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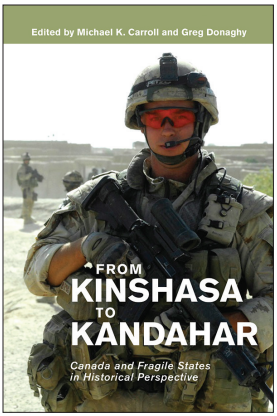

FROM KINSHASA TO KANDAHAR: Canada and Fragile States in Historical Perspective

Edited by Michael K. Carroll and Greg Donaghy

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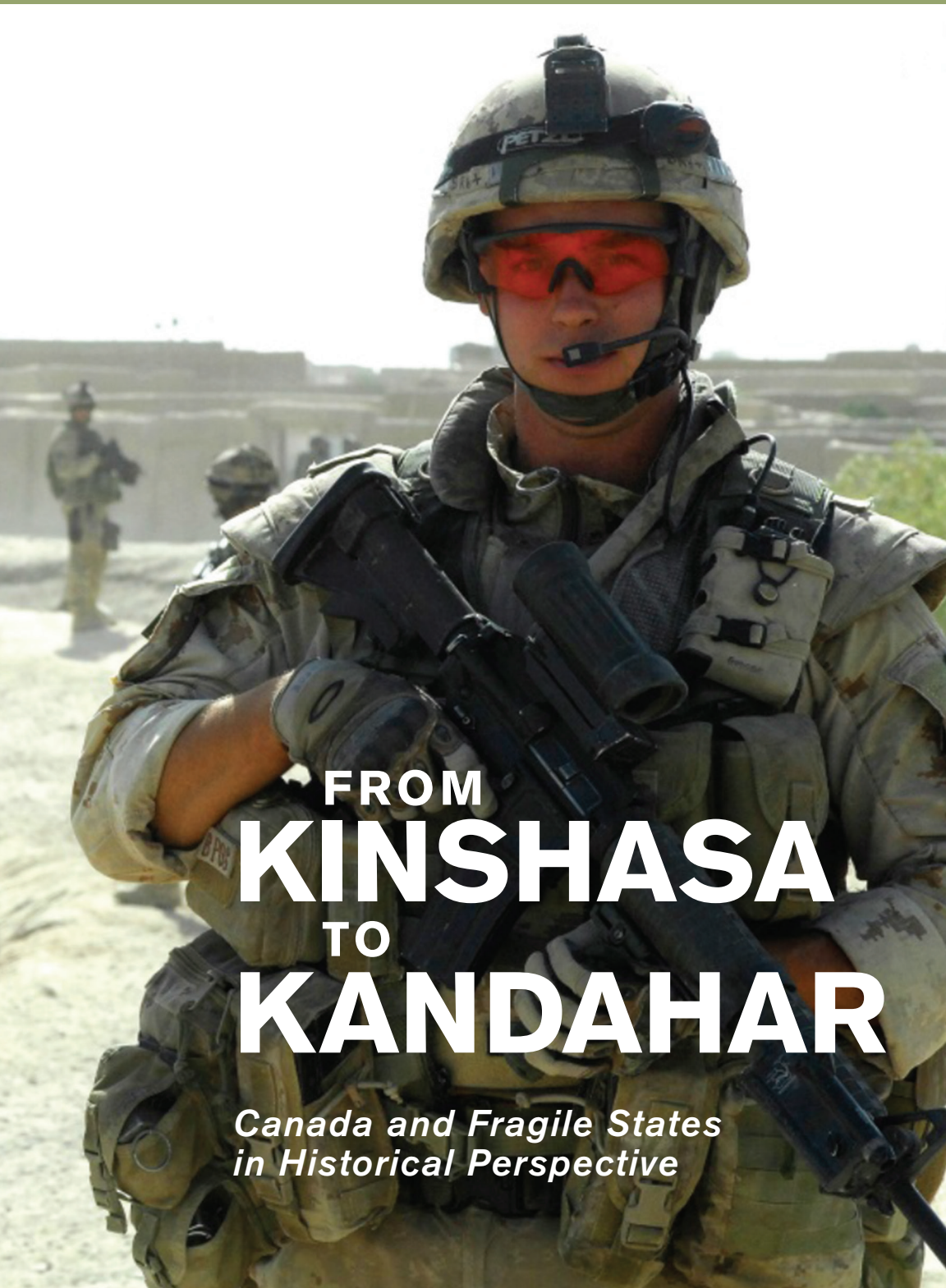

