

# **Post-Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Introducing A New Dataset**

**Andrea L. Everett**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Department of International Affairs**  
**University of Georgia**  
**everetta@uga.edu**

**Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Western Political Science Association,  
Seattle, WA, April 15-17<sup>th</sup> 2014**

## **Abstract**

This paper introduces an original dataset of post-Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies. The dataset identifies recent instances of war, atrocity crimes, one-sided violence against civilians, and inter-communal conflict that have been worst and most disruptive for civilians. In doing so, it complements a growing body of research and data on civilians' experiences in war and other forms of violent conflict. Whereas much recent research focuses on documenting and understanding the causes of intentional violence against civilians, however, this data is likely to be especially useful for scholars interested in questions that require comparison between conflicts on the basis of their humanitarian consequences, such as research into the politics of humanitarian action. The paper lays out the motivation behind the project, discusses the criteria for identifying complex emergencies and the data collection process, provides a brief overview of the data, and offers some ideas for possible applications.

## **Introduction**

Why does the international community sometimes protect civilians from severe violence, but at other times fail to do so? To what extent is humanitarian relief allocated to the conflicts where it is most sorely needed, and why? How do aid organizations decide when to send or withdraw their personnel from ongoing conflicts?

Each of these questions concerns the responses of international actors to the needs of civilians threatened by severe forms of political violence. Yet despite an explosion of research into how civilians fare in war and into the logic of crimes such as genocide, mass killing, and ethnic cleansing, data of the sort needed to answer such questions is rare. Above all, they require an ability to identify the conflicts that are most devastating and disruptive for civilians and that pose the toughest challenges for providing humanitarian relief and civilian protection. Yet these conflicts vary greatly in their causes and characteristics, and range from civil and inter-state wars, to one-sided violence against civilians committed outside of war, to inter-communal violence. Existing data on atrocity crimes and different types of conflict tend to be fragmented, however, and thus do not lend themselves easily to investigating general questions about the politics of humanitarian action.

To rectify this gap, this paper introduces and describes a new dataset of post-Cold War complex humanitarian emergencies (or, simply, complex emergencies). This concept is in wide use by policymakers and the international humanitarian community for the purpose of identifying the conflicts of greatest concern to the UN, government agencies, and relief organizations, and is also prominent in the literature on public health and conflict. For scholars, it offers a promising way to distinguish the many conflicts that generate significant hardship for civilians from those that are truly catastrophic, without imposing restrictions that limit the political character of these events.

Still, while the concept of complex emergencies promises to be useful for scholars, existing lists of these events have important limitations. Most were created by and for the international

humanitarian community and they often reflect political considerations, lack consistent identifying criteria, or have a very narrow timeframe. This article thus develops a new set of benchmarks for identifying complex emergencies and introduces a list of 60 unique conflicts that meet them and that were ongoing between 1989 and 2009. I begin by highlighting the need for this data and introducing the operational criteria and data collection procedures. I then describe the resulting list, offer some comparisons with existing conflict datasets, and discuss some possible uses for the data.

### **Why complex emergencies, and why a new dataset?**

Over the last decade, a burgeoning literature has made great progress in understanding the connections between large-scale violence and the experiences of civilians. Much of this research has sought to improve our knowledge of the consequences of war for civilians and of why some wars are so much worse for them than others. Scholars have examined questions such as how war affects public health (Ghobarah et al. 2003; Iqbal 2010) and why armed actors kill large numbers of civilians or commit crimes like mass killing and genocide, both during and outside of war (Valentino 2004; Valentino et al. 2004; Valentino et al. 2006; Harff 2003; Downes 2006, 2007; Easterly et al. 2006).

In the process, they have collected a wealth of data that reflect civilians' experiences during war and other forms of large-scale political violence. Benjamin Valentino (2004; Valentino et al. 2004), for example, collected data on instances of mass killing, defined as the intentional killing of 50,000 or more noncombatants over five or fewer years. The Political Instability Task Force (PITF) has produced a well-known list of genocides and politicides (Marshall et al. 2011). Both Valentino et al. (2006) and Alexander Downes (2007) have collected data on the number of civilians that individual belligerents killed in inter-state wars. Meanwhile, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) records data on one-sided violence against civilians by governments and other formally organized armed groups (Eck and Hultman 2007). Finally, several other datasets on conflict-related deaths include but are not limited to civilian casualties: Lacina and Gleditsch (2005) collected data

on total combatant and civilian battle deaths in civil and inter-state wars, and UCDP's Non-State Conflict Dataset (Sundberg et al. 2012) includes civilian deaths caused by inter-communal violence.

With these data, scholars have made great strides in describing trends and patterns in various types of conflict and in uncovering the causes of large-scale violence against civilians. At the same time, the questions they are designed to answer are quite different from those about civilian protection and the allocation of emergency relief introduced above. Questions about humanitarian action require comparison among conflicts mainly on the basis of their human consequences. As a result, existing data sources are not well suited to answer them, for at least two reasons.

First, the datasets described above record only those deaths that are direct, intentional, or both. They thus exclude a great deal of the suffering that modern conflict creates.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in many conflicts most civilian mortality reflects indirect causes, especially starvation and disease, rather than direct ones like violence or battle (e.g., Ghobarah et al. 2003). It results from the destruction of infrastructure that is critical to public health – such as hospitals, clinics, electricity grids, and sewage treatment plants – and from the forced displacement of people as they flee ongoing violence.

While deaths due to these indirect causes can be intentional, many are not (or at least are not clearly attributable to the intentions of a specific belligerent). For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), over a decade of war and crimes against humanity beginning in the late 1990s cost millions of lives. Despite the intentional targeting of civilians, the vast majority of civilian deaths were caused by disease or malnourishment associated with civilian flight from warring militias. Indeed, as of 2006, only about two percent of deaths had been caused by violence directly (Holt and Berkman 2006 p.167). Therefore, while direct and intentional deaths are a major part of what makes some conflicts much worse for civilians than others, they are by no means the full story.

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<sup>1</sup> Because they combine civilian and combatant casualties, the battle deaths and non-state conflict data have the added limitation of including deaths that have little to do with civilian suffering.

<sup>2</sup> For more information, see the United States Committee for Refugees (USCR)'s World Refugee Survey 1999 p.108; 2000 p.139, 145; 2001 p.133-36; 2002 p.121-123; and 2003 p.119-121.

Second, each of the above sources of data focuses on a single type of violence. Yet in practice, various kinds of events generate severe and large-scale civilian suffering. These include both wars (civil and inter-state) and one-sided violence against civilians outside of war. They can also include inter-communal violence, conflict between social groups usually based on religion or ethnicity in which the state is not a main party. For example, between 1999 and 2002, fierce fighting between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas Islands and Sulawesi, Indonesia, is estimated to have killed at least 12,500 people directly, while displacing over a million (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2008, 2009; United States Committee for Refugees 2003 p.120-21).<sup>2</sup>

In addition, there is considerable variation in civilian suffering *among* wars, *among* cases of one-sided violence against civilians, and *among* inter-communal conflicts. Crimes such as genocide and mass killing can occur in any of these contexts, but are not the norm for any of them. Even absent these crimes, certain wars and instances of inter-communal violence can be utterly devastating for civilians, while others are much less so. As a result, sources of data that are limited to any one of these types of conflict or only to the worst atrocity crimes exclude at least some conflicts with comparable humanitarian consequences. Simply combining them all, on the other hand, would yield a set of conflicts with wildly disparate levels of disruption to civilian life.

In contrast to these data, complex humanitarian emergencies represent the worst of a variety of different types of violent events and focus exclusively on their consequences for civilians. By incorporating the indirect and unintentional effects of violence, the concept captures not only conflicts that involve many intended civilian deaths, but also those like Somalia, where since the early 1990s direct violence against civilians has generally been low but its indirect effects have often

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<sup>2</sup> For more information, see the United States Committee for Refugees (USCR)'s World Refugee Survey 1999 p.108; 2000 p.139, 145; 2001 p.133-36; 2002 p.121-123; and 2003 p.119-121.

been catastrophic. Complex emergencies, then, are uniquely suited to enable research questions that are agnostic about the causes of conflict, but require comparison based on its humanitarian effects.

While the concept of complex emergencies is not new, however, existing definitions and lists are of limited use to scholars. On the one hand, several of the most prominent definitions reflect the interests of the international humanitarian relief community. Those by both the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) and the Complex Emergency Database (CE-DAT) project at the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, for example, include references to the need for a particular kind of international response to these conflicts.<sup>3</sup> For scholars interested in studying such responses, however, this conflates the dependent variable with the unit of analysis. What is more, these and other definitions refer to multiple highly specific causes and consequences of complex emergencies, such as war, displacement, disease, deterioration of political authority, and ethnic conflict.<sup>4</sup> In doing so, they implicitly exclude other equally devastating events that lack one or more of these attributes.

In addition, in creating their own lists of complex emergencies, these organizations have failed to develop and consistently apply a clear set of criteria for inclusion. CE-DAT's list, for example, includes events that do not meet its own definition but that are of interest to partner organizations and relief groups, such as fragile states that *may* experience a humanitarian crisis and states that host large refugee populations. It is also limited to conflicts for which CE-DAT has been able to collect health and mortality data, which represents a source of potential bias since such data

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<sup>3</sup> OCHA's definition, for example, notes that a complex emergency "requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country program" (1999).

<sup>4</sup> In addition to OCHA see e.g., Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Andrew Natsios (1995 p.9), and Raimo Väyrynen (1996 p.37).

is most difficult to collect in the worst security environments.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, OCHA's process for recognizing complex emergencies reflects the needs and interests of its humanitarian partners. It generally includes emergencies covered by a UN Consolidated Appeal for relief funding and designated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the UN body responsible for the inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. The introduction of a UN Consolidated Appeal, however, depends in part on where aid organizations wish to devote their time and resources.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, more scholarly efforts to identify complex emergencies are subject to their own limitations. The most promising list, by Juha Auvinen and Wayne Nafziger (1999), does identify complex emergencies using clear and consistent criteria based on a conflict's human consequences, including battle deaths, refugee flows, malnutrition, and disease. Still, it only covers the period from 1980 – 1994, and uses data taken at the national level even though many conflicts are sub-national.

### **Definition and Criteria**

Despite their limitations, existing definitions and sources of data on complex emergencies share three key themes that serve as guidelines for the dataset introduced here. First, a complex emergency is generated by ongoing political violence (not a natural disaster). It may reflect various types of political events, and civilians may or may not be the intended targets of a large-scale campaign of abuse. Second, a complex emergency involves severe civilian suffering, which may occur either directly – when civilians are killed violently – or indirectly, due to starvation, disease, or exposure caused by social upheaval and displacement. Third, this suffering occurs at least in part because local authorities are demonstrably unwilling or incapable of meeting the population's needs (alone or with help from relief organizations). Drawing on these ideas, I define a complex humanitarian emergency as *an episode of political violence that severely disrupts civilian life, and in which the*

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<sup>5</sup> David Hargitt, CE-DAT Data Manager at the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Université catholique de Louvain. Personal communication by email.

<sup>6</sup> Shuichi Odaka, ReliefWeb (OCHA). Personal communication by email.

*government responsible for public welfare is unable or unwilling to shield the population from the worst consequences of violence (or to effectively facilitate outside efforts to do so).*

To identify these conflicts I developed a set of operational criteria based on a series of key quantitative and qualitative indicators of disruption to civilian life and government ability and willingness to respond, and then used various data sources on different types of violent conflict to determine which ones met these criteria, and in which years. The remainder of this section discusses the operational criteria, and the following section describes the data collection process.

To assess disruption to civilian life, I rely on two primary quantitative indicators and a series of supplemental qualitative ones. First, where available, the number of civilian deaths is the most obvious indicator of the suffering a conflict generates. Yet very often, reliable information about them is unavailable. Thus, the scale of population displacement serves as another indicator of the size of the civilian population exposed to many conflict-related risks. Civilians forcibly displaced from their homes by conflict may include refugees and asylum seekers (both of whom have crossed international borders), as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>7</sup> When countries cut off access to their territory for journalists or aid workers, refugees and asylum seekers who reach neighboring countries can serve as the primary, if not the only, source of evidence for the outside world about what is going on at home. In addition, forcible displacement is often associated with various indirect but life-threatening consequences. Indeed, according to Frederick Burkle, in most complex emergencies it is displacement-related issues such as “the migration of populations, separation from food supplies, and destruction of the public health infrastructure—that eventually [cause] the greatest mortality and morbidity,” because fleeing populations “suffer almost immediate food, shelter, fuel, water, sanitation, and basic healthcare insecurities” (2006 p.91). Especially among

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<sup>7</sup> See the 1967 Protocol to the UN’s 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, available from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees at <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>.



populations already compromised by mediocre health, large numbers of displaced people can also contribute to the spread of disease and complicate delivery of emergency relief (Burkle 2006 p.91).

Still, sometimes estimates of both civilian deaths and displacement are unavailable, especially as conditions change over time in a conflict. In these circumstances a variety of mostly qualitative supplemental indicators may provide additional information about prevailing conditions. Such indicators can offer either confirming evidence of significant disruption to civilian life, or mitigating evidence that such disruption may not be as dire as it looks. For example, an outbreak of infectious disease, deteriorating health and nutrition statistics, poor sanitation conditions at displaced-person camps, or a shortage of basic necessities such as food, health care, or shelter, can provide confirming evidence of a serious threat to civilian life. On the other hand, evidence that most displacement is temporary may mitigate an impression of otherwise severe disruption to civilian life, since short-term displacement is less likely to contribute to outbreaks of disease or disrupt the food supply.

For assessing a government's ability and willingness to shield civilians from the worst effects of violence, the clearest indicators are generally qualitative. Again, they may provide either confirming or mitigating evidence concerning the presence of a complex emergency. First, evidence that civilians are the intended targets of a large-scale campaign of abuses is the best confirming indicator of a government's unwillingness or inability to respond. In such cases, the government is either the perpetrator – and thus unwilling to protect the population – or widespread abuse provides evidence of the government's failure to protect its victims. Likewise, evidence that a government initiates large-scale hostilities in densely populated areas without attempting to remove or protect the population can indicate its lack of concern for civilian welfare.

