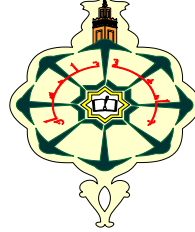


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International Conflict Analysis

محاضرات مقدمة لطلبة العلوم السياسية
تخصص العلاقات الدولية

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International Conflict Analysis

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Introduction to the Course: International Conflict Analysis

The phenomenon of conflict is an inherent aspect of human nature, intimately linked to human activity, existence, and dynamism. It constitutes one of the defining characteristics of human society and will remain an enduring feature of social life. It is impossible to conceive of a perfectly harmonious human community entirely devoid of conflict. The evolution of conflict as a social phenomenon parallels the development of human society itself—progressing from the individual level to that of groups, collective entities, and ultimately to modern political units such as the state, international organizations, and the international system as a whole.

Conflict, by its very nature, is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon—interwoven with diverse causes, factors, levels, dimensions, and influences. This complexity underscores the need for a comprehensive analytical and theoretical framework capable of examining its various aspects, which constitutes a fundamental stage in the understanding and analysis of any conflictual phenomenon.

The field of **international conflict analysis** occupies a central position within academic research in **international relations**, given its significant implications for the stability of the international system. Accordingly, the study of this field is essential for identifying the most effective means of managing conflicts—through understanding their causes, exploring approaches to their settlement and resolution, and developing strategies for prevention and mitigation.

The multiplicity and interconnection of the causes and motivations underlying conflicts have led scholars and practitioners alike to seek theoretical models that can provide general principles for explaining the emergence, management, and resolution of conflicts. These theories, however, differ and overlap considerably, to the extent that each researcher may adopt a distinct conceptual framework to understand the origins of conflict and the mechanisms for its resolution.

Hence, this course offers a comprehensive conceptual and theoretical analysis of **international conflicts**. It encompasses the study of the concept of conflict and related notions; the theories, principles, and analytical tools applicable to the examination of various international conflicts; as well as their stages, dynamics,

and levels of analysis. The course draws upon theoretical approaches and models developed by leading scholars and specialized research centers, as well as the most recent academic studies published by major universities, institutes, and international publishing houses.

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Chapter One: The Concept of International Conflicts

1. Definition of Conflict :

Conflict is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon characterized by intertwined causes, diverse sources, and overlapping interactions at multiple levels of scope, intensity, and violence. Consequently, there is no single, universally accepted definition of international conflict. Nevertheless, it is broadly defined as a clash of national wills, arising from differences among states in their motivations, perceptions, objectives, aspirations, resources, and capabilities — differences that ultimately produce decisions and foreign policies that diverge far more than they converge.

In the *Political Encyclopedia*, conflict is defined as a competition or collision between two or more real or legal powers or persons, in which each party attempts to achieve its purposes, goals, and interests while preventing the other from doing the same — by various means and methods. Conflict is thus a natural phenomenon in human life and society across all domains; it may be direct or indirect, peaceful or armed, manifest or latent.

Conflict further denotes an opposition or clash between different orientations, or an incompatibility of interests between two or more parties, which drives those parties to refuse to accept the existing state of affairs and to attempt to change it. Conflict resides in the interaction process between at least two parties.

It is also defined as a grave situation arising from the collision of perspectives between two states and the opposition of their interests in a manner that proves irresolvable through diplomatic means, and that threatens the use of armed force by one or both parties in support of their respective demands.

Jurists define international conflict as disagreements in which states, or non-state subjects of international law, are parties. It may also constitute a dispute over a legal or factual point, or a contradiction and opposition of legal and factual claims between two states.

Legally, it is a disagreement arising between two states regarding a legal matter, an unforeseen event, or a measure taken by one of them that generates a conflict of economic, military, or political interests — leading to a major modification of the existing conditions. Each party seeks to establish its right in these claims,

possibly through armed operations, thereby necessitating the settlement of the conflict through peaceful means.

Jurists also use the term *conflict* as a synonym for *armed conflict*, which constitutes an international legal state arising between distinct sovereign forces. This is because the rules of international law concern only relations between states that qualify as subjects of public international law and that possess the right to form armed forces in defense of their rights, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

In this legal sense, conflict is essentially a struggle between the military forces of two contending states — a coercive instrument to which a state resorts in order to protect what it claims as a right or to repel aggression against it. Armed conflicts thus represent the continuation of political processes combined with a mixture of other, non-political and violent means between states or other subjects of public international law, the purpose of which is to achieve particular self-interests whenever the will of the parties is directed toward the establishment of a state of war, with the ensuing application of international law on armed conflicts.

Thomas Schelling defines conflict as a confrontation in which each party strives to achieve gain, and in which the

adversary's behavior is described by terms such as *conscious*, *rational*, and *sophisticated*. The parties to such a confrontation seek rules that allow them to guarantee the best possible outcome.

John Burton argues that conflict revolves around substantive differences in interests and can be transformed into a conflict with positive outcomes — namely, functional cooperation for the exploitation of disputed resources.

For **Joseph Frankel**, conflict is a situation arising from differences in national goals and interests.

Amin Huwaidi defines conflict as the collision of the wills and forces of two or more adversaries, with each party seeking to soften the will of the other.

International conflict also evokes a situation arising from contradictions of interests or values between parties who are aware of this contradiction and who desire to occupy a position that is incompatible with — or even hostile to — the desires of others. It is a contradiction in one of the dimensions of human existence, giving rise to a collision between parties and necessitating its management and resolution.

The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Uppsala Conflict Data Program) defines international conflict as a contested incompatibility concerning government or territory, in which the use of armed force between the military forces of at least two parties — one of which must be the government of a state — results in at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in a single year.

Perhaps the clearest formulation of armed conflict is that it constitutes fighting between human communities — once conducted between primitive societies and now between modern states — a process of brutal collision in which human beings physically destroy one another in pursuit of specific objectives.

Regardless of the multiplicity of definitions, conflict may be understood as the interaction resulting from the confrontation and collision of interests, beliefs, and agendas among different entities. It is a clash of national wills, generated by differences in states' motivations, perceptions, objectives, aspirations, resources, and capabilities — leading to the opposition of goals and positions, and ultimately to decisions and policies that diverge more than they agree. Conflict can manifest in multiple forms: political, economic, ideological, or legal — ranging to its most negative manifestations, including pressure, blockade, containment, punishment, negotiation, bargaining, enticement, and concession.

2. The Nature of Conflict :

International relations are characterized by certain actions undertaken by international actors that may not generate contradictions with the goals and behaviors of other actors — a dimension governed by the objectives of public international law, which is the law of security and peace. The second type of interaction involves actions that may generate opposition to the wills and objectives of other actors, thereby producing contradiction and tension — and thus giving rise to international conflict.

Conflict is a complex and unique phenomenon: complex in terms of its dimensions (economic, political, ideological, legal, military), its causes, its parties (hidden or manifest, bilateral or multilateral, domestic or international), and its consequences (alteration of the domestic or international environment).

Despite this complexity, many specialists regard conflict as a natural phenomenon — comparable, in one analogy, to traffic accidents. Some psychologists, and even Aristotle, consider conflict a natural feature of human selfish nature. One school of thought attributes it to charismatic personality and attendant psychological complexes. John Burton's World Government

Approach considers conflict a natural phenomenon, likening it to the phenomenon of marriage within the family; conflict is thus a dynamic mechanism arising from the dynamism and renewal of international relations.

This has prompted leading political thinkers to engage with the phenomenon of conflict, each approaching it from his particular perspective and in response to the intellectual and civilizational context in which he lived.

While Western scholarship began addressing conflict from the perspective of the Realist School during the European Renaissance — tracing its theoretical origins to **Niccolò Machiavelli** in the sixteenth century and **Carl von Clausewitz** — the ancient East had engaged with conflictual thinking millennia earlier. The Chinese philosopher **Sun Tzu** held that the essence of society is power, that human beings are naturally fearful, and that fear creates evil and compels action to avoid punishment — concluding that power is the universal law that must govern the world, as it is the approach most consonant with human nature.

In ancient Greece, **Heraclitus** observed the permanence of things and held that conflict is the law of the visible world, and that war encompasses all forms of human conflict and is thus the father

and mother of all conflict. Within the same tradition, **Gorgias of Leontini**, a Sophist philosopher, treated the phenomenon of conflict and considered knowledge of its laws essential for dispelling the illusions that dominate human cognition. The Sophists posited a contradiction between law and nature, arguing that justice is in fact the interest of the stronger and that nature is governed by the rule of the strongest. The Epicureans interpreted conflict by considering human beings originally predatory and savage, and that the transition from primitivism to civilization resulted from the struggle against nature, while the purpose of law is to secure society against injustice.

Polybius was the first Western philosopher to offer a comprehensive interpretation of society based on the concept of conflict, envisioning — as did Plato — that a great catastrophe had destroyed all human societies while leaving certain individuals. Since humanity, like other animals, cannot survive in isolation, these individuals formed communities in the form of absolute monarchies — the earliest form of human community. Society then evolved, through social dynamics, from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy founded on justice and majority rule.

