



CHAPTER 2

The Need for Prevention in an Interdependent World

The changing profile of violent conflict in the world today is not taking place in isolation. This chapter explores how the trend of violence without borders has emerged in a global context where the balance of geopolitical power is in flux and transnational factors like advances in information and communication technology (ICT), population movements, and climate change create risks and opportunities to be managed at multiple levels.¹ It highlights the centrality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as an organizing template for prevention and examines patterns of governance, pressures at all levels for more inclusive forms of political organization, and changing economic structures. It also reviews the complexity of these global trends that form the landscape against which states and other actors navigate change in pursuit of sustainable peace.

The international system designed to save the world from “the scourge of war” at the conclusion of World War II were formed in the context of still-pressing threats and dark memories of war between nations (UN 1945, 1). The adoption of global norms and values, including those pertaining to human rights, further embodied the collective commitment to managing problems through international governance institutions. As noted in chapter 1, those systems and norms are being called on to respond to a resurgence of violent conflict that is testing the postwar order.

The geopolitical balance in the world is shifting. The rise of new global powers affects not only political and economic equilibriums but also peace efforts (Call and de Coning 2017). Rising tensions among great powers affect the multilateral system at its core, most notably in the United Nations (UN) Security Council, and increasingly tend to spill over into proxy wars. Proxy wars, moreover, are not the exclusive purview of traditional or emerging great powers. A multipolar international system is consolidating, where regional powers easily find room to pursue their own strategic interests independently.

A push for political inclusion is clearly visible within nations as well as in the international system. The number of societies that have adopted more inclusive forms of political and economic governance over the last 30 years has grown rapidly. Inclusive societies, this study argues, are better equipped to develop the incentives that give momentum to prevention and to peace. However, the transition toward inclusion can itself increase the risks of violence, at least in the short term, if not handled carefully. As chapters 4 and 5 discuss in more detail, this transition can open space for new contestation among groups demanding or resenting a change in their relative status.

The shifts in the international balance of power are taking place against a

backdrop of changes in the way people and societies operate and interact. Rapid advances in ICT present opportunities for innovation, growth, and the unfettered exchange of ideas and inclusive narratives. But these advances have negative aspects too. Interconnectivity enables transnational organized crime to flourish, allows the rapid transmission of violent ideologies, and leaves economies vulnerable to cybercrime. Climate change, mass movements of people, and the unmet expectations of a growing population of young people in low- and middle-income countries also present risks that challenge governments on all levels. The ability of global systems to distribute the opportunities equitably and to manage the risks that accompany these rapid changes is increasingly in question.

Changes in the global landscape as well as within societies have major implications for the prevention of violent conflict. Prevention, as elaborated throughout this study and in line with the joint UN Sustaining Peace Resolutions (UNSC 2016; UN General Assembly 2016), is a process aimed at minimizing incentives for violence, while boosting incentives for peace. In such a process, actors continually adjust to changes in the local landscape and beyond in ways that solidify social cohesion and ultimately peace. Countries and the international community urgently need to leverage global trends and better manage the associated risks, building on new and existing approaches that enhance collaboration, inclusiveness, and conflict prevention.

An International System in Search of a New Equilibrium

A Transition in the World Order

The framework of multilateralism, international law, and treaties dedicated to managing peace and security has weathered many storms over the past 70 years, and global institutions continue to adapt to new challenges. The global balance of power and the environment in which global institutions operate are also shifting.

It is widely argued that a transition to a multipolar world is underway (Guterres 2017), with new centers of political, economic, and military power emerging. Today, growing economic power for emerging economies and the achievement by many countries of middle-income status bring demands for the redistribution of global political influence. Pressure to redraw normative boundaries in key areas of international law (such as human rights or the status of women) is mounting. Many countries seek to renegotiate power sharing in multilateral forums, such as the UN and international financial institutions (Griffin, forthcoming; Haass 2017). The pressure for greater inclusion and wider representation in global governance is marked by the emergence of informal and more flexible forums such as the G-20, which facilitates economic and financial cooperation among countries representing more than 80 percent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and almost two-thirds of the world's population.²

The growing need for flexible instruments is also apparent when it comes to preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace. On the one hand, the United Nations remains the pivotal institution in this sector. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not only confirms that sustainable development is the overarching goal in its own right, but also provides a universal framework for addressing the root causes of conflict, recognizing the deep complexity and interconnectedness on the path to peace and progress.

On the other hand, regional organizations play an increasingly central role in preventing conflict (Verjee 2017).³ As violent conflict has evolved, with a decline in wars between states and a sharp increase in intrastate conflicts, some regional organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa are taking a distinctive, more active role in ensuring peace and security in their neighborhoods. Even when their initial purpose was to foster economic integration and trade links, as in the case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), some of these organizations have become the

lynchpin of stability and security in their regions, working also in the field of conflict prevention, resolution, and peace-keeping. Regional responses to the risk of violent conflict, however, have been uneven in their ability to sustain peace. Furthermore, regional competition can fuel unilateral action, prolonging and aggravating conflicts and weakening the capacity of regional organizations to play a role in preventing violent conflicts.

The international law on conflict has evolved as well, becoming increasingly sophisticated (see box 7.2). Commitment to prevention has also been renewed, including at the 2005 World Summit. The United Nations and its partners have built consensus around challenging issues, producing major international agreements such as the 2015 Paris Accord on Climate Change. A series of high-level reports have consistently recognized the need for a stronger focus on prevention. This analytical effort has been consolidated into important resolutions, including the twin Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on sustaining peace (UN General Assembly 2016; UNSC 2016).

Global Drive for More Inclusive Societies

Some states are becoming progressively more open to sharing power and including citizens in political participation. This has been happening in extended waves since the eighteenth century and continues today. A new wave began in the 1970s and broadened after the end of the Cold War with a strong increase in the number of countries with more democratic forms of government (Strand et al. 2012). The number of states with democratic forms of government grew from 45 among 150 states in 1974 to 121 among 193 states in 2003 (Menocal, Fritz, and Rakner 2007).

The 2015 Global Attitudes Survey finds support for democratic values in countries across all regions, although the support varies. Large majorities tend to value religious freedom and an impartial judicial system, while smaller majorities tend to support multiparty elections, free speech, and censorship-free media (Pew Research

Center 2015). The World Values Survey, a global survey of basic values and beliefs, similarly concludes, “Democracy has an overwhelming positive image throughout the world” (Freedom House 2004, 5) and has become, over the last decade, “virtually the only political model with global appeal, no matter what the culture” (Freedom House 2004, 5). The sixth round of the World Values Survey, which collected data from 2010 to 2014, finds that on average people ranked living in a democratically governed country as “highly important,” with the lowest average of the distribution being 6.4 out of 10 (World Values Survey Association 2014).

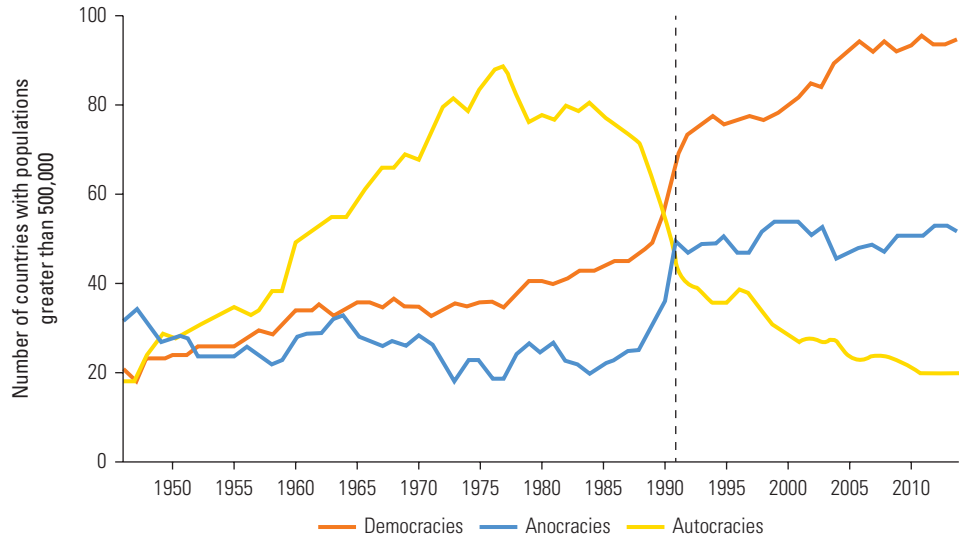
This recent push for more inclusive politics has been driven partly by the availability of social media and communication tools. The growth in interconnectivity and transparency in the world has opened windows, showing people how others live, raising awareness of global inequality, and providing a platform for expression. These tools have been important factors in many political transformations, coming more from the middle class and educated youth than from the poor or marginalized (Devarajan and Ianchovichina 2017).

While this push for more inclusive and transparent government is a positive sign for long-term, sustainable peace (Doyle 1986; Russett 1993; Tomz and Weeks 2013) and has occurred peacefully in many countries, it also carries increased risk. Chapters 4 and 5 explore in more detail some of these risks and opportunities and their implications for prevention.

