Introduction

JACK DONNELLY AND DEBRA LIANG-FENTON

HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE LONG BEEN A CONCERN of U.S. foreign policy, reflecting not only deeply held American values but also responses to both domestic developments (such as the movements for the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, and civil rights) and international events (such as the Holocaust and the Vietnam War). In the mid- and late 1970s, however, a qualitative change in the level, frequency, and intensity of U.S. interest and action in human rights occurred. International human rights law was strengthened by developments such as the Helsinki Accords of 1975 and the entry into force of the International Human Rights Covenants in 1976. The number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) devoted to human rights began to increase, as did their prominence when Amnesty International won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977. And in October 1977, human rights finally found a permanent and formal institutional place in the U.S. foreign policy bureaucracy when President Jimmy Carter established the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs (now called the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor).[1] Since then, ordinary citizens and policymakers alike have devoted growing and increasingly consistent attention to human rights issues in U.S. foreign policy.

This volume examines U.S. efforts to implement its human rights objectives and policies since the mid-1970s. Growing out of a United States Institute of Peace working group composed of prominent policymakers, activists, business leaders, and academics, this book brings

together leading experts from the policymaking, NGO, and academic communities to examine a diverse set of case studies about the process of implementing U.S. international human rights policies. Our shared aim is to develop knowledge that is of interest to scholars and the public, is useful to human rights advocates, and, most important, provides practical advice to policymakers who are considering new human rights initiatives and improving old human rights formulas.

The fourteen countries examined in this volume illustrate the diversity of problems and issues faced by those charged with implementing U.S. international human rights policy. Because these case studies reflect the diversity of regions, regime types, history, and patterns of U.S. interests—as well as the varied experiences and perspectives of the authors—no rigid methodological framework has been imposed on any chapter. The geographic range of the cases spans the globe from China, Pakistan, and South Korea to Rwanda, Kenya, and South Africa; from Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, and Guatemala to Bosnia, the USSR, Egypt, and Turkey. The combination of cases has been chosen not only to chronicle the most commonly known examples but also to shed light on those examples that have escaped front-page headlines. In this way, we hope to see a well-rounded picture of U.S. human rights policy implementation. All cases focus on what works in implementing international human rights policies, how policymakers use the tools available to them, and how policymakers respond to the myriad challenges they face.

This project was conceptualized with the implicit knowledge that human rights in foreign policy should be driven not solely by what is effective but, more important, by what is right. The case studies attempt to describe and explain the motivations behind action, or inaction, while always cognizant of the moral component behind human rights policy. But it should be noted that the central focus of this volume remains the methods used to impact human rights practices.

The volume offers no simple, or even single, model of the determinants of success. Nearly every case examined, however, points to a need for improved integration of human rights with other foreign policy concerns. U.S. international human rights policies, when they are not completely subordinated to competing security concerns, too often are impeded by a recurrent pattern of ad hoc, and thus too often

incoherent, implementation. As long as U.S. international human rights policy continues to be rooted in reactions to immediate, short-run challenges and events, and until human rights concerns are more coherently articulated with other foreign policy objectives, the promise and aspirations of U.S. human rights policies will be compromised by inefficiency and incoherence in their implementation.

What Works? Aims, Opportunities, and Impacts

This volume seeks to answer a deceptively simple question about U.S. international human rights policy: What works? This requires asking what was intended, what was possible, and what was achieved. But each piece of the picture—aims, opportunities, and impacts—is itself complex, making "success" a surprisingly elusive notion.

Foreign policy is often the semiplanned outcome of the interaction of numerous actors who have multiple, conflicting objectives. Consider, for example, the complex and shifting interests and forces that produced U.S. policy toward China in the days, months, and years following the Tiananmen Square massacre. Especially in lower-profile cases, "policy" most often emerges incrementally in response to particular events. Describing "U.S. policy" often requires teasing out an implicit logic for a series of actions undertaken on the basis of ad hoc, reactive judgments.

Beyond examining official statements and other verbal expressions of intent, we should look at the evidence of nonverbal behavior, which is also essential to determining aims. Despite the philosophical and methodological problems of deducing motives from behavior, we can reasonably infer intent from action. A complementary body of information can be provided by tracing which actors, interests, and intentions helped shape policy and its implementation.

In assessing impact, we see that no less important than what was intended and what was achieved is what was possible. The configuration of forces in the target country regularly facilitates or frustrates initiatives on behalf of human rights (or any other policy objective). For example, after Tiananmen, however much the United States wanted to foster China's democracy movement, the best that could be hoped for was ameliorating the conditions of some victims of the

crackdown and imposing some modest costs on the Chinese authorities for their disregard of international human rights standards.

