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Non-State Challenges in a Re-Ordered World

The Jackals of Westphalia

Edited by Stefano Ruzza, Anja P. Jakobi and Charles Geisler

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6 The logic and consequences of state strategies towards violent non-state actors

Sarah Zukerman Daly

Introduction

Across the world, practitioners and scholars seek to understand how to build effective state administration in regions long under illicit armed group control: in particular, a critical question of importance is why some regions become pacified successfully, brought into the democratic rule of law and legal economy, whereas others continue to host violent non-state actors and produce insecurity? Many states in the world are 'incomplete' (O'Donnell, 1993; Risse, 2011); their monopoly over the legitimate means of force does not extend to their borders. Instead, control over coercion is fragmented, resting both with the state and with non-state actors.

Political science offers a robust literature on initial state formation (Migdal, 2001; Tilly, 1990) and on the development of shadow, 'states within states' (Clunan and Trinkunas, 2010; Davis and Pereira, 2003; Kingston and Spears, 2004; Skaperdas, 2002; Slater, 2010). Underdeveloped is a literature on the *re*capture of state sovereignty: how states regain legitimate, military, social, institutional, and political control over territories long under illegal armed group governance, territories that often were never integrated into the states' structures or which were permitted, in collusion with the state, to be ruled by vigilantes, private security, or paramilitaries (Driscoll, 2012; Staniland, 2012a). And how states consolidate their rule in the modern era of international human rights and transparency in which corrupt deal-making and war-waging, characteristic of the European state-building process, prove less acceptable (Andreas, 2013).

Charles Tilly's story of nation-states being built by war reaches its limits at the frontiers of the contemporary developed world (Tilly, 1990). In developing countries, as Herbst (2000) demonstrates, dispersed populations, changing international norms, and the absence of 'highly disruptive forces' generated enduring, weaker states. The apparent lack of inter-state war (Goldstein, 2011), Migdal (2001) concludes, has generated an equilibrium wherein the state does not challenge the prerogatives of its 'strongmen' and the 'strongmen' do not challenge the state.

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Thus, models of state-building lead us to the present situation of many states in which social control is often divided and in the hands of organized crime, warlords, guerrillas, militias, and other armed non-state actors. These models provide few means by which the states can strengthen absent a further, structural shock (war, economic depression, or massive shifts in political geography) that enables the states to challenge the non-state armed actors within their borders (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Herbst, 2000).

At yet, states do clearly shift strategies towards non-state actors and seek to state-build absent such shocks. Latin America is currently witnessing a strong push towards state-building. Across the region, the means of force and receptacles of governance have rested with militias, guerrillas, self-defence forces, and criminal gangs in selected sub-regions. In Peru, the phenomenon of civilian self-defence committees fragmented the state's monopoly of the use of legitimate force (Fumerton, 2000). By the early 1990s these units had extended to almost all the rural zones with *senderista* (Shining Path) presence (Basombrío, 1999). In Guatemala, the provision of security and governance lay in the hands of rebel organizations and civil defence patrols (Bateson, 2013). In Colombia, in 2000, roughly 200 municipalities had never had a police force; instead, guerrillas and militias

> were everything. They were the law, they imposed the rules regulating daily life, they resolved everything in these municipalities from marital problems to the cantina's operating hours … everything. They were the authority and were just accepted.[1]

The challenge of fragmentation of state power remains pronounced in Latin America today where, in Brazil, trafficking and paramilitary organizations operate a parallel state in the favelas (Arias, 2006; Lessing, 2012); in Mexico, large swaths of territory are controlled by cartels (Chapter 7 by Davis and Ruiz de Teresa); and in Jamaica, gangs enjoy impunity and exercise extensive influence over parts of Kingston (Arias, 2010). Across the region, states negotiate pacts and launch military operations to regain sovereignty over territories and functions historically out of the reach of their governments or voluntarily surrendered to these non-state actors to facilitate rule. These state-building projects include the National Consolidation Plan in Colombia,[2] the Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora (UPP) in Brazil,[3] a negotiated truce and 'Municipalities Free from Violence' programme in El Salvador (Savenije and van der Borgh, 2014), and a war on the drug cartels[4] and initiatives such as Todos Somos Juárez in Mexico. These projects aim, to varying degrees, to deactivate armed groups, consolidate institutional presence, and bring security, social services, and development to regions long under non-state actor rule. The ability of these efforts to sustainably dismantle armed groups so they do not reconstitute themselves and to establish a consolidated presence in these areas is yet unknown. Moreover, the question of why states vary in their strategies remains underexplored and undertheorized.