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Canada and Fragile States in Historical Perspective

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For our mentors and friends:

Robert Bothwell, John English, and Norman Hillmer

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List of Acronyms

AI	Amnesty International
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANC	Armée nationale congolaise (Congolese National Army)
ANP	Afghan National Police
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CCODP	Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
CF	Canadian Forces
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIIEID	Canadian International Institute for Extractive Industries and Development
CNG	Conseil National de Gouvernement (Haiti)
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
CUSO	Canadian University Service Overseas
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development
DND	Department of National Defence
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo

ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations)
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ETAN	East Timor Alert Network
EU	European Union
FFP	Fund for Peace
FMG	Federal Military Government (Nigeria)
FRAPH	Front pour l'Avancement et le Progrès Haitien
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFOR	NATO Implementation Force
IMOT	International Military Observer Team
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility (OECD)
JNA	Yugoslav National Army
KANUPP	Karachi Nuclear Power Plant
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
LDC	Least developed countries
MICIVIH	Mission Civile Internationale en Haïti (United Nations Civilian Mission in Haiti)
MIF	Multinational Interim Force
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MNC	Multinational corporation
MNF	Multinational force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDP	New Democratic Party
NGO	Non-governmental organization

NLC	National Labor Committee
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
OAS	Organization of American States
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONUC	Opération des Nations Unies au Congo
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team (Kandahar)
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RoCK	Representative of Canada in Kandahar
SCFAID	Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development
SCFAIT	Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade
START	Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNMIH	United Nations Mission in Haiti
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNMOGIP	United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNODOC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

Michael K. Carroll and Greg Donaghy

The world is a dangerous and fragile place. Nation states, the rock-solid foundation of the post-1945 international system, quake before surging Islamic fundamentalists in the Middle East and Asia, narco-terrorists in Latin America, and the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa. Of the world's seven billion people, almost a quarter live in "fragile states," where one-third survive on less than $1.25 per day and half the children die before the age of five.[1]

For decades, the Cold War confrontation between the US-led liberal democracies and the Communist Soviet Bloc obscured the precarious status of the world's weakest nations. Recruited by one side or the other, weak states, especially those that emerged in the Global South during the 1950s and 1960s from the rubble of European empire, were safely frozen into place by the international system's rigid, bipolar structure. Often buttressed by military advisors and offshore bases, or development specialists and agricultural advisors, corrupt presidents and rotten governments stayed afloat atop a vast pool of dollars and rubles.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the end of the Cold War began to reveal the extent of the rot. Though some countries successfully managed the transition from Cold War client to independent state, most did not, confronting the developed West with almost one hundred states, representing almost two billion people, that were "at risk" of imploding.[2]

As the likelihood of Cold War–style interstate conflict was replaced in the 1990s by fears over intrastate conflict in Eastern Europe and Africa, diplomats and policymakers the world over grappled with the implications for international security. Sexy systemic threats—climate change and drought, organized crime and terrorism, pandemic disease—drew lavish attention, undermining established notions of sovereignty.