Constraints and opportunities within the United States are also important in determining what is "possible." Consider Kosovo. After the United States decided to intervene militarily, its strategy and tactics seem to have been dictated as much by the domestic political logic of minimizing American casualties as by the international humanitarian logic of minimizing the suffering of innocent civilians on whose behalf the United States was intervening.

U.S. policy also faces international and global constraints. For example, a more global and interdependent economy alters the impact of bilateral, multilateral, and transnational actors on the economic and social rights in other countries. The spread of democracy as a widely endorsed international norm enables some kinds of initiatives but constrains others.

Finally, it is important to explore the impact of the full range of U.S. foreign policy behavior on international human rights practices, not just those initiatives that explicitly address human rights. The case studies, therefore, broadly examine the place of human rights concerns and initiatives in the full range of U.S. foreign policy toward the country in question. They address

- how human rights have (or have not) become an active concern of U.S. foreign policy practice in particular concrete cases;
- what means were considered, rejected, and employed to pursue both declared and implicit U.S. human rights objectives;
- how human rights objectives interacted with other foreign policy objectives and the means adopted to implement them; and
- what impact the full range of U.S. foreign policy practice toward a country has had on respect for or violation of internationally recognized human rights.

U.S. Interests and Objectives

U.S. national interests cover a vast range of qualitatively different concerns. Because these interests and concerns are in constant flux, there is considerable confusion, semantic and otherwise, about the precise

nature of U.S. aims, goals, objectives, and policies, and what they are intended to achieve. However, for analytical and practical purposes, three questions help to focus discussion of the implementation process in the case studies:

- Were word and deed consistent? In every case considered, there was substantial inconsistency from the U.S. government. In some cases—for example, China during the Cold War, Egypt since Camp David, and Pakistan since September 11—broad U.S. pronouncements of human rights commitments had almost no effect on policy. More typical, however, are cases such as Kenya, El Salvador, and China since Tiananmen, where stated human rights concerns neither simply triumphed over other interests nor were simply subordinated. The relationship between word and deed seems to be complex and shifting to the point that it defies most generalizations.
- Did the policy declared in Washington govern practice in the field? Joel Barkan emphasizes the special influence of the U.S. ambassador in implementing U.S. policy in Kenya and the impact a "rogue ambassador" can have on human rights. In the case of Chile, Harry Barnes points to the ambassador's role in explaining U.S. policy and the ways in which shifts in policy can sometimes create both hope in grassroots organizations and tension in the U.S. relationship with a host government.
- Both in Washington and "in country," was policy made on the basis of a synoptic vision and an integrated assessment of goals and objectives, or incrementally, in response to particular events, opportunities, and constraints? Here the evidence of the case studies largely suggests ad hoc incrementalism as the norm. And when there has been an overarching policy vision, it has been one that largely excludes human rights from the picture, as in pre-Tiananmen China and post–Camp David Egypt.

Most chapters also undertake a similar analysis of relevant U.S. security and economic interests (as well as other relevant foreign policy concerns). Some chapters highlight interests that are especially relevant to the particular country. This is perhaps clearest in the case of

the war against illegal narcotics in Colombia. And special attention has been given to determining what happened when human rights concerns came into conflict with other objectives and initiatives.

The case studies provide examples that range across the entire spectrum of possible outcomes. Sometimes human rights have been completely subordinated to competing national security and economic objectives. For example, Jon Western argues that for most of the Bosnian conflict U.S. policy was dominated by geostrategic interests that not merely kept it from ameliorating the human rights situation but even unintentionally contributed to abuses. Denis Sullivan's answer to the question of the role of human rights issues in U.S. foreign policy toward Egypt is "almost certainly none." He suggests that the two governments even work hard to avoid discussing the topic.

In a few instances, however, human rights concerns have competed at least equally with economic interests. This was clearly the case not only in the initial responses to Tiananmen but also in the surprisingly long and robust duration of U.S. sanctions and the substantial influence of human rights advocates in Congress right through the mid-1990s. Such a prominent place for human rights is especially striking because of the scope of economic benefits and the presence of important strategic interests (which even during the heyday of sanctions the Bush administration found formal and informal ways to pursue, sometimes even in direct contradiction to stated American policy).

Often human rights have taken priority over concerns lying in the vast residual category of "other" interests. For example, as Pauline Baker describes in the case of South Africa, after much protracted and bitter debate between Reagan administration officials and Congress about how to deal with the apartheid regime, human rights issues supported by a comprehensive package of sanctions eventually were given primacy over the notion that strategic and economic concerns supersede all. But, as Michael Shifter and Jennifer Stillerman point out, Colombia dramatically illustrates that other interests can just as readily trump human rights.