Data from the Polity IV project (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2015) clearly illustrate changing trends in national governance (see figure 2.1) and the risk of instability associated with political systems with varying degrees of openness (see figure 2.2). As figure 2.1 shows,

- The number of autocracies across the world has been declining since 1984.
- The number of democracies has increased since 1980.
- Many countries can be defined as anocracies, meaning that they are either highly imperfect democracies or

FIGURE 2.1 Global Trends in Governance, 1946–2008



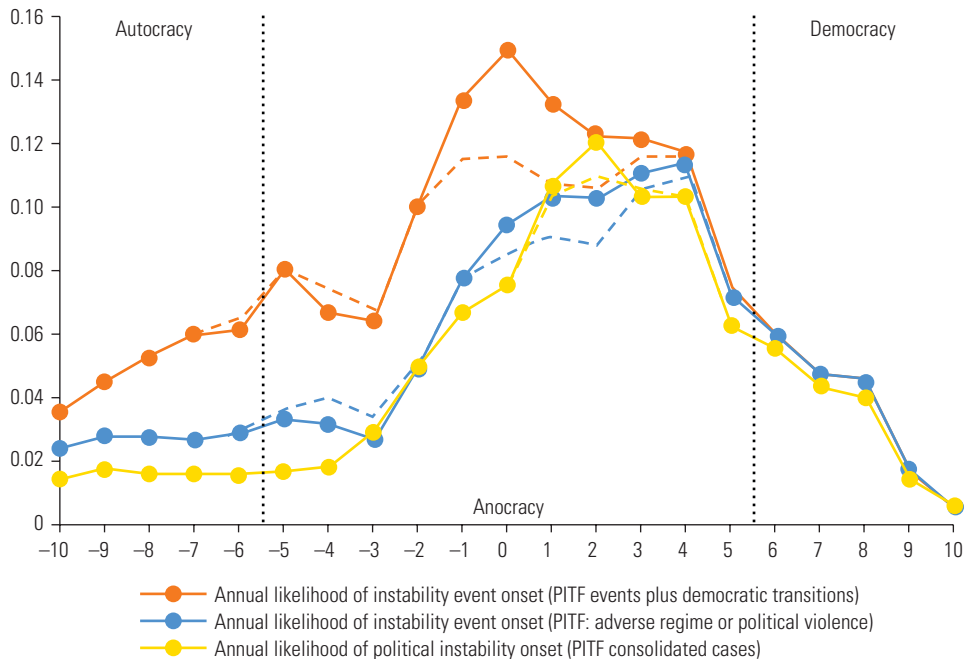
Source: Center for Systemic Peace 2014.

hybrid regimes. As countries that are transitioning or stationed between one mode of governance and another, anocracies present situations where “odd combinations of democratic and autocratic

authority patterns could be observed” (Center for Systemic Peace 2014).

Figure 2.2 illustrates the annual likelihood of political instability (y-axis) plotted

FIGURE 2.2 Polity and the Onset of Political Instability, 1955–2006



Source: Center for Systemic Peace 2014.

Note: PITF = Political Instability Task Force.

against the polity scores of 167 independent countries.⁴ The five categories of instability events are adverse regime change, revolutionary war, ethnic war, genocide or politicide, and major democratic transition (PITF and Center for Systemic Peace 2014). The figure plots the annual likelihood for the following:

- Onset of any of these five categories
- Onset of all categories excluding major democratic transition
- A period of political instability or “consolidated cases.”

Across all plots, “anocracies have the greatest risk of instability, while autocracies and unconsolidated democracies have a lesser, yet still substantial, risk” (Center for Systemic Peace 2014). The rising number of anocracies and the high degree of instability associated with periods of anocracy have important implications for prevention, in that they intensify the risk of conflict that might escalate to violence.

Political transitions can be bidirectional. Freedom House suggests that in 2016, scores for freedom declined in 67 countries but rose in 36 and that 2016 was the eleventh consecutive year in which declines in freedom outnumbered improvements (Puddington and Roylance 2017). Most striking is that, as opposed to earlier years, established democracies⁵—not autocracies or dictatorships—dominated the list of countries suffering setbacks as measured by the Freedom House rankings (Freedom House 2017). This alludes to the fact that democracies are not homogenous and that issues like inequality are on the rise even in democratic systems.

Changing Economic Structures

The global economy has grown substantially since the end of World War II. Global GDP growth has been associated with increasing trade openness and poverty reduction. Between 1990 and 2014, for instance, the share of world GDP encompassing international trade grew from US\$3.5 trillion to US\$18.9 trillion. The correlation between trade openness and per

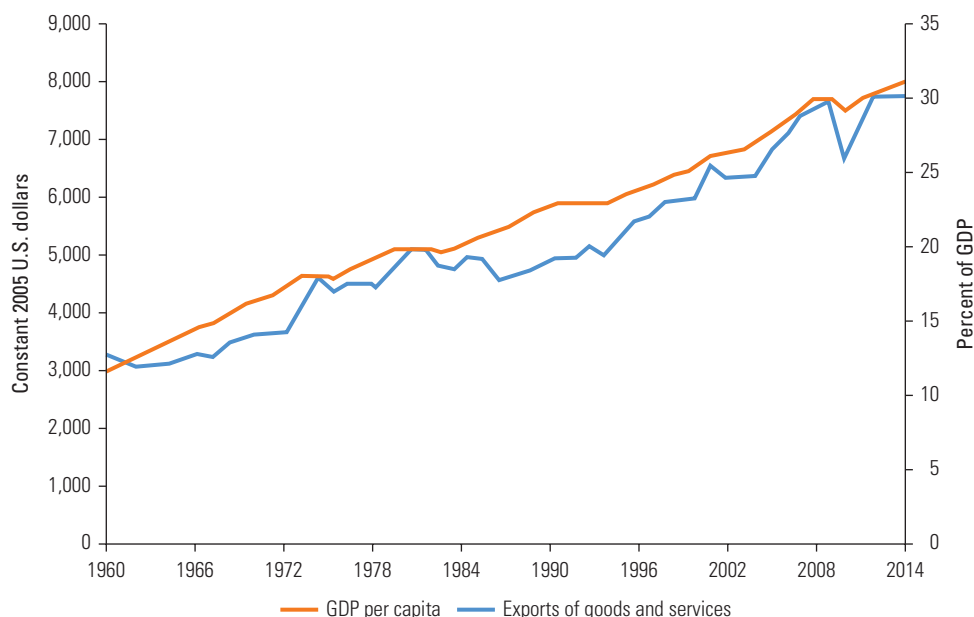
capita GDP growth at the global level is firmly established (see figure 2.3).

While trade and technology have provided “ladders” for rapid growth, individual countries’ ability to benefit fully from advances in trade and technology critically depends on their own characteristics (Bartley Johns et al. 2015). Trade and technology have acted in a complementary way, in large part due to several technological and logistical advances that have improved mobility, communications, and financial systems, such as containerization and information technology.

There are also fewer barriers to global trade and finance. Trade agreements and trade and financial deepening have multiplied in tandem, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) playing an important role in advocating and managing an inclusive global trading system and setting the “rules of the game” for regional trade agreements. Overall, trade dynamics since 1990 have been one of the contributors to the historic improvement in living standards across the world and to a reduction in the share of the world population living in extreme poverty (below \$1.90 a day, in 2011 dollars at purchasing power parity) from 35 percent in 1990 to around 11 percent in 2013 (Ferreira, Joliffe, and Prydz 2015).

The global economy, nonetheless, continues to face many challenges. While global trade has grown, growth has not been evenly spread. Rather, trade growth has been marked by downturns and a prolonged period of only modest improvement since the global financial crisis of 2007, falling, for the fifth consecutive year, below 3 percent in 2016. These values are well below the average of 7 percent for 1987–2007. Although the volume of global trade has increased, the value of global trade has fallen as a result of shifting exchange rates and lower commodity prices (WTO 2017). Meanwhile, foreign direct investment (FDI) to developing countries, which has been empirically found to contribute to higher wages, productivity, and employment, has also been decreasing since 2011 (United Nations 2017a), adversely affecting growth and productivity (Hale and Xu 2016).

FIGURE 2.3 Global Gross Domestic Product per Capita and World Exports, 1960–2014



Sources: World Bank Group and World Trade Organization 2015; data from World Bank, *World Development Indicators*.
Note: GDP = gross domestic product.

From 2015 to 2016, global FDI flows decreased by 7 percent to US\$1.625 billion and stayed below their precrisis peak, representing approximately 2.2 percent of global GDP compared with 3.6 percent in 2007 (OECD 2017; see figure 2.4).

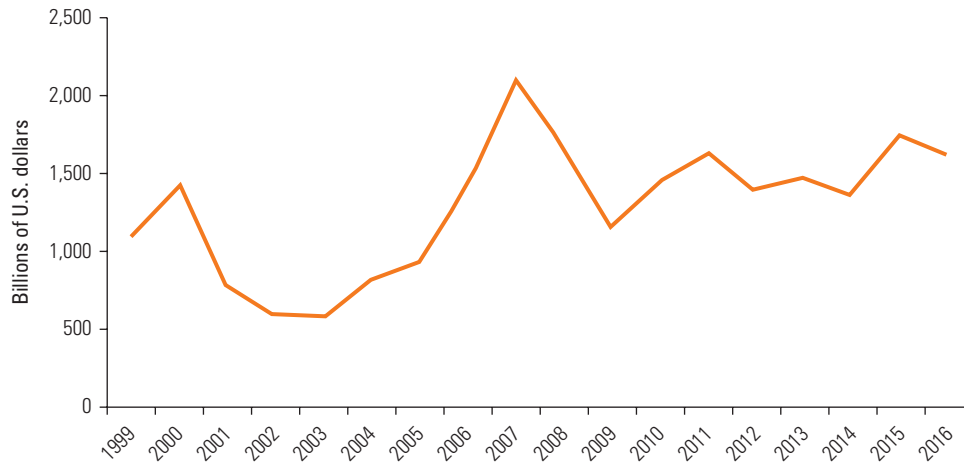
These trends and others create additional challenges for development. For example, the reduction in the incidence of extreme poverty since 1981 has relied heavily on the strong and rapid growth of the global economy. But given the current slow pace of global economic growth and the potential for this trend to persist, many countries face issues in sustaining poverty reduction at the same rhythm as in previous decades. This trend may jeopardize progress toward attainment of the SDGs (SDG 1), calling on the international community to intensify its efforts to combat extreme poverty.

