

# Foreword

Recent decades have seen a remarkable growth around the world in the number and variety of institutions dedicated to conflict management and local security concerns. Perhaps the strongest growth has been in regional organizations. These institutions come in many sizes and shapes. Some have been established to address very specific problems, such as the US-Mexican Merida Initiative against trade in illegal narcotics. Others, such as the African Union, operate at the broadest regional levels, incorporating economic and social development issues as well as collective security imperatives.

In assessing these regional efforts, it is important to understand that conflict management goes far beyond the capabilities of individual institutions and states. Different regions have different requirements for dealing with discord and violence. Some, like Europe and the US, have long histories of elaborate defense alliances which require members to work within a strategic framework, standardize their weaponry, and scale up their interoperability. Other regions avoid confrontation and use long habits of cooperation to promote security, as illustrated by the Southeast Asian dedication to the “ASEAN-way.”

What does this rise in regional conflict management capacity mean for international security? Are regions—through their dedicated organizations or through loose coalitions of states, regional bodies, and nonofficial actors—capable of addressing the array of new and emerging security threats? What does a “regionalization” of security cooperation mean for the international community, and especially the United Nations? Should the United Nations be strengthened or revitalized? Or should it continue the recent trend of subcontracting conflict management initiatives to regional organizations?

To address these questions, we need a fresh understanding of regional threats as well as an assessment of approaches to counteracting them. And we need a better grasp of existing regional security and conflict management capacities, and of the links between the security and conflict management fields.

This volume is designed to foster understanding of the mosaic of regional security challenges and conflict management responses in all their complexity. It explores not only formal regional institutions, but also the informal cooperation (or for some regions, lack thereof) that can grow out of a culture of regional security cooperation and the conflict management tradition.

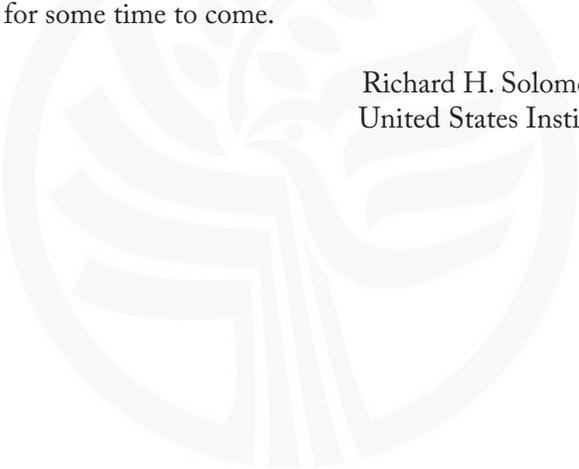
For this effort, the editors of this volume have drawn together an impressive array of scholars and practitioners to provide a region-by-region analysis of security challenges and conflict management capacity. These experts are credible and diverse, coming as they do from Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Russia and Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, South America, North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Editors Crocker, Hampson, and Aall are uniquely qualified to help bring us this fresh understanding. They are the joint editors or authors of no fewer than seven books covering related issues published by the U.S. Institute of Peace Press—including *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World*; *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*; *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the Hardest Cases*, and its companion volume, *Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractability*. These volumes join many other Institute-sponsored studies on conflict management topics, including John Paul Lederach's *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* and I. William Zartman's *Peacemaking in International Conflict*; and case-specific studies by practitioners such as Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah's *Burundi on the Brink: A UN Special Envoy Reflects on Preventive Diplomacy*, Princeton Lyman's *Partner to History: The U.S. Role in South Africa's Transition to Democracy*, and my own *Exiting Indochina: U.S. Leadership of the Cambodia Settlement & Normalization with Vietnam*.

*Rewiring Regional Security* explores new territory for the Institute by looking both intensively at specific regions and broadly across regions. It is a volume that transcends the often stove-piped studies of international relations, security, conflict management and resolution, and regional and area studies. In doing so, it offers a welcome complement to the Institute's Cross-Cultural Negotiating series that examines negotiation and other conflict management techniques inside and across nations. Books in this series explore the negotiating practices of China, Iran, France, and North Korea, among others, as well as studies of the impact of culture on Israeli-Palestinian and Indo-Pakistani negotiations.

We may have once thought that promoting international peace and security was simply a matter of powerful states willing to play a leadership role in world policing, and robust global institutions empowered to play an

active role in conflict management. We now better understand that peace and security depend on a complex web of interrelationships between societies, countries, and regional and global actors. *Rewiring Regional Security* goes a long way to sharpening our understanding of these complexities. It helps us grasp the variety of regional institutions, perceptions, and policies in coping with security and conflict issues. Its central premise—that the growing regionalization of security organizations and activities is spawning an increasingly eclectic and improvised approach to handling conflict management in today’s world—will likely be at the center of discussion and debate for some time to come.



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