Reference
Peoples under Threat 2013: Civilian protection and military intervention

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Introduction

Foreign news reports of a whole community under violent attack in another part of the world quickly prompt the reflection: what should we do? In the western media, the question is rarely posed without quickly leading to calls for armed intervention. No matter which other potential responses are tried – diplomatic pressure, sanctions, international prosecutions – the failure to intervene militarily inevitably invites the judgment: ‘We did nothing’.

The 2013 release of the Peoples under Threat index highlights the need to question this set of assumptions in at least two important aspects. Firstly, in those country situations of most concern in 2013, where the threat of genocide or mass killing is greatest or is rising most quickly, foreign military intervention is not the exception but the norm. Whether it be the deployment of a multilateral force under the auspices of NATO, the African Union or the UN, a military intervention launched by a foreign government or governments, or the arming and logistical support of proxy militias by neighbouring or interested states, the great majority of countries where the threat of mass killing is acute or killing is ongoing have been subject to armed intervention, in some cases on several occasions going back a decade or more.

Secondly, there is a complex causal relationship between civilian security and armed intervention in practice. While it is possible that foreign military action may halt an episode of mass civilian killing or decrease its intensity, it may also prolong or intensify killing, or even initiate a conflict where there was none before. In some cases, it may end one conflict, but start another; or have the effect of shifting violence away from one people or population group onto another or others.

Major Risers since 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank 2013</th>
<th>Rise in rank since 2012</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Shi’a (incl. Hazara), Ahmadiyya, Hindus and other religious minorities; Baluchis, Mohhajirs, Pashtun, Sindhis</td>
<td>20.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Political targets, Shi’a/Alawites, Christians, Kurds, Palestinians</td>
<td>20.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Ibo, Ijaw, Ogoni, Yoruba, Hausa (Muslims) and Christians in the North</td>
<td>18.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>Zaydi Shi’a, ‘Akhdam’, Southerners</td>
<td>18.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Kaba (Sara), Mboum, Mbororo, Gula, Aka</td>
<td>15.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>Black Libyans, Sub-Saharan migrants, Tebu, Berbers</td>
<td>13.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Tuareg, Arabs, Maure, and others in the north</td>
<td>13.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>Bubi, Annobon Islanders</td>
<td>12.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Borana, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luyha, Luo, Muslims, Turkana, Endorois, Masai, Ogiek, other indigenous groups</td>
<td>12.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Berbers, Saharawi</td>
<td>12.89</td>
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This is the eighth year that *Peoples under Threat* has used statistical analysis based on authoritative indicators to identify those communities or peoples around the world most at risk of mass killing. Unlike most early warning tools, *Peoples under Threat* was developed for the specific purpose of contributing to civilian protection. This year's release illustrates starkly, however, just how little we know about the efficacy of international action to prevent atrocity. It underlines the urgent need to track the consequences of any foreign military intervention, to ensure that intervention does not do more harm than good.

**Rising threats in 2013**

At least half the states that have risen most significantly in *Peoples under Threat* in 2013, and eight out of 10 of those most at risk, have been subject to recent large-scale or systematic foreign military interventions.

The two states that have risen most prominently in the index this year are both at the centre of intense controversy concerning international intervention. The recent general election in Pakistan saw fierce criticism of US military action, in particular the systematic use of unmanned drones to drop bombs in the north and west of the country. Drone killings, including an unverified number of civilian casualties, have caused intense resentment among communities in the tribal areas. While the elections were hailed as the first transfer of power from one elected government to another in Pakistan's history, they were marked by violence and the outcome shows deep regional divisions. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and other sectarian extremists, widely believed to be funded from abroad, have intensified a murderous campaign against the Shi'a and other religious minorities, and have operated with almost complete impunity.

At least 93,000 people are now estimated by the UN to have been killed in Syria's conflict. This is the third year in a row that Syria has risen in the index, and previous fears expressed in *Peoples under Threat* that whole communities would become at risk of sectarian killings are sadly being increasingly realized. In June 2013 the US announced for the first time that it would provide direct military support to Syrian rebels, joining a long list of other states that are already engaged in supporting one or other side in the war, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia and Iran. The involvement of the Lebanese group Hezbollah in support of the Syrian government has also increased the danger of the conflict spilling further into Lebanon, which itself rose in the index this year.

In Yemen in 2012 a major military offensive, supported by the US, targeted Islamic militants in the south, and the conflict displaced tens of thousands of civilians. The US continued a separate campaign of drone strikes across the country. In the north, scene of an earlier Saudi Arabian military intervention in 2009, continuing conflict between al Houthi rebels and the government and Sunni tribes caused casualties and displacement in both Zaydi Shi’a and Sunni communities. Yemen now has the dubious distinction of having risen in the *Peoples under Threat* index seven years in a row.

The government of President François Bozizé of the Central African Republic had benefitted from military support from both neighbouring Chad and from France over the years, but he was finally overthrown in a rebellion in March 2013. Victorious fighters of the Séléka alliance have been responsible for a wave of human rights abuses, tens of thousands of people remained displaced and the humanitarian situation in the country has deteriorated markedly in one of the world's forgotten crises.

