

Chapter I: Introduction

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Violent conflicts have been a tormenter of human society since the dawn of man, but in modern times the occurrence and consequences of conflicts have changed. War has, for example, become increasingly costly in terms of the fatalities, the value of the destroyed property and the scope of social misery and human suffering. Through increased efforts, the international community has become more effective in dealing with international conflicts and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has noticed a three times decrease in fatalities related to interstate conflicts in the 1990s, compared to the 1980s.¹ However, the same report also states that there still were some 3.6 million fatalities in conjunction with *internal or intra-state* conflicts in the 1990s. Consequently, these statistics illustrate an overall failure by the international community to prevent the actual occurrence of military conflicts. In addition, the seemingly positive development regarding casualties in international conflicts should be seen in light of the often more brutal and violent internal conflicts, of which Rwanda, Nigeria and Chechnya are telling examples.

Another factor contributing to the changing picture of modern day conflicts is the decreasing attention devoted to traditional military conflicts, or the military aspects of a conflict. The situation is worsened by, not only the lack of interest in internal conflicts, but also by the limited attention paid to the (re)emergence on non-traditional security threats in the post Cold War era, i.e. non-military threats. The non-traditional threat is a common, but broad, classification of threats encompassing, for example, environmental issues, poverty and starvation, failed economic development, organized criminality

¹ United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11.

and political violence by non-state actors. The international community has been slow, or in some cases, inactive in its response to these new security threats. It has also been slow to adapt to the non-conventional manner in which these threats materialize and the levels they are materializing on, i.e. the trans-national and non-governmental levels.²

Needless to say, the resolution of internal conflicts should be given high priority on the international agenda. However, it is arguably even more important to prevent new conflicts from emerging, and if they do occur, to manage them in a way that stop them from escalating. Conflict prevention and management does not only save human lives and prevent human suffering, it also creates confidence between actors and saves a great deal of financial resources that would otherwise have been wasted through destruction of property and increased military spending.

In terms of simple economics, it is generally accepted that 'a penny of prevention is worth a pound of resolution', i.e. that minor economic investments at an early stage of a conflict can prevent large economic commitments later. For example, the conflict related costs in Bosnia has surpassed US\$15 billion according to official statistics but the actual figure is without doubt even higher. There is also no doubt that this conflict could have been prevented at an early stage, thereby saving billions of dollars and the lives and suffering of millions of people. Michael Brown and Richard Rosencrane have showed that, in addition to the reduction in human suffering and moral decay, there are great financial gains to acting early. According to some estimates, the cost of early prevention could be as low as 5 per cent (varies between 5 and 50 per cent) of the cost of late intervention, crisis management and peace creation.³ Early intervention, or in economic terms; early investment, is not only preventing high financial and humanitarian costs, but also increases the political prestige and will toward resolving conflicting issues and prevent further destruction.

With regard to conflict prevention and conflict management, Northeast Asia is one of the regions most urgently in need of the development and

² Steve Smith, "Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11", *International Studies Quarterly* 48, 3 (2004): 504-507.

³ Michael Brown & Richard Rosencrane, *The Costs of Conflict* (New York: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1999).

implementation of such mechanisms. Northeast Asia is not only the most militarized region in the world, but also a region that to date lack any regional organizations through which conflicts can be handled. The distrust among the actors in the region has virtually made any attempt to conflict prevention and management a stillborn venture.⁴ The political will and commitment by states in the region to deal with their neighbors in new ways has been modest at best. Daily, challenges to the peaceful interaction between neighboring states are being added to the already less than favorable regional environment. Yet there are also positive developments that favor the possibility of a culture of conflict prevention and management in the region. The dynamics of Northeast Asia, with regard to conflict prevention and management, are largely unexplored. In addition, the possibilities for creating measures suited for this regional context are all but untapped, yet further inaction in this field could be devastating.

Purpose and Aim

The purpose of this compilation of papers is to combine theoretical research on the issues of conflict prevention and management with a regional Northeast Asian perspective that is policy relevant, thereby filling a gap in the existing literature. This is accomplished through a holistic view of conflict prevention and conflict management in an effort to develop tools for regional prevention and management. The book has a strong regional perspective to facilitate an analysis of a region that is virtually lacking preventive and management mechanisms and is in a desperate need to develop such.⁵ The question is, however, if the region is ready for this. This can only be determined by examining the view of prevention and management in the region and how the regional tool box is structured.

⁴ Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002); Niklas Swanström, "Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management in Northeast Asia", *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 30, 1 (2003).

⁵ Hugh Miall, *Peacemakers: Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Since 1945* (London: Macmillan, 1992); Michael Lund, *Preventive Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995); Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002); Niklas Swanström, "Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management in Northeast Asia", *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 30, 1 (2003): 35.

It has been pointed out that many tools for conflict prevention are not regionally transferable, even if the principles are similar. This, in turn, indicates an explicit need of regional oriented tools.⁶ The aim of the cooperation leading up to this publication is therefore to further develop both the theoretical understanding and the practical mechanisms of conflict management and conflict prevention with specific regard to the Northeast Asian setting. This book aims at setting the stage by introduce theoretical concepts. In addition, it broadly identifies the conflicting issues and the potential mechanisms in all the political entities that are involved in these conflicts. The examination of theoretical assumptions and empirical problems is thus one of the major contributions of this volume, which strives to develop theories and increase the understanding of practical issues of prevention and management in Northeast Asia.

The book aspires to form part of the foundation of a common language and culture of conflict prevention and management in the region. Shared understanding and knowledge of conflict prevention and management in general, and the interpretations made by potential opponents in particular, will provide regional and international actors with means to prevent conflicts from escalating. This, in turn, will increase the possibility for a peaceful development of the region. Such efforts have been undertaken in other regions, but they have never been successful in NEA – a region where they are badly needed.⁷

The uniqueness of this project lies in its combination of: the utilization of a theoretical perspective that integrates the traditionally separated issues of conflict prevention and conflict management; its geographical focus on Northeast Asia, and the highly recognized researchers and policy makers involved in the process. This enables us to provide new information, develop theory and to identify new challenges to conflict prevention and management in Northeast Asia.

This book focuses on the prevention and management of conflicts in the non-military phase. Conflict resolution will only be touched upon briefly in

⁶ Chandra Lekha Sriram, "Refining Conflict Prevention – Sharing Best Practices and Improving Partnering", *Sharing Best Practices on Conflict Prevention* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2002), 4.

⁷ For an overview of regional attempts see Niklas Swanström in chapter 4 in this volume.

the section dealing with the life cycle of conflicts, simply because its exclusion from this section would have been problematic. Moreover, this publication has a strong regional focus despite the theoretical generality. These limitations are, of course, also the strengths of the book as it allows for a deeper penetration of the issues discussed.