Some cases involve fascinating, complex interactions between different objectives and initiatives in which interests are reshaped and policies are redefined. For example, Jon Western suggests that the

dramatic nature of the massacres in Srebrenica and Zepa caused the United States not merely to restate its humanitarian interests but to redefine their relation to strategic concerns; the very meaning of avoiding intervention in Bosnia changed. And Joel Barkan suggests that U.S. policy not only toward Kenya but more broadly toward Africa reflects a creative interaction of concerns for regional order (threatened by "failed states" and humanitarian crises), democratization, and free-market reforms. In this context, human rights have become infused with strategic and economic concerns, which have themselves been reshaped by the post–Cold War emphasis on democracy and human rights.

Individual human rights objectives may also conflict with one another. For example, punitive actions in response to past abuses may not be the most effective way to prevent future violations. Debate over Cold War–era involvement with rights-abusive regimes often focused on this issue, especially when the question was raised of undoing the consequences of past abuses that were sanctioned, or at least tolerated, by the United States. This question tended to be posed with special vigor when the United States had a role in overthrowing a democratically elected government, as in the cases of Arbenz in Guatemala and Allende in Chile.

This problem reflects the conflict between short-term and long-term objectives. In this regard, one of the key challenges facing policymakers, as illustrated in the case studies, is the tension between the closely related interests of human rights promotion and democracy building. Denis Sullivan points out that because the United States views Egypt as pivotal to stability in the region, neither human rights nor democracy has figured prominently in the foreign policy equation, and this ultimately has implications for long-term prospects for peace in the region. Paula Newberg describes a similar scenario in the case of Pakistan, where (even historically) its strategic role in efforts to combat the threat of Soviet communism and, more recently, terrorism has superseded concern for human rights or democracy. In the case of Rwanda, Alison Des Forges notes that democracy promotion without a human rights framework can jeopardize prospects for a democratic transition and, in this case, contribute to a humanitarian disaster.

Means

The means available to realize human rights improvements, as with other foreign policy objectives, range from privately hoping for change to declaring war and seeking unconditional surrender. The typology produced by the Sanctions Working Group of the State Department Advisory Committee on International Economic Policy has had considerable circulation within the State Department. This schema, with illustrative policy instruments, is reproduced in table 1 and lists the full complement of U.S. foreign policy tools and the categories under which each tool falls. Although useful, the schema does not fit the purposes of this study, as its breadth and extensive nature do not lend themselves to the parameters of this volume. However, it does provide a useful outline of specific mechanisms that apply more directly to each case.

The case studies in this volume suggest that seven tools have been most commonly employed:

- *Private diplomacy:* confidential representations between government officials.
- *Public diplomacy:* statements made in the target country, the United States, and international forums by officials of varying seniority that praise, condemn, or otherwise address human rights practices.
- *Cultural, scholarly, and other exchanges and contacts:* increasing or decreasing the range or frequency of sponsored, encouraged, or permitted formal or informal transnational interaction between citizens and private organizations of the United States and the target country.
- *Economic and political sanctions and incentives:* restricting, extending, or threatening to alter access to U.S. resources and official contacts, including diplomatic, political, or military contacts, foreign assistance, debt servicing, investment insurance, trade, and arms sales.
- *Democracy promotion:* strengthening civil society and political parties in the target country.
- *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices:* a congressionally mandated annual report (running to 3,095 pages in 2003), produced

by the Department of State, that examines national human rights practices, with special attention to violations or deficiencies and changes in behavior, in more than 190 countries.

- *Congressional action:* hearings, legislation, and nonbinding resolutions that encourage or require the executive branch to act in a particular way.

The strengths and drawbacks of each of these tools are discussed in the first section of the conclusion.

While the toolbox is large and the tools within it are varied, we must be aware that sometimes none are employed. Often the key foreign policy action of the United States is the decision not to act. For example, as Alison Des Forges suggests, the U.S. decision not to act in the face of growing abuses in Rwanda helped to enable genocide in that country. More broadly, any analysis of the impact of U.S. foreign policy on international human rights must be open to the possibility of the United States being part of the problem rather than the solution. Thus, Susan Burgerman suggests that Washington's greatest contribution to improved human rights practices in El Salvador and Guatemala was the loss of U.S. interest in supporting repressive regimes.

Constructive Engagement, Opportunity Costs, and Unintended Consequences

Whatever the particular instruments, policymakers face a recurrent strategic question: Isolate or engage? For example, Susan Burgerman argues that isolating Guatemala in the 1980s reduced U.S. leverage, whereas engaging El Salvador created an avenue through which the U.S. government could influence behavior by using the right combination of sanctions and incentives. Is this more generally true? Do the benefits of associating closely with a grossly repressive regime outweigh the costs? Our case studies do not provide a clear answer to these questions. But they do help to clarify the character of the issues.

