

A REPORT OF THE CSIS  
PROGRAM ON CRISIS, CONFLICT,  
AND COOPERATION

# U.S. Policy Responses to Potential Transitions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *Authors*

Robert D. Lamb  
Sadika Hameed

## *Contributing Authors*

Joy Aoun  
Kevin Jones  
Kathryn Mixon  
Adam Parker

February 2013



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YEARS

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Cover photos: *top left*— Aleppo, Syria: Rebel fighters belonging to the Javata Harria Sham Qatebee watch over the enemy position during skirmishes at the first line of fire in Karmal Jabl Neighborhood, northeast of Aleppo City, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/syriafreedom/8210821459/in/photostream>; *top right*—White House, [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a1/Barack\\_Obama\\_being\\_briefed\\_on\\_swine\\_flu\\_oubreak\\_4-29.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a1/Barack_Obama_being_briefed_on_swine_flu_oubreak_4-29.jpg); *bottom*—Tahrir Square, February 8, 2011; <http://www.flickr.com/photos/magdino20/5472548266/>.

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\* These sections are included in this abbreviated version of the report. The full report will be available in March 2013 and can be found then on the website of the CSIS Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation (C3) at <https://csis.org/program/c3>.





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project began with a query from the Smith Richardson Foundation’s Nadia Schadlow to CSIS’s president and CEO, John Hamre, asking for a short paper describing how CSIS would do research into “potential transitions.” This query came at the height of the popular uprisings in the Arab world and the concomitant questions about how the United States should respond when it was still uncertain whether the opposed regimes would survive or be replaced. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Schadlow and to Smith Richardson’s senior vice president and director of programs Marin Strmecki for requesting a proposal and for so generously supporting this project.

A number of experts provided assistance and advice at different stages of this project. Craig Cohen and Mark Quarterman offered important feedback at the proposal stage. Scholars from CSIS’s regional programs helped us identify events for inclusion in the dataset, including Jon Alterman, Ernie Bower, Heather Conley, Jennifer Cooke, Richard Downie, Mike Green, Stephen Johnson, Andy Kuchins, Greg Poling, Farha Tahir, and Terry Toland. I am extremely grateful to our external reviewers, Kathryn Stoner, Philip Schrodtt, and Tim Gulden, for their feedback and advice, and to Kevin Jones, the project’s senior consultant, who advised us on dataset structure, variable specification, and many other practical and methodological issues. Marie Claire Vasquez Durán provided useful and timely analytic support as well. David Berteau and Stephanie Sanok offered very practical feedback in the final phase of the project.

This work could not have been completed without the research team at CSIS’s Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation (C3). Kathryn Mixon and Joy Aoun were key contributors to the case research and other background materials that filled in important details that could not be captured by the dataset. Research intern Adam Parker was the data manager for this project and a key contributor to the data analysis as well. Liora Danan provided editing support and constant encouragement. The C3 program’s research interns were critical to the development of the dataset and cases, as well as to the intense data-collection effort, especially Edgar Chávez, Kathy Gilsinan, Andrew Halterman, Katie Quinn, Cristina Sima, Sarah Smith, Aimee Stoltz, and Svetlana Sytnik.

Thanks must go especially to my chief of staff and coauthor, Sadika Hameed, who was the project manager for the duration of the research and was promoted from associate to fellow during its final phases. Her intelligence, good humor, and tough insistence on productive teamwork helped the research team accomplish far more than we otherwise might have done. I am grateful to have her as a colleague.

It seems likely that I have not taken all of the advice that I should have, and perhaps took some advice I should not have, but, as the principal investigator, any errors of fact or omission should be attributed to me alone and not to my coauthors or advisers.

As funding becomes available, our program intends to update the CSIS Potential Transitions Dataset annually, refine our variables, and employ new analytic techniques to continue gaining insights into the key questions that this report can only begin to answer. I invite members of the public to download the dataset from the CSIS website, use it in your own research, report errata if discovered, and offer suggestions for how we might make it even more useful to researchers and decisionmakers in the future. Please feel free to e-mail me directly at [rdlamb@csis.org](mailto:rdlamb@csis.org).

