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# G I G A *Working Papers*

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**State-Building, War and Violence:  
Evidence from Latin America**

Sabine Kurtenbach

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## **State-Building, War and Violence: Evidence from Latin America**

### **Abstract**

In European history, war has played a major role in state-building and the state monopoly on violence. But war is a very specific form of organized political violence, and it is decreasing on a global scale. Other patterns of armed violence now dominate, ones that seem to undermine state-building, thus preventing the replication of European experiences. As a consequence, the main focus of the current state-building debate is on fragility and a lack of violence control inside these states.

Evidence from Latin American history shows that the specific patterns of the termination of both war and violence are more important than the specific patterns of their organization. Hence these patterns can be conceptualized as a critical juncture for state-building. While military victories in war, the subordination of competing armed actors and the prosecution of perpetrators are conducive for state-building, negotiated settlements, coexistence, and impunity produce instability due to competing patterns of authority, legitimacy, and social cohesion.

Keywords: state-building, war, violence, critical juncture, Latin America

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# State-Building, War and Violence: Evidence from Latin America

Sabine Kurtenbach

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## 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

War, violence, and state-building are intertwined but have an ambiguous and complex relationship. Although in the following, the term “violence” will be used only for direct physical and lethal violence against other persons, even such a limited perspective shows very different and manifold forms and expressions of violence. Most of the debate on the relationship between violence and state-building focuses on war, a very specific form of collective violence. Historically, the term war was reserved for armed conflict between sovereign states

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1 My thanks to Andreas Mehler and Leslie Wehner for valuable comments helping me to sharpen the argument.

and thus applied to highly organized and centralized forms of public violence by state actors. Here mobilization for as well as legitimization of violence were based on the formulation of political goals, e.g. nationalism, religion, and ethnic identity. Clausewitz's phrase defining war as "the continuation of politics by other means" shapes the notion of war even today.

At the same time, the theoretical debate is dominated by European experiences of "war-making as state-making" (Tilly 1985), leading to a monopolization and – much later – to the democratic control of the means of violence. These processes have not been replicated in developing countries. Scholars have put forward two lines of argument to explain different patterns in the global South. One argument posits that changes in the international context guarantee the existence of borders and states with low levels of internal cohesion or viability (Sørensen 2004). A second argument is that state-building (or state formation) is a long-term historical process. Hence the violence we currently observe might be part of a longer process whose outcome remains unknown (Schlichte 2006). This debate is further linked to the observation of changing patterns of violence – namely, the decreasing importance of the state as an actor in violence, a development that seems to be demonstrated in the decline of war on a worldwide scale and the increase of other forms of collective violence.<sup>2</sup> Regarding these other forms of violence, the debate lacks an explicit historical comparative perspective most of all due to the lack of reliable and systematic data.

Again, an analysis of European state-building can provide interesting evidence as here, too, the massive use of violence was not exclusively organized in the form of war. Hence not all forms of violence contributed historically to the two factors standing at the core of the state-building debate: the monopolization of the means of violence and its civilian control. It is thus necessary to distinguish between different forms of violence and analyze their specific impacts on state-building and to not just equalize violence with fragility using violence as a major indicator for state fragility. Here most empirical evidence comes from sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, and experiences in Latin American and Asia are disregarded.

This paper seeks to contribute to the debate on state-building, war, and violence, systematizing implications for state-building caused by different forms of violence. The paper will focus mainly on the consequences of war and other forms of violence for the monopolization of the means of violence, mostly seen as an initial, necessary step towards state-building. Distinguishing between specific forms, related actor constellations, and historical patterns of conflict is necessary to identify the consequences for state-building processes.

The main argument put forward here is that the patterns of war and violence termination are decisive for state-building across different forms of violence. The outcome can be concep-

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2 This debate started with the "new war" thesis focusing on non-state armed actors, the dominance of economic goals and high levels of atrocities against non-combatants, see Kaldor (1999), Münkler (2002). On changing patterns of organized violence cf. Human Security Project Report (2011), SIPRI (2011), Fox/Hoelscher (2010), Beall et al. (2011). By contrast Pinker (2011) argues that all forms of direct physical violence have declined significantly.

tualized as a critical juncture as it shapes specific power relations, policy options, and time horizons for state-building.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, war – as the most centralized form of collective violence – allows for patterns of collective organization and mobilization conducive for state-building while other forms of collective violence and high levels of interpersonal violence imply different logics of organization and mobilization. This perspective on the organization and logic of violence allows for a more nuanced and less Eurocentric analysis of the relationship between state-building and violence. At the same time, state-building is a long and complex process influenced by historical developments and shaped by other factors related to violence, too: for example, the intensity of destruction or the legitimization of the use of force.

From this perspective, it is reasonable to conceptualize state-building not just as the establishment of specific formal institutions or bureaucracies but as a process that aims to establish a political order. According to Migdal (2001: 15-16, emphasis in original),

- [t]he state is a field of power marked by the use and the threat of violence and shaped by
- (1) *the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and*
  - (2) *the actual practices of its multiple parts.*

Actual states are shaped by two elements, image and practices. These can be overlapping and reinforcing, or contradictory and mutually destructive.

From this perspective, the congruence – or at least the compatibility – between territorial borders with patterns of social cohesion and legitimacy is essential for successful state-building. But state-building is a non-linear process in permanent motion on a continuum between fragile/weak and strong state images and practices. These rely not just on territorial control but also on financial resources as well as the establishment of a minimum of social cohesion and legitimacy. A historical approach allows us to identify how specific forms of violence shape state-building across different contexts. This enables us to overcome the quite simplistic dichotomy of the state-building–fragility debate and allows for the inclusion of the influences of changing external contexts as well as their relationship with internal dynamics and power relations.

Latin American experiences provide interesting insights into these relationships as the region mirrors global experiences of changing forms of violence since its independence 200 years ago – from international wars during the nineteenth century to internal wars in the twentieth century to privatized violence during the last two decades.<sup>4</sup> The variations in Latin American state-building can be explained by variations in the historical patterns of the inter-

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3 On the concept of critical junctures see among others Cappocia/Kelemen (2007).

4 Although this trend is rather undisputed, there are neither historical nor reliable systematic data on other forms of violence. Pinker (2011) is an exception providing at least some sketchy data across time.

action between state-building, war, and violence. Hence the analysis can contribute to the broader debate on the relationship between those three processes.