Constructive engagement—engaging rights-abusive regimes in order to develop relationships and dependencies that increase U.S. leverage—was, for example, a central issue in discussions of U.S. policy toward South Africa in the 1980s and China in the 1990s.

Table 1. U.S. Foreign Policy Tools: An Illustrative Matrix of Selected Options

	Friendly, Persuasive		**Hostile, Coercive**	
Diplomatic (Executive)	• Embassy: Open/Expand • Ambassador: Accredit • Visas: Liberalize • Landing Rights: Extend/Expand • Intl Orgs: Support Membership/ Position • Intl Confs: Support Sponsorship/Participation • Communiqué: Friendly	• State Visits: Support • Senior Officials Exchange: Support • Hostile Neighbors/Opposition: Minimize Contacts	• Embassy: Reduce Staff • Ambassador: Recall for Consultations • Visas: Restrict to Targeted Group • Landing Rights: Restrict • Binational Commissions: Pare Back • Intl Orgs: Oppose Membership/ Participation • Intl Confs: Oppose Sponsorship/ Participation • Communiqué: Hostile • State Visit: Oppose • Senior Officials Exchange: Restrict	• Embassy: Close • Ambassador: Withdraw • Visas: Suspend • Landing Rights: Suspend • Binational Commissions: Suspend • Intl Orgs: Urge Exclusion • Intl Confs: Urge Exclusion • State Visit: Cancel • Senior Officials Exchange: Cancel • Hostile Neighbors/Opposition: Expand Contacts
Political (Executive and Legislative)	LEGISLATIVE • Resolutions: Friendly • CODELS: Increase • NBD: Increase Funding • Intl Parliamentary Orgs: Support Partic./Position • Opposition: Minimize Contacts • Arms Transactions: Support	EXECUTIVE • Proclamation: Friendly • State/Local Exchanges: Sister City Agreements, • State Offices, Overseas: Support	LEGISLATIVE • Resolutions: Hostile • CODELS: Fact-Finding Missions • NBD: Restrict Funding • Intl Parliamentary Orgs: Oppose • Opposition: Increase Contacts • Arms: Cancel Trans./Boycott	EXECUTIVE • Proclamation: Hostile • Opposition: Host Visit

Cultural (Executive and Legislative)	• Aggressive Broadcasts: Decrease/Suspend • Academic Exchange: Establish/ Expand • Intl Athletic Events: Support Participation/Sponsorship • Entertainment/Cultural Tours: Support Participation/ Sponsorship	• Peace Corps: Expand • Public Exchange: Establish/ Expand • Intl Cultural Orgs: Support Membership • Scientific Cooperation: Establish/Expand • Internet Sites: Expand	• Aggressive Broadcasts: Increase • Academic Exchange: Restrict • Intl Athletic Events: Oppose Participation/Sponsorship • Entertainment/ Cultural Tours: Oppose Partic./Sponsorship • Peace Corps: Restrict • Publication Exchange: Restrict • Intl Cultural Orgs: Oppose Membership • Scientific Cooperation: Restrict	• Academic Exchange: Suspend • Intl Athletic Events: Urge Exclusion • Entertain./Cultural Tours: Ban from US/Urge Exclusion • Peace Corps: Suspend • Publication Exchange: Suspend • Intl Cultural Orgs: Urge Suspension • Scientific Cooperation: Suspend
Economic (Executive and Legislative)	• Debt Rescheduling: Permit/Liberalize Terms • Preferential Tariff Treatment: Expand • Regional Trade Agreements: Permit Participation • Trade Credits: Expand • Investment: Expand Promotion • Business Contacts: Encourage • Trade Missions: Expand • OPIC/EXIM/TDA: Open/ Expand	• Trade Controls: Liberalize • Double Tax Agreement: Negotiate • IFIs: Support Membership/ Position • Financial Controls: Relax • Assts: Release • Postal Cooperation: Expand • Aid/Technical Assistance: Increase	• Debt: Tighten Terms • Investment: Restrict Promotion • Business Contacts: Discourage • Trade Missions: Pare • OPIC/EXIM/TDA: Restrict on Targeted Basis • Trade Controls: Limited (commodity/product-based) • IFIs: Oppose Membership/ Participation • Financial Controls: Increase • Aid/Technical Assistance: Restrict	• Debt: Suspend • Preferential Tariff Treatment: Suspend • Regional Trade Agreements: Suspend Participation • Trade Credits: Restrict • Investment: Ban • Trade Missions: Suspend • OPIC/EXIM/TDA: Suspend • Trade Controls: Expand • Trade Embargo • Double Tax Agreement: Suspend • Tax Treaty: Suspend • IFIs: Urge Exclusion • Assets: Freeze • Postal Cooperation: Suspend • Aid/Technical Assistance: Suspend • G7 Sanctions Group: Activate

continued

Table 1. U.S. Foreign Policy Tools: An Illustrative Matrix of Selected Options *(cont.)*