Conflict Management and Conflict Prevention

Before utilizing and/or developing the concepts of prevention and management, there is a need to go a few steps back and look at where the concepts derive from and their initial meaning. In this question, we stand on the shoulders of giants, many of whom are unknown or have been lost in history. Although the study of the concepts of conflict prevention and conflict management has a relatively short academic history, the thinking on how to manage and prevent conflicts has preoccupied philosophers and scholars for centuries. Throughout human history, people have been exploring ways to manage and prevent conflicts, ranging back to Sun Tzu in the East and philosophers in the Greek city states in the West. They seldom used the terms explicitly and did not necessarily see their actions as preventive or managing. Indeed, they often focused on the study of war and warfare. Nonetheless, throughout history, numerous measures have been undertaken that proved to have preventive and/or managing features and effects, including pre-emptive interventions, giving out privileges or bribing potential enemies and minorities, paying off opponents in wars, using the family as a preventive mechanism through marriage, using deliberate administrative structures to keep potential enemies and conflicts in line (as the Chinese and Romans did).

More deliberate, early attempts to create a conflict managing and preventive mechanism were put forward during the Congress of Vienna in 1815. During this conference, certain mechanisms were agreed upon, such as frameworks for mutual consultation and peaceful settlement of conflicts. In addition, demilitarized zones and neutral buffer states were put in place. The Congress of Vienna was but a sign of the structures to come in the 20th century with the creation of the United Nations, NATO and the European Security Community.

The United Nations is a prime example of a conscious development of conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms – both in theory and practice. The idea of conflict prevention and management is central to the UN and its charter.⁸ Its Secretary-Generals have since the organization's creation progressed the understanding of conflict prevention and management. The UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld introduced the term “preventive diplomacy” already in the 1950’s and his thinking and actions, until his unfortunate death, substantially progressed both theory and practice within this field. Hammarskjöld’s conceptualization on preventive diplomacy referred to actions taken to keep regional conflicts localized, preventing violent spillover from superpower conflicts onto the international arena. Since Dag Hammarskjöld’s time, the concept has been broadened, most notably by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali who defined preventive diplomacy as “[a]ction to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.”⁹ This broadening has been continued by other scholars, like Michael Lund. Lund has defined preventive diplomacy as

“actions taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can arise from destabilizing effects of economic, social, political, and international change.”¹⁰

Another example is the Carnegie Commission’s report on *Preventing Deadly Conflict* which include efforts to pressure, cajole, arbitrate, mediate, and/or lend 'good offices' to encourage dialogue and facilitate a non-violent resolutions of crisis in its definition of preventive diplomacy.¹¹

⁸ The United Nations Charter authorizes the Secretary-General, the Security Council, and the General Assembly to settle disputes peacefully and to prevent the outbreak of wars and other forms of armed conflicts (Chapter VI and VII). It also includes a number of preventive tools including negotiation, mediation, fact finding, conciliation, judicial settlement and arbitration.

⁹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations, 1992), 5.

¹⁰ Michael Lund, *Preventing violent conflicts. A strategy for preventive diplomacy* (Washington D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), 37.

¹¹ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict, Final Report* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1997). Distinctions are also made between different categories of preventive diplomacy, for example between "early preventive

The Marshall plan is another important structural prevention mechanism that was implemented after the Second World War, as well as the two superpowers' goal of preventing nuclear conflict between each other. Another example is the actions taken in the aftermath of the Korean War to prevent future violent conflicts on the Korean Peninsula. Until today, these measures are managing a conflict prone area and a fragile armistice between two states. This conflict moreover involves a number of other states with indirect or direct interests in the development on the peninsula. In the same conflict, a number of preventive measures have also been taken, including north-south confidence building measures, different forms of formal and informal contacts between the two Koreas and/or China, the US, Japan and to some extent Russia. These forms of actions may not have been a progression of conflict prevention and management theory in themselves, but they indicate that the idea of prevention and management have been existing in the minds of the leaders, even in the most tense of situations. To a great extent, neither governments nor academics have drawn any lessons from the conflicts in the world and therefore failed to develop effective conflict management and prevention mechanisms.¹²

Research on conflict management and conflict prevention has proliferated in the 1990s. This is both due to the end of the Cold War and the following move from a bi-polar world order to a multi-polar one, which is less ideological and more open to new ideas, as well as to a greater sensitivity to the devastating conflicts and the humanitarian suffering and economic ruin they create. There are, today, an extensive array of books and other writings trying to answer the question of how to best prevent and manage conflicts within the subject area of prevention and management. However, as will be illustrated below, there are still significant gaps in the current research (not

diplomacy" focusing on actions (good offices, mediation etc) taken to resolve conflicts well before they turn into violent conflicts, and "late preventive diplomacy" referring to attempts to persuade parties to call off their actions when escalation into active violent conflict seems imminent (Graham Evans quoted in Alex P. Schmid, *Thesaurus and Glossary of early Warning and Conflict Prevention Terms (Abridged version)*, PIOON/FEWER (Synthesis foundation Erasmus University), May 1998). It should be noted that Evans' definition focuses on the UN, and hence these attempts are presumed to go through the Security Council and include actions by the Secretary-General.

¹² Steve Smith, "Singing Our World into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11", *International Studies Quarterly* 48, 3 (2004): 504-507.

least in regard to Northeast Asia).

As mentioned above, the concept of preventive diplomacy was broadened, and further research on conflict prevention was diversified and expanded to include a much wider variety of issues than before. For example, in 1992, Boutros Boutros-Ghali did list five specific forms of measures: confidence building, fact-finding missions, early warning networks, preventive deployment, and demilitarized zones.¹³ Examples of other terms that have been introduced are preventive engagement, escalation prevention, relapse prevention, preventive deployment, early warning¹⁴, targeted sanctions, and direct prevention. A wide range of definitions have been presented, ranging from broad ones, including all possible forms of actions that can have direct or indirect effect as managing or preventive mechanisms, to narrow ones focusing only on specific measures taken by the UN.¹⁵

Negotiation and mediation are tools that have been used in conflicts around the world with varying outcomes. Several researchers have developed negotiation and mediation, both in theory and practice. In regard to conflict prevention, research on the hurting stalemate¹⁶, as well as other important

¹³ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations, 1992).

¹⁴ "Early Warning" is an aspect of conflict prevention that will not be addressed in this chapter.

¹⁵ Gabriel Munuera, "Preventing Armed Conflict in Europe: Lessons learned from recent experience", *Chaillot Paper*, 15/16, 1994; Michael Lund, *Preventing violent conflicts. A strategy for preventive diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996); Michael Lund, "Preventing Violent Intrastate Conflicts: Learning Lessons from Experience", in *Searching for Peace in Europe and Eurasia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*, eds. Paul van Tongeren, Hans van de Veen & Juliette Verhoeven (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002); Peter Wallensteen, *Preventing Violent Conflict. Past Record and Future Challenges* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1998); Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham & Tom Woodhouse, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution. The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999); *International Alert, Resource Pack for Conflict Transformation* (London: IA, 1996); Peter Wallensteen & Frida Möller, *Conflict Prevention: Methodology for Knowing the Unknown* (Uppsala Peace Research Papers No. 7, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2004). More on conflict prevention and management theory and definitions will be found in this volume in the chapters by Peter Wallensteen.

