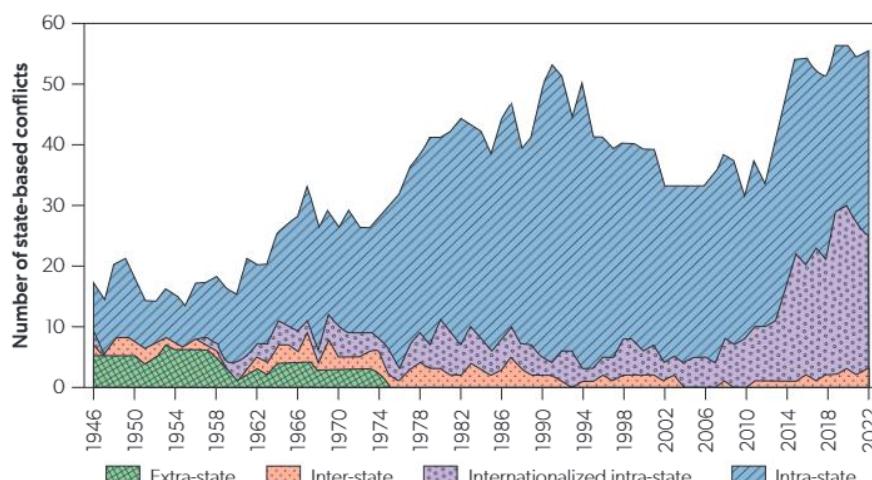
2.3.3 Types of conflict: inter-, intra-, non- and extra-state conflicts

Conflicts are often classified based on whether physical violence is used in the conflict. Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg (2001) define **armed conflict** as "the contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths". Incompatibility here refers to when two or more parties' aims clash.

Conflicts can also be categorized based on the actors involved in it. Two of the leading projects collecting data on violent conflict are the Correlates of War (COW) in the University of Michigan, US, and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) in Uppsala University, Sweden. COW and UCDP divide armed conflict into the following categories based on the actors involved:

1. **Inter-state conflict** occurs between two or more states
2. **Extra-state conflict** occurs between a state and a non-state party outside the borders of the state(s)
3. **Intra-state conflict** occurs within the borders of a single state
4. **Internationalized intra-state conflict** occurs within the borders of a single state, but with at least one side receiving military support from another state
5. **Non-state conflict** occurs between non-state parties
6. **One-sided violence** is the use of armed force by a state or non-state party against civilians

The numbers of the first four types of conflict from 1946 to 2021 are summarized in figure 25.



▲ Figure 25 State-based conflict by type, 1946–2022. Source of data: UCDP

Key term

Armed conflict: the contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government or a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths.

Concept: Postcolonialism

In the period of colonization of large parts of the world by predominantly European powers, and the subsequent period of decolonization, extra-state conflicts were common. Although this extra-state conflict is rarer in the present day, the impact of colonization and decolonization is still present in many formerly colonized societies in the form of structural violence. The theory of postcolonialism focuses on this.

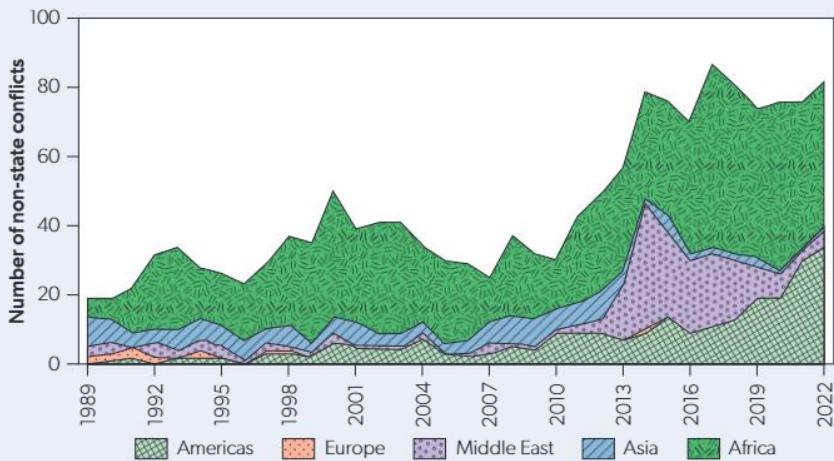
Figure 25 shows that inter-state conflicts have not been that prevalent over the past 75 years relative to other conflict types, and are significantly lower in the period 2010–2022 compared to 1946–1958. Extra-state conflict, as we can also see in figure 25, has not occurred since 1975, when Indonesia conquered Timor-Leste. Extra-state conflict can be further subdivided into colonial wars (to maintain control of a colony) and imperial wars (to extend an empire).

Internationalized intra-state conflict has become more prominent in the 21st century. By far the most widespread form of armed conflict is pure intra-state armed conflict.