Ibn Khaldun attributed great importance to the phenomenon of conflict, grounding it in three fundamental assumptions: the

necessity of human socialization and the impossibility of solitary existence; the necessity of a restraining force against evil; and the possibility of repelling aggression through the power of the sovereign. Ibn Khaldun considered *‘aṣabiyya* (group solidarity) a pivotal concept in explaining the origins of social and political conflict within and between states — rooted in human nature and kinship bonds. He held that political authority is the ultimate objective of conflict and that *‘aṣabiyya* is the genesis of this conflict within the state.

Machiavelli was the first Western thinker to make conflict a central axis of political dynamics in early sixteenth-century Europe. In his work *The Prince*, he posited two fundamental drives that shape political movement and conflict: the desire for security on the part of the masses, and the desire for the acquisition of power on the part of rulers. He believed that human beings are evil by nature and ready to manifest that nature when the opportunity presents itself, and that the continuity of the state represents a form of equilibrium between competing forces — the true source of state stability.

Jean Bodin held that the formation of the state resulted from conflicts between families, and that conflict is at once necessary for society and that the absence of conflict is deeply harmful.

Thomas Hobbes grounded his analysis of conflict in the assumption that human action is driven by the desire for self-preservation and the permanent will to acquire power. At the social level, Hobbes concluded that power is the fundamental driver of social interaction and that the individual is inherently non-social — unwilling to respect the rights of others unless assured that his own rights will be respected. The state therefore originates from the need for self-protection.

David Hume argued that the individual is bound to social laws by necessity, and that governments have three essential duties: the preservation of the public interest, the maintenance of power, and the protection of private property. Conflict between members of society is natural as long as they are equal in intellectual and physical strength, but mutual need ultimately compels submission to authority.

During the eighteenth century, the study of conflict shifted from political to economic analysis. The **Physiocrats** redirected attention toward conflict over the necessities of life, and economic competition was reconceptualized as an instrument for achieving productive efficiency and meeting human needs.

The **Marxists** held that the great wars in international society were driven by conflicts between those who own the means of production and those who do not, attributing conflict to the unjust distribution of wealth.

The **Functionalists** regard international conflict as linked to the nature of the international system: the more anarchic the system, the more unstable international relations become. In their view, strengthening the role of international organizations is the essential remedy.

Chapter Two: Stages of International Conflict

Methodological rigor requires engagement with concepts related to the phenomenon of conflict — variously expressed as hostility, asymmetry or opposition of wills and interests, and the use of violence as an instrument of foreign policy. Some scholars treat these concepts as stages of international conflict. The principal concepts and terms include the following:

1- The Concept of International Tension :

International tension refers, simply, to a divergence of views and perceptions regarding international issues, situations, or conditions. It denotes the psychological anxiety prevailing between two or more parties, arising from multiple causes that threaten the peace and presage a local or regional war. It also refers to conflict situations that do not, at least in a given phase, lead to the resort to force.

Tension represents a state of distrust between two or more states; it may precede and cause conflicts and international crises, or it may be their consequence. Tension may intensify to the point at which a crisis transforms into full-scale conflict. Tension is thus the first stage that leads to conflictual behavior, as decision-makers

are seized by moments of doubt regarding the behavior of others, causing them to act in ways that may provoke other states, creating a fracture in relations between the parties.

2- The Concept of Crisis :

There is no consensus among political analysts and strategists on a single definition of *crisis*, in part because the social sciences lack a general explanatory theory of the international crisis. The term has been applied to numerous meanings and at multiple levels, and today it encompasses virtually all situations of acute instability.

A crisis is a tense confrontation between mobilized parties that may reach the level of threat and situational collision, and that can pave the way toward an imminent civil war or a general breakdown of law and order — occurring when one party suddenly places the other in an untenable situation requiring rapid decisions and violent reactions.

For **Charles McClelland**, international crises are brief bursts characterized by a high frequency and density of events, recurring behavioral patterns, speed (time pressure), and the element of surprise.

Glenn Herald Snyder defines international crisis as "a situation of acute conflict between contending governments, caused by one party's attempt to alter the status quo for another that resists, creating in each a perception of a high probability that war will break out." He further notes that each crisis is unique in its patterns and circumstances, precluding the universal application of identical methods and tools to all types of international crises.

3- The Concept of Confrontation :

Confrontation is a social concept antithetical to the functionalist theory of social structure. It proceeds from the historical reality that conflicts in values and interests constitute an organic phenomenon within social forms and relations. International confrontation arises from the divergence and contradiction of values and interests, as well as from the incompatibility of the material and moral demands of international actors with the limited availability of resources and the distribution of wealth and power within the international system.

4- The Concept of Aggression :

Aggression is mentioned in Article 39 of the UN Charter, at the opening of Chapter VII, which governs collective measures against threats to peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.^[1]

The International Law Commission defined aggression in 1951 as "any use of force or threat thereof by a state or government against another state, regardless of the form, the type of weapon, the reason, or the purpose — except in cases of individual or collective self-defense, or in execution of a resolution or recommendation issued by a competent UN organ".

5- The Concept of War :

Mao Zedong defines war as "the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions between classes, nations, states, or political groups when these contradictions have developed to a certain stage." The phenomenon emerged with the rise of private property and the formation of social classes.

Henry Kissinger views war as "a comprehensive political act that resorts to armed force at a stage in the pursuit of a particular objective — not necessarily requiring the breaking of the adversary's will or the total imposition of the victor's will".

Ali Sadiq Abu Hayf defines it as "a struggle between the armed forces of two contending parties, each seeking to safeguard its rights and interests against the other".

Ghanem views it as "a conflict between two or more states regulated by international law, the purpose of which is the defense of the national interests of the belligerent states".

Al-Shafi'i regards war as "an armed conflict between states with the intent of imposing a political point of view, in accordance with means organized by international law".

Strategic thinker **Carl von Clausewitz** considers war "a continuation of politics by other means" — one of the political options available to the decision-maker in the service of the interests of the unit or group he represents.

Bertrand Russell defines war as "a conflict between two groups in which each attempts to kill, wound, or disable the largest possible number of the opposing group in order to achieve a particular objective".

Karl Deutsch sees in war "a high degree of organized violence that the state prepares and conducts, considering it a

legitimate act falling within its most basic rights — organized violence directed against another state or against non-state political units such as organizations and national and political movements".

For **Milevskiy and Weber**, war is "an armed conflict between two independent political units through resort to organized armed force".

Raymond Aron, in *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, distinguishes three types of war as violent forms of competition between political units:

- (1) total wars between political units that recognize each other's existence and legitimacy;
- (2) imperial wars — the objective, origin, or outcome of which involves the elimination of some belligerents and the creation of a higher-level unit;
- (3) sub-imperial wars — the stake of which is the preservation of the fragmentation of a national or imperial political unit.

6- The Concept of International Terrorism :

There is virtually no consensus among researchers and specialists on a precise definition of terrorism. **Dr. Salah al-Din Amer** views terrorism as "the organized use of violence to achieve

a political objective" — particularly the organized commission of acts of violence by an organization against citizens in order to create an atmosphere of insecurity.

Osama al-Ghazali defines it as "acts or a series of acts of physical violence aimed at injuring the human entity to the point of death, involving a deliberate violation of the moral, customary, and legal rules of human conduct, with the aim of spreading fear and insecurity. These acts carry a symbolic character — conveying a message to all other potential victims — and target the political behavior of the state or states to which the victims belong".

Naomi Gal defines terrorism as "a violent method or style of political opposition, composed of violence and the threat thereof — whether real physical violence, psychological violence, or both — which may be directed against innocent persons or against targets directly linked to the cause for which the terrorists act".

Significant collective efforts include the **Geneva Convention for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism (1937)**, the **Washington Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism (1971)**, the **European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (1977)**, and the **Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (22 April 1998)**, issued by the

Council of Arab Interior and Justice Ministers. Article 1, paragraph 1 of the latter defines terrorism as "every act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in furtherance of an individual or collective criminal plan and aims at sowing terror among people or alarming them by harming them, or threatening their lives, freedom, or security, causing damage to the environment, public or private property, or placing national resources in danger".

Trajectory of International Conflict: Phases :

Having surveyed concepts related to international conflict, the following stages describe the trajectory a conflict may take:

a. Phase of Initial Manifestations

This phase begins when a behavior directly or indirectly affects the interests of other states, prompting those states to respond. This response encompasses a range of options and strategies, and may determine the fate of the conflict. In this phase, the state commences its confrontation through arguments, evidence, and persuasion of external parties through peaceful means. **Marcel Merle** regards tension as the first stage of conflictual behavior, wherein decision-makers are overcome by

moments of doubt about the behavior of others, leading them to act in ways that provoke other states. Diplomacy plays a fundamental role at this stage, as the core of the negotiation process — through which the parties aim to reach an agreement that directs and regulates their behavior based on a "win-win" principle of mutual interest.

b. Phase of Propaganda Campaign

When diplomatic efforts fail, the state launches a media and propaganda campaign aimed at legitimizing and rationalizing its position, portraying the adversary as the aggressor and its demands as illegitimate. The campaign operates both domestically and internationally. Propaganda must satisfy five conditions: *simplicity* of message; *capacity to attract attention and generate interest*; *credibility* (propaganda grounded in deception undermines itself); *alignment with the target audience* (requiring prior analysis of the audience's psychological and social characteristics); *internal consistency* (contradictions fatally undermine the message); and *repetition* across various media platforms.

c. Phase of Peaceful Measures

States begin implementing peaceful measures such as withdrawing recognition of a government, severing cooperative or diplomatic relations — a tool explicitly provided for in Article 41 of the UN Charter as a pressure instrument available to the Security Council. Measures may also include severing economic relations or applying economic and customs policies against the other state.

