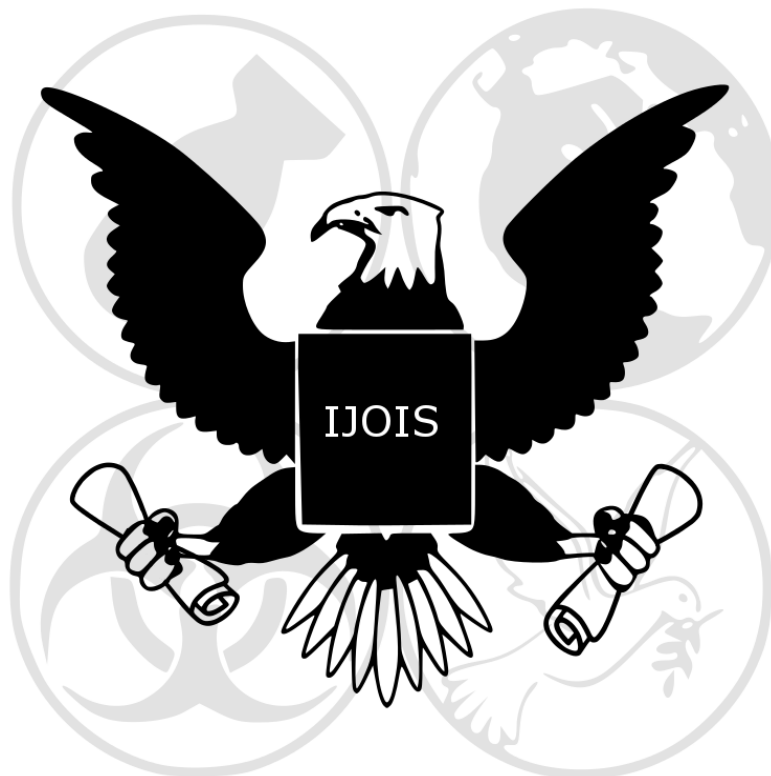


Illini Journal of International Security

Fall 2020, Volume VII



Letter from the Editor

Dear reader,

On behalf of the IJOIS Editorial Board, the Program in Arms Control & Domestic and International Security, the University Library, and the supportive academic community of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, we would like to thank you for reading the sixth issue of Illini Journal of International Security (IJOIS)! IJOIS is a peer-reviewed academic journal that was founded in September 2015 by undergraduate students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We publish exceptional papers on topics within international security or foreign affairs.

For our seventh issue of the journal, we are excited to publish outstanding undergraduate papers that explore some of the most pressing issues within international security and foreign affairs, covering a wide range of topic areas and geographical regions. The first paper that is presented in this edition of the journal is one by Emma Hamel, titled “The Nuclear Awakening of China, which explores the expanding nuclear arsenal of China and explores the background of Chinese nuclear ambitions. The second paper is by Keunhee Kim, titled “At What Cost? Examining the Efficacy of Military Intervention,” and explores the role of the United Nations and United States in intervention in conflicts around the globe. The third paper is by Jake Sepich, titled “In Support of an Independent Kurdistan,” and looks at the historical background of national sovereignty and goes on with the present example of Kurdistan and its struggle for independence. The final paper presented is by Ryan Vetticad, titled “The Justification of International Military Intervention in Response to Human Rights Abuses,” which looks at the pros and cons to military intervention in response to human rights abuses and argues in favor of intervention.

These exceptional undergraduate papers present novel arguments on a wide array of issues within international security and foreign affairs. We hope that these papers will challenge and inform our readers, spark discussion, and encourage undergraduate students to explore these pressing issues or pursue international studies further. We hope you enjoy reading!

Dylan H. Hyams
Editor-in-Chief

About the Illini Journal of International Security

The Illini Journal of International Security (IJOIS) is a peer-reviewed undergraduate academic journal that was founded in September 2015 by undergraduate students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. IJOIS is published biannually through the University of Illinois Library with the support of the Program of Arms Control & Domestic and International Security (ACDIS) and consists of exceptional undergraduate and graduate papers on topics related to international security or foreign affairs. IJOIS utilizes a cross-disciplinary approach and accepts papers from students studying the social sciences, STEM fields, business and the humanities that analyze international security issues from innovative perspectives. While IJOIS is run by students at UIUC, the Journal accepts submissions from students at all University of Illinois campuses (Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield).

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The Nuclear Awakening of China

Emma Hamel

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

The People's Republic of China, one of the biggest military presences in the world, has been rapidly expanding its once modest nuclear arsenal. This article will explore these developments and attempt to explain why China may be expanding its arsenal by looking at motivations arising from international conflicts. The article discusses the history of China's nuclear weapons program, the current efforts to modernize its warheads, and the possible factors that may have spurred this development. The findings in this article showcase how Chinese territorial disputes with its neighboring countries, as well as possible nuclear tensions with the United States, are likely motivating China to improve its nuclear weapons program. Additionally, there is evidence that they are broadening their nuclear capabilities to become a leading nuclear power like the United States and Russia.

Although widely seen as an international military superpower, The People's Republic of China kept a notoriously small nuclear arsenal throughout most of its history. In recent decades, however, the country has been developing its land, air, and sea-based nuclear armaments. China is expanding its nuclear arsenal in response to recent advancements in American military technology and a need to project power around its neighboring countries.

History of China's Nuclear Arms Program

Since its conception in 1949, the People's Republic of China has kept a limited nuclear arsenal. To date, the country only possesses 290 nuclear bombs and no tactical weapons, making it one of the smallest nuclear arsenals of the major world powers (Davenport & Reif, 2019). China also keeps a relatively small collection of RAM-type launchers for land-based missiles and bombers for air-based missiles. Moreover, unlike the United States and Russia, China does not keep nuclear warheads on nuclear launchers during peacetime and has a *No First Use Policy*, which dictates that China will only use a nuclear bomb in response to a nuclear strike. These factors suggest that China created a nuclear weapons program merely to display the country's military prowess and diplomatic credibility, as well as deter nuclear harassment from other countries. The size of China's nuclear capabilities may also be attributed to its unending amount of manpower. Chairman Mao Zedong was confident that the size of his country could adequately defend from any possible nuclear attack, famously stating, "I'm not afraid of nuclear war. ... China has a population of 600 million; even if half of them are killed, there are still 300 million people left" ("China's nuclear", 2019). In an interview with an American journalist, he further expounds upon this idea, saying "The atom bomb is a paper tiger which the U.S. reactionaries use to scare people. It looks terrible, but in fact it isn't. Of course, the atom bomb is a weapon of mass slaughter, but the outcome of a war is decided by the people, not by one or two new types of weapon.." ("Talk with American", 1946). Since then, nearly every Chairman of the People's Republic has kept a small nuclear force until Chairman Jinping. Under Jinping's administration, the Chinese nuclear triad made significant growth in the past two decades. The following sections will detail China's current plans to update its nuclear weapons and attempt to explain why China is developing its nuclear arsenal.

Current Efforts to Modernize

China is making strides in its 'nuclear triad' by diversifying its nuclear capabilities across land, sea, and air. Since the early 2000's, China has been developing new land based inter-continental ballistic missiles, nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, and heavy bombers. Solid-fueled, road-mobile missiles such as *Dong Feng* (DF) class missiles are the newest and most impressive addition to China's land-based arsenal. The latest version of these silo-based missiles, the DF-41, has a range of 15,000 km, can hold up to eight warheads, and has survivability thanks to its mobility ("How", 2019). The DF-41 could potentially release the equivalent of 1 Megaton of TNT ("Dong Feng-41 (Dong Feng-41 / CSS-5)", 2019). China has roughly between 60-200 DF-21 missiles ("Dong Feng-21 (Dong Feng-21 / CSS-5)", 2019) and 25 DF-31 missiles deployed ("Dong Feng-41 (Dong Feng-41 / CSS-5)", 2019).

The Nation's ballistic missile-equipped submarines (similar to American SSBNs) and attack submarines are also being modernized. The *Xia*, a Jin-class submarine, is the only operational Chinese SSBN currently in use and are considered to be technologically primitive, as they are relatively noisy and therefore can be located easily (Farnsworth & Tamerlani & Taylor & Timothy, 2013). The Chinese submarines currently deployed are equipped with JL-2 missiles,

at-sea ballistic missiles (SLBM) that have a range of 8,000-9,000 km and are generally seen as less capable than American and Russian SLBMs, which have a greater range (Goldstein & Erickson, 2019). However, China is building five new Jin-class ballistic missile submarines that can hold 24 Julang-3 (JL-3) missiles, which is comparable to American and Russian SLBMs (*China makes*, 2018).

Furthermore, China plans to bolster its once low-priority air-based delivery systems. The Chinese Air Force is currently developing a new bomber plane, the H-6K. The H-6K bomber is able to carry up to ten cruise missiles with a range of 2,000 kilometers, and deliver the payload to a total range of 5000 kilometers. Additionally, Beijing may be seeking to develop a stealth bomber called the H-20 (Mizokami, 2020). This bomber is similar in design to the American B-2 bomber, and may be ready to deploy as early as 2025.

Possible Factors for Expansion

The Chinese government officially states that its efforts to increase its nuclear arsenal are to strengthen its security (“China's Military”, 2015). However, many other factors may have influenced the sudden expansion. In recent decades, China has found itself in various international disputes. Tensions between the United States and China may have incentivised the nation to match the nuclear prowess of America. Additionally, China is also attempting to expand its borders, which has resulted in a number of territorial conflicts with other countries, such as the South China Sea dispute with the Philippines. The nation may be building its nuclear arsenal to defend or dissuade an attack from one of its competitors.