Canada willingly joined in the search for expansive definitions of sovereignty. As early as September 1991, for instance, Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney called on states "to re-think the limits of national sovereignty in a world where problems respect no borders."[3] His Liberal successor, Jean Chrétien, picked up these themes. Chrétien's 1995 foreign policy white paper, *Canada and the World*, and his activist foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, championed a novel "human security" agenda that favoured the welfare and security of the individual over that of the state.[4]

The 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States by Islamic fundamentalists—hidden amid the ruins of the shattered Afghan state—drove home to the West the direct threat posed by distant fragile states. "The events of September 11, 2001, taught us," the White House declared in 2002, "that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states."[5] Canada learned this lesson too. Liberal prime minister Paul Martin signalled a shift in Canadian policy in his 2005 International Policy Statement. Acknowledging the dangers created by "weak, ineffectually governed states," he edged away from the humanitarian preoccupations associated with Axworthy's human security agenda and embraced a series of measures to enhance global security.[6] He backed the UN's emerging doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), explicitly aimed at preventing civilian casualties in failing states, and took steps to give Ottawa the capacity to respond quickly to international crises in a coordinated fashion. In 2005, the Department of Foreign Affairs created a Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START), committing $100 million annually to the Global Peace and Security Fund for the next five years. "The 'failed states' agenda," observed Erin Simpson of the Canadian International Council, "represents a return to a more traditional, state-centric view of security threats and their solutions."[7]

But state fragility is difficult to define. Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner, former US State Department officials who coined the term "failed states" in the early 1990s, imprecisely label as "failed" any state "utterly

incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community."[8] Others have tried to be more precise. Canadian aid officials, for instance, equate state fragility with "weak institutional capacity, poor governance, political instability, and ongoing violence or a legacy of past conflict."[9] The Fund for Peace's Fragile State Index, the most widely used research tool on weak states, is even more exact, employing twelve economic, political, military, and social indicators to assess national stability.[10] Among these definitions, some common themes emerge: sustained conflict, poor governance, widespread corruption, and poverty. In short, concluded Australian anti-slavery activist Nick Grono, "they all describe some type of significant state failure or dysfunction."[11]

Definitional problems arise almost immediately. Assessments of state fragility and failure are often in the eyes of the beholder, and are sometimes deployed for nefarious purposes. Tom Keating hints at this in the chapter that opens this book, pointing out how the emphasis on liberal democratic norms of state behaviour allows Western governments to regulate access to the international community and its resources. Jean Daudelin, in his chapter on fragility in the Americas, challenges the perception that Colombia is the most fragile state in the Americas, save Haiti. Similarly, Julian Schofield's essay on Pakistan questions the country's high ranking among at-risk states, insisting that it is neither "failed, fragile, nor weak." Rather, the label is used to mobilize public opinion in Canada behind Western anti-terrorist strategies in Afghanistan, while simultaneously encouraging policymakers to adopt inappropriate strategies for Pakistan. David Webster is even more explicit in tackling the rhetorical uses of "failed state" language, exploring how it was used for decades to delegitimize East Timor's demand for independence following the Indonesian invasion in 1975. He shows, too, how challenging that rhetoric made independence possible, and how just a shift from "failed" to "fragile" makes it possible to imagine new ways of engaging the world's weaker states.

Though problems of state fragility seem to loom especially large today, this collection reminds us that Canada's stake in fragile and failed states stretches back into the early post–Second World War era. As Keating demonstrates, the notion of state fragility was implicit in the military help that Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent's government dispatched to the shaky postwar states of Western Europe, which cowered before the Soviet Union's aggressive communism. It was implicit, too, in the

Commonwealth's Colombo Plan, conceived in 1950, to send financial and technical aid to uncertain postcolonial nations of South and Southeast Asia. "These new Governments are highly precarious," Foreign Minister Lester B. Pearson wrote a cabinet colleague in early 1951 to plead for help. "They need external financial assistance if they are to have a chance of making some improvement in the appallingly low standard of living of their people and so of sheltering them from the attractions of Communist propaganda. We must try, I believe, to strengthen the will and the capacity of these countries to assist in the struggle against Communist imperialism; and one of the very few ways we can do so is by showing a practical interest in their economic welfare."[12] Then, as now, Canadian policymakers recognized that Canada's security and its national interests were best served by a world order composed of stable and secure states.