Libya and Mali are two recent cases where success has been claimed for large-scale foreign military interventions, the first in support of rebels, the second in support of the government. Both countries have risen sharply in the index this year, following major rises last year too.

NATO air power helped topple Libya's President Gaddafi in 2011 and led to democratic elections in 2012. Large areas of the country, however, remain under the effective control of different militia groups, and security for much of the population worsened over the last year. Most of the Sub-Saharan population were expelled during the rebellion in 2011 and dark-skinned Libyans, including former residents of Tawergha, remain vulnerable to racist attacks and arbitrary detention.

French President François Hollande was awarded the Houpouët-Boigny Peace Prize by
UNESCO in June 2013 for his decision to send French troops to Mali earlier in the year to regain the north of the country from Islamist rebels. Following the intervention, Arab properties in Timbuktu and other key northern towns were looted and much of the Arab population forced to flee, as were Tuaregs who were perceived to have initiated the rebellion. The UN estimated that some 470,000 people in all have fled the fighting, with Arabs and Tuaregs remaining at risk of reprisal attacks as well as inter-ethnic clashes in the north.

Peoples at greatest risk
At the head of the Peoples under Threat table are those country situations where peoples are at greatest risk. Somalia, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo have all been subject to multiple military interventions by both foreign armies and inter-governmental organizations, over the course of decades.

Both the Kenyan and Ethiopian armies were active again in Somalia over the last year, conducting major bombing and ground operations against al Shabaab, a rebel group formed in 2006 to oppose a previous Ethiopian invasion. The African Union mission in Somalia was able to claim considerable success in pushing al Shabaab back from major cities including Mogadishu, although the group was responsible for a deadly attack on the UN compound in June 2013 and continues to control large areas of South-Central Somalia, including those where the vulnerable Bantu population live. A further 78,000 people fled Somalia as refugees in 2012, according to UNHCR.

Civilian deaths in Afghanistan continue to run at nearly 3,000 a year, the great majority due to attacks by the Taliban and other anti-government forces. The US has sought peace talks with the Taliban in advance of a withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2014, but Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara leaders have formed a new National Front to oppose any accommodation with the Pashtun-dominated Taliban, in a move that underscores the deep ethnic divisions in the country.

Nigeria re-entered the top 10 this year as the threat rose from conflict between Christian and Muslim communities, much of it over land, in Plateau and neighbouring states and in the northeast. The Islamist group Boko Haram issued an ultimatum calling on Christians to leave in

<table>
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Minorities incl. Bantu, Benadiri and ‘caste’ groups (Gabooye etc.); clan members at risk incl. Hawiye, Darod, etc.</td>
<td>23.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Fur, Zaghawa, Massalit and others in Darfur; Dinka, Nuba, Beja</td>
<td>21.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Hazara, Pashtun, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Baluchis</td>
<td>21.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Shi’a, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkmen, Christians, Mandaeans, Yezidis, Shabak, Faili Kurds, Baha’is, Palestinians</td>
<td>20.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Ahmadiyya, Baluchis, Hindus, Mohhajirs, Pashtun, Sindhis, other religious minorities</td>
<td>20.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Political targets, Shi’a/Alawites, Assyrians, Kurds, Palestinians</td>
<td>20.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Burma/Myanmar</td>
<td>Kachin, Karenni, Karen, Mons, Rakhine, Rohingyas, Shan, Chin (Zomis), Wa</td>
<td>20.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Anuak, Afars, Oromo, Somalis, smaller minorities</td>
<td>19.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Ibo, Ijaw, Ogoni, Yoruba, Hausa (Muslims) and Christians in the North</td>
<td>18.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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January 2012 and then launched a campaign of attacks on Christians in the north-east, killing hundreds and displacing thousands. Following the imposition of a state of emergency in three states in north-eastern Nigeria in May 2013, accompanied by a media blackout, the Nigerian army has been accused of arbitrary killings and disappearances in its operations against Boko Haram.

In Darfur in Sudan the joint UN/African Union peace-keeping force (formerly the world’s largest) scaled back to 16,000 troops as progress was made with the implementation of the Darfur peace agreement. Conflict between rebels and the government continued, however, and included attacks by the Sudanese air force and by government-backed militias on civilians in IDP camps. A set of humanitarian crises continue to unfold on both sides of the border with the newly-independent state of South Sudan. In South Kordofan and Blue Nile in Sudan, the Sudanese armed forces were responsible for indiscriminate shelling of villages in their campaign against the Sudan Revolutionary Front, an alliance of existing rebel groups. In the latest agreement between Sudan and South Sudan in March 2013, their respective forces were due to undertake a UN-monitored withdrawal from a demilitarized zone on the border, but violations have already been reported. Inter-ethnic violence continued in Jonglei state in South Sudan, particularly between Lou-Nuer and Murle.

International trade and cooperation
Foreign military intervention lies at one end of a spectrum of possible international engagement and it is instructive first to consider peaceful means of influencing a state’s human rights performance.