Further confirming evidence often relates to problems with emergency relief. As OCHA (1999) notes, complex emergencies tend to involve “the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints” and “significant risks to humanitarian relief workers

in at least some areas.” Relief organizations typically play a vital role in ministering to the needs of conflict-affected populations. Thus, efforts to hinder them, or the failure to effectively protect them, can indicate that a government is unable or unwilling to ensure that civilians’ basic needs are met. Evidence may include official denial of access to external relief organizations; the inability to deliver aid because of fighting or attacks against aid workers; or aid agency evacuation from conflict-affected regions due to insecurity. In contrast, mitigating evidence that a government *is* able and willing to respond to a conflict-affected population’s needs may include international praise for its efforts to respond to the humanitarian crisis, swift and successful efforts to end inter-communal violence, or indications that most displaced persons are adequately cared for.

Using these indicators, my operational guidelines for identifying complex emergencies explain 1) how much disruption to civilian life is required to determine that one has begun, is continuing, or has ended; 2) how to tell if the government is unable or unwilling to act on behalf of conflict-affected civilians; and 3) how I deal with uncertainty in this information.<sup>8</sup> The online appendix contains full details, but in brief, a complex emergency either kills at least 20,000 or displaces at least 500,000 civilians in 5 or fewer years. In addition, annual proportions of these thresholds determine onset, continuation, and termination. To count as the beginning of a complex emergency, a year must produce at least 10% of the baseline (thus, 2,000 deaths or 50,000 displaced persons). A majority of this (thus, 6%) is required for a complex emergency to continue in subsequent years.

These thresholds necessarily exclude some smaller but nevertheless devastating conflicts, especially in small societies, and thus require a tradeoff between clarity and inclusiveness. Other scholars have employed various approaches to deal with such tradeoffs. Sambanis (2004), for example, argues in favor of measuring the magnitude of civil wars in per capita terms in order to

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<sup>8</sup> The online appendix also describes criteria for how to distinguish one complex emergency from another when there is a break in violence, a change in belligerents, or multiple conflicts in the same country, based on rules used by scholars of civil war (e.g., Sambanis 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003).

avoid overlooking significant conflicts in small countries. By contrast, in his work on mass killings, Valentino (2004 p.10-12; Valentino et al. 2004) sets a high threshold of deaths to avoid debate about which cases truly reflect the events he seeks to understand. Given that complex emergencies are intended to identify the very worst conflicts for civilians, I follow Valentino's approach. The high quantitative thresholds for deaths and displacement should encourage agreement that these conflicts truly involve large-scale civilian suffering.

Finally, additional coding schemas reflect my confidence in the extent to which each conflict identified as a complex emergency (a 3-level scale), and each 'emergency-year' thereof (a 5-level scale), fully reflects the definition outlined above. Coding for these schemas integrates both the quantitative thresholds and available confirming and mitigating qualitative evidence. Significant mitigating evidence is reflected in less certainty that a conflict or year qualifies as a complex emergency, while clear confirming evidence is reflected in a higher level of certainty. Given the limitations of this type of data, this seems an appropriate way to acknowledge the unavoidable uncertainty that remains. Over 80% of complex emergencies meet the highest (level 3) standard, but there is much greater uncertainty at the annual level due to the added difficulty of obtaining reliable yearly death and displacement estimates. So that interested readers may judge for themselves, a set of detailed coding notes presents the information used for each coding decision, highlights ambiguous cases, points out missing or contradictory information, and identifies the certainty coding for each emergency and emergency-year.

## **Data Collection**

A number of datasets that provide evidence of ongoing violence or disruption to civilian life first helped to generate a list of possible complex emergencies. Next, more detailed reports on these conflicts helped determine which ones – and when – met the full set of operational criteria.

First, I referred to numerous lists of violent events. For wars I used Version 4 of the Correlates of War project (Sarkees and Wayman 2010), and supplemented this with civil war datasets from Fearon and Laitin (2003) and Sambanis (2004). I also referred to several datasets on atrocity crimes, including the PITF's Genocide and Politicide Problem Set (Marshall et al. 2011) and lists of mass killings by Valentino (2004) and Easterly et al (2006). Finally, I relied on the Forcibly Displaced Populations (FDP) dataset (2009), which is based primarily on information compiled in the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants' (USCRI) annual World Refugee Survey (WRS) series. Since 1965 this series has reported various information on populations of refugees, asylum-seekers, and IDPs, including the total number originating from a given country by year. Because it records stocks rather than flows, however, it does not reflect the amount of new displacement generated in a given year.<sup>9</sup> Still, the presence of many displaced people is generally a strong indicator that violence probably either *is* or recently *was* occurring. I treated country-years that produced 15,000 or more displaced persons as possible complex emergencies.<sup>10</sup>

These data sources were purposefully redundant, and most actual complex emergencies showed up in multiple sources. Thus, there is good reason for confidence that they identified all events that meet the definition and basic quantitative thresholds for a complex emergency.

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<sup>9</sup> Data on stocks of forcibly displaced persons are also available from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). I relied on the FDP dataset because USCRI covers more countries and supplements UNHCR data with a variety of other sources, including assessments made during the frequent visits of USCRI staff to conflict areas. Moreover, since 1981, USCRI editors have made concerted efforts to distinguish between refugees and asylum seekers in need of a permanent home and those who have been successfully resettled (UNHCR does not). The USCRI also weighs the credibility of the various sources of information available to it in making its estimates.

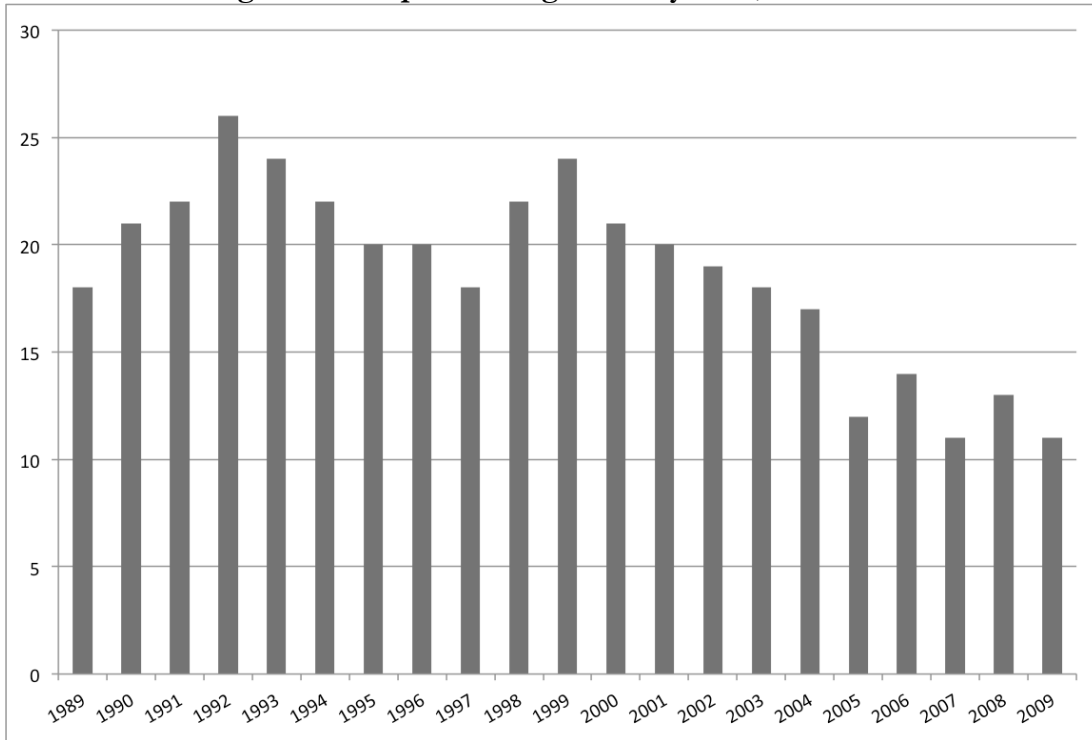
<sup>10</sup> I also looked at several UCDP datasets. I examined the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset to verify that the others had not missed any major conflicts but did not use it more intensively because of its low annual threshold of violence (25 battle deaths per year). I used UCDP's One-Sided Violence dataset in a similar fashion but was limited by the fact that it identifies violence against civilians only according to the perpetrator and not the conflict or the victims.

Next, for each conflict identified by any of the above data sources as going on between 1989 and 2009, I sought additional information about its impact on civilians and governmental willingness and ability to shield the population from its worst effects. Although I focus on the post-Cold War years, some of this period's worst conflicts began beforehand. To capture these, I collected data on the full length of all conflicts that qualified as complex emergencies and were ongoing in 1989 or later, even if they started earlier. The primary sources for this additional information were the in-depth WRS yearly country summaries, which provide a wealth of detailed information on annual estimates of civilian deaths and new displacement, the conditions of life for displaced persons, and evidence of government efforts (or lack thereof) to provide for civilians' basic needs. Reports from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), U.S. State Department, human rights groups, truth and reconciliation commissions, and academic case studies supplemented these as necessary.

### **Overview and Trends**

The dataset includes 60 complex emergencies that began after or were already ongoing in 1989, for a total of 494 emergency-years. Of the complex emergencies, 42 (or 70%) started in 1989 or later, and 393 (or 80%) of the total emergency-years were in 1989 or later. Nine complex emergencies (15%) were ongoing at the end of 2009. Figure 1 shows the trend in the number of these conflicts by year since 1989. The peak was 26 in 1992, with another slightly smaller peak of 24 in 1999. The next decade saw a steady decline, so that by the second half of the 2000s there were between 11 and 14 complex emergencies each year. For the most part, this is consistent with trends in all armed conflicts and wars reported by UCDP for these years, but the latter half of the 2000s are an exception. Whereas the number of ongoing complex emergencies kept falling after 2004, the number of wars remained approximately constant and the number of minor conflicts increased 25% by 2009 (Harbom and Wallensteen 2010, p.502-3).

**Figure 1: Complex Emergencies by Year, 1989-2009**



Complex emergencies occurred in 39 countries, and ranged in length from one to 25 years (with several of the longest still ongoing at the end of 2009).<sup>11</sup> Average length was 8.2 years (7.3 among complex emergencies that ended before 2010). This, however, masks significant differences between those that started before 1989 (13.3 years) and those that started after (6.1 years).<sup>12</sup>

While most complex emergencies affected an entire country, a number were limited to a sub-national region such as a province or island, as in Indian-controlled Kashmir or Aceh, Indonesia. Figure 2 highlights each country that experienced at least one. Regional differences in the concentration of these conflicts are striking. Africa and Asia had 26 and 15 complex emergencies respectively, while Europe experienced 9, the Middle East 7, and Latin America 3.

<sup>11</sup> This figure is based on treating Russia and the USSR as separate countries.

<sup>12</sup> This difference is similar among the complex emergencies that ended by 2009.

**Figure 2: States that Experienced Complex Emergencies, 1989-2009**



In addition, some countries have been far more affected than others. Indonesia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Angola each experienced at least 3 complex emergencies. As some were very long, however, several other countries also experienced numerous emergency-years. Those with the most are Afghanistan (33), Sudan (32), Colombia (25), Angola (24), Sri Lanka (23), and Burma (22). Indeed, the top 11 countries account for over half (264) of all emergency-years.

Since complex emergencies can emerge in various ways, I also divided them into five main types, both overall and on an annual basis. Although some emergencies involved multiple types of violence or the primary fault-lines changed over time, I identified the one that seemed most representative of each complex emergency as a whole. Similarly, for each year, although there were sometimes multiple types of violence, I identified the one that best reflected the conflict at the time.

First, *International Conflict* involves either inter-state war or a dispute between two actors in different states in which at least one is not a government. *Internal Conflict* involves the state and at least one organized opposition group without external intervention. In *Internationalized Internal Conflict*, the conflict is based in one state, but there is international intervention on one or both sides. A complex emergency is primarily *One-sided Violence* against civilians if it occurs without ongoing

concurrent conflict between at least two organized parties. Finally, *Inter-communal Violence* identifies conflicts where the primary fault line reflects inter-communal tension. Here, 1) government is not a primary party to the violence, 2) victims are chosen based on their perceived membership in a religious, ethnic, or kinship group, and 3) members of at least two communities participate.<sup>13</sup>

The appendix lists all of the complex emergencies, along with their primary type. Most (35, or 58%) arose mainly out of Internal Conflict, and an additional 12 (20%) were Internationalized Internal Conflict. Another 7 (12%) were primarily Inter-communal, and 3 each (5%) were mainly or wholly International Conflict or One-Sided Violence. Still, while a clear majority of complex emergencies involved full-blown war, the explicit focus on the experiences of civilians paints a distinct picture of which conflicts are most severe. A number of scholars have used Lacina and Gleditsch's (2005) battle deaths data to reflect war severity (e.g., Lacina 2006; Lujala 2009). Yet of the 60 wars with the highest annual average battle deaths between 1989 and 2009, only 41 make the list of complex emergencies. Meanwhile, complex emergencies involving mainly inter-communal or one-sided violence – as in Indonesia (Moluccas), South Africa, Kenya, East Timor, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe – are either absent or underrepresented.

### **Possible Applications**

The utility of these data lies less in up-ending existing findings than in opening up new avenues for research into important questions about human security and insecurity. As noted above, they are especially well suited for examining patterns in international responses to the most severe humanitarian and civilian protection crises, and there are a wide variety of issues to investigate here.

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<sup>13</sup> These distinctions draw on the variable '*Type*' in UCDP/PRIO's Armed Conflict Dataset (Gleditsch et al. 2002), but with some important changes (for a description of *Type*, see the Armed Conflict Dataset Codebook). First, International Conflict combines UCDP/PRIO's Interstate and Extrasystemic categories, and I also add categories for One-sided and Inter-communal violence. While not all complex emergencies are in the Armed Conflict Dataset, where relevant and sensible I use UCDP/PRIO's coding for specific years. See the online appendix for more information.