	Friendly, Persuasive		**Hostile, Coercive**	
Military (Executive; Legislative Consultation)	• Training (IMET/E-IMET): Increase • Officer Exchange: Increase • Military Cooperation (joint exercises/training/technical cooperation): Increase • Port Visits: Increase • Confidence-Building Measures: Increase	• Peacekeeping Forces: Maintain • Coop. w/ Hostile Neighbors/ Opposition: Restrict • Local Maneuvers: Restrict	• Training: Restrict • Officer Exchange: Restrict • Military Cooperation: Restrict • Confidence-Building Measures: Restrict	• Training: Suspend • Officer Exchange: Suspend • Military Cooperation: Suspend • Confidence-Building Measures: Suspend • Port Visits: Suspend • Peacekeeping: Withdraw • Cooperation w/ Neighbors/Opposition: Increase • Local Maneuvers: Increase • Show of Force • Act of War

Source: Sanctions Working Group, State Department Advisory Committee on International Economic Policy
CODELS = congressional delegation; EXIM = Export-Import Bank; IFI = International Financial Institution; IMET = International Military Education and Training program; OPIC = Overseas Investment Corporation; TDA = Trade and Development Agency

Pauline Baker notes that President Reagan's official constructive engagement policy of offering concrete incentives to Pretoria was met with sustained nonviolent protests, which eventually led Congress to enact a series of comprehensive sanctions that gave human rights concerns primacy over strategic interests. Merle Goldman indicates that constructive engagement in the form of state visits to China reflected the U.S. desire to maintain a stable relationship with a country that holds both strong strategic and economic significance to the United States. She cites National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft's visit to Beijing soon after the Tiananmen Square massacre. The Most Favored Nation and subsequent Permanent Normal Trading Rights debates over linkage to human rights issues also reflected the view that, while other fora were going to raise human rights with China, when it came to practical implications concerning trade issues, the likelihood was that economic interests would prevail. In the end, it should be noted, the linkage of human rights to China's trade status had little real impact on human rights practices in the country, while the symbolic importance of linking human rights to trade privileges did have positive impact on groups and individuals on the ground.

Another general issue connected with the choice of means arises from the limitations of time, resources, and attention. Taking any particular action requires forgoing other possible actions; that is, among the considerations are what economists call opportunity costs. For example, increased attention to trade or security issues may lead to downgrading the concern for human rights, more through limited attention than by conscious choice. The war on terrorism has in many countries pushed concerns for human rights and democracy into the background, often through inattention rather than design. And among human rights objectives, some are likely to receive special attention (e.g., workers' rights, women's rights, or freedom of religion), which, given a fixed amount of resources and attention, means that attention will be diverted from others.

This suggests the central importance of attending not just to intentions but to unintended consequences, some of which may reinforce U.S. policy but others of which may undermine it. For example, U.S. initiatives to foster market-based trade and financial reforms often have negative consequences for the enjoyment of economic and social

rights, especially in the short run. Reducing subsidies on staple foods, to take one common policy prescription in structural adjustment packages, usually harms the nutrition of poor children. Although clearly unintended, such effects are well known and quite predictable. And even when consequences are genuinely unanticipated, they may be crucial to determining the overall impact of U.S. initiatives.

Actors

So far we have treated the United States and the target government as unitary rational actors. This common analytical simplification is obviously inappropriate for a study of foreign policy practice, which involves multiple actors with interests that conflict as frequently as they converge.

The most important actor in U.S. international human rights policy has been the president, as is especially clear in Jimmy Carter's role in introducing human rights explicitly into the mainstream of U.S. foreign policy. Even Carter, however, followed and in many ways built on earlier congressional initiatives (especially the legislatively mandated linkage of U.S. foreign aid to the human rights practices of recipient states). In addition, Congress can force changes even in policies of great importance to the administration. As mentioned earlier, South Africa strikes the most prominent example of congressional initiatives creating a shift in the executive's policies. In the case of Chile, the dispute between Congress and the executive over how to address human rights, however, was protracted. When the Kennedy Amendment became law in December 1974, Congress made it more difficult for the administration to grant military aid to that country. One of the results of congressional pressure was that for the first time, the U.S. government voted in favor of a UN resolution condemning Chile's human rights abuses.

Although it does not possess the same independent authority as does Congress, the federal bureaucracy is not simply an extension of the president. Policy changes at the top often do not penetrate very quickly, or sometimes even very far, into the foreign policy bureaucracy. The distinctive bureaucratic interests of different agencies—and even different branches within a single agency—add a further

level of complexity and present potential impediments to coherent and effective human rights policy formulation and implementation.