Holsti distinguishes between two forms of threat: a *positive threat* (e.g., threatening to raise tariffs, sever diplomatic relations, or impose a boycott on trade) and a *deprivation threat* (e.g., threatening to withdraw foreign aid or suspend benefits granted to the other state).

d. Phase of Third-Party Intervention

A third party may intervene either to resolve the conflict or to support what it considers the aggrieved party. For intervention to serve the goal of establishing balance and preventing war, it must take the form of peaceful political intervention. The Security Council, for example, may call upon parties to a dispute to use peaceful means such as negotiation, mediation, good offices, and judicial settlement.

e. War

This phase involves the resort to armed force within the framework of international conflict. As Clausewitz argued, war is a social activity undertaken by the state as organized violence in its own interest against another state — a cost paid in enormous human and material losses. War is invariably pursued over issues of great sensitivity (economic or political), and its use must always be accompanied by justifications, since war without legitimacy is internationally impermissible. The UN Charter — in Article 2(4) and Article 2(7) — prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state and prohibits UN interference in matters of domestic jurisdiction.

Exceptions to the principle of non-intervention include: (1) **individual and collective self-defense** (Article 51 of the UN Charter); and (2) **collective security** (Chapter VII of the UN Charter), which authorizes the Security Council — after the exhaustion of peaceful means — to undertake direct collective action to suppress acts threatening international peace and security.

Chapter Three:

Classification of International Conflicts

Conflicts are classified according to several criteria:

1. Criterion of Party Awareness

Conflicts are divided into **latent** and **manifest**: a latent conflict does not necessarily mean that the parties are unaware of the opposition between them, but rather that the weaker party lacks the capacity or intent to produce a change in the structure of the conflict in its favor.

2. Criterion of Number of Parties

Conflicts may be **bilateral** (dyadic) or **multilateral** (collective). Pure bilateral conflicts are rare, as indirect parties — providing support or endorsement to one or both sides — cannot be ignored. Conflicts thus often occur between coalitions or blocs, giving rise to the phenomenon of **alliances**.

3. Criterion of Level

By level, conflicts are classified as **local**, **regional**, or **global**, as well as **international** (between states) or **non-international** (intrastate). International conflicts involve states — and, per Article 1(4) of Additional Protocol I (1977) to the Geneva Conventions (1949), include conflicts involving national liberation movements. Non-international conflicts occur within a single state between the central government and one or more insurgent groups, and are governed by domestic law unless they threaten international peace and security.

4. Criterion of Content

Conflicts may be **national**, **economic**, **religious**, **linguistic**, **ethnic**, **ideological**, **political**, **legal**, or **geographic**. They may be direct or indirect (proxy conflicts), and may overlap to become comprehensive, transforming into all-encompassing struggles.

5. Criterion of Party Rationality

Anatol Rapoport distinguishes three types: **Fights** (in which self-control and mutual regulation quickly deteriorate in an

escalating dynamic); **Games** (in which parties rationally regulate their behavior according to the rules of the game, with each player possessing a hierarchy of payoffs and a range of action choices); and **Debates** (in which one party seeks to change the motives and values of the other, making it closer to finding an acceptable and constrained solution — a process of defining adversarial positions and developing means of persuasion).

6. Criterion of Scale

- **Large international conflict:** An open-ended conflict encompassing numerous principal parties, characterized by high intensity, resolvable only within a comprehensive framework.
- **Small international conflict:** Typically a border dispute, resolvable through diplomatic or peaceful means or through regional mediation.
- **Large internal conflict:** Revolutions and large-scale civil wars, which may transform into external conflicts by attracting outside parties.
- **Small internal conflict:** Limited, non-recurring acts of violence, easily contained. These are subdivided into *peaceful conflicts*

(resolved through institutionalized mechanisms such as constitutions, laws, and judicial systems — "zones of peace") and *violent conflicts* (in which parties abandon peaceful means and seek to dominate or destroy the adversary).

7. Criterion of Interaction

By mode of interaction, conflicts are classified as:

- **Diplomatic conflict:** Conducted through procedural channels, institutionalized in diplomatic conventions and norms, and potentially expressed in universal or regional bodies.
- **Non-institutional conflict:** Occurring outside established channels but not contradicting them, non-violent, such as the severance of diplomatic relations or the imposition of sanctions.
- **Armed conflict:** Replacing formal channels with violent mechanisms, encompassing war. It involves four principal elements: *substantive issues* (competition over natural resources, governance, territorial jurisdiction, ideology); *parties or conflict groups* (ethnic, religious, political, domestic, or external); *types of power used* (conventional or advanced weapons, human rights

violations, ethnic cleansing); and *geographic space* (within or beyond the state's territory).

Chapter Four:

Partial Theories in Explaining International Conflicts

1. Psychological Theories

Psychological theories occupy a prominent place in the study of conflict in international relations, with some proponents asserting that the roots and causes of international conflict lie almost entirely in psychological facts.

Sigmund Freud interpreted conflict as aggressive behavior resulting from latent, unconscious aggressive energy within the individual. In peacetime, social constraints suppress this energy; in wartime, conditions are ripe for releasing it in its most extreme and violent forms. Aggressive behavior thus results from the psychological crisis generated by feelings of frustration and disappointment. International conflict, in Freud's view, is the optimal opportunity for satisfying these impulses and serves as a necessity for the survival of groups and peoples.

Hadley Cantril's theory holds that the reactions of peoples to events are always automatic, based on assumptions formed through prior experience. Cantril emphasizes *transactional psychology* in political psychology: international conflict results

from the national image — a set of beliefs producing fixed stereotypes about other nations — which is itself the product of a given people's historical view of another state.

Leon Festinger's theory holds that conflict stems from the human tendency to reduce cognitive dissonance — the contradiction between ideals and social constraints on one hand, and the political reality of the existing system on the other. When people perceive a gap between ideals and reality, they experience tension and seek ways to reduce this dissonance.

2. Human Needs Theory

Human needs are the multiple basics of individual existence — food, clothing, security, identity, and self-actualization. **John Burton** argues that these needs are universal and must be satisfied, beginning with security, recognition, and the equitable distribution of resources; failure to provide them drives individuals toward violence and rebellion.

Abraham Maslow articulates a hierarchical ordering of human needs: physiological needs (food, water, shelter), followed by safety and security, belonging and love, self-esteem, and personal recognition — all equally indispensable.

Burton's proposed mechanism for conflict resolution is the *problem-solving workshop* or *analytical problem-solving process* — round-table meetings in which non-official diplomats (influential civil society figures, academic researchers, or religious personalities) assist conflict parties in finding reconciliatory solutions, adopting a **Win-Win** formula rather than a zero-sum approach.

3. Decision-Making Theory

This theory focuses on foreign policy decision-making as the foundation for explaining international conflict. **Richard Snyder** identified three principal variables:

1. **Decision-maker perceptions** — based on information received through the decision-making system.
2. **Motivations** — frameworks of reference transmitted through the system to achieve a minimum consensus on objectives.
3. **Influence of motivations** — shaped by the scope of competence, the power, relationships, training, and skills of the decision-maker, as well as communication networks and leadership structures.

According to this theory, international conflict results from the movement of groups of decision-makers (the "movement of contending states"), determined by how they perceive and define the situation. Understanding international conflict thus requires identifying those responsible for decision-making and objectively studying their historical backgrounds.

Decisions in this framework take one of three forms: a **postponement decision** (deferring confrontation); a **decisive decision** (definitively resolving the conflict, at least in the short term); and a **conciliatory decision** (not directly confronting the situation but reducing the tension associated with it).

4. Economic Theories

The Marxist Theory: Marxism traces international conflicts to economic causes — specifically, the unequal distribution of wealth and the class struggle between those who own the means of production and those who do not. Foreign policy is seen as a reflection of internal class conflicts, and international conflicts are ultimately reducible to intrastate class struggles. At the international level, Marxists argue that capitalism is the cause of international conflict, and that this phenomenon cannot be

eliminated without the unified proletariat overthrowing the capitalist system.

The Liberal Theory: John Atkinson Hobson attributes international conflict to imperialism — the expansion aimed at domination over other communities and states, which generates conflict. The maldistribution of wealth and the automatic increase in savings among the wealthy class leads to overproduction and underconsumption, prompting capital export and giving rise to colonialism. **John Locke's** axiom that human beings are inherently good underpins the liberal optimistic perspective on international relations.

The Theory of Economic Development: A.F.K. Organski argues that international conflicts arise from differences in the stages of economic development and consequent power differentials among members of the international system. The Industrial Revolution enabled industrialized states to acquire growing power in conflict instruments, dividing the world into major powers and underdeveloped states — and international conflict emerges between these two levels.

The Theory of Relative Deprivation: Relative deprivation in economic resources, combined with the accompanying feelings

of frustration, is among the most significant drivers of rebellion against the international political system that benefits other members.

5. Demographic Theory

This theory holds that population pressure constitutes the motive for waging offensive wars against other states in order to acquire sufficient *Lebensraum* (living space). The composition of the population — including age, gender, race, occupational structure, linguistic and religious composition — is linked to international conflict phenomena.