Robert D. Lamb  
*Washington, D.C.*  
*February 2013*





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Early in the first term of the Obama administration, as popular uprisings spread from Tunisia to Egypt and then to much of the rest of the Arab world, American officials publicly encouraged democratic reforms. In Cairo, President Obama declared, “These are not just American ideas; they are human rights. And that is why we will support them everywhere.” But supporting them everywhere turns out to be tricky, as the unfolding of the various Arab uprisings has well demonstrated. However worthy, democratic and humanitarian goals are difficult to promote amid the complicated politics and competing priorities of U.S. foreign policy. Intervening in the internal politics of other countries is fraught with risks and potentially unpleasant consequences. But enough policymakers believe that intervention can work that the option (or temptation) remains on the table for those occasions when foreign political crises do arise.

This report presents the results of research on U.S. policy responses to *potential transitions*: protests, armed conflicts, and coup attempts that threaten a country’s political leaders seriously enough to trigger a defensive response of some kind. They are “potential” transitions in the sense that the attempt by challengers to effect major changes in leadership might succeed in removing the regime, government, party, or top leader from power—or the attempt might fail. It might result in immediate reforms or a gradual transition to democracy—or it might lead to bloodshed. How has the United States historically responded to the possibility of a regime or leadership change in a foreign country?

The CSIS Potential Transitions Dataset (v1.0) has new data on 396 protest movements, minor armed conflicts, major armed conflicts, and attempted coups worldwide between 1989 and 2010. The dataset, available at <http://c3.csis.org>, includes all instances of social or political disruptions in which an incumbent regime, government, party, or leader was faced with a political or social opposition movement (peaceful or violent) that was significant enough to warrant some material, defensive response.<sup>1</sup> Each event was divided into event-years (one event during one year); the full dataset includes 758 event-years. For each observation, data were collected for 20 new variables describing how the incumbents responded to the challengers and 31 new variables describing whether and how the United States responded to the events. In addition, 18 significant interventions by the United States were studied to tease out details of the decision to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> The dataset does not include all types of foreign crises, such as natural disasters, terrorist and nuclear concerns, or the emergence of an anti-American leader. It also does not include U.S.-initiated regime changes or interventions undertaken covertly.

## Summary of Findings

The number of potential transitions has been generally declining since the mid-1990s, as conflicts along the so-called arc of instability<sup>2</sup> diminished and the post–Cold War transitions stabilized.<sup>3</sup> The United States tends not to intervene in potential transitions in general, but it is even less inclined to intervene in crises with less violence, fewer strategic interests, or more regional constraints.<sup>4</sup> When it does intervene, it almost always uses civilian capabilities first—and far more frequently overall than military capabilities. When it does intervene with military force, it is almost always as a last resort and almost always as part of a multilateral operation. Civilian and military interventions often work out reasonably well for the United States, but enough interventions have had negative or ambiguous outcomes that caution and moderation should be the guiding principles for decisionmaking. The patterns in the historical data are simply not clear enough to recommend otherwise.

## Summary of Recommendations

These recommendations do not focus on any particular crisis or offer any new doctrine for intervention. Rather, they focus on the response options and specifically on understanding the factors that restrict those options: the inherent complexity of crisis situations and the policy tools available for responding to them. Regarding the policy tools, it is recommended that the new Congress work with the Obama administration’s second-term foreign policy team to review the need and demand for civilian response capabilities and to ensure that the needed capabilities are appropriately supported, resourced, and postured. Regarding complexity, the authors recommend caution in deciding which crises merit intervention and modesty in determining the objectives and scale of any specific intervention. To facilitate deliberation on particular crises, the authors offer a framework for identifying the contradictory reasons for and against intervention and the key issues that complicate action.

**Recommendation 1: Review and rebalance civilian power.** American decisionmakers, regardless of political party, clearly prefer civilian tools over military power when they have decided to respond in some way to a major political crisis. Is the capacity for civilian response commensurate with the demand? Although U.S. military power seems more readily available, more strategically postured, and better resourced than U.S. civilian power, further study is needed to determine the degree to which

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<sup>2</sup> The arc of instability is generally understood to include a range of countries from Central Africa through South Asia to Southeast Asia that were experiencing conflict in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The number of potential transitions within this arc has declined since then, making the arc a less coherent pattern than it once was.

<sup>3</sup> Preliminary findings from ongoing research at CSIS suggest that the countries still experiencing potential transitions worldwide tend to be ethnically divided, postcolonial states with “artificial” borders (results from this ongoing research will be published separately).