Despite the fact that inequality between countries has decreased globally, inequality within countries remains high (World Bank 2016b) because economic

interdependence and globalization have increased without equal distribution of the gains. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 10) identifies the reduction of inequality, both within countries as well as globally, as a priority of the international community (UN 2015). Recent analysis by the International Monetary Fund shows that the labor share of income has been on a downward trend in high-income economies since the 1980s and in low- and middle-income countries since the early 1990s (IMF 2017).⁶ This decline in the labor share of income has been associated with an increase in income inequality in many parts of the world. In addition, unemployment rates remain high in many regions, especially in those with high populations of youth.

Challenges to reducing in-country inequality include technological change, such as the increase in automation and routinization of tasks. Although technological progress and the globalization of trade and capital have contributed strongly to overall

FIGURE 2.4 Global Flows of Foreign Direct Investment, 1999–2016



Source: Data from OECD, International Direct Investment Statistics database.

global growth and prosperity as well as to income convergence in low- and middle-income countries, they have had disproportionate and asymmetric impacts across countries, industries, and workers of different skill groups. Moreover, technological change happens quickly, requiring fast adaptation on the part of industries and people to new markets and jobs. The speed of change leads many to believe that technological change, including automation shifts, is, in the long term, “the most important force shaping the labor market and income inequality” (Hallward-Driemeier and Nayyar 2017).

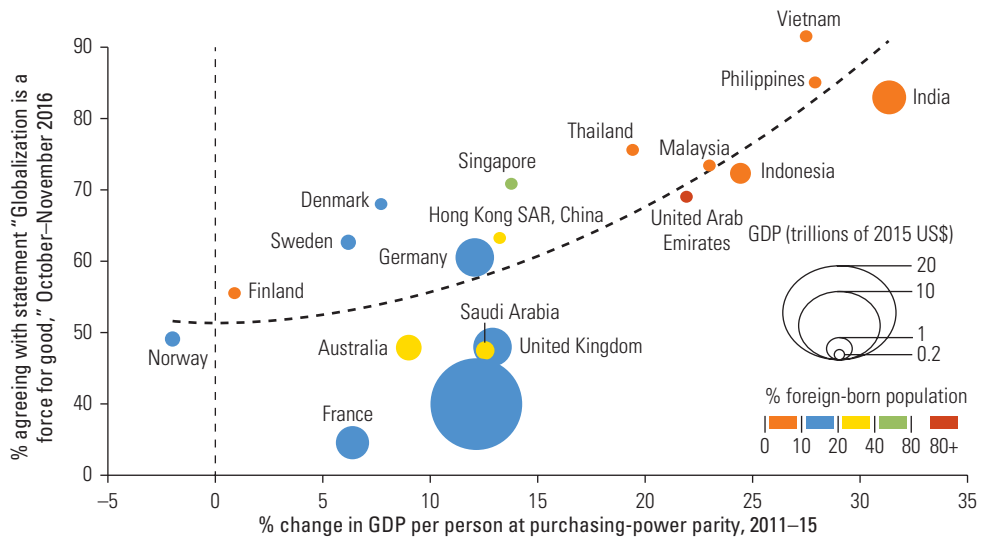
While all of these recent trends pose challenges, they do not directly affect violent conflict. Instead, they put additional stresses on systems and people and can increase the tendency for groups to mobilize to address perceived grievances, which can culminate in violence. In a world where interconnectivity is stronger than ever and transparency is possible through an ever-increasing number of ICT platforms, in most societies the growth of the global economy has generated greater expectations and aspirations for the future. When these expectations and aspirations are unmet, because of the weak capacity of

governments to provide for their constituents, the inability of labor markets to provide jobs, or the uneven distribution of global wealth, frustration and tensions associated with job creation, employment, and wages can rise (Piketty 2013).

It is at this moment that the threat of protectionism weighs heavily. Rising uncertainty about receiving one’s fair share of national or global wealth and being able to achieve individual aspirations has led to mixed feelings regarding the benefits of globalization. A poll of 19 countries shows that globalization is met with increasing skepticism, with mixed views on immigration and trade (see figure 2.5). While enthusiasm for economic globalization is high among people from lower- and middle-income countries that are experiencing higher growth rates, people from high-income countries with modest growth are far more apprehensive (Pew Research Center 2007).

Thus, while changing economic structures and the reduction of the role of labor as an economic factor of production in the postindustrial age are not a direct cause of violent conflict, they generate stress while systems and people adapt. The problem is particularly complex in low- and lower-middle-income countries that have only

FIGURE 2.5 Attitudes toward Globalization and Change in Gross Domestic Product per Person, Selected Countries, 2011–15



Source: Economist 2016b.
Note: GDP = gross domestic product.

partially gone through an industrial transition and that have a labor force with low skills. These countries now face the question of whether a path of convergence to higher income levels through manufacturing is viable. In turn, these countries place immense pressure on job creation and employment, and many people are not able to acquire skills for the higher-quality jobs that are being generated (such as in modern services).

Such adjustments would likely require countries to work together at global and local levels to ensure that their capacities are leveraged to realign jobs and reskill workers and to provide training for different tasks and skills that complement jobs for which machines are substitutes (Hallward-Driemeier and Nayyar 2017; Economist 2016a). Addressing changing economic structures and associated inequality through global collaboration can also support attitude changes toward an integrated global economy. As with previous waves of technological change, however, automation and related technologies enhance overall productivity growth and therefore increase

the resources available to redistribute to groups adversely affected by technological change. Key elements of the social safety net and distributive policies such as unemployment insurance and progressive taxation therefore remain integral to mitigating the social conflict arising from these potential changes.

Risk and Opportunity in an Increasingly Connected World

Against this backdrop of geopolitical flux and the charged movement regarding inclusive governance, some new and fast-evolving trends are altering the environment that international and domestic actors must negotiate. Many of these transnational processes will pose risks to individual societies and the institutions in place. But, if well managed, they will also create opportunities for greater inclusion and peace. Collective and collaborative action is needed by all countries to address these trends in the interest of preventing violent conflict.

Challenges of the Revolution in Information and Communication Technology

Societies have transformed over centuries with the help of technology, but the unprecedented pace and reach of technological innovation in recent decades make this phenomenon a defining global trend. Technological advancements in food and water security, health, education, climate action, disaster response, and economies have saved lives and helped to lift many people out of poverty. Their role as an important means for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals has been underscored in the 2030 Agenda. Their potential for advancing peace has been widely recognized by the global community.

Fast-moving advancements in ICT, however, also have problematic consequences. While more people are connected to ICT than ever before—with an estimated 3.2 billion now using the Internet (ITU 2015)—access remains uneven, exacerbating tensions related to exclusion (World Economic Forum 2015). ICT tools for monitoring and managing conflict such as early-warning systems and crowdsourcing technologies can improve the flow of information and, in some ways, facilitate direct communication between state and society. Similarly, new ICT tools, like social media, offer new platforms for expressing grievances and finding common ground or potentially channeling those grievances toward violence (Mor, Ron, and Maoz 2016). By lowering the cost of collective action, advances in ICT enable armed groups, and violent extremist groups in particular, to recruit globally on an unprecedented scale (Smith, Burke, and de Leieun 2015).

The Digital Divide

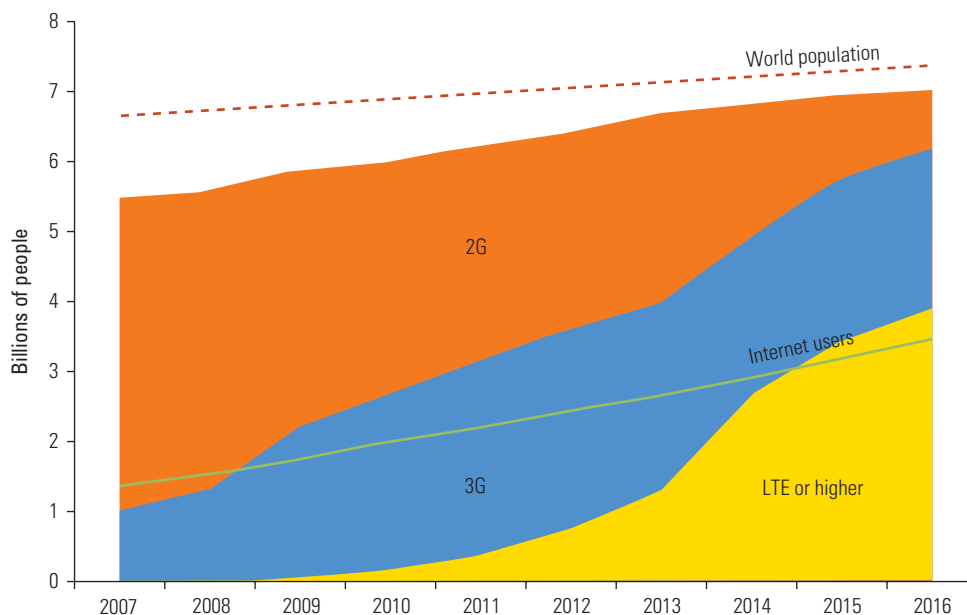
Technology has increased global interconnectivity and access to opportunities that improve well-being. There has been a massive increase in the number of mobile devices with cameras, mobile network coverage, and quantity of data available from so-called “smart” technologies

(Pew Research Center 2017). Mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide jumped from less than 1 billion in 2000 to more than 7 billion in 2016 (ITU 2015). By 2020, it is projected that 70 percent of the world’s population, or 5.5 billion people, will be using mobile technology (CISCO 2017). With the advent of Web 2.0, social media platforms, and other ICT tools, the number of people using the Internet globally has risen steeply (figure 2.6).