When is the state likely to outsource state functions to these proxy forces and allow shared sovereignty versus seeking to enhance its monopoly over violence (Carey *et al.*, 2013; Kalyvas, 2006)? Conditional on opting to state-build, states seek to extend their reach through at least two means: they dismantle the non-state violent actors through military offensives and then fill the resulting power vacuums through the deployment of security forces and government institutions. Alternatively, they sign pacts with these actors and potentially seek to co-opt them over time, bringing their territories and populations under the control of the state. These two means of exerting and consolidating authority represent alternative forms of statebuilding prevalent in many incomplete states around the world.[5] Pacts may include peace agreements, but also informal or tacit accords. For example, the Colombian government collaborated with the Cali cartel to bring down Escobar's Medellín criminal organization. In El Salvador, the government negotiated a truce between the two largest gangs – the Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18. In Mexico, the PRI had an implicit agreement of non-confrontation in exchange for non-violence while Calderón's PAN reneged on this pact and confronted the cartels. In Brazil, the state has oftentimes colluded with non-state actors, including traffickers, and now, at times, seeks to combat them.

State treatment of the same non-state actors often varies across time and varies across organizations. And administrations diverge in their desire to state-build versus encourage state fragmentation. Why and when do governments choose collaboration with versus confrontation of violent non-state actors in their state-building efforts, and how does variation in these strategies affect patterns of violence, democratic politics, and governance? What explains the different types of relationships that emerge between the state and the violent non-state actors within its borders? What are the implications of these divergent strategies for state-building outcomes? When do pacts pay off? When is military confrontation aimed at military defeat more effective?

This chapter seeks to provide preliminary insights into these questions. It proposes a series of intuitions to account for states' decisions to confront and fight versus collaborate and sign pacts with violent, non-state actors. I draw from scholarship on bargaining, rational war, peace-building, and electoral politics to assess the extent to which the arguments advanced in the literature may implicitly explain the variation. The chapter concludes by exploring the implications of divergent government strategies towards illicit non-state actors for state consolidation and governance.

The logic of state strategies

The literature on intra-state conflict proposes that, as the costs of confrontation rise, settlements become more likely. Pacts become especially likely when the state and violent non-state actors find themselves trapped in a mutually hurting stalemate; the costs of confrontation are high and the likelihood of prevailing militarily declines (Walter, 2002). This scholarship focuses

principally on the costs of war. The literature on state capacity similarly proposes that states opt for pacts and do not 'complete' their statehood because they lack the capacity to do so. Specifically, states prove unable to recover a monopoly over the means of force and their territories and to advance along the natural progression towards increased state capacity because of poverty, a weak military, difficult national topography, dispersed populations, and lack of infrastructure (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Herbst, 2000). Establishing and maintaining political order is costly. Outsourcing governance tasks to non-state actors may provide a cost-effective way to construct order.

However, the costs of pacts may also be high and may change over time. When the state implements non-confrontation agreements with illegal non-state actors, it freezes a status quo, which is often expensive in terms of corruption, institutionalized levels of violence, and governability. These pacts may involve a division of territory and afford non-state actors partial sovereignty over spheres of the country's territory, sectors of its economy or functions of its security apparatus. The state may limit its revenue streams by reducing the territory and populations subject to its taxation. While the state may opt for a pact when the costs of 'war' or combating the organizations prove high, we can also imagine that when the costs of a pact escalate, the state will shift to confrontation. Tacit pacts or 'peace accords' with illicit non-state actors may be costly for external reasons; insecurity, corruption, and incomplete control may sacrifice state legitimacy and international reputability and produce perceptions of an unfavourable investment climate. If the extent to which a state values international standing or seeks external investment changes, we may anticipate a shift in the state's strategy towards non-state actors. Similarly, domestic factors such as democratization and shifting distribution of power may drive changes in the state's strategies.