American defense behavior has clearly impacted China’s military desires. Chinese government officials were alarmed when President George W. Bush pulled out of the 30-year-old Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002. Once the United States withdrew from the agreement, the country could develop missiles that could overpower China’s nuclear arsenal. Their suspicions were correct; the Bush administration and the following presidential administrations continued to heavily invest in missile defense systems. Recently, Chinese experts have taken particular interest in new American long-range missiles that can hit any target across the globe within an hour (*China's nuclear*, 2019). With such a weapon, American forces could easily decimate China’s collection of nuclear warheads and launchers. It is clear that China is aware of the nuclear climate and understands that the United States is fully capable of destroying its nuclear arsenals. Thus, American nuclear efforts may have motivated China to develop new long-range missiles so the nation can counter such an attack. The newest line of the DF missile, the DF-41, is capable of hitting American soil from China within an hour (*China's nuclear*, 2019). China is also preparing for a possibility of a American-Chinese nuclear conflict in it’s own backyard: The South China Sea.

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea have incentivized China to expand its naval nuclear capabilities. Three countries currently claim large sections of the South China Sea: the Philippines, Vietnam, and China. In July of 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruled that China was operating illegally in Philippine territory in the South China Sea. In the court’s holding, they state that China has historically not had an exclusive claim to the region and that the country is actively “interfering with Philippine fishing and petroleum exploration” (“The South China Sea”, 2016, p.2). China has ignored the court’s ruling and continues to operate in the region. (Territorial, n.d.). This comes as no surprise, as absolute control of the South China Sea would come with a multitude of benefits.

The South China Sea is a resource-rich area and is estimated to hold around 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 11 billion barrels of untapped oil, worth around \$6 trillion (Territorial, n.d.). The islands located in the Sea also contain fishing areas and other natural resources estimated at around. With the South China Sea, China can amass around \$5 trillion from trade and control one third of the world's cargo that passes through the South China Sea. With this trade advantage, China may also be able to restrict trade to countries. Additionally, control of the South China Sea holds a significant military advantage. Satellite imagery shows that China is creating and increasing the size of islands in the sea, as well as constructing ports, airstrips, and other military facilities on them (Territorial, n.d.). All of these factors suggest that the South China Sea is of great economic and strategic value to China.

China is clearly ready to defend its claim in the South China Sea as the nation recently conducted naval exercises in the area in April of 2018. The United States also has a significant military presence in the South China Seas to protect its security, political, and economic interests (Territorial, n.d.). China clearly views American influence in the region as its biggest threat. Thus, the country has been developing the JL-3 missile, which supposedly rivals the capabilities of missiles carried by American submarines and surface ships deployed in the South China Sea (Chan & Huang, 2019). With these weapons, China will be ready to retaliate against or discourage an attack from America and the other nations who disagree with China's illegal claims. The development of these weapons indicates a possible arms-race between China and the United States, and that China aims to achieve a strong nuclear triad in its effort to become a major nuclear power.

America is not the only nuclear threat concerning China. China has played an active role in the India-Pakistan nuclear conflict. China sees India as a concern, as the two nations have a territorial dispute at the Indo-Sino border. This has led China to supply aid to Pakistan, India's largest nuclear rival. China provided funding and weapon designs to Pakistan until the mid-1990's (Burr, 2004). Today, they still sell nuclear delivery vessels, such as submarines, to Pakistan (Hundley, 2018). This alliance may also suggest that China would send military support to Pakistan if the nation were to go to war with India.

China's support of Pakistan's nuclear ambitions may be attributed to the territorial conflicts between China and India. Specifically, both countries claim a large land mass in eastern Kashmir called Aksai Chin. Despite being uninhabitable, Aksai Chin is strategically important to the Chinese occupation of Tibet. In the region, the Chinese have built a highway to transport troops from Xinjiang to Tibet (Basrur, 2019). The construction of this highway sparked a violent conflict between India and China in 1962 and since then, China has completed the highway with little interference.

Tibet is a crucial component of Chinese imperialism. Like the South China Sea, China wants Tibet for its strategic geographical location. With Tibet under Chinese control, China can reach the rest of Eurasia more readily, especially India. Tibet also has a lucrative mining industry and plentiful water sources which may be of interest to China (Why, 2008). The emphasis on Chinese control of Tibet may be the reason they have been increasing their military presence in the region and growing their collection of land-based nuclear weapons.

As China's influence in Aksai Chin and Tibet grows, the more likely China will protect its claim on the territory. There is a possibility of nuclear conflict over the region as violent attacks between the two countries have plagued the region for decades. The most recent attack in 2019 was a bombing conducted by Islamic Militants that sparked both sides to conduct a number of air strikes in Pakistan and Indian-controlled Kashmir (Yusuf, 2019). Both Pakistan and India

have been refining their nuclear weapons should the conflict in Kashmir become worse. China may be inclined to produce land-based missiles to defend its claim on Aksai Chin. As previously discussed, China is developing a number of powerful short-ranged land missiles, some of which were deployed in China's western provinces as recently as 2010 (Kristensen, 2010). This may signify that China is anticipating the risk of going to nuclear war with India, or is planning to use nuclear weapons as a means of deterring India from attacking.

Conclusion

China's territorial expansion and tense relationship with the United States and its neighboring countries have made the possibility of nuclear war a very real threat. In response to these perceived international threats, China has been substantially expanding its nuclear capabilities. Although this may seem like a reasonable response to the current international climate, China should be cautious of how other countries perceive their efforts to bolster its nuclear weapons program. China's competitors, such as the United States and Russia, could interpret this development as a threat and act accordingly by developing weapons to counter the new Chinese nuclear weapons.

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At What Cost? Examining the Efficacy of Military Intervention

Keunhee Kim

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

According to the United Nations, human rights are the rights to which all people are equally and fairly entitled. Among these are: to be free from slavery and torture, to express themselves, to work and be educated, and to life itself (Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Globalization has been a powerful means to deal with crucial issues integral to the sanctity of human life by bringing international attention and support from around the world to violations of human rights. The military efforts of NATO and the UN forces are ready examples of the global initiative against human rights violations; however, they are not without their cost. This is evidenced by the general ineffectiveness of military interventions, seen in conflicts such as the Iraq War which led to the formation of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (1999-present) (Lopez, 2020), the Somali Civil War (1989/1991-present), the Kosovo War (1998-1999), and the Bosnian War (1992-1995). In order to provide an in-depth analysis, this paper limits its purview to the Kosovo War and the Bosnian War. The high casualty rates, impact of refugees, and destabilization to international societies during the Kosovo War, and then again three years later in the Bosnian War, show how difficult military intervention is for protecting human rights. Instead, the international society should explore non-violent alternatives—economic sanctions and cyber-attacks—and work together to combat human rights violations. The importance of global collaboration in non-violent intervention can be used, for example, to cease North Korea’s mass human rights abuses under the current dictatorship. While the U.S. government’s sanctions are not the most effective, and focus more on nuclear rather than human rights issues, scholars have speculated that sanctions from stronger trading partners will have a real impact on the situation; thus, non-violent approaches call for international collaboration. This paper examines the scholarship on armed interventions and argues that military interventions even for humanitarian purposes are not justifiable for two reasons: the negative global impact of war and the inability of

military solutions to solve the repeated tensions that lead to their respective wars. Additionally, this paper examines the potential effectiveness and risk-mitigation of non-violent alternatives and urges international alliances for higher capability in mitigating the issue of human rights violations.

Introduction

Globalization has been a powerful means to deal with crucial issues integral to the sanctity of human life by bringing international attention and support from around the world to violations of human rights. After World War II, the United Nations formulated an inclusive “international human rights law” to combat existent and potential violations of human rights, such as genocide (CNN Wire, 2020, p. 1). Countries have adopted the United Nations’ principles and therefore bear the responsibility to ensure that individual citizens retain their fundamental human rights. No matter what, human rights should be valued above national interests as means to a successful cosmopolitan society. A growing number of people are examining egregious human rights abuses and ethnic persecutions (Coady, 2002, p.1). For example, North Korean defectors reported torture and other atrocities committed by the North Korean regime to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in 2013 (Keesing’s Record of World Events, 2013, p.2). North Korean defectors and South Korean governmental members have advocated for an international action on North Korea. However, over the past decades, the politics and ethics of military intervention in response to humanitarian issues has been controversial. Americans debated whether armed intervention in Vietnam was morally justified, having demonstrations against the brutal violence of the war effort. This paper examines the scholarship on armed interventions and argues that military interventions even for humanitarian purposes are not justifiable for two reasons: the negative global impact of war and the inability of military solutions to solve the repeated tensions that lead to their respective wars. Additionally, this paper examines the potential risk-mitigation of non-violent alternatives and urges international alliances to take on the obligation in remedying the issue of human rights violations.

Background in International Human Rights Scholarship

Every person is equally entitled to their human rights regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, age, religion, language, or any other status. The United Nations (UN) defines this principle in Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (The United Nations, 1948). The Canadian philosopher Kimberley Brownlee points out that a violation of human rights is a matter of cardinal importance; with globalization, international organizations and governmental actors increasingly address and attempt to prevent human rights violations as a priority matter (2013). For example, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Council (OHCHR, 2020) established the International Human Rights Treaties. The OHCHR issues publications to raise awareness of human rights violations in the world. Despite international efforts, human rights abuses still occur in countries around the world. Human Rights Watch reports that female genital mutilation has been globally practiced on more than 140 million females, mostly on young girls under 15 years-old, for non-medical reasons, but for cultural or religious reasons such as the coming-of-age ceremony (2010).