An unwillingness to overcome bureaucratic constraints can be said to have contributed to U.S. inaction in the early stages of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, according to Jon Western. In the case of Bosnia, pressures that eventually shifted senior-level focus included protracted media attention, congressional and NGO criticism, and the 1995 massacres in Srebrenica. Denis Sullivan points out that Egypt is the largest recipient of USAID-managed assistance in the world, but that according to the USAID and Egyptian human rights officials, there has been little effective activity in human rights promotion. One reason for this gap may be attributed to the lack of coordination between USAID and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor in the State Department. Most recently, after much criticism from the NGO community and heightened media attention related to the Saad Eddin Ibrahim case, the second Bush administration, in a clear shift in policy, linked human rights performance to economic aid.

Beyond governments, important nonstate actors include organized interest groups of just about every imaginable character, as well as the media and influential elites. And the public includes an incredibly diverse array of "ordinary" citizens, both passive and mobilized. The NGO community and the media play an important role in helping to shift policy at the upper levels of the U.S. government decision-making process. The growing influence of prominent human rights NGOs helps local actors work under difficult circumstances. For example, Henri Barkey notes that in Turkey these NGOs have been useful to U.S. policymakers in providing them with information relevant to their work. In addition, the State Department even included these human rights NGOs, together with manufacturers, in its discussions on the expected Turkish request to purchase attack helicopters.

Finally, all of these actors are themselves complex combinations of individuals and subgroups. For example, Congress is a grouping of 535 strong-willed men and women, plus thousands of staff members and dozens of committees and caucuses (and their staffs). Even the president (and his office) is a complex corporate actor.

It is impossible to generalize about such a complex range of actors. Nonetheless, most of the case studies do demonstrate that the

particular configuration of actors and the political forces they represent —not only in the United States, but also in the target countries of U.S. policy—are central to the impact of U.S. international human rights policies. And as Michael Shifter and Jennifer Stillerman argue in their analysis of U.S. policy toward Colombia, the problems posed by multiple actors can be especially severe in the absence of a clear and integrated overarching strategy. In such cases, U.S. policy, or at least a particular segment of it, really does depend on who is occupying the office in question.

Arenas of Action

The arenas of action are more numerous and varied than is implied by the focus on direct state-to-state relations. In addition to bilateral channels, potentially important multilateral, transnational, and transgovernmental arenas must be considered.

International financial institutions, for example, have been a focus of U.S. human rights initiatives for two decades. Since its inception, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, formerly the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) has been a central arena for U.S. human rights policy toward the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Conversely, the countries of Southeast Asia have used the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a forum to coordinate responses to—and often to attempt to buffer the impact of—U.S. and other international human rights initiatives. Are there lessons to be learned about how the United States could work more effectively in multilateral forums, both global and regional? Jack Matlock indicates that in the case of the Soviet Union, U.S. participation in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 succeeded in meeting the U.S. objectives of keeping Europe stable while at the same time securing a Soviet commitment to protect specific human rights. From a military standpoint, the combined force of NATO aerial bombings and gains made by Croats and Muslims on the ground in Bosnia compelled the Serbs to sign a cease-fire agreement. This strategy was not without its flaws, however.

Cooperation with foreign governments outside the context of formal organizations must also be considered. Working unilaterally

has advantages and disadvantages. The contributors in this volume have attempted to examine the opportunities for and significance of international consensus on human rights values and initiatives. An important issue with respect to improving U.S. human rights implementation is the willingness and ability of the U.S. government to support and enhance the efforts of foreign governments, multilateral institutions, and other actors that share its human rights goals. This is one of the principal lessons Susan Burgerman draws from her examination of El Salvador and Guatemala. One of the lessons she identifies is that U.S. human rights interests were best achieved in Central America when they were "expressed through support for multilateral efforts" such as UN-mediated peace talks and deployment of observer missions.

The importance of transnational interactions—relations across borders between private actors rather than public authorities—may at first sight seem less obvious. In many cases, however, transnational actors and channels may be of great political salience. Consider, for example, pressures from prominent human rights NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have often helped to shape U.S. policy objectives and initiatives. Or, to take a multilateral example, at the 1993 World Human Rights Conference in Vienna, the United States found Asian human rights NGOs a valuable ally in countering arguments by some Asian governments that they should not be held to universal human rights standards.

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink have identified another important transnational channel, which they call the boomerang effect.[2] Local human rights advocates whose efforts are blocked by a resistant government often use international colleagues to mobilize their own governments to apply international pressure. This pattern of action was especially evident in the Southern Cone of South America in the 1970s and 1980s. And it alerts us to the broader issue of cooperation (and conflict) between governmental and nongovernmental actors in designing and implementing international human rights policies. This is especially important because of the prominence attached to civil society in many recent U.S. initiatives.