Thus, as a general point, we may anticipate that states will change strategies depending on the costs and benefits of different policies at different points in time. The question becomes, what specifically conditions the benefits and drawbacks of confrontation versus collaboration?

Relative capabilities

One potential determinant of variation in state strategies towards non-state actors is the balance of power and shifts in the distribution of power. The inter-state war literature proposes that conflict becomes likely when changes occur in the division of relative capabilities (Werner, 1999).[6] Fearon and Laitin (2003) perceive relative strength between the state and non-state actors and a lack of state capacity to drive outcomes. If prospects for victory improve, for example, if the government receives an influx of military or counter-narcotics aid, the state may be emboldened to confront its non-state actors. Alternatively, if the non-state actor weakens because of infighting, falling profits, or rising opportunity costs to participation in illicit activities, the state may take advantage to deploy its troops and offensively reclaim the territories under

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these non-state actors' control. For example, as the non-local paramilitary Bloque Catatumbo in Norte de Santander in Colombia, dissolved, its pact with the state broke down. The state shifted from a strategy of collaboration – a peace bargain – to one of confrontation. It activated the 30th Brigade in Cúcuta, assigned the 15th Mobile Brigade to the region, and established a series of new National Police stations in an effort to confront the ex-paramilitary structure and fill the vacuum left by its disarticulation.[7]

In contrast, in Medellín, the state confronted a highly local paramilitary structure, the Bloque Cacique Nutibara (BCN). This structure was able to remain intact and sustain its relative power after negotiating the peace pact and thus the local government under Mayor Sergio Fajardo adopted a strategy of collaboration with the BCN from 2003 to 2007 as opposed to demanding a full dismantlement of the organization and its criminal and governing functions.[8] It allowed the paramilitary structure to continue narcotrafficking and controlling its territories and, in exchange, the ex-BCN structure promised to keep levels of violence to a minimum. As a result, the BCN persisted for several years as a quasi-state with 'silent guns'. Homicide rates in Medellín declined from 184 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2002 to 23.9 in 2007 (Palou, 2009). According to a Medellín ombudsman, the ex-combatants 'radically changed their means of operating and their manner of being. Now they do not use direct violence, do not displace. They use latent power'.[9] Nonetheless, the BCN retained the latent coercive capacity from which it could easily remobilize (Daly, 2014). Shifts in relative power seemingly determined the state's varying strategies towards these non-state actors.

Indeed, in Medellín, as the mechanisms that sustained the BCN's organizational collective action became subject to decay over time,[10] the Medellín government under mayor Alonso Salazar's administration gradually increased its levels of contestation, enhancing its presence in the territories traditionally controlled by illegal actors.[11] Evidence of the organizational decay emerges when one compares the responses to two government actions: (1) the issuing of an arrest warrant for Bloque Cacique Nutibara commander 'Don Berna' in 2005 for the murder of Congressman Benitez; and (2) the extradition of 'Don Berna' to the USA in 2008 on drug trafficking charges. In response to the former event, the ex-Cacique combatants paralyzed Medellín for a day by shutting down all buses and public transportation in the entire Metropolitan area in protest. In response to the latter event, there was no disturbance or protest of any kind by the former Cacique members. After several years of the state's co-opting strategy, many of the Cacique fighters had been brought into 'legality' and its command and control had been damaged (Palou, 2009). Given this weakened organizational capacity,[12] the local government shifted strategies. As a result, the government's sovereignty became no longer restricted to a small radius in the centre of Medellín; rather, by co-opting the BCN units, its reach extended into the city's marginal neighbourhoods and into the 30 municipalities to the east of Medellín. There, it constructed a slew of new libraries, metro-cables, parks, schools, and urban and rural development projects.