For Canada, Keating continues, tackling fragile states in search of global order was usually a multilateral effort tied to NATO and its Anglo-American leadership, the Commonwealth, and the United Nations. This is a theme picked up and elaborated in several chapters. Alliances motivate Canadian intervention, provide the means to act, and ultimately limit and constrain Canadian action. Canada was rarely ready to confront the consequences of state fragility alone, a point that is made clear in Kevin Spooner's chapter on Canada's struggle to help Congolese leaders build a professional, non-political military in the midst of the civil war that tore apart their country in the early 1960s. Canadian diplomats and soldiers were certainly aware that strong governing institutions were key to state stability, but they repeatedly declined to act without the UN's multilateral blessing. "Canada may well have been witness, and even unwittingly contributed," Spooner grimly concludes, "to a critical moment when the seeds of a failing state were sown."

Alliances have similarly defined Canada's long engagement with the impoverished Caribbean nation of Haiti. Beset in equal measure by natural disasters and unnatural dictators, Haiti has lurched along from crisis to crisis for decades. Despite billions of dollars in aid, much of it from Canada, progress has been glacial. Yet, as Andrew Thompson points out, Canada persists. His chapter shows why: Though Canada's domestic stake in Haiti is small and the island poses no direct danger to Canada, the same cannot be said of the United States. The thought of an unsettled Haiti, driving boatloads of refugees to nearby Florida, is a genuine worry for

Washington. In Thompson's view, the ebb and flow of US-Haitian relations determines Canada's uneven commitment to the island's fate. Saving Haiti often takes a backseat to saving Washington.

Though national interest and alliances were doubtless foremost, they have not been the only influences on Canadian policy. The challenges of addressing state fragility after the terrorist attacks on the United States of 11 September 2001 renewed debate between realists and idealists over why and when to intervene. Keating's overview dissects this recent discussion, while historian Stephanie Bangarth locates the same tensions in Canada's response to the Nigerian civil war of the late 1960s. The war between the Federal Military Government and the breakaway state of Biafra pitted Canadian humanitarians against the early realist inclinations of their prime minister, Pierre Trudeau. Humanitarian members of Parliament David MacDonald and Andrew Brewin campaigned hard for direct aid to civilians in Biafra, but were denied by Trudeau, who feared that support for a secessionist state might establish a useful precedent for Quebec separatists. The uneasy compromises that eventually permitted a trickle of NGO aid to flow into Biafra in 1970 highlight the range and mix of motives driving Canadians toward intervention.

Fragile states are not for the fainthearted. Keating's opening catalogue of Canadian engagement records few victories. Accounts of Canadian efforts in the Congo, Haiti, and Pakistan emphasize the constraints on success. Yet, there are grounds for a careful optimism, especially when will and resources are mobilized. Duane Bratt's account of Canada's engagement in Bosnia, alongside its UN and NATO partners, is clear: though far from perfect, forceful and sustained international intervention turned a "failed state into a functioning state," and helped reestablish stability in the Balkans. Jean Daudelin's rigorous examination of the data on Canadian aid to fragile states in the Americas strikes a similar, balanced note: too much aid to Haiti, not enough help in Central America, just right across the Caribbean, where Canada has historically been active. Practice and commitment make perfect.

Even in Afghanistan, perhaps the most complex and difficult environment addressed in this collection, progress is still possible, concludes Stephen Saideman. Backed by real force and a strong political commitment, Canada made a difference in rural Kandahar, though the cost was high and the effect fleeting. For Saideman, the costly commitment and the

lessons hard-learned presage other, better-managed, more realistic campaigns to come.

Africanist Hevina Dashwood is more hopeful still, as she traces the growing international willingness to tackle some of the underlying challenges that give rise to fragile states and weak governments. Combining natural resource riches—oil, gas, and minerals—and corporate greed often produces the kind of systemic corruption and factional violence that can compromise a weak state. But this is changing. Dashwood's chapter examines the successful global campaign by liberal states, the UN and its many civil society backers, and multinational corporate stakeholders to create guidelines to reinforce the state's capacity to govern. Recent Canadian governments, both Liberal and Conservative, have championed notions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), voluntary commitments to act in "an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner," as a key part of the resolution of state fragility.