The paper is organized into five sections: I will start with a short survey on different concepts and forms of violence and the data for Latin America. I will then explore the different consequences of war and other forms of violence and their outcome for state-building, starting with international and internal wars, looking then at other forms of collective violence and then at the impact of the current wave of interpersonal violence. In the concluding section, I will summarize the different phases and patterns of state-building and present evidence regarding the thesis of victories as critical junctures in state-building.

## 2 Multiple Forms of Violence

Violence is a multifaceted phenomenon. Distinctions can be made according to different criteria (e.g. level of organization, space, goals, actors, relationship, intensity), but clear-cut classifications are difficult, as changing definitions of war show.<sup>5</sup> Historical definitions emphasizing the role of sovereign states had to be adapted with the increasing importance of armed conflict inside these states after World War II. Nevertheless, the state remains an important actor. The Uppsala Conflict Data Project (UCDP) defines war as “a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state,” that results in at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in one calendar year. Qualitative definitions use similar criteria although lack the establishment of a quantitative threshold for battle-related deaths.<sup>6</sup> Both definitions reflect the reality of war during most of the twentieth century.

But while other forms of violence have existed in human history, the turn of the century has been marked by a growing awareness of collective violence in contexts where a central state is weak, fragile, or non-existent. Here, private and non-state actors like warlords or militias play an important role; economic enrichment is perceived as a major goal. While this debate on the “new wars” has highlighted a number of important patterns of violence, it has somehow idealized interstate and civil wars in the tradition of Clausewitz. Even in these wars, not all violence has been political or restricted to formal combatants. Historical evidence for greed and economic enrichment as well as for violence against civilians (women, children, ethnic minorities) abounds.<sup>7</sup>

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5 For different possibilities of categorization see WHO (2002: 7), Tilly (2003) and Brzoska (2007: 102-103) on data for other forms of collective violence.

6 For the Uppsala definition, see <[www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions)> (08 November 2011); for a qualitative definition see Gantzel/Schwinghammer (1995: 31 ff.).

7 For example, plundering and rape in many interstate and internal wars; see Kalyvas (2006) and Gerlach (2010), among others.



During the last two decades, the number of wars has decreased although armed violence is still a significant problem across the globe. The “Global Burden of Armed Violence” Report (Geneva Declaration 2008) claims that currently two-thirds of the victims of armed violence die outside of collectively organized armed conflicts. Other reports perceive similar trends and see political violence in the form of wars and armed conflicts as being on the retreat while other patterns of violence, namely from gangs and organized crime is increasing (SIPRI 2011, Human Security Report Project 2011). Hence the state seems to have lost its predominance in organized armed violence – as a perpetrator as well as a controller of violence. But as there are no systematic collections of historical data on different forms of violence outside of war, it is impossible to determine whether what is changing are the patterns of violence or the levels of awareness. Hence there is a need for systematic historical data compilation and research.<sup>8</sup>

Maybe more than warfare itself, what has changed since World War II have been the international perspectives on violence as well as the modes of legitimation of violence. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations have restricted states’ right to use force in dealing with each other as well as internally. As a consequence, the use of violence has increasingly become a matter of public observation and debate. New and rapid forms of international communication enable us to witness violence that would have remained unnoticed by academic observers and the general public decades ago.<sup>9</sup> As a consequence, there has been a process of de-legitimization and thus “criminalization” of the use of violence, along with increasing levels of direct and indirect intervention into violent contexts. For example, the establishment of the legal concept of “crimes against humanity” or the “responsibility to protect” enables external actors to intervene into what, before, were “internal affairs.” The impact of these changing norms and perceptions of violence on state-building have not yet been systematically explored.

Existing data for Latin America show a great variety of violence:<sup>10</sup> Since 1945 the region experienced only a few and mostly very short interstate wars. Intrastate or civil wars were dominant in the second half of the twentieth century, but their intensity and level of organization has changed during the last decades. Currently, violence occurs mostly in the context of organized crime (most of all in relation to the drug trade) and gangs, as well as in the form of interpersonal violence in the urban areas. Data on collective violence after 1945 show a high level of variation across Latin America. Colombia is definitely the country with the most

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8 See Brzoska (2007) on the problems in providing definitions and collecting data regarding these other forms of collective violence. Nevertheless, it has become increasingly evident that the borders between war, armed conflict, and other forms of violence are blurred and lack clear-cut distinctions.

9 The power of images vis-à-vis the mobilization of international public opinion has been obvious since Robert Capa’s famous photograph of the dying republican combatant in the Spanish Civil War, despite the recent allegations that the picture was a set-up.

10 Cf. Tables 1 to 4 in the Annex. Although violence has been and is an everyday experience in Latin America’s rural areas (see Kay/Salazar 2001; Kay 2009) no data have been systematically collected.

intense experience of different forms of violence, while other countries show variance depending on time period (e.g. Argentina) and the forms of violence (e.g. Brazil, with high homicide rates and no intrastate armed conflict).

In the following sections, I will discuss the relationship between state-building and violence using empirical evidence from Latin American cases. I will start with Tilly's argument on the close relationship between war and state-building.

### 3 War and State-Building

Most research regarding the relationship between state-building and violence has focused on the historical development of the European nation-state, specifically England and France.<sup>11</sup> The main argument is twofold: While the modern state is a product of war and violent conflict, it was able to establish a monopoly on violence inside its territory, providing the basis for internal pacification or "civilization."<sup>12</sup> Hence, controlling forms of violence considered illegitimate is a core function of states based on a process of framing and interpreting violence. But empirically this function is not always organized in the form of a monopoly of force as established in the European states, nor are the definitions of "legitimate" or "illegitimate" and thus criminal forms of violence universal. They differ widely across historical and cultural contexts.

In his famous article "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," Charles Tilly identifies four important mechanisms for the establishment of the state's monopoly on violence (1985: 181):

Under the general heading of organized violence, the agents of the states characteristically carry on four different activities:

- 1) War making: Eliminating or neutralizing their own rivals outside the territories in which they have clear and continuous priority as wielders of force.
- 2) State making: Eliminating or neutralizing their rivals inside those territories.
- 3) Protection: Eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of their clients.
- 4) Extraction: Acquiring the means of carrying out the first three activities – war making, state making, and protection.