Scholars disagree about whether human rights abuses justify international armed intervention. While some scholars maintain that international armed forces should intervene in cases of human rights abuses, they often argue that war should be the last resort (De Waal & Omaar, 1994, p. 6). Alex De Waal and Rakiya Omaar illustrate that if military forces are needed to intervene, they should maintain a neutral position (p. 8). However, people should think about whether military intervention is an ethically justifiable method; preceding military intervention, De Waal and Omaar claim that relief and diplomatic efforts should be prioritized (p. 7). Ironically, military intervention can result in more human rights abuses in the end, leading to higher casualties and refugees. Beyond thinking about the rationale for military interventions,

they also call for accurate and independent evaluations of the scale and nature of humanitarian needs (p. 7). Additionally, they point out that military intervention may not necessarily address the strategic context of a disaster (p. 8). Finally, they state that intervening forces should strive for neutrality and be accountable (p. 8). In summary, De Waal and Omaar assert that international military intervention for human rights abuses can work, but it should be the last resort.

Many scholars think that even though the aim of military intervention is to stop human rights abuses, armed intervention cannot be justified. For example, Political Science scholar Dursun Peksen argues that regardless of the intentions of the intervening force, foreign armed intervention of any kind does not help human rights abuses (2012). Indeed, supportive, neutral, or hostile interventions all promote domestic instability across the nation. Interventions in general only increase the occurrences of human rights abuses via “more violence, humanitarian disasters, and other instabilities given the inherent link between the respect for human rights and the maintenance of peace and security” (Peksen, p. 568). Military interventions—regardless of their intention or strategic approach and despite their humanitarian goals—lead to violence, instability, and further human rights violations.

Generally, armed conflict has damage global societies in numerous ways. Political scientist Arben Qirezi shows Serbians used “self-determination strategies” against Albanian populations, which called for the genocide of the Kosovo War (2016). Three years after the Bosnian War, the Serbians repeated this genocide against a different target, Albanians. Qirezi delicately described the aftermath of the war and international military intervention against Serbians’ human rights abuses. For example, Qirezi highlights that during the Kosovo War, there were a lot of civilian deaths and a mass exodus to neighboring countries due to the effect the war had on the population (2016, pp. 39-22). Political science professor Richard Regan provides specific numbers of refugees from the aftermath of the Bosnian war (2013). In both cases, the sudden and heavy influx of refugees into countries that were unprepared, stressed, and taxed of their resources, made Kosovo, Bosnia, and other neighboring countries unstable.

While military intervention may seem to be an immediately effective option, Haggard and Noland argue that the international community should work together towards a non-violent interventionist approach to resolve the underlying issues of conflicts and put pressure on a country that repeatedly violates human rights; one example being North Korea (2011). They also show possible effective non-violent strategies in terms of international financial and diplomatic isolation through sanctions to compel the target to listen to the international community (2011).

Scholarly Positions for Intervention

Scholars point out violations of human rights that have been committed around the world. North Korea has rampantly infringed for some time on personal rights such as forced labor, murder, torture, rape, forced abortion, religious and racial persecution, and deliberate starvation (Human Rights Watch, 2014, p. 360). Therefore, the UNHRC established a committee in 2013 to carry out formal inquiries to examine the human rights situation in North Korea (Human Rights Watch, 2014, p. 360). International communities have been appealing for help to stop and to prevent systemic human rights abuses under the totalitarian regime. Given these ongoing human rights abuses and countries’ involvement, such research is significant in making non-violent interventions more palatable.

Nevertheless, there is some disagreement in scholarship on international armed intervention for humanitarian purposes. Some scholars have the point of view that armed

intervention can work to discourage human rights abuses, but they believe that armed conflict should be the last resort. Alex De Waal and Rakiya Omaar are of this opinion and believe that when armed forces intervene, they should maintain a neutral position focusing on verifying facts without bias (1994, p. 8). In contrast, Dursun Peksen refutes Waal and Omaar's idea pointing out that supportive or even neutral interventions cannot solve human rights abuses (2012). Military interventions, which take a supportive or neutral stance towards the government of a country, make extrajudicial killing, disappearance, political imprisonment, and torture more likely to occur (Peksen, 2012, p. 558). Notably, Dursun Peksen's stance is an argument against taking a neutral position when it comes to international military intervention for humanitarian purposes. To illustrate this point, Richard Regan notes that the neutral intervention does not work because, in the Bosnian War, even though the Security Council created six "safe areas" for people in Bosnia, these were attacked by Serbians who continued to violate human rights of Bosniaks (2013, p. 207). The UN attempted to maintain neutral positions. Yet, this did not have a desired result as the Serbians did not acknowledge the neutrality of the UN.

Military intervention is not without its fault. De Waal and Omaar highlight that war leads to other mass human rights abuses by creating high rates of casualties, orphans, and refugees (1994). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UNHCR provide specific numerical information to support this. The OHCHR examines the number of unlawful killings to civilians due to armed conflicts between both parties (2015). During the Sri Lankan Civil War, the government estimated the number of people who were affected by the conflict to be only 100,000, but later acknowledged an estimated 300,000 people were affected (p. 51). The UNHCR points out that post World War II, wars and conflicts have caused around 51.2 million people to seek refuge in neighboring countries (2014, p. 5). Altogether, the consequences of armed intervention are further abuses to human rights, which counters the aim of the international military intervention to reduce human rights abuses.

Even De Waal and Omaar are aware of the seriousness of this aspect, and they think that the most important part in terms of international military intervention, is whether or not the military force can do the job (1994, p. 7). They maintain that even if military intervention takes place for human rights abuses, armed intervention cannot be the preferred strategy (p. 7). In other words, since most modern armed forces utilize highly developed weapons and technologies to win a war in a short period of time, they predict that there would be more or worse violations of human rights during or after the war (p. 7). De Waal and Omaar describe armed intervention for humanitarian purposes in Somalia in 1992 and show the drawbacks of international military intervention to solve human rights violations (1994, p. 7). This is why they believe that international military intervention for humanitarian purposes should be the last step to resolve violations of human rights.

On the whole, military intervention for humanitarian purposes is still a controversial issue. On one hand, scholars such as Dursun Peksen acknowledge the benefits of armed intervention. Other scholars such as Arben Qirezi, Regan, Haggard, and Nolan also provide realistic reasons why armed intervention is not justifiable even though it is to protect human rights. In contrast, De Waal and Omaar provide reasons why international military intervention cannot be justified for humanitarian purposes.

The Cost of Violent Intervention

Taking all the scholarly positions into consideration, international military intervention cannot be justified, even if it has humanitarian purposes, due to its usual severe negative global

impact. First of all, Richard Regan (2013) and Arben Qirezi (2016) elucidate the aftermath of war, making examples of the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War; wars which only settled after international military forces intervened. The Bosnian War occurred from April 6th in 1992 to December 14th, 1995. In 1992, the society was composed of Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks), Bosnian-Serbians, and some other ethnicities (Regan, 2013, p.199). The incident began with the declaration of independence of Bosniaks. With the spread of nationalism, Serbians, who did not support and even resisted the independence of the Bosniaks, fanned the flames of their desire to create a Great Serbia. Serbians started the ethnic cleansing of Bosniaks in order to force them to flee. Regan pointed out that the Serbians committed vile atrocities on Bosniaks, especially in the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo, where Serbians massacred the civilians with artillery (Regan, 2013, p.199). Despite several attempts by the UN, Serbia's violation of human rights continued. To remedy the human rights abuses, NATO externally intervened by employing air strikes against the Serbians, after which the Serbians backed down (Regan, 2013, p. 210).

Ostensibly, the military intervention ended the Bosnian War, but the cost of the armed intervention must be taken into consideration. Throughout the violence, Bosnia lost many lives, and even after the war, Bosnians suffered. Richard Regan described that during the war, 2,000,000 Bosnians became refugees and fled to neighboring countries (Regan, 2013, pp. 203-204). The OHCHR defines a refugee as, one who is forcefully displaced “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” and stipulates how all different kinds of human rights should be protected (OHCHR, 2020). Regan also points out that most residential areas and cities were destroyed, and people suffered from shortage of indispensable resources (Regan, 2013, pp. 203-204). These repercussions are consistent with Brownlee’s description of human rights violations (2013).

Secondly, international armed involvement cannot be justified by human rights violations, since the military force cannot resolve the tension underneath the war or prevent repetition of conflict. The critical loophole of military intervention is that it can only be a temporary solution for humanitarian purposes as examined in the Bosnian and Kosovo Wars. Less than three years after the Bosnian War ended, Serbians again violated human rights against Albanian populations in Kosovo. The Kosovo War is considered to be another instance ethnic cleansing and occurred between May 5th, 1998 and June 11th, 1999. Serbia had an unfulfilled desire for the Great Serbia, so it wanted an annexation; however, Albanians fought for their independence. When a Serbian police officer who went out for patrol was killed by an Albanian, Serbian aggressors used his death as an excuse to massacre Albanians (Qirezi, 2016). Serbia sent troops to kill Albanian civilians. In June of 1998, the United States of America and the European Union demanded the withdrawal of the Serbian military and the termination of the massacre of Albanian civilians. However, Serbians ignored the ultimatum and occupied an Albanian military base. The bloodshed dragged on for a year until NATO intervened yet again to stop the escalation of the conflict.

