

THE INTERNATIONALIST
Undergraduate Journal of
Foreign Affairs

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Volume V

Issue II

Spring 2021



This image is of the Schneeberg auf dem Schönberg, Schneeberg being the name of the castle in ruins and Schönberg being the mountain it finds itself on. The Schneeberg was built in the 13th century by the Herren von Hornburg. Given to feudal sovereignty of the St. Gallen monastery in 1349 in exchange for control of some of the local area, the castle was abandoned by 1500 and fell into disrepair.

Photo by Kathryn Obenshain, Class of 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to:

Professor Andrew Sisson
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Dr. Katarzyna Maniszewska
Vice-Rector for International Relations
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Dr. Paulina Piasecka
Collegium Civitas

For their guidance throughout the earlier stages of the editing process. The Spring 2021 edition would not be possible without their invaluable expertise!

FROM THE EDITOR

The pieces you're about to read are the culmination of hard work, diligence, and dedication from a team of talented editors and authors. Despite the challenges of yet another remote semester, the Internationalist team has delivered on its promise to showcase stellar pieces of undergraduate student research and writing. I couldn't be more proud of that.

In the past school year, we've expanded our staff tremendously, started our wildly successful website and international relations blog, significantly increased the number of editions we print, and accepted photograph submissions for our journal from undergraduate students around the country. These are changes that the Internationalist needed in order to flourish, and I'm so excited to have been a part of it all. Although this will be my last year on staff, I know that we are moving in the right direction.

Special thanks go out to Aida Al-Akhdar, my Executive Editor, who has spearheaded external communications for this journal with such grace and determination; our Head Design Editor Mariana Herrera, whose expertise and flair we simply could not do without; our incredible Managing Editors Ash Huggins and Hannah Rubenstein who I am so confident are the right hands for the journal to be left in next year; and our Marketing Director Emma Holmes, a ray of sunshine who champions our online presence.

I give my biggest thanks of all to our incredibly talented staff – the Spring edition truly wouldn't be possible without each and every one of you. I will miss you all so much!

Sincerely,



Meghan Prabhu
Editor-in-Chief

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Lessons From the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

By Zoe Hatsios

Zoe Hatsios is a member of the Class of 2023 pursuing majors in Peace, War, and Defense (National Security and Intelligence) and Political Science with a minor in Information Systems. Her interests include U.S. Foreign Policy, Middle Eastern studies, and International Relations. This piece was inspired by a desire to deeply understand the implications of seminal American foreign policy decisions.

On September 11, 2001, the United States encountered two comprehensive and unforeseen dilemmas, brought forth by the suicide attacks which took the lives of many American citizens. A plan of action had to be formulated, for recovering internally by ensuring the safety and comfort of American citizens, and for avenging the terrorist attacks by targeting Al-Qaeda, a terrorist group which operated out of the Middle East (originally Pakistan). The Bush Administration's solution was to launch a public, global War on Terror which "[would] not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."¹ Nineteen years later, the U.S. military is operating counter-terrorism missions in eighty nations on six continents, and it has cost nearly six trillion dollars and half a million lives.² However, a significant portion of the U.S. strategy has focused on Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result of involvement in these two

countries and of the failure to reach counterterrorist and state-building goals, American public opinion has shifted largely against the wars.³ Yet, despite a toppling national debt and both vertical and horizontal growth of terrorist groups,⁴ both Obama and Trump initially supported increasing troop levels to the Middle East.⁵ Since both wars were similar in their mission, these strategic failures offer many meaningful lessons. An analysis of what caused the U.S. to enter Iraq and Afghanistan and what keeps U.S. military presence in the Middle East, as well as an understanding of weak state dynamics, is necessary to determine the primary lesson(s) that can be drawn from the conflicts.

The circumstances which fueled the entrance into Afghanistan in late 2001 were primarily grounded in the 9/11 attacks.⁶ Entrance into Iraq in 2003 was rooted in the faulty judgement that Saddam Hussein was fostering a quickly developing Weapons of Mass Destruction

(WMD) arsenal, but the reasoning for the U.S. military's prolonged stay has shifted as initial goals became clearly unattainable.^{7,8} The original force presence in Afghanistan of about 1,300 troops grew to 2,500 when the Taliban fell.⁹ But when the U.S. invaded Iraq, the Taliban regrouped, which led Bush to send 10,000 more troops (bringing the total in 2008 to 31,000) and later 70,000 by Obama (reduced to 9,800 in 2016).¹⁰ In Iraq, after it became known that Hussein did not possess WMD, the Bush Administration adopted the goal of "democratizing" the Middle East.¹¹ The continued force presence in Iraq prompted an insurgency and a civil war, which allowed the Islamic State and Iran-backed militias to gain power.¹² The Trump administration set a goal to remove all troops from Afghanistan by late 2021, after having initially added troops to prevent the emergence of a terrorist power vacuum.¹³ Trump's plan also included reducing troops in Iraq to nearly 3,000. This

change provoked mixed reactions from top officials, but was somewhat necessary to retain a version of peace following the US drone strike that killed General Qassim Suleimani (a top Iranian officer) at Baghdad International Airport.¹⁴ The military presences in Iraq and Afghanistan have not led to the long-term defeat of major terrorist groups or a restructuring of a new regime, and conflict spillover has escalated proxy wars into direct confrontations with Iran and Syria.¹⁵

One of the primary lessons drawn from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that the United States should not use military force to overthrow foreign governments in weak states. This multifaceted approach can be broken down into four concepts: state-building takes a long time;¹⁶ nation-building is impossible;¹⁷ democracy must be constructed internally;¹⁸ and the U.S. military cannot solve internal state problems which require peaceful diplomatic relations.¹⁹

As defined most comprehensively by M. Chris Mason from the United States Army War College, Afghanistan represented a “complete lack of nationhood...[and] legitimacy of governance, and “completely inadequate and unmotivated security forces.” The latter statement is similar to the situation of South Vietnam, where the U.S. historically failed through an enormous amount of civilian casualties and a win for communist forces.²⁰ Building a na-

tion — forming a shared political identity that transcends tribal and ethnic divides — can only be done slowly as an internal social process, and is therefore impossible as a foreign policy objective.²¹ State-building, on the other hand, “refers to a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law, and political order have fallen apart and must be reconstituted in some form, old or new.”²² By this definition, state-building has been successfully achieved in Germany, Japan, and Korea through 70-100 year commitments by U.S. military force presence and economic investment. Therefore, building a state (which was one goal in the Iraq War in particular) was possible. Where the presence in Iraq differed, just as it had in South Vietnam, was that officials and military officers were rotated every six to twelve months for ten to twelve years. Not only was the military present for a much shorter duration, but the continuous re-stationing formed an environment where little expertise could be gained and utilized.²³ It was no surprise that the government implemented in South Vietnam lasted three years, and in Iraq only two years.²⁴ Since the objective of democratizing the Middle East is both ideological and cultural, the United States should use peacekeeping presence, diplomatic relations, and economic aid, instead of military force; more specifically, the U.S. must peacefully target and grow civilian groups, rather than project-

ing military offenses at terrorist militias and killing token leaders (like Osama bin Laden).²⁵

However, this broad tactical suggestion does not take into account factors that caused failures in pre- and post-war planning, such as confirmation bias,²⁶ baseless nationalistic morale,²⁷ the absence of an alternative identity to aid civilian survival,²⁸ inadequate training,²⁹ and an unclear post-invasion strategy.³⁰ These pitfalls yield more deliberate instructions for future military interventions that involve either targeting terrorist groups or overthrowing foreign governments in weak states.

Although the military invasion of Afghanistan was somewhat rushed due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the war in Iraq was not, and there was room for more detailed planning mechanisms in both cases. Neither invasion strategy took into account the fact that the Middle East is not a direct security threat to the United States (as Russia and China are).³¹ Any force presence, especially if targeted at a terrorist group, would therefore be largely symbolic, and for this reason, need to be receded quickly.³² Foreign terrorist attacks contribute to a small portion of deaths worldwide, and almost none on American soil,³³ and both military capability and staying power are finite.³⁴ Resources should therefore be focused on great-power conflicts where vital U.S. interests are at stake.

In both cases, the Bush Administration's judgement in particular was severely clouded by rhetoric that any war could be won and that, in weak states, the process would be quick and easy. This factor set the initial invasion of Iraq apart from past wars. The CIA had missed critical nuclear developments in Pakistan and was in effect looking for any evidence to support military force in Iraq on the premise that Saddam Hussein had resumed developing a nuclear arsenal, so the green light was given when the report confirmed the Bush Administration's suspicions.³⁵ This decision has attracted overwhelming criticism because it was highly inaccurate and violated international law, as Iraq had "represented no threat to the U.S. and had no links with Al-Qaeda."³⁶ Nevertheless, the nationalistic grounding of Bush's strategy remains present in the reasoning for further deployments to the Middle East. For example, President Obama's remarks such as 'I lead the strongest military that the world has ever known,' in the context of outlining strategy in Syria and China, reflects this reasoning.³⁷ Despite the large death toll, the Taliban holding control of much of Afghanistan, and opium production quadrupling, President Trump continues to insist that U.S. strategies are working, just as Bush and Obama had deceitfully claimed in the past.³⁸

Lastly, after the wars had been initiated, neither strategy in-

cluded a calculated plan for post-war action or stabilization and peace, likely due to the fact that military strategy in these wars was in the hands of civilian officials with no experience in combat.³⁹ Too few troops were left in Iraq to prevent looting, restore basic services, and move against the insurgency so that it would not further spread.⁴⁰ This calls into question the sudden decisions of the Trump administration to significantly decrease troop deployments in both countries, including all private security contractors, trainers, and advisors.⁴¹ This could potentially further fracture the polity in support of terrorist groups, render the U.S. unable to monitor developments without a military base foothold, and leave the domestic military untrained.^{42,43}

Given these circumstances, there are multiple specific lessons to be drawn from these two wars: if a conflict is not an immediate security threat, but rather a symbolic one, a short-term strategy should be employed and troops should be removed as soon as possible. If force presence is not receded quickly, a new strategy should be developed that addresses post-war involvement and American military training, in particular. But above all, the nationalistic rhetoric of civilian leadership must not factor into war strategy or intelligence assessment.

These lessons overlap, and evaluating military strategy in the War on Terror must address both

broad and narrow failures in order to propose future objectives. The first distinction that must be made is that terrorism is not a strategy; it is an idea, and therefore it cannot only be combated through military means.⁴⁴ Terrorist groups gain traction in fragmented societies where any appeal to organization is desirable.⁴⁵ To combat this in weak states, any intervention style should be equipped with a ready alternative for civilian loyalty. It must first be distinguished whether the country has the capabilities for a new state to be built (i.e. must have a national identity, as was absent in Afghanistan) before U.S. aid is provided.⁴⁶ In terms of aid for state-building, the only real forces that are helpful are peacekeepers and economic assistance. In most circumstances, weak states will not pose a huge threat to American national security. For these reasons, there is no use for prolonged conflict (more than ninety days), and resources should be focused in other regions after immediate threats have been defeated. If prolonged conflict is initiated, though, post-war planning is critical to any lasting success, given that a power vacuum would be formed upon exiting. Generally speaking, the Achilles' heel of U.S. foreign policy is the democratic savior complex, which most critical members of civilian and military leadership demonstrate. The quest to spread democracy is a waste of time and resources, especially when military

force is involved; state building often needs to be led from within, and the tendency of American leadership to wage war for token validation is unjustified. Furthermore, the primary lesson of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that if the United States decided to militarily intervene to overthrow a foreign government (after exhaustive cost-benefit analyses of using other means), thorough post-war planning, utilizing a variety of expert sources, should be im-

plemented.

There are many takeaways from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (and the War on Terror in general), but whether broad or detailed lessons are more relevant is not as important as ensuring that they are learned. The impending conflicts with Iran and Syria progressed especially quickly under the Trump Administration, and if the strategic mistakes outlined above are not corrected, there is no telling what the

consequences will be. The United States' national debt is on track to nearly double by 2029, largely as a result of major defense spending and domestic tax cuts.⁴⁷ This should provide an even more compelling reason for allocating resources (especially militarily) wisely and correcting the mistakes of the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through future military objectives.

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Zwinger Palace is the most famous architectural moment in Dresden, Germany. Here is a view of it in the night sky.

Photo by Danny Sachs, Lafayette College Class of 2022



This picture was taken in the Tràng An scenic area in northern Vietnam, a UNESCO world heritage site. The river winds through small limestone mountains and cliffs for several miles.

Photo by Christian DeSimone, Class of 2021



This photo captures a Springtime sunset over the town of Heidelberg, Germany.

Photo by Melina Pearson, Class of 2020

Propaganda and the Duality of Media: A Look into the Tactics of the RTLM in Rwanda

By Brianna Corrie

Brianna Corrie is a sophomore double-majoring in Peace, War, and Defense & Media/Journalism with a concentration in Advertising and Public Relations. She is passionate about the intersection of media and government, especially as it relates to propaganda and misinformation campaigns. This piece was inspired by a class discussion and seeks to answer the popular question, "how could we allow this to happen?"

Ethnic polarization was long established in Rwanda, stemming from the colonial legacies set forth by the ruling Belgium colonizers, who favored the minority Tutsis over the majority Hutus. The various media outlets in Rwanda at the time did not introduce new ideas, but rather inflated the pre-existing tensions between groups to catalyze violent action. This paper explores the specific tactics employed by the Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) to promote genocide between the years 1993 and 1994.

Contextual Background: Kangura Print Media

When considering the role of media in the Rwandan Genocide, most people think of RTLM; however, RTLM drew a lot of inspiration from print media preceding 1994. Specifically, RTLM drew influence from Kangura, a newspaper that

aligned itself heavily with the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development party (MRND). The newspaper was established following the 1990 Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) invasion from Uganda. From the very beginning of its publications, Kangura featured strong anti-Tutsi propaganda. The paper had a variety of tactics to incite hate towards the Tutsis, including sexually graphic depictions of Tutsi women, as well as other offensive cartoons to cater to the illiterate population of Rwanda.¹ In December of 1990, Kangura published a "Ten Commandments of Bahutu," which encouraged Hutus to break all ties they had with Tutsis, whether that be professional, business, or marital relationships.² The "Ten Commandments" were not as well received by the Hutu population, so the paper switched to other tactics to incite stronger anti-Tutsi sentiment. One of those tactics included

an emphasis on the living conditions in 1957 rather than the 1990s; Kangura continually attempted to dig up repressed feelings that inspired revolutionary action.³ Moreover, the paper played up the fact that the Tutsi were the favored group by the previously ruling Belgians and renamed the Tutsis as colonizers.