ATL Research skills

Visit a news site and look up an article that analyses an armed conflict.

1. Apply the five types of armed conflict to the article. What type of conflict is it?
2. Is it difficult to identify which type of conflict it is? Why (not)?
3. Can the type of conflict change over time? How?
4. A World Economic Forum global risks report states that interstate conflict is one of the main concerns of “leaders and decision-makers”. In what ways can an inter-state war be more concerning than intra-state war?



▲ Figure 26 Non-state conflicts by region, 1989–2022. Source of data: UCDP

The prevalence of non-state armed conflicts by region is detailed in figure 26.

5. Pick a region and the year with the highest number of non-state conflicts. Identify some of the parties involved in non-state conflicts that occurred in that year.

ATL Research skills

Look up a recent or ongoing UN peacekeeping mission. To what extent has the mission been able to honour the three principles of UN peacekeeping?

2.3.4 Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding

The UN has three principles for peacekeeping. It should be based on the “consent of the parties”. This means that the main warring parties must agree to the intervention of UN peacekeepers for them to be deployed. However, small local groups or certain individuals within the conflict parties may disagree with their deployment. “Impartiality” is the second main principle, which means that the UN can not be seen as clearly taking sides or favouring one party over the other. The UN stresses though that impartiality does not mean “neutrality or inactivity. United Nations peacekeepers should be impartial in their dealings with the parties to the conflict, but not neutral in the execution of their mandate”. The last principle is the “non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate”. In 2022, the largest UN Peacekeeping missions were in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

Peacemaking can be done in many different ways, from **consultation** to **arbitration**. The role of the peacemaker can change during the process. It may start with offering **good offices** (a neutral place to meet) and evolve into active suggestions or pressure to reach an agreement. Geoff Berridge argues it is difficult to identify the ideal mediator as this is dependent on the nature of the conflict and the stage it is in. However, he has identified some general characteristics that benefit a mediator:

The ideal mediator...

1. should be perceived as impartial on the specific issues dividing the parties to a conflict
2. should have influence, if not more effective power, relative to the conflict parties
3. should possess the ability to devote sustained attention to the dispute
4. should have a strong incentive to reach a durable agreement.

Diplomacy: Theory and Practice, Geoff Berridge, 2005

A mediator might be closer to one party than the other but is ideally impartial or seen as impartial on the particular conflict. A **powerless mediator** may work in certain cases, but often it is an advantage when the mediator can apply pressure when needed. As negotiations can take a long time, Berridge argues the mediator should generally be available over many years. Negotiations tend to be "lengthy, trying and costly", so it is important the mediator has a strong motivation to stay involved.

The Harvard Negotiation Project offers a number of additional suggestions to Berridge's "ideal mediator", which includes the creative approach of focusing on "underlying interests" and needs (that is, the positions, interests, needs model), as well as the art of listening, rather than talking.

Some principles of "interest-based negotiation":

1. separate the people from the problem and try to build good working relationships
2. facilitate communication and build trust by listening to each other rather than by telling each other what to do
3. focus on underlying interests and core concerns, not demands and superficial positions

4. avoid zero-sum traps [mutually exclusive goals] by brainstorming and exploring creative options
5. anticipate possible obstacles and work out how to overcome them.

Transforming Violent Conflict: Radical Disagreement, Dialogue and Survival, Oliver Ramsbotham, 2010

With ever expanding interpretations of conflict, violence and peace, it is not surprising that the interpretation of resolving a conflict has changed. For example, we might see a peace treaty as the end of a conflict, but in some cases the conflict is often far from over and may flare up again. Peacemaking, or bringing the parties together, is still a vital element in the process towards conflict resolution, but increasingly the argument is made that a transformation is needed by fully reconciling the conflict parties.

Key terms

Consultation: to ask for advice.

Arbitration: to ask for someone to make a final judgement or decision on an issue (to be the referee or the arbiter).

Good offices: to provide a place and a space for two or more conflict parties to meet to discuss their conflict, without actively involving oneself in the process of negotiation.

Powerless mediator: someone trying to actively resolve a conflict, as a mediator, but who has no actual power to use force, threats or payment to make the conflict parties come to an agreement.

Key terms

Criminal tribunal: a court that judges the level of guilt a person has.

Truth and reconciliation commission:

an organization offering a process of identifying the role of various groups and people in a conflict, providing a space for apologies and a form of restorative justice between victims and perpetrators.

Social forgetting: a collective repression of memories of an event or history by a social group.

Concept: Equality

Peacebuilding efforts often specifically address inequality as it is an obstacle on the road towards reconciliation and positive peace.

The Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) has analysed the peacemaking process between the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government. They argue the attempt at peacemaking in 1999 to 2002, the Caguán process, was too ambitious and broad, with only a symbolic space for the wider public, victims and women. The Havana process, which led to an official peace treaty between the parties and the FARC disarming, was more narrow in its focus, allowing space for the wider public, victims and women.

After peacekeeping (separating the violent conflict parties) and peacemaking (reaching an agreement between the conflict parties) comes peacebuilding. Susan Opatow, a US Professor of Sociology, describes reconciliation as a process that “can move people from antagonism to coexistence. It can foster mutual respect, and, at its most ambitious, it can foster forgiveness, mercy, compassion, a shared vision of society, mutual healing, and harmony among parties formerly in conflict”. But, “[t]here is no one-size-fits-all blueprint for reconciliation”. The four basic options for post-conflict societies are to ignore the conflict altogether, to bring the perpetrators of crimes to justice via **criminal tribunal**, to offer amnesty (for example, via a **truth and reconciliation commission**) or a combination of any of these.

In table 3, Lydia Apori-Nkansah (2011) identifies the differences between justice through retribution (or revenge) and through restoration (repairing the harm done).

Justice as retributive	Justice as restorative
Justice as punishment	Justice as healing
Justice according to law	Justice according to truth
Justice as adversarial	Justice as reconciliatory
Justice as retaliatory	Justice as forgiveness
Justice as condemnation	Justice as merciful
Justice as alienation	Justice as redemptive
Justice as impersonal	Justice as human centred
Justice as blind	Justice as sensitive
Justice as humiliation	Justice as honour

▲ Table 3 Retributive and restorative justice. Adapted from Lydia Apori-Nkansah, *Restorative Justice in Transitional Sierra Leone, Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 2011, Vol. 1, No. 1

There are many local ways in which offenders are offered a form of restorative justice. Truth and reconciliation commissions aim to unearth the truth of what has happened and provide a chance for both perpetrators and victims to have their say so they can formally acknowledge a silenced and painful past. However, truth and reconciliation research is costly. The process can be held up by formal paperwork, distracting from the reconciliation. This is known as bureaucratization. Extreme violence can be normalized—for example, if victims are repeatedly asked questions about their experiences of violence in the conflict. Lastly, victims may not feel justice has been done if someone who has wronged them receives amnesty.

Case study

Truth and reconciliation in Sierra Leone

The following is a summary of a report by Rosalind Shaw, detailing the role of the truth and reconciliation commission in Sierra Leone.

After an eleven-year civil war that became internationally notorious for mutilation, sexual violence, and the targeting of children, a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) began its public hearings in April 2003. Increasingly, truth commissions are regarded as a standard part of conflict resolution “first aid kits.”

Despite pressure from local NGOs and human rights activists for a TRC, there was little popular support for bringing such a commission to Sierra Leone, since most ordinary people preferred a “forgive and forget” approach. [...]

In northern Sierra Leone, **social forgetting** is a cornerstone of established processes of reintegration and healing for child and adult ex-combatants.

Speaking of the war in public often undermines these processes, and many believe it encourages violence.

In Sierra Leone’s TRC, however, sensitization materials and commissioners’ speeches promoted the healing and reconciliatory powers of verbal remembering, often explicitly discounting local understandings of healing and reconciliation in terms of social forgetting.

People in both urban and rural locations were divided about the TRC, and in several communities people collectively agreed not to give statements.

Before a truth commission or TRC is initiated in a particular setting, it is important to establish whether such an exercise has popular support—not only among local NGOs but also among ordinary survivors.

Truth commission reports can provide crucial frameworks for debates about violence and repression, and can foster the development of stable national institutions. Sierra Leone’s Truth and Reconciliation Report offers this framework. But where there is no popular support for a truth commission, we need to find alternative ways of producing such reports.

Where a truth commission or TRC is initiated, it will be more effective if it builds upon established practices of healing and social coexistence. If we discount or ignore such processes, we may jeopardize any form of social recovery.

Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation: Commissions Lessons from Sierra Leone, Rosalind Shaw, 2005



▲ **Figure 27** Sierra Leonean human rights activist Binta Mansaray with the archive of testimony used in the TRC. The boxes contain over 1000 detailed accounts of the experiences of those involved in the civil war

**Save
Sierra Leone
From
another war.
Reconcile now,
the TRC
Can help**

**Disarm your
Mind!
Tell the
Truth to
the TRC**

▲ **Figure 28** Reproduction of campaign posters used by the Sierra Leone TRC

Key terms

Individual vengeance: to retaliate against another person or group for harm that has been done to you or your group.

Cycle of violence: the process of groups or individuals consistently retaliating against each other through physical force.

Rule of law: the legal system within a country or territory to which everyone is accountable.