Nevertheless, 3.9 billion people in low- and middle-income countries, equivalent to 53 percent of the world’s population, are not connected (see map 2.1). The penetration rate in the poorest countries is only 9.5 percent, or 89 million out of 940 million people (ITU 2015). ICT use continues to vary among men and women: Internet penetration rates are higher among men than women in all regions of the world, with the gender gap in global Internet use rising from 11 to 12 percent from 2013 to 2016 (ITU 2016). In many contexts, the unconnected are often the poor and excluded. Data that show income levels as a critical barrier to Internet access also point to the fact that countries with low GDP per capita often have low Internet penetration. For example, Internet penetration is five times lower in India than in Europe (Deloitte 2014). Additionally, many people are unable to access or use available ICTs because electricity is minimal or absent or because they lack technological literacy. This digital divide cuts people off from the potential cross-cultural exchange and discourse that come with increasing interconnectivity.

Internet penetration has direct implications for economic progress. Every 10 percent increase in broadband penetration in low- and middle-income countries is estimated to have a 1.38 percent increase in GDP (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016). The digital divide can aggravate exclusion and inequality, since “some segments of the population may be exposed differently than others to labor market shifts induced by technological innovation, which can aggravate inequalities across groups with different skill levels. In the absence of close monitoring, ICTs could contribute to inequality, thus

FIGURE 2.6 Global Mobile Network Coverage, 2007–16

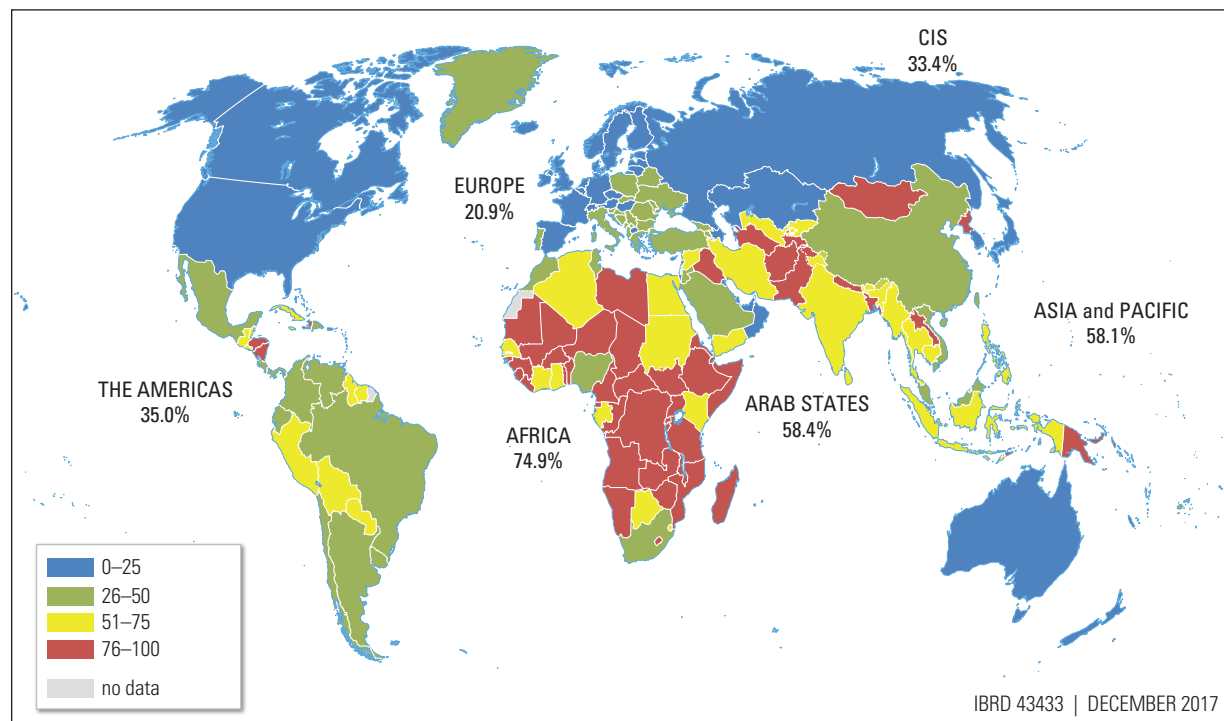


Source: UNITU 2016.

Note: 2016 data are estimates. "Mobile network coverage" refers to population covered by a mobile network.

LTE = long-term evolution.

MAP 2.1 Percentage of Individuals Not Using the Internet, by World Region



Source: UNITU 2016.

Note: CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States.

exacerbating tensions rather than mitigating them” (World Economic Forum 2015).

The Potential Role of ICT in Peacebuilding

The international community and the multilateral system increasingly recognize the role of ICT in preventing violent conflict. The 2005 Tunis Commitment, a statement from the World Summit on the Information Society (2005), highlights ICTs as “effective tools to promote peace, security, and stability and to enhance democracy, social cohesion, good governance, and the rule of law, at national, regional, and international levels.” In addition, it argues that ICTs can and should be used for multiple purposes along the conflict prevention arc, including identifying conflict situations through early-warning systems, preventing conflicts, promoting peaceful resolution, and assisting postconflict peacebuilding and reconstruction (see box 2.1).

Indeed, early-warning systems are useful for collecting data, analyzing risk, and providing information with recommendations to targeted stakeholders on the escalation and potential occurrence of violent conflict. Greater capacity to mine and manage big data provides opportunities to improve conflict analysis as well as to test the effectiveness of early-warning systems and refine program selection, design, and implementation accordingly. Geographic information systems, crisis mapping, and crowdsourcing are just some of the tools that can generate data to identify risk and patterns of conflict and violence. Techniques like crowdsourcing also can promote inclusion and transparency regarding decision-making processes and enable citizens to “better assess their outcomes, indirectly increasing their legitimacy” (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016). Many nongovernmental and civil society organizations, such as those that tracked postelection violence in

BOX 2.1 Examples of New Technologies Assessing Violent Conflict Risks

Information and communication technologies (ICT) and the data they generate can support efforts to prevent crisis and tackle the causes of violence using cell phones and tablets, social media, crowdsourcing and crowd seeding, crisis mapping, blogging, and big data analytics. ICT help collect quantitative and qualitative data more frequently in remote areas, through digital surveys, SMS-administered polling, geo-spatial mapping, photographs, videos, and satellite imagery.

For instance, in Sudan and South Sudan, the Crisis and Recovery Mapping and Analysis project (CRMA) undertook participatory mapping of threats and risks. For that purpose, UNDP developed a GIS-enabled desktop database tool, and used geo-referenced analysis to work with state governments, as well as national security, development, and informal actors to identify preemptive interventions based on perceptions of

risk and tension after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. During the 2015 elections in Nigeria, a team used Artificial Intelligence for Monitoring Elections (AIME), a free and open source solution that combines crowdsourcing with Artificial Intelligence to automatically identify tweets of interest during major elections. Crowdsourcing systems such as Ushahidi have the potential to be used in early warning if the system is designed to produce consistent and complete data frequently.

Technologies have also changed the way people respond to crisis. Following the 2010 Haiti earthquake, for the first time, thousands of people volunteered online to support rescue operations. This has given rise to “Digital Humanitarians,” who, through crowdsourcing, created a digital crisis map that showed the real-time evolution of the situation on the ground.

Sources: Blattman 2014; Letouzé 2012a, 2012b; Letouzé, Meier, and Vinck 2013; Mancini 2013; Meier 2013, 2015; Morel 2016; Scharbatke-Church and Patel 2016; and Puig Larrauri 2013.

Kenya in 2008, use these technologies (World Economic Forum 2016).

Recent analyses of the application of ICT to peacebuilding and peacekeeping highlight the examples of Kenya's violence prevention network, Uganda's election monitoring, Sudan's low-tech adaptations for community communications, and Cyprus's civil society empowerment to illustrate that "ICTs can facilitate peace, not because they directly empower the local over the national and international, or the marginalized over the elites, but because they can be used for the mobilization of grassroots actors, which may affect peacebuilding's balances of power" (Telledis 2016, 80). Participatory peacekeeping is another example that enables local residents to share their observations, alerts, and insights. This process helps to foster confidence and trust between peacekeepers and local populations (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016).

ICT as a Means to Achieve the Unfiltered Exchanges of Views

Tools like social media can mitigate the risk of violent conflict through online platforms for dialogue and conciliation (Mor, Ron, and Maoz 2016). A study of Israelis and Palestinians using the Facebook platform showed that Facebook posts emphasizing moderate Palestinian voices promoting peace elicited higher sympathy and acceptance (Mor, Ron, and Maoz 2016). Social media can encourage and enable back and forth communications among people, differentiating them from traditional media communications and mass media outreach that are typically one way and susceptible to power control. Social media are a means, therefore, to mobilize people collectively to nonviolent or violent action. Social media messaging services like Twitter also can serve as outlets for people to express their views and discontent peacefully, by providing access to larger networks and freedom to speak or associate (Davison 2015). They can present an opportunity for whistleblowing on corrupt, unethical, or other practices contrary to the public interest. However, they potentially also can constitute a harmful instrument for spoilers

seeking to procure and disclose communications selectively for divisive purposes. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss in greater detail collective mobilization in terms of the risk and prevention of violent conflict.

ICT and the Risk of Violence

ICTs can put inequalities into sharp relief and create a space for inciting violence. Recent research on the effect of ICTs on violence indicates that the most important impact is through collective action (Weidmann 2015). But traditional media can play significant roles as well. In the Rwandan genocide, approximately 10 percent of the participation in the violence was attributed to the effects of radio broadcasts (Boggero 2017; Yanagizawa-Drott 2014). Mobile long-distance communication also changes the way information flows, with varying effects on violent activity (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013). For example, one analysis finds that the diffusion of cell phones affected the propensity for political violence in Iraq, where the location of cell phone towers was negatively associated with violence (Shapiro and Weidmann 2015); another shows that the availability of cell phones substantially increased the probability of violent conflict and can amplify the effect of economic downturns on political mobilization (Manacorda and Tesai 2016).