Print Media Environment

It is important to note that while Kangura is the most well-known newspaper, the overall print media industry only appealed to a small section of the population based on literacy rates and the wealth of the readers. In an April 1991 census, only 57% of the population could read or write.⁴ Additionally, the print media industry relied heavily on external financial support. "When the private press was first established, a newspaper sold for 50 Rwandan francs (about US \$0.30). After devaluation of the Rwandan franc by 67 percent

in November 1990, under an International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment program, the cost of a copy doubled.⁵ This means that newspapers that aligned themselves with affluent political parties, such as the MRND, were the most successful. Upon obtaining financial viability, newspapers also had to find markets and create distribution systems. Only government newspapers were able to reach individuals living in rural areas, meaning that most of the population did not even know newspapers with different opinions existed. This is also because the Ministry of Information created barriers to the creation of such newspapers. In 1992, the government passed a law recognizing freedom of the press, but it required journalists to get authorization from the Ministry of Information and jump through a number of hoops before getting approval to publish.⁶ So, while recognizing the freedom of the press, the government and the ruling party (MRND) could still limit the amount of information accessible to the Rwandan public.

Introduction to Radio

For the aforementioned reasons, much of the Rwandan population utilized radio broadcasts as their means to get information. Prior to 1991, Radio Rwanda was the only radio station and acted as the official voice of the government. It broadcasted appointments and dismissals of government posts, re-

mindings from the president, as well as candidates admitted to secondary schools.⁷ Radio Rwanda even broadcasted false information about the progress of war, but most people did not have access to independent sources to verify these claims.⁸ In March of 1992, Radio Rwanda was used to promote the killing of Tutsis in Bugesera by falsely reporting Tutsi mobilization to attack Hutus. At this point, the government recognized the freedom of the press as voices of dissent for Habyarimana's government grew louder and louder.

RTLM's Tactics in Promoting Genocide: Introduction

As the voices of dissent from the Tutsi minority grew louder, so did the government's pushback. The RTLM was launched as a semi-private radio station in July 1993, following the signing of the Arusha Accords. The Arusha Accords also drew in United Nations peacekeeping forces to help parties implement the agreement. While polarization was always present in Rwanda, events in nearby Burundi furthered this divide. The Hutu Burundi president was assassinated on October 21, 1993, leading the Hutus of Burundi to attack Tutsis.⁹ Conversely, Tutsis started executing reprisal killings of the Hutus. Overall, these incidents caused people to question the integrity and effectiveness of the Arusha Accords.¹⁰ The RTLM sensationalized reports of these events

in order to increase the population's fear of the Tutsi. From October on, the RTLM repeatedly and forcefully promoted extremist ideas to further divide Hutus and Tutsis. In April 1994, Habyarimana's plane was shot down, which advanced extremist ideas in the media. Moving forward, the RTLM continued to air hate speech and escalated to instructing the killings of Tutsis in Rwanda.¹¹

When learning about the RTLM's role in the Rwandan Genocide, it is easy to adopt the stereotype that Rwandans are blind followers, poorly educated, and easily manipulated. This stereotype is dangerous, as it diminishes the media and the RTLM's role in promoting these violent, ethnic killings. The show was formulated and designed to deliver MRND propaganda, and it employed a variety of tactics to mobilize the Hutu majority to violent action. Some of the tactics employed included the use of an interactive format, the extrapolation of previous knowledge, the incorporation of elements of truth, the exacerbation of existing tensions, the strategic use of language choice, and, finally, the manipulation of fear as a tool for mobilization.

Interactive Format to Reach New Audiences

One of the main benefits of utilizing radio for mass communication was that it could reach a larger audience of people. Because freedom of the press was granted in 1992,

more and more voices came on air and drowned out the messages of Radio Rwanda. In turn, supporters of the MRND and a related party launched the RTLM in July 1993 to combat the disadvantage in numbers. The RTLM was specifically designed to echo the message of official authorities but deliver the material in a more informal manner. In fact, while many Hutu and MRND elites backed the RTLM, the price of the share was kept relatively low to attract the average, middle class citizens.¹² Aside from being economically appealing, the show's format took on a conversational and casual approach. In the beginning, RTLM was very similar to any other radio station you might hear today—they played modern music, had quick-witted announcers, and even allowed for listeners to call in to request songs or exchange gossip.¹³ RTLM made an effort to incorporate everyday citizens on to the show to build a reputation of being “for the people.” Even the announcers and staff of the station gained popularity; announcer Kantano Habimana was known for his quick-wit while announcer Valerie Bemmeriki was known for her speed and passion of delivery.¹⁴ Overall, the format of the show was designed to appeal to a new, younger audience—specifically those who were poor and felt deprived of the privileges that the Tutsi minority enjoyed.

Building on Previous

Knowledge to Increase Trust and Legitimacy

One of the biggest questions surrounding RTLM is how a station that incites so much violence and hate could gain legitimacy in the eyes of its listeners. To unpack this question, we must analyze it from two different levels. First, the station built on Hutus' previous knowledge and inclinations to gain trust from listeners. The incorporation of everyday people onto the station created a psychological loyalty from the start, whether listeners realized it or not. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, loyalty is directly tied to your customers' (or in this case, listeners') feeling of belonging.¹⁵ Given the colonial legacy of a Tutsi elite, the RTLM was a place where grievances could be aired and appreciated by others with similar experiences. It provided the Hutu majority with this very feeling of belonging, which then culminated in a steadfast loyalty and obedience to the radio station. Moreover, RTLM entwined its propaganda with lessons taught in schools to build credibility amongst the Hutu listeners. For example, the station emphasized the idea that Hutus and Tutsis were different peoples by nature, often equating these differences to the fundamental differences between males and females.¹⁶ The technique of assessing a “biologically superior” ethnic group is nothing new, as it was also used to justify slavery in America. Also, propaganda ex-

ploiting the tensions between Hutus and Tutsis was not unprecedented. In fact, a lot of the information the station broadcasted was inspired by the Kangura newspaper.¹⁷ The only difference was that RTLM used its platform and lively, casual format to present this perspective in a more digestible way.

Lastly, the interactive broadcasting format was not a short-lived, introductory tactic, but a technique used throughout the genocide. Journalists from RTLM often interviewed people at the roadside checkpoints of Kigali and gave them an opportunity to explain on air what they were doing and why.¹⁸ This further legitimized the violence the show endorsed, as ordinary people received real-time confirmation of others committing these acts.

Utilizing “Experts” and Elements of Truth to Increase Credibility

While the RTLM exploited the predispositions of its listeners to gain trust, it also employed techniques to gain credibility among those who might be on the fence with their message. The station regularly cited intellectuals or university professors as the source of their information. While this may be true, the sources were often from Habyarimana's home region and some of his most devout supporters.¹⁹ Furthermore, the advancement and continued employment of some of these “experts” was reliant on their support

of the government, thus giving them another incentive, aside from hometown loyalties, to falsify or exaggerate information for the RTLM.²⁰

The RTLM also incorporated elements of truth into its broadcasts in order to gain credibility. The station took a position against UN presence in the region, Tutsis, RPF, and RPF supporters. The UN showed up in the region in 1993, and in several cases, behaved badly towards Habyarimana supporters. These instances provided the RTLM with a credible kernel of truth to build credibility and further support for their cause.²¹ As time went on and the RTLM gained more popularity, it started directly promoting action in the genocide. For most, following orders from a semi-private radio station seems absurd. However, many local authorities of Rwandan villages and towns instructed their constituents to treat the radio as direct orders from themselves.²² The backing from local authorities thus substantiated RTLM's credibility even more in the eyes of the Hutu population.

Exacerbating Existing Tensions through the Use of Exaggerations

Another technique of the RTLM was to exacerbate the existing tensions of ethnic groups by exaggerating or embellishing events. The fact that the Hutu-Tutsi tensions went beyond Rwandan borders helped muster support for MRND propa-

ganda. For example, when the Hutu President of Burundi was assassinated by a bayonet blow to the chest, the RTLM reported the incident with extreme exaggerations. It reported details of torture and castration of the president, which stemmed from the ethnic practices of pre-colonial Tutsi kings when they defeated enemy rules.²³ Not only was this information false, it also reminded listeners of the old practices of Tutsis and evoked the same feelings of revolutionary action.

Strategic Use of Language to Dehumanize and Facilitate Genocide

From its conception, the RTLM was very strategic in its use of language. There was a large effort to blur the lines between Tutsis and the RPF. Inyenzi, meaning cockroach, was often used when referring to RPF combatants and its supporters to dehumanize them.²⁴ Furthermore, the station would use terms like "Tutsi" and inyenzi interchangeably when referring to RPF combatants, so that listeners automatically associated all Tutsis with the RPF, and therefore saw them as enemies. The RTLM even broadcasted that RPF combatants were dressing in civilian clothes and disguising themselves.²⁵ The description of the RPF disguises, however, was simply a description of a Tutsi. While it may seem minute, the interchangeable use of RPF and Tutsi terms helped condition, facilitate, and legitimize violence later

on. Additionally, RTLM frequently used euphemisms to convince listeners that violent action taken towards the Tutsis was for the "common good." The station called for individuals "ready to work," and the elimination of those not willing to "work."²⁶ The use of the word "work" as a euphemism for "kill" not only disguises the act from what it is but presents killing the Tutsis as a civic duty of the Hutus.

The Manipulation of Fear as a Tool for Mobilization

The previously mentioned tactics were used simultaneously, but they all paved the way for the RTLM to exercise its true power and influence in the genocide. Perhaps the most powerful tactic, however, was its ability to manipulate fear in order to mobilize action. "For instance, a May 20, 1994, broadcast described Tutsis as gathering guns, killing Hutu families and burning down their houses, then hiding in a church preparing for another attack."²⁷ The overwhelming fear experienced by Hutus provoked the burning of this church. The station also instructed the killings of specific targets. One broadcast instructed residents to eliminate Antoine Sebera, a Tutsi business man. Another broadcast instructed assailants to attack a mosque where Tutsis were seeking refuge.²⁸ Every attack instructed by the RTLM was framed to be an act of retaliation. They often told listeners that the specified

targets were planning attacks, and that the only way to stop these attacks and ensure the safety of the Hutus was to eliminate them first. Additionally, every attack was also celebrated on air and praised as an act of heroism. With all the reported Tutsi attacks, the RTLM had even prepared explanations as to why no bodies were being found. Some of these explanations were plausible, like the disposal into bodies of water. Other explanations claimed that the Tutsis carved open Hutus and ate their organs.²⁹ The RTLM was so good at its propaganda because it played on people's emotions and delivered the rationalization of violent action on a silver platter. Whenever a listener questioned the information broadcasted, the RTLM had already prepared a counter argument and evidence to legitimize itself. In combination with all the other tactics, the RTLM's manipulation of fear mobilized violent action that often went unquestioned by its audience.

International Media

The RTLM proves that media can play a significant role in catalyzing action. However, this very idea is challenged by the lack of international media attention and intervention in the Rwandan Genocide. In order to answer this significant question, we first must look at the international context.

For starters, the American experience in Somalia just one short

year before the Rwandan Genocide changed the will of the Western world to even commit itself to the betterment of the developing world. The October 1993 Black Hawk Down incident killed eighteen Americans and propelled the U.S. to pull out from the region.³⁰ While hundreds of thousands of Somalis were dying, the price for U.S. involvement became too high. Moreover, the American public was extremely scarred by Paul Watson's photo of an American soldier's corpse being desecrated by Somali civilians.³¹ The conflict in Rwanda picked up immediately after the horrors in Mogadishu, so the fear of casualties was heavy on the American public's mind. Only two days after Habyarimana's plane was shot down, ten Belgian peacekeepers were tortured and killed. The timing of these events only reinforced the fear of American death and provided more reason for the U.S. to remain uninvolved.

While the media played a great role in catalyzing action within Rwanda, it failed to do internationally. In 1994 alone, the U.S. media was consumed by the news of Aldrich Ames' arrest for espionage, O.J. Simpson's arrest for murder, and Tonya Harding's kneecapping of a figure skating rival.^{32 33} In fact, "during the 100 days of the Rwandan Genocide, ABC, CBS, and NBC offered more coverage of Tonya Harding than of the Rwandan Genocide."³⁴ Roméo Dallaire questions why this was—asking if it gained attention because

of a love of pathos or general excitement, or if someone else guided the media away from covering Rwanda.³⁵ Either way, Rwanda was of no interest to the United States nor to the international community. Many actors viewed the conflict as flare-up tribalism, rather than an organized and systematic genocide. A representative of a major power told Dallaire, "You know, this country is of no strategic value. Geographically it provides us nothing. It's not even worth putting a radar station here. Economically it's nothing, because there are no strategic resources."³⁶ Whether the Rwandan Genocide's lack of international media attention was a poor timing issue or something more methodical is up for interpretation. With the horrors experienced by the American public following the Somalia conflict, one can question whether international media attention of the Rwandan Genocide would have even made a difference in U.S. involvement or not.

Conclusion

The Rwandan Genocide is one of the biggest failures of the international community, and in turn, one of the biggest humanitarian crises in history. The RTLM is a prime example of expert propaganda. It attracted new audiences, exacerbated pre-existing divisions, gained legitimacy and credibility, utilized strategic language and exploited people's fears to direct genocide. It is a

crisis that raises many questions to this day: what if international media used these same tactics to promote intervention? What if the genocide occurred at a different time? What if Rwanda was of more strategic value to the major powers? While the outcome of the genocide cannot be

changed, it provides a number of lessons to learn from in the future. In a time of increasing interconnectedness and globalization, the media continually proves to be a powerful force that catalyzes action – for good or for bad. By monitoring the media environment of failing

states, the international community can gain a better understanding of the actors' power, the intensity of tensions, and early warning signs to prevent another "Rwanda" from happening again.

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Photos by Jaya Mishra, Class of 2022

(Left) This photo was taken off the Rialto Bridge of the Grand Canal as the sun sets over Venice, Italy.

Photo by Tori Huggins, Emory University Class of 2022



(Right) Sun-sitting on the beach in front of the hazy Indian skies.

Photo by Jaya Mishra Class of 2022



Contemporary Conflict: The Role of Hybrid and Asymmetric Threats

By Matthew Pierro

Matthew Pierro is a second-year student studying Peace, War, and Defense, Global Studies, and Russian at UNC Chapel Hill. His academic interests include international development and security in the Central Asian, Russian, and Eastern European regions. Matthew was inspired to write this paper upon researching new principles of modern warfare, and how defense strategies can more appropriately define and combat emerging security threats in the 21st century.

In recent decades, the international stage has witnessed warfare's evolution away from conventional tactics. Whereas, historically, rivaling nation-states duelled on rigid battlefields to determine a clear victor, modern tactics have blurred the lines between war and peace while also removing definite fronts, actors, and necessary capabilities. This is representative of contemporary asymmetric threats: generally used by weaker actors in conflict to exploit vulnerabilities in a more powerful opponent, they circumvent direct confrontation while being irregular and difficult to combat. In unison with traditional war tactics, these asymmetric conflicts combine to form hybrid warfare. This paper will seek to define asymmetric and hybrid threats, their status-modeling conflict in the 21st century, and the actors, both state and non-state, that drive their use. Further, a variety of case studies will

be discussed to exemplify asymmetric and hybrid tactics in warfare. Finally, national and international defense systems will be examined, from which recommendations to combat asymmetric and hybrid tactics will be made.