Each of these activities leads to "characteristic forms of organization:" war-making to armies, state-making to instruments of surveillance and control, protection to courts and assemblies,

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11 Cf. among others Giddens (1985), Tilly (1990), Holsti (1996: 41-60). Looking at the European "latecomers" in state-building, most of all Italy and Germany, it is obvious that the relationship between war and state-building is much more complicated.

12 Norbert Elias (1976) has described the related violent conflicts as "elimination contests." The monopolization of the means of coercion and of taxation are at the core of Max Weber's (1972) definition of a modern state, although in the process they can take very different forms (see Tilly 1985: 181-182).

and extraction to fiscal and accounting structures (*ibid.*). In Europe these forms of organization are territorially bound and embedded in state–society relations. But Tilly also points to the fact that the replication of these processes in the developing countries of the second half of the twentieth century is difficult and unlikely. In Europe, external warfare allowed for the distinction between the internal and the external supporting specific – and territorially bound – forms of social cohesion and identity, namely nationalism. On the contrary, most developing countries “have acquired their military organization from outside, without the same internal forging of mutual constraints between rulers and ruled” (*ibid.*: 186). Hence, these political entities lack comparable forms of social cohesion at the national level.

Latin America is rarely discussed from this perspective. Centeno (2002, 2003) is an exception, arguing that Latin American history lacks experiences of war that would push towards the centralization of both state capacities and power due to easily available external resources. As a consequence, the need to integrate and control society has been low, and levels of taxation, conscription, and social welfare have remained underdeveloped. Ideological commonalities between elites exceeded those inside territorial borders, inhibiting the rise of nationalism. Although this pattern is quite common, there are interesting exceptions and examples for the “early European model” of state-building with the support of external and internal wars.<sup>13</sup>

Chile in the nineteenth century is a case in point: In the so-called Saltpeter/Nitrate War or War of the Pacific (1879–1883), Chile increased its territory northwards at the expense of Bolivia (which lost its access to the Pacific Ocean) and Peru. In contemporary categories, this was a classical “resource war.” Chile’s military victory provided control over one of the world’s largest nitrate deposits and thus became the central source of income for the Chilean central state.<sup>14</sup> These resources were used to establish and centralize state institutions, first of all the armed forces. Nevertheless, the war did not establish a new relationship between the dominant elites and the population. The political regime remained exclusive; the oligarchy and the armed forces controlled the state. Consequences of the war on state-building in Bolivia were different, as the defeat deprived the state from an important source of income. Nevertheless, in Bolivia as well as in Chile the war was an important basis for the construction of national identity: superiority in the case of Chile, the construction of Chile as a threat

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13 The following empirical evidence is neither complete nor representative but illustrates variance in the relationship between war and state-building.

14 The disputed territory was home to the world’s largest deposit of saltpeter, a nitrate that gained importance as a fertilizer as well as a gunpowder for the production of explosives in the second half of the nineteenth century. While the economic importance of saltpeter declined after it was substituted with synthetic products, the Atacama Desert is also rich in copper, which replaced nitrate as Chile’s most important export product at the turn of the twentieth century. Even today, Chile is the world’s leading exporter of copper. See Kurtz (2009) for the importance of specific social relations for institutional development in a comparative study of Chile and Peru at the end of the nineteenth century.

in Bolivia.<sup>15</sup> In both countries, the construction of the line between the internal and the external supported identity patterns along “nationalist” lines in spite of social and political divisions across social classes, ethnicity, or the conflict over state–church relations.

Insurgent victories in the Mexican and Cuban internal wars/revolutions had similar effects. They provided the state with significant economic resources via taxation and state enterprises and thus a financial basis for social integration. At the symbolic level, both introduced “national” revolutionary narratives that have only recently lost their widespread internal appeal. Costa Rica is another example of successful state-building after its internal war ended with a military victory. But different from the Mexican and the Cuban experiences, Costa Rica established a democratic political system. The narrative of national state-building is based on the construction of Costa Rica as a peaceful and non-violent society in contrast to neighboring countries.<sup>16</sup>

Government victories after internal wars or armed conflicts – in many cases accomplished through direct intervention by or military aid from the United States – led to the monopolization of the means of violence with a variety of organizational features of the specific state. Regimes range from the kleptocracy of the Somoza clan in Nicaragua to the bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes in the Southern Cone. As a consequence, the repressive state apparatus was expanded and served as a main mechanism to maintain the social and political status quo, at least temporarily.

Colombia’s history of civil war between the Liberal and Conservative parties provides a rather different and interesting lesson regarding internal wars without a clear outcome: Even in the nineteenth century these wars involved high levels of mobilization and organization of the population, forcing Colombians to take sides with one political party. As a consequence of nearly one hundred years of recurring armed conflict along these lines, cultural identities developed beyond the local level. However, these strengthened political party identities at the expense of a “national” Colombian identity, dividing the country between Liberals and Conservatives.<sup>17</sup>

From this perspective, it becomes evident that it is not just war itself that has a close relationship to state-building but that the specific outcome is important, if not decisive.<sup>18</sup> This is most evident for the state’s legitimacy. External wars provide an important basis for strengthening internal patterns of social cohesion (nationalist, ethnic, religious) while internal wars point towards deficits in the state’s legitimacy. If they are won, external as well as

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15 See Wehner (2010: 13-18), who also shows how difficult it is to change these bilateral discourses from rivalry to cooperation and mutual trust.

16 On the power of stories see Selbin (2010). On the non-violence discourse in Costa Rica see Huhn (2011).

17 On Colombia’s violent history see among others Kurtenbach (1991, 1999), Berquist/Peñaranda/Sánchez (2001), González/Bolívar/Vázquez (2003).

18 On civil war termination and the probability of war recurrence see Duffy (2010, 2010a), who argues that rebel victories produce the most stable outcomes due to higher levels of institutional capacity and legitimacy. Both factors are also very important for state-building.

internal wars may not only enhance the symbolic dimension of unity but can even provide necessary financial or material resources to enhance cohesion. While losing an international war may provide the basis for national myths, too, it can also lead to fragmentation and fragility. After internal wars, the long-term stability of state-building will depend on the policies the victors pursue vis-à-vis the losers. Examples range from openly repressing to subordinating potential opponents (e.g. in post-revolutionary Mexico) to coopting through power-sharing models (e.g. in Colombia, where the losing party was conceded a minority participation in government).