One of the advantages of establishing a criminal tribunal is that it can diminish **individual vengeance** and avoid a continuing **cycle of violence**. In addition, it can enhance respect for the **rule of law**. Disadvantages are that tribunals can be seen as justice imposed by the victors on the defeated, and individuals can be prosecuted for acts that would be more properly attributed to governments. Criminal tribunals are also a costly affair and they may not always be effective. For example, perpetrators can deny their involvement in acts of violence and therefore the relatives of victims cannot learn the details of the crimes and receive an apology.

In 2016, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers were established to look into crimes committed in the Kosovar independence struggle from 1998 to 2000, when it was still formally a Serbian province. The government of Kosovo only agreed to the court under immense external pressure from the European Union and the Council of Europe. Experts have questioned the legitimacy of the court when it lacks local support. With former president of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, first appearing in court in 2023, it is too soon to say whether it can contribute to a form of peacebuilding.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) offers another option to prosecute the perpetrators involved in the most serious crimes. According to its founding document, the Rome Statute, it deals with the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression.

The ICC is limited by the fact that not all countries have become a member, including some of the most powerful nations such as the United States, Russia and China. It is also increasingly criticized for its focus on Africa and the number of years that the procedures take. At the same time, William Schabas, President of the Association for Genocide Scholars, calls it "perhaps the most innovative and exciting development in international law since the creation of the United Nations. [...] From a hesitant commitment in 1945, to an ambitious Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, we have now reached a point where individual criminal liability is established for those responsible for serious violations of human rights, and where an institution is created to see that this is more than just some pious wish".

The Court's founding treaty, called the Rome Statute, grants the ICC jurisdiction over four main crimes.

First, the crime of genocide is characterized by the specific intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial or religious group by killing its members or by other means: causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Second, the ICC can prosecute crimes against humanity, which are serious violations committed as part of a large-scale attack against any civilian population. The 15 forms of crimes against humanity listed in the Rome Statute include offences such as murder, rape, imprisonment, enforced disappearances, enslavement—particularly of women and children, sexual slavery, torture, apartheid and deportation.

Third, war crimes which are grave breaches of the Geneva conventions in the context of armed conflict and include, for instance, the use of child soldiers; the killing or torture of persons such as civilians or prisoners of war; intentionally directing attacks against hospitals, historic monuments, or buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes.

Finally, the fourth crime falling within the ICC's jurisdiction is the crime of aggression. It is the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, integrity or independence of another State. The definition of this crime was adopted through amending the Rome Statute at the first Review Conference of the Statute in Kampala, Uganda, in 2010. On 15 December 2017, the Assembly of States Parties adopted by consensus a resolution on the activation of the jurisdiction of the Court over the crime of aggression as of 17 July 2018.

How the Court works: The crimes, The International Criminal Court, 2023

Case study

ICC trial of Dominic Ongwen

In 2016, a trial started against Dominic Ongwen, a Ugandan leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Because Uganda is a member state of the ICC, the court's prosecutor could start an investigation into the situation in Northern Uganda. Ongwen argued that because he was abducted and enlisted by the LRA as a young boy, he was a victim himself rather than a perpetrator. Ongwen was one of the 30–50,000 children who were abducted by the LRA.

In 2021, he was sentenced for war crimes and crimes against humanity and given 25 years in prison. This included "the crime of conscripting children under the age of 15", which meant that Ongwen was found guilty of doing upon other children what had been done to him. The plight of child soldiers has been a focus point of many organizations, from UNICEF to Save the Children. These organizations try to support the children with processing trauma and reintegrating them into society.

ATL Research skills

Look up an ICC case on its website. Answer the following questions:

1. Where was the conflict the case relates to?
2. How long has the ICC been involved in the case?
3. What do the regional focus of the ICC case and length of the process say about the legitimacy and effectiveness of the court?



▲ **Figure 29** Residents of the Lukodi village in Uganda listen to Dominic Ongwen's conviction for war crimes in 2021. More than 60 village residents were killed by the LRA in 2004

2.4

Debates on peace and conflict

As you have seen so far, almost everything is debatable in *peace and conflict*, from definitions of terms to the causes of events, to the methods of preventing and resolving conflict. However, some of the main debates revolve around whether violence can be justified, what types of protest are more legitimate and what forms of peacebuilding are more effective, such as reconciliation, retribution and social forgetting.

2.4.1 Justifications of violence in conflict (including, cultural, legal and religious justifications)

Key terms

Honour killings: the use of deadly violence, often by relatives, to protect the image of a family or a group in response to an act by a person that is considered offensive and socially unacceptable.

Self-defence: using violence to neutralize an opponent, to protect oneself from harm by the opponent.

As both direct and structural violence is so widespread, societies have come up with many different ways to justify this violence. Some, for example **honour killings**, are embedded in local cultures and not necessarily integrated in the legal frameworks of countries. Other justifications, such as **self-defence** or the state's monopoly on violence through its armed forces, are usually legitimized through the country's constitution or legal framework.