Youth bulges can destabilize political communities and make young people susceptible to radicalization and the rejection of authoritarian regimes. Religious divisions — particularly when religion is politicized — generate conflicts between different religious communities and between factions within the same religion (the conflict between advocates of a religious state and proponents of a secular state). Linguistic minorities may resort to violence if their cultural identity is suppressed. Ethnic diversity, when politically manipulated — through social polarization, oppression, and the absence of the rule of law — generates internal and regional conflict dynamics.

Chapter Five:

Macro-Theories in Explaining International Conflicts

1. Realism

Realism constitutes the first major theoretical attempt in international relations. Academic studies emerged in the United States after World War II as a reaction against Wilsonian idealism and the moralistic-isolationist tendencies of the Republican Party.

Hans Morgenthau, the founder of classical Realism, holds that political reality — like all social life — is governed by objective laws rooted in human nature, and that international politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. The international relations of Realists are characterized by two fundamental patterns:

- **Direct Opposition:** Occurring when a major state (A) pursues a policy directly against another major state (B) and demands the preservation of the status quo (e.g., France and its allies against Russia in 1812; Japan against China in 1921; the Allied Powers against the Axis Powers in World War II).

- **Competitive Model:** In which Morgenthau presents three scenarios for competition between major states (A) and (B) for control of a smaller state (C): if (A) — which seeks control — prevails, the independence of (C) is endangered; if (B) — which seeks to preserve the status quo — prevails, (C)'s sovereignty is secured; if (A) redirects its expansionist policy toward state (D), (C)'s independence and security are stabilized.

Realists hold that states are continuously seeking to protect and advance national interests, and that the conflict for power is the fundamental pillar of national interest. They identify three core principles: human beings are evil by nature; the desire for power and domination is part of human instinct; and this desire manifests in conflicts, wars, and the struggle for power.

Neo-realism (Structural/Systemic Realism) — pioneered by Kenneth Waltz and Robert Gilpin — posits three key variables: the anarchic nature of the international system; functional differentiation (a variable in decline due to the loss of its *raison d'être*); and the distribution of power (the central mechanism for maintaining the status quo through the construction of a balance of power). **Barry Buzan** applied neo-realism to ethnic conflict, arguing that the collapse of multi-ethnic states places diverse

communities in a state of anarchy in which each group attempts to use force to improve its relative position.

2. Balance of Power Theory

This theory assumes that international conflict is a phenomenon of imbalance between states. It posits that the dominant feature of international interaction is conflict, and that conflict occurs whenever a disruption in the balance of power emerges. Conflict is driven not only by differences in national interests, but also by each state's attempt to increase its power at the expense of others. Two factors govern the balance of power at the international level: the diversity and plurality of components of international society (i.e., states); and the hostility between the constituent elements of the international system. The scientific study of the balance of power system requires identifying three variables: the interacting units, the nature of their relationships, and the objectives of their decision-makers.

3. International System Theory

This theory assumes that the international political system — grounded in the principle of national sovereignty — constitutes the primary source of all forms of international anarchy and conflict.

The elimination of these conflicts requires modifying this foundation by dissolving national wills into a single will, expressed by a world government with the full capacity to impose and consolidate peace.

Richard Rosecrance, drawing on a study of nine historical international systems in Western Europe from 1740 to 1960, distinguished between stable systems (in which international conflict is minimized) and unstable systems (in which conflictual dynamics escalate). His criterion was three elements: *disturbance inputs* (ideologies, domestic threats, resource disparities, opposing interests); *the regulator* (the system's response mechanism, such as the League of Nations or the United Nations); and *environmental constraints* (pressures exerted by the international environment on the behavior of actors). He identified four key factors in determining conflictual phenomena: the orientations of local elites; the degree of elite control; available resources; and the international system's capacity to contain disturbances.

4. Arms Race Theory

Arms superiority naturally produces a propensity to demonstrate force, even in conflicts whose circumstances call for political settlement. The technological revolution in weapons

production creates gaps in existing security systems, generating incentives for escalation. Continuous armament, premised on secrecy, fosters mutual suspicion and fear. It also sustains the influence of military-industrial interest groups, who maintain pressure on decision-making bodies to keep certain conflicts active in order to maximize their material gains.

5. Geopolitical Theories

Geopolitical theories seek to explain international conflicts through the relationship between conflict and the natural environment and its pressures on the external behavior of states. Key thinkers include **Friedrich Ratzel**, **Alfred Thayer Mahan**, **Alexander P. de Seversky**, **Nicholas J. Spykman**, and **Halford John Mackinder**.

Ratzel held that the state is an organic unit of people and land, analogous to a living organism whose capacity for growth depends upon its spatial living space. Boundaries are fluid zones susceptible to shifts in favor of more vital states.

Mackinder divided the world into three regions and summarized his theory as: "Who rules East Europe commands the

Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the world".

Natural factors shaping decision-making and generating international conflict include: **spatial characteristics** (location, size, shape of the state); **physical appearance** (topography, climate); and **natural resources** (water resources, soil, mineral resources, flora, fauna).

Chapter Six:

Theories of the Management of International Conflicts

The term *conflict management* originally emerged in the wake of public administration as a discipline, in reference to the state's role in confronting sudden public disasters and emergency conditions — such as earthquakes, epidemics, fires, floods, air raids, conflicts, and total wars. It subsequently evolved and gained greater prominence in the field of international relations, designating the method by which foreign policy is administered in response to acute and volatile international situations, particularly those involving international conflicts.

Part One: The Concept of International Conflict Management

Some scholars employ the concepts of *crisis management* and *conflict management* interchangeably, despite the fundamental distinctions between a crisis and a conflict. In this regard, it is imperative to differentiate between two conceptually distinct notions: *conflict management* and *management through conflicts*. The former refers to the process of overcoming conflict through various scientific instruments, mitigating its negative consequences while capitalizing on its positive dimensions. The latter, by contrast, involves the deliberate fabrication or artificial

generation of a conflict or crisis as a mechanism for concealing and diverting attention from pre-existing problems.

Among the principal definitions pertaining to conflict management, the following may be cited:

1. The Optimal Utilization of Available Capacities and Means

Conflict management is understood as the optimal utilization of available capacities and means — whether capital assets, diverse properties, personnel, individuals, states, governmental and non-governmental organizations, or power resources — with the aim of achieving the objectives delineated in a given conflict, whether through contributing to its resolution, its exacerbation, or its elimination.

2. The Identification of Certain Threats to International Peace and Stability

Some scholars approach the subject of conflict management from the angle of threats to international security and peace in their relationship with international law and norms. This entails the identification of certain principal threats to international peace and

stability that may materialize in the future, as well as the exploration of potential new approaches for addressing such threats.

3. Obstacles to the Use of Coercive Means

This refers to those impediments that stand as barriers to the employment of coercive means in order to subjugate a rival or adversary, potentially preventing the transition to outright war. However, this is difficult to apply universally, as certain states do resort to repressive and coercive means in the management of conflicts. Accordingly, management does not exclusively entail the use of peaceful means or the prevention of non-violent conflicts from evolving into violent ones.

4. Crisis Containment

This refers to the ensemble of steps and capabilities designed to contain a crisis, prevent its escalation, and preclude its transformation into an armed conflict, in order to safeguard the vital interests of the state.

From another perspective, Glenn H. Snyder contends that conflict management is predicated upon the exercise of precise

control by wise leaders involved in a given conflict, with the aim of minimizing the likelihood of the conflict erupting into a state of war. In other words, every state seeks to manage the conflict in a manner that maximizes its utility in the final outcome and in the resolution of the issue under dispute.

Johan Galtung, for his part, characterizes international conflict management as a conservative and methodologically distinctive field of study. By definition, if conflict mitigation from the perspective of the stronger party constitutes the axis of conflict management studies, the result would be the emergence of a branch of inquiry concerned with conditions that guarantee the preservation of power and the freezing of the *status quo* — in other words, distracting the weaker party from taking up arms against the stronger one.

Conflict management thus came to be dominated by an ideology holding that order is of greater value than change, and that the objectives of conflict management are, in essence, a microcosm of the grand interests operative within the international system. International conflict management thereby becomes a factor reinforcing the existing *status quo* of the international order, as it furnishes decision-makers in major states with information

necessary for processes of regulation, control, and integration within the international system.

The term *conflict management* is commonly associated with the concept of *conflict containment*. As Hugh Miall — one of the foremost contemporary theorists of *conflict transformation*, considered a more developed and ambitious alternative approach to conflict management and resolution — argues, theorists who subscribe to the concept of conflict management hold that violent conflicts generate consequences that cannot be entirely eliminated, involving as they do deep-seated disagreements over values and interests both within and between contending communities. Such theorists consider the pursuit of a definitive resolution to such conflicts to be unrealistic, and maintain that the best course of action is to "manage" and contain them, and in some cases to set aside violence and resume normal political relations.

Conflict management is thus oriented toward issuing warnings against actions and intentions attributed to actual or potential adversaries, thereby deterring such adversaries should mediation or arbitration fail, and resolving the conflict before it threatens other significant internal or external objectives.

There is no doubt that the technological advancement of armaments in the modern era has tilted the balance in favor of new political concepts and strategic philosophies in conflict management, revolving fundamentally around the avoidance of nuclear warfare in order to avert the catastrophes that modern weapons might bring — that is, the shift by states from the concept of the actual use of force to that of the mere threat of force.