But while in the past, military victories have been the most common form of war termination, there has been an important shift in the patterns of war termination during the last two decades. According to Kreutz (2010: 246), the percentage of victories in intrastate conflicts has declined from 58.2 percent for 1946-1989 to 13.6 percent 1990-2005.<sup>19</sup> In relation to state-building, the advantage of a military victory rests in the establishment of relatively clear-cut power relations – that is, the elimination or neutralization of internal rivals via military victory. Suhrke (2011) calls this a “victor’s peace.” Against this background, U.S. strategist Edward Luttwak (1999) has made a call to “give war a chance.” But military victories have become an unlikely method of war termination under today’s international priorities, which promote and favor mediation and negotiated agreements to end internal wars and armed conflicts. As a consequence, even the formal termination of war or armed conflict does not necessarily establish stable post-war orders, but in most cases leads to high levels of instability, fragility, and inequality (Licklider 2001: 697 f.). Sørensen (2001) and Migdal (2001: 137-150) argue that the international community thus supports the survival of weak states that would have fallen apart or been annexed by others without today’s guarantee of a recognition of international borders or cooperation in strengthening fragile states.<sup>20</sup> The negotiated war terminations in Central America ended internal war after more than a decade but were unable to establish a stable political order (Kurtenbach 2010).

Hence state-building after a negotiated end of internal wars without a clear winner or after a secession into a new political entity is much more complicated than it would be after a victory. Here the warring factions will have to find a way to live together independent of different patterns of organization and mobilization and the existence of mostly auto-excluding patterns of legitimacy.<sup>21</sup> The main weakness of negotiated settlements is not related to their

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19 Although using different definitions, other datasets show similar shifts: see Schreiber (2009, 2010), Duffy (2010, 2010a).

20 The causes as well as the consequences of state fragility and external intervention strategies have been discussed broadly in the last two decades from different perspectives but with inconclusive results. For an overview on the related debates see Boege et al. (2009). Nevertheless, these debates lack a focus on a systematic comparison of differences in the internal structure of these societies (legitimacy, patterns of social cohesion, etc.), Migdal (1988) being an exception.

21 Ethnicity and religion are the most prominent factors in these debates. But other post-war or post-conflict contexts show exclusionary patterns of legitimacy, too. Different forms and models of power-sharing and institu-

content but to a lack of sanctions for non-implementation (Duffy 2010a: 34). Hence political authority is important to enforce compliance.

Looking at Latin America's experiences with war and state-building, two general patterns become obvious:

- a) External wars as well as internal wars that end with a clear military victory of one side mirror the European war–state-building nexus regarding the monopolization of the means of violence at least temporarily through the elimination of rivals and the protection of clients inside a specific territory.
- b) Internal wars ending with an agreement nevertheless lead to recurrent cycles of war due to a lack of political, economic, and social hegemony as former rivals have to cohabitate without clear-cut power relations. Hence external interventions to promote negotiations may promote fragile outcomes.<sup>22</sup>

But successful state-building is not a static condition: it is subject to permanent change as processes of social differentiation as well as changes in the external environment may provide new opportunities for state-building or undermine existing forms of integration.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4 “States-within-states” and State-Building

The main focus of the current discussion on state-building analyzes collective violence below the level of the territorial state institutions perpetrated by non-state armed actors like warlords or armed entrepreneurs.<sup>24</sup> These political entities at times establish territorial control and fulfill state-like functions (like collecting taxes and providing security and/or social services). Although their organizational level and institutional capacities differ, Kingston/Spears (2006) subsume them under the concept of “states-within-states.” Even in cases where “states-within-states” establish more or less durable forms of control, these entities lack juridical status and international recognition. Somaliland is a case in point, while state-building in Timor-Leste and South Sudan was successful after decades of war against their respec-

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tional engineering are promoted to overcome these problems, but the results are rather inconclusive as to what works and what does not (see Basedau 2011).

22 This does not imply that military victories should be promoted or accepted. Under the current human rights regime they are definitely not. But international actors have to come to terms with the fragility of the outcome they create via negotiations and need to invest human and financial resources into implementation and compliance beyond the existing options that formal democratic elections provide.

23 Mexico and Cuba are examples. In both cases, the revolution supported quite stable state-building processes that only needed selective forms of violence. It was no coincidence that the Chiapas rebellion in Mexico happened the moment the Mexican economy opened up, invalidating the revolution's promises of agrarian reform that had never reached Mexico's poor south (Barry 1999).

24 On non-state actors and their varied relationship to the state see Krause/Milliken (2009) and Davis (2009). On the dynamics of non-state actors see Schlichte (2009). For a debate regarding Latin America that focuses on the military, see Davis/Pereira (2003), Koonings/Kruit (2002), Holden (2004). On other actors see Koonings/Kruit (2004).

tive central states. However, not all of these entities aim to achieve independent statehood, they may want to overthrow or substitute an existing government or achieve autonomy.

To distinguish between different patterns of “states-within-states,” we can use the activities Tilly identified as a fundamental link between war and state-building (see above). There are states-within-states that

- have coercive power (providing protection for some groups),
- control a specific territory, and/or
- extract economic resources.

Being capable of all three activities can be an indicator of incipient processes of state-building although these processes may not aim to establish control over larger territories. The relationship between “states-within-states” and violence is twofold. Violence can be a main resource for the establishment and the survival of these entities, as it can be a consequence of their existence when the relationship between the internationally recognized state and the “state within” is contested.

Although Latin American examples do not figure prominently in these debates, the region has a rich history of states-within-states. We can identify four patterns that have been important during different historical phases or regional contexts with varying patterns of coercive power, territorial control and resource extraction:<sup>25</sup>

- 1) Communities of indigenous populations have been “states-within-states” for much of Latin American history as neither the colonial nor the independent central states controlled territories far from the urban and economic centers. Many of these communities and territories were subordinated (violently) to the central state during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century following the classical territorial expansion path. Argentina’s violent military campaign in Patagonia and Chile’s war against the Mapuche in the south are examples (see Urban/Sherzer 1991). In other regions, these indigenous communities were neglected and survived as long as the territory they lived in had no economic or political value. This came to an end with increasing demographic density and the shifting of agrarian frontiers, for example into the Amazon and other neglected areas like the Nicaraguan Mosquito Coast. Recently, global norms on indigenous rights

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25 External economic enclaves could be conceptualized as another but not necessarily violent pattern. From the end of the nineteenth century to the first few decades of the twentieth century, for example, the United Fruit Company (UFCo) was a true state within the Guatemalan state, having controlled about one-third of the territory, having had its own jurisdiction and police, and having established a postal service and a railway system. This deprived the Guatemalan state of financial resources – political will provided – necessary for the country’s development. Similar patterns of foreign-dominated enclaves can be observed today due to increasing globalization in some export-processing zones and in many Latin American mining regions. Here the respective state passes concessions to international corporations and receives only a marginal fee or royalty. Working and health conditions are poor as workers are not allowed to organize, environmental standards are low, and conflicts abound. In many cases, these enterprises leave the moment the state tries to get more control or when wages go up. Security is mostly provided by private security companies.

as well as decentralization policies have empowered many of these surviving or revived communities, leading to conflicts between them and the central state.

