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**PEACE TIME:
CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENTS AND THE DURABILITY OF PEACE**

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Book Summary

The Durability of Peace

This book is about how deadly enemies maintain peace. In the immediate aftermath of war, peace is precarious, but in some cases it lasts and in others it fails. Why do some cease-fires fall apart within days or months, while others last for years, and still others last indefinitely? Why did a cease-fire reached in July 1948 during the first Arab-Israeli war fail after only three months? Why did the next last longer, yet ultimately fail? Why has the armistice in Korea held? Why did Honduras and El Salvador clash again seven years after the Football War, and how did they avoid full-scale hostilities? How did Ethiopia and Somalia manage to avert resumption of their 1978 war over the Ogaden? What would we need to know to predict whether the cease-fire reached in June 2000 between Ethiopia and Eritrea will hold? In short, what determines whether peace lasts? And perhaps more important, what, if anything, can the belligerents themselves or the international community do to improve the chances of durable peace? These are the questions that motivate this book.

The field of international relations provides surprisingly little guidance on why cease-fires fail or on what helps make peace last. There is a growing scholarly interest in war termination, both of civil and international wars, but very little work has examined the durability of peace once belligerents have stopped firing at each other. How to maintain peace in the aftermath of war is arguably one of the most important questions of the post-Cold War era, and one of the least explored issues in the study of war and peace.

The Book

Maintaining peace in the aftermath of war requires cooperation. Because war is costly, both sides would be better off without renewed warfare, but both are likely to have incentives to break the cease-fire and both are almost sure to fear that the other side may do so – they are deadly enemies, after all. This book draws on, and develops, the international relations literature on the obstacles to cooperation under anarchy and on ways international actors might overcome these obstacles. In it, I argue that belligerents and the international community can draft cease-fire agreements that foster peace by altering the incentives to attack, by reducing uncertainty about compliance with the cease-fire, and by preventing and controlling accidents that might otherwise escalate back to war.

The book focuses on specific mechanisms incorporated into cease-fire agreements that can help foster durable peace. These include demilitarized zones, the involvement of third party guarantors or peacekeepers, the inducement of political or reputational “audience costs” with a formal agreement, dispute resolution procedures, confidence-building measures, and measures to guard against involuntary defection by rogue groups. I test the relationship between these mechanisms and the duration of peace. Do they actually help prevent war? This project is a systematic study of what works and what doesn’t work to maintain peace.

Whether the measures studied here matter in the construction of durable peace cannot be answered in isolation, however. The counter-argument to the hypothesis that cease-fire agreements foster peace is that they merely reflect other factors that determine the duration of peace. When cooperation is relatively easy because relations are fairly good, this argument goes, parties will be able to draft strong agreements incorporating many of the mechanisms examined in this study. But these are the

very cases in which peace will last in any case. Conversely, when cooperation is difficult and the chances that peace will fall apart are high for other reasons, belligerents will be unable to conclude agreements that do anything more than paper over differences. Any apparent relationship between the strength of agreements and the duration of peace may therefore be spurious.

On the other hand, an argument can be made for just the opposite logic. If mechanisms within cease-fire agreements help belligerents keep peace; the greater the obstacles to peace, the greater the need for these mechanisms. When peace is most fragile, states will have greater incentive to invest in mechanisms to prevent its demise. This argument suggests that the strongest agreements will be put in place in the most dangerous situations, not the easiest ones. In either case, ignoring the situational factors or the “pre-existing conditions” that influence the underlying prospects for peace will hide the true causal relationship between agreements and the duration of peace.

This project thus addresses three central questions: First, what factors or situational variables affect the baseline prospects for peace? How do factors such as the decisiveness of military victory, states’ relative capabilities, the stakes of the conflict, the belligerents’ history of conflict before the war, geography, and the cost of war affect whether peace lasts or falls apart? Second, how do these situational factors affect the content of cease-fire agreements? Are belligerents and the international community only likely to implement measures to try to maintain peace in the easy cases where peace would last in any case? Or are they more likely to invest in these measures when peace would otherwise be most precarious? And third, given the baseline prospects for peace, how does the content of cease-fire agreements affect the durability of peace? Do stronger agreements lead to more durable peace? And which mechanisms are most effective? For example, do demilitarized zones help maintain peace empirically? Does peace last longer when peacekeepers or monitors are present? How important is it to have a third party guarantee the peace? Is peace more stable if the belligerents sign a formal agreement or is a tacit understanding just as effective?

The theory developed in this study builds on insights from debates in international relations theory about the obstacles to cooperation and about ways to improve the chances for cooperation. It develops competing hypotheses about the effectiveness of such measures and then tests these hypotheses empirically. This testing involves three complementary research methods: quantitative analysis, in-depth case studies, and what for lack of a better term I call “large-N qualitative” comparison. The quantitative analysis employs a duration model and a dataset created for this project of all cease-fires in interstate wars ending between 1946 and 1994. The case studies focus on the cease-fires between India and Pakistan, and Israel and Syria. These are particularly difficult cases for the cooperation theory developed here. They also provide significant within-case variation, allowing me to hold particularities of culture, geography, etc. relatively constant. In addition, I examine the full set of cease-fires qualitatively. This systematic comparison of mini-cases or “large-N qualitative” method uses information that would otherwise be lost, either in the condensation of complex cases into numerical data or in case studies of only a few cases. The combination of these three techniques is particularly powerful because each compensates for the weaknesses of the others.