The lessons of these chapters on the history of Canada and fragile states are modest but worth retaining. First, Canadian foreign policy, this collection shouts, "does" state fragility, having a long record of recurring engagements in fragile states. Ottawa's efforts were not always perfect and did not always spring from the purest of motives. Indeed, Canadians were rarely the disinterested participants that they—and their governments—imagined themselves to be. Rather, as this volume shows time and again, Canada's policies have been driven by a complex range of motives: humanitarian, electoral and geopolitical, national security, and economic. Policymakers who ignored these broad motivations were likely to find themselves in real trouble, both at home with voters and in the field abroad.

Second, Canada mattered. *Kinshasa to Kandahar* sometimes makes for grim and discouraging reading. Despite fifty years of effort, the landscape of fragility seems sadly familiar: Congo, Haiti, Afghanistan. Yet this collection reminds readers that Canada has made a difference, however incremental and imperfect. And over time, Canada, like the UN and NATO, has learned to address state fragility, developing better tools to reinforce weak states and better techniques for intervening.

Finally, this volume underlines the enduring challenge of getting Canadian engagement right, striking a balance between competing interests, and finding the will to support sustainable commitments. Policymaker Darren Brunk's concluding reflections address this point forcefully,

asking: when are Canada's efforts "good enough"? It's a tough question, one which demands that government and all sectors of civil society interrogate frankly the motives prompting and constraining engagement with fragile states, as well as the uncertain prospects for success.

This discussion is already under way. Perhaps, as former Supreme Court justice Louise Arbour has argued recently, there are no obvious answers to the problems of state fragility. After working on improving global governance, R2P, and international criminal justice issues since the mid-1990s, she has become increasingly skeptical of Western intervention, wondering if the simultaneous pursuit of peace, justice, and human rights might be impossible. "What I'm trying to promote," she explains, "is the idea of a kind of political empathy as a strategic advantage … a blueprint for understanding before you act, as opposed to rushing into things."[13] Former Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy, who champions intervening in fragile states to protect the vulnerable, sharply dismisses this view as "ill-founded, based on faulty information and questionable assessments."[14] R2P and international criminal law, he insists, remain part of a broader process of developing enforceable global norms of behaviour, reinforcing the rule of law and promoting a humane world.

We hope this book represents a contribution to this vital national discussion.

Notes

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6 Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World—Diplomacy*, 2005, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/FR4-4-2005E.pdf (accessed July 10, 2014).

7 Erin Simpson, "Who Failed the World's 'Failed States'?," *Peace Magazine* (Apr–June 2007): 6, http://peacemagazine.org/archive/v23n2p06.htm (accessed 8 July 2014).

8 Gerald B. Helman and Steven R. Ratner, "Saving Failed States," *Foreign Policy* 89 (Winter 1992–93): 3.

9 Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, "CIDA's Strategic Overview," http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/NAT-911133132-NK9 (accessed 11 July 2014).

10 While perhaps the most widely recognized, the Fund for Peace (FFP) is by no means the only index available for the ranking of fragile states. The Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) program, headed by David Carment at Carleton University in Ottawa, is excellent, and is designed to assist the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in prioritizing Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA).

11 Nick Grono, "Fragile States, Searching for Effective Approaches and the Right Mix of Instruments," 29 January 2007, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/speeches/2007/grono-fragile-states-searching-for-effective-approaches-and-the-right-mix-of-instruments.aspx (accessed 14 June 2014).

12 Secretary of State for External Affairs to Minister of Finance, 17 January 1951, reprinted in Greg Donaghy, ed., *Documents on Canadian External Relations, Volume 17: 1951* (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing, 1996), 1042.

13 Doug Saunders, "Why Louise Arbour is thinking twice," *Globe and Mail*, 28 March 2015, online edition (accessed 18 June 2015). See also Lysiane Gagnon, "The suspension of intervention," *Globe and Mail*, 8 April 2015, online edition (accessed 18 June 2015).

14 Lloyd Axworthy, "Louise Arbour has it wrong," *Globe and Mail*, 13 April 2015, online edition (accessed 18 June 2015).