¹⁶ A hurting stalemate is a situation in which neither party thinks it can win a given conflict without incurring excessive loss, and in which both are suffering from a continuation of fighting.

factors for successful handling of conflicts has been undertaken.¹⁷ Researchers like Hiroshi Kimura and Cecilia Albin have, respectively, developed the understanding of values and justice in international negotiations.¹⁸

Negotiation and mediation research has also addressed the importance of change in relative legitimacy and power increase, both of which increase an actor's propensity to negotiate¹⁹ and to explore problem solving approaches.²⁰ The fields of negotiation and mediation are important when dealing with conflict management and the creation of preventive mechanisms since negotiation and mediation theories offers explanations and solutions on how, when and with whom to interact to make prevention and management possible.

The importance of intervention has also been thoroughly explored in its different forms.²¹ Research on how to best use sanctions as a tool for conflict management and conflict prevention has also been undertaken, where some

¹⁷ William I. Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond", in *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War*, eds. Paul Stern and Daniel Druckman (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000); William I. Zartman, "The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments", *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 1, 1 (2001): 8-18.

¹⁸ Peter Berton, Hiroshi Kimura & William Zartman, *International Negotiation: Actors Structures/Process, Values* (Palgrave MacMillan, 1999); Cecilia Albin, *Justice and Fairness in International Negotiation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹⁹ Daniel Druckman and Justin Green, "Playing Two Games", in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. William I. Zartman (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995).

²⁰ Connie Peck, *The United Nations as a Dispute Settlement System. Improving Mechanisms for the Prevention and Resolution of Conflict* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1996)

²¹ Michéle Griffin, "A Stitch in Time: Making the Case for Conflict Prevention", *Security Dialogue*, 32, 4 (2003): 481-496; Stanley Hoffman, Commentary on Ernst B. Haas' "Beware the Slippery Slope; Notes toward the Definition of Justifiable Intervention" in *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention*, eds. Laura Reed and Carl Kaysen (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993); Ernst B. Haas "Beware the Slippery Slope; Notes toward the Definition of Justifiable Intervention" in *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention*, eds. Laura Reed and Carl Kaysen (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993); Ramses Amer, *The United Nations and Foreign Military Interventions*, (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1994); Nicholas J. Wheeler, "Humanitarian intervention after Kosovo: emergent norm, moral duty or the coming anarchy?", *International Affairs*, 77, 1 (2001): 113-128.

of the more progressive research projects have addressed so called smart or targeted sanctions.²²

The role of regional and international organizations (other than the UN) in conflict management and prevention has been strengthened and the research in regard to these actors has expanded. This is largely due to the increased importance given to economic development for successful management and prevention of conflicts.²³ The World Bank, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union and sub regional agencies such as the Southern Africa Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States have been the focus of much research, and in recent years, some attention has also been given to regional cooperation and organizations in East Asia.²⁴ One important aspect of the focus on such organizations is that it has increased the emphasis among both scholars and practitioners on the need, importance and benefits of sharing best practices. The aim is to find effective ways to enhance the coordination between the UN, regional-, sub regional and civil society organizations, thereby creating better linkages between national, regional and international conflict prevention and management efforts, including the improvement of the planning in the field as well as at the headquarters.²⁵

Finally, the idea of a so called "culture of prevention", an idea promoted both by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has been trying to move the

²² Peter Wallensteen, Carina Staibano, and Mikael Eriksson, eds., *Making Targeted Sanctions Effective – Guidelines for the implementation of UN Policy Options* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2004).

²³ The importance of regional organizations will be discussed in greater detail in Niklas Swanström's chapter in this volume.

²⁴ Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002); Niklas Swanström, "Conflict Management in Northeast Asia", *Korean Journal of International Studies*, 30, 1 (2003); Rajshree Jetly, "Conflict management strategies in ASEAN: perspectives for SAARC", *The Pacific Review*, 16, 1 (2003), 53-76; R Foot, "The UN systems contribution to Asia-Pacific security architecture", *The Pacific Review*, 16, 2 (2003), 207-230.

²⁵ Chandra Lekha Sriram, "Refining Conflict Prevention—Sharing Best Practices and Improving Partnering", Albrecht Schnabel "Operationalizing Conflict Prevention: Opportunities and Challenges for Regional and Subregional Organizations", Augustine Touré, "Moving Towards A Culture of Prevention: Bringing in Local Actors", in *Sharing Best Practices on Conflict Prevention: The UN, Regional and Subregional Organizations, National and Local Actors*, IPA Policy Report, <<http://www.ipacademy.org>> (February 28 2003).

organization away from a culture of reaction to one of prevention²⁶ and by the OECD. In the OECD, the goal is to create a culture of prevention in both development cooperation and foreign policy. The OECD does, in its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) guidelines, urge the international community to make sure to always apply a conflict prevention lens to all its actions, and has regularly pointed out the need for a culture of prevention. This could be accomplished, according to the OECD, if the international community was better able to “analyze the causes and dynamics of conflict and peace in order to understand how their actions will affect the “structural stability” of a society or country”²⁷. Furthermore, the international community needs to be more aware of “the political aspects of any activity and understand how its aims, design, and implementation may interact with the political and economic dynamics in that society, including their effect on poverty.”²⁸ The idea of a culture of prevention has also been discussed by scholars and practitioners in a recent volume published in the memory of the late Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh.²⁹ There is no doubt that if a regional agreement on core principles, i.e. a culture of prevention, could be reached, it would greatly improve the prospects of creating functional preventive and management mechanisms at a regional level. This has, however, been difficult to reach at this point in time, and the success on the international arena has been even more limited.

This leaves us with a very broad concept that potentially could include most aspects of handling conflicts or preventing conflicts. What exclusively is being dealt with here is preventing a conflict from reaching military violence, either through structural or direct prevention, or management of a conflict that has not reached military violence, such as in the Taiwan Straits. In addition, only peaceful means are included in the definition, a distinct change from the old traditions of preventive strikes.

²⁶ Kofi Annan, *Prevention of Armed Conflict*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/55/985-S/2001/574, June 7, 2001.

²⁷ OECD, *The DAC Guidelines: Helping Prevent Violent Conflict* (OECD, 2001), 31, <<http://www.oecd.org>>, (April 28 2003).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Anders Mellbourn, ed., *Developing a culture of conflict prevention* (Hedemora: Gidlund, 2004).

Lack of Research: Practical and Theoretical

In simple terms, conflict prevention and management are general concepts for methods and mechanisms used to avoid, minimize, and manage conflicts between different parties.³⁰ Conflict prevention is a set of instruments used to prevent disputes from forming in the first place, or preventing them from developing into an active conflict.³¹ Conflict management, on the other hand, is a theoretical concept focusing on the limitation, mitigation, and/or containment of a conflict without necessarily solving it.³² These two concepts are often seen as distinct from each other as they differ significantly in their implementation. However, conflict prevention and conflict management are, in fact, different sides of the same coin, since without conflict management it would not be possible to initiate preventive action. Preventive actions, in turn, are essential to successful managing of active conflicts.