The military intervention of NATO did not solve the core issue underlying the war, even if it was for a humanitarian cause. Serbians infringed upon human rights with the same reasons and with the same strategies in the Kosovo War as they did in the Bosnian War. Even though NATO stopped Serbians’ human rights abuses temporarily with its military attacks, Serbia repeated the violations later against another target. Therefore, the Kosovo War had most of the severe negative impacts not only domestically but also internationally. Arben Qirezi and Regan

show that military intervention has critical limitations to prevent further conflicts and human rights abuses by giving numerical information and specific events. For instance, Arben Qirezi highlights that during the Kosovo War, 13,321 of civilians died or went missing and about 164,000 people left Kosovo due to the aftermath of the war (Arben Qirezi, 2016, p.5).

Another inability of international military intervention that can be shown from both the Bosnian and Kosovo War is that if external powers is what it took to force an end of tensions, then the major fault that led to a war would have remained, so that continuous conflict would last for a long time. For instance, Arben Qirezi focuses on the discord between Serbians and Albanians after the formal peace agreement at the end of the war with an example of an outbreak of ethnic riots by Albanians against Serbians in 2004 (2016, p.57). Qirezi stresses the point that since the delicate relationship between the two groups was determined by external intervention, “this unresolved dispute continues to foster both group insecurity and regional instability” (2016, p.37). This demonstrates that external military intervention by force cannot solve main conflicts that initiated a feud between both parties. While the military intervention may work on the surface issue, it does not present as a sustainable and long-term strategy.

Lastly, due to the negative consequences of armed conflicts, as shown above, international society should seek for sustainable, non-violent alternative strategies of intervention and cooperation for humanitarian purposes. For example, by collectively putting pressure on a target country and by isolating it from the global society—financially and diplomatically—in order to weaken the target regime and protect its citizens’ human rights.

What could be a good alternative or remedy for the international community in regard to the severe drawbacks of military intervention? Haggard and Nolan point out “the difficulty the United States had in mobilizing pressure on North Korea” (Haggard & Nolan, 2011, p.14). As the United States has a much weaker trade relationship with North Korea than China and South Korea, non-violent interventions like sanctions have little effect and are not very persuasive (p.14). However, if stronger trade partners like China and South Korea, who account for “55 percent to 80 percent of North Korea’s trade,” were to sanction North Korea, their efforts would be much more effective in pressuring the regime (Haggard & Nolan, 2011, p.16). Haggard and Nolan also argue that the international community should team up against the target country financially and diplomatically with an example of North Korea (2011, p.14). They highlight that China’s commerce made about 2.7 billion dollars of trade with North Korean commerce in 2007 (Haggard & Nolan, 2011, Figure 4). This enormous foreign capital enables North Korea to maintain their communist regime, which leads to systemic human rights violations. As North Koreans are educated to worship the Kim dynasty, anyone who defies Kim’s regime will be tortured or even killed (Larsen, 2020; Edwards, 2015). The unique structure of the dictatorship of North Korea, which concentrates power in the hands of a single dynasty, enables systemic human rights abuses such as torture, murder, rape, and arbitrary detention (Choe, 2020). Therefore, it is important to financially and diplomatically isolate North Korea from the international community in order to protect human rights.

Haggard and Nolan insist that the whole international society should cooperate to strategically isolate North Korea, forcing them to back down (2011, p.14). For example, the scholars highlight the decrease in trading between Japan/South Korea and North Korea as well as the increase in trading between China and North Korea. The author stresses the point that “despite the high partner concentration of North Korea’s trade, its vulnerability to sanctions has not necessarily increased. Those countries more inclined to sanction North Korea—the United States and Japan—have negligible economic exchange with the country” (Haggard and Nolan,

2011, p.16). That is to say, even though nations concerned about human rights violations are enacting diplomatic/financial non-violent interventions, such as sanctions, those nations, like the United States, do not significantly affect North Korea's earnings from foreign capital. Countries that are weak trading partners with the offending nation will have little pressure on the offending nation and thus have a small effect in their intervention.

The active commercial trade between North Korea and China is a large enabler of North Korea and its operations. If China and other significant trade partners of North Korea were to get on board with the rest of the world and sanction North Korea, this collaboration could become a method of putting pressure on a country for certain demands. The international community should be in alliance with each other by signing treaties which might allow them to backfill their economic losses that are derived from the economic sanctions against the target country to stop its human rights abuses. This means that if the global society does not work together and only thinks about their own interests, the financial/diplomatic isolation would not be as effective in getting any country to listen to the international community. The coalition should prioritize human rights over instant gratification, like economical gains, for the benefit of global prosperity. The international community should ensure to propagate the idea of human rights so that all of mankind can fully understand that they deserve to have human rights and human rights abuses should not be tolerated.

Conclusion: Violent Intervention is Never Justifiable

Infringement upon individual human rights should be combated with more effective and non-violent joint efforts of the international community. There are some disagreements amongst scholars whether armed intervention can be justified or not. International military intervention has been shown to have a negative global impact and to be ineffective at solving the tensions underlying the wars and situations in which human rights violations occur. Additionally, the global society should strive to improve non-violent alternative intervention strategies such as financial and diplomatic sanctions and cooperatively implement them for humanitarian purposes. The International community should fight against injustice in its society and regrab the ideal of inborn human rights, but this can only be done if it is pursued non-violently and in one accord. Should the international community choose to commit to joint, non-violent intervention for the sake of human rights, military intervention and all its downsides may never again be necessary.

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In Support of an Independent Kurdistan

Jake Sepich

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Since the end of World War I, ethnic Kurds have been denied a sovereign, independent state despite repeated assistance provided to the West. Because of this, and features of their state such as promotion of democratic values, the United States should actively support an independent Kurdistan from a minimum of the territory held in Iraq to as large as the total territory which could have been gained under the referendum promised in the Treaty of Sevres. This paper examines first the historic background since 1921 which has led to how the situation currently stands. Next, it examines the aspects of an independent Kurdistan which would be beneficial to the United States and Western Society at large. These are shown through the political and economic work that has been undertaken in Kurdish territory in Northern Iraq. Finally, it is worth considering possible issues behind support of such a policy for the United States and thus the major issues are laid out for consideration. While no decision has been made, there is certainly room for movement, especially with the election of a new Biden administration. When discussing improving relations with United States allies, it bears considering a shift in view of the Middle East to bring the Kurds into the fold of close U.S. allies.

The area that would make up an independent state of Kurdistan lays across four countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Today, there are approximately 30 million Kurds throughout the world (The Kurdish Project) with many of them living outside of this area. Because of this, the Kurds are one of the largest, stateless, ethnic groups in the world. The United States should support an independent Kurdistan despite the opposition from other countries in the region due to the economic, security, and strategic benefits which could be gained subsequently. Kurdistan's benefit as an economic partner is primarily based in the energy sector with their large oil reserves. They are currently renovating their economy away from one that is oil-based to one that includes an emerging private sector and use of the vast quantities of arable land, which was overtaken by Saddam Hussein's urbanization project.

On the security front, the Kurds have fought alongside the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and have been a vital ally in the defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) because of the territory they have held and the support they have provided. They were the first ethnic group to react and fight against ISIL and were a necessary partner. Finally, the Kurds can help the United States reach its strategic goals of promoting democratic goals and norms throughout the region both by example and as a close ally of Israel. The Kurds have also shown their ability to do this through a history of following democratic norms and promoting diversity within their own territory.

History of Kurdistan from the end of WWI - Present

Following World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the Treaty of Sevres was negotiated to split up the Middle East (Sansal). In this Treaty, the Kurds were promised a referendum to determine whether or not to create an independent Kurdistan under the British sphere of influence. However, three years later nationalists overthrew the Sultan of Turkey. The new Turkish government did not recognize the Treaty of Sevres and renegotiated it to become the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 which denied a Kurdish homeland.

Despite the setback in efforts to create a Kurdish state, resistance groups attempted to make progress. General Mullah Mustafa Barzani led most of these revolutionary attempts until his death in 1979. His first attempt was in 1943 when he attempted to fight the Iraqi government with a small force. After this failed, in 1945 he fled to the Kurdish Mahabad Republic in Iran. In large part due to support from the USSR, the Kurds were able to successfully fight the Iraqi government. In the end, support was receded from the Kurds and the Iranian government attacked Barzani and his forces, ending this stage of resistance. Barzani returned to Iraq in 1958 when the Free Officers, an underground military organization, overthrew the monarchy and established a new government that recognized Kurdish national rights. Despite this, the KDP, or Kurdistan Democratic Party, now led by Barzani, staged a revolt against the new government in 1961 with the assistance of local tribal groups. The government eventually put down the revolt and dissolved the KDP, but offered an autonomy agreement in 1970. This agreement was not seen as providing enough authority to the KDP, and ultimately resulted in a final failed revolt by General Barzani. In this revolt, the United States provided weapons to the Kurds in hope that they would defeat Iraq, but would not take an official stance (Smith). In 1975, the US broke off all support for the Kurdish rebels after the Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran because they did not view Iraq to be as large of a threat. Thus, the Iraqi Army pushed the Kurds back and the United States allowed General Barzani to live out his final days in the U.S.