Although international relations with any given state are complex and can have negative as well as positive effects on human rights, a condition of general isolation from international exchange and cooperation, when combined with other factors, signals danger. The *Peoples under Threat* index uses the country credit risk classification assigned by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a proxy for low trade openness, one of the known antecedents to genocide or mass political killing (see box: ‘How is *Peoples under Threat* calculated?’ on p. 219).

Under this rubric, embeddedness in the international system not only brings with it a range of economic benefits which it would be costly to lose, but also exposes a national government to a level of continuous pressure to conform to minimum international standards.

Globalization, the expansion of international trade and the growth in inter-governmental organizations have significantly reduced instances of international isolation. The remaining exceptions – of which North Korea is the most striking example – present profound human rights challenges.

Emerging from relative isolation over the last two years, Burma/Myanmar has made tentative moves towards democratization, most visibly in the appointment of a civilian government and the release from house arrest and election to Parliament of the opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. Burma has accordingly fallen in the index this year, although it remains in the top 10. In addition to widespread human rights violations associated with renewed conflict in Kachin state, inter-community violence has caused the deaths of hundreds of Muslims, particularly Rohingya in Rakhine state. Dam construction and other major development projects across the country have drawn a huge increase in international investment, but have themselves created further concerns for indigenous and ethnic minority communities who fear displacement and the loss of their livelihoods.

Cooperation extends beyond trade relations. International cooperation to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is actually enshrined in international law as one of the founding principles of the UN. Such cooperation includes oversight mechanisms, including the UN Human Rights Council, through which member states’ pledge to promote human rights can be scrutinized. Whether it be through the agencies of the UN, through regional inter-governmental organizations, or through bilateral cooperation, states can also benefit from a wide range of ‘technical assistance’ programmes, from advice on legal drafting and rights monitoring through to training in human rights standards for judges, lawyers and law enforcement agencies.
More generally, international aid for development is a major source of income for most of the world’s poorest states, including many near the top of the *Peoples under Threat* table. Whether or not it is a formal condition for receiving aid, accepting international observation or assistance on human rights is often seen as part of the package. Conversely the removal of aid, or the threat of its removal, can provide a major lever of influence over a government to improve its human rights performance. In 2012, for example, the EU and a number of other governments partly suspended aid to Rwanda following a report by a UN group of experts into Rwandan support for the M23, a rebel group in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) whose murderous activities have sparked a renewed humanitarian crisis.

**The toolbox of coercion**

Beyond international oversight and the provision or withholding of aid, a range of other means are available to the international community to seek to modify a state’s behaviour. These include, but are not limited to, diplomatic pressure, litigation before international tribunals or the International Court of Justice, suspension or expulsion from international organizations, severance of diplomatic relations, economic sanctions, arms embargoes, international prosecutions of military or political leaders, and travel bans or asset freezes.

The use of a number of these tools is illustrated by the response to inter-ethnic violence in Kenya, when over 1,300 people were killed following a disputed general election in December 2007. Intense diplomatic pressure, including a threat from the EU Development Commissioner to reduce aid and the imposition of a US travel ban on a number of Kenyans, led to a set of power-sharing accords, mediated by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. A commission of inquiry established under the accords recommended the prosecution of those most responsible for the violence, with a recourse to the International Criminal Court (ICC) should national prosecutions not progress. In the event, the ICC opened an investigation in 2010. A new general election in Kenya in March 2013 passed off relatively peacefully, but resulted in the election as President and Deputy President of two men with outstanding ICC indictments for crimes against humanity for their role in the 2007–8 post-election violence. Kenya rose sharply again in the *Peoples under Threat* table this year.

Both Kofi Annan and his successor as UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, described the Kenya mediation as the first application of the new norm of ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P). At the UN world summit in 2005, UN member states had agreed that, although an individual state carried the primary responsibility for protecting its population, the international community also had a ‘responsibility to protect’ populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility was to be discharged through ‘appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means’ but, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations, also through taking collective action, ‘in a timely and decisive manner’, through the UN Security Council.

Much of the groundwork for developing the norm of responsibility to protect was undertaken by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, set up under the auspices of the Canadian government. Borrowing heavily from just war theory, the Commission identified six necessary criteria for a justified military intervention: just cause, right intention, last resort, proportional means, reasonable prospects and right authority. For the just cause threshold to be met, the Commission explained that there must be serious and irreparable harm – such as large-scale loss of life or ethnic cleansing – occurring to human beings or imminently likely to occur. The criteria of just cause and right intention in particular remain deeply controversial, given that most military interventions in history have not been undertaken for humanitarian reasons and that the intention or motivation of states can be difficult to certify.