Introduction

Though the terms “conflict” and “warfare” see interchangeable use in modern rhetoric, we must recognize the elevation of violence and destruction that warfare involves. In making this distinction, we must also be wary of the biases introduced by traditional literature on warfare, assuming its state-like nature. “Conflict” can be framed by the clash of opposing blocs, sparked by ideological, territorial, or other disagreements. Conversely, we define “warfare” as “*sustained, coordinated violence between political organizations*”.¹ This definition provides a more flexible approach to

warfare, and it emphasizes several components. First, war is violent. Warfare involves the use of force to kill people and wage destruction. This violence must be sustained to qualify as warfare, which is an exclusionary factor when classifying something as a conflict or a war. Conflicts and disputes are common in international relations, but rarely do they escalate to war; such an escalation would require violence, the use of force, and then sustaining this violence for a period of time.² A second component in identifying war emphasizes the “between” in our definition. Violence must be reciprocated to qualify as war; thus we treat war as the outcome of the behavior of two or more actors.³ It is important to clarify that “actors” participate in war, not necessarily states. This paper emphasizes the role of non-state actors in both conflict and warfare, while criticizing the antiquated definitions of warfare

that preclude such actors.

The concept of war is neither new nor uniform: warfare has long been subject to evolutionary forces and its existence has been defined according to a variety of historical and present perspectives. Whereas the above definition approached war with a broad, non-state scope, much of historical and contemporary literature ignore such cases. Carl von Clausewitz, a Prussian general and military theorist active during the Napoleonic Wars, provided several definitions of **warfare**: once as “[the] continuation of policy by other means,” while later as “...nothing but a duel on an extensive scale” and “...an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will.”²⁴ Clausewitz’s implication of warfare as state-dominated was a product of conventional tactics prominent in his era. Nonetheless, to many, the prevailing perception of warfare is similarly conventional in nature. Military historian John Keegan proposed this in his **political-rationalist theory of war**, saying “[warfare] is assumed to be an orderly affair in which states are involved, in which there are declared beginnings and ends, easily identifiable combatants, and high levels of obedience by subordinates.”²⁵ Per Keegan, this theory deals poorly with non-state and non-conventional tactics, which is the subject of this paper.

The rationalist theory finds company in academic literature. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a Genevan

philosopher and enlightenment thinker, argued “*war is a relation not between man and man but between state and state.*”²⁶ Even Webster’s Dictionary, a supposed arbitrator of word usage, defines war as “*a state of...conflict between states or nations.*”²⁷ Conventional warfare fits within these classifications: global security has historically evolved around the clashes of nation-states and their militaristic ventures. The end of the 20th century and notably the Cold War, however, has demonstrated a dramatic shift in the sphere of conflict.

Witness to increasingly powerful nation-states with numerically extravagant armies and weapon arsenals, pure conventional warfare has lost its position as a viable means of completing political goals. As of January 2019, the United States military budget exceeded \$700 billion dollars.⁸ Even accounting for inflation, this exceeds the United States’ Cold War average by over \$100 billion dollars.⁹ Boasting a military of this strength, conventional warfare with the United States is not a practical strategy. The disparity is blatant in the ongoing conflict in Iraq: in 2019, Iraq’s military budget valued roughly \$7.6 billion in US dollars, a fraction of the resources wielded by the United States.¹⁰ As such, counters to U.S. offensive attacks (such as the assassination of Iranian commander Qassem Soleimani, which was itself asymmetrical) include frequent mass demonstrations

and, more violently, a rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.¹¹ In sum, warfare has been forced to adapt to the powers that participate in it. Nonetheless, warfare represents more than the individuals or weapons involved: it is the theater in which opposing values clash, and in modern society it has morphed into a path around the stalemate between powerful national armies.

Definitions: Asymmetric Threats

Referenced above, select nation-states dominate military spending (and generally global conflict). A prominent example is the United States, whose national defense budget constitutes nearly 40% of global military spending, while their allies account for (roughly) another third.¹² This accumulation of force proves counter to deterrent efforts: according to the Serbian *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, released in May 1997, “U.S. dominance in the conventional military arena may encourage adversaries to use such asymmetric means...”¹³ Thus, the concept of asymmetric threats was introduced, proposed to “...avoid direct military confrontation with the United States,” and “disrupt the US command, control, communications, and intelligence networks, [and] deter allies...from supporting US intervention.”¹⁴ Steven Metz, an American national security expert at the U.S. Army War College,¹⁵ critiqued this nation-specific defini-

tion and proposed a more complete definition of asymmetric strategy: “[in military affairs] asymmetry is acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents to maximize relative strengths, exploit opponent’s weaknesses or gain greater freedom of action.”¹⁶ Contrary to nation-states in the upper echelons of military spending, weaker sides in conflict must circumvent direct attacks in favor of unexpected tactics, due to their own shortcomings as well as the superiority of their opponent. These asymmetric approaches employ innovative, nontraditional tactics, and weapons or technologies that are irregular in nature.¹⁷

Asymmetric threats include a variety of tactics, including disinformation campaigns, terrorism, and cyberattacks. Importantly, these tactics exist under the threshold for conventional conflict while still destabilizing governments, alliances, or organizations.¹⁸ According to the Ministry of Defense in Serbia, certain characteristics are inherently asymmetric:

1. considered unusual from a conventional point of view (i.e. torture);
2. irregular in the sense that they violate treaties or laws of armed conflict;
3. depart from war as previously understood, (as in flying planes into buildings);
4. leveraged or specialized against assets;
5. difficult to respond to propor-

tionally, creating a situation where military intervention in response seems inhumane or cruel;

6. having unforeseen circumstances, typical of an event or attack not previously used.¹⁹

Stephen Blank, a Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and published author on asymmetric threats,²⁰ presents another interpretation of asymmetry, labeled “Blank’s Theory.” Blank’s Theory classifies asymmetric threats within five dimensions:

1. “they are threats of non-conventional nature;
2. they are designed to mislead the opponent;
3. they can be used by both state and non-state actors;
4. they do not imply confrontation, and;
5. they reflect the opponent’s strategy.”²¹

In both scenarios, these tactics are intangible and entirely flexible, creating military action that is unpredictable, irregular, and difficult to combat.

Definitions: Hybrid Warfare

Hybrid warfare exists in concert with asymmetric threats, blending conventional and irregular tactics.²² In this sense, **hybrid warfare** “...combin[es] military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber attacks, economic pressure, [and the]

*deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces.*²³ Franck Hoffman, a Distinguished Research Fellow with the Institute for National Strategic Studies, builds on this definition: he argues that hybrid warfare incorporates different modes of warfare (both conventional and asymmetric capabilities), thereby utilizing synergistic efforts that are simultaneous, fused, and subordinate to one command unit.²⁴

According to some military experts, this unconventional theater of conflict can further be described as the “**Gray Zone**” of warfare, characterized by “...intense political, economic, informational and military competition more fervent than steady-state diplomacy, yet short of conventional war,” and employing “small-footprint, low-visibility operations often of a covert or clandestine nature.”²⁵ This hybrid zone utilizes operations below internationally recognized thresholds and conventional, on-the-ground tactics. Though hybrid tactics are traditionally linked to non-state actors (terrorist organizations, for example) waging wars against more powerful foes, Hoffman argues that hybrid wars neither supplant conventional warfare nor relegate future threats to sub-state actors.²⁶ To this point, the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and subsequent cyberattacks, media manipulation, and criminal agitation have been increasingly cited by policy experts (and contested by many others) as a prominent na-

tion-state fusing conventional and asymmetric means under one command.²⁷ Additionally, operating in the Gray Zone, the United States countered the September 11th terrorist attacks with small special operation forces (SOF), carrier and land-based airstrikes, and indigenous Afghan fighters to depose the illegitimate Taliban government, which was giving refuge to al-Qaeda.²⁸ Alongside their asymmetric means, the U.S. “boots on the ground” presence of roughly 350 SOF and other operatives made this a hybrid approach.²⁹ Either state or non-state, consensus acknowledges hybrid warfare’s combination of tactics utilized, some conventional and some asymmetric, and the strategically and simultaneously coordinated efforts that are unlike those of previous wars.³⁰

The History of Conventional Warfare

At the beginning of the 21st century, **conventional warfare** was loosely defined as “*the confrontation of two or more countries to defeat the other by means of armed forces and winner’s dictation of peace conditions*”.³¹ More specifically, conventional warfare can be examined as *military action supported by economic pressure, information relations, and diplomacy from the state*. Through conventional political channels the government guides operations, the population provides the productive means, and the military uses them

in conflict.³²

This strategy has largely defined historical warfare. In 1945, United States forces under the command of General Douglas MacArthur approached Manila, the capital of the Philippines, in an attempt to eradicate the Japanese presence from the archipelago.³³ The defending Japanese forces were strongly and relentlessly committed to holding the city. In the face of tremendous ground casualties, American air commanders persisted in requesting General MacArthur to approve aerial bombardment to assist U.S. ground troops. MacArthur repeatedly denied the request, stating that while Japanese forces would likely be killed, so too would innocent Filipino civilians.³⁴ Without aerial support, both sides suffered heavy casualties, though the United States prevailed in capturing the city. Nonetheless, MacArthur argued, the world would have reacted in horror had the U.S. employed aerial forces.³⁵ Circumventing the principles of conventional warfare was an unacceptable cost.

The complex history of war provides context for this reluctance to engage in any tactics deemed “irregular.” Constructed in academic literature, warfare is classified into four distinct “generations” (five phases).³⁶ Each generation features radically different warfare strategy. The tactics used in Manila have few parallels to the methods embraced by modern Iraqi fighters. The gen-

erations include:

1. Wars before nation-states;
2. “Classical Warfare” (Generation 1), including the Napoleonic wars: lined arrangements of musketeers on battlefields;
3. “All Together Industry” (Generation 2), including World War I: the industrial revolution and wider railroad availability ushered in auxiliary and infantry units;
4. “Maneuver Wars” (Generation 3), extending back to WWII: “blitzkrieg” strategies, which targeted the weakest part of the enemy;
5. “Unconventional Wars” (Generation 4), including the aftermath of September 11th and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.³⁷

As evidenced above, the fourth generation departs quite extremely from the tactics of prior wars and encompasses asymmetric and hybrid methods unique to modern conflict. A 1989 article in the Marine Corps Gazette (a professional journal for the US Marines disseminating military art and science) introduced the concept of “**fourth generation warfare**.” Here, “*...warfare seems likely to be widely dispersed and largely undefined; the distinction between war and peace will be blurred to the vanishing point. It will be nonlinear, possibly to the point of having no definable battlefields or fronts. Also, the distinction between ‘civilian’ and ‘military’ may disappear.*”³⁸ This centers on the ability of weaker powers

to combine conventional and irregular tactics to pose a legitimate threat to an opponent's political will. As such, the fourth generation (constituting hybrid warfare) does not attempt to win by defeating an enemy's military forces, but through hybrid tactics aimed at an enemy's political will.³⁹

Warfare's Transition

As warfare progresses, the question remains: why are asymmetric and hybrid strategies dominating global conflict? Curiously, the answer lies in defensive efforts against these tactics: extreme discrepancies between actors' military capabilities has incentivized the use of asymmetric and hybrid threats.⁴⁰ In other words, there is a disparity between actors with the capacity to accumulate large armies and those without. This has created an environment where less powerful actors must engage in hybrid tactics to reduce the disparity.⁴¹ The U.S. and its allies best represent this, with their national budgets constituting 40% and roughly a third of global spending.⁴² "Weaker" nation-states, which includes almost everyone else, cannot compete through conventional channels with the West. Thus, historical wars pitting two nations against each other on a battlefield have been rendered obsolete.

Inequality in military capacity is not the lone transforming force: **the doctrine of mutually assured destruction (MAD)** is an evolutionary de-

fense strategy based on the concept that *"neither the United States nor its enemies will ever start a nuclear war because the other side will retaliate massively and unacceptably,"*⁴³ potentially with nuclear weapons. This doctrine applies narrowly to nations of nuclear capacity, yet serves as an additional deterrent to conventional war. In sum, post-Cold War society has forced state and non-state actors to pursue irregular tactics in warfare to combat an escalating arms race between opposing ideological blocs. These conditions are directly responsible for the transition away from conventional warfare, and their maintenance on a global scale will only serve as additional encouragement for the usage of asymmetric threats and hybrid tactics.

Though conventional war has seen a decline in modern conflict, it remains in use by global powers against weaker nations and vice versa. Demonstrated by the trends outlined above, this type of warfare is becoming difficult, outdated, and ineffective against irregular opponents. Nonetheless, especially alongside hybrid tactics, conventional warfare can be advantageous. The U.S. government engaged in aspects of conventional warfare against the Ba'athist government in Iraq.⁴⁴ This nation-state against nation-state, enemy-specific attack was replicated to an extent in Crimea in 2014, where Russian troops invaded the peninsula and combined hybrid with conventional tactics.⁴⁵ These

examples demonstrate increasing hybrid tactics, but also the need for nations to remain vigilant against conventional ones.

Actors of Warfare

From the perspective of conflict analysis, **actors** in warfare are *all those engaged in or being affected by conflict*, otherwise considered *"who intervenes."*⁴⁶ John McDonald, a former U.S. Ambassador, diplomat, and peacebuilding expert, introduced the concept of "Multi-Track Diplomacy" which distinguished nine tracks of conflict-resolution and expanded on a previous list of actors in conflict. Despite the expanded list, McDonald maintained Multi-Track Diplomacy's foundation of two central sub-groups: official states/governments and unofficial, non governmental and non-state groups.⁴⁷ For the purpose of this paper, actors will refer to these large sub-groups, characterizing each actor as being tied (or not tied) to a sovereign nation, therefore as "state" or "non-state." Though state actors are capable (and willing) to organize asymmetric efforts, their position on asymmetric conflict generally differs from that of non-states and therefore is considered separately.

The **state** contains *traditional military and political authority which relies on its own economic and diplomatic power.*⁴⁸ Comparatively, **non-state actors** employ a *non-hierarchical structure of motivated "cells" with common motivations and political*

goals.⁴⁹ This compartmentalization works in favor of organizations such as terrorist groups that must leave potential vulnerabilities decentralized. State and non-state actors are inherently different, crucially so in regards to sovereignty: according to a report released by the National Intelligence Council, non-state actors are non-sovereign entities and therefore are not legitimized on a global stage.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, understanding both actors is vital to any discussion surrounding asymmetric and hybrid warfare. Russia, a powerful nation-state, and the Islamic State, a terrorist non-state actor, operate vastly differently despite both engaging in hybrid and asymmetric tactics, and both must be understood in prospective defensive efforts.