Historically, it has been generally accepted that the state is the one actor allowed to use violence. Most countries have laws allowing state police forces to use violence, though they are normally expected to react in a restrained manner. The death penalty is still practised in at least 22 countries and is another form of legitimized violence by the state. Imprisonment can be interpreted as a form of structural violence, and a form of justified violence. Some believe that many countries' legal systems have implicit biases against certain minorities, and this can further be seen as a form of legitimized structural violence.

Case study

The UN Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations has created 17 goals with the aim of positively transforming the world, called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The Walk Free Foundation has published a report focusing specifically on norms that perpetuate gender inequality, which manifests itself in both structural and direct violence. Some of their findings are detailed in figure 30.

The report explains that "at the core of [gender] inequality is the idea that women and girls are inferior to men and boys—a mistruth that underpins their greater risk of violence, exploitation and modern slavery. Understanding the impact of the patriarchal social norms which exclude women and girls from exercising power and agency across their lifetime is ultimately necessary to ensure that no female, of any age, is left behind. Currently, no country is on track to achieve the gender equality goals set out in the 2030 SDGs".



▲ Figure 30 The biases faced by girls and women throughout their lives. Taken from the Stacked Odds report, Walk Free Foundation

A state's secret services are normally also allowed to use limited forms of violence. Torture is illegal under international law, but some attempt to justify its use by secret agents if it is believed that they are acting in the country's interest—for example, for the purpose of preventing a terrorist attack. Many non-state actors, from guerrilla groups to terrorist organizations are likely to use similar forms of violence. However, this is normally considered unjustified by those who do not agree with their objectives. If non-state actors are successful in their struggle and establish themselves as the rulers of a particular country, then the domestic legal system is often adjusted to legitimize the group's actions retrospectively. Other countries may further legitimize the original violence by accepting the new government.

Just war theory is a set of principles concerning the conduct of war and relations between countries. Some of these principles have largely been legalized through the United Nations. Just war theory, which both establishes the legal reasons for going to war (*jus ad bellum*) and the conduct during war (*jus in bello*). If the "rules" of just war theory are being followed, a war can be considered legal; whereas a war not fought for the right reasons and in the right manner is considered a **war of aggression**.

The basic conditions for a war to be fought for the right reasons, or *jus ad bellum*, are as follows:

1. It requires a "competent authority" to declare and wage the war.
2. It is fought in the pursuit of a "just cause".
3. It is fought with the right intention.
4. It is used as a last resort.
5. Waging the war is proportional to the act that triggered it.
6. There is a reasonable hope of success.

The "competent authority" condition was originally introduced to ensure that only states could declare war, and not private armies and other non-state actors. It is debatable whether even states meet this criterion in some cases. For example, if a state wages a war based on false information, or the basis for the war does not follow the country's constitution, can the state be considered a competent authority? The other problem is that many non-state actors claim the right to launch a war. Can organizations who claim **revolutionary rights**, or the right to go against a government that does not act in their interest, be considered a competent authority? This is not clear.

Article 42 of the United Nations Charter states: The UN Security Council "may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security". The charter is signed by the almost-200 member states of the United Nations, so it is close to universally accepted that the UN Security Council is a competent authority, despite not being a state. However, the UN does not have a military itself.

Key terms

Just war theory: the international principles of the legal reasons for going to war (*jus ad bellum*) and the conduct during war (*jus in bello*)

War of aggression: an armed conflict that does not fully meet the criteria of just war theory.

Revolutionary rights: the idea that a group has the right to challenge the government of a country if the government is illegitimate and/or harming its citizens.



Assessment advice

In your paper 2 essays and engagement project, make sure you include the arguments of both sides. Even though you may more strongly lean towards one side, it's important to include and evaluate the other party's arguments.

ATL Communication skills

The International Crisis Group is an NGO based in Brussels, Belgium, that researches and analyses global crises. Use a search engine to visit the website of Crisis Group and select one of the current conflicts they are analysing. What arguments do the warring parties use to justify their involvement in the war? And to what extent do they meet the *jus in bello* criteria of proportionality, discrimination and minimal force?

Concept: Liberty

Liberty plays an important role in peace and conflict in that coercion is often part of conflict dynamics. The established practices in relations among states, and the set-up of the UN Security Council with permanent members who hold veto-power, also reveal that actors may have limited space and options in how to act in conflict situations.

The “just cause” condition of just war theory is heavily debated. One of the main, generally accepted just causes is self-defence. The United Nations Charter also acknowledges this in Article 51: “Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations”. However, the ways in which a conflict party can act in self-defence are not clear.