- 2) Linked to civil wars or armed conflict are “liberated zones,” which aim to either establish an alternative social and political order or maintain the status quo. Here, armed actors establish state-like structures providing security, regulating conflicts, offering social services and – last but not least – collecting taxes. During most of El Salvador’s civil war, the departments of Chalatenango and Morazán were controlled by the Frente Martí de Liberación Nacional (FMLN). Peru’s Sendero Luminoso established control in the Andean highlands, as Colombia’s Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes de Colombia (FARC) did in the Amazon lowlands. In these cases, the outcome of the war or armed conflict is decisive for the effects these experiences have on state-building.<sup>26</sup>

Two other experiences are not necessarily based on territorial control but rely on coercive power complementing or competing with the sovereign state.

- 3) The autonomy of the Latin American military and the delegation of security to non-state actors (either local strongmen in the past or private security companies today) is important in this respect. Writing on Central America, Holden (2004: 26) observes that for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, “state-formation remained dominated by shifts in the relative military superiority of competing party militias and *caudillo*-led bands [...] that could operate outside the national ‘army’ (not to mention outside the national boundaries themselves) as well as within it.” This is comparable to current experiences regarding warlords in other regions of the world. When the militaries took over most Latin American states in the 1960s and 1970s, this increased the centralization of the means of violence significantly at least for a short time.<sup>27</sup> Current trends show high levels of diffusion and privatization of violence to a variety of actors like private or community-based organizations.
- 4) Last but not least, current, relatively organized violent actors, like organized crime groups, can be considered “states-within-states” as they have coercive power and control specific territories and economic resources. Where this violence is related to the drug-trade, violent actors try to conquer the state and/or parts of its institutions (police, judiciary), leading to the establishment of so-called “narco-states.”<sup>28</sup> Other actors – like youth

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26 Herreros (2011) argues that these civil war dynamics explain specific patterns of post-war repression in Spain after the civil war. State repression was most intense in territories controlled by the republican troops as the Franco regime used preemptive repression to stabilize its control.

27 Exceptions from military rule were Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Venezuela.

28 These “state-sponsored protection rackets” (Snyder/Durán 2009) can lead to a reduction of violence as long as the existing equilibrium of power is not disputed. Reno (2009) emphasizes the fact that the use of violence in these contexts is highly dependent on the relationship between the armed actors and the communities as well as their relationship with the state.



gangs – just control their immediate neighborhoods. Organizational patterns can range from clearly top-down hierarchies to different forms of interrelated networks.

**Table: Patterns of States-within-states in Latin America**

	Coercive power	Territorial control	Resource extraction
Indigenous communities	low	yes	yes
Liberated zones	high	yes	yes
Military autonomy	high	yes	partly
Organized crime	high	partly	yes

External interventions in these contexts have been frequent; their effects on state-building are rather ambivalent as they can shift power relations towards one side or the other. While economic enclaves have weakened the sovereign state's financial capacities, U.S. assistance was fundamental for the establishment of many military regimes, who were able to monopolize the means of violence in the state.

To sum up, the consequences of these forms of collective violence on state-building depend on the outcome of conflicts between the "state within" and the sovereign state. The expansion of the sovereign state's claim to power and control over local or subnational organizations has been and still is a cause of increasing conflict often leading to violence.

- a) Where the sovereign state is able to subordinate these political entities, state-building will at least in the short term be strengthened. While these conflicts were solved via "elimination contests" in European history, this path is no longer a viable option today due to changes in the international environment, with other states recognizing existing state boundaries and promoting negotiated ends to armed conflict and violence.
- b) Where the sovereign state and the "state-within-the-state" coexist or compete, state-building will be difficult due to the incompatibility between the external and the internal logics of organization. Even if the state within becomes subordinate, long-term state-building can be endangered by incompatible and exclusionary patterns of identity and social cohesion (e.g. along different ethnic or religious lines).

## 5 Interpersonal Violence and State-Building

Interpersonal violence is a less organized, non-political form of violence.<sup>29</sup> It is mostly framed as criminal violence, although classifications of crime are highly context-specific, and increasing amounts of interpersonal violence have political causes as well as political consequences (Kurtenbach 2011). Classical state-building theory emphasizes the fact that successful state-building is the basis for a significant reduction in interpersonal violence. Therefore, high levels of interpersonal violence can be an indicator of deficits in the monopolization of the means of violence but can also point towards other processes of social change like the destruction of traditional forms of social control or of norms restraining the use of violence.<sup>30</sup>

Increasing levels of interpersonal violence have been a general trend in Latin America since the 1980s (see Table 4 in Annex). “All other things equal, countries in Latin America tend to have homicide rates that are, on average, roughly twice as high as those in similar countries located outside this region” (Cole/Marroquín 2009: 763).

The increase in interpersonal violence in Latin America has initiated a broad discussion on its causes, dynamics and consequences.<sup>31</sup> The interaction with state-building has not been a major focus but was addressed from different perspectives. Waldmann (2002) takes the high level of interpersonal violence as proof of the existence of anomic states in Latin America. Regarding the calls for “*mano dura*” approaches (those particularly “tough on crime”), Jenny Pearce (2010) identifies a process of “perverse state-building.” Here the discourse on violence and the demand for *mano dura* strategies is used by the elites in the most violent societies (Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras) to legitimate their power although (or because) they have been unsuccessful in reducing violence and providing public security.