ICT and the Reach of Violent Extremist Groups

It is broadly recognized that violent extremist ideologies have harnessed the "technological revolution," adversely affecting international, regional, and state stability (Boggero 2017). Social media have played multiple roles in violent extremism (Smith, Burke, and de Leieun 2015), including allowing violent extremist groups to use the online space to coordinate group behavior on a large scale and catalyze grassroots action from anywhere in the world (Veilleux-Lepage 2015). Groups, including but not limited to violent extremist groups, can use social media platforms to mobilize support among persons whose grievances and anxieties about the future have already reached or are close

to reaching a critical level. Excluded identity groups and youth are prime targets (Allan et al. 2015; Crenshaw 1981; Fjelde and Østby 2014; Miodownik and Nir 2016; Ross 1993). Logistically, technology platforms are used for data mining, networking, recruiting, mobilization, instruction, planning, and fundraising, among others.

The Cyber Security Threat

Overall, the systemic challenges posed by ICT suggest that action is needed at national, regional, and global levels. International collaboration is needed on issues such as governing cyberspace and addressing cybercrime (see box 2.2), as well as providing international support to countries that are not able to afford equitable access to these technologies.

The answer is not to restrict the use of ICT. Instead, countries could ensure that mechanisms for equitable access are in place at the local level, in line with the SDGs, and that strong normative frameworks for the prevention of cyber security threats exist. This may entail enforcement of existing norms or creation of new norms where needed (G7 2017).

Additionally, they should ensure that technology is leveraged in the many ways that it can be for building peace, addressing risks of conflict, and communicating narratives that create incentives for peace rather than violence. This will allow societies to realize the potential of ICT as an instrument for sustaining peace and mitigate the risks of violent conflict that are too often easily exploited. Indeed, navigating

BOX 2.2 Cyberspace, the Fifth Domain of Warfare

Cyber insecurity is a new threat to stability. The increased use of cyberspace as a domain for hostilities has been increasingly apparent (Singer and Friedman 2014), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has declared it the fifth domain of warfare. Research suggests, “As the barriers to entry in the cyber domain are low, cyberspace includes many and varied actors—from criminal hackers to terrorist networks to governments engaged in cyber espionage” (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016). Moreover, cybercrime and cyberattacks can “undermine the safety of Internet users, disrupt economic and commercial activity, and threaten military effectiveness” (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016).

Many have argued for a treaty addressing cyber security that is more comprehensive than those that govern nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. In 2001, the Budapest Convention—or Convention on Cybercrime—required “parties to harmonize domestic criminal legislation and promote international collaboration

in addressing transnational cybercrime” (Council of Europe 2001). However, the UN Working Group on Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes has concluded thus far that cyber terrorism is “not yet a threat serious enough to warrant separate legislation” (Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2016).

Privacy rights play a prominent role in developing legal frameworks around cyber security. Big data can be a severe risk not just to privacy but also to individual security. This is a critical area for attention, as privacy in conflict-affected areas can be a question of life or death. What constitutes a cybercrime and how existing international law is to be applied are heated elements of this debate. Some initiatives have aimed to provide clarity in this matter, resulting in an emerging consensus that international law, and specifically the UN charter, is applicable to cyberspace. These include a report by the Group of Governmental Experts^a as well as the Tallinn Manual created by the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence.

^aThe third Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

change by fostering inclusiveness and, thus, social cohesion is the essence of prevention, as this study argues throughout.

Demographic Change and Populations on the Move

Population Growth, Youth, and Aging

Demographic shifts may create new stresses on global and national systems that carry implications for prevention. The good news is that more than 1 billion people exited extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015, even as the world's population increased by 2 billion (UNDP 2017). Looking ahead, half of the world's population growth during 2015–50 is expected to be concentrated in just nine countries, including several conflict-affected countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria (UNDESA 2015b). The shift is already striking in some areas. One of the fastest-growing areas in the world, for example, is the Sahel in Africa, which is also one of the most challenged because of the direct impact of climate change, violent extremism, and illegal trafficking (World Bank 2014).

Already there are more young people in the world than at any other time in history—1.8 billion people between the ages of 10 and 24—and the vast majority of young people live in low- and middle-income countries (UNDESA 2015b). In Africa, 60 percent of the population is under the age of 25 (UNDESA 2015a), compared with around 40 percent in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDESA 2015c).

Populations are also aging in parallel with this population growth: 12 percent of the global population is now 60 years or older. Rapidly aging populations create pressures on societies with low fertility rates. Europe has the largest percentage of older persons (24 percent), but by 2050, all regions except for Africa will have around one-quarter or more of their population 60 years of age or older (UNDESA 2015c). Having more old and young people rely on a disproportionately smaller working-age population places a heavy burden on the

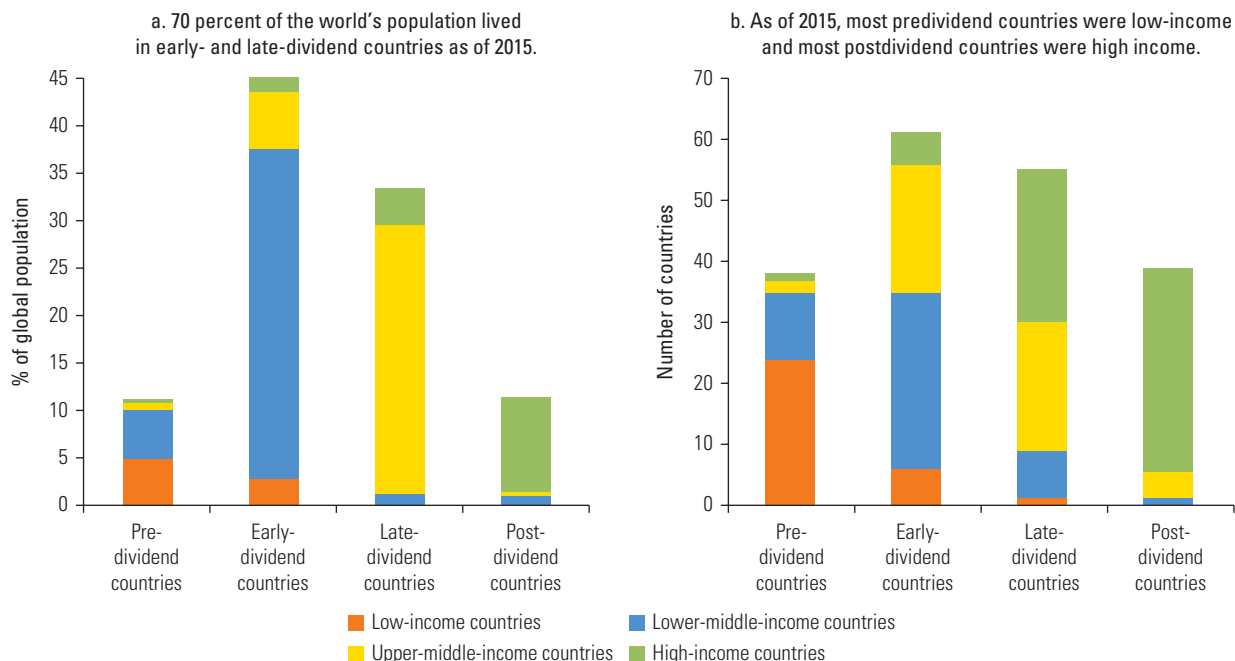
share of the population that is of working age (Griffin, forthcoming). The varying stages of demographic transition are also correlated with the income level of countries (see figure 2.7).

Greater Expectations and Pressures Due to Demographic Shifts

Major demographic shifts are creating potential vulnerabilities and risks. While demographic change in itself does not cause conflict, it can potentially put pressure on systems and societies, increasing the risk for conflict. A large youth population puts huge pressure on education systems to provide decent learning and skills that will allow young people to become more meaningfully engaged and included in their societies. Many countries with high demographic growth are seeing their education system struggle to provide even quality basic education (World Bank 2018). Population growth, while a positive force for economies, also puts pressure on labor markets, which will have to absorb the estimated 600 million new workers entering the markets in the next 10 years (ILO 2016).

Similarly, increasing levels of educational attainment create greater aspirations; compounded with increasing transparency of the world via the ICT revolution, young people are more aware of how others live and succeed. The middle-class dream has become universal. These rising expectations are difficult for many societies to meet, creating the risk that people will grow dissatisfied with the social contract in their country because they have come to expect services and opportunities that are not provided to them. For instance, research on aspirations and well-being in the Middle East shows that many young people, better educated than their parents and previous generations, aspire to meet social and economic milestones like finding a good job after school, getting married, and being socially recognized as important (Devarajan and Ianchovichina 2017). However, they are often unable to do so because of a lagging economy, skills mismatch, and lack of mobility, and so they grow increasingly frustrated (Cammett and Diwan 2013).

FIGURE 2.7 Correlation between Country Income Level and Stage of Demographic Transition, 2015



Source: World Bank and IMF 2016.

Note: See appendix C.5 of World Bank and IMF 2016 for classifications of country groupings.

Addressing these challenges requires not only creating a societal framework that integrates people successfully, but also investing directly in children and youth. Education is key for poverty reduction and sustainable development. It gives individuals access to information and the knowledge to use it. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically SDG 4, makes access to inclusive and equitable quality education a global priority. Furthermore, it promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all, focusing on the need to provide citizens with skills that are valuable and valued on the labor market. Investing in the right skills is particularly critical, as the demands of the labor market are changing rapidly and proving to be a risk for tension. A survey of nine broad industry sectors in 15 economies at various stages of development shows that by 2020 more than a third of the core skills that will be considered essential in most occupations were not yet considered crucial to the job in 2015 (World Economic

Forum 2016). With these challenges in mind, many individuals migrate to other places in search of better socioeconomic opportunities.