The “right intention” condition means that a country can only pursue the just cause and cannot change its objectives during the war to include other, possibly unjust, causes. A just and lasting peace should also be the ultimate intention of a conflict party. However, there are many interpretations of what a “just and lasting peace” can be.

The “last resort” condition is the requirement that war should not be the first approach taken by a conflict party. It is difficult to determine whether this condition is always followed. It could be that a state considers war as one of the initial options and decides to convince the public and other governments that all other options have been exhausted.

The “proportionality” condition dictates that the ends must justify the means. If there has been an accidental border intrusion or another minor incident, this is not an acceptable justification for going to war. It also asks the conflict party to compare the positive outcomes of a successful war against the negative impacts of the war itself. If the negative outweighs the positive, it is not considered just.

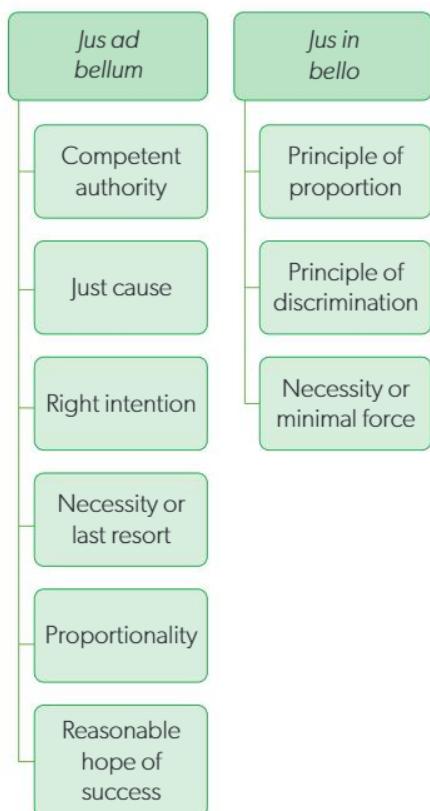
Lastly, if there is no hope of success, war is not justified, according to *jus ad bellum*.

Once all the *jus ad bellum* conditions are honoured, a war-waging party still has to respect the principles of just conduct (or *jus in bello*) during war. Once again, proportionality is required. In this case, it is the conduct during a war that must be in proportion to the offence and the end goal.

Under the principle of discrimination, warring parties are expected to refrain from direct, intentional attacks on civilians and non-military targets. Once again, these terms are debatable, and it is not always clear where to draw the line. For example, factories, media and governmental institutions may serve the military in some way, but when do they become a legitimate military target? The final condition is that any force used in war should be minimal and only out of necessity to achieve the stated outcomes.

Adhering to the conditions of *jus ad bellum* and the principles of *jus in bello* is almost a theoretical exercise when it is obvious that wars involve immense misery. One criticism is that the conditions can be interpreted in different ways, which allows too much flexibility for conflict parties to justify their reasons for war and their conduct during it. There is also the question of what can be done if powerful nations choose to ignore *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*.

It is difficult to find a war that fully adheres to the conditions of just war theory. It has been argued that just war theory should include justification for military intervention, as a last resort, in cases of mass atrocities perpetrated within a country by its own leaders. However, as discussed in 2.2.3 *Third parties*, humanitarian justifications for intervention can be misused. Regardless of the multi-interpretable elements and the current debates about its limitations, just war theory is still a fundamental code in the relations among nations.



▲ Figure 31 Summary of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* in just war theory

2.4.2 Legitimacy of non-violent and violent protests

To evaluate the legitimacy of protest movements, the law (domestic or international) is often used. A.P. Schmidt states that no violent non-state actor is considered legal in a domestic context. Based on this, it can be interpreted that non-violent protest is the only legally legitimate option on a national level.



Research skills

Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* report tracks the civil liberties and political rights of 195 countries and 15 territories. Based on this, it assigns them a category of "free", "partly free" or "not free". Figure 32 tracks the percentage of countries within each category from 1972 to 2022.



▲ Figure 32 Freedom of countries 1972–2022. Source of data: *Freedom in the World* report, Freedom House, 2023

One of the political rights tracked is the degree at which citizens of a country are allowed to protest. In the 2023 report, approximately 40% of countries in the world fully allow for the right to protest and another 25% provide some limited options. The Carnegie Endowment's Global Protest Tracker indicates over 400 anti-government protests have occurred worldwide since 2016. Many of these protests occur in countries that are considered "not free" according to the *Freedom in the World* report. This indicates that it is not even legal to gather as a group, let alone protest against the government.

Use a search engine to find the Carnegie Endowment Global Protest Tracker. Select a protest with the status "not free". Then access Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* report. What rights to protest are limited in the country you have selected? Why are people not allowed to protest in this country?

The right to protest is recognized in many international documents, most specifically in the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, to which an overwhelming majority of countries in the world are a party.