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29 Homicide rates are the most important indicator of interpersonal violence. They are based on the number of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Data are difficult to compare due to methodological differences in their collection or political manipulation (WHO 2002: 7-9). Data on Latin America have improved significantly over the last two decades as different organizations like the Pan-American Health Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and UNODC have supported data collection and analysis. On variations in homicide rates see Fajnzylber/Lederman/Loayza (2002), Neumayer (2003) and Briceño-León/Villaveces/Concha-Eastman (2008). Interpersonal violence has long been a realm of sociology and criminology and has only recently been studied from a conflict and state-building perspective. See Geneva Declaration 2008, Fox/Hoelscher 2010, Beall et al. 2011. On the other hand, Kalyvas (2006) has shown that in many wars and armed conflicts, interpersonal violence can be a side effect at the micro-level following dynamics quite different from the conflict’s “master cleavage.”

30 Theoretically, violence can be controlled through different mechanisms along the spectrum of external coercion (police, military) and internal control (norms, values, socialization). Historical criminology affirms a trend of decreasing homicide rates for Western Europe but also claims that it is necessary to identify the specific mechanisms leading to violence reduction and violence control in state and society (Eisner 2003). In the current debate on state fragility, violence is the most prominent indicator. Three of the twelve categories of the Failed State Index are related to these patterns: criminalization, widespread violations of human rights, and the security institutions as a state within the state (see <<http://fundforpeace.org>>).

31 Cf. Ayres (1998), Bodemer/Kurtenbach/Meschkat (2001), Briceño-León (2002), Frühling/Tulchin (2003), Bobea (2003), among others.

Although there is evidence for both arguments, the high levels of variation in the region point towards a more complicated relationship.

Variation between Latin American countries can be explained by differences in historical state-building patterns. All countries with a rather successful monopolization of the means of force through victorious internal and/or external wars as well as the subordination of “states-within-states” have low levels of homicide: Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay. But high levels of homicide seem to be based on negotiated outcomes of war and/or the coexistence of “states-within-states:” Guatemala, El Salvador, and Colombia are the most obvious cases.

But interpersonal violence also shows variation inside the most violent countries:

- In Guatemala, violence is distributed unevenly along a “corridor of violence” between the Atlantic coast, the east, and the southern coast up to the Mexican border. The department of Petén (bordering on Mexico and Belize) is another violence hotspot, home to 4 of the 15 most violent municipalities (PNUD 2007).
- In Mexico, the federal states of Guerrero, Nayarit, Chiapas, Michoacán, and Morelos have the highest homicide rates, while according to the president, 57 percent of the homicides related to the drug trade occurred in Chihuahua, Baja California, and Sinaloa (Benítez Manaut et al. 2009: 318-319).
- In Colombia, violence was concentrated in Medellín, Bogotá and Cali at the end of the 1990s, while armed conflict and violence have “traveled” into the countryside (PNUD 2003, Chapter 4).

As these countries are all involved in the drug trade, interpersonal violence is mostly considered a by-product.<sup>32</sup> Obvious historical patterns of state-building interact with current developments in the transnationalization of violent crime.

Can high levels of interpersonal violence contribute to state-building or only to fragmentation and fragility? Looking at the relevant mechanisms – coercive power, territorial control, protection and resource extraction – the most plausible argument would be that it cannot contribute to state-building. But looking at Latin American experiences, it becomes obvious that again outcome is important.

Here, outcome can be distinguished as either the prosecution of violent actors or impunity. While it is evident that the state is not the only institution able to sanction violence regarded as illegitimate, regarding state-building the establishment of minimum standards of rule of law is essential. The most violent countries in Latin America not only have high homicide rates but also have high levels of impunity.

Under these conditions, persistently high levels of interpersonal violence may lead to a downward spiral of decreasing state capacities that may be described as follows:

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<sup>32</sup> But drug-trading is not necessarily linked to violence, see Naylor (2009), Andreas/Wallmann (2009), and Snyder/Duran-Martinez (2009).

High levels of violence and deficits in public security delegitimize the state providing a basis for the “privatization” of state functions further weakening the state or leading to calls for “strongmen” and *mano dura* policies. These will further weaken state institutions and state legitimacy as well as limit the space for non-violent actors.<sup>33</sup>

This process can have three different consequences or outcomes:

- a permanent blockade or a struggle between different armed actors, state institutions being one of them (e.g. El Salvador),
- a downward spiral dismantling existing state-like institutions and organizations (e.g. Guatemala), or
- efforts to strengthen the state (e.g. Colombia).

The first two outcomes can lead to the “perverse state-building” pattern Pearce (2010) identified, while the last may reflect some European experiences – centralization as an initial step towards state-building. While politicians and media publicly blame violence for being a fundamental problem across all three contexts, success in strengthening the state depends on confronting and reducing impunity. Hence in Colombia, the trials against paramilitaries may be at least as important as Uribe’s “democratic security policy” in strengthening the state. Hence high levels of interpersonal violence can be a source of fragility as well as a catalyst for state-building.

## 6 Violence and State-Building in Latin America – A Path-Dependent Relationship

In this concluding section, I will summarize the different phases and patterns of state-building and present evidence regarding the thesis of patterns of war and violence termination as critical junctures in state-building. Disaggregating the relationship between war, violence, and state-building along different forms of mobilization and organization we can identify different historical phases where specific forms of violence predominated and influenced state-building:

In the aftermath of independence during the nineteenth century, external wars on the control of territory and resources dominated as did “states-within-states” in the form of indigenous communities and military entrepreneurs in the form of *caudillos*. Latin American countries whose wars or armed conflicts ended with a military victory or the subordination of the “states-within-states” were able to follow the “early European model” of state-building, successfully monopolizing the means of violence. Chile, Argentina, and Mexico provide examples of this.

During the twentieth century, internal wars as well as “states-within-states” in the form of liberated territories and military autonomy due to different political agendas shaped conflict and violence in the region. State-building was successful in cases of victory and subordi-

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<sup>33</sup> Richani (2002) has called this “systems of violence,” others label these contexts as narco- or shadow states.

nation (e.g. Costa Rica, Mexico) and remained fragile in cases of negotiation and coexistence (e.g. Colombia, Guatemala).

With the turn of the century, other “state-within-state” patterns emerged (drug lords, gangs) that have still today not been subordinated and that undermine monopolization where it had been achieved (Mexico) and make its establishment extremely difficult where it never existed in the first place (Colombia, Guatemala).

While external interventions have been present across these time periods, their impact has varied. Military interventions during the twentieth century supported an authoritarian pattern of monopolization under the control of military leaders or the military as an institution. Economic interventions in the form of economic enclaves as well as under the premise of neoliberalism deprived the Latin American states of economic resources necessary to complement monopolization with social integration. Diplomatic interventions in support of negotiations have led to outcomes with highly fragile political contexts.