Record-Breaking Migration

Migration and the historic movement of people in recent years is a defining trend in today's world (UNDESA 2016). In 2015, there were approximately 250 million international migrants throughout the world (World Bank 2016a), up from 173 million in 2000 (UNDESA 2016), and women constituted 48 percent of the total (World Bank 2016a). Well-managed migration can offer many benefits and is an alternative to enduring the constraints felt by demographic transitions. Migrants contribute to their host countries by filling critical labor shortages, paying taxes and social security contributions, and creating jobs as entrepreneurs. Globally, a vast majority of migrants (72 percent) are of working age (UNDESA 2016). Migration also can contribute to reducing the pace of population aging and, hence, old-age dependency ratios.

Migration can be important for home communities as well. For instance, since 2000 remittances sent to low- and middle-income countries have increased by more than 500 percent, reaching US\$441 billion in 2015 (Dugarova and Gulasan 2017). These funds constitute important sources of foreign exchange earnings and help recipient households to increase consumption, invest in education and health, and support small businesses. In origin countries, emigration can often lead to the loss of valuable human resources such as doctors, nurses, and teachers, but it can also lower unemployment and facilitate trade, investment, and technology transfers. Moreover, some migrants who become successful abroad invest in their home countries, bringing home capital, trade, ideas, skills, and technology (UN 2017b).

In particular, the global community needs to address the challenge presented by rapidly growing younger populations and populations on the move. This requires providing urgent help to countries that have not yet undergone a demographic transition, especially those with scarce resources. Giving children security and the opportunity to receive a quality education is vital and a core element of early conflict prevention. Moreover, migration needs better management, within countries, intraregionally, and internationally. Better management cannot be achieved without the right legal frameworks and processes for migrants, such as the provision of identity cards and papers. Along with improving legislation on asset ownership, such as land and housing (see chapter 5 on land), conflict management systems at the local level need to be strengthened.

While much attention is focused on migration across continents, intraregional migration and rural-urban migration constitute the bulk of the population movements. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, intraregional migration is higher (67 percent) than migration to other regions (World Bank 2016a). Often this migration has beneficial aspects because it brings people closer to resources

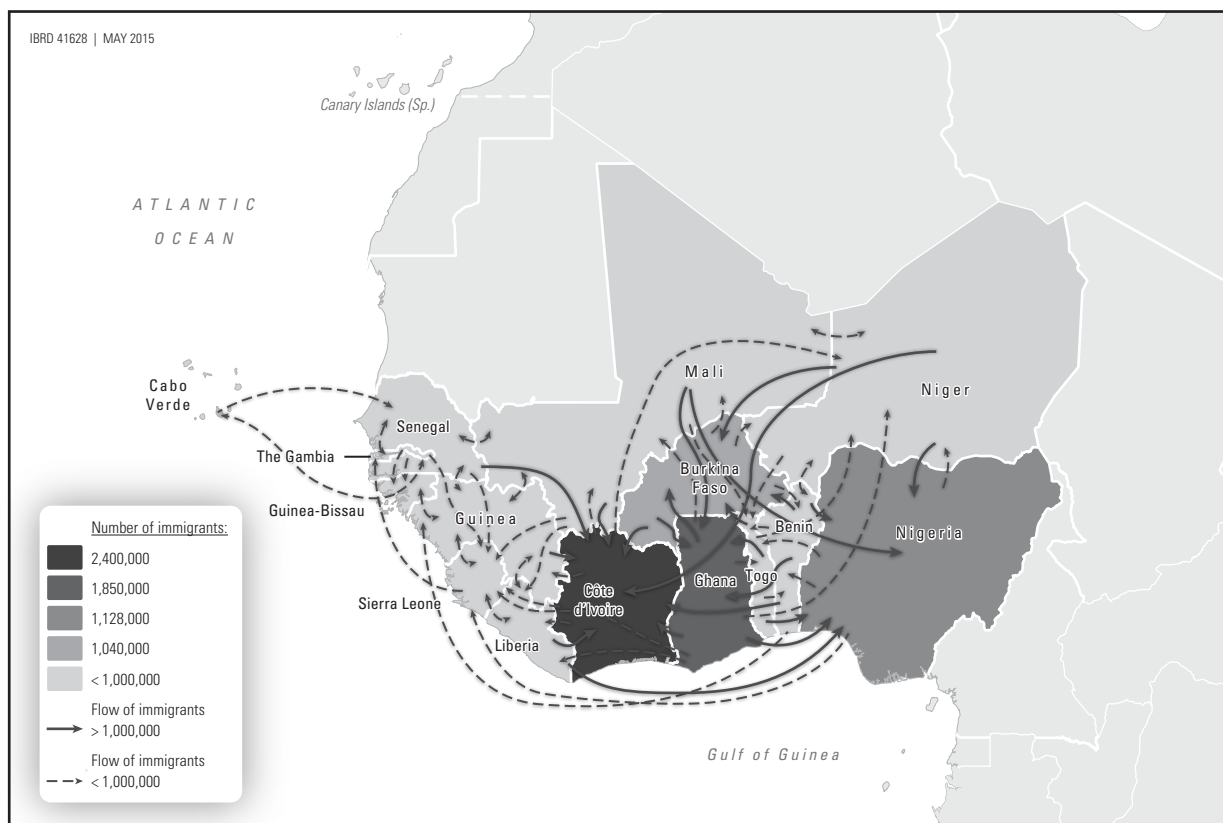
and livelihoods. In West Africa, for instance, where a large amount of intraregional migration takes place among ECOWAS states (see map 2.2), 70 percent of migration is linked to employment (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015).

Intraregional migration can be a source of major tension and can give rise to civil war or severe cases of violence. Growing numbers of people looking for resources and livelihoods can exacerbate tensions across fault lines, as in the conflict in Mindanao, one cause of which is thought to have been the mass migration of Christian populations to ancestral Muslim lands (Parks, Colletta, and Oppenheim 2013), or in Nigeria's Middle Belt, which was caused mostly by nomadic herders searching for water and fodder in areas largely populated by sedentary farmers (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015). In Côte d'Ivoire, conflicts over land management were ignited between migrants from the north of the country as well as from other countries and local communities during and after the civil war (McGovern 2011).

In places like the semiarid regions of northern Kenya and the Sahel region of West Africa (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015), conflicts are endemic between nomadic herders moving southward and farmers in the southern areas. Pastoral and agricultural livelihoods depend on mutually beneficial and negotiated, nonexclusive access to water and reciprocal land use agreements. Conflicts arise when access to water points, grazing lands, and pastoral corridors are restricted and crops are damaged. Increased herd sizes and environmental degradation have increased the frequency and intensity of these conflicts.

Migration also has impacts on the areas left behind. If a large proportion of the working-age population migrates, they often leave behind family members of either younger or older generations. This may create a gap in the labor force and social fabric. Resulting low-density areas may experience challenges with service provision and local governance mechanisms, dynamics that some armed groups could see as an opportunity.

MAP 2.2 Intraregional Migration within the Economic Community of West African States



Source: Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015.

The Flow of Forcibly Displaced Persons

Another major challenge today is the large-scale forced displacement across countries and regions as well as the flow of internally displaced persons (IDPs). As noted in chapter 1, conflict, generalized violence, and persecution are forcibly uprooting people on a large scale. At the end of 2016, 65.6 million individuals were forcibly displaced (UNHCR 2017). These individuals include 40.8 million IDPs, 21.3 million refugees, and 3.2 million asylum seekers (UNHCR 2017).

Low- and middle-income countries host the great majority of forcibly displaced persons: by the end of 2015, these countries hosted 99 percent of IDPs and 89 percent of refugees, including Palestinian refugees

(World Bank 2017). Africa and the Middle East accounted for almost 60 percent of all forcibly displaced persons by the end of 2015 (World Bank 2017). The 10 countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees by the end of 2015⁷ were all low- and middle-income countries, and five of these were in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNHCR 2016).

While these flows can strain the economic resources and capacities of many host countries, including conflict-affected countries, forcibly displaced persons rarely spread conflict to host communities and countries (World Bank 2017). A review of 82 countries that received more than 25,000 refugees for at least a year between 1991 and 2014 finds that about 68 percent of these countries did not experience any conflict (World Bank 2017). In the 32 percent of

hosting countries that did experience conflict, refugees were determined to have a role in causing conflict in only 0.8 percent of cases (World Bank 2017). In addition, the wage and employment effects were small because refugees and natives did not compete for the same jobs. Instead, refugees often have a net positive effect on government budgets (World Bank 2017).

The Trend of Increasing Urbanization

An estimated 66 percent of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2050, up from 54 percent in 2014 (UNDESA 2014). Population growth projections for this period estimate that 2.5 billion people will be added to urban centers, with almost 90 percent of the increase concentrated in Africa and Asia (UNDESA 2014). Between 2014 and 2050, just three countries (China, India, and Nigeria) are expected to account for 37 percent of the growth of the world's urban population (UNDESA 2014).

Rapid urbanization raises an array of risks and challenges. Many armed conflicts are now taking place in cities rather than rural areas, as in many past conflicts. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimates that 50 million people are affected by war in cities around the world (ICRC 2017). The increasing trend of conflict taking place in urban centers, including violent extremism, which can find fertile breeding ground in cities, will have important implications for the risk of violence and the number of civilian casualties that result from conflict.

Still, urbanization offers many opportunities for conflict prevention. Historically, the development of urban centers has helped to facilitate contact across different identity groups, creating a stronger sense of citizenship, building social networks, and stimulating trade and exchange. Social systems have also evolved the fastest in urban centers. Such potential needs to be leveraged for peacebuilding to a much greater extent than it is currently, including through urban planning that, in line with SDG 11, reflects risks in full and identifies factors of increased vulnerability to violence, making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The Stress of Climate Change

The ability of climate change to disrupt societies has become increasingly evident with more extreme weather events, water and soil stress, and food insecurity (National Intelligence Council 2017). Climate change poses immense threats to sustainable development, affecting people through changes in mean conditions such as temperature, precipitation, and sea level (Barnett and Adger 2007) over long periods of time and through greater frequency and severity of extreme weather events (Hallegatte et al. 2016). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 13) commits the international community to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact. In the absence of preventive action, global warming may exceed 4°C by the end of the twenty-first century, facilitating “severe, widespread, and irreversible” impacts on poverty reduction and development (Hallegatte et al. 2016; IPCC 2014, 17; World Bank 2015).