The responsibility to protect envisages states taking collective or multi-lateral action, but it does not specify which form of mandate might be appropriate for such action, other than that it should be in accordance with the UN Charter, including Chapter VII. The first military implementation of the responsibility to protect is accepted to be Security Council Resolution
1973 in 2011, which authorized UN member states to ‘take all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians and civilian populated areas’ in Libya, including by the establishment of a no-fly zone (although NATO was later criticized for exceeding its mandate when it went on to support the overthrow of President Gaddafi). Since the 1990s, however, UN missions have evolved from a traditional peace-keeping role, in which lightly-armed personnel were deployed post-ceasefire with the consent of both parties to the conflict, to multi-function missions with wide humanitarian aims including, increasingly, ‘peace enforcement’. The UN’s largest peace-keeping operation, in the DRC, provides a good case study of this development, with the mission’s latest incarnation including an ‘intervention brigade’ with the power to ‘carry out targeted offensive operations’ to neutralize armed groups threatening state authority and civilian security (UNSC 2098, March 2013).

Although military interventions authorized by the UN Security Council or other inter-governmental organizations have increased in recent years (see opposite), it should be noted that most interventions continue to be undertaken by neighbouring states or world powers. Furthermore, interventions using the regular forces of a national government or governments are themselves outnumbered by the widespread practice of providing military, financial or logistical support to proxy militias or rebel groups.

Armed intervention and mass killing: cause or effect?
Ten years ago in 2003 the United States led a military coalition to intervene in Iraq. One narrative for what then happened describes the removal of a government responsible for gross human rights abuses and the installation of a fledgling democracy. Another version of the same events tells how an illegal invasion started a war that has to date cost the lives of at least 112,000 civilians and left the country in a semi-permanent state of conflict, with approximately 400 civilians continuing to be killed every month.

That both these narratives can exist, credibly, at the same time is an indication of the difficulty in identifying cause and effect in a series of events that appear over-determined. The Iraqi case has perhaps occasioned more debate than any other in recent years, but difficult questions on the aims and effects of armed intervention could equally be posed concerning many of the critical country situations in the *Peoples under Threat* index, including *inter alia* Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the DRC, Yemen and Libya. In each case, humanitarian grounds have been among those cited to justify military intervention, but it remains hard to establish whether the majority of civilian killing is the cause or the effect of sustained intervention, particularly in the case of interventions that comprise multiple episodes.

In specific cases it may be possible to draw at least interim conclusions. Even in the case of Iraq, most commentators would agree both that the population of Iraqi Kurdistan feel more secure following the removal of their nemesis Saddam Hussein and also that the 2003 invasion triggered an unprecedented level of sectarian violence between Arab Sunni and Shi’a. Two international military interventions that produced a definite, immediate improvement in civilian protection were the UK operations in Sierra Leone in 2000 to help halt a rebel advance on the capital Freetown; and the EU/French Operation Artemis to secure the town of Bunia in Ituri in the DRC in 2003. (It is notable that both these were limited operations focused on securing one urban area and were launched with the cooperation of the national host government.) However, with over 16 years’ continuous experience of repeated foreign interventions by both foreign governments and inter-governmental actors, the DRC case more than any other demonstrates the complexity of disentangling the lines of causality linking intervention and civilian killing or protection.

A growing number of academic research institutes now compile data on inter-state conflict and other instances of international military action. Of particular interest is the updated International Military Intervention dataset (IMI), compiled by Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet F. Kisangani at Kansas State University. This records 444 separate instances of military intervention across international boundaries by regular armed forces from 1989 to 2005. It has the advantage of using the same definitions and
coding as an earlier dataset covering the Cold War era, thus providing a consistent body of data from 1946 onwards, and includes information on the direction of military intervention (for example whether it was hostile, supportive or neutral) and on the motivation or issues driving intervention. (The data excludes support for proxy militias, paramilitaries, mercenaries or
IMI records an increase in the use of foreign military intervention, from approximately 16 foreign military interventions launched every year during the Cold War period to 26 interventions initiated per year in the post-Cold War years of 1990–2005. Interventions by major powers (i.e. the five permanent members of the UN Security Council) increased slightly, with US and French activities accounting for most of the increase, but the greatest proportional increase was seen in interventions mounted by international organizations, including the UN, NATO and other regional organizations (Pickering and Kisangani, ‘The International Military Intervention Dataset: An updated resource for conflict scholars’, Journal of Peace Research 46, 2009).

This finding of an increase in foreign military intervention is consistent with the high levels of armed intervention noted earlier in countries ranked highly in the 2013 *Peoples under Threat* index. Other studies in the literature demonstrate a relationship between armed intervention and an increase in human rights violations. Working from a sub-set of the IMI data for the period 1981–2001, Dursun Peksen finds that foreign military intervention increases the likelihood of violations of physical integrity rights, particularly in the case of interventions that are supportive towards the target government or neutral (‘Does Foreign Military Intervention Help Human Rights?’, Political Research Quarterly 65, 2012). He hypothesizes that the use of repression is essentially a policy choice adopted by the government and that supportive or neutral military intervention enhances the state’s coercive power and encourages more repressive behaviour. Interestingly, he finds no major statistically significant difference between humanitarian intervention and non-humanitarian intervention. He notes the value of these findings in shedding light ‘on the empirical relevance of ongoing policy debates showing that interventions might inadvertently do more harm than good – at least in the case of human rights – even if they are initiated by IGOs or liberal democracies’.