One challenge with the distribution of power logic is that it adopts the often empirically erroneous assumption of a singular non-state actor and examines dyadic relations between a state and a singular rebel group. In contrast with this theoretical set-up, most states host a multitude of non-state actors, complicating both the stability of the balance of power and ability of the actors involved to themselves accurately calculate changes in that balance of power (a necessary condition for effective bargaining and pact-making) (Daly, 2014). Multi-party conflicts also generate opportunities for alliances in response to power shifts. The state's relationships with different non-state actors are interdependent and an enemy of an enemy may become a friend. The presence of multiple non-state actors generates shifting alliances and coalitions to balance against different armed organizations and bandwagon with others (Christia, 2012). It brings the state together, perhaps only temporarily, with its bitter adversaries in common cause. The state often does not have the manpower or resources to fight or state-build on all fronts at the same time.[13] These allies at times explicitly help the state fight its wars or at other times merely keep the territory under their control quiet so that the state can focus its fight on the source of greatest opposition.[14]

We may also anticipate a greater number of non-state actors to be associated with greater variability in state-building strategies.[15] We observe elements of this dynamic at play in Colombia where the government opted to collaborate with the Cali cartel and the PEPES organization to combat Escobar's cartel (Lessing, 2012). Similarly, the Colombian paramilitaries sold the legitimacy of their brand as the lesser of two evils compared with the formidable foe of the left-wing, revolutionary guerrillas who sought a complete re-configuration of power. The paramilitaries were more aligned with the state than were the guerrillas, and were fighting the same enemy as the state. This did not mean that they sought the same goals as the state, but the government allied with narco-paramilitaries to fight the guerrillas. As these alliances succeeded at eroding the power of Escobar and the guerrillas respectively, the government shifted strategies from collaboration to confrontation.

Commitment problems

Related to the shifting power argument is one centred on credible commitments (Powell, 2012). Walter (2002) argues that fear of future defection and exploitation renders pacts elusive. The government and non-state actors may not trust each other to comply with the terms of the agreement (Svensson, 2007). Fear and insecurity dominate their decision-making and thus, absent sufficient arrangements to ensure compliance following a pact, non-state actors will be wary of entering into collaborative arrangements. Even when the government and non-state forces can effectively bargain and agree to a truce, the truce will not be implemented unless, for example, an external, third party provides a guarantee. Third party enforcers – peacekeepers,

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international interventions, and verification missions – ensure that non-state group members will be protected, violations detected, and promises kept (Doyle and Sambanis, 2000; Fortna, 2004). Several alternative treaty terms provide credible commitments between the state and non-state factions. These include political power-sharing, security sector reform and integration, and elections (Lijphart, 1977; Matanock, 2014; Toft, 2010). Therefore, pacts may prove more likely when they include these terms.

Of course, the pacts do not require disarmament and thus may not shift power, but may instead maintain the balance. Many pacts between the state and violent non-state actors do not demand that these non-state actors relinquish their arms, but merely that they resist using them; these pacts are ceasefires or truces. Leaders buy social stability in exchange for a hands-off policy. The government does not interrupt the non-state actor's prerogatives – such as criminality or regional governance – if that actor does not interrupt the state's imperatives – a need to reduce violence levels. Even without disarmament, a variant of the credible commitment logic may operate.

In Mexico, for example, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) set up a figurative prisoner's dilemma, rendering cooperation possible. The PRI's seemingly indefinite time in power extended the shadow of the future and created a situation in which the PRI and cartels interacted repeatedly with expectations that future interactions were likely enough for the threat of retaliation to deter cheating. Mechanisms of conditional retaliation such as tit-for-tat sustained cooperation, and longstanding interactions generated a regime to monitor defections (Fearon, 1998). Then, when the PRI lost control and ceded the reins of government to the National Action Party (PAN), the rules of the game were destabilized, the long-term expectations turned upside down, the shadow of the future shortened, trust between state and non-state actors eroded, and, thus, the bargains obsolete. The non-state groups began to engage in violence again (Rios Contreras, 2012).