This development gave rise to what is known as *crisis diplomacy* and *coercive diplomacy*, which in turn led to conflict management being capped at a threshold not exceeding the threat of force, particularly regarding existing and potential conflicts among major and great powers — although this did not preclude such powers from engaging in the disorder of conventional wars waged with technologically advanced weaponry.

The science and art of international conflict management encompasses the integration and interplay of a set of methods and approaches — including negotiation, deterrence, coercive diplomacy, limited wars, escalation, détente, and normalization — all of which are employed, albeit to varying degrees.

Conflict management may therefore be defined as comprising the conflict postures adopted by a party to a conflict vis-à-vis the

other, or the policies (strategies and tactics) pursued by a conflict party with respect to a given situation or condition, with the aim of preventing the outbreak of war and securing mutual gains that could not have been achieved had the conflict assumed a violent form.

Part Two: Game Theory and Conflict Management

Some scholars perceive in the term *game theory* a form of trivialization of significant human phenomena such as politics and conflict. Indeed, certain researchers were uncomfortable with the reduction of the importance of political phenomena and their treatment as though they were a sporting game or a creative contest — notwithstanding the fact that generals and strategists had previously spoken of what is known as "war games," which denotes the capacity to anticipate an adversary's next move.

The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga maintains that human culture is difficult to comprehend unless the human being is treated as a "player," and that individuals engage in play from childhood throughout their lives and across all domains, from emotional relationships to conflictual and belligerent ones.

Game theory is defined as the methodological framework premised on the existence of a significant resemblance between certain ordinary game situations and certain recurring social scenarios. Steven Brams defines it as the set of rules that serve to link players or coalitions to outcomes.

For Martin Shubik, game theory represents a method for studying decision-making in conflict situations. As Thomas Crombie Schelling argues, the theory is concerned with situations in which the optimal behavior of each party depends on its capacity to anticipate what the other party will do — which implies a fundamental distinction between strategic games and games of chance.

It is noteworthy that Schelling and Shubik built their theoretical frameworks on the foundations laid by John von Neumann, a mathematician, and Oskar Morgenstern, an economist, in their seminal work *The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, in which they analyzed the various strategies available to a player and sought to provide a mathematical-theoretical formulation of the outcomes corresponding to each move, followed by the selection of the move that yields the best results — what they termed the *optimal strategy*.

This theory focuses on addressing situations characterized by conflicts and clashing interests, treating them as strategic games. The preoccupations of game theory are fundamentally directed toward the analysis of all models of political conflicts in general, and toward the problems of war and peace in particular. A number of eminent military thinkers and experts in international strategy have succeeded in developing methods for applying game theory to the design of strategic alternatives applicable under conditions of various conflicts.

The general premise of game theory rests on the assumption that conflicts are inherently divisible into two principal categories: competitive and non-competitive conflicts. It holds that decision-making involves a certain degree of rationality, with each player seeking to maximize gains, and that the outcome of a competitive or cooperative game is not predominantly contingent upon chance or the nature of the environment in which the contest takes place, but rather upon the choices of the player or the opposing players.

According to this theory, every party to a conflict is capable of selecting the course of action it believes will ultimately lead it to prevail over its adversary. However, this requires prior knowledge of the adversary's intentions — who is presumed to possess no lesser degree of intelligence than the other party in this conflictual

strategy. Consequently, all possible alternatives for action constitute a set of strategies from which one or another may be prioritized according to the anticipated outcomes of each, and these expected outcomes can be represented in a matrix composed of cells that record the gains and losses of the conflicting parties against one another.

The content of game theory is thus predicated on the assumption that decision-makers in any form of conflict will adhere to rational strategies throughout the conflict, by seeking to maximize values or gains and to minimize losses as much as possible, or at least to reduce them to the lowest feasible level.

If conflict is viewed as a game, then every player participating in the game seeks to win in order to secure gains, or at the very least seeks to avoid emerging with a loss, through short-range tactical moves or long-range strategic maneuvers. Accordingly, the most rational strategy for a player is one that yields outcomes of maximum value in terms of profits or gains — or, conversely, one that most effectively increases the chances of avoiding a losing outcome. Expressed in quantitative terms, the most rational strategy is that which maximizes net gains to the greatest possible extent, or minimizes net losses to the lowest possible level.

Game theory is thus founded on three fundamental principles:

1. Choices:

Each party to the game possesses choices and priorities, with opportunities to select from available alternatives. However, every option available to one party affects the value of the returns achieved by the other player, and the choices available to any given player are equally available to all other players.

2. Objectives:

Every player pursues an objective and seeks to achieve victory. A player who pursues defeat would be considered irrational, as each party not only seeks to gain but strives to maximize its gains to the greatest possible extent.

3. Rationality:

The theory is predicated on the achievement of rational behavior that enables the player to prevail. This refers to the behavior of the decision-maker, whereby rational behavior means that every player in the conflict possesses a defined set of values and objectives and formulates its policy accordingly, without error.

Game theory is divided into two principal categories: **zero-sum games** and **non-zero-sum games**.

1. Zero-Sum Games:

The elementary meaning of this type of game is that one party wins while the other loses. In mathematical terms, the gain achieved by the first party is equal in magnitude to the loss sustained by the second party; every game ends with a value of +1 for one party and -1 for the opposing party. In the realm of international relations, the zero-sum game represents a perpetual, irreconcilable conflict in which each party seeks to bring about the elimination or the unconditional surrender of the other. Karl Deutsch accordingly regards zero-sum games as a model for intense conflict between players, in which what one player gains, the other loses, and what is beneficial to one player constitutes, at the same time, a detriment to the other.

2. Non-Zero-Sum Games:

While the zero-sum game presupposes a state of perpetual conflict that precludes coordination and cooperation, the non-zero-sum game presupposes the existence of opportunities for coordination and cooperation stemming from the mutual interests of the

conflicting parties. In this type of game, both parties may adopt either cooperative or non-cooperative behavior toward each other. In the case of cooperative behavior, both parties to the conflict are capable of communicating with each other and exchanging information in advance regarding the matter under dispute.

In the case of non-cooperative behavior, direct communication is absent and neither party is aware of the other's behavior until after it has been enacted; nevertheless, even in the absence of direct contact, a form of tacit communication persists. Non-zero-sum games are characterized by the coexistence of cooperative and competitive interests, which is why they are sometimes referred to as variable-sum games, mixed-motive games, or variable-incentive games — games in which one player gains something from another in a competitive manner, while collectively they win or lose vis-à-vis an additional or secondary player.

Among the examples of non-zero-sum games are the **Prisoner's Dilemma** and the **Chicken Game**.

The Prisoner's Dilemma involves two defendants, neither of whom is aware of the other's decision during their respective interrogations. The options available to each defendant are either

to testify against the other before the judge or to remain silent and deny all charges:

	Defendant B: Confess	Defendant B: Deny
Defendant A: Confess	5 years each	A: 2 years / B: 10 years
Defendant A: Deny	A: 10 years / B: 2 years	Both acquitted, or both 10 years

- If both defendants confess, each is sentenced to 5 years in prison.
- If one confesses and testifies against the other, the testifying defendant receives 2 years for cooperating with justice while the other is sentenced to 10 years.
- If both choose to deny the charge, two scenarios arise: either both are acquitted if the investigator lacks sufficient evidence, or both are sentenced to 10 years if incriminating evidence is available against both.

Part Three: Deterrence Theory and International Conflict Management

It would be erroneous to assume that deterrence originated in the nuclear age, for it had long existed as one of the mechanisms of the balance of power, albeit in different forms. The Greek historian

Thucydides recorded numerous instances of each party maneuvering to build alliances in order to convey to the adversary that initiating or expanding a war would entail grave consequences. Similarly, Niccolò Machiavelli emphasized the necessity of demonstrating one's own strength and adopting a policy of "flexing one's muscles" as a means of preventing the adversary from engaging in acts of aggression.

Nevertheless, no concept dominated international strategic theory during the Cold War as profoundly as the concept of deterrence. The term deterrence rarely appears in works on international relations published prior to the Second World War, and when it does occur, it does not carry the meaning it would come to bear in the atomic age. Bernard Brodie referred to the implicit or explicit threat of war by a particular state against another in order to prevent it from undertaking a specific action.

The most prominent Western theorists of nuclear deterrence include the French scholars Raymond Aron, General André Beaufre, and General Pierre Gallois; the British theorists Liddell Hart and Morgane (Patrick Morgan); while the most prominent Soviet theorists in this field include Marshal Vasily Danilovich Sokolovsky, Marshal Pavel Alexeyevitch Rotmistrov, Marshal

Ogarkov (Egorov), Colonel "Tayouth Levitz," and the military theorist Karpetov (Karabutov).

Deterrence signifies the presentation to the adversary of unmistakable evidence of the existence of a retaliatory capability that guarantees severe punishment for any inclination on its part to initiate war in pursuit of a particular objective or gain at the expense of the deterring state. Thomas Schelling argues that deterrence is the art of not using military force. French General André Beaufre holds that the objective of deterrence is to prevent any hostile power from reaching the decision to use military force — or in other words, to induce the adversary to act in the situation, whether in terms of action or reaction, under the influence of a strong sense of threat, so that the intended outcome is fundamentally psychological, achievable only through the method of threat.