State Actors

State-actors represent the traditional consolidation of authority and the central elements of the international system.⁵¹ Defined by Higher School of Economics Professor Timofei Bordachev, a **state** is *a politically organized body of people at an established territory with public authority and the legal use of force and violence*.⁵² This monopoly on violence differentiates sovereign states from other actors that lack similar territory or authority.⁵³ Importantly, nations must be recognized by other sovereign states through international channels, such as the United Nations, to achieve this status. Fur-

ther, the state must have public authority, governing tools, and territory and population to rule.⁵⁴ Legality aside, certain states exercise conflict beyond their borders, wielding armies large enough to warrant conventional conflict or relying on hybrid and asymmetric means to circumvent international laws that would inflict potential consequences.

State Actors: Libya and Russia

Nation-states are capable of abusing asymmetric tactics to achieve political goals, as exemplified by the Libyan Civil War between the internationally recognized Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army.⁵⁵ Neighboring nations and global powers have become increasingly involved in the conflict through asymmetric tactics. For example, both Turkey and Russia have trained mercenaries to be dispatched in Libya.⁵⁶ Elsewhere, Turkey and the UAE have continued devastating airstrikes, jockeying over (what some consider) the largest drone war in the world.⁵⁷ Disinformation campaigns have increased alongside physical strikes, particularly through bots and trolls deployed by Russia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia in favor of the Libyan National Army.⁵⁸ These developments demonstrate modern “wars at distance”: technology, social media, proxy wars, and private armies of mercenaries allow states to par-

ticipate in conflict and destabilize opposing governments without actively engaging in the carnage.

Whereas the Libyan conflict featured nation-states and non-state actors in coordination, Russia’s aggressive international actions have demonstrated the capability for a state to execute hybrid and asymmetric attacks without international assistance or a pre-existing conflict. Through tactics of disinformation, cyberwarfare, and support for foreign political movements, Russia has tactfully played the line below conventional war.⁵⁹ In 2017, a disinformation campaign, widely believed to have originated in Russia, falsely accused German soldiers deployed in Lithuania of raping a teenage girl, stirring anti-soldier sentiments.⁶⁰ Elsewhere, Russian disinformation efforts have targeted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partner countries to undermine citizen’s support for joining the alliance, in addition to cyberattacks targeting the Democratic National Convention in the United States, leaking vulnerable information online that jeopardized U.S. election security.⁶¹ In these scenarios, Russian efforts sought destabilization, manipulation of citizens, and vulnerability in nations Russia considers as global foes. This is further evident in overt and covert Russian support for political groups, their funding of a French far-right national group, and aiding networks of non-governmental organizations

shifting European public opinion towards a positive view of Russian politics.⁶²

Russia is just one example of a prominent nation-state engaging in hybrid tactics. Both in states with the capabilities for conventional warfare and those who fight proxy wars abroad, asymmetric threats have proven effective in causing mass disruption to national governments and supra-national organizations. Thus, as their effectiveness remains consistent on a global stage and their methods remain below the threshold for conventional war, defense strategies must be adjusted to fully combat asymmetric means, and security experts must acknowledge the threat that nation-states pose.

Non-State Actors

Non-state actors are defined as “non-sovereign entities that exercise political, economic, or social” control at either a national or international level.⁶³ These actors operate outside the confines of a conventional state, pursuing their political agendas through means more difficult to contain or regulate. Forming a consensus on non-state actors has proven difficult for scholars and national governments alike. Nonetheless, a flexible list includes the following, per the United States National Intelligence Council:

1. multinational corporations and organizations;
2. nongovernmental organizations

(NGOs);

3. super-empowered individuals;
4. terrorist organizations;
5. criminal networks.⁶⁴

This is not a summative list, but rather an introduction to several non-state actors in global politics. However, in the context of hybrid warfare, terrorist organizations and criminal networks participate as the most important actors.

In examining conflict, two main groups of non-state actors can be identified in accordance with their operating tendencies. **Non-violent non-state actors**, including multinational corporations, *can have profound effects on a nation’s economic or political state, with the potential to also exert harmful influence or undue control over a region.*⁶⁵ **Violent non-state actors**, however, generally *present national and international consequences of extreme magnitude, and are characterized by their ability to rely on violence and force through asymmetrical channels.*⁶⁶ Militias, warlords, insurgents, terrorist and criminal gangs, and transnational criminal groups all exemplify the range of violent non-state actors.⁶⁷ As previously theorized, the usage of asymmetric and hybrid threats stems from a disadvantaged military position, where non-state actors or weaker states must approach warfare through irregular and unexpected tactics to sustain victory. This becomes evident when examining specific examples of non-state actors and their methods, such as

terrorist organizations operating in the Middle East, Africa, or South-east Asia.

Non-State Actors: Terrorist Organizations

On September 11th, 2001, the actualization of asymmetric threats posed by non-state actors was fully realized. Hijacking commercial aircrafts and piloting them towards buildings symbolizing the global authority of the U.S. departed quite extremely from warfare in the trenches, and this shifted U.S. foreign policy to the primary role of counterterrorism.⁶⁸ The administration of President George W. Bush declared a “War on Terror,” gathered information and targeted the terrorist non-state actors responsible, which represented the United States’ own effort in hybrid warfare and dealing with non-state actors.⁶⁹ U.S. forces operated in the previously defined “Gray Zone,” deploying SOF, carrier and land-based airstrikes, and irregular Afghan fighters to depose the illegitimate Taliban government, which was giving refuge to al-Qaeda.⁷⁰ Despite fighting occurring largely in the nation-states of Iraq and Afghanistan, the perceived threats from U.S. strategy were al-Qaeda and the Taliban, emphasizing the role that non-state actors can play in global conflict and their complicated relationship with nation-states.⁷¹

The September 11th terrorist attacks and subsequent geopoliti-

cal consequences modeled an increasing fusion of non-state and state forces. This created a gap in contemporary military terminology and strategy filled today by the widely utilized “asymmetric and hybrid threats.”⁷² Neither terrorism, the organizations behind these attacks, nor tactics in the following Afghan invasion were unknown to the US in 2001. However, combining conventional “on the ground” military action (such as the deployment of U.S. SOFs) with irregular methods of insurgency, war on information, and cyber attacks represented a departure from previous military strategy.⁷³ Further, despite frequent terrorist activity both prior to and since September 11th, this awoke much of the world to potential threats posed by terrorist—and generally non-state—actors such as al-Qaeda and presently the Islamic State.

Platforms of Warfare

After the dramatic arrival of asymmetric threats in global conflict, national defense strategies eagerly rushed to identify and address potential tactics. This proclivity ran counter to an actual comprehension of the term: asymmetry quickly came to define every threat faced in international conflict, and this careless application rendered the concept useless.⁷⁴ Substantive critique from academics contested the label of threats themselves as asymmetric, instead of the nature of strate-

gies utilized.⁷⁵ In reference to “platforms” of asymmetric and hybrid warfare, this paper seeks to identify and address this complaint.

The idea of “platforms of warfare” is not widely addressed in academia, and this makes asymmetric tactics difficult to reliably quantify. Therefore, this paper looks to introduce the concept of **platforms of warfare** as an overarching classification of asymmetric threats characterized by the nature of the threat utilized. This definition relies on the logic that asymmetric and hybrid tactics, or “means” exist within a greater conceptual platform. For example, a cyber attack is an asymmetric threat dependent on computer technology and communication networks. From this, cyber attacks can be determined to exist within the platform of information warfare.

Beyond this, this paper looks to acknowledge a platform widely utilized today and referenced above: information warfare. This example is not an all-encompassing list; several other platforms exist, notably terrorist activity. To maintain the scope of this paper, however, information warfare will be briefly explored while cyberattacks, a central asymmetric threat within that platform, will receive an in-depth case study.

Platforms: Information Warfare

The past few decades have revolutionized information and commu-

nication technologies in society, introducing modern telephones, radio signals, and satellites. To optimize military strategy, warfare has shifted alongside technology: broadly, **information warfare** is a struggle over these information and communication systems, and the application of destructive force on a large scale against information assets and systems and against the computers and networks that support this critical infrastructure.⁷⁶ These increased communication systems have created a societal reliance on them, leaving organizations potentially vulnerable to information warfare that damages or freezes their networks. However, increased communication systems can be similarly favorable to offensive information attacks: whereas once information was a tool of the state, (in certain nations it remains that way) asymmetric opponents today wield the power to make and distribute their own information to much wider audiences.⁷⁷ This ability has ushered in new areas of conflict operation, enabled states to engage in mass disinformation campaigns, and allowed wars to be fought remotely behind a monitor.⁷⁸

Commonly utilized by rogue nations or non-state actors seeking destabilization, cyberattacks and cyberwarfare are central to information warfare. These tactics represent a particularly advantageous strategy due to the limited assets they require: with secure networks and infrastructure, actors can leverage

massive disruption and destabilize government networks, elections, or the networks of supranational organizations from abroad.⁷⁹ This capability of “warfare from abroad” allows states to conceal their actions or motives, avoid international consequences (such as sanctions), or prevent the carnage possible in conventional intervention.

During the Kosovo War in 1999, Serbian hackers, in concert with their Eastern European sympathizers, launched global attacks aimed at shutting down key computer systems in NATO countries.⁸⁰ Despite knowledge that this attack was not sufficient to win the war, the Serbs successfully stalled the NATO offensive and disabled temporary response and communication systems.⁸¹ These cyberattacks are rudimentary compared to the information warfare used today: among other nation-states and non-state actors, China and Russia are capable of waging catastrophic cyber attacks on rival states, vastly more damaging than those utilized by Serbia in 1999. With disinformation campaigns, trained cyber experts, and the world’s increasing reliance on global networks, these powers have many vulnerable targets to exploit and will continue to do so under the threshold of warfare.

As mentioned previously, information warfare is not the lone platform of asymmetric means. Though broad in scope, terrorism represents another. This includes attacks lev-

eraged by terrorist organizations, though terrorism may also result from state-waged violence through the use of weapons of mass destruction, biological weapons, attacks on critical infrastructure that society depends on, or from attacks on people and government institutions.⁸² The threat of terrorism continues to loom large over the Western world, especially as military accumulation forces non-state actors to utilize irregular tactics. Therefore, this platform must be addressed as feverently as information warfare in an effort to stall its global rise.

Asymmetric Threat Case Study: Cyber Attacks

Cyber operations and their role in conflict represent a dramatic shift in society over the past few decades. Under the veil of anonymity and the threshold for conventional conflict, cyber attacks are an emerging asymmetric threat being utilized to create great destruction. Academia hosts several definitions for the concept of **cyberattacks**, though specifically for this paper cyber attacks refer to “...*hostile acts using computer or related networks to disrupt or destroy an adversary’s cyber systems or functions*.”⁸³ Whereas cyber attacks refer to isolated incidents, **cyberwarfare** expands upon this concept as “...*massively coordinated digital assaults on one government by another or by large groups of citizens, as when cyber attacks are orchestrated by state-sponsored hackers against an-*

other nation’s cyber infrastructure.”⁸⁴

Examining these concepts, there are generally three targets of cyberwarfare:

1. information itself;
2. information based processes that collect, analyze, and disseminate material of the state;
3. the infrastructure of information and communication systems that collect, process, store, transmit, display, disseminate, and act on said material.⁸⁵

The utilization of cyber methods against these targets offer actors operational flexibility, convenience, and undue authority. Computer attacks can be launched remotely or anonymously so as to avoid direct consequence, while their non-physical existence offers less able nation-states to be equally disruptive as their more-powerful counterparts. Whereas traditional warfare required a level of capability to launch an attack, cyber methods have created a sphere of conflict where power can be utilized by a wide array of political instigators for damaging purposes.⁸⁶ From this, defending national security systems proves difficult, especially considering how many potential threats exist; terrorist organizations, disgruntled individuals, or even hostile nation states can overpower cyber systems manned by limited numbers.

In recent decades, Russia has utilized cyber attacks as a means of promoting its political agenda abroad. In some instances, these

tactics are combined with conventional conflict in the form of hybrid warfare. In 2007, following a dispute between the Estonian and Russian governments, pro-Kremlin forces froze Estonian networks. This cyber barrage was asymmetric in nature and orchestrated by non-state actors, thereby distanced from the Russian state itself.⁸⁷ The following year amidst the Russo-Georgian War, Russian criminal gangs attacked multiple Georgian government targets, marking the first time that a known cyber attack had coincided with shooting in war.⁸⁸ This utilization of asymmetric means alongside conventional strategy explicitly demonstrates hybrid warfare.

North Korea is an additional proponent of cyber attacks. Lacking strategic advantages of large enlistment numbers, foreign investments, and advanced technical equipment, North Korea uses asymmetric strategies to offset warfare disparities against more powerful opponents.⁸⁹ This has made cyber attacks a strong strategy for North Korea: cyber attacks can be conducted from abroad, require limited assets, and rely on little manpower to wreak considerable havoc abroad. Further, North Korea leverages their detachment from global cyber networks to manipulate cyber attacks as a viable strategy.⁹⁰

Recognizing their reliance on cyber attacks, the North Korean national government has made

considerable efforts to funnel their brightest students into computer hacking and cyberwarfare operations. Government officials select promising students in mathematics to learn computer-based warfare. These students are then trained in specialized organizations before entering computer hacking forces, the most prestigious of which is known as the Bureau 121. Forces like these have been successful in enabling North Korea to engage in asymmetric combat from a distance, in soliciting funds for national use, and in incapacitating enemies of their ideology.⁹¹

In February 2016, \$101 million dollars were taken from a New York Federal Reserve account that belonged to the Bangladesh Central Bank. A single spelling error on a withdrawal request raised the alarm that prevented the initial request of \$1 billion from being authorized. This attack, later found to have occurred in banks in over ten other nations, was eventually discovered to have come from North Korea. However, due to a lack of physical evidence, the funds were never recovered and are potentially in circulation in North Korean markets.⁹² This attack demonstrates the significant capabilities of cyber attacks and the flexibility of their use. Rogue nation-states or non-state actors wield the capability to freeze networks, shut down entire governments, or steal significant sums of money, all without direct conflict, under the

threshold of warfare, and without global repercussions.

Responses to Asymmetric and Hybrid Threats

Modern conflict's shift to asymmetric and hybrid tactics represents one of the most pressing matters in global security. Following the arrival of these tactics on the international stage, defense doctrines and recommendations were released by national and supranational governing bodies to outline methods of prevention. These responses were preliminary in nature and are being continually evaluated to more properly address evolving threats. For example, increasing Russian hybrid activity has alarmed nations in Europe and NATO into further hybrid warfare prevention.⁹³ As these issues continue to disrupt global processes, effective responses become increasingly crucial for international security and must comprehensively address and alleviate threats posed by asymmetric tactics.

In addressing responses to asymmetric and hybrid threats, this paper will outline current European procedure. Though response strategies to these threats will vary depending on the nature of conflict to specific regions, European alliances, specifically NATO, have formulated comparatively advanced response systems that will be discussed as models for other global regions to utilize. These responses may not apply uniformly, especially consider-

ing NATO's status as a supranational organization. Nonetheless, the principles that they rely on are crucial to combating asymmetric threats on a global level.