In the 1980's, the KDP and another Kurdish rebel groups, called the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), came together with Iran to fight against Iraq and Saddam Hussein. As the war

with Iran came to a conclusion, Saddam sent his brother, along with the Iraqi military, to put down any semblance of resistance. His brother, Ali Hassan al-Majid, proceeded to use chemical weapons on both rebel targets and civilian towns. Between chemical weapon attacks and other humanitarian atrocities, it was believed that up to 90% of all Kurdish villages were destroyed (Johns, 2006) in the Anfal Campaign, or Anfal Genocide. In 1990, President George HW Bush called upon Iraqis to help throw Saddam out of power. After Operation Desert Storm and with Saddam still being in office, he began to take revenge on the Kurds who had helped the United States. In response to the defeat of Saddam Hussein by the United States and Allied forces, the Kurds began an insurgency attempt in 1991. Saddam Hussein proceeded to use chemical weapons (Air Force Historical Support Division, 2012) to suppress the insurgency. As a consequence of the burgeoning humanitarian crisis, the United States instituted a no-fly zone in Northern Iraq. This was led by the United States, United Kingdom, and France to prevent another genocide like the one that occurred in Anfal in 1988. This allowed the Kurds to take over large swaths of territory, establish an autonomous region, form the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The KRG is a power sharing agreement between the PUK and KDP, but the peace did not last long and a civil war erupted from 1994-1998.

The U.S. invaded Iraq five years after the conclusion of the civil war in 2003 and the Kurds assisted in overthrowing Saddam Hussein. Following the overthrow, the Kurds continued to work towards achieving increased levels of independence. In 2009, the KRG attempted to begin oil exports but were blocked from doing so by the Iraqi government in Baghdad. The PKK also continued to use coercive measures against other states, such as Turkey and Iran, in attempts to gain independent territory from these states.

Soon after these attempts by the PKK to gain territory, the region was shaken by the invasion of Iraq by ISIL and the occupation of vast swaths of territory. While the Kurds were the first ethnic group to join the fight against ISIL, and were invaluable in counterinsurgency measures, they did not stop fighting for their independence at the same time. In 2015 a suicide bomber killed 33 people (Who are the Kurds?, 2017) in a Kurdish town near the border of ISIL territory. The PKK accused the Turkish government of “complicity” with the bomber and attacked Turkish soldiers and police. Consequently, Turkey launched a “synchronized war on terror” (Who are the Kurds?, 2017) against the PKK and ISIL. Turkey has also begun to more widely oppose Kurdish groups. Turkey now claims that the People’s Protection Unit (YPG) and the Democratic Union Party (PYD) share the PKK’s goal of secession through armed struggle. Throughout the entirety of counterinsurgency efforts, Kurds were fighting ISIL and taking back land in Iraq for themselves, including the oil rich town of Kirkuk. This land was called the “disputed territory” until 2017 at which point Iraqi Kurds, under the KRG, held a secession referendum regarding both the agreed upon autonomous region and the disputed territory. Baghdad declared the referendum illegal (Iraq Supreme Court Rules Kurdish Referendum Unconstitutional) and moved in with its military to retake the disputed territories.

The referendum could have succeeded despite a lack of support from Baghdad except for a few key factors. There was, and is, no superpower who will be an advocate for Kurdish independence. Israel supports an independent Kurdistan, but 90% of Arabs surveyed in the 2017-2018 Arab Opinion Index viewed Israel as a threat to the security of the region. Other powers will not support the Kurds because of reasons such as their view of regional instability in the wake of the Islamic State, and Iran’s attempts to move in as a regional hegemon. After the decade of the 2010s which revolved around regional instability, it appears as if the Middle East is finally returning to a state of calm. Uprisings from the Arab Spring have finally ended,

including the winding down of the Syrian Civil War. ISIL has been defeated and territory is being returned to the states who previously had sovereignty. The United States appears poised to remove troops from the Middle East. No major powers want to risk these factors being disrupted and causing a war over land disputes to give the Kurds their own country. These states also remember the civil war of 1994, which occurred very shortly after global powers helped the Kurds establish an autonomous region. They are hesitant in their support of a new or expanded state given how the independence process went the first time. Arable land is still being recovered from explosives used in this conflict to expand the agricultural economy (Ministry of Planning, 2013). Despite this conflict, there has been no Kurd-on-Kurd political violence since the civil war ended in 1998 and major progress has been shown when the KDP and PUK combined to create the majority party in the most recent KRG. Both of these are signs that there would be a functional government which could work across party and long-standing familial lines.

Despite the crushing loss to the central government in Iraq, a positive light shined out of Syria for the Kurds. President Bashar al-Assad had been vehemently opposed to the Kurdish occupation of Syrian land and claimed that he would take back all of Syria. Nonetheless, the Syrian Foreign Ministry stated in September 2017 that they are open to negotiations with the Kurds. Additionally, in early 2019 the Turkish government stated that they were willing to create a 20 mile “safe zone” for the Kurds (Syria War: Turkey Ready to Create 'Safe Zone' for Kurds - Erdogan, 2019). This opened the possibility of negotiations between the Kurdish population in Northeastern Syria and the Syrian government. Despite hopes for improving relations, they quickly deteriorated during Turkey’s Operation Peace Spring during which time they invaded the Kurdish populated northeastern area of Syria. President Erdogan claimed this operation was undertaken to “neutralize terror threats against Turkey and lead to the establishment of a safe zone, facilitating the return of Syrian refugees to their homes” (Kirby). Turkey undertook this invasion of Kurdish-populated territory because they are afraid of the connection between the SDF and PKK and wished to establish a buffer by moving Syrian refugees back into the territory previously held by the Kurds. This was precipitated by the United States removing their troops from Syria and Iraq despite Turkish threats of invasion. The operation did establish a safe zone, but it has not been as successful as was hoped. President Trump has left the Kurds without any support from the United States and it is unknown if this status will change anytime soon.

Reasons to Support an Independent Kurdistan

The primary reason to support the Kurds is that they have a history of helping the United States promote their strategic goals in the Middle East. In 1991, they assisted the United States by rising up against Saddam Hussein when they did not need to and they were punished for doing so. The U.S. did not provide any support during this time and did not work to prevent the Anfal Genocide from occurring. Then, after having failed at gaining independence from Iraq once already, it decided to help the United States again in 2003 when they invaded Iraq. The Kurds proceeded to assist in the fight against ISIL throughout the entirety of counterinsurgency efforts. Kurdish forces were in fact the first to fight back, and held a 600-mile line for three years (Boteach). The United States continued to arm and support the Peshmerga, the military unit of the Kurdish region, to fight with the Syrian Democratic Forces during this period. This continued support bolstered the Kurds ability to defeat both remaining ISIL cells, and other security forces. From the invasion by the United States until they began fighting ISIL in Iraq and Syria, Kurdistan was the only sector of Iraq where no terrorist attacks by ISIL occurred (Frantzman). While no terror was undertaken by ISIL, the PKK, a group considered terrorists by Turkey and

the United States, and YPG, often conflated with the PKK by Turkey, continued to use coercive measures.

Another major goal for the United States is curbing Iran's influence in the region. While the Kurds have allied with Iran before, most of these alliances ended with Iran backing out, such as when Iran revoked their support for the KDP in the 1970's as a result of the 1975 Algiers Accord. This was called the most cruel betrayal in Kurdish history (Taleblu and Tahiroglu, 2017). Iran has also historically persecuted the Kurds and attacked groups such as the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, the Party of Free Life of Kurdistan, and the PKK. The leader of the Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK) also recently claimed that Iran is the Kurds and democracy's greatest enemy (Aziz, 2019).

Despite this all, Iran has been attempting to improve economic ties with the KRG. Improving the United States' relationship with the Kurds will help to prevent Iran from spreading its influence further through the region. Iran has the benefit of providing Kurdistan with a land border that they could permanently move goods across. However, tensions over territory have risen in recent times. In September 2020, Iran and Turkey signed an agreement to coordinate efforts against "armed Kurdish groups" (Menmy, 2020) in both Turkey and Iran. Iran has an incentive to work with the Kurds, especially if other Western powers are not. Iran and the United States have had major issues over the past several years. In January 2020, the United States assassinated General Soleimani and then in November 2020 Israel assassinated Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the head of Iran's nuclear program. This comes as the United States has withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and is looking to rejoin the agreement early in 2021. Despite this attempt to revitalize relations between the two states, the United States is still looking to prevent Iran from becoming a regional hegemon. This is where the Kurds would become extremely useful. They would be able to work with Israel and other countries who have normalized relations with them in recent times to counter Iranian aggression and provide pressure to rejoin the JCPOA.

The Kurds have also shown a willingness to support Western values more than other states in the region. Despite the fact that they are not an independent state, Kurdistan has a well-functioning democratic system. The KRG has had peaceful transfers of power since the end of the civil war between the KDP and PUK in 1998. In the KRG, there are requirements for female and minority representatives (Jones). The government is also a champion of religious neutrality in schools (Mansfield) despite the territory being 94% Muslim. These freedoms are unseen in other states throughout the Middle East, even in our strategic allies. The KRG also supports a free press, which is a vital cornerstone of democracy that is oftentimes difficult to establish. The secession referendum, with results showing 93% of Kurds who voted supported secession from Iraq (McKernan, 2017), presented a devotion to democratic values as well.

Another reason for the United States to support Kurdistan is that they are viewed favorably by the state of Israel. In 2013, 96% of Egyptians (Beauchamp, 2014) who were polled viewed Israel's influence as mostly negative. This is not an uncommon view throughout the Middle East. Despite this, the Kurds and Israel have a good relationship. Prime Minister Netanyahu has called for international support of their independence (Sobelman). So far, Israel is the only state to explicitly state their support for an independent Kurdistan. Kurdistan may also provide a continuance of normalizing relations with Israel in the region. While President Trump did succeed in having normalization agreements be agreed upon between Israel and Sudan, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates, Kurdistan would provide an effective state to continue these agreements in the beginning of a new Biden administration. Israel is the strongest supporter

of the United States in the Middle East. This could allow the Kurds to work bilaterally to improve relations between Israel and other Arab states. If successful, the United States would have two strong democratic allies in the region to work with while providing Israel with increasing numbers of normalized relationships in the region. This would be critical to regional stability.