Domestic politics

The discussion thus far has tended to assume that a lack of state-building and reclaiming state functions and territories back from non-state actors results from a lack of capacity or relative power. A recent, exciting literature argues instead that the lack of a state's monopoly over violence may constitute an equilibrium and one that serves the interests of specific stakeholders that sustain the equilibrium. For example, Carey et al. (2013) suggest that collaboration with militias is often a cost-effective force multiplication measure for incumbents and a strategy to avoid being held accountable for violence. Kalyvas (2006) shows how outsourcing to militia proves a rational means to govern and control populations if states lack sufficient capacity to deploy forces and institutions everywhere. Acemoglu et al. (2013) illustrate how state and non-state armed actors interact symbiotically for electoral purposes. Hidalgo and Lessing (2014) demonstrate similar dynamics in the Brazilian

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case; Walston (1988) in the Italian case; Staniland (2012b) in South Asian countries; Driscoll (2012) in Central Asia; and Boone (2012) in Africa. As Acemoglu et al. (2013) observe, the existence of tribal areas in Waziristan does not indicate the absence of the state, but rather the tribal areas are part of the state. In other words, the states choose to govern through these proxy forces or tolerate shared sovereignty versus challenging the non-state actors not because they have no choice, but because they *do* have a choice and because having incomplete states suits their interests. This observation calls for a disaggregated view of the state and for examining the costs and benefits of different strategies for incumbents and opposition players rather than for the state as a whole.

The Mexican experience suggests the importance of domestic politics, specifically democratization and elections, in determining state strategies. Trejo and Ley (2014) develop a model in which, under authoritarian governance, the state allows non-state specialists in violence to regulate, tax, and protect the criminal underworld in exchange for their political loyalty. Democratization undermines the stability of the pacts and informal networks of protection for illegal markets and introduces uncertainty into the criminal underworld. The result of the uncertainty is greater conflict with the state as the criminal druglords develop their own private armies and defend themselves against threats from newly elected governments and from rival criminal groups. Hegre et al. (2001) similarly suggest a relationship between semi-authoritarian regimes and new democracies and confrontation of non-state actors and large-scale political violence.

In addition to changes in regime type driving shifts in state strategies as relationships are upended and the providers of security change, we can imagine that incumbents choose the state-building strategy that will serve to limit challengers and keep them in power. If a policy – collaboration or confrontation – is perceived to be ineffective, the electorate may engage in retrospective voting, voting out the incumbent and voting in a new strategy. Thus, we might be most likely to observe shifts in state strategies in the aftermath of elections. Experts argued that Mexico's strategy of waging war on the traffickers likely shifted to a policy of greater collaboration between state and non-state actors as the public's tolerance for confrontation waned and it cast its votes against this state-building strategy, endorsing the PRI opposition – Enrique Peña Nieto. Similarly, Santos' negotiations with the FARC in Colombia served as an effective campaign strategy as the public began to favour peace over Uribe's policy of confrontation.

It is not only the domestic considerations of the electorates, civil society, incumbent resources, and political capital that dictate state strategies. Other third parties and international actors may play roles. States may choose their state-building strategies to appease public opinion and accord with the preferences of their international donors. For example, in Colombia, President Uribe negotiated a pact with the paramilitaries, but within a year, when a hurricane of criticism from civil society, the political opposition, and international

governmental organizations hit, threatening to derail the pact, his government reneged on elements of its promises to the self-defence militias (Daly, 2014). States are also likely to be influenced by external state demands and pressures from international civil society and the international business community.

Nature of the non-state organization

The analysis has black-boxed the non-state actor, but of course it matters who those actors are, their political identities. Not all non-state armed groups are created equal. Some of them emerge in collaboration with the state and some in opposition to it. The vast majority of academic literature on conflict and state-building has focused on anti-state groups. However, a multitude of actors arise in incomplete states. These include the well-studied 'ideological' rebel groups aimed at state takeover and secession, but also destabilizing the peace and controlling means of coercion are militias, paramilitaries, vigilantes, irregular forces, self-defence groups, death squads, private security units, and criminal organizations (Avant, 2005). While rebel groups pose obstacles to states' hegemonic control over the means of coercion, the Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18 organizations in Central America have 30–50,000 weapons and sponsor killing sprees surpassing those experienced during the civil war. Similarly, the BACRIM currently pose some of the gravest security threats to Colombia. In parts of Central America and the Caribbean, criminal organizations and militias surpass the state in coercive and financial strength. They play a greater role in governance, providing social services, infiltrating existing parties, founding their own parties, and controlling diverse sectors of both the illicit and the licit economies, pervading them with their laundered supra-profits.