Finally, attention may need to be paid to transgovernmental relations, more or less direct relations between parts of the bureaucracy of one country with counterparts in another country, with little

or no direct supervision between central decision makers. For example, relations between Latin American and U.S. military officials during the Carter administration often appeared to reflect interests and objectives that differed from those expressed in high-level policy statements.

Types of Effects

The obvious measure of success is the extent to which human rights practices in the target country changed in response to U.S. initiatives. This is an area, however, in which generalization is especially difficult. For example, U.S. (and other international) initiatives have often brought about the release of individual prisoners of conscience. But international human rights pressures have rarely brought major structural reforms in rights-abusive regimes. In between these two extremes is a broad range of possible effects that vary not only with the means employed but also with the objectives sought and the particular conditions in the country in question.

Many of the effects of international human rights initiatives, however, are indirect or outside the immediate target country. Despite failing to change behavior now, an initiative may reduce the likelihood of an undesirable behavior being repeated in the future. For example, the limited pressures of the Reagan administration on El Salvador, which in the short run had little discernible influence on military violations of human rights, may have had some impact in later months and years. Deterrence may be no less important in human rights policy than in national security policy, and it can either reinforce or operate against other policy objectives toward the immediate target.

Seemingly ineffective U.S. initiatives might also have positive effects by supporting local human rights advocates or delegitimating repressive regimes. By subtly altering the local human rights environment that a rights-abusive regime faces, U.S. policy can have significant long-term effects. This is perhaps the greatest lesson of the Helsinki process in countries such as Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. South Africa is another prominent example.

The impact of U.S. policies on the broader normative environment must also be considered. For example, although sanctions

imposed in the late 1970s and 1980s on governments in Central and South America usually had little impact on the behavior of the target governments, they were crucial elements in altering international expectations and giving new force to the norms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments.

Strengthening international norms can easily become an excuse for doing less to stop particular violations. But it is arguable that this is the most important effect of U.S. and other international human rights initiatives over the past quarter century. Individual efforts to support human rights may not always have been successful in the short term, but their long-term cumulative effect has been to strengthen international norms.

It is worth noting that such impacts on the local and international normative environments can strengthen later U.S. human rights initiatives. Only because of the existence of widely endorsed international norms are human rights violations no longer treated entirely as a matter of sovereign prerogative and domestic jurisdiction. And the striking difference between the Cold War and post–Cold War environments for international human rights initiatives owes as much to normative change as to changes in the global balance of power.

We should also consider the possibility of important "internal" effects on the development of U.S. international human rights policy. Doing action *a* at time *t* in country *x* may create precedents that shape future responses to similar violations later or elsewhere. For example, the initial Carter decision to suspend aid to Guatemala in 1977 established a precedent that had immense effects, despite the failure of that initiative to alter the policies of the Guatemalan military regime. Conversely, failing to act in a particular case may create inconsistencies that would reduce the efficacy and credibility of U.S. policy in the future.

International human rights policies may also be undertaken primarily to satisfy powerful constituencies in the United States. There is something troubling in the notion of a "successful" policy that satisfies national political constituencies with no international effects, but if that is what the policy is designed to do, that reality must be acknowledged. For example, periodic changes in U.S. support to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities seem driven more by

the abortion debate in the United States than by anything else. And at least some of the supporters of sanctions against South Africa or Burma seem to have been more interested in responding to mobilized domestic constituencies than in bringing about change overseas. In any case, as Joel Barkan emphasizes in his discussion of U.S. human rights initiatives in Kenya, the presence of a mobilized U.S. constituency that follows events in that country often is a powerful determinant of U.S. policy.

We must also note that speaking out and acting against evil may be desirable, even demanded, whether or not there is a reasonable prospect of changing anything anywhere. In personal relations we may appropriately chastise friends, colleagues, or relations over whose behavior we have no substantial influence. We may even be held in disrepute if we silently stand by in the face of their misbehavior. So too in international politics. Our values may demand that we speak and act even when our words and actions have no discernible effect, if only because failing to do so may undermine those values or our own identity and credibility.

Finally, in assessing impact, wherever we might be looking for it, we must remember that the governments whose behavior U.S. foreign policy seeks to influence are not passive recipients of U.S. initiatives. "What works" often is determined by the reaction of target governments to the ends sought, sometimes irrespective of the means applied on their behalf. This is especially true because states rarely engage in serious human rights violations unless there are substantial (political, financial, or other) costs to respecting the rights in question. How U.S. objectives are perceived and valued by the target government, which usually will be largely outside the control of the United States, often is one of the most important determinants of success.