An independent Kurdistan would finally provide the US an economic foothold in the region through both investment in the Kurdish government and the creation and improvement of a private sector in Kurdistan. This has already begun with initiatives like the United States – Kurdistan Business Council which “seeks to highlight the unique opportunities for companies to invest in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and to make it easier for companies to secure their investments and be successful” (United States-Kurdistan Business Council.). As of 2018, more than 20% of all Kurds ages 18-34 were unemployed (van Wilgenburg, 2018). While this is not promising for an independent state, it provides ample opportunity for American business to come in and have workers readily available. As of 2013, 50% of Kurdistan was 20 years old or younger, and it was projected that 1.1 million new jobs would need to be created by 2033 (Ministry of Planning, 2013). To do so, the private sector will have to step in to help provide between 43,000-54,000 jobs per year (Ministry of Planning, 2013). On top of this, Kurds are looking for work in the private sector. While there is high unemployment, more than 17% of those who have a job are underemployed (Ministry of Planning, 2013). Despite the high rate of youth unemployment, 93% of Kurds 18-24 years old can read and write (Benaim, 2018). The KRG, led by Masrour Barzani, has spoken about its desire to professionalize the KRG. These two factors are vital to the success of a strong, modern economy. Advances in the private sector funded by the United States will also open up availability for domestic private business to thrive. The KRG has also been making attempts to improve relations for foreign direct investment. This primarily has been undertaking major portions of the Kurdish economy. It is also important to acknowledge the abundant agricultural sector which is available to Kurdistan. Vast quantities of arable land were harmed by Saddam Hussein’s chemical weapon attacks and explosives used in subsequent conflicts. This land has not been available to Kurdish farmers since the attacks because of the expense in terms of both time and money to bring it back to functional levels. Once the recovery process is complete, 28 percent of the land controlled by the KRG will be arable (Kerr, 2012). This vast quantity of arable land, combined with a focus on improved agricultural production by the Kurdish government, will allow them to take advantage of this available resource.

Opposition to U.S. Support for an Independent Kurdistan

The primary reason to oppose supporting an independent Kurdistan is the negative relationship the landlocked state would have with its neighbors. Kurdistan imports an estimated 80-90% of all goods (Dziadosz, 2017) from their neighbors and other states in the region. It would be devastating to the Kurdish economy and its ability to move goods if any of those states decided to cut them off. The Kurds export many of their goods for their GDP. Luckily, oil can be moved by pipelines, but other sectors of the economy that they are trying to move into can not be moved so easily. Agricultural goods require a land or sea access location to move their goods out of what would be an independent nation. All of their neighbors have, at some point, threatened economic sanctions or to close their borders on Kurdistan if they attempt to become independent. Be that as it may, given the current situation in Syria, it is unlikely that they would be unable to move goods or services through their borders. Additionally, territory in Turkey that is largely

populated by ethnic Kurds, as well as historically possessed by the Kurds, has access to the Mediterranean Sea. These facts create doubt in the idea that their neighbors could block necessary goods from arriving, especially if Kurdistan had Western support.

Should the United States choose to support an independent Kurdistan, it would also be choosing an expensive undertaking. The cost would not just be economic, but also require manpower and political capital. It would also be difficult to nation-build with the potentially violent opposition of the Kurds' neighbors. Given the defeat of ISIL and winddown of the Syrian Civil War, stability has been becoming more of a reality in the region, and some leaders believe that efforts to create a Kurdish state could upset chances at long lasting stability. However, there is rarely more political capital than at the beginning of a new administration. The political cost would not be so dire if they undertook a process of supporting this proposal early on in the administration. In terms of economic costs, while the COVID-19 pandemic will decrease the quantity of funds available for any projects outside of rebuilding the country, support for the Kurdish government could provide valuable economic stimulus. As previously mentioned, the developing Kurdish private sector would provide ample opportunity for American investment. This investment would provide ample opportunity for revitalizing the economy in the wake of the pandemic. In terms of manpower, the United States would need to work multilaterally with other major powers to determine and utilize best practices for nation-building because of their history of failure in this regard.

The United States would also have to find a way to handle the fears of Turkey, an important ally to both the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Turkey, and its leader President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have previously vowed to crush Kurdish rebels and groups they consider to be sympathetic to the Kurds. A central reason for this is that the Turkish government considers the Peshmerga to be a terrorist organization. This continues to be the case, despite the Peshmerga and PKK, or Kurdistan Workers' Party, fighting against ISIL. Turkish Kurds have attempted to secede in recent time, but Turkey believes that if Iraqi Kurds succeed then it is only a matter of time before their Kurdish minority attempts to secede as well. Even if the Kurds' state did not involve Turkey or Turkish land, Turkey has been clear that it will not support the state. President Erdogan stated that if American troops leave, "we will curse them as traitors" (Barkey, 2019). Turkey has also cracked down on Kurdish political leaders, even those without outspoken secessionist desires. An example of this was when the leader of the main Kurdish political party in Turkey was imprisoned. The United States would have to either convince Erdogan and his government that there is not a threat of their Kurdish minority seceding, or potentially lose a critical ally. Turkey also has enormous control over Kurdistan's economic stability. They recently allowed Kurdistan to build the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline, a \$1 billion oil pipeline (Dziadosz, 2017) through their country which is critical to their economy. Turkey also threatened to stop buying oil (Dziadosz, 2017) from the Kurds. Iran has been more welcoming to the idea of an independent Kurdistan, especially in regards to economic coordination with the KRG. They do not want the Kurds in their own country to have autonomy or to rise up against them, but do not oppose the KRG.

Finally, despite the Kurds overwhelming support of independence for their own state, the United States has a history of opposing secessionist movements. The Kurdish representative in Washington expected opposition because, in a situation that was believed to be similar to their own, they claimed that if the US policies of the 1990's had its way then the "[Baltic States and Croatia] would still be part of the eastern bloc" (Calamur, 2017). Because of this, they believe that they had to move forward with the referendum in 2017 despite widespread opposition,

including harsh statements to not move forward with the vote from the United States. Even more recently than with the Baltic States, the United States did not support Catalonia in its recent attempt to break away from the rest of Spain. It would contradict the majority of post-Revolution American history to support the Kurds in their attempt to gain sovereignty.

Conclusions

Since the rise of ISIL in 2014, Kurds have shown why they could be a valuable ally in the region if given proper support. Their vast quantities of oil, as well as the infrastructure which is already in place, provides a stable economic base which many fledgling countries have not had. This would provide them time to reinvent their economy and make it more sustainable while supporting a currently almost nonexistent private sector. These changes would be mutually beneficial to the Kurds and the United States. The Kurds have also helped the United States promote their military goals since the mid-1970s. This would be critically important to have in an ally, especially with the defeat of ISIL approaching and the attempts by Iran to become a regional hegemon. Finally, the Kurds can help be a city on the hill in a region where the United States and its allies are traditionally not viewed well. The Kurds' promotion of democratic norms is critical as a potential launching ground for spreading democracy throughout the Middle East.

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**The Justification of International Military Intervention in Response to Human Rights
Abuses**

Ryan Vetticad

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Abstract

Interstate conflict, in layman's terms - war, is by nature a highly complex and debated issue. From absolute or total war, to multi, dyadic, or systemic level conflicts, to simply a war fought for personal or state glory, the nature of war and military intervention is no doubt a complicated and intricate issue. When the nuance of human rights is added to the picture, the entire concept as a whole becomes increasingly difficult to delve into. But the fact remains that even in the fog of war the question of whether or not international military intervention is justified by human rights abuses, is of the utmost importance.

This paper will analyze the salience of this question, and the fact remains that no matter the circumstance there are bound to be human rights violations where there is military intervention and that action is justified. Specifically the paper will discuss three underlying themes behind this rationale 1. Due to the inescapable nature of war, 2. Numerous case studies such as the Rwandan or Armenian genocide, and 3. Most government's Responsibility to Protect commitment. Overall the paper will come to the conclusion that international military intervention is undoubtedly justified by human rights abuses.

Introduction:

Interstate conflict, in layman's terms - war, is by nature a highly complex and debated issue. From absolute or total war, to multi, dyadic, or systemic level conflicts, to simply a war fought for personal or state glory, the nature of war and military intervention is no doubt a complicated and intricate issue. Furthermore, adding the nuance of human rights to the picture, the entire concept as a whole becomes increasingly difficult to delve into. But the fact remains that, even in the fog of war, the question of whether or not international military intervention is justified by human rights abuses, is of the utmost importance.

The rationale behind this idea is seen throughout history and even in the present day. A newsletter from the Africa News in regards to the former President of Nigeria Goodluck Jonathan illustrates this exact point. In the letter, Jonathan stated in regards to the Nigerian Army combating terrorism in the region, “[w]e are sticking to international best practices in prosecuting the war against terrorism and doing our best to ensure that we don’t have cases of human rights abuses in the North-East” (Vanguard (Lagos), 2015). Even when it comes to dealing with atrocious terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, the importance of the issue still comes to light and showcases the importance of the question when it comes to discussing international military intervention in regards to human rights. Additionally, one can look towards the issue at hand that is currently occurring in Myanmar (former Burma). An article from the Islamabad Policy Research Institute spoke to the sentiment that western governments have towards the situation in Myanmar stating, “[t]he non-democratic governments and the human rights violations in Myanmar have been opposed by the West. This is reflected in the international support [they have received] over the year” (Dr. Imran Syed, 2019). Western democracies have opposed human rights violations, and as a result have supported this approach through any means necessary, including military intervention.