*Peoples under Threat* is designed to assess the risk to population groups not just from government repression but also from the activities of rebel groups, from inter-ethnic or inter-religious conflict, or indeed from foreign attack. The correlation between the level of current threat to population groups and a history of international military intervention can be demonstrated by plotting the 2013 index (for 114 countries) against the IMI data on military interventions by target country over the period 1989–2005. The correlation is particularly strong for hostile interventions (i.e. those coded in IMI as opposing governments or supporting rebels). A higher number of hostile interventions in the 1989–2005 period corresponds to higher levels of current threat (see graph on p. 217).

**Monitoring the impact of intervention**

It should be stressed that even if there is a correlation between military intervention and a subsequent rise in the level of threat to civilian population groups, it cannot be assumed that one causes the other. There might be significant differences in the situation in target countries *ex ante*, or intervening variables – the nature or direction of the intervention, the level of wider international support – may be as or more important. But it does underline the need for more research. It also highlights the point that interventions, particularly belligerent ones, often do not turn out the way they were intended, as the case of Iraq tragically demonstrates.

One of the conditions for a justified intervention under the R2P doctrine is a reasonable prospect of success. It might be argued that a test based only on reasonableness sets the bar too low, but it would help if the test were correctly applied. Reasonable prospect is often judged just in terms of the immediate military objective, whether it be gaining air supremacy, defeating a military force, or establishing effective control of territory. But if the just cause for an armed intervention is civilian protection, then success should also be judged in terms of civilian protection. As Taylor Seybolt, author of a major study on military interventions, has argued: ‘A reasonable prospect of success is as critical to legitimate humanitarian intervention as just cause. If an intervention is not likely to do more good than harm from a humanitarian point of view, it cannot be justified in humanitarian terms. This is true even if the other criteria of right authority, right intention, last resort and
proportional means are met. Despite its essential character, the prospect of success is undervalued and has been the subject of too little study. This lack of attention may help to explain why so many humanitarian interventions have gone awry’ (Taylor B. Seybolt, *Humanitarian Military Intervention*, SIPRI, OUP, Oxford, 2007, p. 26).

There is perhaps no older ethical problem in politics than the morality of the use of force. The state will reserve to itself the monopoly of the legitimate means of violence, but when and how violence can be employed to maintain order are questions that have been posed by governments through the ages. In the era of decolonization, we also became familiar with the revolutionary’s dilemma: is it right to spill blood to win liberty? Although the answer to such questions may be influenced by an estimation of how much blood might be necessary, it also depends on the wider political beliefs of the individual confronted by the dilemma and the relative value he or she places on life, as opposed to freedom or order. As such, the problem always escaped simple resolution.

In the current debates over responsibility to protect and armed intervention, the fundamental moral question is perhaps more straightforward: how many lives should be risked to save other lives? The calculus is still complex, but the currency is the same. Perhaps the greatest scandal, under such circumstances, is the failure to monitor loss of life following an armed intervention, so the question can at least be put. After the Libyan intervention, for example, NATO was heavily criticised for failing to investigate over 70 civilian deaths caused by its aerial bombardment. But there remains even more confusion about the far greater numbers killed in the Libyan conflict by both government and rebel forces, the majority after the start of foreign intervention. Even today, credible estimates of the number killed range from 15,000 to 30,000 (around half of them civilians). If there is a basic failure even to count the dead, then the relative success of an intervention can never be properly evaluated.

As the threat of mass killing continues to be faced by peoples around the world, there is an urgent need for reliable data on the consequences as well as the causes of military intervention, to ensure that civilian protection is improved in practice. *Additional research by Jack Dentith.*

**How is Peoples under Threat calculated?**

Since the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, our ability to identify those situations most likely to lead to genocide or mass killing has improved. A number of comparative studies of the factors preceding historic episodes of political mass killing had been undertaken since the 1970s, including by Helen Fein and Ted Robert Gurr, but it was not until the 1990s that researchers such as Rudolf Rummel and Matthew Krain pioneered quantitative longitudinal analysis of a wide range of such factors, enabling the testing of different causal hypotheses. Rummel, for example, showed the very strong relationship between concentration of government power and state mass murder; Krain demonstrated the correlation between existing armed conflict or political instability and the onset and severity of mass killing.

Following the early work of the Clinton administration’s policy initiative on genocide early warning and prevention, Professor Barbara Harff, a senior consultant with the US State Failure Task Force, constructed and tested models of the antecedents of genocide and political mass murder and her results were published in 2003 (‘Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955’, *American Political Science Review* 97, February 2003). Her optimal model identifies six preconditions that make it possible to distinguish, with 74 per cent accuracy, between internal wars and regime collapses in the period 1955–1997 that did, and those that did not, lead to genocide and political mass murder (politicide). The six preconditions are: political upheaval; previous genocides or politicides; exclusionary ideology of the ruling elite; autocratic nature of the regime; minority character of the ruling elite; and low trade openness.

Minority Rights Group International has drawn on these research findings to construct the *Peoples under Threat* table, although
responsibility for the final table is exclusively our own. Peoples under Threat is specifically designed to identify the risk of genocide, mass killing or other systematic violent repression, unlike most other early warning tools, which focus on violent conflict as such. Its primary application is civilian protection.

