Preface

PEACEBUILDERS EXPEND CONSIDERABLE RESOURCES AND EF-
fort on postconflict peacebuilding with democratization as a core ob-
jective. Why then do countries so rarely emerge from civil war as democracies?

Democratization has been formally enshrined in the postwar settlement
of nearly all civil wars ending after the Cold War. Scholars and practitioners
alike have promoted the use of democratic processes and institutions to trans-
form armed conflict into peaceful political competition.

At the same time, the involvement of external actors like the United Na-
tions and major bilateral donors in postconflict peacebuilding has grown
exponentially. External actors have taken on sweeping roles in helping to
monitor and implement peace processes, from overseeing the demobilization
of troops to helping administer elections. Often, extensive policy reform is
part of the peace process, including but not limited to the reform of political
institutions and processes.

Three decades after the advent of structural adjustment and aid condition-
ality, donors are well acquainted with the challenges associated with policy
reform. Conditioning aid on liberal economic policy has enjoyed only limited
success. Advocacy of political reform has proven still more challenging. Using
democratization as the cornerstone of peace, then, is an enterprise fraught
with peril.

All attempts to promote reform from the outside are plagued by the principal-
agent problem. The incentives of domestic actors who must implement reform

do not always align with the incentives of those advocating reform, a fact that is well established in the study of aid conditionality. But until very recently the importance of domestic political actors, particularly as *political actors*, has been neglected in both scholarly and policy studies. The latest OECD policy statements have only just begun to acknowledge the fragile politics of fragile states.[1]

This book focuses on domestic political actors and the incentive structures they face in contemplating the democratic postwar political settlement. That the outcomes of externally led peacebuilding missions are influenced by domestic political actors is obvious. Yet the question of when and how their preferences affect peacebuilding outcomes has not yet been systematically addressed in a comparative context. This book attempts to do so. We employ a qualitative comparative case analysis based on original field research on postwar democratic transition in nine countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia, East Timor, Haiti, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, and Tajikistan.

Although the book has six authors, this is not an edited volume disguised as a monograph. The book is the product of an iterative process of research and discovery among a small group of scholars with wide-ranging regional expertise and a shared interest in understanding the linkages among external intervention, peace, and democracy in postconflict countries.

Collaboration began in Berlin in October 2008 with a workshop aimed at exploring the factors that might explain democratic outcomes in postconflict peacebuilding cases. The initial goals were modest: to examine the influence of external interventions on postconflict democratization efforts in a meaningful sample of countries. We were interested in interventions that included "boots on the ground" (such as UN peace operations), as well as the provision of financial resources. An international team of country experts was then commissioned to conduct nine structured case studies between October 2008 and December 2009.[2] These are available on the project website.[3] Our sample includes just under half of the available cases and includes variation in terms of outcome and relevant independent variables, including regional context, the character of the war and its resolution, aid amounts and modalities, and the size and scope of the UN peace mission (see Table 1.1, Chapter 1).

In the initial stages of research, the authors employed their country-specific expertise to gather empirical data using a consistent and detailed template for qualitative field research in nine cases. Given the geographic and

temporal separation of these cases, it would have been difficult if not impossible for a single researcher to conduct primary research in all of them. Moreover, we were fortunate to have case study authors who had long studied these cases. All had already conducted fieldwork in these cases during the peacebuilding period.[4]

This first step allowed the authors to reexamine the empirical evidence through fresh fieldwork, using a different theoretical lens in countries they knew well. Once fieldwork was complete, the authors gathered at Free University Berlin for a second workshop. There we agreed to publish our findings with a focus on the distinctive circumstances and outcomes of each case. The eight case studies were published in a special issue of the *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*.[5]

Our most important finding was that whether a polity embraced democracy in the wake of war appeared to depend on demand for democracy among domestic political actors and how this demand shaped the interaction between peacebuilders and domestic political elites. While much of the literature has argued that democratic outcomes depend on capacity, our findings suggested that local demand is also important.

We set out to explore this insight more fully and to discover the implications for the theory and practice of postconflict peacebuilding. Together, seven of the nine case study authors drafted a set of four papers to be presented as a panel at the 2009 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Toronto. The papers examined the impact of four sets of variables on postconflict democratic outcomes in our cases: factors related to the war and its resolution, the size and scope of the international peace missions, the regional "neighborhood" in which each country was situated, and international aid.

This exercise convinced us none of these "usual suspects" typically used to explain the success or failure of peacebuilding missions had a clear, direct influence on the trajectory of democratization efforts. Though each of these sets of factors was important, it was clear that something was missing in the broader literature: a systematic analysis of the role of domestic political actors in peacebuilding outcomes. Out of this realization came the inspiration for this book.

In an effort to systematically capture the effects of domestic actors' preferences on peacebuilding outcomes, we have used the concept of adoption

costs—the costs to domestic political actors of embracing democratic politics after civil war. Adoption costs are shaped by whether actors feel they stand to gain or lose physical, political, and economic security by playing the democratic game. These costs are obviously shaped by the particular contexts in which actors find themselves as well as by the large number of idiosyncratic factors that come into play. In this book we argue that adoption costs can be boiled down to threats to an actor's physical security and to his or her primary goals (be they economic or political). We can therefore employ the concept to analyze quite disparate cases comparatively, while remaining sensitive to empirical reality.

The theory that this book offers can be summarized as follows: We depict peacebuilding as an interactive process not only between former adversaries but also between peacebuilders and the victorious elites of a postwar society. We demonstrate that the preferences of domestic elites are to a great extent shaped by the costs they incur in adopting democracy, as well as the leverage that peacebuilders can muster to increase the costs of nonadoption. Implicit in this understanding of peacebuilding is the assumption that the preferences of peacebuilders and domestic elites are hardly ever aligned. Our approach thus parts with one of the most prominent yet underexamined assumptions of the peacebuilding literature (and presumably of peacebuilding practice): that the interests of domestic elites and peacebuilders coincide. As our sample cases demonstrate, this is rarely the case. Typically, domestic elites in postwar societies are keen to benefit from the resources—both material and symbolic—that peacebuilders can bring, but they are less eager to adopt democracy because they believe democratic reforms may endanger some or all of their substantive interests. Put differently, adopting democracy can be too costly a proposition for domestic elites, and the policies and resources of peacebuilders are rarely able to offset this cost. This book demonstrates the importance of understanding postwar democratic peacebuilding as an interactive bargaining process, which is shaped to a large extent by adoption costs. We hope that the book contributes to a better, more realistic understanding of postwar democratization and eventually to more effective policies.

We developed these arguments over several years. During this time, we were blessed with many sharp-eyed, thoughtful, and supportive friends and colleagues, who have contributed in various ways to the project. Christof Hartmann, Monica Malbrough, Anna Matveeva, Henri Myrttinen, Jens Narten, Hamish Nixon, Tome Sandevski, and Brendan Whitty generously