Furthermore, it is not only real world examples that showcase this question's significance, but also the input of learned political scholars as well. A news article from Ken Booth, a prominent political scientist of International Relations at the Aberystwyth University, spoke on how the relationship between military conflict and human rights is an unclear but salient issue. In the abstract of his article he stated “[h]uman rights have been in the practice of international relations... since the discipline became institutionalized in 1919” (Booth, 2019). Booth brings light to the fact that human rights are an extremely important facet of the international system, and the question of whether or not governments should intervene on behalf of human rights is far-reaching and consequential across all nations.

In light of these revelations, the fact remains that where there is military intervention it is bound to include some form of human rights violations, and due to the nuances of the problem those actions are justified. Due to the inescapable nature of war, numerous case studies such as the Rwandan or Armenian genocide, and most government’s Responsibility to Protect commitment, international military intervention is undoubtedly justified by human rights abuses.

Literature Review:

There are various scholarly publications that support this viewpoint and one of the most prominent is Hans Speier’s Journal on *The Social Types of War*. Speier was a German-American sociologist who worked with the government of the United States both during and following World War 1. His journal article distinguishes the difference between the various forms of war and how they interact with each other and society as a whole. The main thesis that he forms early

on in his article is what exactly these forms are and what differentiates them from one another. He states “The three pure types of war may be called absolute war, instrumental war, and agnostic fighting. Absolute war is unrestricted and unregulated war, agnostic fighting is regulated according to norms, and instrumental war may or may not be restricted, according to considerations of expediency.” (Speier, 1941). He goes on to elaborate on these three overarching types of war and what exactly they each constitute in their respective right.

Absolute war is characterized by the absence of any restrictions or regulations that are more common to the concept of traditional warfare, and includes more instances of treachery, human rights violations, and violence. Also referred to as “total war”, this form of war is further based on the fact in which an entire nation is taking part in the fight against another and the only way to victory is, as Speier puts it, “Absolute war is waged in order to annihilate him.” (Speier, 1941). On the other hand, instrumental war is waged in order to gain control or access to resources and/or values that the opposing party controls. These values can be considered as political (such as strategic sites, or alliances), economic (industry, or access to markets), or religious (cultural sites). The last form of warfare that Speier speaks of is agnostic fighting. This form of warfare is much more complex and difficult to grasp. As Speier puts it, agnostic fighting is observed “under the strict observance of rules” (Speier, 1941). Meaning that both parties are seemingly equal, and the purpose of the fight is nothing more than personal or state glory. Overall Speier’s argument boils down to the idea that there are only these three pure types of war, and they are “oriented, respectively, toward (1) annihilation, (2) advantage (especially enrichment), and (3) glory and justice.” (Speier, 1941). But more so that no actual war coincides with any specific one of these three pure types of war, and that making the distinction between what constitutes as a morally “good” or “bad” war is highly up to speculation and debate.

In addition to Speier’s journal on the various forms of war, it is imperative to identify specific case studies of actual examples of prominent human rights violations. One in particular was that of the Rwandan Genocide that occurred without (and some argue because) there was little to no use of military intervention. David Scheffer, the former U.S. ambassador at-large to the U.N.’s War Crimes Issues, and current Northwestern Law professor, wrote a journal article in the Georgetown University Journal of International Affairs titled, “Lessons from the Rwandan Genocide”. For those who are unfamiliar with the genocide, over the course of 100 days, more than 800 thousand men, women, and children (mostly of Tutsi decent) were killed by the Hutu majority. Over the course of his article, Scheffer makes the claim that both the United States and the international community failed to respond to the atrocity, and that the main lesson to be learned from this event is that policymakers have to be able to handle multiple crises simultaneously - especially due to the fact that so many lives were at stake.

Early on in his article Scheffer asserts the notion that there were various reasons that the U.S. and international community reacted to the situation poorly, including the disbelief of information, a ‘politically correct’ early response, and an incohesive U.S. peacekeeping policy. Overall, Scheffer brings light to the fact that the main idea that can be learned from this event is that policymakers have to juggle multiple tasks in order to fulfill their civic duty, “We learned that policymakers cannot permit other priorities and breaking events to distract them from responding swiftly to atrocities” (Scheffer, 2004).

In addition the Armenian Genocide is another prominent case study that further explores the effects of non-military intervention in regards to human rights violations. Richard G. Hovannisian, an Armenian American professor emeritus at the University of California Los Angeles, wrote a chapter in the book “Embracing the Other: Philosophical, Psychological, and

Historical Perspectives on Altruism” entitled *The Question of Altruism during the Armenian Genocide of 1915*. Hovannisian makes the claim that those who intervened and carried out good deeds during the genocide garnered little public attention, but still made an immense difference. Over the course of his chapter, Hovannisian explains that it was very difficult to recap the events of the genocide due to a multitude of factors, including the limited amount of data on the subject, that the Turkish government denies the fact that a genocide ever occurred, and that the event was overshadowed by an overarching World War.

Hovannisian goes on to detail how he carried out a study and investigation of 183 individual survivors of the genocide and how they recount an overarching account of instances of altruism over the course of the genocide. He went on to elaborate how there are various facets to his study including, sexual exploitation, the economics of the situation, religious motivations, humanitarian motivations, and prior acquaintances. Overall, Hovannisian makes multiple conclusions, the most important of which “there were numerous individuals, families, and even entire villages that were moved to intervene” (Hovannisian, 1992).

Furthermore, perhaps the most important concept to discuss is the concept and idea of *Responsibility to Protect*, that exists within the international system. Expanding upon the idea that within these case studies, even when there are multiple forms of warfare occurring, most nation-states maintain that they carry the responsibility to intervene during such occurrences. Dwight Raymond, a former Colonel in the U.S. Army and current member of the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, constructed a research report within the Igarape Institutes report *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: New Directions for International Peace and Security?* titled “Responsibility to Protect and the Military”. Raymond’s overall claim is that the overall concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is vital but does include various caveats, and that while instituting R2P, policy-makers and the military have to additionally include the new concept of Responsibility while Protecting (RWP).

Early on in his report, Raymond claims that the military carries a prominent role in the prevention of various atrocities and human rights violations, being done in various stages including preventing, reacting, and rebuilding. There are, however, various risks while undergoing the process of instituting R2P which include unintended escalation, collateral damage, anti-intervention sentiment, quagmire, and politicization. Raymond makes the point that adopting the new measure of Responsibility while Protecting (RwP), which include facets as planning for contingencies, efficient reporting, and the quick termination and withdrawal of forces, will mitigate these risks and create an overall more efficient and effective program in stopping global atrocities. Raymond states “RwP can be a helpful concept to shape R2P efforts effectively (including military measures) and mitigate the risks of action and inaction.” (Raymond, 2013). Overall, he makes the claim that RwP is a helpful and important tool in order to effectively implement R2P policies and prevent future human rights violations.

While building upon these concepts of R2P and RwP, it is important to note that there is some controversy that exists within these ideas, and a few questions that require a deeper investigation in order to fully explore the exact nature of these concepts. Questions such as whether or not people believe if intervention reduces human rights abuses or makes them worse; the fact if scholars and leaders think these ideas are even effective; and what constitutes if intervention is good or when it is bad? In answering these questions, we need look no further than the third chapter in a book published by the Brookings Institute, written by Gareth Evans titled “The Scope and Limits of the Responsibility of the Responsibility to Protect”. Evans makes the argument that there are five quintessential problems, or what he refers to as

'misunderstandings', that exist within this protocol known as R2P. The first being that "R2P is just another name for Humanitarian Intervention" the second, "In extreme cases R2P means the use of coercive military force" third, "R2P applies only to weak and friendless countries, never the strong" fourth, "R2P covers all human protection issues" and fifth, "Iraq 2003 was an example of the application of the R2P norm and a forstate of things to come" (Evans, 2008).

These five 'misunderstandings' as Evans characterizes are more or less simple to understand. But their true importance lies in trying to understand and answer these core questions when it comes to analyzing R2P. Not all scholars agree that R2P will reduce the amount of human rights abuses and furthermore that there is a lot of skepticism if the policy is effective at all. Overall Evans' core analysis is that R2P is not all that it appears to be and that there are some fundamental flaws that lie within it.

Along with navigating these questions regarding the flaws in R2P, it is imperative to explore exactly what constitutes implementing the policy. Afterall is it not easier to engage in discussion over a concept, than it is to actually implement it? That is the very discourse that Julia Rabar at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute seeks to answer. In March of 2011, she published a policy report titled "Uncharted Terrain: Libya and the Responsibility to Protect". In her report she delved into how the concept of R2P, simply put, is much easier said than done. She cited the intervention in Libya as her prime example, expanding on the fact that the situation in the nation became increasingly complex as the relationship between President Muammar Qaddafi's government and the rebels continued to escalate. That intervention itself means so much more than simply protecting the populace in this conflict, but forces countries to legitimize and pick a side. In Rabar's words "... it enables the rebels and implicitly legitimises[sic] their agenda. The intervention chooses a side." (Rabar, 2011). The whole idea of military intervention for the basis of human rights revolves around this idea of R2P, and Libya in itself is an important case study in how the concept of R2P is flawed while at the same time highly important in the battle to protect those who need it. Overall, Rabar's core argument aligns with most academic scholars, that although R2P is somewhat flawed it is the best tool we have in order to correct the abuses of human rights.