Three issues are important beyond the Latin American experience.

- 1) External and internal wars ending with a victory as well as the successful subordination of “states-within-states” enable state-building along the lines of the “early European model.” Patterns of war termination are an important intervening factor as they shape the power relations after war’s end and can thus be regarded as critical junctures. Military victories support the monopolization of the means of violence as well as the establishment of patterns of social cohesion and identity through narratives along a territorially bound internal–external division. Whether the relevant actors will use their power for state-building is at their own discretion. In Latin American history, most military victories led to state-building under authoritarian conditions. But these regimes became unstable due to newly arising conflicts and social change. Costa Rica is the exceptional case due to intelligent conflict management and a favorable international and regional environment in 1948. This allowed for the abolition of the armed forces and the non-interference of the U.S. (contrary to the Guatemalan Spring six years later).
- 2) Internal wars ending with negotiated settlements as well as the existence of “states-within-states” prove problematic for state-building as they rarely lead to the establishment of a stable political order.

Negotiated settlements make the establishment of a stable political order more difficult even if pacts between the leaders of former combatant parties help to end some wars. In many cases, the price for these pacts is the exclusion of all other actors and a limitation of society’s broader participation. The Colombian National Front (1958–1978) is an example of this, as are many pacts between different oligarchic groups throughout the nineteenth century. While peace accords reflect a (temporary) consensus to end organized armed conflict, even in cases where comprehensive peace agreements are in place, this does not necessarily imply a general consensus on basic reforms or changes to the political, social, and economic order. Peace accords may just be tactical political concessions (e.g. to weaken internal opponents or

to appease external actors) whose implementation depends on existing local power relations. Guatemala and El Salvador show the related difficulties. Hence external actors promoting negotiated war termination must also provide long-term resources for implementation and sanctions for non-compliance.

Even without permanent violence, the coexistence of the sovereign states and the “states-within-states” proves difficult. The difficulties Latin American states face trying to subordinate their armed forces are an interesting example of the related consequences on state-building with a variety of outcomes. Costa Rica and Panama (after the U.S. intervention 1989), as well as the Sandinista government in Nicaragua abolished or reconstructed their armed forces after a military victory (critical juncture). Other Latin American countries struggle even today to limit or suspend military prerogatives and autonomy. The current developments in Mexico and Guatemala show the negative impact on state-building due to the establishment of violent networks between active and former military officers and criminal organizations involved in the drug trade.

3) Interpersonal violence can lead to destructive downward spirals regarding state-building, although – in specific contexts – it can serve as a catalyst for the strengthening of the state.

The current wave of interpersonal violence in Latin America provides evidence of the difficult relationship with state-building. The discourse of *mano dura* strategies helps to establish a distinction between us (the peaceful and law-abiding) and them (the violent) and thus may legitimize specific elites and strengthen the repressive capacities of the state. But without efforts to reduce impunity, these policies do not lead to a reduction in violence. Hence the state may increase coercive power without being able to protect its citizens. It thus loses (or is unable to establish) territorial control and resource extraction. The slums of many major cities that are no-go areas for the police and other state institutions across Latin America are a case in point. As a consequence, the population will seek protection from other sources leading to a process where high levels of interpersonal violence can develop into “states-within-states.” The close relationship between different forms of violence is obvious in these cases.

Hence across the different forms of war and violence, what matters most for state-building are the patterns of war and violence termination. While victory, subordination, and prosecution are conducive to the monopolization of the means of violence and the establishment of related institutions, other outcomes lead not necessarily to collapse or decay but to hybrid orders with high levels of instability. This is relevant not only for the monopolization of the means of violence but for the control of economic resources as well (e.g. economic enclaves) as these are necessary for sustainable state-building through social integration. These findings need to be tested in and across other regional contexts.

External as well as internal actors trying to reduce and control violence confront a two-fold dilemma. The European state-building model is hardly transferable, and outcomes along this line of development (monopolization) are unlikely under today’s globalized conditions. But at the same time, established international norms do not allow for policies of

non-interference (“give war a chance”) regarding high levels of violence. Hence the main challenge for state-building in the actual context is related to the question of how the changes in international norms regarding the use and legitimization of violence can be reconciled with the internal societal structures of developing societies and the need for violence control and a modicum of stability.

The analysis of current state-building processes and the related international policies should be based on the disaggregation of different forms of violence and focus on the patterns of war and violence termination. This will allow us to identify the variations in, the chances for, and the obstacles to effectively controlling violence. While the monopolization of the means of violence might work in some contexts, the development of adequate equivalents or surrogates will be necessary in others. While few will dispute the necessity of violence control in society, the specific form of its organization may vary broadly across time and space.

## Annex – Data on Violence in Latin America

Table 1: Interstate Wars in Latin America (1822-1945)

Argentina	1825–1828 (with Uruguay vs. Brazil) 1836–1839 (with Chile vs. Bolivia. and Peru) 1839–1852 (Uruguay) 1864–1870 (with Brazil and Uruguay vs. Paraguay)
Bolivia	1827 (with Colombia vs. Peru) 1836–1839 (with Peru vs. Chile and Argentina) 1879–1883 (with Peru vs. Chile) 1902 (Peru) 1932–1935 (Peru)
Brazil	1825–1828 (Argentina, Uruguay) 1864–1870 (with Argentina and Uruguay vs. Paraguay)
Chile	1836–1839 (with Argentina vs. Bolivia and Peru) 1865–1866 (with Peru vs. Spain) 1879–1883 (Bolivia and Peru)
Colombia	1827 (with Bolivia vs. Peru) 1863 (Ecuador) 1932 (Peru)
Costa Rica	1855–1857 (with Honduras and El Salvador vs. Nicaragua) 1897 (Nicaragua)
Dominican Republic	1822 (Haiti) 1862 (Spain) 1917–1918 (U.S.)
Ecuador	1859 (Peru) 1863 (Colombia) 1941–1942 (Peru)
El Salvador	1855–1857 (with Honduras and Costa Rica vs. Nicaragua) 1865–1867 (with Honduras vs. Guatemala and Nicaragua) 1885 (Guatemala) 1906 (with Honduras vs. Guatemala) 1907 (with Honduras vs. Nicaragua)
Guatemala	1865–1867 (with Nicaragua vs. El Salvador and Honduras) 1885 (El Salvador) 1906 (Honduras, El Salvador)
Haiti	1822 (Dominican Republic) 1855–1856 (Dominican Republic)
Honduras	1855–1857 (with Costa Rica and El Salvador vs. Nicaragua) 1865–1867 (with El Salvador vs. Guatemala and Nicaragua) 1906 (with El Salvador vs. Guatemala) 1907 (with El Salvador vs. Nicaragua)
Mexico	1838–1839 (France) 1846–1848 (Mexico)
Nicaragua	1855–1857 (Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador) 1865–1867 (with Guatemala vs. El Salvador and Honduras) 1897 (Costa Rica) 1907 (Honduras, El Salvador)
Paraguay	1864–1870 (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay) 1932–1935 (Bolivia)
Peru	1827 (Bolivia, Colombia) 1836–1839 (with Bolivia vs. Chile and Argentina) 1859 Ecuador 1865–1866 (with Chile vs. Spain) 1879–1883 (with Bolivia vs. Chile) 1902 (Bolivia) 1932 (Colombia) 1941–1942 (Ecuador)
Uruguay	1825–1828 (with Argentina vs. Brazil) 1839–1852 (Argentina) 1864–1870 (with Brazil and Argentina vs. Paraguay)