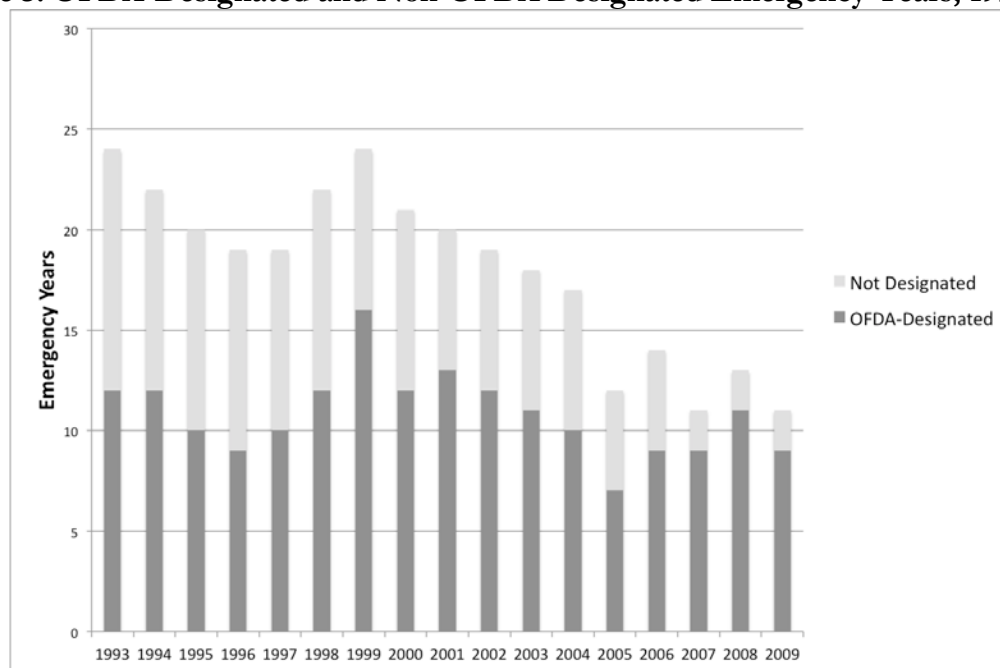
First, for example, scholars might use these data to study the ways that states and other international actors allocate humanitarian relief in conflict situations. Research on foreign aid suggests that political interests, rather than need, often determine the allocation of both military and development assistance (e.g., Alesina and Dollar 2000; Kuziemko and Werker 2006). Humanitarian assistance has received less attention, but at least one study suggests that these same patterns also apply to emergency relief in natural disasters (Drury et al. 2005). This may or may not be true of conflict-related humanitarian disasters, and even if it is, the nature of the relevant calculations may differ.

In the United States, for instance, most emergency humanitarian assistance is coordinated through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). OFDA responds to both natural and man-made disasters, including complex emergencies. Each year, however, it responds to only a subset of these events, which it officially designates as disasters. This process involves a declaration by the U.S. Ambassador or Chief of Mission in the affected country that 1) the scale of the event is too large for the country to cope with on its own, 2) the country requests or will accept assistance, and 3) such assistance is in U.S. interests (see e.g., Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 2010, p.13). This designation allows for spending up to \$50,000 immediately, with the potential for more depending on the scale of the disaster. For disasters that continue for multiple years, continued funding depends on annual renewal of the disaster declaration.

A comparison of the post-Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies Dataset with conflicts designated by OFDA as disasters would help to improve our understanding of OFDA's decision-making process. In particular, if humanitarian needs rather than politics were the primary force behind decisions about which conflicts to designate as disasters, a high percentage of complex emergencies should be designated. Yet between 1993 and 2009, only 60% (184) of 306 emergency-years in the dataset were designated disasters by the OFDA either during the calendar year itself or

the U.S. fiscal year that applied to it (which starts the previous October 1). What is more, there was significant variation over time and across countries. As illustrated in Figure 3, during the 1990s no more than 55% of emergency-years were designated with the single exception of 1999), but this increased steadily over the following decade. By the late 2000s, 64-85% were designated. Similarly, some complex emergencies were never designated while others were designated every year, and still others were designated in some but not all years. What is more, civil wars in Colombia, Algeria, Burma, Russia, and India were never designated, although natural disasters in each of these countries *were* designated and targeted for U.S. emergency assistance. Thus, these data seem to suggest a trend toward an increasing role of need relative to politics in the post-Cold War allocation of U.S. foreign disaster assistance in the worst conflicts, as well as differences in the factors affecting responses to conflicts and natural disasters. Further exploration using the complex emergencies data may help improve our understanding of these patterns, and extend the investigation to other donor states.

**Figure 3: OFDA-Designated and Non-OFDA Designated Emergency-Years, 1993-2009**



Further uses for the complex emergency data could involve studying the behavior of international humanitarian organizations and the correlates of attacks on aid workers. First, much as with foreign aid, there is a debate about the extent to which IOs and NGOs that engage in humanitarian action are motivated by principled concerns or material considerations rooted in competition for donor resources, and about how variation in these organizations' missions, contracting relationships, and organizational cultures affect their actions (see e.g., Cooley and Ron 2002; Barnett 2005). To date, however, relatively little systematic quantitative research has been done in this area, and this dataset would enable further work on the comparative politics of humanitarianism, such as investigating the extent to which aid groups with different characteristics or national origins deploy their personnel and resources to the conflicts where they are most needed.

In addition, as noted above complex emergencies can be especially dangerous places for humanitarian actors. According to data from the Aid Worker Security Database, of nearly 1000 major recorded attacks on aid workers from 1997 to 2009, at least 77% took place during conflicts identified as complex emergencies and an additional 11% occurred in these locations in the years shortly before or after.<sup>14</sup> Yet the nature and timing of these attacks vary greatly: some are lethal while others are not, some target foreign workers while others target local staff, some begin early in a conflict while others start later. What is more, while some emergencies with an international presence experienced few attacks (e.g., Côte d'Ivoire, Kosovo, and Colombia), others experienced dozens within a similar timeframe (e.g., Somalia, Afghanistan post-2001, or Sri Lanka II). To better understand when and why these attacks occur, complex emergencies may be the proper universe of conflicts to examine, since less intense conflicts appear far less likely to produce them at all.

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<sup>14</sup> The Aid Worker Security Database is available at <https://aidworkersecurity.org/>. The uncertainty reflects the fact that there are some attacks for which a precise location is not recorded. Where it is not clear whether an attack took place in the context of a complex emergency I exclude it from the count, and so 77% may actually be an under-estimate.

Another class of related research questions focuses on the physical protection of civilians through peace operations or military intervention. As a group, complex emergencies resemble the descriptions of conflicts sometimes identified as possible candidates for military action to protect civilians from grave harm, even without the local government's consent. For example, Michael Walzer argues that humanitarian intervention is "morally necessary whenever cruelty and suffering are extreme and no local forces seem capable of putting an end to them" (1995, p.55).<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty's *Responsibility to Protect* report argued that non-consensual interventions could be justified to avert or halt large-scale loss of life or ethnic cleansing, actual or apprehended, caused by "deliberate state action, or state neglect or inability to act, or a failed state situation" (2001, p.32). Yet most efforts to account for traditional peacekeeping examine responses only to wars (e.g., Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 2006; Fortna 2004, 2008; Gilligan and Stedman 2003), while studies of humanitarian intervention and notorious failures to initiate it often focus only on the very worst cases of mass atrocities (e.g., Power 2002; Wheeler 2000; Bass 2008). Such studies thus exclude a number of conflicts that can provide important insights into patterns in civilian protection. By contrast, complex emergencies are well suited to represent those conflicts where military missions to provide physical protection for vulnerable civilians (either with or without the local government's consent) would seem most plausible on humanitarian grounds, and thus for exploring the sources of variation in these operations.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, complex humanitarian emergencies identify the worst and most disruptive conflicts for civilians, without reference to who committed the violence or with what intent, and while accounting for both its direct and indirect effects. In these respects this concept and the Post-

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<sup>15</sup> For a similar argument see Wheeler (2000, p.34).

Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies data presented here are distinct from those employed in most of the recent literature addressing civilians' experiences during violent conflict. As discussed, they are likely to be especially useful for answering questions about how states, IOs, and NGOs respond to severe humanitarian needs and the extent to which their decisions reflect these needs or, instead, more political or material considerations. Still, these ideas are by no means exhaustive. One could also use the complex emergency data to facilitate other inquiries in the field of human security, such as updating previous research on the causes of complex emergencies to cover more of the post-Cold War period (see e.g., Auvinen and Nafziger 1999), or investigating the post-conflict trajectories of communities that experience these uniquely devastating events. Broadly speaking, the data are uniquely suited to inquiries that require distinguishing among conflicts primarily on the basis of civilian suffering and identifying the most devastating ones.

## Appendix: Post-Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies

CE Name	Start Year	End Year	CE Type	Certainty
Afghanistan I / Soviets	1978	1992	Int'l-Civil	3
Afghanistan II / Civil War	1992	2001	Civil	3
Afghanistan II / OEF & After	2001	Ongoing 2009	Int'l-Civil	3
Cambodia	1979	1990	Int'l-Civil	3
India / Kashmir	1990	2004	Civil	2
India / Northeast	1993	1998	Civil	2
Indonesia / Aceh	1999	2004	Civil	3
Indonesia / East Timor	1999	1999	One-sided	3
Indonesia / Moluccas & Sulawesi	1999	2002	Communal	3
Myanmar / Burma	1988	Ongoing 2009	Civil	3
Pakistan / Govt. vs. Taliban	2004	Ongoing 2009	Civil	3
Philippines / Govt. vs. NPA	1986	1992	Civil	3
Philippines / Govs vs. Islamist Insurgents	1996	2009	Civil	3
Sri Lanka I	1983	2001	Civil	3
Sri Lanka II	2006	2009	Civil	2
Tajikistan	1992	1993	Civil	3
Bosnia	1992	1995	Civil	3
Croatia	1991	1995	Civil	3
Yugoslavia / Kosovo	1998	2000	Int'l-Civil	3
Turkey / PKK	1992	1998	Civil	3
USSR / Azerbaijan - Armenia	1988	1991	Communal	3
Azerbaijan / Nagorno-Karabakh	1992	1994	Int'l-Civil	3
Russia / Chechnya I	1995	1996	Civil	3
Russia / Chechnya II	1999	2004	Civil	3
Sierra Leone	1991	2001	Civil	3
Liberia I	1990	1996	Civil	3
Liberia II	1999	2003	Civil	3
Algeria	1992	2003	Civil	3
Burundi	1993	2004	Civil	3
Mozambique	1982	1992	Int'l-Civil	3
Angola I	1975	1991	Int'l-Civil	3
Angola II	1992	1994	Civil	3
Angola III	1998	2002	Int'l-Civil	3
Somalia	1988	Ongoing 2009	Civil	3
Uganda I	1987	1991	Civil	3
Uganda II (LRA)	1996	2006	Civil	3
Zaire / DRC I	1992	1997	Communal	5
DRC II	1998	Ongoing 2009	Int'l-Civil	3
Congo-Brazzaville	1997	1999	Int'l-Civil	3
Cote d'Ivoire	2002	2004	Civil	3
Rwanda	1990	1999	Civil	3
Sudan / North-South civil war	1983	2004	Civil	3
Sudan / Darfur	2002	Ongoing 2009	Civil	3
Sudan / Southern violence	2008	Ongoing 2009	Communal	2
Eritrea / War w/ Ethiopia	1998	2000	International	3
Ethiopia / Civil War	1988	1992	Civil	2
Nigeria / Inter-communal violence	1997	2006	Communal	3
Kenya / Post-election violence	2008	2008	Communal	1
Zimbabwe	2005	2008	One-sided	3
South Africa	1986	1995	Communal	2
Peru / Shining Path	1983	1994	Civil	2
Colombia	1985	Ongoing 2009	Civil	3
El Salvador	1980	1990	Civil	3
Iraq / Kurds I	1987	1989	Civil	3
Iraq/ Kurds II	1991	1993	Civil	3
Iraq/ Shiites	1991	1998	One-sided	2
Iraq / US-led coalition	2003	Ongoing 2009	Int'l-Civil	3
Kuwait	1990	1990	International	1
Lebanon / Civil war & Israeli invasion	1975	1991	Int'l-Civil	3
Lebanon / Israeli air attacks	2006	2006	International	1

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## Online Appendix

There are three parts to this online appendix. Part I briefly describes the variables in the dataset. Part II describes the coding guidelines for identifying and distinguishing among complex emergencies, and for measuring both overall and annual uncertainty (as described in the main text). Finally, Part III includes a selection of entries from the *Complex Emergency Coding Notes* mentioned in the main text (and below). The full set of coding notes will be available soon.

### **Part I: Variables in the dataset**

**CEName** – Unique name for the complex emergency

**CEID** – Unique identifying number for the complex emergency (From 1 – 60)

**Year** – There is one observation for each year of each complex emergency

**StartYear** – First year of the complex emergency

**EndYear** – Final year of the complex emergency

**Censored** – Coded 1 if the complex emergency continued past the end of 2009; 0 otherwise

**CEType and CEType\_Annual** – Respectively, the type of conflict that best represents the complex emergency as a whole, and the type of conflict that best represents the emergency-year.

As described in the main text, each may take on one of five values:

1 = *International Conflict*: Either inter-state war or a dispute between two actors located in different states in which at least one is not a government.

2 = *Internal Conflict*: Involves the state and at least one organized opposition group, without external intervention. Here I follow Sambanis (2004, p.829) and do not require the government's armed forces to be directly involved, as long as it is actively supporting a warring militia or militias involved in the fighting. In addition, where there is no effective government, at least one party that claims the state must be involved.