Discussion:

The question of whether or not military intervention is justified in response to human rights abuses is by no means a straightforward discussion. It is without a doubt, however, that due to the nature of war, numerous case studies, and the international community's commitment to the concept of Responsibility to Protect, that military intervention is undoubtedly justified by human rights abuses. The literature review encompassed six salient pieces of information, all of which include multiple sources of evidence and explanation that supports the notion that the answer to this question is clearly 'yes'. But it is important to realize that it is possible to go about this discussion in two distinct themes or ways. The first of which is characterizing this argument from the facts of the nature of war, which correlate to the case studies of Rwanda and Armenia. The second theme revolves around the whole concept and idea of Responsibility to Protect - how it functions, what it constitutes, and what flaws that it also has. By going about this discussion in the means of these two individual themes, the purpose is to craft and expand on the nuanced and complex relationship that exists between them in order to fully support the assertion that international military intervention is justified by human rights abuses.

Speier's article on the Social Types of War first, provides the framework on which to explain the inherent nature of war and conflict in general. Simply put, war is an extremely

intricate and dynamic issue, but can be categorized to fall within one of these three forms that Speier insinuates - absolute, instrumental, and agnostic. But furthermore is the fact that there is the possibility for these three forms of war to intersect and overlap in various ways. An instrumental war, for instance, can be waged in a manner that is consistent with absolute warfare, and thus it would be unfeasible to distinguish the two from one another. This is the first generalization that is important to make, that simply due to the nature of war and conflict, that while there are various forms of war in theory it is near impossible to distinguish them in reality. Moreover, the second generalization that is vital to muse over is that Speier's first form of warfare, absolute war, is by definition consistent with every human rights violation imaginable. The purpose of absolute war is not merely to win strategically but to "annihilate" the enemy, as the theory suggests that there can be no peace until the opponent is wiped out. With these two generalizations, it is safe to say that it is simply in the nature of war for violations of human rights to occur. Since the three forms of warfare are dynamic and overlapping, and due to the fact that absolute war consists of human rights violations, conflict in general will inevitably lead to human rights violations. And such, it is because of this fact that military intervention is always justified by the human rights violations simply because there is no escape from the fact that human rights violations will never cease to exist in the scope of war.

This further leads to the two case studies of the Rwandan and Armenian genocides. And specifically these were not merely factual accounts of both events but rather more nuanced approaches to both affairs. In the case of Rwanda, through the perspective of the West and international community, and the lessons that can be learned from the incident. In the case of Armenia, with the overtone of the theme of altruism and how that motif fits into the overall picture. Both Scheffer and Hovannisian assert the position that there are numerous undertones that go along with both of these events. In the case of Rwanda, the international community made multiple mistakes and as a result, one of the greatest atrocities of the 21st century occurred. In the case of Armenia, although the international community did not necessarily have the ability to intervene due to the circumstances of the situation (the First World War), there were still individuals and communities that took the responsibility to intervene even while the events of the genocide unfolded. What both of these sources work to provide is that it is both the responsibility of the international community and system to intervene when human rights violations like this occur, and in addition, it is in our human nature to help those who need it even in the most dire of circumstances. As a result it is more than justifiable to engage in military intervention, as it is both our civic duty as well as in our human nature.

In addition to these two case studies, it is vital to incorporate the topic of how these human rights abuses and international conflicts have affected people in the scope of their actual livelihood. The main avenue to explore that dynamic is in reference to the refugee crisis that currently exists in many wartorn countries that both have and have not experienced international military intervention. The table above comes directly from the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and showcases the amount of refugees that various regions of the world currently have. However, going a step further, the table below showcases that pertaining data and explores exactly which countries have the highest number of refugees.

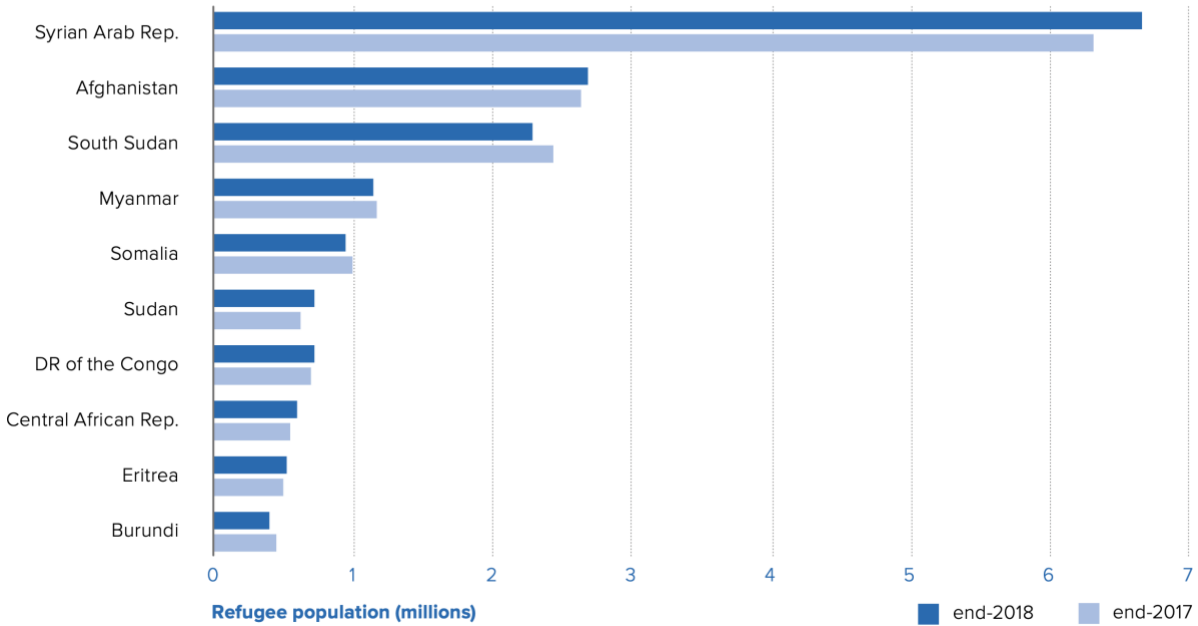
Table 1 | Refugee populations by UNHCR regions | 2018

UNHCR regions	Refugees (including persons in a refugee-like situation)		Change		% of total, end-2018
	Start-2018	End-2018	Absolute	%	
- Central Africa and Great Lakes	1,475,700	1,449,400	-26,300	-1.8	7
- East and Horn of Africa	4,307,800	4,348,800	41,000	1.0	21
- Southern Africa	197,700	211,000	13,300	6.7	1
- West Africa	286,900	326,300	39,400	13.7	2
Total Africa*	6,268,200	6,335,400	67,200	1.1	31
Americas	646,100	643,300	-2,800	-0.4	3
Asia and Pacific	4,209,700	4,214,600	4,900	0.1	21
Europe	6,114,200	6,474,600	360,300	5.9	32
thereof: Turkey	3,480,300	3,681,700	201,400	5.8	18
Middle East and North Africa	2,705,400	2,692,700	-12,700	-0.5	13
Total	19,943,600	20,360,600	417,000	2.1	100

* Excluding North Africa.

UNHCR 2018

| Major source countries of refugees | end-2017 to end-2018



UNHCR 2018

At closer inspection and comparison between these two tables, one can easily see that Syria (6.7 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), South Sudan (2.3 million), Myanmar (1.1 million), and Somalia (0.9 million), just five countries house more than two-thirds or 67% of all refugees worldwide. The reason why this information is vital, especially when analyzing which specific countries have the most refugees, is because when one compares that data to the international

military intervention that particular nation has seen it showcases how conflict has impacted the lives of that nation's people in regards to their human rights. When you look at nations such as Myanmar (which was discussed earlier) and South Sudan, it becomes known that there is not an immense degree of international military intervention if any at all. In turn that reflects the immense amount of refugees from those states. Yet, if there was international military intervention perhaps those numbers would be smaller and fewer people would have been displaced. This only works to prove the fact that if there were international military intervention, then the amount of refugees from these countries could be lower and this only works to justify the fact that international military intervention is not only vital in stopping human rights abuses but is justified by them.

Building off of this point, the last theme to discuss is the concept of R2P as a whole. Colonel Raymond's report on the concepts of both the Responsibility to Protect as well as the Responsibility while Protecting, works to encapsulate this entire argument. One can already see that it is both an aspect of civic duty as well as in our human nature to intervene when there are violations of human rights, and this whole concept of R2P is that very idea codified. Evans showcased the dynamic that exists on the other side of the aisle, bringing to light some of the fundamental flaws that exist within the R2P protocol. Yet even with these flaws, one can see that R2P is generally a successful and prominent approach when it comes to military intervention in the international system, and Rabar's report works to bring the whole argument together. That even though R2P is nowhere near perfect, it is by far the best approach the international system possesses, and fully works to the benefit of both the country receiving as well as the country giving help. This only works to support the notion that international military intervention is fully justified when it comes to human rights abuses. The R2P concept as a whole is an 'imperfect' approach towards working and solving the issues of international conflict, specifically in regards to human rights.

Conclusion:

Overall, it is clear to note that the importance of this question is easily distinguished. The entire concept of human rights is of the utmost salience and affects each and every one of us. That is why it is crucial to intervene when there are gross violations of human rights. Speier's three social types of war, theorize that war and conflict inevitably leads to violations of human rights. The case studies of Rwanda and Armenia goes to show that it is both our civic duty as well as in our human nature to step in when there are injustices occurring, and the data from the UNHCR only works to display what happens when states do not take action. The entire theory and practice of Responsibility to Protect works to encapsulate all of it; from a state's duty to intervene to an individual's desire to serve. As a result it can be clearly identified that due the inescapable nature of war, various case studies, and the concept of R2P that international military intervention is without a doubt justified by human rights violations.

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