The military meaning of deterrence generally refers to discouraging the adversary from undertaking military action by ensuring its prior knowledge that the magnitude of costs and risks exceeds any anticipated gains.

This concept has been extended into the political domain to mean discouraging a second party from doing something by means of an implicit or explicit threat of punishment should the prohibited

action be carried out. It is important to note that deterrence performs a *quasi-offensive* function, in that the defensive function is a purely passive means, whereas deterrence involves the threat of offensive retaliatory action — including the prevention of the adversary from undertaking a specific action and responding to acts of provocation.

The principal elements of any effective deterrence strategy are as follows:

1. Retaliatory Capability:

Among the necessary prerequisites for demonstrating effective retaliatory capability is its active announcement or competent promotion, without compromising or damaging the deterring state's national security. For deterrence to be effective, it must not remain secret; a sufficient volume of information must be allowed to reach the adversary. If one party manages to augment or modernize its weaponry in conditions of secrecy, this does not enhance the effectiveness of its deterrent capability.

2. The Resolve to Employ that Capability:

The retaliatory capability must be reinforced by an unequivocal

resolve to employ it when such use becomes imperative. If a faction opposes the use of this retaliatory capability despite provocations emanating from hostile states — on the grounds that acquiescing to the adversary's will is less harmful than entering into a suicidal war — this opposition will strip deterrence of all its effectiveness vis-à-vis the targeted adversary.

Accordingly, any deterrence strategy must be aligned with a clearly defined security strategy and must also adapt to the realities and transformations of international relations. The question of nuclear deterrence, for instance, has occupied a prominent position since its emergence at the close of the Second World War and has undergone fundamental changes in its essence, owing to the political-military transformations that have occurred in interstate — or more accurately, inter-bloc — relations on the one hand, and the perceptible technological development of nuclear and ballistic weapons on the other.

3. The Capacity to Inflict Damage upon the Adversary:

This refers to the capacity to inflict damage upon the adversary that surpasses in scale and scope any advantage it might obtain through a first strike, thereby providing the capability to anticipate the risks

that will accrue to the aggressor as a result of the retaliatory measures to be executed against it.

Deterrence is thus a method of implementing foreign policy and managing international conflicts. Since deterrence theory came to dominate thinking in the field of international politics, it has presupposed a high degree of rationality in policy-making decision circles when it comes to the management of international conflicts, particularly in light of the nuclear proliferation witnessed by the world.

Part Four: Escalation Theory and International Conflict Management

International conflicts, as they develop either negatively or positively, tend to evolve along the following trajectories: escalation, de-escalation, stabilization, and termination. Escalation, simply put, refers to the broadening of the scope of a conflict and a rise in the degree of tension within it, while de-escalation refers to a decrease in the intensity of tension and a contraction in the scope or range of the conflict. Assessing the conflict and the phase it currently occupies — whether it falls within any of the aforementioned trajectories — depends on the accurate monitoring of the following factors:

- The geographical boundaries of the conflict
- The number of parties participating in the conflict
- The volume of resources and capabilities allocated to the conflict
- The types of weapons employed in the conflict
- The objectives that states set for themselves in and through the conflict

These factors represent the quantitative criteria used to measure the degree of tension and violence in any international conflict. However, qualitative criteria also enter into the assessment process; the level of mutual trust or distrust among the decision-makers who are parties to the conflict also constitutes an important factor conducive either to escalation or to the compression and reduction of tension.

Among the other factors whose influence is directed toward escalation as a means of managing international conflicts, the following may be cited:

- One party's mistaken belief that the other party will escalate the conflict to a higher level of dangerousness, prompting it to pre-emptively escalate the situation.

- One party's perception that competing with the other in escalating the conflict yields certain advantages, arising from the belief that the other party will not risk escalating the situation beyond a certain point.
- One party's perception that the conflict's development to a certain stage will inflict a certain loss upon its interests, leading it to resort to escalation in the belief that such escalation will mitigate the likelihood of a loss.
- The pressures exerted by domestic public opinion within the decision-maker's environment may impel it toward escalating the situation, irrespective of whether the party in question actually desires escalation.
- One party's escalation in response to pressure exerted upon it by a third party outside the immediate circle of the conflict.

However, these escalation-oriented factors may be counterbalanced by others working in the opposite direction, most notably:

- One party's awareness of the risks to which escalation — which may become uncontrollable — could lead, should it decide to escalate the conflict.
- One party's assessment that the other's escalation of tension in the conflict has not yet reached a level of provocation and hostility that necessitates a comparable retaliatory escalation.

Part Five: Collective Security Theory and International Conflict Management

Scholars have differed in their definitions of the concept of a collective security system. Some define it as the system in which the organized international community assumes responsibility for protecting each of its members and safeguarding their security against aggression. Others define collective security as the collective, joint action among members of the international organization for the preservation of international peace. Still others define it as the system in which states rely for the protection of their rights, when faced with an external threat, not on their own defensive capabilities or the assistance of their allies, but on the basis of solidarity and cooperation embodied in an international organization endowed with sufficient and effective means to achieve such protection.

Inis Claude defines collective security as any measures of any kind involving the possibility of joint military action in any conflict by two or more states.

Collective security is thus one of the techniques for regulating and governing behavior in the dynamics of international interaction and in the management of international conflicts, preventing them from evolving to the level of total war. In this context, some scholars note that the concept of collective security in international relations implies the formation of a global alliance patronized and guaranteed by the major powers, aimed at deterring any state that adopts conflictual behavior and engages in actions threatening the security of another state — on the grounds that such a threat constitutes an infringement upon the collective security of all states.

The concept of collective security thus resolves itself into action aimed at deterring the conflictual behavior adopted by decision-makers, such that no state can commit an act of aggression that challenges legality, since the international community will take the necessary measures to repel the aggression and this conflictual behavior, thereby ensuring the consolidation of international security and peace.

For the collective security system to effectively manage international conflicts and prevent their escalation in order to safeguard international security and peace, it must be composed of the following pillars:

- The existence of an international organization that assumes responsibility for protecting international security and peace and serves as an instrument of the collective security system.
- States' readiness to go to war for the continuation of the existing order.
- Commitment to objectivity in addressing all international conflicts and all issues threatening international security and peace.
- Universal membership, such that all states join this system and not even adversaries are excluded from it.

Following agreement on the identity of the party responsible for a conflict, the international community proceeds to take measures designed to deter it rapidly and effectively, with the aim of containing it and averting the broadening of the conflict and its consequences. The objective of resisting conflict and aggression is

considered a moral obligation incumbent upon member states of the international community. States' participation in collective measures capable of confronting the aggressor is contingent upon the will of these states and the freedom and flexibility they enjoy in this regard, whereby effective collective pressures and measures, along with their attendant arrangements, are sufficient to ensure the capacity to repel and frustrate conflictual behavior.

This decisive collective international stance in confronting aggression aims, in part, at cultivating the awareness among decision-makers of the state contemplating the execution of illegitimate conflictual behavior, that it will be unable to resist the reaction of the international community and that its venture will not yield the results it seeks, but may instead result in a certain defeat.

Chapter Seven:

Theories of the Resolution of International Conflicts

The theories and methods of international conflict resolution are, by virtue of their nature, organized into multiple groups: diplomatic theories and methods, legal methods, strategic theories, economic theories, and even value-based and cultural ones. They take into account the causes and nature of international conflicts and seek to frame them theoretically in order to eradicate all root causes of international conflicts.

In many cases, a settlement among the conflicting parties may be reached as a result of changes that lead one of the parties to introduce modifications to its priorities, demands, or fundamental positions — to which inflexible adherence prevents the parties from arriving at a settlement.

It should be noted at the outset that a recently emergent phenomenon — peace agreements — constitutes an essential component of the international conflict resolution process. Without some form of agreement among the conflicting parties, it is difficult to speak of a conflict resolution process. Nevertheless, agreements — even when implemented — may be insufficient to establish a

lasting peace, which requires more than the signing of an agreement between the parties concerned; yet the existence of a peace agreement is a necessary condition for reaching a final arrangement.

A conflict resolution process may thus be defined as a situation in which the conflicting parties enter into an agreement to settle their substantive differences, to accept the existence of the other party, and to cease all mutual acts of violence.

Diplomatic Theories and Methods

It is uncontested that diplomacy is the primary instrument of states' foreign policy. It may be defined as the process of representation and negotiation conducted between states addressing their relations, transactions, and interests. Effective diplomacy is that which is supported by all other policy instruments available to the state, whether political, propagandistic, economic, or military.

Diplomacy emerges as a means and an instrument for implementing foreign policy objectives; it is the approach predicated on negotiation for the purpose of persuasion in resolving conflicts rather than resorting to violence. Diplomacy has been

defined as the art of translating foreign policy programs into practice through negotiation.

Diplomacy as a phenomenon emerged alongside the emergence of human conflict over the process of value distribution; it is significant in international politics because it performs five essential functions in the dynamics of international interaction:

- Diplomacy can be harnessed to the management of international conflict.
- Since diplomacy is predicated on dialogue and persuasion, it undoubtedly plays a significant positive role in resolving international conflicts.
- Diplomacy, through its various methods and channels, contributes to and deepens cultural communication between states and facilitates its wide dissemination.
- Diplomacy entails the pursuit of negotiation and bargaining between actors in the international system on numerous specific issues and the conclusion of agreements and treaties across diverse domains.
- Diplomacy functionally administers the general program of any state's foreign policy decisions with respect to other states.