Case study

Kurdish Women's Protection Units

The Kurdish Women's Protection Units, or YPJ, provided security against ISIS. In 2023, they primarily fight against Türkiye and act as a general women's defence force. YPJ use feminist arguments to legitimize their struggle, as they serve to protect women, are all-female and try to promote gender equality. War and engaging in violence is sometimes seen as traditionally male, so the use of violence by women could be interpreted as fighting gender stereotypes.



▲ Figure 33 Combatants of the all-female Kurdish Women's Protection Units, or YPJ

However, the YPJ no longer allow married women and have been accused of human rights abuses, including using child soldiers.

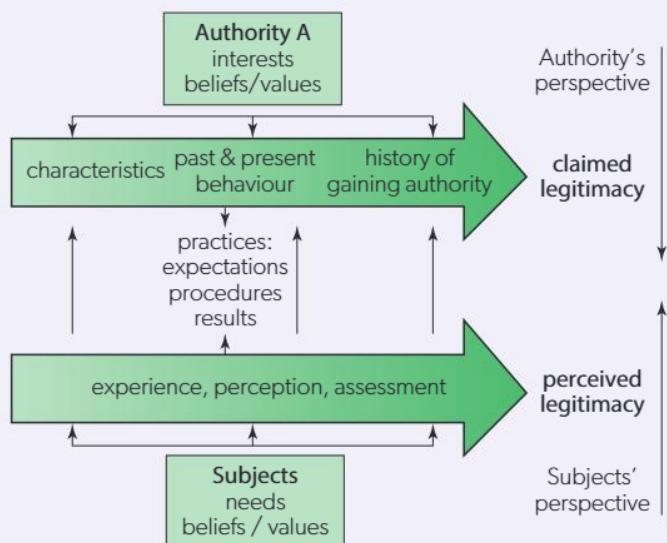
Key terms

Claimed legitimacy: the degree to which a political actor considers itself as a valid authority and that its involvement in an issue is justified.

Perceived legitimacy: the degree to which a political actor is seen as a valid authority by the general population or particular groups and that its involvement in an issue is justified.

Concept: Legitimacy

Whether something is legal or illegal may influence whether a government considers it legitimate, but for the general population this may not be so relevant. Therefore, another important source of legitimacy is how people perceive a protest movement. Dr Florian Weigand of the London School of Economics explains the difference between **claimed legitimacy** and **perceived legitimacy** (figure 34). In the case of violent and non-violent non-state actors ("authority A" in the diagram), their perceived legitimacy is based on the needs of the population ("subjects"), their beliefs and their experience with the actor. The claimed legitimacy of the non-violent or violent non-state actors is then based on their characteristics, past and present behaviour, and history of gaining authority.



▲ Figure 34 Claimed and perceived legitimacy. Adapted from *Investigating the role of legitimacy in the political order of conflict-torn spaces*, Florian Weigand, 2015

Legitimacy can also be derived from religion and culture. Earlier we saw how some view non-violence in a pragmatic way, whereas others see themselves as "principled non-violent activists". Those practising principled non-violence are often religiously inspired and refer to religious texts to argue for non-violence as a way of life. Similarly, some violent non-state actors refer to religion to justify their actions—for example, the Islamic State (IS).

Some non-state actors claim legitimacy on the basis of ideology. For example, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have waged a nearly 60-year struggle on the basis of claiming to aim for better land distribution and equality, using Marxism as a justification. Other violent non-state actors have argued that violence is justified if it is part of a struggle to create equality.

2.4.3 Effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts

Peacebuilding requires long-term commitment by both national and international actors and in many post-conflict situations they require continuous commitment. Whether societies opt for a form of legal justice, social forgetting, truth and reconciliation or a combination of these, it is not easy to measure their effectiveness.

Earlier we saw how Opotow identified real challenges with truth and reconciliation commissions, desensitizing people to the seriousness of violence and war crimes not being properly punished. It could be argued that this sends a message to the younger generation that you can just own up to your crime and then walk free. It was also stated that tribunals often lack local legitimacy as they are often installed by international actors, such as the Kosovo Specialist Chambers.

John Paul Lederach identified how different actors should be involved in different elements of the peacebuilding process with his peacebuilding pyramid (figure 35). The “top leadership” are involved in negotiations, “middle-range leaders” should engage in problem-solving workshops and be trained in conflict resolution, and “grassroots leadership” should focus on local peace commissions, the reduction of prejudice and the amelioration of post-war trauma.