NATO's Response Strategy

At the 2008 Bucharest Summit, NATO presented their Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, a framework to mobilize military and civilian resources as resistance to hybrid challenges.⁹⁴ This represented a crucial first step in acknowledging the threat of asymmetric and hybrid tactics, which to that point had not entered the public sphere. In December of 2015, this progress continued: NATO adopted a strategy of confronting hybrid threats by increased partnership with the European Union (EU). This partnership included information sharing between member states, warning signs of hybrid threats at the alliance's border, and encouraging members to recognize potential vulnerabilities within their own system to Russian interference.⁹⁵

In recent years, joint-defense efforts have been expanded by both EU and NATO officials. The two alliances have coordinated response strategies and established centers dedicated to the analysis and development of hybrid defense, among them the European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. This coordination relays joint declarations and recommendations to member states, calls on

individual national governments to identify internal weaknesses, and encourages members to contribute to a greater security threshold in Europe. Despite these promising advancements, it remains true that NATO defense strategies are not being optimized and they face institutional challenges to success.

Though NATO and the EU have pledged cooperation in their war on asymmetry, their efforts remain stalled by a lack of funding, a lack of membership commitment, and lack of information sharing.⁹⁶ In situations of pressing hybrid challenges, this lack of information sharing across organizations ensures a less effective response. Worse still, even attempts to promote information sharing within the organizations has proved challenging. For example, despite Russian cyber and disinformation attacks on the U.S. 2016 election, the nation shared little information with fellow NATO members.⁹⁷ Fundamentally, this hesitance makes sense: even with allies, states are reluctant to discuss internal vulnerabilities. Nonetheless, this approach to information sharing has stunted the alliance's ability to appropriately respond to hybrid threats and create uniform responses to urgent issues.⁹⁸

Further, despite centers positioned to address asymmetric and hybrid threats, NATO's identification policy is unclear. In modern conflict, hybrid forces are commonly fused with conventional warfare

and oftentimes exist without underlying conflict. Despite this common occurrence, NATO's internal framework addressing these conflict levels has no concrete response.⁹⁹ In addition, response strategies are stalled by NATO members' varying perceptions of threat in regards to asymmetric tactics. Nation-states susceptible to Russian influence in Eastern Europe may call for increased protections against information warfare, while nation-states overwhelmed by migration from the Middle East in Southern Europe may wish to adjust their focus to criminal activity. NATO must find a way to blend their response strategies to fit this range of issues, or else remain fractured and pulled along by their member's diverse interests. Ultimately, however, it proves difficult to organize an alliance on a single issue in the face of many.

Recommendations to Asymmetric and Hybrid Threats

While malicious state and non-state actors continue to engage in asymmetric and hybrid tactics, other global actors must not be complicit in their progress and must recognize necessary procedures to be enacted. Proactively, this recognition must translate to policy and definite changes. Therefore, this paper will identify several recommendations to effectively challenge asymmetric tactics in modern society. As European responses to hybrid warfare were outlined above,

a NATO-specific recommendation will be discussed. However, as recommendations are crucial to regions that do not already have functioning response systems to hybrid threats, generalized recommendation strategies will also be addressed.

NATO principally relies on its stated articles to govern and direct the alliance. These articles, meant to provide guidance in times of crises, are not being effectively enforced in a unified defense strategy. Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty (the treaty that established NATO) states that parties (nation-states) will consult together when, in the opinion of any member, the political independence or security of a member is threatened.¹⁰⁰ As previously mentioned, certain NATO members have not been transparent in their struggles with hybrid threats, particularly when it exposes vulnerabilities in a nation's infrastructure or defense capabilities. Nonetheless, the alliance must invoke Article 4 to enable these difficult consultations and to properly address areas in alliance security where foreign actors may be meddling. To respond effectively, individual nations should develop "internal thresholds" that identify asymmetric threats.¹⁰¹ When crossed, this should serve as an alarm to bring the issue to the awareness of other NATO members. Then, NATO should facilitate consultations that organize effective responses to hybrid operations. In doing so, a NATO-wide response

team to assist member-states struggling with conflict would be incredibly constructive for the alliance going forward.¹⁰²

Elsewhere in the world, especially in regions plagued by terrorist activity or struggling with governmental infrastructure vulnerabilities, responses to hybrid and asymmetric threats are crucial in securing national defense. These recommendations are not nation- or alliance-specific, but rather they represent actions that would be beneficial outside the scope of an international organization or any individual nation-state.

For an effective national response to asymmetric threats, response mechanisms must be institutionalized. There is no universal solution to asymmetric threats; even among related means, such as chemical and biological warfare, responses differ greatly and can complicate defense strategies. Therefore, responses must be institutionalized by the national military and governing bodies: in doing so, doctrine, strategy, structure of armed forces, and training must be addressed in policy and procedure to ensure a timely and effective response to hybrid attacks. Furthermore, understanding that variable asymmetric means warrant varying responses, an integrated and institutionalized defense effort should incorporate two primary efforts: protection and threat management. In other words, though each unique type of asymmetric attack

calls for its own individualized response, a national system must be organized with responses categorized by defensive protections versus proactive threat management. Defensively, this would establish procedures in the scenario of an incoming or on-going asymmetric attack, whereas coordinating threat management systems would attempt to prevent any attacks from materializing. These efforts should be coordinated with allied states and national partners to standardize responses globally.¹⁰³

Specific to Africa, several additional recommendations will be made to secure nations from impending hybrid and asymmetric threats. Some of these threats are contingent on region-specific qualities, however the recommendations are applicable to a global audience.

First, nations should revisit and revise their threat-response mechanisms.¹⁰⁴ Threats often assume a transnational capacity, exposing weaknesses in the state. Therefore, existing institutions and defense approaches need to constantly adapt to emerging threats as they appear. In states that are particularly fragmented or with less centralized governments, this revision and policy-making process should include the involvement of local or religious leaders who would be most knowledgeable of the threats their community faces.¹⁰⁵ Next, the coordination of efforts and existing strategies is imperative for a successful de-

fense system. This revisits the issue of government fragmentation or decentralization: it is possible that within government bodies of a state, information sharing and communication procedures are ineffective. To improve response systems, such information gaps and disconnects must be narrowed, and intelligence sharing should be streamlined to be efficient and effective in the face of emergency threats.¹⁰⁶ As part of the information process, warning networks and response mechanisms should be established and optimized. However, these mechanisms will only alert the acting government of a potential threat. Following this realization of a present or potential national security risk, there must be some state capacity to respond to or prevent any such threat from materializing. This may be in the form of increased national intelligence organizational capacity, increased number of staff of intelligence operatives and state employees, stronger cyber infrastructure, or increased military capability to deter armed threats.¹⁰⁷

As part of the necessity for state capacity, it is recommended that

nations improve their infrastructure as a means of defense. The lack of a self-sufficient economy or reliable infrastructure leaves states vulnerable to crises or attacks. For example, an attack of biological warfare might be more effective and spread more thoroughly in a state with inadequate health care.¹⁰⁸ As a final recommendation, both for states defending against asymmetric threats and those that utilize them in conflict, the ability to resolve conflict without intervention, warfare methods, or illegal channels is important to global peace. International diplomacy, economic relations, and strategic policymaking must be more accessible and effective. For non-state actors and nations to abandon asymmetric means, there must be legal channels for their political agendas to be processed. This should exist through international organizations, alliances, and councils meant to support weaker states.

Conclusion

Albert Einstein once said “You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war.”¹⁰⁹ In conceptual-

izing the role of modern asymmetric and hybrid threats, this paradox of warfare rears its head. As nation-states compete to accumulate arms and deter conventional attacks, less capable actors will increasingly revert to asymmetric means to exercise their political aspirations and disrupt more powerful foes. To combat this, nation-states and supra-national organizations such as NATO must establish and refine response systems to defend against these tactics. Utilizing the recommendations above, states should institutionalize their responses, streamline information-sharing procedures, and develop stable infrastructure to allow for increased state capacity. Most importantly, diplomatic means and resolutions must be developed beyond intervention or asymmetric means. The global security realm must not be complacent in its battle against asymmetric war and warfare’s constant development. Otherwise, as states develop the capacity to defend against current methods of cyberattacks or terrorism, other means of warfare will simply arise to take their place.

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This photo was taken in historic East Berlin.

Photo by Lydia Weinberger, Class of 2021



El Camino de Santiago is a world-renowned backpacking trail in the north of Spain that dates back to the 8th century, when pilgrims first traveled to the burial site of James the Apostle in what is now the town of Santiago de Compostela. The trail weaves through major cities, small towns, barren fields, and foggy woods alike as travelers experience all the beauty and culture that Northern Spain has to offer. This photo was taken at Sarría, a town in Galicia, Spain.

Photo by Andres Otero, Class of 2021



A picture of Thean Hou Temple, a Buddhist temple dedicated to Mazu, a Chinese sea goddess. Built by the Hainanese community in Malaysia, who are originally from southern China. Photo taken at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Photo by Christian DeSimone, Chemistry, Class of 2021

Undocumented Latino Immigrants: A Unique Challenge in UN Agencies' Realization of the Right to Food

By Sophie Therber

Sophie Therber is a junior studying Global Studies and Human Development & Family Studies. Much of her coursework centers around social determinants of health, such as food access, immigration status, and other structural barriers to health. Sophie is involved in volunteering and research with the Building Integrated Communities initiative of the UNC Latino Migration Project. Moving forward, she has committed to senior honors thesis in the UNC School of Education regarding the simultaneous effects of COVID-19 and natural disasters for immigrant communities in eastern North Carolina.

United Nations (UN) agencies have laid forth the framework of human rights, including the right to health, which encompasses the right to food. The right to food is more than just access to basic staples; rather, it has been clarified and expanded to include the rights to nutrition and food security. Although these rights apply to undocumented Latino immigrants in the U.S., they face disproportionate food insecurity. Undocumented Latino immigrants are left unprotected by the national government, facing significant barriers to accessing food assistance programs, health insurance, and legal protection. This paper examines the origins of the right to food, fo-

ocusing on the role of UN agencies in the creation and promotion of this right. This paper also highlights the unique circumstances of undocumented Latino immigrants, focusing on the tension between the need to access assistance programs and the fear of punishment or deportation. While UN agencies have taken steps to protect some vulnerable groups, such protections are currently lacking for undocumented Latino immigrants in the United States. Despite their shortcomings in securing undocumented migrants' right to food, UN agencies can do much more to address food security by expanding the conceptualization of rights-holders and duty-bearers to encompass state obligations to un-

documented immigrants. Furthermore, this paper presents directions for future policy to promote undocumented immigrants' realization of the right to food.

Background

Given its profound impact on individual and population health outcomes, the right to food is a fundamental aspect of the overall right to health. UN agencies play a significant role in creating an equitable global landscape that allows people to secure their human rights. However, despite UN efforts, some vulnerable populations face severe barriers to accessing food. Moreover, lack of access to food interferes with political participation and in-

fringes upon other human rights. This paper will focus on one specific subset of the population: undocumented Latino immigrants in the United States. Fifty percent of immigrants and seventy five percent of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. come from Latin America.¹ A disproportionate number of Latino households lack adequate nutritious food, with over one in five households facing food insecurity.² Those who are undocumented face even more barriers to realizing the right to food. This section will describe the right to food, the UN agencies that have recognized this right, as well as the expansion of the right to food to include the right to nutrition and food security. The explanation of the right to food will be followed by an overview of the challenges that undocumented Latino immigrants face in securing the right to food.

The Right to Food

The right to food is more than an ideal; rather, it sits in a legally binding framework of human rights. The right to food was first conceptualized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which addressed food as an underlying determinant of health. Although this declaration was non-binding, the inclusion of the right to food paved the way for subsequent human rights measures, most notably the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Interna-

tional Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both of which are legally binding for the 160 member-states who have agreed to uphold these covenants.³ The UN General Assembly adopted the UDHR, ICCPR, and ICESCR as an “International Bill of Human Rights” to define human rights and normalize them under international law.⁴

The right to food is often situated within the right to health in these documents. However, the right to food is much more than an afterthought of the right to health; it is constantly being revised, expanded, and clarified. For instance, after the Cold War, the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) established several General Comments to clarify and interpret the rights set forth in various UN-adopted documents. General Comment 14, in particular, asserts that the right to food is more than the provision of basic staples. Rather, the right to health encompasses access to nutrition and other socioeconomic factors that can threaten good health.⁵ Moreover, the UN Commission on Human Rights includes a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food to clarify and expand the implications of this right. Beyond these documents, there are several UN agencies dedicated to promoting access to food. Most notably for this paper, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), founded in 1945, aims

to eradicate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition.⁶ The World Food Programme (WFP) delivers food assistance during emergencies and builds partnerships with communities to improve nutrition and food infrastructures throughout the lifespan.⁷

Over time, there has been a shift in the conceptualization of the right to food to include the rights to food security and nutrition. Examining the right to food through the lens of food security provides a more nuanced view of individual access to food. The concept of food security emerged as a response to the world food crisis of 1973-1974, upon which the 1974 World Food Summit described food security as “availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs...to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption...and to offset fluctuations in production and prices.”⁸ In other words, food security shifts the focus of the right to food beyond the actual food supply, to encompass the individual pathway to food acquisition. Such a shift is also clear in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Although the CFS was established by the FAO in 1976, it wasn’t until 2009 that it explicitly included the right to food as a means of global food security.⁹

Rather than solely encompassing basic food staples, under the FAO, the right to food has expanded to emphasize access to a nutritious, appropriate diet within the context

of an environment that promotes sanitation, safety, and adequate health care related to food.¹⁰ In other words, even if food is accessible, it must not exist in a vacuum. Food itself must be supported by the fulfillment of other rights, such as the right to health, the right to dignity, freedom from discrimination, and the right to life. Such an approach to the right to food is not specific to the FAO. In its General Comment 12, the CESCR clarifies that physical and economic access to food must go hand-in-hand with inherent dignity and be supported by economic, environmental, and social policies aimed at eliminating poverty.¹¹ The WFP has come to embrace nutrition as part of food security as well, expanding its focus from solely providing food in emergencies to prioritizing malnutrition throughout the lifespan. This includes tackling undernutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, overweight, and obesity simultaneously.¹² This explicit focus on both acute and chronic malnutrition clarifies that food insecurity may have structural roots present throughout one's entire life.

Challenges in Applying the Right to Food to Undocumented Immigrants

Moving beyond the right to food itself, there are significant challenges in applying this right to undocumented Latino migrants in the United States. Undocumented Latino immigrants, like other vulnera-

ble populations, do have the right to the highest attainable standard of health. However, there are a multitude of challenges faced by this particular group that make securing this right difficult. About 23.3 percent of Latino households are food insecure; undocumented Latino immigrants likely face even more disproportionate food insecurity.¹³ According to a 2014 qualitative study of undocumented Latino immigrants, most participants reported not having enough to eat, sacrificing their own food so their children could eat, experiencing mediocre food quality, and having a lack of choice in their food.¹⁴ It is clear that more work needs to be done in ensuring access to food security for this population. The challenges in applying the right to food to undocumented immigrants can be generalized into four main categories: health care barriers, occupational barriers, immigration status barriers, and educational or linguistic barriers.