<sup>4</sup> Preliminary findings from additional ongoing research suggest that the United States is also less likely to intervene in crises with less congressional interest and less involvement by multilateral institutions (final results will be published separately).

civilian capacity might be inadequate to the demand. The authors recommend a global civilian posture review, asking whether the United States has the right civilians with the right tools and skills in the right places in the world. What are the strategic interests, values, and demands that require civilian capabilities, both at the global level and by region? What civilian capabilities are most needed to promote those interests and values and to meet those demands? Does the United States have personnel with those capabilities, and does it have the right mix of capabilities in the right places worldwide? Do civilians have the training, support, flexibility, and incentives that they need in those places to do their jobs? Such a review would enable Congress and the administration to determine what legislative changes and executive actions are needed to ensure that decisionmakers have a robust set of civilian options readily available that will allow the United States to reduce the expense and risk of military intervention.

**Recommendation 2: With intervention decisions, err on the side of caution.** Many of the nearly 400 foreign crises studied for this project emerged and unfolded in ways that were not foreseen, and the U.S. response was neither consistent nor consistently successful. Popular uprisings and the outbreak of war are nearly immune to prediction by experts and scientific models alike. Predicting how foreign powers will respond to those events and how their response will work out for them in the end is equally difficult. The practical and moral issues involved in deciding whether to get involved in another society's internal struggles are not usually straightforward, and the facts needed for a well-informed decision are not always immediately available. It is therefore important for U.S. policymakers to be cautious when deciding which crises merit intervention and, in those that do, to be modest in defining the scale and objectives of the effort. Things often do work out reasonably well for the United States when it intervenes, but the evidence for such success is not so overwhelming that it should encourage intervention. There are real constraints on what can be done to bring about an outcome consistent with U.S. interests and values.

## Basic Findings

In these findings, an important distinction is made between a response and an intervention. *Response* is the broader category, including immaterial responses such as public statements and other activities intended only to express an opinion or protect Americans, as well as any civilian or military activities that are intended to influence the outcome. An *intervention* is restricted only to those activities intended to influence the outcome, including economic and diplomatic efforts, military support such as arms and training, and direct military actions whether carried out in multilateral or unilateral operations. In each of the following nine findings, the authors indicate parenthetically the degree of confidence they have in the supporting evidence.

**1. The United States favors nonintervention over intervention and civilian response over military response (strong evidence).** On the question of *whether to intervene* in a potential transition, the United States clearly prefers not to. On the question of *how to intervene* once a decision to do so has been made, the United States clearly prefers to use civilian tools over military power. It did not intervene in more than four-fifths of the potential transitions it faced every year and did not even respond to about two-thirds. Of those to which it *did* respond each year, it responded exclusively with

civilian tools about two-thirds of the time, responded immaterially about half the time, and responded militarily about a quarter of the time. This preference for nonintervention over intervention and civilian tools over military tools is particularly clear when the data are broken down into the main categories of response. The United States did not respond to 64 percent of the event-years, issued statements in 32 percent, provided economic aid or sanctions in 9 percent, undertook diplomatic efforts in 8 percent, offered military support such as arms and training in about 4 percent, participated in multilateral military actions in 4 percent, and undertook a unilateral military action in less than 1 percent.

**2. The United States intervenes more in major armed conflicts than in less violent potential transitions (strong evidence).** There is a fairly linear relationship between the level of violence of an event and the propensity of the United States to intervene: the more violent the event, the higher the proportion of interventions. The United States has intervened in more than half the 41 major conflict events (and more than a third of the 167 major conflict event-years), a far higher rate of intervention than for minor armed conflicts, coups, and protests. For those types of event, the intervention rate was only 16–18 percent.

**3. The United States intervenes less in the Middle East and North Africa and in South and Central Asia than in regions with fewer geopolitical constraints (strong evidence).** The United States has intervened in 31 percent of the potential transitions in East Asia and the Pacific, 25 percent of those in Europe, 23 percent of those in the Americas, 21 percent of those in sub-Saharan Africa, 11 percent of those in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and 11 percent of those in South and Central Asia. Of the 28 events in MENA, the United States did nothing in 12, responded immaterially (e.g., by issuing public statements) in 13, and intervened in only 3. Likewise in South and Central Asia, of the 45 events there, the United States did nothing in 28, responded immaterially in 12, and intervened in only 5. It seems to be the case that, where U.S. values are at stake and the constraints to action are low (e.g., sub-Saharan Africa), the United States intervenes more. Where its interests are at stake and the constraints are low (e.g., Europe and Latin America), the United States also appears to intervene more. Where its interests are at stake but the constraints are high (e.g., MENA and South and Central Asia), the United States intervenes less but issues a lot of statements.