Indicators of conflict are included in the table’s construction, however, as most, although not all, episodes of mass ethnic or religious killing occur during armed conflicts. War provides the state of emergency, domestic mobilization and justification, international cover, and in some cases the military and logistic capacity, that enable massacres to be carried out. Some massacres, however, occur in peacetime, or may accompany armed conflict from its inception, presenting a problem to risk models that focus exclusively on current conflicts. In addition, severe and even violent repression of minorities may occur for years before the onset of armed conflict provides the catalyst for larger scale killing.

The statistical indicators used all relate to the state. The state is the basic unit of enquiry, rather than particular ethnic or religious groups at risk, as governments or militias connected to the government are responsible for most cases of genocidal violence. Formally, the state will reserve to itself the monopoly over the means of violence, so that where non-state actors are responsible for widespread or continued killing, it usually occurs with either the complicity of the state or in a ‘failed state’ situation where the rule of law has disintegrated. Certain characteristics at the level of the state will greatly increase the likelihood of atrocity, including habituation to illegal violence among the armed forces or police, prevailing impunity for human rights violations, official tolerance or encouragement of hate speech against particular groups, and in extreme cases, prior experience of mass killing. Eggregious episodes of mass killing targeted principally at one group have also seen other groups deliberately decimated or destroyed.

However, some groups may experience higher levels of discrimination and be at greater risk than others in any given state. Minority Rights Group International has identified those groups in each state which we believe to be under most threat. (This does not mean that other groups or indeed the general population may not also be at some risk.) It should be noted that although these groups are most often minorities, in some cases ethnic or religious majorities will also be at risk and in relevant cases are therefore also listed in the table. In some cases, all the groups in the country are at risk of ethnic or sectarian killing.

One indicator that has been tested and discarded by a number of studies is the general level of ethnic or cultural diversity in a society. Krain did not find any correlation between ‘ethnic fractionalization’ and the onset of genocide or political mass killing. Similarly, neither of the patterns of ethnic diversity tested by Harff had any effect on the likelihood of mass killing (although she did find the minority character of the ruling elite to be significant). These findings are supported by research on the relationship between diversity and conflict.

The overall measure is based on a basket of 10 indicators. These include indicators of democracy or good governance from the World Bank; conflict indicators from the Center for Systemic Peace and other leading global conflict research institutes; indicators of group division or elite factionalization from the Fund for Peace and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; the State Failure Task Force data on prior genocides and politicides; and the country credit risk classification published by the OECD (as a proxy for trade openness). For citations and further information, see the notes to the table. For a fuller discussion of the methodology, see State of the World’s Minorities 2006.

Based on current indicators from authoritative sources, Peoples under Threat seeks to identify those groups or peoples most under threat in 2013.
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<td>genocide/politicide</td>
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State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2013
Reference
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# Table 1
Peoples under Threat 2013

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Peoples under Threat 2013

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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
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**Notes to Table**

Sources of the indicators are as follows:


- **Prior genocide or politicide**: Harff, US Political Instability Task Force (formerly State Failure Task Force). 1 = one or more episodes since 1945.

- **Indicators of Group Division**: Failed States Index,

Self-determination conflicts in 2013 were ranked on a scale of 0–5 as follows: 5 = ongoing armed conflict; 4 = contained armed conflict; 3 = settled armed conflict; 2 = militant politics; 1 = conventional politics. Major armed conflicts were classified as 2 = ongoing in late 2012; 1 = emerging from conflict since 2007 or ongoing conflict with deaths under 1,000.
Indicators of group division

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- **Democracy/Governance Indicators**: Annual Governance Indicators, World Bank, 2012.
- **OECD country risk classification**: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, ‘Country Risk Classifications of the Participants to the Arrangement on Officially Supported Export Credits’, January 2013. Where no classification is given, a value of 8 was accorded.

Data for Kosovo include some indicators relating to Serbia. Where separate indicators are available for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the latter have been used.

Indicators were rebased as necessary to give an equal weighting to the five categories above, with the exception of the prior geno-/politicide indicator. As a dichotomous variable this received a lesser weighting to avoid too great a distortion to the final ranking. Resulting values were then summed. The full formula is:

\[(A/2) + (B\times1.25) + (C\times2) + (D+E+F)/6 + (G+H+I)/-1 + (J\times0.625)\]
## Status of ratification of major international and regional instruments relevant to minority and indigenous rights

**as of 1 February 2012**

- ■ Ratification, accession or succession.
- □ Signature not yet followed by ratification.

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Status of ratification of major international and regional instruments relevant to minority and indigenous rights
as of 1 February 2012

- Ratification, accession or succession.
- Signature not yet followed by ratification.

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### Status of ratification of major international and regional instruments relevant to minority and indigenous rights

**as of 1 February 2012**

- ■ Ratification, accession or succession.
- □ Signature not yet followed by ratification.
- ■ Ratification of ICERD and Declaration on Article 14.
- ■ Ratification of ICERD and Signature of Declaration on Article 14.
- ■■ Ratification of ICCPR and Optional Protocol.
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## Status of ratification of major international and regional instruments relevant to minority and indigenous rights

as of 1 February 2012

- Ratification, accession or succession.
- Signature not yet followed by ratification.