In the case of Turkey, a close ally of the United States, Henri Barkey notes that the Turkish government takes very seriously any criticism from the U.S. government, especially in the form of public statements. U.S. objectives of democracy and human rights in Turkey are seen through the prism of the NATO alliance and so do not engender the same sentiments that guide U.S. policy toward countries that do not enjoy as close a relationship. David Steinberg points out that the United States convinced the Syngman Rhee, Park Chung

Hee, and Chun Doo Hwan governments in South Korea to act on specific points of concern with respect to human rights issues, and they complied. The combined effect of rising nationalism, the Korean public's lingering perception that the United States has historically supported dictatorial regimes in South Korea, and some specific acts of violence committed by U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea has contributed to the constraints the United States faces in pursuing human rights in that country, however.

The Structure of This Volume

As stated earlier, this volume seeks to identify what works in U.S. human rights policy. Contributors have attempted to draw out broader implications of their studies. Additional attempts at generalization are offered in the concluding chapter, but no simple solutions are to be found in this volume. The various cases, however, do lay out the specific tools available to policymakers and the challenges confronting these policymakers as they implement their human rights policy agenda.

Alison Des Forges describes in striking detail the events leading up to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the U.S. response to these events. Hindsight is 20/20, and the lessons that can be drawn from this case may shed light on preventing future crises of this magnitude.

Clearly articulated but inconsistently applied policy on the transition to democracy and the protection of human rights in Kenya has had mixed results with respect to human rights achievements. Joel Barkan illustrates his case in part by emphasizing the role of the ambassador in affecting the success of U.S. human rights policy and in part by examining U.S. potential and limitations in this regard.

Perhaps South Africa represents the clearest example of how the impact of the right set of tools combined with the right set of environmental circumstances can positively affect human rights conditions on the ground. In her chapter, Pauline Baker illuminates the range of U.S. policy options and the multiple actors that drove the process.

Merle Goldman, in her chapter on U.S. human rights policy toward China, stresses the importance of multilateral institutions in changing Chinese views on human rights. In China, the various tools

that have been used to impact human rights practices (and that have been used discretely) have had mixed results. Even so, some lessons may be drawn with respect to the way in which China thinks about and speaks about human rights.

Pakistan presents a case in which strategic concerns have historically dominated the bilateral relationship with the United States. Paula Newberg outlines the problems and challenges that confront policymakers and the consequences of neglecting a human rights and democracy–promoting agenda.

David Steinberg looks at the multiple influences on U.S. policy toward South Korea and the ways in which the bilateral relationship has shaped current perceptions of that policy. He explores the motivations behind U.S. human rights policy and the implications for how Koreans view the United States more generally.

Jon Western presents a case that (from a policy perspective) lays out the challenge of high-level inattention to a growing crisis in Bosnia. Could a more robust preventive diplomacy effort have forestalled the egregious human rights violations in that country?

Jack Matlock covers a thirty-year history in his examination of the Soviet Union. He explores the development and implementation of a U.S. human rights/democracy promotion strategy toward this superpower.

In her comparison of El Salvador and Guatemala, Susan Burgerman considers the impact of U.S. leverage in the form of military assistance as an important contributing factor to influencing regime behavior.

In the case of Chile, Harry Barnes notes the important role of Congress in pressing human rights concerns and the impact this can have on a target country. Shifts in U.S. policy from one administration to another have also meant changes in the way human rights are implemented.

Michael Shifter and Jennifer Stillerman posit that the U.S. government's interest in combating the drug trade in Colombia has overshadowed a clear human rights objective in that country. In their chapter, the authors chart the myriad challenges that U.S. policymakers must address in implementing a realistic human rights policy in a conflict zone.

Turkey presents a case in which an important strategic alliance has been forged to the extent that issues of human rights can be perceived as intrusions on an otherwise stable association. Henri Barkey analyzes this complex relationship through the prism of U.S. human rights policy.

Regional tensions govern the nature of the relationship between Egypt and the United States. Given the primacy of regional stability in U.S. foreign policy calculations, Denis Sullivan explores the ways in which human rights policy has been (and can be) advanced in a pivotal state, where other concerns top the agenda.

The volume is rounded off by a conclusion that seeks to synthesize the analyses and insights offered by the case studies. The first part of the conclusion identifies the range of tools available to U.S. policymakers and practitioners as they seek to translate policy objectives into concrete accomplishments. The discussion examines the strengths and weaknesses of the various tools and assesses the conditions under which they are likely to be most effective. The second part distills a series of six lessons from the case studies. Intended as guidelines rather than as a set of detailed instructions, these lessons offer practical advice to those who craft and execute U.S. human rights policy.

Notes

1. The State Department had established the position of coordinator for humanitarian affairs on April 21, 1975, in response to growing congressional interest in human rights issues in foreign policy.

2. Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 12–13.