Source: Luard (1986).



**Table 2: Collective Violence in Latin America 1945-2010**

	Interstate		Intrastate		outcome
	War	Armed Conflict	War	Armed Conflict *	***
Argentina		1982 (U.K.)		1955 1963 1974–1975 1976–1977	Victory Victory Victory
Bolivia			1946	1952 1967	Victory Victory Victory
Chile				1973	Victory
Colombia**			1994 2001–2002 2004–2005	1964–1979 1980–1993 1995–2000 2003 2006–	Ongoing
Costa Rica				1948	Victory
Cuba			1958	1953 1956–1957 1961	Victory Victory Victory Victory
Ecuador		1995 (Peru)			
El Salvador	1969 (Honduras)		1981–1989	1972 1979–1980 1990–1991	Coup Peace agreement
Guatemala				1949 1954 1963 1965–1967 1968–1995	Victory Victory Low activity Low activity Peace agreement
Haiti				1989 1991 2004	Victory Victory Low activity
Honduras	1969 (El Salvador)	1957 (Nicaragua)			
Mexico				1994 1996	Peace agreement Low activity
Nicaragua		1957 (Honduras)	1978–1979 1983–1988	1977 1982 1990	Victory Ceasefire with conflict regula- tion
Panama		1989 (U.S.)		1989	Victory
Paraguay			1947	1954 1989	Victory Victory Victory
Peru****		1995 (Ecuador)	1983–1985 1988–1991	1965 1982 1986–1987 1992–1999 2007–	Victory MRTA: Cease- fire with conflict regulation Sendero Lumi- noso ongoing
Uruguay				1972	Low activity
Venezuela				1962 1982 1992	Victory Victory Victory

Source: UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v. 4-2011, 1946–2010; UCDP Conflict Termination dataset v. 2010-1, 1946–20010.

\* This may include episodes of violence in the context of coups d'états.

\*\* Colombia's Violencia (1948–1958) is not included in the UCDP Database because it is classified as non-state and one-sided violence. But while the political parties were the main actors, the state and the military were party to the conflict, e.g. the police participated in the repression of Liberals. Many features of so-called new wars (e.g. privatized actors, indiscriminate violence against the civilian population) were already apparent in La Violencia.

\*\*\* UCDP's Conflict Termination Set may subsume various conflict events with different intensity; e.g. Nicaragua's armed conflict (1977) and war (1978–1979) terminated with the Sandinista victory.

\*\*\*\* In the case of Peru there have been different forms of termination. While the conflict with the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA) is coded as a Ceasefire Agreement with Conflict Regulation, the armed conflict with the other guerrilla group, Sendero Luminoso, is ongoing.

**Table 3: One-Sided and Non-State Violence (1989-2008)**

	One-sided armed conflict (against civilians)	Non-state armed conflict (between organized groups)
Bolivia		2000 Qaquchacas
Brazil	1993 Government 2005 Government	2001 Terceiro Comando 2004 Terceiro Comando
Colombia	1990 ACCU 1990–1991 Government 1997–2005 AUC 1998 ELN 2000–2001 ELN 1994–2010 FARC 1989 Medellín Cartel 1993 Medellín Cartel	1990 Medellín Cartel 1993 PEPES 1997–1999 FARC 2000–2001 FARC 2002–2005 FARC 2000 ELN 2001 ELN
Ecuador		2003 Tagaeri
Guatemala		2005 Mara Salvatrucha
Haiti	1991 Government 1993–1994 Government 2005 Government	1991 Supporters of Roger Lafontant
Jamaica		2001 Supporters of PNP
Mexico	1997 Paz y Justicia 2010 Los Zetas	1993 Pena Rojas Clan 2002 Santo Domingo Teojomulco 2004 Sinaloa Cartel 2005 Sinaloa Cartel 2008-2010 Juarez Cartel 2008- Sinaloa Cartel 2008- Tijuana Cartel 2010- Gulf Cartel 2010- Beltrán Leyva Cartel 2010- Los Zetas
Peru	1989–1993 Sendero Luminoso	

Source: UCDP, minimum of 25 deaths.

**Table 4: Homicide Rates in Latin America**

Homicides per 100,000 inhabitants			
	1980	1990	2009/10
Argentina	3.9	4.8	5,5
Belize			41,7
Bolivia			8,9
Brazil	11.5	19.7	22,9
Chile	2.6	3.0	3,7
Colombia	20.5	89.5	33,4
Costa Rica			11,3
Cuba			4,6 (2008)
Dominican Republic			24,9
Ecuador	6.4	10.3	18,2
El Salvador			66,0
Guatemala			41,4
Haiti			6,9
Honduras			82,1
Mexico*	18.2	17.8	18,1
Nicaragua			13,2
Panama	2.1	10.9	21,6
Paraguay	5.1	4.0	11,5
Peru	2.4	11.5	5,2
Uruguay	2.6	4.4	6,1
Venezuela	11.7	15.2	49,0

Sources: Homicide: 1980, 1990 Ayres (1998:3); 2003–2010: most recent in UNODC 2011.

\* Historical data for Mexico show a decline of homicide rates during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, while current data indicate a strong increase after 2008 (Ríos/Shirk 2011:6).

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