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- Armenia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Georgia

## Reference

State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2013
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State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2013
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- **R** Ratification, accession or succession.
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- **R-** Ratification of ICERD and Declaration on Article 14.
- **R** Ratification of ICERD and Signature of Declaration on Article 14.
- **S** Ratification of ICCPR and Optional Protocol.
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### Number of states parties

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<td>Signature of ICCPR and Optional Protocol</td>
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Compiled by Natasha Horsfield and Electra Barbouri

Sources:
- [Treaties][1]
- [Ratification Status of ICERD and Declaration on Article 14][2]
- [Ratification Status of ICCPR and Optional Protocol][3]

[2]: (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/docs/RatificationStatus.pdf this has been fully updated as of 2006 so above link more relevant)
[3]: http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/Statusfrset/OpenFrameSet

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http://www.achpr.org/
http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/Sigs/b32.html
http://www.cidh.oas.org/
http://conventions.coe.int/鼠
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http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=148&CM=8&DF=&CL=ENG
Who are minorities?

Minorities of concern to MRG are disadvantaged ethnic, national, religious, linguistic or cultural groups who are smaller in number than the rest of the population and who may wish to maintain and develop their identity. MRG also works with indigenous peoples.

Other groups who may suffer discrimination are of concern to MRG, which condemns discrimination on any ground. However, the specific mission of MRG is to secure the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples around the world and to improve cooperation between communities.

Selected abbreviations

ACHPR – African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
AHRC – Asian Human Rights Commission
AU – African Union
CEDAW – Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CERD – Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR – Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
FGM – Female Genital Mutilation
HRW – Human Rights Watch
IACHR – Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IACtHR – Inter-American Court on Human Rights
ICC – International Criminal Court
ICG – International Crisis Group
IDPs – internally displaced people
IMR – Infant Mortality Rate
MDGs – Millennium Development Goals
MMR – Maternal Mortality Rate
NGO – non-governmental organizations
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
UNAIDS – UN Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP – UN Development Programme
UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO – UN Education, Science and Culture Organization
UNHCR – UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF – UN Children’s Fund
UNPO – Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
UPR – Universal Periodic Review
USCIRF – US Commission on International Religious Freedom
WHO – World Health Organization
Contributors

Maurice Bryan (Americas) is a Caribbean-born writer and communications consultant with a special focus on the use of information technology in a rights-based approach to social and economic development and cultural processes. He has worked in over 30 countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, and currently spends most of his time in Central America.

Carla Clarke (Litigating indigenous peoples’ right to health) is MRG’s Legal Cases Officer. She is a qualified lawyer who has worked in both the government and NGO sectors. She holds an MA in Human Rights from Essex University.

Jack Dentith (Turkey) is a writer and researcher based in London, UK. Trained in the anthropology of development, his research focuses on the transition to sustainable and equitable economics.

Nicole Girard (Minority women’s vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in South East Asia) is the Programme Coordinator for the Asian component of MRG’s Minority Realities programme. She has been researching and writing on issues facing minority communities in Asia for 10 years.

Katalin Halász (Europe) is a researcher, writer and activist with expertise in anti-discrimination legislation, minority rights, Roma rights and racism as a crime. Over the last decade she has worked for national and international human rights organizations in Hungary, Germany, India, Belgium and the UK, and at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Visual Sociology at Goldsmiths College, University of London, on the representation of race and ethnicity in contemporary visual arts.

Emily Hong (East Asia) is a writer and trainer currently pursuing a PhD in anthropology at Cornell University. Emily has spent more than four years in Thailand, including on the Thai–Burma border, working as a trainer and training adviser to minority rights activists from the region, and as a campaigner for Burma’s democracy movement-in-exile. Her recent research focuses on the interplay between culture and rights, the local strategies of minority and indigenous human rights defenders, and corporate human rights abuses.

Hanan Hammoudeh (Middle East case study) was a Conflict Prevention Intern at MRG and is a candidate MSc Human Rights at the London School of Economics. Previously she has worked in human rights, democracy development and co-existence ventures.

Paul Hunt (Foreword) is a Professor of International Human Rights Law at the School of Law, Essex University, UK. He served as a member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1999–2002) and UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health (2002–2008). The UN has published his human rights reports on a range of issues including access to medicines, water and sanitation, mental health and sexual and reproductive health.

Paige Wilhite Jennings (West and Central Africa) has worked with inter-governmental organizations and NGOs in Central Africa, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Mark Lattimer (Peoples under Threat) is the Executive Director of MRG. Formerly he worked with Amnesty International. Recent publications include (as editor) Genocide and Human Rights (Ashgate 2007).

Corinne Lennox (Addressing health inequalities in the post 2015-development framework) is a Senior Lecturer in Human Rights at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London and Associate Director of the Human Rights Consortium, University of London. Her research focuses on minority and indigenous rights protection and on human rights and development. She has worked as a human rights practitioner and consultant, including for MRG, the UNDP and the OHCHR.