**4. Strategic and in-country factors have more influence on intervention decisions than U.S. domestic factors (modest evidence).** Strategic significance, the quality of the country's relationship with the United States, and regional and geopolitical factors such as a country's relationship with Iran or China are difficult to quantify in a meaningful way. But a qualitative review of the intervention cases found that decisionmakers were concerned about geopolitical competition, terrorism and nuclear proliferation, risks that an internal conflict might draw neighboring countries into a war, and other strategic factors. The dataset and the cases both suggested a strong concern for the level of violence, the quality of governance, and other regime behaviors. Decisionmakers were somewhat affected by political and economic pressures in the United States, but these factors seemed to have less weight overall.

**5. As a policy tool, the United States treats military intervention as a last resort (strong evidence).** The historical data show clearly that military tools are the least preferred policy instruments for

dealing with potential transitions, reserved, apparently, for the most severe cases, which are the least common. Once the United States has decided to intervene in a potential transition, it has nearly always used more than one method to achieve its desired objectives. But it responds to a wide range of incumbent behaviors with civilian tools but to only a very narrow range of incumbent behaviors with military tools. The cases show that almost every U.S. military intervention in a potential transition took place only after the United States had exhausted all the civilian options.

**6. The United States is not generally biased toward either incumbents or challengers (inconclusive evidence).** The research team tested for patterns in the identity of the groups the United States tends to support but found no evidence of a clear pattern. It seems that the reality of U.S. support is often ambiguous, even to decisionmakers themselves. Even in cases where the United States has had a long-standing relationship with one side or the other in an internal conflict, it has not always clearly sided with that partner, often opting instead to mediate or even to use its influence with that partner to encourage restraint and reform—with mixed success.

**7. Protests seem to be the most successful strategy for challengers (inconclusive evidence).** Protest movements have by far the highest rate of unambiguous success for challengers compared to the other types of event: a 42 percent success rate, compared to 28 percent for coups, 12 percent for major conflicts, and 10 percent for minor conflicts. The evidence is mixed, however, because of a likely selection bias affecting these figures: for a protest to appear in the dataset, it has to be fairly significant, and presumably most smaller protests fade away or get crushed before they can grow into movements; and at least some protests that do grow are probably focused on some situation that people have hope of actually changing. By contrast, violent conflicts might be violent because the conditions that challengers are trying to change have already proven intractable through peaceful means, and thus there would naturally be a lower probability of success.

**8. U.S. interventions affect outcomes (inconclusive evidence).** The historical data show that challengers are successful at meeting their objectives in a potential transition only about a fifth of the time. But even if one divides the potential transitions into those in which the United States intervened and those in which it did not, the challengers still succeed only about a fifth of the time in both sets. It is not usually clear which side the United States actually supports in any given crisis, but a closer look at those cases where it is clear does suggest that the United States tends to get its way when it intervenes. Because success and failure in complicated situations such as potential transitions are not black and white, this finding should be taken with caution. U.S. intervention sometimes seems to affect the outcomes of events, but overall it might not be decisive.

**9. U.S. interventions tend to have favorable outcomes for the United States (modest evidence).** A review of U.S. interventions found generally favorable outcomes for the United States, both immediately and in the long run. The United States met or partially met its objectives and developed or maintained positive relations with the country somewhat more often than not. Still, given that enough interventions did not work out so well, this finding should not be interpreted as encouraging intervention.

# Decision Framework

This framework is not intended to be a comprehensive analytic tool (conflict assessment tools already exist) but simply a guide to some of the key questions that this research found to be central to the concerns of decisionmakers in a variety of contexts. These questions are divided into three sections: practical considerations, moral considerations, and historical evidence.