All international charters have affirmed the settlement and resolution of conflicts through peaceful means. The UN Charter, in paragraphs two and four of Article Two, obligates all member states to settle their disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace, security, and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

The UN Charter addressed those peaceful means — such as negotiations, mediation, good offices, conciliation, or recourse to regional organizations to which both parties to the dispute belong, or other means of their own choice.

It must be noted that the settlement of international disputes under the UN Charter proceeds in accordance with Chapter VI and pursuant to Article 33 of the UN Charter, which stipulates the mandatory recourse to peaceful means of settlement: negotiations, mediation, inquiry, conciliation, judicial settlement, recourse to regional organizations, etc. The Security Council is entitled to intervene in the event of a dispute threatening international security and peace, either on its own initiative or at the request of a UN

member or at the initiative of the Secretary-General of the Organization.

The exercise of a settlement role by the Security Council requires the passage through two essential phases:

- The first phase consists of examining the subject of the dispute or situation to determine whether its continuation is likely to endanger international security and peace.
- The second phase involves the examination of the dispute or situation and necessitates the establishment by the Security Council of committees — appearing in practice under the designation of inquiry and conciliation commissions. Although the recommendation is not legally binding, it carries a moral obligatory force of considerable weight, on the basis that it represents the view of the international community.

Jean-David Levitte, the former Permanent Representative of France to the Security Council, stated in his address on behalf of the European Union on July 20, 2000, that the most important role the Security Council can play in the prevention of conflicts is to eliminate their root causes, those who fuel them, and the conditions that facilitate their eruption.

1. Negotiation

William Zartman notes that negotiations are a political process or a process of communication or aggregation of different perspectives in order to reach a common objective. Fisher and Ury consider negotiations to be back-and-forth communication aimed at reaching an agreement when there are interests, some of which are shared between the parties and some of which are in opposition.

Charles Ikle (Fred C. Ikle) notes that negotiations are a process in which explicit proposals or suggestions are submitted in order to reach an agreement or mutual accord, or to realize a common interest in a matter in which the interests of the reconciling parties are in conflict.

Ibrahim Al-Ghamry defined negotiation as an attempt made by two or more parties to reach an agreement that changes the existing relationship between the two parties, and that changing it leads to a change in each of them.

Negotiation is the essence of diplomatic work; Kissinger considers that diplomacy in the conventionally accepted sense is a process of reconciling opposing viewpoints through negotiations, and as a phenomenon it is the art of conducting negotiations

between representatives of international units — that is, reconciling opposing viewpoints and harmonizing the divergent interests of these units within the framework of the objectives they seek to attain in the dynamics of international interaction.

Negotiations constitute a process taking place between parties holding differing views and demands, which they seek to resolve through mutual bargaining and concessions in order to reach an agreement mutually acceptable to both. They thus represent the organized dialogue conducted between two or more parties possessing a specific legal personality as an agreed-upon method for resolving disputes between them or reaching solutions or agreements on matters of common importance.

Negotiations are considered the best and most widely used method of settling international disputes, being the familiar method for concluding agreements. They are characterized by flexibility and confidentiality, which leads to narrowing the gap between disagreements when the negotiating powers are balanced. When the powers are not balanced, however, this may result in harm to the weaker state in the event of its subordination to the authority of the stronger state.

The success of negotiations thus depends on the spirit prevailing in the negotiations — if the negotiating states do not possess equal political power, the larger states overshadow the smaller ones and impose their will upon them. It also depends on the strategy employed by each negotiating party, on the objectives charted and sought from the negotiating process, and on its capacity to persuade the other party.

2. Good Offices

This refers to an attempt by a state to bring together two disputing states and encourage them to enter into negotiations to resolve the dispute between them, without the state offering good offices participating in the negotiations in any direct manner. The expression "good offices" designates the intervention of a third party — whether requested to intervene or acting on its own initiative — for the purpose of assisting in reaching a settlement between the disputing parties without directly proposing a solution to the dispute. It constitutes, therefore, the friendly action undertaken by third-party states in relation to two disputing states, with the aim of reducing the intensity of their conflict and creating a more conducive atmosphere for the resumption of negotiations and the achievement of mutual understanding — in order to avert the outbreak of an armed conflict or to resolve the international

dispute peacefully. In other words, good offices aim to put an end to a war, whether actual or potential.

The objective of good offices is thus to clear the atmosphere between the conflicting parties and to encourage them to conduct negotiations among themselves through established diplomatic methods, for the purpose of settling the dispute. The party offering good offices does not participate with proposals or conditions between the disputing parties in any form; if requested by the disputing parties, any proposals it offers are merely advisory in nature and non-binding, and the disputing parties may accept or reject them without this constituting a violation of the rules of international law.

3. Mediation

This refers to a state's effort to find a resolution to a conflict between two states through its direct participation in negotiations conducted between the two disputing states, aimed at reconciling their viewpoints. The mediating state intervenes either on its own initiative or at the request of the parties to the dispute. It may put forward proposals in its own name as conditions for a resolution, which are not binding on the parties and do not necessarily rely on legal considerations — meaning that the disputing states are free to

accept or reject the mediation and are not considered to be in violation of international law by doing so, although rejection is regarded as an unfriendly act.

Mediation is a process in which the disputing parties seek to accept an offer of assistance in settling the dispute or conflict without resorting to coercive material procedures, material force, or the use of legal powers or procedures — this assistance being provided by the mediator.

In order to avoid the pressure exerted by the mediating state on the two disputing parties, or bias on the part of the mediating state, the need has arisen to resort to a qualified independent personality to perform the role of mediator.

Mediation is divided, in terms of form, into individual mediation — conducted by a single state, such as Algeria's mediation between Iraq and Kuwait — and collective mediation conducted by several states, such as the mediation conducted by six American states in 1935 between Bolivia and Paraguay. In terms of objective, mediation may aim to avert a war — such as Britain's mediation between France and Prussia over Luxembourg — or to bring a war to an end — such as the French mediation to halt the Spanish-American War, which led to the peace treaty of 1898. In

terms of the mediator, mediation is divided into state mediation and international organization mediation.

Mediation has evolved considerably, with a qualified individual now often chosen in lieu of a state to perform this role — such as the mediation of the UN Secretary-General between the conflicting parties in Afghanistan through the dispatch of his envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, who succeeded in bringing the warring factions together on March 11, 1999, for the purpose of achieving national reconciliation. Alternatively, a global or regional organization may serve as mediator — such as the mediation of the Organization of African Unity to halt the fighting between Ethiopia and Eritrea in March 1999 — all of which occurred as a result of the international conflicts that characterized the post-Cold War era.

4. Inquiry

In cases where the basis of a dispute involves disagreement over specific facts, it is useful and desirable for the two disputing states to appoint an international commission of inquiry entrusted with the examination and investigation of the facts of the dispute. This was addressed in Article Nine of the First Hague Convention of 1907. The commission of inquiry is generally constituted on the basis of a special agreement between the two disputing states,

which specifies the facts to be investigated, the authority vested in the commission in this regard, the location of its meetings, the procedures it will follow, and the manner of its composition.

On this basis, two criticisms are leveled at the inquiry system as established by the Hague Convention:

- Resort to it is not obligatory, and the matter is left to the will of the governments of the disputing states and their desire for an amicable understanding of the dispute.
- Inquiry commissions do not have a permanent status that would allow recourse to them immediately at the onset of a dispute or enable them to offer their services before it deteriorates.

Inquiry commissions are thus concerned with international disputes and undertake the examination of their factual dimension — such as an incident occurring on the borders of two states where the borders have not been definitively determined — requiring both states to provide the commission with all facilities enabling it to complete its information-gathering, hear witnesses and experts, and examine documents.

The commission issues its report confidentially, by a majority vote with the names of dissenters recorded, then reads it in a public session and delivers a copy to each of the parties. This report confines itself to a recitation of the events and facts, and does not carry the character of binding judicial decisions; the two states must therefore adopt such courses of action as they deem appropriate and consistent with their interests.

5. Conciliation

This refers to the resolution of a dispute through its referral to a neutral body that undertakes the determination of the facts and proposes an appropriate settlement to the parties to the dispute. The decision of the conciliation body is non-binding upon the parties — which is what distinguishes it from the decision of an arbitral or judicial body, as the state concerned may accept or reject it.

It is also defined as the effort exerted by an international commission that enjoys the trust of the parties to the dispute, which presents them with a solution it hopes will gain their acceptance and approval. The mission of conciliation commissions is thus to study disputes and submit a report to both parties containing clear proposals for the purpose of reaching a settlement and reconciling the two parties. The principal feature of conciliation is the optional

character of the commission's decision. This method serves as a preliminary stage for arbitration or judicial settlement of a binding nature, to which the two parties invariably resort following the failure of the conciliation attempt.

Legal Methods

The solutions for both legal and political disputes differ according to the nature of each. Legal disputes are settled through arbitration or judicial proceedings, relying on the rules of international law, while political disputes can only be resolved through diplomatic means.