Prevention and management are, by far, the most financially sound mechanisms to deal with potential conflicts as they are relatively cheap for states and international organizations to put in place, both from an economic and a political perspective. To avoid a conflict requires fewer resources than to rebuild a society and recreate political capital. Not to mention the human costs, and the industrial costs following the loss of the productive part of the populations, or the rehabilitation of the victims of conflict. Indeed, preventing conflicts or managing them when prevention has failed, could save millions of people from violent deaths, rapes and suffering.

³⁰ Bruce Russett, "Preventing Violent Conflict Through the Kantian Peace", in *Preventing Violent Conflicts: Past Record and Future Challenges*, ed. Peter Wallensteen, Report No 48 (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1998); Michael Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C., 1996); Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002); Niklas Swanström, "Conflict Management in Northeast Asia", *Korean Journal of International Studies* 30, 1 (2003); Peter Wallensteen, ed., *Preventing Violent Conflicts: Past Record and Future Challenges*, Report No 48 (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1998).

³¹ Sophia Clément, *Conflict Prevention in the Balkans: Case Studies of the Fyr Macedonia* (Alençon: Institute for Security Studies of WEU, 1997).

³² Fred Tanner, "Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution: Limits of Multilateralism", *International Review of the Red Cross* (September, 2000).

Despite the apparent benefits of conflict prevention and management, there is a lack of effective mechanisms for this in the international system. Even though the equation 'a penny to a pound' is sound, what is gained through investment fails to materialize for the public and the politicians. In fact, the opposite occurs: if prevention and/or management measures are successful, nothing will materialize, i.e. the absence, or non-escalation of conflict is the reward for conflict prevention and management. Such a lack of political profitability and return of investment is a difficult motivator for action. Thus, one of the greatest obstacles for conflict prevention and management is to prove that attempts to avert a conflict succeeded, since it is difficult to prove a potential outcome that did not occur. To overcome this problem and change the focus of decision-makers is one of the major tasks within prevention and management.

Nevertheless, conflict management and conflict prevention are concepts that the international community has been increasingly eager to accept, at least on paper. The task is to implement measures in practice and to create an international culture of prevention and management that can replace the traditional view of crisis management and conflict resolution. This is a monumental undertaking as little has been done in the past. Indeed, the international community has increasingly been placing the burden of conflict prevention and management on regional actors and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This transfer of responsibility has met with different responses by the established regional organizations. Some member states and regional actors have been significantly engaged in both direct and structural prevention, but in general there exists little coordination of attempts and the resources put into preventive and management schemes are limited. This is directly connected to the lack of political engagement and fear by states and leaders that engagement in regional or international endeavors, of any kind, would undermine and limit national sovereignty.

The need for conflict prevention and management, at the state level and beyond, seems hard to accept, despite the fact that prevention and management are two of the most common social interactions of human life. Not a day goes by where individuals do not engage in conflict prevention or management of security threats. Nobody thinks twice about washing hands

before eating, looking both ways before crossing the road, wearing a safety belt in the car, taking medicine when sick or purchasing travel insurance before going on vacation. These are all preventive or management measures taken before a “conflict” has erupted or in the early stage of it. Amazingly, when millions of lives and billions of dollars are at stake, governments tend to neglect these actions. This is not only strange, but irrational both from a financial and humanitarian point of view.

Conflict, Conflict Management and Conflict Prevention: the Development of Concepts

Definition of conflict

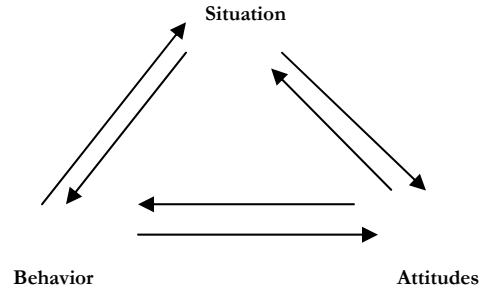
The perception of a threat, or actual occurrence, of a conflict is necessary for the initiation of conflict prevention or management measures, and hence it is essential to address the concept of conflict before exploring how to prevent and manage such occurrences. Although conflicts can be positive and lead to inventions, understanding and friendship etc., the concern here is the negative affects of conflicts that could lead to political and economic stalemate, increased tension and/or violent military conflicts. In this chapter, the suggested definition of conflict is not simply confined to violent behavior or hostile attitudes, but includes also a notion of incompatibility or in “differences in issue position” (*Positiondifferenzen*).³³ Such a definition is designed to include conflicts that fall outside traditional military conflicts, for example those that are based on behavioral dimensions. The actions that are undertaken to handle or prevent differences in the issue positions are considered to be prevention and management.

The first step is to understand exactly what a conflict consists of. The starting point for this volume will be the traditional definitions of conflicts (presented below), according to which a conflict is a situation of opposing interests involving scarce resources, goal divergence and frustration. It then moves on to address more current perceptions on the concept of conflict. According to C. R. Mitchell, the conflict structure consists of three parts:

³³ Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Internationale Politik; Ein Konfliktmodell* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1981), 198-203.

attitudes, behavior and situation that interact and create conflicts between actors.³⁴ Mitchell's conflict structure simplifies the complex reality in an understandable way, even if it has limitations as any theory.

Mitchell's model was created for political and military conflicts, but is also applicable to the changes in perception of conflicts that the international community has experienced. Economic, environmental and human security became fundamental aspects of international and regional interaction and Mitchell's model is able to incorporate this. However, this model is complicated by the fact that conflict often occurs in mixed-motive relationships where the involved parties have both cooperative and competitive goals.³⁵ Mitchell's model seems to have neglected this more complex dimension to the relationship. The competitive element creates conflicts and the cooperative element creates incentives to negotiate in an effort to reach an agreement.³⁶ There are, however, studies that confirm that conflicts tend to occur even if the involved parties have highly compatible goals.³⁷ This can be explained by including frustration, obstruction, interference and other subjective aspects of conflict in the definition. The theoretical framework has here been adjusted to leave room for an interpretation of a conflict to include tensions, misunderstandings, political and economic interests, and historical animosity.



Model 1: Social structure

1. The situation impacts the behavior (failure to reach targeted goals, especially important goals, creates frustration and increases the willingness to reach these goals).
2. The situation impacts attitudes (incompatible goals increase the suspicion and distrust between the actors).
3. Behavior impacts the situation (success can introduce new questions in the conflict as demands increase).
4. Behavior impacts the attitudes (destruction increases hatred, success can impact the group solidarity and the notion of "us").
5. Attitudes impact the behavior (expectations such as "our traditional enemies will attack again" will impact the defensive planning and preventive actions).
6. Attitudes impact the situation (the longer the conflict continues the more questions will be introduced).