As we have seen in many Latin American countries, some non-state armed groups emerge in collusion with the state and, in several cases, under heavy protection by it. Vigilantes, private security companies, and paramilitaries not only appear where the state is absent, but also where there is a heavy presence of the state, and it and its institutions deliberately decide to surrender the monopoly over the legitimate use of force. The state may not be able to be separated empirically from non-state actors. Non-state actors may answer to state entities (as in the case of death squads). They may aim to corrupt states, blurring lines between the two. For example, how can we think of an agreement between the state and autonomous paramilitary groups when the paramilitaries came to control 35 per cent of Congress? National governments may also diverge in policy from regional governments.

There may exist path dependency in the relationships, with groups born in collusion with the state maintaining a collaborative relationship whereas those born in conflict with the state elicit a combative reaction by the state. Explicitly anti-state groups may diverge from pro-state or state-neutral organizations. In particular, we should expect pacts with rebel groups to be more difficult to broker than those negotiated with pro-government factions, as

mistrust between the state and this sub-set of non-state actors is more pro-
nounced. Rebel groups also may be more likely to receive structured peace
processes and robust terms, which facilitate their transition, while 'pro-state'
groups are often more informally disbanded and criminal groups usually
receive only tacit or secretive pacts (Fearon, 1998). At the same time, the
binary classifications – political versus criminal groups; investors versus con-
sumers; aggrieved versus greedy – may have more aptly applied before the end
of the Cold War when rebel groups possessed more robust ideological plat-
forms (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Weinstein, 2007). These categories may be
arbitrary in the post-Cold War environment. Nonetheless, we can potentially
divide groups along several dimensions that may matter for state strategies:
(1) anti-state versus state-neutral or pro-state groups; and (2) ideological
versus criminal actors. These categories are not static; the political identities of
the groups may change in response to the state strategies and may depend on the
identities of the political leaders in power and their ideological sympathies.
The identities of the groups are created, reproduced, and transformed by the
relation with the state, that is, the type of strategies that the state pursues.

In addition to the non-state actors' political identities and origins, other
aspects of their character may matter for states' strategies, specifically, their
embeddedness in the civilian population, their ability to provide governance
functions effectively, their own strategy vis-à-vis the state: fight or ally, and
their projected trajectories over time.

Implications of different state-building strategies

What are the implications of the divergent paths to state consolidation – col-
laboration versus confrontation? On the one hand, confrontation may yield
more sustainable results. Military victories are found to yield more stable
peace than negotiated settlements or ceasefires (Fortna, 2004). That peace is
more stable after decisive military victories than after wars that end in a tie, is
perhaps the most consistent finding of the literature on the durability of peace
after both civil and inter-state conflicts (Fortna, 2004; Licklider, 1995; Toft,
2010). Indecisive military outcomes leave all sides capable of resuming the
fight, and no-one fully satisfied with the terms of the peace. Wars that end in
a draw also leave greater uncertainty about who would win another round of
fighting (Fearon, 1995). Thus, we can imagine that effective confrontation is a
more sustainable and effective means of state-building.

However, there are two caveats. One, military victory is much more difficult
in intra-state wars. Even when groups are 'defeated', they usually continue to
control regions of the country. For example, following Guzmán's capture,
Sendero Luminoso was seen as 'defeated'. And yet, a faction still poses
security challenges to the Peruvian state and continues to exercise influence in
the Alto Huallaga Valley. Two, military victory is insufficient for state-build-
ing. If confrontation works, disarticulating the non-state actor, the state has
only generated a power vacuum, but has not consolidated the state. Unless

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the state immediately brings the full force of the government into the territories, security forces, but also social development programmes, other actors will quickly fill the vacuum, reproducing the challenge to the state.

On the other hand, collaboration has its own set of negative and positive implications. Pacts come under many names both positive and negative: collaboration, co-optation, state-building, integration, consolidation or corruption, collusion, and 'dealing with the devil'. Accordingly, pacts are often clandestine, tacit, and informal. If we study observed pacts, we are likely to be studying pacts that have been revealed and brought to public attention, an outcome likely to suffer selection bias.