3 = *Internationalized Internal Conflict*: The conflict is based in one state, but there is international intervention on one or both sides. Following UCDP's Armed Conflict dataset, I code international intervention when a foreign state (or states) deploys troops that participate in combat with the goal of influencing the outcome of the conflict and promoting the victory of one side over another.<sup>1</sup>

4 = *One-sided Violence*: Directed against civilians, and the violence is *not* associated with sustained hostilities between two or more organized parties. Thus, an emergency or

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<sup>1</sup> See UCDP's definitions of 'Third Party,' 'Warring Party,' and 'Secondary Warring Parties' at <http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/>

emergency-year may involve extensive violence against civilians as part of International, Internal, or Internationalized Internal conflict, but is only coded as *primarily* One-sided Violence if there is not significant concurrent violence that falls into one of these categories.

5 = *Inter-communal Violence*: The primary fault line in the conflict reflects inter-communal tension. In addition, 1) government is not a primary party to the violence, 2) victims are chosen based on their perceived membership in a religious, ethnic, or kinship group, and 3) members of at least two communities participate.

**ForeignInterveners** – Names of any foreign countries that intervene during an emergency-year, leading to a coding of Internationalized Internal Conflict

**OverallCertainty** – Measure from 1 (low) to 3 (high) of my certainty that the complex emergency as a whole meets the full set of operational criteria. For more extensive descriptions, please see the operational guidelines below.

1 – A conflict meets the overall quantitative threshold for a complex emergency, but there is significant mitigating to suggest that it may not truly reflect the definition.

2 – Quantitative estimates are unclear about whether the overall threshold for a complex emergency is met, but there is confirming qualitative evidence to suggest that they may significantly underestimate the true extent of disruption to civilian life. The conflict appears to be consistent with the definition of a complex emergency, and there is strong reason to suspect that the quantitative threshold is met.

3 – There is clear evidence that civilian deaths and/or displacement met the quantitative threshold for a complex emergency, and no significant mitigating evidence. There is every reason for confidence that the conflict reflects the definition.

**AnnualCertainty** – Measure from 1 (low) to 5 (high) of my certainty that the emergency-year meets the full set of operational criteria. For more information, see the operational guidelines below.

1 – There is sufficient uncertainty about the evidence that emergency-years coded 1 may not truly reflect the definition of a complex emergency.

2 – There is good reason to suspect a complex emergency is ongoing, but the clarity of the available evidence is limited.

3 – There is considerable evidence of an ongoing complex emergency, but there is some doubt about whether the relevant threshold is attained.

4 – There is strong evidence of an ongoing complex emergency.

5 – We can have a very high level of confidence that a complex emergency is ongoing.

## **Part II: Operational Guidelines**

### ***1) Ongoing Violence & Disruption to Civilian Life***

#### ***A) Baseline Threshold***

A complex emergency displaces at least 500,000 civilians or generates at least 20,000 civilian deaths due to a combination of the direct and indirect consequences of violence within a period of 5 or fewer years.

#### ***B) Annual Thresholds***

##### ***i) Onset***

A complex emergency begins in the first year in which it reaches 10% of the overall threshold – either 50,000 persons displaced or 2,000 civilian deaths, during the year, as a direct or indirect consequence of violence.

##### ***ii) Continuation / Termination***

A complex emergency continues through each year in which the number of newly displaced civilians or civilian deaths reaches 6% of the overall threshold – either 30,000 newly displaced or 1,200 civilian deaths. Thus, the last year of a complex emergency is the last year that meets either of these criteria, although lower-level violence may continue. This requirement ensures that a single complex emergency is characterized by persistent, sustained violence.

### ***2) Episodes of Political Violence***

#### ***A) Change in Actors / Political Issues***

Since it is defined as an episode of political violence, a complex emergency is identified in part by the actors involved and the political issues at stake. Thus, when there is a fundamental change in the basic political issues or the major actors, a new complex emergency is coded thereafter (as long as all the other characteristics are met by the ensuing violence).

For example, although Afghanistan has experienced no significant break in violence since 1978, 3 identifiable complex emergencies occurred during this time:

- 1) 1978 – 1992: The basic conflict was between the USSR and its Afghan puppet regime on the one hand, and the US-supported Mujahideen on the other.
- 2) 1992 – 2001: The basic conflict was between different Afghan groups vying for power with one another.
- 3) 2001 – Ongoing 2009: The basic conflict was between the United States and its allies on the one hand, and the Taliban on the other.

#### ***B) Breaks in Violence***

If a complex emergency experiences a break in violence, a new one begins thereafter if the break in violence lasts at least one full year (assuming all other criteria are met when violence

resumes). If the break in violence is shorter, only a single complex emergency is identified.

### C) Multiple Complex Emergencies in a Country

When a single country experiences multiple concurrent conflicts, separate complex emergencies are coded if it is possible to identify separate actors in distinct geographical regions, and uniquely identifiable political issues generating the violence (again assuming that each conflict also meets all the other criteria). Otherwise, only one complex emergency is coded.

For example, multiple Burmese ethnic groups distributed in different geographic areas have concurrently fought the Burmese government for greater autonomy or independence. These conflicts generate only one complex emergency, however, because a single, consistently applied policy of heavy-handed government treatment of civilians in these regions is primarily responsible for the extent of disruption to civilian life (see *Complex Emergency Coding Notes* for more information).

In contrast, in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto, the province of Aceh experienced a separatist civil war (1999 – 2004), which – on its own – met all the criteria of a complex emergency. Meanwhile, far away in the Moluccas (1999 – 2002), inter-communal violence between Muslims and Christians separately met all of these criteria. These are coded as separate complex emergencies.

### D) Cross-Border Violence

Because complex emergencies are defined in terms of a government's responsibility to its own citizens, evidence used to identify them must reflect this. Thus, although inter-state conflicts or cross-border insurgencies are in some sense single episodes of political violence, such conflicts are coded as separate complex emergencies if all of the other criteria for a complex emergency are met on each side of an international boundary. Otherwise, a complex emergency is coded only where the conflict's effects on the population of a single state meet these criteria.

For example, although the Lord's Resistance Army has attacked and displaced civilians in northern Uganda, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, only in Uganda did this conflict clearly meet the quantitative threshold for a complex emergency (at least, through 2009). Thus only one complex emergency is identified related to this group's activities, in Uganda.

## 3) Incorporating Qualitative Information and Measuring Uncertainty

To incorporate qualitative information about disruption to civilian life and governmental willingness/ability to respond to the threat to civilians, each complex emergency receives a numerical coding based on a combination of the available qualitative and quantitative information. This coding measures my certainty about whether each complex emergency fully meets both the quantitative thresholds and the overall definition of a complex emergency. As described below, it ranges from 1 to 3, where 1 reflects the most uncertainty and 3 reflects the least. A second coding – from 1 to 5 – performs the same function for each individual year of each complex emergency.

### A) Types of Information

Qualitative information incorporated in these coding schemas is of four basic types. The first two provide either mitigating or confirming evidence about whether or not the responsible

government appears to be unwilling or unable to shield civilians from the worst effects of violence, and the last two provide similar information about whether a conflict generates severe disruption to civilian life. Here, where it is clear that the quantitative threshold is met, mitigating evidence can suggest that a complex emergency is not ongoing. Where there is insufficient quantitative evidence to determine whether a conflict (or a given year within it) met the relevant quantitative threshold, confirming qualitative evidence can increase our confidence that it is likely to have done so.

In general, the more the available confirming evidence, and the less the available mitigating evidence, the more likely it is that a complex emergency is occurring. The coding schemes reflect this basic insight.

*i) Governmental Inability/Unwillingness*

Mitigating Evidence:

The responsible government's reaction to the violence appears adequate and appropriate to meet civilians' needs. Evidence can include international praise for the responsible government; government success at swiftly ending inter-communal violence; or indications that most displaced persons are adequately cared for.

Confirming Evidence:

A concerted campaign of rights abuses directed against the physical security of civilians serves as *confirming* evidence of a complex emergency. If carried out by the responsible government, we can infer that this government is unwilling to protect civilians. If carried out by another actor, we can infer that the government is unable to protect civilians. Similarly, evidence that a government initiates large-scale hostilities in densely populated areas without attempting to remove or protect vulnerable civilians; or that aid operations are subject to attacks or serious disruption due to insecurity, can serve as confirmation that a government is unable or unwilling to mitigate a conflict's effects on civilians.

*ii) Disruption to Civilian Life*

Mitigating Evidence:

Occasionally, a conflict that displaces 500,000 civilians in 5 years may not truly represent a severe threat to civilian life, for reasons *other* than effective government response. Typically, this occurs where civilians are able to flee large-scale violence of which they are not the primary targets and also do not experience significant shortages of basic necessities. Evidence that the vast majority of displaced people find housing with individual families (thereby avoiding overcrowded, unsanitary conditions in displaced-person camps) or that almost all displacement is temporary (a few weeks or a couple of months), can thus mitigate a judgment that a complex emergency is occurring.

Confirming Evidence:

Evidence of a widespread and potentially life-threatening shortage of access to the basic necessities of subsistence – food, water, health care, and shelter – can serve as confirming evidence that the quantitative threshold for a complex emergency is likely to be met, even if clear quantitative estimates are unavailable. Evidence of widespread malnutrition; starvation; outbreaks of disease related to overcrowding and unsanitary conditions; substantially elevated child or maternal mortality or significantly decreased life expectancy; a large population

without shelter; or a large population unreachable by humanitarian aid organizations indicates extensive exposure to the dangerous indirect effects of ongoing violence.

### B) Measuring Overall Uncertainty

**Coding of 1:** A conflict meets the overall quantitative threshold for a complex emergency, but there is significant mitigating evidence – either about the government’s ability / willingness to respond to civilians’ needs, or about the extent of disruption to civilian life – to suggest that it may not truly reflect the definition.

Example: Israel’s 2006 war against Lebanon, in which the vast majority of displaced people were able to return home quickly (see *Complex Emergency Coding Notes*).

**Coding of 2:** Quantitative estimates are unclear about whether the overall threshold for a complex emergency is met. There may be multiple competing estimates, or available estimates may be slightly below the threshold. However, there is confirming qualitative evidence to suggest that the available quantitative estimates may significantly underestimate the true extent of disruption to civilian life. In general, these events appear to be consistent with the definition of a complex emergency, and there is good reason to suspect that the quantitative threshold is met.

Example: Violent Iraqi suppression of the Shiite community, 1990s (see *Complex Emergency Coding Notes*).

**Coding of 3:** There is clear evidence that civilian deaths and/or displacement met the quantitative threshold, and no significant mitigating evidence. This represents the highest level of certainty that a conflict reflects the definition.

Example: Sierra Leone’s civil war, 1991 – 2001 (see *Complex Emergency Coding Notes*).

### C) Measuring Annual Uncertainty

**Coding of 1:** There is evidence that the quantitative threshold is met, but there is significant mitigating evidence – either about the government’s ability / willingness to respond to civilians’ needs, or about the extent of disruption to civilian life – to suggest that it may not truly reflect the definition.

*Emergency-years coded 1 may not truly reflect the definition of a complex emergency.*

**Coding of 2:** There is *either* some quantitative, *or* some confirming qualitative evidence of an ongoing complex emergency, but it is unclear whether the quantitative threshold for onset or continuation is met. Specifically, there is at least one major confirming qualitative indicator, or at least one of two kinds of quantitative information:

- 1) There is some new displacement and/or civilian deaths, but it is unclear whether they exceed the relevant threshold (such as when ‘Tens of thousands were displaced during the year’).
- 2) There is a single estimate for deaths or displacement over multiple years that include the

year in question, where the *average* number displaced or killed over this period exceeds the relevant quantitative threshold. For example, if there are an estimated 50,000 deaths over 5 years (including the emergency-year in question), the average is 10,000 / year, well over the threshold for onset (2,000) or continuation (1,200). If this is the only information for any of these years, they are coded '2.'

*Emergency-years coded 2 reflect good reason to suspect a complex emergency is ongoing, but the clarity of the available evidence is limited.*

**Coding of 3:** There is at least *some* quantitative evidence of a complex emergency, *and* this is supplemented with at least some confirming qualitative evidence. Specifically, there is at least one of the two kinds of quantitative information just described, *and* at least one confirming qualitative indicator.

*Emergency-years coded 3 reflect considerable evidence of an ongoing complex emergency, but there is some doubt about whether the relevant threshold is attained.*

**Coding of 4:** There is at least *some* quantitative evidence that a complex emergency is ongoing, *and* this is supplemented by multiple forms of confirming qualitative evidence. Specifically, there is at least one of the two kinds of quantitative information just described, and at least two confirming qualitative indicators.

*Emergency-years coded 4 reflect strong evidence of an ongoing complex emergency.*

**Coding of 5:** There is clear evidence that the relevant quantitative threshold (for onset or continuation) is met and no significant mitigating evidence. Thus, the onset year is coded '5' if there is clear evidence of 50,000 newly displaced or 2,000 civilian deaths. Each subsequent year is coded '5' if there is clear evidence of 30,000 newly displaced or 1,200 civilian deaths.

*Emergency-years coded 5 reflect a very high level of confidence that a complex emergency is ongoing.*



### **Part III: Complex Emergency Coding Notes**

This document presents the information used to make both overall and annual coding decisions for the *Post-Cold War Complex Humanitarian Emergencies Dataset*. It contains a sample of ...

Each record contains the name of the complex emergency; an overview of the conflict that generated it; the information used to make the decision to include the event in the dataset and an assessment of the overall certainty that it belongs there; and the information used to determine which years were part of each complex emergency and my certainty that each year reflects the operational guidelines laid out in the appendix. I also record the basic *type* of each complex emergency: whether primarily generated by a civil war, internationalized civil war, inter-state war, one-sided violence against a civilian population outside of war, or inter-communal violence. Sources are cited throughout and listed in a bibliography at the end.