Healthcare Barriers

Health care, including preventative care, can play a significant role in granting undocumented immigrants the right to health. Health care can also guide right-holders towards nutritious food options and remedy diet-related ailments. Although federally qualified health centers that serve migrants do exist, these centers are often not physically accessible. Rural areas also tend to lack culturally and linguistically competent health care centers.¹⁵ Even where healthcare is available,

a lack of financial, educational, and procedural resources often deters migrants from seeking care. Perhaps the most salient barrier to undocumented immigrants' food and health access is lack of legal protection. Many migrants are thus ineligible for many health services without paying high out-of-pocket costs. For example, for the first five years after arrival to the US, immigrants are not allowed to access social protections, including Medicaid, or purchase health insurance. This applies to both documented and undocumented immigrants. Additionally, free health clinics that serve migrants are few and far between and are rarely advertised.¹⁶

Occupational Barriers

Undocumented immigrants are often vulnerable to discrimination and occupational hazards. Dangerous industries, lack of education and training, language barriers, and lack of social capital often make undocumented immigrants vulnerable to exploitation.¹⁷ For example, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, many of whom are undocumented immigrants from Mexico, have the worst health outcomes within the agricultural industry. Sparse enforcement of the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Field Sanitation Standards leaves them even more vulnerable to exploitation, danger-

ous work environments, and poor health outcomes.¹⁸ Oftentimes, work opportunities may be short-term or unreliable, creating periods of unemployment or forcing undocumented immigrants to be transient and change residences frequently to find work. Many undocumented migrants describe food insecurity as a consequence of such unsteady work.¹⁹

Other Immigration Status Barriers

In addition to a lack of access to health care and health insurance, undocumented immigrants face other challenges due to immigration status or lack of legal documentation. Pursuing any government assistance carries some risk of being discovered and punished or deported. Some undocumented immigrants take the risk, while others are discouraged entirely from seeking help in any form. Specifically related to nutrition, undocumented immigrants are excluded from all government nutritional programs except for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); however, children born in the U.S. to undocumented immigrants are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). WIC benefits allow families to purchase specific foods to improve their nutrition intake, and SNAP provides “near-cash” assistance that families can use to purchase food.²⁰ More-

over, it is quite common for undocumented immigrants to be responsible for sending money, known as remittances, back to family and loved ones in their country of origin. The pressure of remittances can add stress to the daily lives of undocumented immigrants and detract from the income they can spend on food.²¹

Educational and Linguistic Barriers

Many undocumented immigrants describe a lack of English proficiency as a significant barrier to the procurement of food. Indeed, linguistic ability can act as a barrier for food, health care, education, government services, job opportunities, and social support. Community assistance and kinship networks have proven to serve as protective factors from food insecurity; linguistic barriers jeopardize the formation of these positive relationships and thus increase vulnerability to food insecurity.²² Beyond language barriers, educational barriers can increase food insecurity. A general fear and distrust of government officials and programs can lead to limited knowledge about food resources, health care options, and other beneficial programs.

Clearly, more attention needs to be paid to undocumented immigrants’ rights, as this population faces unique challenges in realizing the right to food. Such challenges are compounded by the global

trend towards urbanization and the massive growth of the food industry, resulting in the “globalization of an unhealthy diet.”²³ Undocumented immigrants’ food options are restricted by an abundance of low-cost, high-sugar, high-fat foods available for purchase in place of nutritious foods that promote good health and food security.

Reasoning

The right to food encompasses the right to nutrition and food security for undocumented immigrants. UN agencies such as the WFP have taken steps to protect some migrants, such as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP), with provisions of food, cash, food vouchers, and other amenities.²⁴ Such protections are currently lacking for undocumented Latino immigrants in the United States. Despite their shortcomings in securing undocumented migrants’ right to food, UN agencies can address these issues by expanding the conceptualization of rights-holders and duty-bearers to encompass state obligations to undocumented immigrants. This section will examine the ways in which undocumented immigrants differ from refugees and IDP in terms of food procurement. It will also explore existing UN mechanisms that could be used to coordinate national efforts to ensure protection of the right to food for all, including undocumented immigrants.

Undocumented immigrants are

in a unique situation that presents special challenges to UN agencies securing their right to food. On one hand, this population exists in a very precarious situation, and many take extensive precautions to avoid revealing their lack of documentation and risking punishment or deportation. Government outreach programs are few and far between, but even when presented with viable options, many undocumented immigrants are hesitant to accept government aid for fear that they will be required to show proof of citizenship, valid ID, or health insurance. Furthermore, “victims of the violations of the right to food” are often unable to access judicial systems to redress human rights violations.²⁵ Such options may only be viable for residents who can show proof of a green card, permanent residence, citizenship, or other documentation, or they may incite fear of punishment or deportation.

On the other hand, undocumented immigrants are woven into the framework of communities in ways that refugees and IDP are not. Many are fully integrated into the workforce, send their children to public schools, and circulate money throughout the U.S. economy. Many acquire food through the market, rather than relying solely on donated food assistance. Indeed, upon immigrating to the U.S., many immigrants experience dietary acculturation. This involves a sudden shift from traditional diets to more

highly processed, high-fat, and high-sugar foods. Such an abrupt shift in diet means that among U.S. immigrants, acculturation is associated with increased cardiometabolic risk, including hypertension, diabetes, overweight, obesity, and hyperlipidemia, the causes of which stem from poor diet and low physical activity.²⁶

Due to the extent of undocumented immigrants’ integration into the market, some may argue that UN agencies are unable to stand up to transnational corporations, who are partially responsible for the lack of nutrition available to undocumented immigrants.²⁷ However, although more attention needs to be paid to undocumented immigrants, UN agencies are ultimately best suited to address the unique challenges this group faces in procuring food. Undocumented immigrants are not legally bound to the states in which they reside; thus, it is important that states look to UN agencies in order to address this. UN agencies can unite states in the coordination of national responses to food insecurity, thus increasing nutrition access for all people, but especially the most vulnerable, including undocumented immigrants. For instance, the FAO seeks to coordinate national responses to food insecurity, by providing support for designing food security laws, policies, and programs to be implemented on the national level. The FAO also holds international conferences to address

food security, such as the World Food Summits of 1996, 2002, and 2009.²⁸ Moreover, the FAO and the WHO have set universal standards for food and food trade through the Codex Alimentarius, thus standardizing national responses to food insecurity.²⁹ National policies can and do fall short of protecting undocumented migrants’ right to health; thus, it is crucial that states turn to the UN for standards, knowledge, and responses to food insecurity.

Policy Implications

Policy can play an important role in promoting participation, transparency, equality, and accountability in realizing the right to food for undocumented Latino immigrants. This situation requires a reconceptualization of rights-holders and duty-bearers. Although undocumented immigrants may not be bound to one state, it is important for the UN to remind states that these people are indeed rights-holders. Moreover, the role of duty-bearers must include a duty to all who reside in a state, documented or otherwise. Mainstreaming human rights and explicit use of human rights language is needed to remind states that they are bound to their human rights obligations.

Policy may also prove useful in implementing government assistance programs that are appropriate for undocumented immigrants. Undocumented immigrants and their children are ineligible for food as-

sistance programs, with the exception of WIC and SNAP.³⁰ Government assistance programs geared towards undocumented immigrants should be clear about their intentions and clearly specify that they do not require health insurance or valid U.S. government-issued ID. Moreover, interviews with undocumented Latino immigrants have revealed the importance of culturally appropriate food that is relatively consistent with traditional diets.³¹ Future programs should account for cultural preferences in determining what food may be distributed, discounted, or considered appropriate. The concept of food security is more nuanced than the mere provision of food staples, and policymakers must bear this in mind when designing food assistance programs.

Beyond undocumented immigrants specifically, there is much work to be done in easing the barriers to access of nutritious food. One way to tackle this would be

to regulate unhealthy, high-sugar, high-fat foods.³² The FAO already helps states write food security laws; it could feasibly also incorporate taxation into its current model. Increasing access to nutritious food will benefit all rights-holders, even those who have documentation and those who are U.S. citizens. Although undocumented immigrants are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, the U.S. population as a whole could benefit from more affordable, accessible, and appropriate nutritious foods in place of cheap, fat- and sugar-loaded foods that threaten health.

Conclusion

UN agencies have laid forth the framework of human rights, including the right to health, which encompasses the right to food. The right to food is more than just access to basic staples; rather, it has been clarified and expanded to include the rights to nutrition and

food security. Although these rights apply to undocumented Latino immigrants in the U.S., this population is disproportionately burdened by food insecurity. Undocumented Latino immigrants are left unprotected by the national government, facing significant barriers to accessing food assistance programs, health insurance, and legal protection. Beyond the barriers outlined in this paper, securing undocumented Latino immigrants' right to food will prove difficult in the face of populist nationalism, which threatens human rights on a fundamental level. Unfortunately, undocumented immigrants are often the target of state-sanctioned hatred and violence, making securing food more difficult than ever. Thus, it is essential that the concepts of rights-holders and duty-bearers be expanded to emphasize the ways in which states are obligated to assist undocumented immigrants.

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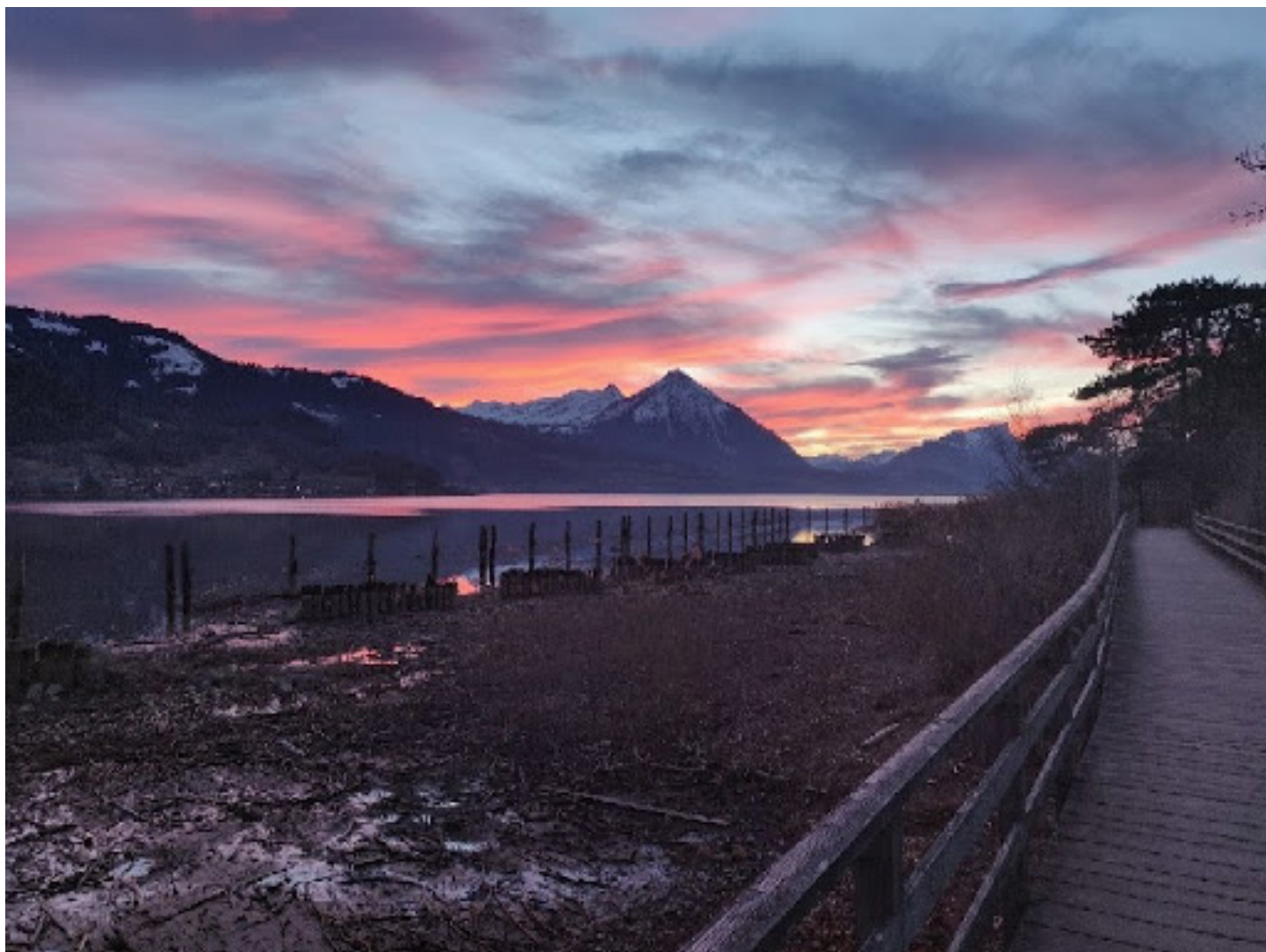
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A sheep practices social distancing from his flock on the inner Hebrides island of Skye in Scotland. The day before, UK prime minister Boris Johnson closes the country's borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo taken at Staf-fin, Isle of Skye, Scotland.

Photo by Jennings Dixon, Class of 2022



Sunset trail by the mountains. Photo taken at The Alps, Interlaken, Switzerland.

Photo by Danny Sachs, Lafayette College Class of 2022



Photo by Jaya Mishra, Class of 2022

W.H.O Coronavirus Response Policy Analysis

By James McClure

James McClure is a sophomore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill majoring in Global Studies and Public Policy, with a minor in French. His article was inspired by his interest in the role of international institutions in foreign affairs, especially in the case of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. It was written as the final paper for PLCY 210: Policy Innovation and Analysis and takes the form of an analysis of several potential policy changes for the World Health Organization, in response to the failure of the international community to limit the spread of the COVID-19.

When examining the accomplishments of the World Health Organization (WHO), the merits of its role in global health governance are undeniable. Since the WHO was founded in 1947, it has been responsible for nearly eradicating polio, creating guidelines for declaring international public health emergencies, and addressing health inequities between developed and developing countries.¹ Currently, the WHO coordinates the creation of the seasonal flu vaccine,² leads the international response to health emergencies, and performs research and interventions on ongoing health crises worldwide.³ While the value of the WHO to the world seems obvious, its insufficient response to the spread of COVID-19 has shown the limits of its organizational structure in coordinating a global public health response. Many world leaders are now seemingly at a crossroads: reform the WHO and allow

it to combat the pandemics of the future, or abandon it altogether and find a better option for the world.