After the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the country opted for a combination of an international tribunal targeting the leaders of the genocide and local community-based courts called gacaca, which were able to process a staggering 2 million cases for crimes of genocide. According to the report *Traditional Justice and Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: Learning from African Experience*, the gacaca are viewed much more positively than the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which is “portrayed and perceived as an instance of the Western way of doing justice—highly inefficient, time consuming, expensive and not adapted to Rwandan custom”.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) spent more than US\$2 billion on trialling just over 160 individuals. Many will argue you cannot put a price on justice, but post-conflict societies and the international community have to consider where they spend their money.

Concept: Justice

Post-conflict societies often struggle with coming to terms with their past, and it sometimes seems as though legal justice may lose out against peace in post-conflict peacebuilding through amnesty or forgiveness.



▲ **Figure 35** Peacebuilding pyramid showing the roles of different actors. Adapted from *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, John Paul Lederach, 1997

ATL Thinking skills

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects has identified five factors that can be used to judge the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts:

1. The effort results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances in situations where such grievances do, genuinely, drive the conflict.
2. The effort contributes to a momentum for peace by causing participants and communities to develop their own peace initiatives [...]
3. The effort prompts people increasingly to resist violence and provocations to violence.
4. The effort results in an increase in people's security and in their sense of security.
5. The effort results in meaningful improvement in inter-group relations.

Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics. A Resource Manual, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016

Another organization, Interpeace, has put specific emphasis on how peacebuilding should become more inclusive by issuing its *Ten Foundations for Gender Inclusive Peacebuilding Practice*:

1. Strengthen the capacity of staff, partners and those engaged by programmatic and policy interventions to analyse gender and to design and implement gender inclusive interventions;
2. Conduct gendered conflict analyses to inform programming;
3. Build intersectoral linkages and connect with organizations working explicitly on gender;
4. Create safe spaces and opportunities for marginalized and excluded groups to voice their vulnerabilities and needs, to transform themselves in the aftermath of conflict and to develop confidence and capacity for effective engagement in peacebuilding and decision-making;
5. Work on masculinities and engage men and boys to understand their gender specific sources of vulnerability and resilience, address gendered drivers of violent conflict, strengthen gender resilience against violent conflict and promote women's empowerment and gender equality;
6. Utilize participatory processes and creative approaches to promote meaningful inclusion of women, men, boys and girls;
7. Ensure efforts to promote gender inclusion in peacebuilding are locally led and contextually adapted;
8. Integrate gender into monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, activities and tools to encourage practices of collecting and analysing gender disaggregated data, applying a gender lens; mapping the impacts for different actors and generating more evidence on the impact of gender inclusive programming;
9. Embed gender inclusivity in institutional frameworks guiding organizational, programmatic and policy engagement practices;
10. Engage donors to align priorities for gender equality and inclusivity in peacebuilding to local realities and priorities.

Ten Foundations for Gender Inclusive Peacebuilding Practice, Interpeace, 2020

1. Compare and contrast the suggestions for effective peacebuilding from the International Peacebuilding Alliance and those from Interpeace.
2. How can a gender-inclusive approach to peacebuilding make the process more legitimate?

Exam-style questions

Here are some examples of paper 2-style essay response questions. In paper 2, there are three questions per section, but you are only required to answer one question from each section. Questions are worth 15 marks each. For more details on assessment, see the *Skills and assessment* chapter.

Paper 2, section A

1. In what ways, and **to what extent**, is conflict a contested concept?
2. **Compare** and **contrast** the interactions of non-violent and violent non-state actors with the state.
3. “Children are the most vulnerable group in armed conflict.” **To what extent** do you agree with this claim?
4. “Identity is a bigger cause of conflict than ideology.” **Discuss.**
5. **Analyse** the nature of intra-state conflict in global politics.
6. **Justify** the claim that tribunals are more effective in peacebuilding than truth commissions.
7. “Structural violence is more harmful than direct violence”. **Discuss.**
8. **Evaluate** the claim that without a strong third party, peacemaking cannot be successful.
9. **Compare** and **contrast** the impact of non-state and inter-state conflict.
10. **Analyse** the role of three different parties in one conflict.

Paper 2, section B

1. “Without sustainability, there is no peace.” **To what extent** do you agree with this statement?
2. **Evaluate** the claim that the state is the only political actor that is allowed to use violence.
3. “Violent protest violates human rights.” **Discuss.**
4. **Justify** the claim that despite its flaws, the United Nations positively impacts conflicts.
5. **To what extent** do you agree with the claim that without economic development, peacebuilding cannot succeed?
6. **Analyse** the role of IGOs in preventing conflict.
7. “Interactions of states are more often characterized by conflict than by cooperation.” **To what extent** do you agree with this statement?
8. **Evaluate** the claim that the main role of IGOs and NGOs should be to promote peace.
9. “Interdependence has made the world a more peaceful place.” **Discuss.**
10. **Analyse** the importance of recognizing human rights in peacemaking processes.
11. **Evaluate** the role of the media in conflict.