#### **List of Acronyms & Abbreviations**

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IDMC: Internal Displacement Monitoring Center

MSF: Médecins Sans Frontières

USCR: United States Committee for Refugees

WRS: World Refugee Survey (produced by the USCR)

(\*Note: for WRS reports through 1989, the year in the title of the report reflects the year of the events described. Beginning in 1991, the year in the title of the report reflects events that occurred during the previous calendar year. Thus, WRS 1989 covers events from 1989 and WRS 1991 covers events from 1990.)

# 1. Afghanistan I (Soviets), 1978 – 1992

**Overall Certainty:** 3

**Primary Conflict Type:** Internationalized Civil War

## *General Information and Overall Severity:*

In April 1978, a military coup installed a new Marxist government under the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The new regime's revolutionary political programs prompted widespread popular resistance, in turn leading to a brutal government crackdown and civil war. The Afghan government's inability to control the chaos led the USSR to invade on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1979 in an effort to restore stability in what it considered a key client state. After the initial invasion over 80,000 Soviet forces remained in Afghanistan and participated in counterinsurgency operations on the ground and by air.

Over the next ten years the USSR supported the pro-Soviet Afghan government and participated in waging a brutal war against the Afghan resistance, the mujahideen. Aerial bombings as well as reprisal massacres by ground troops against villages supporting the mujahideen resistance destroyed tens of thousands of homes and whole villages. A scorched-earth policy including the use of napalm and defoliants destroyed agricultural production in many areas. The war was devastating for the civilian population, millions of whom died, fled across the border into Pakistan, or became displaced within Afghanistan itself. Much of the displacement occurred as a result of Soviet and Afghan army efforts to deprive guerrilla forces of support from the civilian population.

Soviet troops withdrew from Afghan territory in February 1989, but the mujahideen continued fighting against the Soviet – backed government of Mohammad Najibullah. In 1992 they defeated Najibullah's forces and subsequent violence reflected a new fight between the mujahideen for control of the state.<sup>2</sup> By this time war-related casualties amounted to an estimated 1.5 million deaths, 2 million injured, over 6 million refugees, and 2 million internally displaced out of a total pre-war population of 15 million.<sup>3</sup>

## Annual Data

### 1978 (Certainty: 5)

As noted above, the PDPA's revolutionary political programs prompted widespread resistance, in turn leading to a brutal government crackdown and civil war. In 1978, PDPA violence resulted in the "capture of the state, assassination of previous leaders and political, ethnic, and religious elites (up to 100,000 people)," as well as mujahideen uprisings against those actions.<sup>4</sup>

## *Confirming Evidence*

a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* The PDPA was complicit in the violence. The campaign was accompanied by mass repression in the countryside that resulted in the arrest and summary execution of tens of thousands.<sup>5</sup> Those targeted included political figures, religious leaders, teachers, students, other professionals, members of ethnic minorities, particularly Hazaras, and

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<sup>2</sup> I code a new complex emergency in 1992, "Afghanistan II," that reflects this subsequent violence.

<sup>3</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.94.

<sup>4</sup> Sambanis 2004, p.2. See also Roy 1990, p.95-97.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State 1980, p.708.

members of Islamic organizations.<sup>6</sup> Government-detained political prisoners fluctuated from 14,000 to 4,000.<sup>7</sup>

### 1979 (Certainty: 3)

The Afghan government's inability to control the chaos led the USSR to invade on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1979 in an effort to restore stability in what it considered a key client state. By this time there were already more than 400,000 Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and people were crossing the border at the rate of about 1,000 per day.<sup>8</sup> After the invasion civilian deaths and numbers of refugees and IDPs began to increase at alarming rates. Clear information on the number of deaths and refugees during 1979 specifically is not available. However, during President Hafizullah Amin's time in office (September 1979 until his death during the Soviet invasion) an estimated "tens of thousands" of prisoners of conscience were reportedly executed.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Confirming Evidence*

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* The large number of government executions were accompanied by high rates of political imprisonment and arbitrary arrests, and together represent the government's unwillingness to protect civilians.
- b) *Conditions of Life for displaced:* Little information on conditions for the displaced is available. However, the UN High Commission for Refugees began working with the Pakistani government to aid Afghan refugees there in April 1979, and other UN programs were active in the Pakistani camps during the year as well.<sup>10</sup>

### 1980 (Certainty: 5)

War raged between the mujahideen, Soviet forces, and the Soviet-backed central government in Kabul. As a result, refugees poured over the border into Pakistan at a rate of tens of thousands per month.<sup>11</sup> More specifically, according to the UNHCR, between the Soviet invasion at the end of 1979 and the start of 1981 the Afghan refugee population in Pakistan grew from less than half a million to some 1.4 million (and perhaps 1.5 million by other estimates). Another 100,000 – 300,000 Afghan refugees were in Iran by the end of 1980.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Confirming Evidence*

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Regular, systematic Soviet ground and air offensives contributed to the deliberate large-scale devastation of the agricultural infrastructure, decimated livestock, and depopulated rural areas.

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<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch 2001, p.3.

<sup>7</sup> Amnesty International 1979, p.81.

<sup>8</sup> On the first point see United States Committee for Refugees 1982, p.14. For the second statistic see United States Committee for Refugees 1987, p.17.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of State 1980, p.708.

<sup>10</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1981, p.17.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of State 1981, p.929. The exact number entering in 1980 is not specified but the "rate of tens of thousands of refugees every month" implies that at least 120,000 refugees entered during the year.

<sup>12</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1981, p.15.

## 1981 (Certainty: 5)

Refugee flows from Pakistan to Afghanistan peaked between January and June 1981, reaching a estimated 4,700 persons crossing the border on a daily basis.<sup>13</sup> This implies that some 850,000 people left for Pakistan alone in the first half of the year. Past this period, continued fighting resulted in thousands of refugees fleeing to Pakistan each week. The USCR estimated that some 500,000 Afghans had died so far in the conflict.<sup>14</sup>

### *Confirming Evidence*

*b) Conditions of Life for displaced:* There was little information on conditions of life for IDPS. For refugees in the Pakistani camps, however, USCR notes that conditions had improved by 1981 – whereas hunger and disease had been common initially, now “most refugees [were] receiving basic subsistence services.”<sup>15</sup>

## 1982 (Certainty: 4)

A combination of repressive Afghan government practices, the government’s secret police force, and Soviet military offenses caused the civilian population intensified instability. In areas of high mujahideen activity government forces and Soviet troops targeted and killed civilians. Residential neighborhoods in Kandahar, Afghanistan’s second largest city, were heavily bombed in early 1982, resulting in large numbers of casualties.<sup>16</sup> Later in the year the towns and villages of the Panjsher Valley, Paghman, and the villages of the Shomali region were bombed. While no sure estimate of casualties is available, “survivors speak of thousands killed and wounded.”<sup>17</sup>

### *Confirming Evidence*

- a) Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Survivors of Soviet bombing campaigns report “savagery and lack of regard for human life shown by Soviet troops searching for resistance fighters and loot. Numerous accounts of rape, butchery, and looting are reported after the Soviet bombing of Kandahar in January.”<sup>18</sup> Soviet use of chemical weapons on the civilian population has been reported.<sup>19</sup> The Afghan regime acquiesced in these activities.
- b) Conditions of Life for displaced:* In areas under Afghan regime control, some social services exist but are frequently disrupted by fighting between the Soviet/regime forces and the mujahideen. In 1982, large numbers of IDPs severely strained already inadequate services.<sup>20</sup>

## 1983 (Certainty: 5)

It was not clear how many civilians were newly displaced or killed this year. However, according to USCR, “In mid-1983 alone, a wave of 400,000 crossed into Iran as Soviet forces battled rebels.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1987, p.17.

<sup>14</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1981, p.16.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of State 1983, p.1073.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of State 1983, p.1074.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of State 1983, p.1076.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of State 1983, p.1081.

<sup>21</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1984, p.55.

Moreover, by November 1983 a total of 2.8 million Afghan refugees had been registered in Pakistan since the beginning of the war. With an additional 1.5 million Afghans in Iran, some 20% - 25% of Afghanistan's population was living in exile.<sup>22</sup>

### **1984 (Certainty: 3)**

Approximately 115,000 Soviet troops plus regime forces continue fighting against the mujahideen in 1984. Human rights conditions remained essentially unchanged.<sup>23</sup> Soviet troops stepped up the policy of harsh reprisals against the civilian populace in militarily strategic regions and areas of greatest resistance. According to the U.S. State Department, the "strategic Panjshir Valley was subjected to large-scale carpet bombing as a prelude to a largely Soviet military thrust. In the countryside, it was standard practice to bombard villages suspected of harboring resistance fighters."<sup>24</sup> This devastation forced many civilians to seek refuge in Kabul, whose prewar population of one million had now doubled.<sup>25</sup> The official estimate of Afghan in refugees in Pakistan climbed by 100,000 to 2.9 million by the end of the year, although it is not clear if this reflects new refugee flows of this magnitude during the year.<sup>26</sup>

#### ***Confirming Evidence***

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* While the number of refugees appeared to have largely stabilized, Soviet attacks against civilians kept the number high and prevented hopes for repatriation in the near future.<sup>27</sup>

### **1985 (Certainty: 5)**

Large-scale military operations continued with scant regard for death and injury to civilians. Urban centers were repeatedly bombed and strafed by aircraft and subjected to mortar and artillery bombardment. In 1985, 45,000 to 50,000 additional refugees fled to Pakistan.<sup>28</sup>

#### ***Confirming Evidence***

- a) *Conditions of Life for displaced:* Despite relief efforts, refugees were in poor health. UNHCR "found infant mortality among Afghan refugees to be among the highest in the world and the rate of birth-related deaths among mothers to be the world's highest. The high death rates were attributed to diseases that could be avoided with proper medical care."<sup>29</sup>

### **1986 (Certainty: 3)**

In May 1986 the Soviets replaced Karmal with former secret police chief Najibullah, due to "frustration over Karmal's failure to subdue armed opposition to his regime despite the support of

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<sup>22</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1984, p.5.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of State 1985, p.1159.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of State 1985, p.1160.

<sup>26</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1984, p.55.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1985, p.65.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

120,000 Soviet troops.”<sup>30</sup> Arbitrary killing and other acts of violence against the civilian population in areas related to suspected regime opponents were common throughout 1986. Soviet aircraft bombing raids were carried out against cities throughout Afghanistan resulting in an unknown number of civilian deaths. (Each raid, on average resulted in the death of approximately 20 – 50 civilians.)<sup>31</sup> Also during 1986, scorched earth tactics by Soviet and regime forces continued to be a major factor contributing to the mass exodus of refugees, according to the U.S. State Department.<sup>32</sup> An estimated 15,000 new arrivals entered Pakistan from Afghanistan in the last six months of 1986.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, according to USCR some reports suggested that new arrivals in Iran continued at the rate of some 2,000 per day during the year.<sup>34</sup> If accurate this would suggest over 700,000 new refugees arriving in Iran, but the veracity of this information was unclear.

### **Confirming Evidence**

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Government inability/unwillingness is apparent in the intentional bombardment of civilian areas, especially in provinces bordering Iran and Pakistan. In November 1986, the UN issued a report saying that the “pattern of aerial bombardment indicates an intention to clear out the Afghan population from the provinces bordering Iran and Pakistan.”<sup>35</sup>

### **1987 (Certainty: 5)**

Under the Najibullah regime, fighting increased and civil administration was ineffective. Throughout the year reprisal attacks against the civilian population suspected of supporting the mujahideen included the use of antipersonnel mines, grenades, and lethal chemical weapons. According to USCR, in 1987 some 72,000 – 96,000 refugees fled Afghanistan, based on an estimated average of between 6,000 and 8,000 each month.<sup>36</sup> In addition, over a third of the pre-coup population of 15 million lived outside the state borders, and of the world’s 12 million refugees nearly half were Afghans.<sup>37</sup>

### **Confirming Evidence**

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Government unwillingness to protect the civilian population is demonstrated by restricting domestic travel, particularly in combat zones. According to the U.S. State Department, Soviet and Afghan government forces attempted to block the movement of refugees out of areas of combat during Soviet military operations in March in Kunduz and Takhar provinces, and in August in northern Kabul province.<sup>38</sup>
- b) *Conditions of Life for displaced:* According to USCR, refugee assistance programs in Pakistan were not plagued by many of the negative factors frequently found in refugee situations. By the end of 1987 “there had been no major disruptions of the assistance distribution network, no

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<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of State 1988, p.1090.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of State 1987, p.1095.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of State 1987, p.1099.

<sup>33</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1986, p.69.

<sup>34</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1986, p.65.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1987, p.17.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of State 1988, p.1096.

epidemics, no starvation, little acute malnutrition, and no serious outbreaks of violence.”<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, indications of inadequate care still persisted in high rates of child/maternal mortality. In addition, the relative stability of the refugee population offers little insight into conditions for the even more vulnerable IDP population.

### **1988 (Certainty: 5)**

Soviet resolve to continue the war in Afghanistan began to weaken in late 1987. On April 14, 1988, after negotiations in Geneva, the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw all troops by February 15, 1989. As the Soviet drawdown began mujahideen pressure on the Afghan regime increased. Facing increased mujahideen military success, the Soviets stopped troop withdrawals in order to support the Afghan government. According to USCR, about 40,000 new arrivals crossed into Pakistan during 1988. Most of those who entered the North West Frontier Province were fleeing fighting in the Nangarhar and Konar areas. Thousands of others are believed to have entered during the course of the year to Baluchistan, mostly fleeing fighting in and around Qandahar.<sup>40</sup>

### **1989 (Certainty: 5)**

Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan in February, but their departure did not end the war. Fighting continued between the mujahidin and Afghan government forces. According to USCR, few refugees returned to their homes, while significant numbers became newly displaced. For example, “fighting for control of Jalalabad, in the east, caused some 70,000 additional refugees to flee to Pakistan. Intense rocket attacks virtually emptied the city of women and children, many of whom fled to safer areas within Afghanistan.”<sup>41</sup>

#### **Confirming Evidence:**

b) *Conditions of Life for Displaced:* Conditions of life for the displaced, and more broadly for the Afghan civilian population, remained severe in 1989. Food access was a serious problem. According to USCR, “Food shortages were exacerbated by the rural to urban migration of most of those displaced by the fighting, by war-damage to irrigation, devastation of farms and livestock, abandonment of fields for years, and continuing fighting.”<sup>42</sup> As a result, international relief agencies predicted that without significant food aid, up to an additional half million people could be displaced during the winter of 1989-1990. In addition, child mortality rates among the displaced were extraordinarily high. According to the USCR, “The mortality rate for Afghan refugee children under the age of five is 130/1000. But the mortality rate for children within Afghanistan is even worse—a staggering 300/1000.”<sup>43</sup>

### **1990 (Certainty: 3)**

Fighting continued in 1990 and, along with persistent food shortages, caused new displacement.<sup>44</sup> According to USCR, new refugees were believed to have fled to Pakistan, but their numbers are

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<sup>39</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1987, p.18.