Problem Definition

While the COVID-19 pandemic's complete impact on human society is yet to be known, the crisis clearly highlighted the flaws in the World Health Organization's public health response and enforcement mechanisms. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" (PHEIC), and specified that countries with vulnerable health systems were particularly at risk.⁴ The recommendations provided in the declaration included contact tracing, early observation, and patient isolation. Even though these guidelines were sound, lack of transparency between the WHO and the Chinese government played a significant role in the creation of the crisis the world now lives with in every aspect of daily life.

The Chinese government contacted the WHO about the Wuhan outbreak on December 31, but it was not until two weeks later, on January 12, that China confirmed the full genome sequence of the virus with WHO scientists.⁵ Retrospective analysis revealed that production of test kits during that two-week time period could have significantly improved the initial response in Wuhan.⁶ Even after the Chinese government refused the WHO's request for observers in Hubei province and underreported initial cases, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus commended China for "setting a new standard for outbreak control."⁷ Taiwanese officials also stated that the WHO did not respond to their initial warning related to COVID, since Taiwan lacks member status, due to China's continued claims of possession over Taiwan. Critics believe Adhanom moved too slowly to declare a PHEIC, as there were nearly 10,000 cas-

es by the time of the declaration.⁸ It is no wonder that many view the WHO's initial COVID response as inefficient and bending to the will of the Chinese authoritarian regime. The structure of the WHO is fundamentally not conducive to the sub-par public health responses of governments across the globe. The organization lacks any enforcement mechanism and possesses a budget nearly the size of a university hospital.⁹ While the WHO could have done more to condemn the actions of the Chinese government, as it did after the lack of transparency by the Chinese government during the SARS epidemic, criticism would have had little impact beyond symbolic signaling. The behavior of Western countries, who are the primary benefactors of the WHO, has also proved detrimental to a successful response to COVID-19. On February 5, 2020, the organization asked for \$675 million in support for a global preparedness and response plan to the pandemic, primarily to provide aid to the nations most vulnerable to outbreaks.¹⁰ By March 4, the international community had only offered \$1.2 million in support.¹¹ The response plan did not receive adequate funding until the first week of April, when the global case count surpassed one million.¹² The actions of the U.S. and UK governments in this pandemic are excellent examples of the international community going against WHO recommendations. The John-

son administration's misguided attempt to initially avoid economic shutdowns as well as the Trump administration's sustained campaign of misinformation regarding COVID-19 highlight the WHO's inability to influence foreign governments to follow their guidelines, as well as the lack of repercussions for these actions.¹³ Unlike the World Trade Organization, the WHO has no ability to sanction its members, which makes strict enforcement of public health regulations nearly impossible.¹⁴ While it is not the fault of the organization itself that individual nations responded poorly to the spread of the virus, structural flaws within the organization and lack of credibility from its Director General likely worsened confidence in WHO guidance.

Goals

In my analysis, I will examine three possible policy alternatives to the status quo of the WHO. To evaluate each of my policy alternatives, I will use two evaluative criteria. The first criterion will be cost-effectiveness. Questions regarding this criterion include whether the alternative will be more effective at preventing a public health disaster than the current status of WHO, or if required member state contributions would increase. I will also analyze the political feasibility of each alternative by evaluating whether or not the governments of highly contributing member states will favor possible

changes. After thorough consideration of each alternative, I will recommend the most effective option according to my chosen evaluative criteria, and the logistics of implementing the chosen alternative.

Role for Government

According to an economic analysis from July 2020, it is estimated that total worldwide consumption loss as a result of COVID-19 is \$3.8 trillion dollars, or approximately 4.2% of global GDP.¹⁵ It is likely that these losses will rise, as the pandemic has no end in sight until the broad implementation of vaccines, which poses a greater challenge to developing countries than developed nations due to global vaccine supply inequalities. The economic consequences of COVID-19 justify government intervention, as the spread of the coronavirus creates a negative externality that the market will not offset on its own. While many world leaders espouse that the re-opening of economy must be prioritized over "social distancing" measures, a former director of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warned in April of 2020 that cases could get "five times or close to 10 times worse" if the return to normalcy is too rapid and without proper precautions.¹⁶ If leaders continue to maximize productive output without regard for the possible acceleration of coronavirus spread, the humanitarian consequences will also intensify. As

of April 2021, global coronavirus cases exceed 136 million, with over 2.9 million deaths.¹⁷ To properly address future pandemics and prevent devastating economic consequences and millions of deaths, members of the international community must intervene and create policy changes to the current structure of the WHO.

Policy Alternatives

Option 1: Grant the WHO the power of "Dispute Settlement Mechanism"

My first possible policy alternative would involve modifying the WHO, giving it the power to enforce agreements and creating a required contribution minimum to ensure it receives proper funding. Enforcement power would involve the creation of a "Dispute Settlement Mechanism" (DSM) power for WHO authorities and member states, which would allow for an intrusion of national sovereignty upon member states in the event that international public health guidelines were violated.¹⁸ The World Trade Organization possesses DSM power and is able to issue a fine to member nations when one violates an agreement. In this process, a member nation of the WTO can present another nation's violation of trade guidelines to an impartial appellate court of WTO panelists and fellow WTO nations.¹⁹ While this process in total can take up to one to three years, it is essential to properly address the diffusion

of responsibility for damages that may occur once the long-term impacts of COVID are fully realized.

An implementation of the DSM in the WHO would allow states to appeal violations of international health guidelines to an unbiased panel of WHO officials, especially when violations caused economic and humanitarian damages. For example, states could argue inaction by China at the onset of COVID-19 in Wuhan resulted in a worsened spread of the disease initially, and that it was a gross violation of WHO guidelines. Additionally, it would allow the WHO to act faster when emergencies occur and incentivize foreign governments to take proper precautions. For example, the WHO recommended lockdowns to prevent the spread of COVID in late January of 2020, yet most Western governments did not issue stay-at-home orders until late March, when the virus had already been spreading internationally for months.²⁰ In this scenario, a member state abiding by WHO lockdown recommendations could present a case arguing that inaction by these countries at the onset of this pandemic further intensified the spread of COVID internationally. Even though DSM trials are oftentimes slow-moving and inefficient, the opportunity for member states to hold one another accountable for any violations of international guidelines is essential to a stronger WHO.

While giving the WHO DSM

power may aid the halting of future pandemics, better global health standards are necessary as a basis for these enforcement decisions. The International Health Regulations (IHR) act as a template for action in a global public health emergency and determine criteria for a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). These guidelines were most recently updated in 2005 after the MERS outbreak and were successful in addressing outbreaks of H1N1, polio, Zika, and Ebola in the decade after the update.²¹ Unfortunately, the current IHR was not effective at addressing the current COVID-19 crisis. While the agreement legally binds member nations to "develop core health capacities to detect and respond to public health emergencies," compliance to this requirement is lacking, as many governments did not launch an adequate governmental response to the initial spread of COVID.²² The WHO was also a week late to declare COVID a PHEIC under the clauses of the current IHR, which caused policymakers to lose crucial time in coordinating an international response to the initial outbreak in Wuhan.²³

To remedy the problem of WHO underfunding, I would suggest a required member fee that is proportional to GDP. In the 2018-2019 biennium, five of the top ten WHO donors were nonprofit organizations rather than sovereign nations, with the third highest donation

coming from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.²⁴ While the U.S. and UK were the top donors during that two-year period, their contributions were only a small fraction of their respective GDPs.²⁵ Another problem with the status quo of WHO funding is the reliance on voluntary contributions; according to an analysis of the 2018-2019 budget, less than \$1 billion of the \$4.8 billion budget came from mandatory contributions.²⁶ If the WHO raises the requirement for mandatory contributions in addition to raising the organization's overall budget, the WHO would be able to create more consistent and effective policy. Creating a more powerful WHO may seem politically infeasible due to the importance of national sovereignty amongst the international community, yet the long-lasting impact of COVID-19 may shift the global landscape in favor of stronger, more impactful global governance. It is also difficult for governments to justify raising financial commitments to international organizations to their citizens, as the primary benefit of strong global governance is prevention of disaster, rather than a specified tangible policy outcome. If the WHO prevents pandemics in the future, uneducated onlookers may view it as an organization with little purpose or use. Regardless of these difficulties, attitudes towards the WHO may change once the full impact of COVID has been realized. These implications suggest that oth-

er policy solutions may be necessary to increase the efficiency of the WHO.

Option 2: Create a new international agreement

Another possible alternative would be to maintain the current structure of the WHO while creating a separate international agreement with fewer nations. One option would consist of an agreement similar to the Paris Climate Accords, where each nation would set an individual goal for public health infrastructure improvements to maintain and uphold. To improve the enforcement power of an international agreement, one could adopt an agreement with stringent guidelines similar to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has been more widely enforced than the Paris Agreement. Agreements with more rigid guidelines would likely be less politically feasible and have less widespread international support, yet alternatively, more flexible agreements would likely be less effective in influencing global public health policy. After the introduction of several vaccines, it may be best for an international agreement to incentivize the distribution of vaccines ahead of the more complex task of creating global health security infrastructure to prevent future pandemics.

An advantage of the treaty approach is that it would allow nations to utilize international organizations and other existing in-

stitutions for the disputing of potential inter-state conflicts after the pandemic. The WTO already has the power of DSM, so disgruntled nations could present arguments for inaction to the pandemic in a context of economic damages. Another justified DSM case may come from arguing against "cases of unjustified trade restrictions" that were ineffective during the initial stages of the pandemic.²⁷ In addition, civil society watchdog groups may be the most realistic way of monitoring member state compliance²⁸, as many nations have little appetite for organizations or treaties that infringe on their national sovereignty. These trends are evidenced by the lack of adherence to human rights doctrine across history, particularly under authoritarian or nationalist governments.

Option 3: Abandon the WHO entirely

The alternative that seems the most politically feasible in the context of global authoritarian backsliding is to abandon the WHO entirely due to its failure to address China's initial mishandling of the novel coronavirus. Isolationists would favor this option, as many see the WHO as wasteful and ineffective at coercing foreign leaders to change their policies. In this scenario, states would set their own public health priorities, without international cooperation. While abandoning global governance would save billions in funds for foreign governments, it would leave the world unprepared

for future pandemics. Due to climate change and agricultural techniques that put people into contact with animal habitats, scientists expect that pandemics will reoccur in the coming years.²⁹

In the absence of an international global public health authority, many nations may look towards the global world hegemon, the United States, to become the world's leading public health authority. There are a variety of problems with a U.S.-centered global health system. Firstly, the U.S. lacks the impartiality and credibility it takes to take the role of the WHO. Due to the U.S.'s grotesque colonial history and completely inadequate COVID-19 response by the Trump administration, many governments will never see the U.S. government as a reliable leader of an international coalition. These trends are best evidenced by an incident where the CIA organized a fake vaccination drive in Pakistan to obtain the DNA of Osama bin Laden's family.³⁰ Without trust from the international community, the U.S. could potentially fumble groundbreaking health accomplishments the WHO is close to completing, such as the eradication of Polio.³¹

In evaluating each of my proposed policy alternatives in terms of cost-effectiveness, a reformed WHO with an updated IHR, DSM power, and better funding would rank the highest. If tangible consequences are introduced for non-compliance with revised WHO guidelines, this

path would provide the greatest chance of preventing future crises for the lowest cost. According to a report by the JAMA Health Forum, "Sustainable investments in the WHO would more than pay for themselves," as they would reduce government spending occurring in the event of pandemics, such as the trillions the U.S. government spent on COVID-19 stimulus packages.³² Unfortunately, the option of a reformed WHO may be the least politically feasible, as many member nations would likely oppose these changes or leave the WHO entirely if they were to be implemented. A comprehensive global health treaty would be next most cost-effective, as it would be more politically feasible than a broad alteration of the WHO and still allow for enhanced international cooperation in the realm of public health security. It is unlikely that a treaty would be as effective as a reformed WHO, as a treaty does not replace the role of a centralized organization whose sole goal is to address health inequities and crises worldwide.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The option of reforming the WHO is the most appealing under my evaluative criteria. To implement these recommended changes, it would be essential to hold a summit of member states and WHO officials to discuss the logistics of raising member fees, creating a DSM

tribunal, and revising the IHR, soon into the post-vaccine era. While one could be tempted to favor the input of the nations with the highest voluntary contributions to the WHO (the U.S. and the UK), it is imperative that nations such as China and Russia, whose leaders may be more resistant to an organization that could violate their national sovereignty, are also supportive of the possible reforms. The voices of leaders of the global south must also be considered in negotiations, as much of the health capacity building projects that the WHO undertakes occur in the regions of sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, as well as South and East Asia. Some experts even recommend moving the WHO headquarters to sub-Saharan Africa, to allow the organization to "respond rapidly where its technical assistance is needed most."³³

Beyond discussion of the reforms themselves, a process must be created to evaluate the effectiveness of the reforms made to the WHO. During the proposed summit, the creation of an oversight committee monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the WHO's existing projects and new reforms is necessary. This committee would be most useful in the event of the next PHEIC, where it could compare global economic damages and promptness of international response under the revised WHO, to the response and damages of PHEICs under the unreformed WHO.

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Night lanterns in the old Taiwanese gold mining town of Jiufen. While mining no longer occurs, the town has turned into a popular tourist destination famous for its deserts and tea.

Photo by Christian DeSimone, Class of 2021



A view of the mountains at the Alps, Interlaken, Switzerland.

Photo by Danny Sachs, Lafayette College Class of 2022



This picture is of many tunnels that wind through the incredibly steep and tightly packed mountains in Taroko National Park, located on the eastern coast of Taiwan.

Photo by Christian DeSimone, Class of 2021

A Critique of the Organization of African Unity (OAU): A Comparison of Attempted Interventions by the OAU and the African Union

By Erin Lee

Erin Lee is a rising senior majoring in Global Studies and Peace, War, and Defense. Her interests lie at the intersection of supranational organizations, culture, and politics, particularly in East Asia. This essay was an academic exercise in exploring a different region.

One of the most striking features of contemporary African history is how often actors have committed human rights abuses against people across national borders. This paper seeks to compare the effectiveness of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and its successor, the African Union (AU), in protecting human rights on the continent. I hypothesize that the OAU, already weakened by internal Cold War divisions, was ill-adapted to the challenges and conflicts of the last half of the 20th century. Throughout its existence, the OAU failed to encourage better governance and stand up against human rights abuses. The AU was consciously better structured to intervene in human rights abuses, which it did in three key ways: explicit rec-

ognition of human rights; moving from the policy of non-interference to non-indifference so the African Union had the right to intervene; and creating a regional peacekeeping force. In this essay, I seek to answer the question of whether or not the AU accomplished its mission of establishing the principle of non-indifference and holding its members to a higher standard of human rights, through four case studies.