Pacts enable incomplete states to work through already established vehicles of governance in regions out of their reach. No power vacuums are created and, by using the non-state actor, the government may rule through this proxy and gain access to the population and territories under the non-state group's control without having to deploy state institutions. In other words, it is cost-effective; it outsources governance in the medium term while it works on building up its own institutions in the region, something that cannot occur overnight. It also takes advantage of a potentially locally accepted or embedded governance apparatus while state institutions may be viewed with suspicion or opposition.

However, there exist several limitations of a state strategy of collaboration and pact-making. The government risks legitimizing and institutionalizing an illegal armed actor, granting it immunity, and freezing a status quo of split sovereignty if co-optation of the actor fails over time. Enabling the non-state group to retain control over its territory also may preserve its capacity for organized collective action and thus its ability to return to threatening the state in the future. Illegal, armed non-state forces are not necessarily democratic, transparent governance structure and, therefore, enabling them to continue to operate and exercise influence over their fiefdoms, may have additional detrimental effects on democratization and governance outcomes. To the extent that collaboration is really corruption, these pacts may constitute deals 'with the devil', exposing the state to degradation and perversion times (Archibold, 2012).

Co-optation of armed groups may enhance statehood, but in the process, risks generating narco, mafia states. The implications of the two state strategies – collaboration (bargaining) or contestation (war) – depend on the state's subsequent and longer-term policies. The defeat of or collaboration with the non-state actor is only the first step in a campaign to bring the full presence of the state back into the territories and sectors under the non-state actor's control. If the state is able to quickly deploy its social, political, judicial, and security institutions, and fill the power vacuums that result from confrontation, then defeat may prove a beneficial path to state consolidation. It requires, however, a relatively strong, capable state. If the state is able to effectively co-opt the group and integrate it into the legal state system, this may prove a viable means of state-building, especially where capacity and will are lacking and thus confrontation only expands the breeding grounds for violent, non-state actors.

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Notes

1 Defensoría del Pueblo, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
2 This integrated action doctrine operates according to a traffic light scheme whereby municipalities are rated red if they are rebel strongholds, targeted only by military operations; yellow if they have been largely cleared of narco-guerrillas and are targeted with short-term development activities; and green if security has been established and social agencies can enter with their social development programmes.
3 In 2008, Rio de Janeiro's government commenced integrated action to gain access to communities lost to drug trafficking organizations. First, the state issued an ultimatum to the gangs to surrender, followed by a military invasion and then a development 'invasion' in the form of two community-oriented programs: (1) the 'Pacifying Police Units' (UPP): new, specially trained corps to provide around-the-clock community policing; and (2) the deployment of schools, health care, and community-led poverty eradication initiatives.
4 This strategy has been based on intensive deployment of both police and military agents with captures, deaths, and extraditions of cartel members reaching record highs. See Garzón (2008).
5 Gaudencio Pangilinan Jr. (General Brigadier of the Filipino Army), interview by author, 7 May 2009; Favela residents, interviews by author, Rio de Janeiro, September 2006; Padre Apollinaire Malu Malu (President of the AMANI Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of Congo), interview by author, 7–10 May 2009.
6 Changes in the distribution of power may matter alongside the levels of state power relative to the violent non-state actor. With what probability can the state crush the non-state actor militarily?
7 Army General, interview by author, Tibu, April 2008.
8 Gersen Arias, (Fundación Ideas para la Paz), interview by author, Bogotá, 17 July 2008.
9 Defensoría del Pueblo, interview by author, Medellín, 29 February 2008.
10 This is similar to what happens during military transitions. Hard-liners may wish to instigate a coup, but may no longer be able to; cohesion and collective action within the military erodes.
11 Colombian think-tank analyst, interview by Author, Bogotá, July 2008.
12 Ex-militia, interview by author, Medellín, 27 February 2008.
13 The state will have state-building priorities depending on the strategic nature of the territory. Decaying armed groups in the depths of the jungle will be unlikely to experience the state's incursion into their zones of former control.
14 The Indian state, for instance, 'allowed' low-level insurgencies to continue in their hinterlands while focusing on other security threats (Mukherjee, 2014).
15 Cunningham (2006) proposes that a greater number of non-state actors (or 'veto players') may instead make pacts less likely rather than merely variable.

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