<sup>40</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1988, p.80.

<sup>41</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1989, p.76.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1989, p.85.

<sup>44</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1991, p.90.

unclear. Mujahideen sources claimed they numbered 83,000, but this was disputed by the Pakistani government, which did not report any new influxes.<sup>45</sup>

**Confirming Evidence:**

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Security conditions in Afghanistan in 1990 contribute to the impression that the Afghan government was unable and/or unwilling to address the threats the ongoing fighting represented for the civilian population. UN food distribution teams were harassed, US food relief was hijacked, and a nurse with the French doctors' organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) was killed. As USCR summarized, "UN and western aid workers were clearly the objects of threats, prompting other western agencies periodically to suspend projects inside the country."<sup>46</sup>

**1991 (Certainty: 5)**

The USSR and United States continued to withdraw from Afghanistan in 1991. The conflict transitioned from a proxy war between the superpower to a civil war with regional powers -- Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia -- competing for influence with the various factions. Ethnic based conflict became more common. The split between the dominant Pushtuns and the Tajiks—who claim to outnumber them—became more pronounced.<sup>47</sup>

Fighting during the year centered around cities and towns controlled by Najibullah, formerly the head of the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, who had now proclaimed himself leader of a renamed 'Watan' (homeland) Party. In April, at least 1,000 families reportedly fled to Pakistan to escape fighting near Khost. In May and June, heavy fighting in Herat Province forced 30,000 to 40,000 civilians to flee toward the Iranian border.<sup>48</sup> After this, despite calls for a transition period and political settlement to end the hostilities, the war continued. In August, Ahmed Shah Massoud, who controlled most of northeastern Afghanistan, threatened to cut a highway to Kabul, "unless the government halted air strikes that he alleged were causing hundreds of casualties in civilian areas of the northeast."<sup>49</sup> More broadly, new refugees continued to arrive in Pakistan throughout the year.<sup>50</sup>

**Confirming Evidence:**

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* As in the previous year, security conditions continued to restrict international aid agencies' ability to provide relief to the civilian population. Western aid workers were abducted on multiple occasions, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) pulled out of some areas after 2 employees were killed.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1991, p.100.

<sup>46</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1991, p.90.

<sup>47</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.94.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.105.

<sup>51</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.94.



## 1992 (Certainty: 2)

Soviet aid to the Najibullah regime ended in January, and in April the mujahideen succeeded in overthrowing Najibullah and seized Kabul, triggering a massive repatriation of some 1.5 million Afghan refugees.<sup>52</sup> This brought to an end the complex emergency triggered by the installation of the Marxist regime in 1978, but not the fighting in Afghanistan. Subsequently, a new civil war between rival Afghan mujahideen factions emerged and displaced over half a million people – mostly around Kabul – later in the year.<sup>53</sup> This is coded as a new complex emergency, however, and the fighting and displacement later in the year are attributed to it. Estimates of the effects of the assault on Kabul early in the year that represented the end of the original complex emergency are unfortunately unclear, but should be properly attributed to the original conflict.

## 9. Indonesia / Moluccas and Sulawesi, 1999 – 2002

### **Overall Certainty: 3**

**Primary Conflict Type:** Inter-communal conflict

### *General Information and Overall Severity*

Large-scale inter-communal conflict between Christians and Muslims erupted in the Indonesian provinces of Maluku, North Maluku, and Sulawesi following the fall of President Suharto in 1998. Tensions had been growing in the largely-Christian provinces thanks to the arrival of large numbers of Javanese Muslims through the Indonesian government's policy of 'transmigration,' designed to reduce population pressures on Java. Although the violence began in 1998 (in Sulawesi) and continued sporadically through 2004, the most intense period – and the part that qualifies as a complex emergency – was between 1999 and 2002.

Large-scale conflict in Maluku began in January 1999, "when a dispute between a Christian and a Muslim in the capital Ambon triggered two months of inter-communal violence that claimed the lives of an estimated 1,000 people. In the following months the fighting intensified and rapidly spread to other regions of the province."<sup>54</sup> It was the worst religious violence Indonesia had seen in 15 years.<sup>55</sup> In North Maluku, an August 1999 incident "sparked off a wave of inter-communal violence between Christians and Muslims across the province. As a result, an estimated 200,000 people were displaced, a third of the province population."<sup>56</sup> In Sulawesi, the first major incident occurred in late December 1998, but most violence and displacement took place from 2000 – 2001. According to the USCR, in Sulawesi, "The clashes, though linked to local issues, were also related to the sectarian violence in the Moluccas."<sup>57</sup> From 2000, the conflict in all three provinces was complicated with the emergence of a Muslim militant group called Laskar Jihad, which attacked Christian civilians and whose members largely hailed from elsewhere in Indonesia, particularly Java.

Beginning in 1999, the Indonesian government sent thousands of troops to both the Moluccas and Sulawesi to combat the violence and, according to the IDMC, "drastically increased military and police presence to re-establish law and order and also assist with the evacuation, shelter,

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<sup>52</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.87, 90.

<sup>53</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.91.

<sup>54</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009b.

<sup>55</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1999, p.110.

<sup>56</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009b.

<sup>57</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.123.

food and medical needs of the victims of violence.”<sup>58</sup> The government also sponsored the December 2001 Malino peace accord, which largely ended the violence in Sulawesi, and the February 2002 Malino II peace agreement, which did the same for the Moluccas. Nevertheless, as described below these actions were insufficient to quickly quell the violence, or to provide for the basic needs of much of the conflict-affected population.

Overall, more than 10,000 people are believed to have died due to the fighting in the Moluccas. USCR estimated that the violence killed some 5,000 to 10,000 Moluccans from 1999 to 2002, and some 2,500 residents of Sulawesi since the end of 1998.<sup>59</sup> The IDMC has estimated, moreover, that in the Moluccas, “Fighting between Christian and Muslim communities displaced nearly one million in both provinces between 1999 and 2002.”<sup>60</sup> And according to the UNDP, in Maluku province alone, “between 1999 and 2002, the conflict... claimed 4,800 lives and displaced an estimated 500,000 people, or half of the province population.”<sup>61</sup> In Sulawesi, meanwhile, “In total, between 100,000 and 150,000 people were displaced by three years of violence.”<sup>62</sup>

## **Annual Data**

### **1999 (Certainty: 5)**

As noted above, large-scale violence began in both Maluku and North Maluku in 1999, so this is the first year of the complex emergency.<sup>63</sup> By the end of the year, “more than 1,000 people had been killed in Ambon and other Moluccas islands. An estimated 369,000 persons were internally displaced.”<sup>64</sup>

### **Confirming Evidence**

a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* The Indonesian government’s efforts to quell the fighting were clearly inadequate to do so. According to the USCR, “In January, the government sent 1,000 troops to quell the violence. Nearly a year later, in December, the military announced it was taking charge of security in Maluku. The troops’ presence failed to deter the fighting.”<sup>65</sup>

b) *Conditions of Life for Displaced:* Despite assistance from government and some international aid agencies, conditions of life for the displaced were extremely poor and contributed to frequent disease-related deaths. According to the USCR, “In May [1999], the official Indonesian news agency reported that 25 Ambonese living in makeshift centers in southeast Sulawesi had died of cholera in recent weeks, while 400 others were hospitalized with various diseases. Officials blamed dirty water and poor living conditions for their deaths.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009b.

<sup>59</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2003, p.120-121. See also Sambanis 2004, p.108.

<sup>60</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009b.

<sup>62</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009a.

<sup>63</sup> According to the IDMC, a December 1998 incident in Sulawesi led to “a week of rioting which resulted in hundreds of Christian and Muslim homes and shops destroyed and thousands of people displaced” (See *ibid.*) Given that the violence was limited to the final week of the year and that there is no information to indicate that the magnitude of the displacement meets the 50,000 threshold for the beginning of a CE, I do not code 1998 as the beginning of the CE.

<sup>64</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2000, p.145.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

## 2000 (Certainty: 5)

Violence continued in both Moluccas provinces through 2000, and by the end of the year, over 400,000 people were displaced (including 215,000 to 285,000 persons in Maluku and 207,000 in North Maluku) and 5,000 Moluccans were believed to have died since the conflict began.<sup>67</sup> The activities of the new Muslim militant organization, Laskar Jihad, took a heavy toll, killing an estimated 2700 to 3500 Christian Moluccans during the first half of the year.<sup>68</sup> In addition, in 2000 the violence spread to Sulawesi, where several incidents prompted waves of violence in April and again in May – June. According to the IDMC, “By July the violence had spread beyond Poso [the capital] and affected many villages across the district. Between 300 and 800 people died, most of them Muslims.”<sup>69</sup>

### Confirming Evidence

a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness*: Serious threats to aid workers both inhibited civilians’ access to relief and reflected the government’s inability or unwillingness to provide security for aid operations. According to USCR, “A small number of international NGOs, UN agencies, and local NGOs assisted the displaced in the Moluccas. Throughout the year, these agencies struggles to maintain operations in the midst of difficult security conditions, with most of those in Ambon at least temporarily suspending operations.”<sup>70</sup> According to Sambanis, aid organizations were forced to flee Ambon due to the threat caused by Laskar Jihad, with the last aid workers departing by May 2000.<sup>71</sup>

b) *Conditions of Life for Displaced*: According to the USCR, conditions for the displaced in the Moluccas often remained “critical, with reports of serious malnutrition and disease,” especially in camps located in mountainous jungle regions.<sup>72</sup>

## 2001 (Certainty: 5)

Violence continued throughout 2001, and by the end of the year there were some 542,000 IDPs between Maluku (approximately 336,000 IDPs) and North Maluku (approximately 206,000 IDPs), while many thousands of others had fled to other provinces in Indonesia.<sup>73</sup> North Maluku was mostly calm in 2001, with little new displacement, and many people were able to return home. On the other hand, “numerous outbreaks of deadly violence” continued to occur in Maluku province, “particularly in and around the port city of Ambon and on the island of Buru,” preventing repatriation to central Maluku.<sup>74</sup> According to the USCR, “By year’s end, between 5,000 and 9,000 Moluccans were believed to have died since the conflict began.”<sup>75</sup> In Sulawesi in 2001, the conflict “sent both Christians and Muslims fleeing. . . Several thousand members of Laskar Jihad were reported to have arrived in the Poso region around mid-year, some having come from Maluku.

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<sup>67</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2001, p.133, 136.

<sup>68</sup> Sambanis 2004, p.108.

<sup>69</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009a.

<sup>70</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2001, p.136.

<sup>71</sup> Sambanis 2004, p.108.

<sup>72</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2001, p.135-136.

<sup>73</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.121-122.

<sup>74</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.123.

<sup>75</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.122.

Laskar Jihad attacks intensified in June and continued throughout the year.<sup>76</sup> By the end of the year, over 2,500 people were dead in the province as a result of the violence since the end of 1998.<sup>77</sup>

### ***Confirming Evidence***

a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Throughout 2001, the scale of the government response remained too weak to seriously address the security deficit. According to the USCR, “The state of civil emergency imposed by the government in June 2000 remained in effect at the close of 2001, but had done little to stem the violence.”<sup>78</sup> In Sulawesi, the arrival of thousands of soldiers following the initial outbreak of violence in 2000 stabilized the situation somewhat, “but violent attacks by militias, including by Muslim militias coming from outside the province, continued during 2001 resulting in widespread destruction and displacement throughout the province.”<sup>79</sup> Some 378,000 people were displaced in Sulawesi at year’s end,<sup>80</sup> but it was unclear from available reports how many originated from the Moluccas, and how many from Sulawesi itself.

### **2002 (Certainty: 2)**

In 2002, violence in the Moluccas was much reduced, “largely because of the increased religious segregation.”<sup>81</sup> Despite continued attacks by Laskar Jihad, overall, “Little new internal displacement occurred, and security steadily improved, generally ensuring better delivery of humanitarian aid.”<sup>82</sup> At the end of the year, USCR estimated there were still some 300,000 people displaced in the two provinces.<sup>83</sup> Return of IDPs began shortly after the end of the conflict, and most of the displaced have since been able to return home.<sup>84</sup> In subsequent years, there were sporadic incidents of violence. In the largest such incident, 10,000 people were displaced in Maluku in renewed Christian-Muslim violence in 2004.<sup>85</sup>

In Sulawesi, the December 2001 Malino Accord represented an effort to achieve peace. After this, according to the USCR, “The level of violence fell and the region was relatively peaceful in the first several months of 2002. By June, however, bombings and shootings in the Poso area had resumed, causing numerous fatalities... The violence prompted some new displacement and caused international NGOs to temporarily halt activities and withdraw staff.”<sup>86</sup> Violence continued, “and by September more than 5,000 security officers were enforcing an uneasy peace.”<sup>87</sup> In Central Sulawesi, at least 55,000 people were able to return home during the year, but up to 200,000 people remained displaced (it was unclear from available reports how many of these people were displaced from the Moluccas, versus from Sulawesi itself).<sup>88</sup> In later years, “violence and insecurity continued to prevent many people from returning but it did no longer result in any large-scale displacement.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.123.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.122.