Irwin Loy (South East Asia) is a multimedia journalist and editor based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where he focuses on human rights and development issues. He has filed news and feature
reports from around the South East Asia region for international media.

Farah Mihlar (South Asia) has worked as a journalist covering South Asia for over ten years. Since 2004 she has worked on human rights, including at the UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights. She currently works as Conflict Prevention Coordinator at MRG.

Daniel Openshaw (Central Asia) is Press and PR Officer for the Royal College of General Practitioners in London, UK, and a freelance researcher and writer. He was previously a Research Assistant at MRG where he worked on the Central Asia chapter and others, for State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2012. He holds an MA in Chinese Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Audrey Prost (South Asia case study) is a senior lecturer at University College London’s Institute for Global Health, and has been working with Indian civil society organization Ekjut since 2008.

Soumendra Sarangi (South Asia case study) is a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at Utkal University, India, and partners with Ekjut for his research.

Said Shehata (Middle East and North Africa) is an expert on Islamic issues in the Middle East and Europe. He has published academic papers and newspapers articles on Islam and politics in the Arab world, and is a former lecturer in Middle East Politics and International Relations at the London Metropolitan University. He has worked as a consultant for MRG’s Egypt and the Middle East programmes.

Carolyn Stephens (Improving indigenous maternal and child health) is Professor of Ecology and Global Health of the National University of Tucumán (UNT), based in Argentina, and is UCL Honorary Professor of Ecology and Global Health Equity at the UCL Institute of Health Equity. She is an environmental and social epidemiologist working on health equity, environmental sustainability and human rights. She is Director of the Amazonia-Yungas Observatory of Biodiversity, Indigenous Health and Equity, and has worked for over 25 years with low-income communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. She has advised UN agencies, national governments and NGOs on health equity, rights and environmental sustainability. She holds the Royal Society Kohn award for science communication, and is on the editorial board of six international journals.

Irina L Stoyanova (Russia case study) is a researcher, writer, and educator whose work focuses on indigenous peoples’ rights and activism, sustainability, and international environmental policy. The Circumpolar North region, in particular the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the Saami of Scandinavia, has been a special interest of hers. She has worked with the Rainforest Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, MRG and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Prasanta Tripathy (South Asia case study) is the Director of Ekjut and an Ashoka Fellow.

Inga Thiemann (Southern Africa) is a human rights campaigner and researcher on the issues of gender and racial discrimination, as well as sexual violence. She is a PhD candidate at University College London, working on human trafficking. Inga holds postgraduate qualifications in Advanced International Studies (Dipl.) from Johns Hopkins University SAIS, and International Peace and Security (MA) from Kings College London.

Beth Walker (SWM Editor) is former Commissioning Editor at MRG. She is currently an editor at chinadialogue, an English-Chinese bilingual environmental website. Her work focuses on water and sustainable development on the Tibetan Plateau and the rivers that originate there. Beth has worked in Beijing and Shanghai in China, and for an HIV/AIDS NGO in Yunnan province. She studied Chinese at the University of Oxford.

Laura A. Young (East Africa) is an attorney and independent consultant focused on human rights and rule of law in Africa, with specific expertise in gender, social inclusion and governance in transitioning states.
Jacqui Zalcberg (Oceania) is a human rights lawyer who has worked on a range of international indigenous rights cases in a variety of international and domestic forums. This has included working for the UN Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit and the US-based NGO EarthRights International. She has also been engaged as a legal adviser to the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, and founded and coordinated the Human Rights Law Clinic at the Law Faculty of the Humboldt University, Berlin.

Holly Ziemer (Mental health care for survivors of torture and conflict) is the Director of Communications for the Center for Victims of Torture. Prior to this, Holly served as Director of Communications for the Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition and also worked as an Account Supervisor for the public relations firm Shandwick International (now Weber Shandwick), and as Director of Communications for Minnesota Attorney General Hubert H. Humphrey III. She has a background in journalism, having worked as an associate producer for several PBS Frontline documentaries and has written for various print media.

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Minority Rights Group International

Minority Rights Group International (MRG) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) working to secure the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples worldwide, and to promote cooperation and understanding between communities.

Our activities are focused on international advocacy, training, publishing and outreach. We are guided by the needs expressed by our worldwide partner network of organizations which represent minority and indigenous peoples.

MRG works with over 150 organizations in nearly 50 countries. Our governing Council, which meets twice a year, has members from nine different countries. MRG has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), observer status with the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, and is registered with the Organization of American States.

MRG is registered as a charity and a company limited by guarantee under English law. Registered charity no. 282305, limited company no. 1544957.

Discover us online:

**MRG website**
Visit our website for news, publications and more information about MRG’s work:
www.minorityrights.org

**Minority Voices Newsroom**
An online news portal that allows minority and indigenous communities to upload multimedia content and share their stories:
www.minorityvoices.org

**Peoples under Threat map and Directory of minorities and indigenous peoples**
Visit MRG’s online interactive Peoples under Threat map where you can view and compare detailed country information on the world’s minorities and indigenous peoples:
www.peoplesunderthreat.org.