Scope, Relevance, and Definitions

Human rights in Africa have increasingly come into international attention in recent decades, as political instability, economic troubles, and climate/war refugee crises have plagued many countries. In this essay, I will cover 1963 to the present,

but focus specifically on case studies emerging in the post-Cold War and early 2000s years, as the OAU was replaced by the African Union. While there is generally an internationally inclusive definition of human rights (this essay defines human rights as the ones listed in the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights), there is the less-understood challenge of defining human rights protections. The United Nations leans on a combination of peacekeeping missions, international military intervention, treaty bodies and councils, R2P (responsibility to protect,) and UN bodies such as the UN Security Council.¹ The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), established in the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and

also known as the Banjul Charter, defines human rights protections far more vaguely, focusing on the legality of human rights issues and research.² The ACHPR has three human rights monitoring procedures: the state-reporting procedure, the inter-state complaints procedure, and the individual complaints procedure.³

Due to the overlapping and confusing agreements on what protections look like, this essay only focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the OAU and AU's usage of international intervention in cases where poor governance met human rights abuses. Additionally, I ask the reader to consider how most of the states on the continent are part of the OAU and African Union, so membership alone cannot account for the variation in human rights protection. This paper will primarily pull from case studies throughout the given time period.

Historical Timeline and Topic Background

Since its conception in 1963, the OAU has been consistently involved in the human rights struggle, as demonstrated by “the struggle for the decolonisation of Africa and the right to self-determination and independence.” However, it was only after transitioning into the African Union that not only were human rights made into an explicit part of its charter, but protections were actually integrated into its regular practices.⁴ With the exception of Morocco,

which withdrew for 32 years before rejoining, the OAU/AU has consistently maintained continent-wide membership. The OAU aimed to promote unity, accelerate liberation from colonial rule, and help states achieve economic success independent of their former colonial rulers. Because of how fresh independence movements and colonialism were in the African consciousness when the OAU was created, the organization emphasized state sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs, and had little enforcement capacity to carry out its goals. In terms of human rights in particular, these characteristics hindered OAU intervention, as the majority of conflict on the African continent is not interstate conflict, but intrastate conflict (e.g. civil wars and conflicts involving non-state actors).⁵

The African Union was an attempt to better serve the needs of a decolonized Africa. Its restructuring sought to solve many of the enforcement issues of the OAU and to grant the organization more power, following the precedent of the similar European Union. The African Union's strong emphasis on human rights, and the bodies it has created to protect them, has coincided with the use and growth of international involvement in peacekeeping. However, the African Union has much work to do, if it is to accomplish its ambitious goals of protecting human rights across the continent.

The OAU

Very quickly after its creation, the

Banjul Charter seemed like an inadequate basis for action, especially with only the tools of weak and insecure state governments. There was also the economic weakness of many African states (i.e. they could not contribute funding resources to multilateral organizations), and thus the OAU through its operating years, which limited its enforcement. But ultimately, the nail in the coffin was the principle of non-intervention, contrasting directly with the African Union's principle of non-indifference. The case studies I will look at here are the Biafran War and the Uganda-Tanzania War.

The OAU in the Nigerian Civil War/Biafran War (1967-70)

The Biafran War was a civil war that attempted to stop the secession of the Biafran region, which was populated mostly by Igbo people and contains the lucrative, oil-producing region of the Niger Delta. The Biafran Conflict was the OAU's first true management crisis. The conflict was complicated by how invested more powerful non-African actors (such as the United States, Soviet Union, etc.) were, due to the issue of resource access and the fact that the Biafran War was a civil war.⁶ The first mistake of the OAU was to initially dismiss the deteriorating situation in Nigeria. Then, when the organization caved in to international pressure to start peace talks, it only brought in the federal government of Nigeria. Scholars at the time recognized the incompetency of these efforts, and “it is with the same naivete and ineptness that

the OAU approached other African conflicts.”⁷

Because the OAU was unable to enforce its decision to support Nigeria as an anti-secessionist organization, the Nigerian situation divided Africa between states that recognized Biafra and those that did not, which demonstrated its weakness to the continent as well as to the outside world. Nigeria thus became an “open field for unilateral third-party intervention by extra Africa[n] states.”⁸ This blanket support became tacit permission for the enormous human rights violations committed in Biafra, with estimates ranging from 500,000 to 6 million wartime casualties, as well as a million total deaths due to starvation and disease.⁹ Indeed, the OAU passed a resolution formally condemning secession, and refused Nigeria-Biafra diplomatic mediation by not allowing Biafra an audience with the OAU. In direct contrast, the Commonwealth Secretariat (United Kingdom) began peace talks with both sides to begin finding a diplomatic solution.¹⁰ While these were also ultimately unsuccessful, the Commonwealth made more progress in conflict management than the OAU, yet again undermining its efficacy. Albeit at this time the OAU was extremely new, but it was clear that the OAU did not necessarily have a vested interest in protecting human rights — it first failed to criticize the Nigerian blockade that was causing the food shortages, and then dragged its feet in completing negotiations.¹¹ The consultative sta-

tus of the OAU reflects the view that this was a domestic dispute, rather than one that concerned most African nations.

The OAU in the Uganda-Tanzania War (1978-79)

Relations between Tanzania and Uganda were tense, due to Ugandan President Idi Amin’s coup of Milton Obote and Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere’s support of Obote. Both Tanzania and Uganda were in violation of OAU’s non-interference principle — Tanzania for invading and overthrowing Amin, Uganda for annexing Tanzanian territory — but Amin was notorious for his human rights abuses. His administration actively committed political repression and extrajudicial killings, and the death toll during his years in power is estimated to be between 80,000 and 500,000.¹² Interestingly, the Uganda-Tanzania War lacks the Cold War dimension that complicated many African conflicts.

First, we must address why the OAU did not intervene or even discuss Amin’s brutality, even when the Uganda-Tanzania War began. Indeed, the OAU summit was hosted in Kampala in 1975, the same year Amin became chairman of the OAU. Only after the 1975 summit did concerns around Amin’s chairmanship begin to develop, and yet there was no active conceptualization of the human rights violations occurring.¹³ In the conflict, despite the extraterritorial actions of both nations and the blatant disregard of OAU policies, Nyerere’s invasion of Uganda was quietly accepted by

most external observers. Crucially, the OAU declined to formally condemn the Ugandan invasion, and Nyerere privately invoked humanitarian concerns, but never publicly linked them to Uganda’s intervention, as to do so would have been an admission to breaking the OAU Charter.¹⁴ This clarifies that the OAU was not only turning a blind eye to Amin’s atrocities but de facto discouraging military intervention based on human rights.

The task of mediating the conflict fell to the OAU, but with both parties unwilling to negotiate diplomatic mediation, mediation seemed to stall. However, suddenly on November 14, 1978, Amin “announced an unconditional withdrawal and invited OAU observers to witness it.”¹⁵ Although this was claimed as a successful OAU effort, Amin’s decision in reality had more to do with the realization that he had little support — the conflict was frozen rather than resolved. This failure to broker a lasting peace spoke not only to the OAU’s widely acknowledged impotence in resolving disputes, but also to how its policy institutions were ineffectual at taking action and could mostly only advise and mediate. In the OAU’s state of forced neutrality and lack of executive power, African nations could easily disregard the decisions and vague resolutions of the organization. By engaging in more decisive, and perhaps military, intervention during Amin’s reign, the human effects of the Uganda-Tanzania War and Amin’s war crimes could have

been reduced, if not eliminated entirely.

The African Union

The African Union has taken far more of an interventionist approach to stopping human rights violations, by developing legal frameworks and developing the principle of non-indifference, reflecting a new political culture that prioritizes democracy and intervention. I will again look at two case studies here, including one regional peacekeeping mission: the UN-AU Mission in Darfur and the Libyan Civil War.

African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID): 2004-07, 2007-present

AMIS was unable to contain the human rights crisis in Darfur, Sudan for several reasons.

UNAMID is a joint peacekeeping mission that absorbed the African Union Mission in Sudan and aimed to stabilize Darfur, Sudan, while peace talks continued. Joint missions are important in allowing the AU to stay at the forefront of continental conversations on human rights, while providing more manpower and experience to increase the capacity of intervention. They are also a financial necessity; many African states fail to pay their OAU dues, and the AU's "chronic failure to raise enough financial and human resources to conduct peacekeeping or peace support operations has been embarrassing to the organization."¹⁶ The \$26 million USD

budget for the original 2004 African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was funded entirely by international donors, including the UN, European Union, and NATO, with no AU member states contributing to the funding.¹⁷ Financial instability not only made the presence of AMIS in Sudan unviable in the long-run, but also reduced its ability to defend those in Darfur. This reduced ability led the AU to finally accede to joint UN intervention with the establishment of UNAMID, conceding control notably to the United States, who played a key role in the recruitment of peacekeeping troops. By handing over control, UNAMID was allowed to become one of the largest and most expensive peacekeeping operations ever deployed, with nearly 20,000 troops and staff, to meet the needs of Darfur.¹⁸

The Libyan Crisis (2011)

When the Libyan Crisis broke out with the Arab Spring and the ousting of Gaddafi, there was hope that the African Union would decisively step in and create "African solutions to African problems."¹⁹ But not only were the African Union's first half-hearted measures (including trying to dispatch a fact-finding mission) quickly overridden; they were eventually shut out of the peace-making process entirely. The AU also had internal disagreements over how to respond to Libya, further slowing its response. The AU's marginalization in responding to the Libyan Crisis comes partly from this failure to send a fact-finding mission, as the UN would have had

to step back — the UN Charter recognizes the importance of regional arrangements, and "regional arrangements are enjoined to make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements ... before referring them to the Security Council."²⁰ Subsequent UNSC resolution 1973, authorizing the use of force (de facto providing the justification for NATO intervention), and then the UNSC's refusal of the AU's Ad Hoc Committee, supposedly the decision-making committee of the AU on Libya, to meet Gaddafi, the AU was shut out entirely.²¹

The Libyan Crisis is yet another example of compelling enforcement power, the lack of true AU financial commitment to regional peacekeeping, and aforementioned internal divisions. Although Gaddafi ignored AU demands to end the crisis peacefully, the AU hesitated to intervene or impose sanctions, because Libya was a key leader in the formation of the AU and one of "five countries contributing 75% of the AU budget."²² An important disagreement was on the acceptance of UN and NATO intervention: some member states accepted UN intervention while disapproving of NATO, some opposed NATO's operation in Libya, and some supported NATO. There was also disagreement on how to handle Gaddafi, and whether or not to recognize the UN-implemented Libyan transitional government. The AU's roadmap for Libya was unable to reach consensus through the bitter end.

However, unlike under the OAU, tangible steps were taken towards the goal of reducing human rights abuses and fostering peace, such as the creation of the AU Peace and Security Council, which replaced the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. However, even beyond diplomatic rhetoric, the Libyan crisis was an embarrassment for an organization that claimed to promote Pan-African consensus but could not hold its own members accountable to committee-wide decisions.

Even though the African Union has engaged in relatively more successful international intervention, its “ambivalent, and at best muted, response” to humanitarian crises in Côte d’Ivoire, Libya, and Mali has drawn criticism.²³ Part of this can be attributed to the difficulty of reaching consensus on regional peace-keeping missions, as many African states have not ratified the protocol establishing the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, indicating that governments are selective in choosing when and when not to intervene. Another burden is low organizational capacity: because the African Union does not have the manpower to engage in every in-

stance of human rights violations, the organization has become relatively dependent on UN intervention.

Final Comparison and Conclusion

After comparing the two organizations, it is clear that the OAU was set up to be ineffective by design, as the OAU was at its core a conservative, anti-secessionist, anti-interventionist institution that affirmed state decisions selectively and was able to hide behind the idea of state sovereignty to avoid actively defending human rights on the continent. The African Union has seen great success in improving transparency and initiative in protecting human rights, compared to the Organization of African Unity, and its public rhetoric has reflected this new emphasis on intervention. However, without achieving financial independence and raising its organizational capacities, the AU will be unable to shed its colonial-era structural limitations and transform into a truly modern multilateral organization that is respected and capable of swift action in Africa. Because the autonomy of the African state has been increasingly eroded

by the international community, the limited independence translates to the supranational level as well, where the AU is constrained in its decision-making power and depends on the United Nations. (The Libyan Crisis demonstrates this financial dilemma: the lack of political will to impose punitive measures on rulers who contribute funding leads to a less democratic organization). Due to this, my earlier hypothesis of whether the AU does a better job than the OAU of protecting human rights abuses is only half correct — it’s true that the OAU certainly did not pay as close attention nor was as invested in resolving conflicts as the AU, but much can be attributed to the fundamental difference of non-intervention. The African Union’s revised structure bodes well for future action on preventing human rights abuses, but at this point in time, the AU does not have the capacity to succeed in interventions without assistance from the UN or other organizations.

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Crowded beaches in Rio de Janeiro, just a few months before COVID-19 arrived in Brazil. The gorgeous sunset reflects along the water with the Morro Dois Irmãos visible in the distance.

Photo by Gustavo Nativio, Class of 2023



The Church of our Lady before Týn is the most alluring and visually appealing part of the old town square, attracting thousands of visitors each day. Photo taken at Old Town Square, Prague.

Photo by Jordan Wade, Baylor University Class of 2022



A view of Cape Town from the top of nearby Table Mountain, South Africa. Dark clouds encircle the mountaintop, but the city is still awash in sunlight.

Photo by Jack O'Grady Class of 2022

Canaan

By Lydia Weinberger

Lydia Weinberger is a senior double-majoring in Political Science and Studio Art with a minor in Creative Writing. Weinberger recently finished her first manuscript, entitled Mashiach Mashiach, for her senior honors thesis. While Canaan is not among her most current collection, it embodies the poet's introspective nature and the conflict an individual faces when reckoning with their people's painful past.

In Budapest, bronze shoes
sit on the river, where Hungarian
soldiers marched us from the ghetto
and bound our arms with our own shoelaces,
had children stand in front of parents
to save bullets, let the velocity
push them into the Danube—
we find a store with my last name
blazoned across it and I can't shake off
the feeling that if I touch the water I might
be greeting kin—
it is stuck in my throat
bitter and hard like shards of bone and
you want to dredge the river,
give the bodies a proper burial—
did you know my father's DNA
test tells him nothing other than
how thoroughly no country wants to own him.
As though a country can claim a people
they have slaughtered by the millions—
as though cycles of abuse only perpetuate
on a personal level. We are convinced
growth only comes at the expense of others,
like we learned from the Spanish,
the German, like we are starting
to teach in the Holy Land.

we opened the door so they would know
we were not drinking their child's blood,
made our broth clear, why shouldn't we be
allowed to turn around the scrutiny?
Burn down the house of the debtor and the debt
is forgiven--learned that from the English?
How do I claim a house that's burning?
It was supposed to be a homeland
but it is laced with repetition, with more corpses
in rivers with more war and war and war.
Have you ever stood on the shore
of a river, and felt only loss,
like all that will ever swell on your tongue is grief?
Was it the Danube? Was it the Jordan?
we have seen death so often
aren't surprised when
We look at our reflection in the water
and it is there too.
This is a country, not a graveyard,
Remember