1. Arbitration

Arbitration is considered one of the most important types and means of settling international disputes. It is employed internationally not only to resolve legal disputes of a political character, but also to resolve international commercial disputes. Arbitration is one of the oldest means of resolving international disputes.

Arbitration has been defined by numerous international law scholars. One school of thought defines it as a particular procedural

pathway for adjudicating a specific dispute by a third party. Another defines it as the settlement of disputes between states through the acceptance by the disputing parties of recourse to third parties — such as eminent official personalities, political commissions, or judicial bodies — on the basis of reaching a special agreement that adjudicates the dispute.

The UN Charter defined arbitration in Article 33 and considered it a peaceful means of settling international disputes. It was also defined in the Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes of 1899 to the effect that the object of international arbitration is the settlement of disputes between states by judges of their own choosing, on the basis of respect for the law.

Arbitration is the examination of a dispute by a person or body to which the disputants have recourse, with their commitment to implementing the decision issued in the dispute. Arbitration is compulsory if the arbitration agreement precedes the dispute, and voluntary if the agreement follows the dispute and results from it.

Arbitration may be of three types:

- **Arbitration by a head of state:** This method is known as royal arbitration or single-judge arbitration.
- **Arbitration by a mixed commission:** This may consist of only two members, each representing one of the disputing parties without a third casting vote, or of three to five commissioners (one or two from each party, to whom a third casting member is added, chosen from the nationals of one of the parties). However, this commission tended more toward conciliation than arbitration, and its work was considered both diplomatic and legal.

Recourse to arbitration as a peaceful means of resolving international disputes usually occurs at a stage in which diplomatic means — especially negotiations — have been exhausted or have failed, while the parties to the dispute maintain a commitment to peaceful settlement as a strategic or sole option, which impels them to resort to the alternative of arbitration and international judicial proceedings.

Arbitral awards resemble in formal terms the decisions of domestic courts; like them, arbitral awards contain a reasoned statement of the grounds of the decision, a *dispositif*, and are issued by a majority of the arbitrators. The dissenting majority has the right to record its point of view.

2. International Judicial Settlement

The International Court of Justice was established in 1945 as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. The Court adjudicates, in accordance with international law, legal disputes arising between states, and renders advisory opinions on legal questions that may be referred to it by UN organs and specialized agencies.

All members of the United Nations are, by virtue of their membership in the Organization, parties to the Statute of the Court, which is composed of independent judges elected from among persons of high moral character who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices, or who are jurisconsults of recognized competence in international law.

The functions of the Court encompass a **contentious jurisdiction**: pursuant to Article 36, paragraph 1, of the Court's Statute, the jurisdiction of the Court comprises all cases that the parties refer to it and all matters specially provided for in the Charter of the United Nations or in treaties and conventions in force. The exercise of the Court's contentious jurisdiction is limited to disputes arising exclusively between states, which alone have the

right to be parties in cases before the Court. It must be noted that the jurisdiction of the Court is optional — that is, it is based on the consent of all disputants to submit the matter of the dispute to it for consideration and adjudication, and the Court's judgment is final and not subject to appeal.

The Court's second jurisdiction is an **advisory jurisdiction**: Article 96 of the UN Charter provides for the Court to give an advisory opinion at the request of the General Assembly, the Security Council, or other branches and specialized agencies of the United Nations authorized by the General Assembly to request advisory opinions.

Economic Theories

Ernst B. Haas defines integration as the process by which political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new center whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states. Leon Lindberg views it as the process whereby nations find themselves unable to conduct foreign or domestic affairs independently, and seek instead to make joint decisions or delegate decision-making to new central organs.

Integration is a term with ethical connotations linked to human sentiment and conscience. The integration approach seeks to understand the system and its behavior, aiming at achieving security and cooperation. Integration is thus considered a remedy for the anarchic character of international relations characterized by abundant conflicts and wars — it is, in essence, a means of resolving or attenuating conflicts.

Resort to integration or amalgamation theories is increasing to explain the phenomenon of regionalism, which is being reinforced across all regions of the world. Growing interdependence among states has been driving various regions of the world to organize their economic and social cooperation in the context of intensifying economic globalization. The experiences of integration suggest that they expressed either a political will to guarantee security and cooperation among member states, or a functional logic linked to the achievement of basic needs that can be provided through enhanced exchange and communication among peoples.

Students of political integration owe a significant intellectual debt to the concept of functionalism. Structural-functional analysis occupied a prestigious position in political science studies, and the functionalist school drew heavily in its premises on the ideas of

Hugo Grotius in his work *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (*The Law of War and Peace*). It was thus founded on assumptions that sought to achieve compatibility and harmony among the interests of states, attempting to replace the benefits of security and self-interest with those of peace, the elimination of conflicts, welfare, and participation as fundamental objectives and priorities in international action.

Integration theories were distinguished in many cases by their constituting a reference relied upon for the development of international and regional fields of cooperation. The difficulty of defining the meaning of integration stems from disagreement about the perspective through which the study of integration is approached. Writers have distinguished between two aspects or perspectives of integration: a dynamic or processual aspect that views integration as a process (*Integration as a Process*) — whereby various distinct elements are unified and consolidated into an organic system — and a static aspect that views integration as a situation (*Integration as a Situation*) — as something that has been finally and definitively accomplished.

Etzioni, in his study of the phenomenon of political unification in his book *Political Unification* (1970), employed the term "political unification" to denote the process of integration,

while using the term "integration" to describe the situation to which the integration process leads, which in this case is synonymous with equilibrium.

Integration can be achieved in several domains and encompasses diverse activities. It typically begins in the economic and social spheres before advancing to the political domain, since integration as a process consists of a series of successive stages ranging from the establishment of a limited unit in terms of membership and integration domains to the dissolution of states as independent sovereign units in favor of a new community or political unit. Between these two distant poles lie multiple degrees of integration.

The functionalists therefore focused their attention on technical domains, in the hope that integration could be achieved apart from political interests or calculations. In this regard, the founder of traditional functionalism, David Mitrany, believed that the proliferation of common problems among societies would logically require cooperative responses among states to find solutions, since these social problems are non-political in nature (economic, environmental, scientific, etc.).

Contemporary integration theory has thus drawn its theoretical foundations from the international functionalist theory (*Functionalism*), which is the theory that most comprehensively explains the causes underlying most integration and merger processes in international society.

The primary reference for functionalism is the study of the British (Romanian-born) researcher David Mitrany, who developed it in 1943 on the eve of the end of the Second World War. The use of modern technology for total destruction drew the attention of certain scholars in the period before the Second World War — including Mitrany, who presented his theory of functionalism in one of his works entitled *A Working Peace System* in 1933, in which he emphasized the importance of transnational linkages that could lead to international integration and reduce extremist nationalist principles, thereby increasing the prospects for peace and stability.

Mitrany's 1943 study argued that functionalism rests on a set of assumptions relating to the causes of war and peace: the optimal method of resolving problems of international peace and security is through the deepening of international cooperation in various economic and social domains.

In other words, functionalist theory views international conflicts as arising primarily from the weakness or absence of economic cooperation among states, and holds that the resolution and overcoming of such conflicts is achievable only by creating all conditions that encourage states to cooperate in serving their common economic interests. Through cooperative relations, the sensitivities that influence state behavior can be gradually eliminated — sensitivities that are largely rooted in the dominance of the principle of national sovereignty, which often impels states toward rigidity and the rejection of compromise from the standpoint of intermediate solutions, all of which are factors that push more than anything else toward conflict and violence.

As an extension of functionalism, **neo-functionalism** drew on the contributions of Ernst B. Haas and Leon Lindberg, who were influenced by the European integration experience.

Haas argues that integration is the process involving the transfer of loyalty to a new international center whose institutions possess trans-national authority transcending the borders of member states, and considers trans-national authorities to be essential for successful economic cooperation, with their value exceeding the political commitment.

Like David Mitrany, Haas relied on the *spillover* factor, considering that success in one dimension of economic cooperation would enhance the interests of political elites and governmental institutions in advancing to new dimensions of cooperation, thereby realizing the integration process. However, he rejected the idea of isolating technical tasks from politics, or prosperity and welfare from war. Neo-functionalists hold that the success of the regional integration process remains contingent upon its recognition or endorsement by political elites who perceive it as falling within their own self-interests.

Concerning the question of transferring functions to a new "supra-national" authority or international organization, neo-functionalists link its success to the belief by political actors that their personal and self-interests will be realized through political commitment to that international organization.

Regarding the strategies for constructing a regional integration project, neo-functionalists — unlike Mitrany's functionalist project — do not aim to reduce the role of national state sovereignty, but rather to create a new sovereignty governed by a new state of a federal type within expanded borders, while retaining at all times the original national sovereignties of the states. Recognizing the difficulty of this path, given that it impinges

upon state sovereignty, neo-functionalism attempts to explain the phenomenon of regional integration in terms of the progress of its process, the availability of conditions for its success, and the obstacles it encounters, by focusing on the degree of change in elite behavior through learning.

The distinction between functionalism and neo-functionalism is thus that the former weakens existing sovereignty by distributing it among multiple international organizations, while the latter seeks to delegate political sovereignty to a new trans-national body. While functionalism distanced itself from regionalism, neo-functionalism moves toward a wider region on a basis closer to federalism.

Neo-functionalism adopts a strategy of gradualism, achievable in stages through transnational international institutions with defined competences, but whose decisions carry direct effect.