³⁴ C.R. Mitchell, *The Structure of International Conflict* (London: Macmillan, 1981), 55.

³⁵ Kwok Leung and Dean Tjosvold, *Conflict Management in the Asia Pacific: Assumptions and Approaches in Diverse Cultures* (Singapore: John Wiley & Sons, 1998); R. Walton and R. Mckersie, *A Behavioural Theory of Labour Negotiations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).

³⁶ M Deutsch and M. Krauss, "Studies in interpersonal bargaining", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6 (1962).

³⁷ M. Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002).

Conflicts have generally been defined as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time.³⁸ There is no disagreement among scholars that there needs to be more than one party to have a conflict, nor is there usually a dispute about the time factor. What does cause concern is the term "scarce resource". Although the central point in the argument is scarcity, resources should also be included in the discussion. Peter Wallensteen has pointed out that resources not only are economic in nature,³⁹ but that the terminology excludes conflicts over economic orientation, human security, environment, religion, historical issues, etc. Such conflicts are not always about resources, and where they are, these resources are, more importantly, not necessarily scarce.⁴⁰ Conflicts are, moreover, in many cases based on positions, rather than on attitudes or behavior as it has generally been defined. In addition, when discussing the definition of conflict, perception should be included as a central concept, as conflicts and the opponent's intentions not always are objectively defined, but rather based on subjective perceptions. There could be an abundance of room for an agreement (or resources), but the parties perceive the conflict as being irresolvable. Consequently, it may not be possible to compromise with an unbeliever or an opponent that is perceived as untrustworthy.

The normative disputes, many times subjectively defined, are also excluded from the rational definitions. Normative disputes are disputes involving religion, values and beliefs. Such conflicts do not always have a military outcome and are regularly disregarded despite their indirect or direct conflict potential. Consequently, in this chapter, the following, more inclusive, definition of conflict is being suggested: *perceived differences in issue positions between two or more parties at the same moment in time.*

³⁸ Peter Wallensteen, *Från krig till fred - Om konfliktlösning i det globala systemet* [From war to peace - conflict resolution in the global system] (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1994), 14-15; Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and The Global System* (London: Sage Publishing, 2002), 16.

³⁹ Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and The Global System* (London: Sage Publishing, 2002), 16-17.

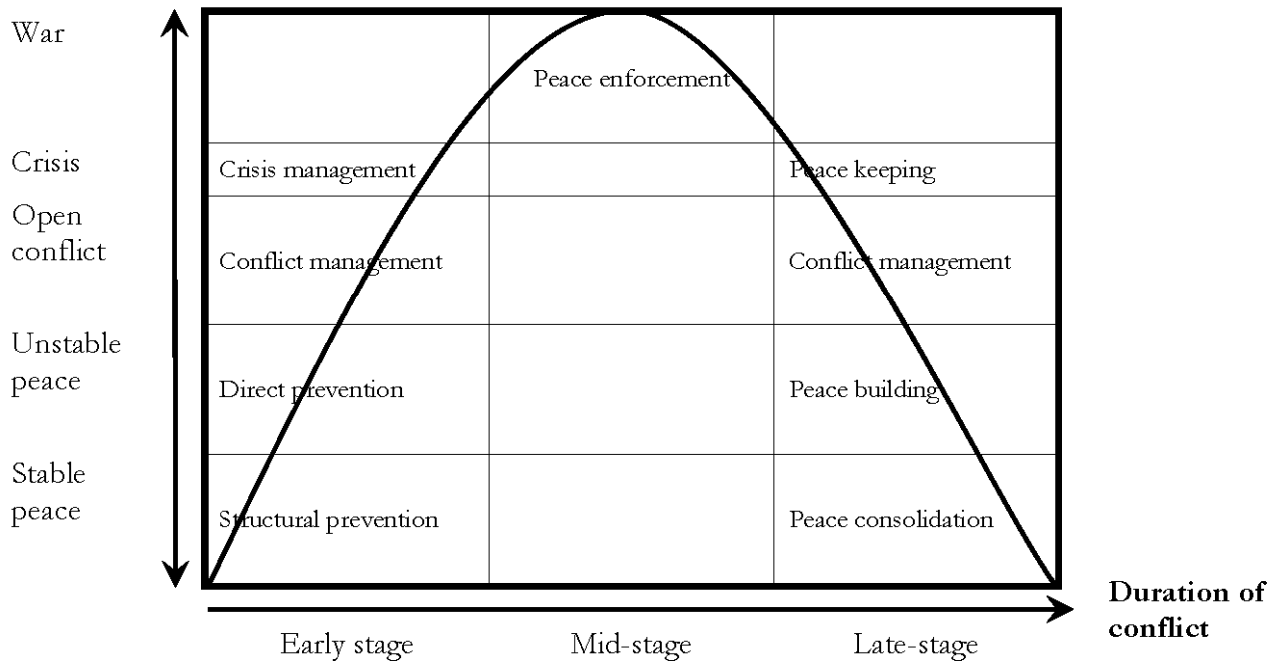
⁴⁰ Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002).

The life cycle(s) of a conflict

It is important to define a conflict cycle in order to understand how, where and when to apply different strategies. A conflict is not a static situation, but a dynamic one – the intensity level changes over its life cycle. Over time, numerous suggestions and models of what these patterns look like have been suggested. Some models have the form of a spiral, while others involve different types of curves (often U-shaped). Among these models, a number of patterns stand out. Conflicts are often described as cyclical in regard to their intensity levels, i.e. escalating from (relative) stability and peace into open violent conflict (war), thereafter deescalating into relative peace. Most scholars also agree that these cycles are reoccurring. This proposition is strongly supported by empirical research on conflict patterns. Here, it should also be noted that many scholars have added stable or durable peace as concepts, in which the conflict is considered resolved – i.e. the re-occurring pattern of conflict has been stopped. Also, most models divide both the escalation and de-escalation parts of the conflict cycle into phases.

The division into phases, and the cyclical perception of conflict, has also become the starting point for research on conflict prevention, management and resolution. In principle, conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution are regarded as applicable in different phases of a conflict. In sum, conflict prevention measures are designed for the early phases, before a conflict has become manifest (open). Management measures are applied in later phases when a conflict is manifest, but before violence has occurred. As illustrated below, this is a very much simplified description of reality. Also, there are large disagreements both within the academic and the policy community, as well as between the two.

Conflict intensity level



The model of the life-cycle of conflicts presented here includes both the conflict process itself and possible prevention, management and resolution measures (Model #2). This conflict cycle is presented in the form of an upside-down U-curve, illustrating a conflict cycle in its most simplified form, i.e. the rise from stable peace to war and the de-escalation to stable peace. As will be noted, this is not in line with the empirical reality, but simply a theoretical outline.