**1. Practical considerations.** Decisions are based on practical considerations that are relevant in three contexts: on the ground (i.e., in the country experiencing the crisis), in the world (including that country's relationship with the United States and any number of international and regional considerations), and at home (i.e., economic and political pressures within the United States):

- *On the ground.* Who are the challengers and the incumbents, and what are they doing? Whom is the crisis affecting? How many people are being killed, injured, displaced, or otherwise harmed? What do those not participating in the conflict believe or want (especially regarding outside intervention), and how unified are they in those desires? Who has formal and informal power? How has social change traditionally taken place? What is the quality of formal and informal institutions? What is the state of ethnic and economic relations? How does the country relate to its neighbors in the region? What other details about the political economy and the society in general are available?
- *In the world.* What are the U.S. foreign policy priorities in that country and region? Is the country in the sphere of influence of a powerful country such as Russia, China, Iran, or Saudi Arabia? What are the level and sources of foreign influence in general? How close is it to the U.S. homeland or U.S. allies? Are chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear materials, stockpiles, or weapons present? Are there transnational illicit networks, and how much of a threat are they now or in the future? Are there natural resources that are important to the United States or to the world economy? What is the historical relationship between the United States and that country, including development aid, security cooperation, and bilateral trade flows? Is a regional or multilateral institution willing to get involved?
- *At home.* Are media reporting and interest groups, including diaspora populations living in the United States, raising public awareness? How much would the intervention cost, and what are the opportunity costs of intervening? Is funding appropriated and authorized? How would intervention affect trade relations? How much congressional and public support is there for intervention?

**2. Moral considerations.** Decisions about intervening are supposed to be difficult. In addition to being about practical matters, such decisions present real moral dilemmas. In moral philosophy, moral decisions can be framed as questions of principle (right and wrong), consequence (good and bad), or character (virtue and vice). And an intervention can be simultaneously right and wrong, good and bad, and virtuous and vicious, all for different reasons that can exist simultaneously.

- *Right and wrong.* What principles (e.g., rights, self-determination, “do not kill,” “mind your own business,” or “do to others what you would have them do to you”), norms (e.g., manners, etiquette,

mores, and even international norms such as sovereignty or the “responsibility to protect”), rules (e.g., laws, regulations, and treaties), and membership obligations (e.g., for multilateral organizations) would *require* the United States to intervene? Which ones would *permit* it to do so? And which ones would *prohibit* an intervention?

- *Good and bad.* Who would benefit and who would be harmed by a decision to intervene—and also by a decision not to intervene? How might valuable relationships be affected? What would the costs and benefits be? What might the range of possible unintended consequences be? What are the possible “good” outcomes (e.g., lives protected, a dictator deposed, economic activity rejuvenated)? What are the possible “bad” outcomes (e.g., prolonged conflict, the delegitimation of the U.S. partner as a foreign puppet, mission creep, the growth of costs far outweighing the benefits)? What is the relative importance of any moral harms to others compared to the practical benefits to the United States?
- *Virtue and vice.* What would intervening or not intervening say about the kind of country the United States wants to be? What would the particular way we intervene say about our national character? What virtues would be demonstrated by intervening or not intervening (e.g., we would show leadership and integrity by living up to our vision of ourselves as a force for prosperity and democratic progress in the world; we would act with courage and restraint in the face of violent threats; or we would be generous with our lives and resources for the sake of helping others)? What vices would be demonstrated (e.g., the arrogance of believing that outsiders can or should transform another society; the hypocrisy and injustice of helping some and not others; or the ignorance and cruelty that often accompany efforts to influence social and political behavior in violent environments)?

**3. Historical evidence.** It is notoriously difficult to find a precise historical analog for any crisis situation in the present. But for decisionmakers faced with a potential transition, history can offer a glimpse of the range of possibilities and reminders of the constraints that limit what one society can achieve by intervening in another. Implicit in the findings of this report is a logical sequence of questions asking how the United States has responded historically (using the dataset of 758 event-years):

- *If the United States faces a potential transition, should it respond somehow?* As noted in the section on basic findings, a “response” includes public statements and other activities intended only to express an opinion or protect Americans, as well as any civilian or military activities that are intended to influence the outcome. The historical chance of a U.S. response in any given year is 36 percent (275 out of 758 event-years).
- *If it decides to respond, should it intervene?* An “intervention” includes civilian and military activities that are intended to influence the outcome of the crisis, including economic and diplomatic efforts, military support such as arms and training, and direct military actions whether carried out in multilateral or in unilateral operations. The historical chance of a U.S. intervention is 18 percent overall (134 out of 758), or 49 percent of all U.S. responses (134 out of 275 responses).