Contribution to International Relations Scholarship

This book contributes both to international relations theory, and to substantive issues in war and peace studies and conflict resolution. The study of how peace can be maintained in the aftermath of violent conflict contributes to our understanding of international cooperation in general, and cooperation among adversaries in particular. By examining cooperation in the least likely place, among deadly enemies, it provides a “hard test” of arguments that states can and do overcome the pernicious effects of anarchy. International agreements are fundamentally unenforceable, yet most states comply with most of their international obligations most of the time. However, the degree to which agreements bind international actors is not well known empirically, nor have the causal mechanisms by which agreements might affect outcomes been thoroughly explored. The study of cease-fire agreements and their effects on peace begins to fill this gap. It is also relevant for the parallel debate over whether institutions have

independent effects in international relations or whether they are merely epiphenomenal. By taking the argument about spuriousness seriously, and nonetheless showing that cease-fire arrangements affect the durability of peace, this study sheds light on whether and how institutions matter in international relations.

In addition to its contributions to international relations theory, this study adds significantly to empirical literatures within international relations and security studies. For example, it speaks to the growing literature on “enduring rivalries” and protracted conflict. Because it examines both enduring rivalries and single-shot conflicts, it helps answer the fundamental question posed by this topic: what distinguishes conflicts that set off such rivalries from those that are not repeated? It also adds to specific literatures on some of the particular peace-maintaining mechanisms studied here. These literatures tend to be descriptive rather than analytic, and rarely involve systematic tests of the effectiveness of these measures. Studies of peacekeeping, for example, tend to examine only cases where peacekeepers were deployed, with no comparison to non-peacekeeping cases so that it is difficult to judge empirically what difference peacekeeping makes. Other measures examined here have not been studied at all. We know almost nothing about demilitarized zones, for example, or about dispute resolution procedures reached between ex-combatants.

Finally, this book contributes most directly to a small but growing number of studies on the durability of peace. To date, this literature consists of only a handful of articles and policy monographs. A book-length, academically rigorous study of this topic is long overdue. Through a systematic analysis of both durable cease-fires and those that proved failures, this book aims to contribute not only to international relations theory, but also to practical efforts to restore lasting peace to war-torn regions of the world.

Expected Readership

The book can be expected to appeal to a wide audience of scholars and policy makers. It is written so that not only graduate students and established scholars, but also advanced undergraduates and policy makers will find it accessible. Because it speaks to the broad issue of international conflict and cooperation, it will be of wide interest to the scholarly international relations community and will be useful for general courses on IR, and on cooperation and conflict. Beyond that, it will also appeal to academic scholars, researchers at think-tanks and policy makers working in the burgeoning field of peace-making, peacekeeping, war termination, and conflict resolution. There is increasing interest in these topics within the policy community, and they are also growing in popularity as both undergraduate and policy school courses. Because the book focuses on international agreements, it can be expected to be of interest to international lawyers and law-school students as well.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Chapter 1 A Theory of Agreements and the Durability of Peace

Develops cooperation theory to explain why agreements might be expected to affect the durability of peace. This chapter outlines the obstacles to cooperation, and specific mechanisms that belligerents and others can use to alter incentives, reduce uncertainty, and manage accidents in order to improve the chances for lasting peace. This chapter also discusses the counter argument that strong agreements are merely epiphenomenal.

Chapter 2 Investigating the Durability of Peace

Discusses the evidentiary issues involved in studying why peace lasts or war resumes. Chapter 2 describes the three research methods used in the book: the econometric model and the data set created for the quantitative analysis, the case selection and research methods employed in the in-depth case studies, and the “large-N qualitative” case comparisons used to flesh out the study.

Chapter 3 The Baseline Prospects for Peace

Examines the relationship between situational variables and the durability of peace. This chapter develops and then tests empirically a number of hypotheses about factors that might be expected to shape the baseline prospects for peace. I find five variables to be particularly important: the decisiveness of military victory, the cost of war, belligerents’ history before the war, the stakes of conflict, and whether the fighting states are contiguous. Other factors, relative power, the number of states in the war, measures of states’ “expected utility” for war, and changes in regime type, for example, are less helpful for understanding whether peace will last.

Chapter 4 Agreements: Epiphenomenal or Functional?

Using the findings in Chapter 3 to provide a gauge of the baseline prospects for peace, this chapter addresses the counter-argument that agreements are epiphenomenal or spurious. Despite empirical tests that are biased in favor of the counter-argument, I find surprisingly little evidence that belligerents only reach strong agreements when the prospects for peace are good in any case. If anything, just the opposite is true, parties tend to invest more in keeping peace when it would otherwise be most precarious.

Chapter 5 Agreements and the Durability of Peace

Tests the central hypothesis of the book – that stronger cease-fire agreements yield more stable peace. Taking the baseline prospects for peace into account, I show that the content of agreements does indeed matter in the construction of durable peace. All else equal, peace lasts longer when stronger agreements are in place.

Chapter 6 Peace Mechanisms: What works and What Doesn’t?

Focuses on specific measures and their empirical effectiveness in maintaining peace. This chapter shows that some measures are more important than others for maintaining peace. Demilitarized zones are particularly effective, for example, but arms control measures are not. Explicit guarantees of peace by outsiders help. Peacekeeping and monitoring by the international community can be very effective, but once a peacekeeping mission is discredited by the outbreak of another war (as in South Asia, for example) it becomes completely ineffectual. Joint commissions set up to resolve disputes as they arise also help belligerents maintain peace.

Conclusion