The curve is divided into five levels of conflict intensity (stable peace, unstable peace, open conflict, crisis and war) in a total of nine chronological phases. Stable peace is a situation where tension between the parties is low and there exists different forms of connections and cooperation between them, often including economic and environmental cooperation, as well as cooperation within other non-sensitive issue-areas. During a period of *unstable peace*, tension has increased. This is a situation where, albeit the existing negative peace, there are such high tensions between the parties that peace no longer seems guaranteed. An *open conflict* is when the conflict is defined and the parties have taken measures to deal with it, even if militarized options are not adopted. In the *crisis phase*, the risk of an open

violent conflict is imminent and militarized options are the preferable or likely option. There may be sporadic violence between the parties at this stage, but there is no *open* violent conflict (war). In the *war phase*, the parties are in open violent conflict.

In the de-escalation phase the pattern is reversed, moving from crisis to stable peace and the conflict intensity follows the same pattern as well. However, the measures targeting the de-escalation phase are often much more financially and politically demanding and often involve third parties, such as the UN or stronger military actors that can guarantee security for all actors involved. Trust is often lacking and is tremendously difficult to rebuild. Empirically, there are often no, or limited, trust until the peace consolidation phase has been initiated. Resolution of the conflict can be initiated in all levels of the conflict curve, although some authors confine such actions to after the militarized phase. It is, of course, possible to resolve differences in issue positions without going to war, as seen during the Cuban Missile Crisis, in Cyprus, in the border conflicts between China and Kyrgyzstan etc. These are all examples of conflicts and crisis that were managed or prevented before war erupted, even if the underlying issues were not always resolved.

Just as the phases of the conflict cycle are important, the connection between prevention, management and resolution needs to be developed further. The easiest way to separate between the concepts is by focusing on the time factor. Starting with conflict prevention, it is by definition applied before the conflict has become open and violent (or to prevent a conflict from re-escalating in a post-conflict phase). Conflict prevention measures are effective at the level of stable- and unstable peace. Here, it is important to differentiate between structural- and direct preventive measures. The former are most applicable in the stable peace phase. The reason for this is simply that the acceptance of preventive measures tends to be higher at low levels of intra-party suspicion. If structural preventive measures are implemented at an early stage, including both the building of institutions and development of trust and (longer-term) cooperation, they decrease the perceived need to, and hence risk of, escalating a potential conflict issue into the level of unstable peace. In the unstable peace phase, the direct preventive measures are directed at the issues (conflicts) with a more short term goal in

mind, i.e. to reduce tension and create trust between the actors. Simultaneously, the window of opportunity for longer-term initiatives, such as the building of institutions, fades away slowly. Examples of direct measures include sanctions, coercive diplomacy, the dispatch of special envoys, and problem-solving workshops.

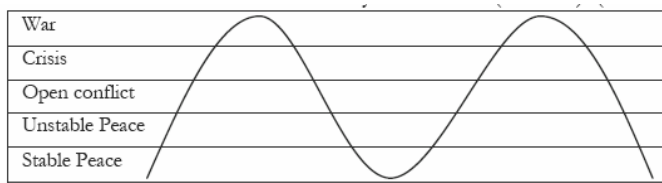
Crisis and conflict management, on the other hand, involves tactics that are enforced when violent conflict is deemed as likely, but before it escalates into open war. Conflict management can be enforced as soon as the conflict has been identified by the actors. Direct measures can be designed to handle the conflict and reverse destructive behavior into constructive. The measures are often bilateral and range from CBMs to direct negotiations. Crisis management is employed in the short time frame before a war is to erupt, when the conflict escalates rapidly and the time for management measures are limited. These measures are often more drastic and aims at containing the outbreak of militarized conflicts with all means possible. Examples of such measures include peace-keeping missions and intervention by other actors such as NATO. Some analysts also view preventive strikes as possible crisis management measures. However, in this paper, management and prevention measures are, per definition, strictly peaceful.

During the stage of war, neither prevention nor management is possible (apart in a negative sense, i.e. prevention of peace). The actors either have to fight things out and reach a hurting stalemate where both realizes the need to end the conflict, or peace has to be enforcement by external actors. If the militarized conflict is contained, either through a peace treaty or a cease fire, there are possibilities to reverse the positions of the actors and make them adopt a more constructive behavior. Initially, the focus is on separating the actors and preventing further escalation, either by mistake, or by calculated measures. This stage is comparable to the crisis stage in the escalation phase and often involves third party actors that assist with peacekeeping or monitoring. This is followed by a phase of peace building and peace consolidation where the aim is to make actors more cooperative and create an inclusive peace for all involved parties. This is often a financially very costly stage requiring enormous political and economic commitment from the international community as well as the involved actors. Thus, the notion that resolution or other mechanisms to deal with conflicts have to be

applied after (potential) conflicts are militarized, is humanitarilly, as well as, financially unsound.

Different conflict curves

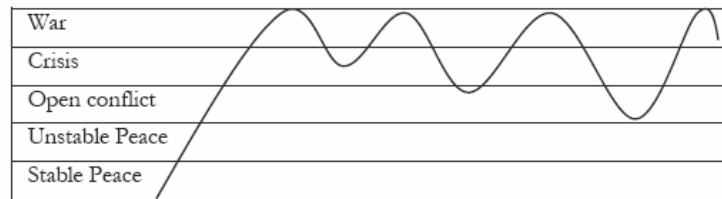
As mentioned earlier, the conflict cycle is re-occurring over time. In a first version, the conflict curve moves trough all stages and the conflict is eventually transformed into stable peace. In this case, the upside down U-curve will look like a wave of U-curves, reaching the level of war and then de-escalating to the level of stable peace, until the conflict is ultimately resolved (if ever) (model 3:a).



Model 3:a

However, here it is important to note that all waves of the conflict do not look the same. The pattern in the figure simply does not

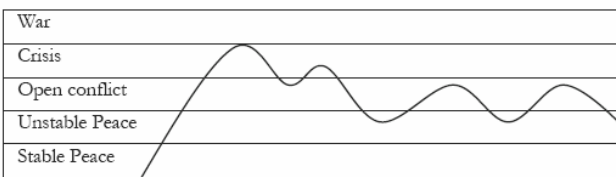
correspond to the patterns of real conflicts. A re-escalation of a conflict can occur at any point during the de-escalation phase and does



Model 3:b

not normally follow the standardized theoretical curve. In fact, it is more likely that a conflict re-emerges the higher the intensity level is. Thus, there is a reason why the crisis phase is called crisis phase also in the post-war part of the conflict (model 3: b). The conflict “bounces” between the higher levels of the conflict cycle and it proves difficult or impossible, to reduce the conflict intensity or increase the long-term trust.

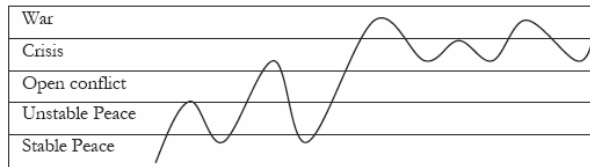
Here it is also important to note that each escalation not necessarily, and not even likely, will reach the intensity level of a war (model 3: c). The parties



Model 3:c

will not find any means to resolve the conflict, or create even unstable peace, but the conflict never reaches the level of militarized conflict.