<sup>79</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009a.

<sup>80</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2002, p.123.

<sup>81</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2003, p.120.

<sup>82</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2003, p.121.

<sup>83</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2003, p.120.

<sup>84</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009b. See also Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2008.

<sup>85</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2005, p.81.

<sup>86</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 2003, p.121.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2009a.

Thus, 2002 was the last year of substantial violence generating new displacement, and thus the last year of the complex emergency.

## 16. Azerbaijan - Armenia (USSR), 1988 – 1991

**Overall Coding:** 3

**Primary Conflict Type:** Inter-communal Violence

### *General Information & Overall Severity*

A dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh territory in the South Caucasus traces its roots to more than a century of tension between Christian Armenians and Muslim Turkic Azeris in the region. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the region became part of the Russian empire and its population lived in relative peace, although both sides partook in acts of brutality against the other in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following the Bolshevik revolution, the new Soviet rulers established the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region. Though located within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, the majority of Nagorno-Karabakh's population was ethnically Armenian.

As the Soviet Union began to loosen control over its territories during the late 1980s, 80,000 Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh signed a petition in January 1988 asking that the territory be transferred to the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. On February 20, 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh Regional Soviet passed a resolution formally requesting that the territory be incorporated into Armenia, which was rejected by both Moscow and Baku. Tensions in the region erupted into turmoil, which took the form of demonstrations, strikes, and political quarreling. Violence exploded on February 28 when a pogrom in the Armenian quarter of the Azeri city of Sumgait left 26 Armenians and six Azeris dead.<sup>90</sup> Continued demonstrations in Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, and Yerevan prompted Soviet intervention and triggered waves of violent deportations of Armenians from Azerbaijan and Azeris from Armenia. The presence of Soviet troops not only failed to end the violence, but at times contributed to making it worse. By the time of the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, the conflict had produced more than 1,000 deaths and more than half a million refugees.<sup>91</sup>

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Armenia and Azerbaijan became independent countries. In September 1991, Nagorno-Karabakh Oblast Soviet announced the establishment of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, a declaration that was annulled by the Azeri parliament in November. In January 1992, the Nagorno-Karabakh parliament declared independence from Azerbaijan, requesting and failing to receive international recognition.

At this point the conflict entered a second stage that justifies the coding of a new complex emergency. First, Azerbaijan and Armenia were now independent, with separate governments responsible for their own civilian populations. In addition, the conflict changed dramatically. Between 1988 and 1991, it primarily took the form of inter-communal violence between Azeris and Armenians. Displacement was mostly cross-border, with ethnic Armenians fleeing Azerbaijan and ethnic Azeris fleeing Armenia. By contrast, between 1992 and 1994 the violence morphed into a civil war for political control of Nagorno-Karabakh that was mostly limited to the territory of Azerbaijan. It was fought primarily between organized military units, and displacement was

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<sup>90</sup> De Waal 2005.

<sup>91</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.78.

primarily within Azerbaijan.<sup>92</sup>

## **Annual Data**

### **1988 (Certainty: 5)**

USCR reported that in 1988, some 230,000 Armenians and 160,000 Azeris were displaced by pogroms and inter-ethnic violence in Armenia and Azerbaijan.<sup>93</sup> In the wake of the February demonstrations in Stepanakert and Yerevan, Armenians and Azeris in Nagorno-Karabakh engaged in communal violence, characterized by individual attacks in the form of hostage taking, destroying livestock, and stoning passing cars.

### **1989 – 1990 (Certainty: Both 2)**

Pogroms and forced population exchanges continued in 1989 and 1990, with gangs of Armenians and Azeris attacking each other and both sides engaging in hostage taking and other human rights abuses. Violence intensified in late 1989 and the first half of 1990 as Armenians protested Azerbaijan's blockade of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. By the end of January 1990 USCR estimated that the number of displaced Armenians had climbed to 300,000.<sup>94</sup> Based on displacement figures from 1988, this suggests that an additional 70,000 Armenians were displaced between 1989 and January 1990. In addition, USCR later reported that 173,000 to 195,000 ethnic Azeris fled to Azerbaijan from Armenia between 1988-1989.<sup>95</sup> Based on the 1988 figures cited above, this implies that approximately 13,000 to 35,000 Azeris entered Azerbaijan in 1989. On the other hand, Human Rights Watch gives slightly different figures, claiming that the 1988-1990 period saw the flight of 300,000-350,000 Armenians and about 167,000 Azeris.<sup>96</sup>

### **Confirming Evidence**

*a) Government Inability/Unwillingness:* The conflict prompted Moscow to deploy troops and place Nagorno-Karabakh under its direct control in early 1989. According to USCR, violence nevertheless continued, and arms flowed freely to both sides.<sup>97</sup> In November, the Soviet direct command was abolished and Nagorno-Karabakh was returned to Azeri control. In December 1989, the Armenian Supreme Soviet moved to incorporate Nagorno-Karabakh into the Armenian Republic. This led to anti-Armenian riots and pogroms in Azerbaijan, which killed about 68 Armenians in January 1990. In the course of repressing these demonstrations, Soviet troops killed about 100 mostly unarmed Azeris. During the spring, Soviet troops used force at least twice to end Armenian demonstrations. In addition, although it received aid from UNHCR, Armenia struggled to care for its population and refugees thanks to the Azeri blockade.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> On the change in the pattern of displacement in 1991-92, see Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2003, p.9-11.

<sup>93</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1989, p.65.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Different USCR reports cite different numbers. In 1991 (p.76-7), USCR reported that 173,000 had fled in 1988-89, while in its 1993 report (p.112) it cited a figure of 195,000 for the same time period).

<sup>96</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994a, p.1.

<sup>97</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.112.

<sup>98</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994a, p.2-3. See also Cornell 1999.

## 1991 (Certainty: 2)

By the end of 1991, USCR estimated that there were over half a million refugees and that the entire Azeri population of Armenia had fled the country.<sup>99</sup> Given the uncertainty surrounding the scale of new displacement in 1989-1990, however, it is unclear how many of these may have been displaced in 1991 (though see ‘Confirming Evidence’ below for confirmation of at least some new displacement). Still, the year saw the growing formation of Armenian paramilitary groups as well as regular raids on villages, clashes between armed bands of Armenians and Azeris, and attacks on law enforcement officials and military outposts (an estimated 115 between January and May).<sup>100</sup>

### *Confirming Evidence*

*a) Government Inability/Unwillingness:* During the spring and summer of 1991, a joint Soviet and Azeri military and police operation known as “Operation Ring” led to the clearing of as many as 24 Armenian-populated villages on the northern periphery of Nagorno-Karabakh and the deportation of thousands. The operation was reportedly carried out with an unprecedented degree of violence and a systematic violation of human rights.<sup>101</sup> Thereafter, according to Human Rights Watch, “skirmishes between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces became more frequent in Nagorno-Karabakh and bordering districts. In the late summer and early autumn 1991 Armenians fought to retake their villages, and Azeris used force to counter Nagorno-Karabakh’s declaration of independence. The number of casualties and hostages began to mount rapidly.”<sup>102</sup>

## 17. Azerbaijan / Nagorno-Karabakh, 1992 - 1994

### **Overall Coding:** 3

**Primary Conflict Type:** Civil War

### *General Information and Overall Severity*

Following more than a century of ethnic tension, violent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh erupted in 1988. At that time, both Armenia and Azerbaijan were republics of the Soviet Union. Soviet leaders had planted the seeds of turmoil early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when they created the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, placing an ethnically Armenian Christian population under the control of Muslim Azeris. Until 1988, however, the populations had lived in relative peace, though acts of brutality on both sides in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century marked popular memory.

As Soviet control loosened in the late 1980s, ethnic frictions between Armenia and Azerbaijan turned violent. The first stage of the conflict, which took place between 1988 and 1991, began when the Nagorno-Karabakh Regional Soviet formally requested incorporation into the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. This stage was marked primarily by inter-communal violence between Azeris and Armenians, and displacement was mostly cross-border, with ethnic Armenians fleeing Azerbaijan and ethnic Azeris fleeing Armenia. By the end of this stage in 1991, over 1,000 people had been killed and more than half a million had been displaced.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.77-79.

<sup>100</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994a, p.3-4.

<sup>101</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994a, p.5.

<sup>102</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994a, p.6.

<sup>103</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1992, p.78.

In January 1992, Nagorno-Karabakh declared itself an independent republic, and the conflict entered a new stage. The period between the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the end of the violence in 1994 is coded as a separate complex emergency for several reasons. Before this, the responsible government with respect to both populations was the Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union prompted the establishment of Armenia and Azerbaijan as two separate countries, each with its own government responsible to the citizens of its respective territory. Additionally, beginning in 1992, the violence was limited to the territory of Azerbaijan (including Nagorno-Karabakh), and so coding a complex emergency in Armenia from this point forward would not be consistent with the basic requirement of ongoing political violence necessary for a complex emergency. Finally, violence that had formerly been primarily inter-communal took the form of a conflict between organized military units. This new stage of the conflict was relatively brutal, as both sides were able to pilfer weaponry from former Soviet armories following the fall of the USSR. The Council of Europe estimates that between 1988 and 1994, the conflict produced almost 20,000 deaths and more than one million refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan and Armenia.<sup>104</sup>

In May 1994, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a Russian-brokered ceasefire and the *de facto* partition of Nagorno-Karabakh, leaving most of the territory and swathes of surrounding land in Armenian hands. Though the armies stood down, the region's sovereignty was still contested, and both sides have had soldiers killed in sporadic breaches of the ceasefire. USCR reported no new displacement or deaths in 1995 or 1996, but conditions were critical for many of the displaced. As of 1995, some 10-15% of Azerbaijan's population remained displaced.<sup>105</sup>

## **Annual Data**

### **1992 (Certainty: 5)**

In January 1992, Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence from Azerbaijan. During the year, 152,000 ethnic Azeris were newly displaced, primarily from the towns of Shusha and Khojaly (both within Nagorno-Karabakh), and from Lachin, a town on the road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia.<sup>106</sup> During the invasion of Khojaly in February, Armenian forces killed as many as 2,000 fleeing civilians, a massacre that led to the resignation of Azeri President Ayza Moutalibov.<sup>107</sup> In June and July, following the Armenian attacks on the territory situated between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, Azeris launched a counter-offensive, recapturing a quarter of the disputed territory and displacing about 40,000 ethnic Armenians.<sup>108</sup>

### **1993 (Certainty: 5)**

In 1993 the number of refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan reached at least 800,000, half a million of whom were newly displaced during the year. As ethnic Armenians widened their area of control in all directions, displacement began to occur outside Nagorno-Karabakh in areas such as Kelbajar to the north and west, where about 60,000 were displaced in April and May, and Agdam to the east, where another 150,000 were forcibly removed. Southeast of Nagorno-Karabakh, 150,000

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<sup>104</sup> Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly 1995.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.117.

<sup>107</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.112.

<sup>108</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2007, p.14.



were displaced from the towns of Jibrail and Fizuli and their surrounding areas. In October, ethnic Armenian forces captured the remaining territory to the southwest, forcibly removing some 50,000 to 100,000 people from the Zangelan district. Because they had no direct escape from Azerbaijan, many first had to cross into Iran before later being transported to safer areas in Azerbaijan. Armenian offensives throughout the year as well as renewed fighting in December have prompted some, including the Azeri government, to add an additional 100,000 to their estimates of the total persons displaced in 1993.<sup>109</sup>

### Confirming Evidence

- a) Government Inability/Unwillingness: As waves of people fled the fighting, the government of Azerbaijan prevented newly displaced persons from traveling to the capital, Baku, or other cities. Roadblocks kept them close to the front lines and prevented them from dispersing throughout the country.<sup>110</sup>
- b) Conditions of Life for Displaced: In September, USCR visited the area along the Iranian border and found that most of the displaced were not yet registered and had received little to no aid, lacking the most basic human necessities in terms of shelter, food, sanitation, medicine, and clothing. Lack of shelter became a particular problem with the onset of winter, and many were forced to live in makeshift dwellings made from sticks, parts of farm vehicles, and other scavenged materials. People fleeing in 1993 were generally in good health because their departure had been sudden rather than the product of a long period of attrition, but the poor state of cleanliness and sanitation in camps left many with diarrhea and other stomach problems. Assistance from NGOs such as the World Food Program and UNICEF proved inadequate; many refugees saw no aid deliveries whatsoever and were forced to rely on their own resources.<sup>111</sup>

### **1994 (Certainty: 5)**

Due to heavy fighting near Adgam and Mardakert, an additional 50,000 Azeris fled in April 1994.<sup>112</sup> A May 1994 cease-fire established a *de facto* partition of Nagorno-Karabakh, but occasional skirmishes continued.

### Confirming Evidence

- b) Conditions of Life for Displaced: USCR reported that though many found shelter in public buildings such as schools and dormitories, some internally displaced persons lived in tent camps, shelters dug out of the ground, and abandoned railway cars. In addition, because the question of Nagorno-Karabakh's sovereignty was never officially resolved, discussion of returning internally displaced persons to their places of residence remained at a standstill. In May 1994, Azerbaijan accused ethnic Armenian forces of launching a scorched-earth campaign and therefore preventing internally displaced Azeris from returning to their homes in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.117; see also Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2007, p.14.

<sup>110</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.118.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1995, p.126; Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2007, p.14-15.

<sup>113</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1995, p.126.