The impacts of climate change cut across both the short and long term. Environmentally, climate change leads to rising sea levels, ocean acidification, melting glaciers and polar ice caps, and increased pollution that affects both animal and human health (National Intelligence Council 2017). Increasing pressure on environmental systems also affects the availability of water and biodiversity, threatening livelihoods and intensifying competition for natural resources such as farm and grazing land. Economically, climate change can affect household consumption by leading to spikes in food prices, decreasing productivity, and eroding financial, physical, human, social, and natural capital assets (Burke, Hsiang, and Edward 2015).

Climate change unevenly affects certain places and people, including fragile and conflict-affected settings. A largely uncontested evidence base indicates that, regardless of the exact nature and magnitude of change, climate change has a disproportionate impact on poor and vulnerable countries and communities (Nordas and Gleditsch 2007). This is especially true for people who are more dependent on natural

resources for their livelihoods and jobs and who cannot easily adapt to fluctuations in their supply. For example, a decline in precipitation can be dangerous for people around the world already working at subsistence levels. In Timor Leste, 85 percent of the population relies on agriculture as the main source of income, with most of the population being subsistence farmers (Barnett and Adger 2007). A lack of rainfall in the dry season can reduce crop production by up to one-third, increasing the risk for pervasive hunger and famine as well as migration and competition for resources (Barnett and Adger 2007).

Climate change increases the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, thus increasing the risk of complex crises and human insecurity (USAID 2014). It may reduce access to natural resources important for sustaining livelihoods, or it may degrade the quality of those resources. In such contexts, direct resource competition from relative scarcity or abundance of a specific natural resource can create tensions within and among groups. Schleussner et al. (2016) examine data on outbreaks of violent conflict and climate-related natural disasters for the 1980–2010 period, finding

that climate-related disasters coincided with approximately 23 percent of the outbreaks of armed conflict in ethnically fractionalized countries.

There is also strong evidence that climate change acts as a threat multiplier, indirectly escalating the risk of conflict through mechanisms such as food insecurity, economic shocks, and migration. Evidence in a growing body of literature on the impact of climatic variability on violent conflict shows that low water availability and very high and low temperatures are associated with organized political conflicts. Studies using country-level data show a correlation between changes in temperature and precipitation associated with economic contraction and destabilization of the political balance (Hsiang and Burke 2013).

Overall, climate change does not automatically cause violent conflict. However, there is no doubt that climate change creates major stress, especially in fragile situations where governments have limited means to help their population to adapt (see box 2.3). Climate change requires global collaboration, from reducing the emission of carbon dioxide to preparing for climate shocks (which can trigger violent

BOX 2.3 The Impacts of Climate Change on the Lake Chad Region

Since 1970, temperatures across the Sahel have increased by almost 1°C, which is nearly double the global average. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change expects temperatures in the Sahel to increase by 1°C over the next 20 years, 2.1°C by 2065, and 4°C by the end of the twenty-first century. Despite limited data on changes in environmental conditions, the Sahel has experienced more severe and recurrent droughts and floods in past years. Combined with political, economic, and social instability; poverty; historical grievances; poor governance; and weak institutions, Sahelian states face many challenges in managing the detrimental impacts of climate change.

Lake Chad is one such example that highlights the links between environmental, social, and political vulnerability. Situated between Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, Lake Chad is a vital resource for more than 50 million people. The lake and its drainage basin provide not only jobs through food production and a rich trading economy, but also water and land for agriculture. The region itself is a focal point for agricultural production, encompassing both expanses of shallow water, vegetation, and rich soil used for a variety of purposes.

In recent years, the ability of the lake region to be a net exporter of food and a source of employment has

(Box continued next page)

BOX 2.3 The Impacts of Climate Change on the Lake Chad Region *(continued)*

come under threat. Climate change challenges the biodiversity growing in the lake, creating a fragile ecosystem and increasing the vulnerability of the Sahel, which relies heavily on the resources of Lake Chad. Rising population growth rates have also generated an increasing number of incoming migrants, such as refugees and displaced persons fleeing Boko Haram. Although these groups have historically been welcomed into the area, food, water, job insecurity, and land saturation have created tensions over access to available resources. With 2.8 million displaced people in the Sahel, these tensions may rise between host and displaced communities over competition for scarce resources. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms may no longer be adequate to help residents to cope with the scale of the growing challenge.

The Sahel has experienced major tensions and violent conflicts directly

related to these climatic changes. Pastoralists from the northern fringes of the Sahara, who have to use transhumance to sustain their herds, increasingly move southward in search of pasture. In these areas, agriculturists are already struggling with less predictable rainfall. Pastoralists also tend to stay in these areas over a longer period of time, including when crops are ready to be harvested. These situations have created serious conflict and destruction of both crops and cattle. Herders increasingly form militias to protect their cattle, look for protection from various armed groups, and get drawn into violent conflict. In the Central African Republic and Mali, for instance, militia groups were created for protection purposes and have played a strong role in local conflict dynamics. Nigeria has also seen this dimension of conflict increasingly in the north of the country.

Sources: Crawford 2015; FERDI 2016; Guichaoua and Pellerin 2017; Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015.

conflicts in tense environments, as discussed in chapter 5) to investing in and building up social and economic resilience. In some countries—in particular, those on the fringes of the Sahara Desert—addressing climate change remains at the core of early conflict prevention strategies (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015).

Transnational Organized Crime

Trafficking and transnational organized crime (TOC) contribute directly and indirectly to violent conflict. The detrimental impacts of TOC are increasingly recognized,⁸ as are the negative ripple effects of various illicit flows such as drug, human, and natural resource trafficking, smuggling of migrants, illicit trade of firearms and wildlife, counterfeit medicines, and cybercrime. The United Nations High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change has identified TOC as a top priority, on par with civil wars, nuclear weapons, and terrorism (Comolli 2017; UN 2004).

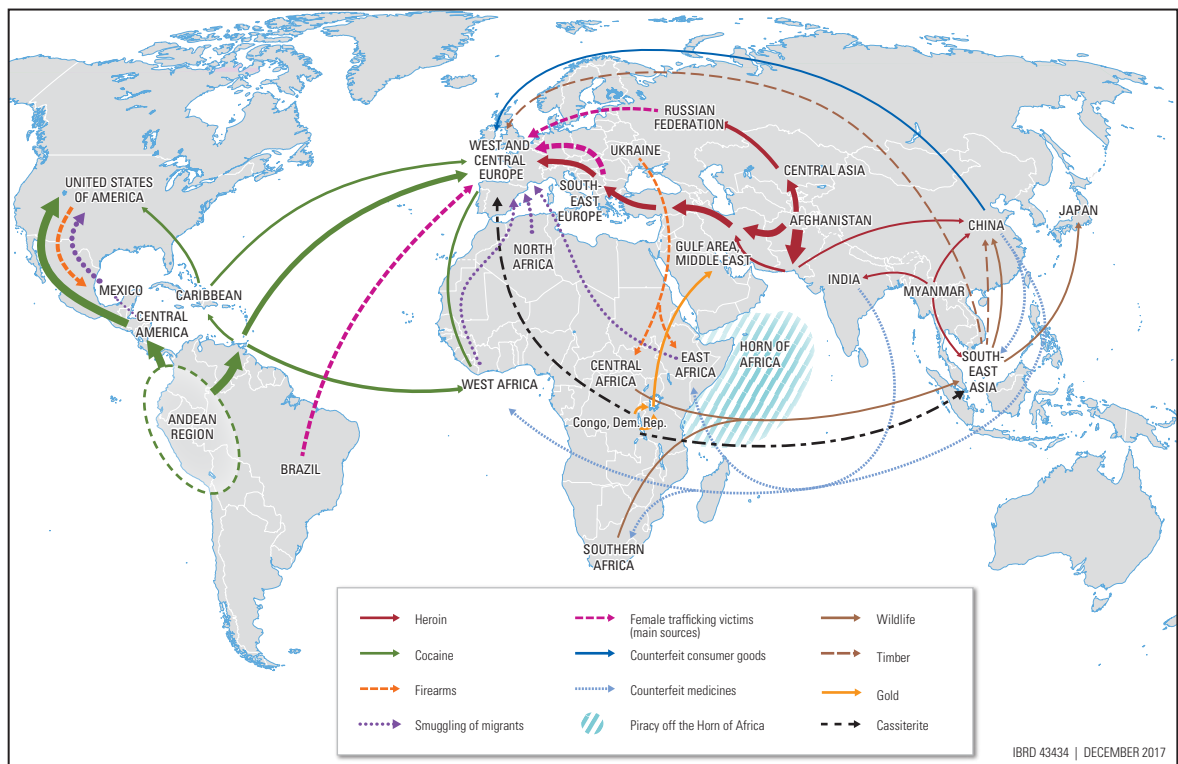
The financial consequences of TOC are serious. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that in 2009, TOC generated US\$870 billion, equivalent to 1.5 percent of the global GDP. Trafficking of drugs, arms, and people—the most lucrative manifestations of transnational organized crime—generates large criminal proceeds. Illicit drugs alone account for 17–25 percent of the total generated by TOC. It is difficult to measure illicit financial flows, such as money that is illegally earned, transferred, or used and that crosses borders, including transfer pricing and tax avoidance by multinational corporations. Still, Global Financial Integrity estimates that 15 low- and middle-income countries lose almost US\$1 trillion per year and lost US\$7.8 trillion from 2004 to 2013 (Spanjers and Salomon 2017). The yearly amount of illicit financial flows from low- and middle-income countries exceeded the sum of FDI and official development assistance that those countries received in 2013 (Spanjers and Salomon 2017).