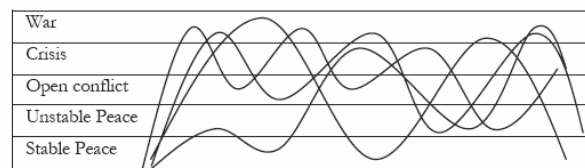
To add further complexity to the wave pattern, it should be noted that the same kind of pattern can, and is, occurring in the escalation phase of the conflict (model 3: d).



Model 3:d

However, the wave pattern is far more complex than has been indicated to this stage. Indeed, each conflict arguably includes a large number of sub-conflicts. The

idea is that a conflict consists of numerous sub-conflicts over a wide array of issues. Each of these sub-conflicts has its own conflict cycle (model 3: e). As each of these sub-conflicts has its own conflict curve, at any set point in time these sub-conflicts will be at different points on their respective curve. As a result, they will also be in different conflict phases, phases that need not overlap with the one of the overarching conflict. In other words, each sub-conflict requires a unique kind of prevention, management or resolution measure, suitable for the conflict intensity and phase of that particular conflict. In short, at each point in time, different kinds of measures need to be applied to maximize the ability to handle the conflict. If overarching conflicts between two or more actors are to be managed or prevented, there is a need to focus on more issues than the core ones to build trust and prevent the conflict from further escalation.



Model 3:e

What are the Existing Problems with Theory?

Although the inconsistency in the definitions of the two terms conflict prevention and conflict management is a problem within the existing theory, it will not be the direct focus of this book. Quite contrary, within this publication, they will be treated as different sides of the same coin. Instead, a number of other problems and gaps in the existing theoretical frameworks will be addressed by the different authors in the volume.

Existing theories on conflict prevention and management are, in most cases, not directly applicable to actual or potential conflicts in the world. Of

course, simplifications are needed to create theoretical frameworks. However, a model for conflict prevention and conflict management that is far too simple risk losing track of the specific local context where actual conflicts occur, be it on a regional, sub-regional, state, or sub-state level. Most scholars, at least partially, accept the fact that each and every (potential) conflict is depending on its specific circumstances and the local context (historical, cultural, geographical etc.). Some would even argue that each conflict is unique and need its own management and preventive tools.

It is simply not possible to create a theory that fits all conflicts in all contexts. We, the authors, even argue that each regional cluster has its own dynamics and attributes, both physical and cultural.⁴¹ This problem is illustrated by the fact that most writings on conflict management and prevention have an empirical focus, either focusing on a single case and the lessons that can be drawn thereof, or trying to provide methods and tools in different forms of toolboxes or best practices.⁴² Consequently, there is still a lack of theoretical frameworks. The attempts to develop a far-reaching framework have, on the other hand, often been too general to create theories directly applicable to actual conflicts. In this volume, we will try to bridge between the two ends, trying to create an integrated foundation for theory, methods, and tools for conflict prevention and conflict management. However, we will strive to ensure that such measures are customized for the environment in which the findings are to be implemented. This seeks to meet the commonly agreed upon need for integration of theory and policy experienced by leading scientists and practitioners.⁴³

One other major, although often neglected, problem with the existing theory relates to the separation of the two concepts of conflict prevention and

⁴¹ Niklas Swanström, *Regional Cooperation and Conflict Management: Lessons from the Pacific Rim* (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2002).

⁴² Annelies Heijmans, Nicola Simmonds, and Hans van de Veen, eds., *Searching for peace in Asia Pacific : an overview of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2004); Monique Mekenkamp, Paul van Tongeren, and Hans van de Veen, eds., *Searching for peace in Central and South Asia : an overview of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002); Paul van Tongeren, Hans van de Veen, and Juliette Verhoeven, eds., *Searching for peace in Europe and Eurasia: an overview of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2002)

conflict management. In theory, it has been seen as necessary to make a distinction between management and prevention of conflicts. However, this separation is not only artificial and non-coherent as different scholars use their own definitions of the respective concepts. There is also a risk that such a distinction proves to be counterproductive since the differences between conflict prevention and conflict management are empirically indistinguishable. In practice, these measures can be seen as working side by side at different levels and in different issues in a larger conflict. It is easy to visualize that certain issues in a conflict can be managed as, at the same time, the forming of others is being prevented. However, this does not mean that the conflict has been successfully prevented or managed, or even that tension has been reduced, as new issues can be brought into the conflict.

The problem of separation will be addressed in a number of the chapters in this volume, as will the possibility to integrate the two concepts into one single framework. This theme will also be further developed in a coming volume, in which the thoughts of both practitioners and scholars will be presented.⁴⁴ The problem of separation becomes particularly clear when observing real world conflict prevention and conflict management. In each and every case, a wide array of different methods and tools is used simultaneously at different levels and aspects of a conflict to prevent and/or manage the large number of tensions and issues that may arise, are present, or in risk of escalation.

The practical need for an integrated view on prevention and management is, for example, evident in some of the conflicts in the region of interest in this book. Northeast Asia has unique features that have to be considered when developing relevant theories if they are to be operationalized and implemented in the region. In the region, there is a lack of institutionalization and a general preference for informal and consensus

⁴³ William I. Zartman, "Conflict Management: The Long and Short of It", *SAIS Review* 20, 1 (2000); Michael Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996).

⁴⁴ The authors acknowledge that to develop a well grounded and working theory simplifications need to be made, such as, for example, a separation of the three concepts addressed in this article. However, we argue, not only, that such an integration is possible and would enhance theory, but also that a theory with high empirical relevance has the potential of minimizing conflicts, both in number and intensity, and hence need to be explored.

based interaction between the actors. At the same time – against most existing economic and trade theory – the economy is working well and there is a high level of intra-regional trade and economic cooperation. Northeast Asia has a long cultural, philosophical and religious history that is very different from in the West. In regards to the existing theories, this is an unfortunate fact since most of them are based on Western culture, historical heritage, religious values and philosophy. This is also an important fact, as the last thing that can be said about Northeast Asia is that it lacks historical and cultural history and context.

Despite, or possibly due to, the historical and cultural interaction, there is a high level of intra-regional distrust, but still a lack of open conflicts. Furthermore, the region does not have any dominant regional power, and there is a strong suspicion of each and every rising power. Moreover, the region hosts a number of potentially devastating conflicts, the most evident ones in the Taiwan Strait and on the Korean Peninsula. Indeed, these are hotspots in which not only Mainland China, Taiwan, the two Koreas have a stake, but also Japan, the US, and Russia.

