Political Violence/International Relations - And other Topics that relate (Assigned Articles)

Basic definitions
Foreign Policy – one state’s decisions and actions in its relations with all actors operating outside the state’s borders
International Relations – politically relevant interactions among two or more actors from different states
International Law – broadest attempt to formalize and constrain the interactions among states

International Law
- Natural vs Positive Law
  - Natural are “in nature” while positive are explicitly written (eg. Constitution)
- Political Realism – people are naturally disposed to base their behavior on self-interest
- Political idealism - Human nature is basically good; people, and the states they construct, can be altruistic and cooperative
  - In what other ways might we see the world, and how might this affect the way we react to international law and cooperation generally?

Violence
The use of physical force, usually with the purpose of injuring or damaging the target of violence
Political Violence – the use of actual physical violence or very serious threats of such violence to achieve political goals

Economic Development

Economic Development – usually measured as the total value of goods produced in a country, divided by the population of the country. It is then adjusted for purchasing power parity (ie- the cost of food)
Social Progress - The Social Progress Index measures the extent to which countries provide for the social and environmental needs of their citizens. Fifty-two indicators in the areas of basic human needs, foundations of wellbeing, and opportunity to progress show the relative performance of nations.

Economic development is necessary but not sufficient for social progress. A country’s overall level of development masks social and environmental strengths and challenges.

GDP per capita
Social Progress
Global North

GOAL: Prosperity
- The global north contains the most economically developed countries in the world
- Emphasis is on sustaining a high level of economic growth under the assumption that this will generate an expanding economic base that provides more material benefits to the population

GOAL: Stability
- The global north has been generally successful in achieving their stability goals of democratization, political institutionalization, and order maintenance

GOAL: Security
- Since the end of WWII, the developed countries of the global north have generally enjoyed success in pursuit of their basic security goals
- Arguably the greatest security victory during the last century was the collapse of the Soviet Union

Global South

GOAL: Prosperity
- It is clear that political choices such as the organization of the political economy, the distribution of prosperity, the education of women, and the form of government can have a powerful impact on the quality of citizens’ life

GOAL: Stability
- Pervasive insecurity
- Low levels of political and economic development reduce the capacity of the state to control their population and resources
- Not one of the top 25 countries on the Global Peace Index is a developing country

GOAL: Security
- Not been able to establish and institutionalize structures that maintain social order and ensure effective functioning of the political system
- Reduces their capacity to govern, raises the probability of decay, and increases their vulnerability to outside actors

Questions?
- Are the problems in achieving economic development in the global south attributable primarily to the actions of the global north, or are they better explained by domestic circumstances?
- Is political violence likely to increase or decrease in developing countries?

Secession crises, human welfare and conflict resolution - (Basic et al 2003)

Rational School – emphasize the provision of international security guarantees as necessary for persuading warring parties to lay down their arms

Theory
The principles currently embodied in international law actually induce the actors in secession crises to engage in violent conflict to further their goals
This then emphasizes the importance of altering international law so that it provides incentives for the adoption of peaceful behaviors and, also for the adoption of liberal norms that can foster long-term cooperation and stability.

Research Questions
How can states avoid civil wars?
How can states prevent the escalation of secession crises into violent war?

Why?
- Avoid cost of war
- Long-term cooperation and stability are more likely to be achieved when cross-group trust can be established
- Easier to accomplish these goals when violent inter-group conflict has not commenced and is not part of recent memory

The Three Actors
International Community
- Specific community of nation-states
- These nation-states have a common understanding of goals
- Primary force in the formation of international law

Minority Groups
- Share the same goal of increased autonomy or independence
- Responsive to incentives generated by international law

Central Governments
- Prefer that political power is centralized in the hands of state institutions
- Also responsive to incentives generated by the international community

Principles of International Law
Self-determination of peoples
- Minority groups that constitute distinct ethnic and religious communities

Territorial integrity of the state
- In states were there is no conflict among people, integrity is inherent
- Where multiple claims to nationality exists, minority groups might seek self-determination through violence or civil war

Rationality
Because self-determination and territorial integrity are opposing constructs, minority groups and the state act according to their own rationality
- Minority groups seek succession
- States seek to centralize their power

Their separate pursuits often lead to armed conflict

THE PROBLEM PAPER IS ADDRESSING:
The international community has failed to establish norms that would resolve conflict nor has it succeeded in preventing or settling outstanding disputes when the two sides have threatened each other with annihilation
- Both parties worry that a cease-fire will lead to exploitation by the other party
• This leads to escalation
• Both parties likely would prefer peace
• One or both parties will cease hostilities and disarm only when an outside third party can guarantee that exploitation will not occur

Incentives
• Contrary to the intentions of members of the international community, incentives often encourage minorities groups to foment conflict in order to create the appearance that dissolution has been breeched
• Once the international community characterizes a state as dissolving, the secession movement can solicit the international community for recognition and support
• This also causes states to engage in suppressive activities

Human Welfare

*With clearly laid plans, the international community can decide if the central government or the secession plans of the minority group offer the best and most convincing proposals for enhancing the welfare of the affect populations*

• Evaluations of human welfare may require very difficult assessments of tradeoffs between different components of welfare
• Programs should stipulate appropriate behaviors and policies and envision changes in preferences that encourage conciliation rather than conflict

• Adoption of human welfare criterion could remove much of the confusion in international policy making about secessionist movements as well as the uncertainty faced by central governments and minority groups about the posture of the international community
• Would induce minority groups and central governments within a state to contemplate policies and programs that might improve the welfare of the populations beyond levels currently envisioned
• International recognition of secessionist claims should be dependent on whether the relevant minority group or central government lays out the most convincing plans for enhancing the welfare of the population

Conclusions
• Various nation-states, who have cooperated and come to agreement about norms and a shared interest in promoting stability or liberal democracy are the ‘international community’ and are responsible to creating incentives to foster peace, not conflict
• Adoption of these plans is not a panacea for all conflicts
• Time will be diverted away from hostile and violent crime and towards increasing the welfare of the people

Human trafficking: The Unintended Effects of UN Intervention - (Smith and Smith 2011)

Theory
• An increase in demand in a destination country is the primary force explaining the development of the human trafficking trade
• Any factor that serves to increase domestic demand for prostitution will lead to the expansion of human sex trafficking rings
• The bigger the UN intervention is, the larger the demand for prostitution will be

How
• Foreign soldiers and the auxiliary support networks that surround them use prostitutes
• Where there is a military presence, there will be a demand for prostitution
• UN is involved in places that have small domestic militaries, and UN intervention sizably increases the number of soldiers
• UN might suppress the domestic criminal networks, which may open the door to international criminal rings

*UN intervention leads both to an increase in demand for prostitution as well as a reduction in the costs of entry into the market for the suppliers of human traffic*

Future Questions
What can be done to prevent the spread of human trafficking in light of UN intervention in the future?