- *If it intervenes, should it use civilian capabilities? Should it use only civilian capabilities?* A civilian intervention includes economic and diplomatic activities that are intended to materially influence the outcome of the event (even if some military capabilities are also used). The historical chance of civilian intervention is 14 percent (108 out of 758), or 81 percent of all U.S. interventions (108 out of 134 interventions). The historical chance of a nonmilitary intervention (i.e., using civilian capabilities only) is 9 percent (70 out of 758), or 65 percent of all civilian interventions (70 out of 108 civilian interventions).
- *If it intervenes, should it use military force? Should it use only military force? Should it use military force unilaterally?* A military response involves material military support, such as weapons and training, or the use of force by U.S. military personnel in either a unilateral or a multilateral operation. Military support alone does not count as a military intervention, which by definition must involve the use of force (or at least the deployment of troops). The historical chance of a U.S. military response is 8 percent (64 out of 758), or 48 percent of all U.S. interventions (64 out of 134 interventions), while the historical chance of military intervention is 5 percent (37 out of 758), or 28 percent of all U.S. interventions (37 out of 134 interventions). The historical chance of a unilateral military intervention is less than 1 percent (3 out of 758), or 8 percent of U.S. military interventions in potential transitions (3 out of 37 military interventions).

## Future Research

The record on foreign interventions into internal turmoil of all sorts is extremely mixed. Given the complexity and uncertainty of potential transitions, it is often difficult to determine what is actually happening on the ground, much less what a favorable outcome might be. Helping challengers topple an autocratic regime might lead to democracy, might empower a new group of autocrats posing as democrats, or might empower a democratic regime less friendly to U.S. interests than the deposed autocrats. Promoting one set of U.S. interests could harm another set of interests or violate U.S. values. Promoting one set of values could violate another set of values or harm U.S. interests. And the United States does not always get its way whatever values and interests it pursues. If such situations are so complex for decisionmakers at the point of decision, then it should come as no surprise that they are too complex either to allow for prediction of future decisions or to generate many clear patterns in data about past decisions.

The CSIS Potential Transitions Dataset can provide some historical insight into what earlier decisionmakers have faced. But the findings in this report raise additional questions of interest to decisionmakers and scholars alike. When the United States does not intervene, is it because it has no interests or values at stake, because it faces too many geopolitical constraints, or because it does not need to intervene since another institution is doing so instead? Does intervening lead to better outcomes than not intervening? Does congressional pressure increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention, and does it improve the outcomes of intervening? Does the U.S. military use troops more for internal political crises, such as the potential transitions studied here, or more for major combat operations? And, most important, under what circumstances should the United States intervene (for example, in the Syrian conflict)?



No dataset by itself contains enough information to answer all these questions. The first version of the CSIS Potential Transitions Dataset, for example, does not include data on the number of congressional resolutions passed for each event year (a potential proxy for political pressure to intervene) and does not offer a satisfying measure of how well U.S. interventions have worked out for the United States in the past. Those and other questions are a matter for future updates of the dataset, and CSIS is undertaking additional research on these policy questions using the current version as the key resource. Other researchers are encouraged to do the same.

## About the Authors

**Robert D. Lamb** is a senior fellow and director of the Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation (C3) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a research scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, at the University of Maryland. Dr. Lamb studies governance and development amid conflict, with an emphasis on hybrid political systems and complex crises. He has presented his work to policymakers and experts in Afghanistan, Colombia, France, Germany, Greece, India, Korea, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Dr. Lamb has appeared on CNN, NPR, and NBC News and has been quoted in *USA Today*, the *Los Angeles Times*, Reuters, Bloomberg, McClatchy, Danger Room, and other media outlets. As a Defense Department strategist in 2006 and 2007, he developed tools to help defense policymakers pay more attention to local governance and informal systems in places that terrorist, criminal, and insurgent networks use as safe havens. As a doctoral candidate, he spent a year in Colombia developing new methods for studying gang governance, violence, and legitimacy in the stateless slums of Medellín; he then joined CSIS as a visiting scholar after returning to Washington in late 2009. He earned his PhD in policy studies in early 2010 from the University of Maryland School of Public Policy in a program combining security, economics, and ethics. He received a BA degree in interdisciplinary studies from Gettysburg College in 1993, spent half a year in Nicaragua with a microdevelopment project, and then worked for nine years as an editor and journalist, winning a National Press Club award in 2001, before changing careers after 9/11.

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