The magnitude of TOC also puts the stability of many countries at risk, given increased mobility and interconnectedness today and the global impacts of illicit trafficking (see map 2.3). As UNODC (2010, v) notes, “Most TOC flows begin on one continent and end on another, often by means of a third.” For instance, drug production and trade have an impact not only on countries of origin but also on consumer markets, as in the case of the Andean region, where drugs are transmitted through West and North Africa and into Europe (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015). West Africa also provides an example of how drug trafficking undermines stability, governance, development, and health in transit regions (UNODC 2008, 35–48).

The scale and reach of illicit trafficking contribute to many elements that can increase the risk of conflict or allow it to persist. Its transnational nature means

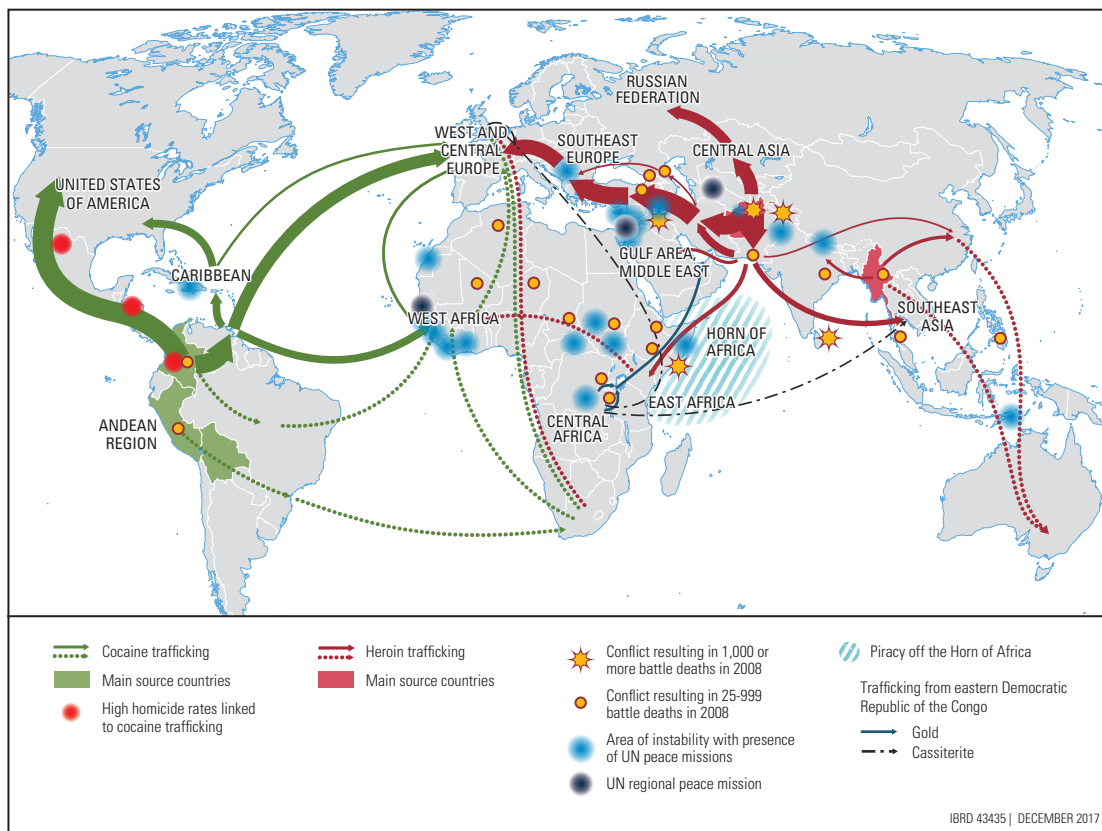
that it can generate or perpetuate instability across borders (see map 2.4). Illicit trafficking activities can make it more likely for local conflict to spill into surrounding areas and countries, thus contributing to its regionalization. The Balkans provide a good illustration of the regional dimension of trafficking networks and their ramifications (Grillot et al. 2004). Criminal networks are actors, with agency, that should be taken into account in assessing the risk of violent conflict. They may act to undermine the legitimacy and capacity of their rivals, including the state. (Chapter 3 discusses actors and their interrelationship in greater detail.) Drug cartels in Latin America changed their behavior to avoid confrontation with the state and seek alternative markets, shifting cocaine trafficking to West Africa (Cockayne 2013, 14–16; 2016, 267–89). By establishing

MAP 2.3 Global Flows of Transnational Organized Crime



Source: UNODC 2010.

MAP 2.4 The Intersection of Transnational Organized Crime and Instability



Source: UNODC 2010.

parallel structures that provide economic opportunities and services to the local population, criminal networks (like other actors) can also degrade the image of the state in the eyes of the population.

Criminal activities can underwrite parties in violent conflict, prolonging or changing the nature of the conflict. Revenues from these activities can enable parties to attract more fighters and purchase more sophisticated weapons (Felbab-Brown 2009) and thus to fight longer. Analyzing 128 civil wars between 1945 and 1999, Fearon (2004, 284) finds, “Contraband has clearly played a role in several of the longest-running civil wars since 1945, such as Colombia (cocaine; 37 years to 2000 as coded here), Angola (diamonds; 25 years to 2000), Myanmar (opium; off and on for many years, especially in Shan State), and Sierra Leone (diamonds; 9 years

to 2000). In 17 cases where there was major evidence of rebel groups relying on production or trafficking on contraband, the estimated median and mean civil war durations were 28.1 and 48.2 years, respectively, as compared to 6.0 and 8.8 years for the remaining civil wars.”

Violent conflict also opens up opportunities for criminality. Illicit activities tend to thrive in contexts of weak rule of law and where other forms of violence are present (World Bank 2011). In conflict settings, goods and supplies may not be easily accessible, and criminals adapt to fill the demand. In this regard, more attention should be paid to the trafficking of illicit commodities versus “survival smuggling” of basic goods such as food that have long been the lifeline of nomadic communities in the Sahel-Sahara region (Reitano and Shaw 2015).

In spite of these dynamics, the existence of criminal economies and illicit trafficking networks in conflict situations does not automatically translate into higher levels of violence. Certain criminal groups may choose instead to operate by coercion and intimidation, especially where markets are stable and a clear hierarchy is identified. For instance, despite the large size of the narcotics economy in Afghanistan, drug-related violence remains relatively low and sizably lower than in Latin American drug markets such as in the Northern Triangle (Byrd and Mansfield 2014, 75). In addition, state responses to crime and preconditions, like the nature of local gang culture, are important factors in assessing the potential escalation of violence (IISS 2011).

Like other trends discussed in this chapter, TOC needs to be addressed at national, regional, and global levels. Globally, UNODC and other institutions have made important advancements, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted by General Assembly Resolution 55/25, which has been ratified by 170 parties. This convention provides “a universal legal framework to help identify, deter, and dismantle organized criminal groups” (UNODC 2012, 3). In addition, the global community has adopted specific frameworks, such as the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components, and Ammunition. These agreements represent the commitment of states to address a complex global challenge in partnership with the international community.

As discussed in chapter 3, prevention rests on the incentives of actors to choose behavior leading toward peace rather than violence and to limit the harm done by actors who choose violence. This understanding is particularly relevant in relation to the risks posed by TOC. At the country and regional levels, focus should be placed not only on changing the incentives of actors operating in areas where transnational organized crime is present, but also on fighting corruption within the state and reinforcing its accountability prerequisites

for action to be effective. The security and justice sector is particularly crucial in this regard. It is also important to ensure that no geographic areas are left out of an accountable and positive governance system, because TOC preys on vulnerable areas, including those far from the center or difficult to reach, regions with low density, urban slums where the state is absent, and any area with weak governance. Addressing TOC requires working with the community, as many organized crime networks are entrenched in the communities themselves.

Conclusion

The scale and pace of change in the world today are striking. The world is at once more interconnected and interdependent than ever, which means that many countries acutely feel the stresses of global changes like population movements, climate change, advancements in new technologies, and shifting patterns of governance.

Now there is pressure on global institutions and individual societies to improve their management of the risks and opportunities that arise as a result of so many concurrent, interlinked, and impactful global trends. The current international system, both states and multilateral institutions, has been dedicated to preventing interstate war and, increasingly, intrastate conflict. But the changing nature of warfare and violence (as shown in chapter 1) and the changes in transnational phenomena and the global landscape (described here) warrant a different approach. With several opportunities for peace, as well as risks for violence, global collaboration is critical. Specifically, it requires working at national, regional, and international levels together, as no country alone can manage the risks that arise from these trends.

In this challenging global framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides an organizing framework for achieving global development goals that are sustainable in part because they recognize the deep complexity and interconnectedness on the path to peace and progress.

Notes

1. The concept of risk is discussed in more detail in chapter 3. It is understood in this study as a combination of the probability of an event and the severity of the event if it does occur and is strongly mediated by the capacity of a society to manage its impacts.
2. See <https://www.g20.org/en/g20/faqs>.
3. Regional organizations include, among others, the European Union, League of Arab States (1945), Organization of American States (1948), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (1967), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (1969), Economic Community of West African States (1975), and Southern African Development Community (1992).
4. The Center for Systemic Peace (2014) notes that these countries had total populations greater than 500,000 in 2015 along a 21-point scale. Polity scores range from –10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy). Countries can also be grouped into three categories of regime: autocracies (–10 to –6), anocracies (–5 to +5), and democracies (+6 to +10).
5. The United Nations does not have a specific definition of “democracy.” The General Assembly asserts that “democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives. . . . [W]hile democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and . . . democracy does not belong to any country or region, and reaffirming further the necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right to self-determination” (UN General Assembly 2015).
6. Labor share of income is defined as the share of national income paid in wages, including benefits, to workers.
7. Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Pakistan, Turkey, and Uganda.
8. UNODC broadly defines TOC as encompassing all criminal activities motivated by profit and with international scope.

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