## 18. Bosnia, 1992 – 1995

**Overall Coding:** 3

**Primary Conflict Type:** Civil War

### *General Information and Overall Severity:*

From 1945-1991, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was made up of six republics: Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia), Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. Rising ethnic nationalism in the 1980s led to the break-up of the federation beginning in 1991 with the secession of Croatia and Slovenia. Bosnia – the most ethnically diverse of the republics, with a population composed of Serbs, Croats, and a plurality of Bosniaks (also known as Bosnian Muslims) – was soon torn over whether or not to secede as well. In October 1991 Bosnia's Muslim-dominated government declared the territory's sovereignty. A public referendum (Feb. 29-March 1 1992) and an official declaration of independence (March 3) soon followed. Many Bosnian Croats, however, wanted to join Croatia, while many Serbs preferred to set up a separate Serbian state rather than remain a minority in an independent Bosnia. In April 1992, therefore, and supported by the FRY and its Yugoslav National Army (YNA), Bosnian Serbs declared the creation of an independent Serb republic in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be known as Republika Srpska. Bosnian Croats soon declared their own republic with Croatian support.<sup>114</sup>

The next 3.5 years of war were characterized by extreme brutality, with forces from each ethnic group fighting each of the others and victimizing civilians in their efforts to gain territory for their own ethnic brethren. While all sides engaged in human rights violations and ethnic cleansing, Serb forces perpetrated the majority of these offenses, especially against Bosnian Muslims. Serb forces beat, captured and killed civilians, and destroyed many homes, especially in areas of eastern Bosnia adjacent to FRY territory that were to be part of Republika Srpska. Men were interned in camps where they were abused and murdered, and women and children were kept in unsanitary detention centers where they suffered from a lack of food and water and recurrent rapes. On a smaller scale, Bosniaks also created prison camps where they committed abuse, murder and rape.<sup>115</sup>

Following a July 1995 massacre by Serb forces of more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslims in the UN safe zone of Srebrenica, a NATO bombing campaign and an allied Croatian and Bosniak ground assault turned the tide of the war against the Serbs. In November, leaders of all three groups signed the Dayton Agreement ending the war. The agreement divided Bosnia into a Muslim-Croat federation and a separate Bosnian Serb entity, and NATO peacekeepers soon deployed to enforce it. Relatively small-scale new displacement continued into 1996-97, but fell below the threshold for continuation of a complex emergency.<sup>116</sup>

At the end of 1995, the UNHCR estimated that 1.3 million people were internally displaced and an additional 1.4 million were 'war affected.' Around 2.2 million were refugees in other

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<sup>114</sup> See International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, "The Conflicts," at <http://www.icty.org/sid/322>. See also Human Rights Watch 1993. Available at [http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Hsw-10.htm#P671\\_238252](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Hsw-10.htm#P671_238252).

<sup>115</sup> See, e.g., United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.114; United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.120; United States Committee for Refugees 1995, p.128; United States Committee for Refugees 1996, p.129.

<sup>116</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1997, p.170, 174; United States Committee for Refugees 1998, p.166.

regions.<sup>117</sup> Estimates of the death toll in Bosnia, however, have been fraught with controversy. Although conventional wisdom at the time estimated that Serb forces killed 200,000 – 250,000 Bosniaks, Bosnian officials intentionally inflated these numbers for political purposes.<sup>118</sup> Later, more reliable estimates placed the numbers considerably lower. A 2010 estimate collected for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) placed the total death toll from the war at 104,732, of which 42,106 are thought to have been civilians.<sup>119</sup> Another reputable 2007 estimate published by the Research and Documentation Center in Sarajevo (known as the Bosnian Book of the Dead) identified 39,684 civilian deaths due directly to military activity.<sup>120</sup> These figures, however, do not account for an unknown number of deaths among refugees that would not have occurred except for the war. Such deaths would be relevant as part of the complex emergency, but are not needed to determine that the war meets the designated thresholds.

### **Annual Data:**

#### **1992 (Certainty: 5)**

Beginning in April 1992, Bosnian Serb forces and Serb troops from the YNA launched large-scale attacks in eastern and northern Bosnia, killing and forcibly removing non-Serb civilians. The first several months were the worst of the war in terms of population displacement. According to the UNHCR, by mid-June Serb forces had taken control of two-thirds of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and already 1 million people had fled from their homes.<sup>121</sup> Also during 1992, the Bosnian government killed an unknown number of Serb civilians in the town of Gorazde and Croats forced Serbs from their homes in western Hercegovina and killed Muslims in Prozor.<sup>122</sup> By November the UNHCR estimated that over 1.8 million people had been displaced, of which some 810,000 remained in Bosnia and just over 1 million had fled to other republics or outside of the former Yugoslavia.<sup>123</sup>

It is difficult to arrive at a precise estimate of civilian deaths for 1992. The Bosnian government reported over the summer that 250,000 Bosnians were dead, but as noted above its estimates are unreliable because it inflated them for political purposes.<sup>124</sup> On the other hand, USCR reported on a number of specific incidents of large-scale massacres and various post-war reports prepared for the ICTY provide estimates of deaths in certain areas during the year. While not comprehensive, together the estimates from these sources alone clearly exceed the threshold for establishing the start of a complex emergency. According to USCR, Serb troops killed approximately 3,000 civilians in northern Bosnia in May and June, and some 200 Muslim civilian men near the town of Travnik in August.<sup>125</sup> Investigators for the ICTY estimated that conflict in the

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<sup>117</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1996, p.129.

<sup>118</sup> Seybolt 2013, p.13-14.

<sup>119</sup> Zwierzchowski and Tabeau 2010, p.14-16.

<sup>120</sup> Seybolt 2013, p.14.

<sup>121</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2006, p.16.

<sup>122</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.114-115.

<sup>123</sup> Tabeau and Bijak 2005, p.210; United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.115.

<sup>124</sup> Seybolt 2013, p.14. The USCR – citing the Bosnian government – suggested that over 100,000 people were killed and 60,000 people went missing during the year. Given the more recent estimates of deaths for the entire war cited above, these numbers are also certainly too high, though they may reflect some downward revision of the Bosnian government's public statements. See United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.114.

<sup>125</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.114.

autonomous Krajina region alone (which almost certainly overlaps with the above estimate, since the Krajina was located in northern Bosnia) claimed a minimum of 3000 and, more likely, about 6000 lives during 1992.<sup>126</sup> In addition, according to another ICTY report, an estimated 1399 civilians were killed and 5093 were wounded in the Siege of Sarajevo between 10 September 1992 and 10 August 1994, of whom 420 died and 1370 were wounded during 1992. This report was based primarily on a household survey conducted in Sarajevo from April to September 1994, and according to the authors it reflects a minimum credible estimate of deaths and wounded in the city during this time.<sup>127</sup>

### Confirming Evidence

*Government Inability/Unwillingness:* In addition to the fact that Bosnian government forces targeted non-Muslim civilians, relief organizations like the UNHCR were harassed and threatened. In the UN-led Sarajevo airlift, for example, an Italian cargo plane was shot down.<sup>128</sup>

### **1993 (Certainty: 5)**

In 1993, conflict escalated between Bosnian Croats and Muslims in central Bosnia, resulting in a new round of ethnic cleansing. Croat forces deliberately killed, raped, and imprisoned Muslims. In mid-July, they began forcing Muslims from western Herzegovina into Bosnian-government held territory, deporting some 20,000 by late August.<sup>129</sup>

Serb forces also continued to kill or remove non-Serbs in areas under their control. According to USCR, “in northwest Bosnia, Serb militias continued to intimidate, harass, and kill non-Serbs in an effort to force those who remained in the area to leave...In 1993, at least 30,000 persons fled from Bosnia into sector west of the UN Protected Areas in Croatia.”<sup>130</sup> Conditions were also bleak in the Eastern government-controlled enclaves, Sarajevo, and other isolated communities to which Serb forces hindered or denied outside access. The USCR described these areas as “becoming more and more like detention centers administered by the UN and assisted by UNHCR.”<sup>131</sup> Nevertheless, Bosnians isolated in Eastern communities in Serb-controlled regions sought to reach UN or government-controlled areas. According to USCR, early February alone saw some 7,000 people walk from such areas to the government-controlled town of Tuzla.<sup>132</sup>

According to USCR, by the end of 1993 over 2 million people were displaced by the war, with an estimated 1.3 million as IDPs and at least 800,000 having fled to other countries.<sup>133</sup> As above, accurate casualty numbers are unavailable. Investigators for the ICTY Prosecutor’s Office, however, estimated that 800 civilians were killed and 3259 injured in Sarajevo during the year.<sup>134</sup>

### Confirming Evidence

- a) *Government Inability/Unwillingness:* Aid workers and UN forces charged with assisting them continued to face harassment and sometimes-deadly attacks during the year, making travel and

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<sup>126</sup> Tabeau and Bijak 2005, p.198.

<sup>127</sup> Tabeau, Żółtkowski and Bijak 2002, p.74 & 95.

<sup>128</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1993, p.114-116.

<sup>129</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.122.

<sup>130</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.122-123.

<sup>131</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.124.

<sup>132</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.123.

<sup>133</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.120.

<sup>134</sup> Tabeau, Żółtkowski and Bijak 2002, p.74 & 95.

delivery of relief aid difficult.<sup>135</sup> Fighting between Croats and Muslims jeopardized humanitarian aid in Central Bosnia, and in the east Bosnian Serb forces repeatedly attacked UNHCR convoys and personnel throughout Serb-held areas.<sup>136</sup> The airlift of relief supplies into the capital of Sarajevo also came under fire.

- b) *Conditions of Life for the displaced:* In January, UNICEF reported that “more than one million children were in need of winter clothing, shoes, and blankets, and that in Sarajevo, outbreaks of typhoid, hepatitis, and diarrheal diseases were increasing.” Due to the large number of IDPs and the approaching winter, the World Health Organizations advised the UNHCR to give top priority to the delivery of sleeping bags, blankets and fuel of any kind.<sup>137</sup>

## 1994 (Certainty: 5)

In March the Bosnian Government and Bosnian Croats signed an agreement to reconcile their differences and end the fighting between them that had rocked central Bosnia for the previous year. This led to a significant decrease in human rights abuses and allowed for a major improvement in the delivery of humanitarian relief to central and southwestern Bosnia.<sup>138</sup>

At the same time, however, fighting between Bosnian Serbs and the joint Muslim-Croat forces persisted in causing new displacement. In early August, for example, approximately 30,000 people who had been sheltering in the Bihac enclave were displaced. Most fled to nearby areas where the political and military situation limited the delivery of emergency relief.<sup>139</sup>

In addition, Serb-led ethnic cleansing and attacks on humanitarian aid and UN-designated safe areas (including in Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Gorazde) continued to be serious problems.<sup>140</sup> In one widely criticized instance on February 5, for example, a mortar shell landed in Sarajevo’s central market place, killing 68 people and wounding 200.<sup>141</sup> Investigators for the ICTY Prosecutor’s Office estimated that a total of 179 civilians were killed and 461 were injured in the city by August 10.<sup>142</sup> In addition, Human Rights Watch reported that Serb forces expelled 6,000 people (almost all Muslims) from the Bijeljina region and another 4,600 non-Serbs from northwestern and north-central Bosnia between July 17 and October 12, 1994.<sup>143</sup> More broadly, rights abuses against non-Serbs continued to include forced labor, theft, beatings, and rapes.

### Confirming Evidence

*Government Inability/Unwillingness:* According to the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, despite the improvements in central Bosnia, “Bosnian Serb authorities continued to control all humanitarian access to Sarajevo (320,000 residents), Bihac (160,000 residents), and the eastern

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<sup>135</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.121. For example, three Italian aid workers were killed in central Bosnia in late May.

<sup>136</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.121-122.

<sup>137</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1994, p.120.

<sup>138</sup> Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 1994, p.43; Human Rights Watch 1995.

<sup>139</sup> Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 1994, p.43.

<sup>140</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1995, p.128-130.

<sup>141</sup> Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 1994, p.43. After this, a NATO threat to use airstrikes against Serb targets in the event of future heavy weapons attacks on the capital led to an increased flow of aid to the city.

<sup>142</sup> Tabeau, Żółtkowski and Bijak 2002, p.74 & 95.

<sup>143</sup> Human Rights Watch 1994b, p.7.

enclaves (120,000 residents),” and “chose to allow only minimal quantities of essential commodities...into the Muslim enclaves in their territory.”<sup>144</sup> In Sarajevo, the airport was closed due to intense attacks.

### **1995 (Certainty: 5)**

In mid-July, Serb forces attacked the UN designated safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepa, leading to the worst single atrocity of the war. Some 28,000 women and children who had been taking refuge in Srebrenica fled to nearby Potocari, while some 12,000 to 15,000 men and teenage boys tried to flee through the woods to Bosnian Government lines. These men and boys were subjected to ambushes, hunger, cold, and execution at the hands of Serb forces. An estimated 8,000 were killed or died trying to escape.<sup>145</sup>

Starting in late August, Bosnian government and Croat forces initiated a joint offensive directed against northwest and central Bosnia. This was accompanied by NATO airstrikes against Serb targets, and together these actions led to more new displacement. The International Committee of the Red Cross estimated that some 85,000-90,000 Serbs fled into the Prijedor and Banja Luka areas after September 13, and another 20,000 settled around Doboj.<sup>146</sup> At the end of the year, the UNHCR estimated that 1.3 million people remained internally displaced and an additional 1.4 million were “war affected.” Around 2.2 million were refugees in other regions.<sup>147</sup>

### **Confirming Evidence**

*Conditions of Life for the displaced:* Around half of the 323,000 displaced and war-affected in the Banja Luka region (who were mostly Serbs) were refugees or internally displaced people in need of fuel, shelter, food, clothing and shoes.<sup>148</sup> Meanwhile, in Gorazde, around 65,000 persons were surviving on limited rations and lived in abandoned houses, schools and government buildings. Serb authorities continued to deny access to relief agencies in various places. In both Bihac and the country’s eastern enclaves, lack of access for UNHCR convoys left residents without adequate food and medical supplies. In addition, thousands in Sarajevo residents suffered shortages of food, medicine, water and fuel when the UNHCR airlift was halted between April 8 and September 16 after a U.S. transport plane was hit by small arms fire.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 1994, p.43.

<sup>145</sup> Tabeau and Bijak 2005, p.198; United States Committee for Refugees 1996, p.130.

<sup>146</sup> Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance 1995, p.46.

<sup>147</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1996, p.129.

<sup>148</sup> United States Committee for Refugees 1996, p.131.

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