Northeast Asia and the Study of Prevention and Management

The importance of Northeast Asia to conflict prevention and management is twofold. Firstly, and as mentioned before, the region has been largely neglected academically from a conflict prevention and management perspective. Secondly, the region presents such dynamic with regard to factors that promote or impede the establishment and implementation of conflict prevention and management mechanisms. It is therefore of utmost importance to avoid further neglect if the future of intra-regional, and arguably international, relations is to be safeguarded.

Presently, Northeast Asia is the most militarized region in the world. This is the consequence of an arms race between states due to, among other things, a lack of trust, fear of regional dominance and the close proximity to conflicts with a real potential for escalation. According to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the arms race in Northeast Asia

cost the participating states a total of US\$ 109.1 billion in 2001 alone.⁴⁵ And the trend in military spending follows an almost constantly increasing curve.⁴⁶ Also, the region is host to three actors in possession of nuclear weapons (China, Russia and the USA), three with the capacity for constructing nuclear arms (South Korea, Japan and Taiwan) and one with unknown capacity (North Korea). In instances where armaments is the threatening factor, it is uncommon for actors to act according to an optimistic scenario, and the presence, or unknown status, of nuclear weapons only increases the predisposition of states to prepare for a worst-case situation.

In addition to, and in parts a reason for, the arms race, the region hosts two almost sixty-year long conflicts - on the Korean peninsula and in the Taiwan Strait. These prolonged conflicts have varied in intensity over the years, but never been resolved. Although sources of much dispute and conflicting interests, these conflicts provide significant empirical information for the understanding and development of measures of conflict prevention and management for the region. There is ample information to be gathered regarding existing conflict prevention and management methods, as well as patterns of conflicts in the region. Yet in order to implement regional conflict prevention and management mechanisms, and subsequently develop a culture of prevention, the interaction between the actors needs to be positive and mutual beneficial. Such interaction do, indeed, already exist between some actors in the region, but two areas of special importance for the development of common mechanisms of conflict prevention and management need to be highlighted.

Northeast Asia hosts three of East Asia's largest consumers of fossil fuels. China, Japan and South Korea together consumed a total of 780.4 million tons of oil and natural gas in 2003, or 17.7 per cent of the world's total.⁴⁷ With only China and North Korea having any proved, yet fairly small,

⁴⁵ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *The Asian Military Balance: An Analytic Overview A comparative Summary of Military Expenditures; Manpower; Land, Air and Naval Forces; and Arms Sales* (May 2003): 7. Individual political entities' expenditure in billion US\$: China 46, Japan 39.5, North Korea 2, South Korea 11.2, and Taiwan 10.4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁴⁷ British Petroleum, *Statistical Review of World Energy*, (2004), 10, 25
<<http://www.bp.com/subsection.do?categoryId=95&contentId=2006480>>(September 13, 2005).

reserves of oil or natural gas, all actors, including Taiwan, are net importers of energy. This common need to achieve energy security could offer a venue for cooperation. In securing for example oil supplies from the Middle East, the regional states would benefit from cooperation over shipping routes or cooperative projects involving pipelines or hydroelectricity. The need for increased energy could even create the base for a Northeast Asian coal and steel union that could, in turn, create the basis for preventive work in the region. In addition, the reliance on imports, and the volatile fuel market, could also be a source of friction and competition if a firm foundation for cooperation is not established.

One of the most poignant areas of cooperation in the region is trade. Asia at large has the second highest intra-regional merchandised trade in the world, with US\$ 949 billion circulating within the region in 2003. This equals almost half (49.9 per cent) of the region's total merchandise exports. According to the WTO, the greater region of Asia has the second largest share, 13 per cent, of regional trade flows in world merchandise exports.⁴⁸ China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have all had strong trade relations and have all assisted in driving and developing the region's economy at various intervals. Japan, to a large extent, drove the regional economy during the 1950s and 60s, South Korea in the 1970s and 80s, and China in the 1980s and 90s. Thus, there is considerable interaction between some of the strongest financial actors in the entire region of East Asia and they are all located in Northeast Asia. However, there are very few financial structures that assist integration and cooperation. The lack of formal cooperation structures, especially political ones, in Northeast Asia makes existing venues for cooperation even more important for the development of a common foundation, from which trust can be built and cooperation extended. As argued before, each region has different frameworks for existing cooperation and it is vital that those are recognized for their worth and potential as building blocks for other forms of cooperation, such as conflict prevention and management.

⁴⁸ The World Trade Organization International Trade Statistics 2004
www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2004_e/itso4_byregion_e.htm (September 13, 2005).

Propositions and Roadmap

The basic assumption behind this book is that conflicts should be dealt with peaceful means and that they are easier and less costly to deal with the earlier they are detected. There are no dispositions how conflicts should be handled or prevented. Here, this first step has been taken to identify possible conflict lines, understand the differences in the perception of conflict prevention and conflict management and finally to assess how the concepts can be integrated into a regional culture of prevention and management. The project behind this book is a holistic process and tries to keep an open mind in a region of controversy and conflicts where different political actors often are locked in antagonistic positions, at least officially. The diversification between the different actors in regard to perceptions of the concepts, and the importance of potential conflict lines can be seen in the different chapters of this book. In many cases, these are incompatible at the surface, but a closer look at the conflicts often reveals an honest interest in compromising and seeking peaceful resolutions to the conflicts in the region.

This book attempts to integrate conflict prevention and conflict management, seeing them as two integrated phases in a conflict process rather than separate entities. The hypothesis is that such integration will enhance our ability to understand and minimize the risk of militarized conflicts. Traditionally, these have been separated, but since it does not mirror the operational reality, many policy people are skeptical against the concepts. It should also be noted that the assumption that a conflict is linear similarly is disputed on empirical grounds. Any conflict, such as the Taiwan Straits, is characterized by a main conflict line, for example political status, but involves several other sub-conflicts such as trade, fishery etc., which affects the overall conflict. It is problematic to separate the different conflicts as they form a close relationship. In addition, smaller conflicts offer possibilities for compromise and confidence building when the larger issues cannot be agreed upon.

Bridging theory and practice is a primary objective in this project and this book offers the structures for future research. It is necessary to include practitioners at one stage of theory development to make it operational. Conflict prevention and conflict management are highly delicate and

practical issues, both politically and operationally and the theoretical development in this field must be closely connected to the implementation phase. Thus, theory and practice must be integrated and developed parallel to avoid creating a theory without practical relevance. Without practical relevance or compatibility, prevention and management will be met with increased skepticism, especially towards the idea of early engagement, and the international community will continue to focus on crisis management, peace enforcement and other highly costly measures. Therefore, this theoretical approach integrates the practical and analytical know-how of regional practitioners and academics in the field from the region at large. Only in this way will it be possible to offer policy recommendations that are empirically grounded and suitable for implementation.

The book investigates local, national, regional and international perspectives on conflict management and prevention in order to provide a multi-levelled analysis. It is assumed that general prevention and management mechanisms do exist and are global in nature. Similarly, there also exists a region specific perspective of how to prevent or deal with conflicts. This book aims at identifying these perspectives in each individual state. The next step will be to integrate the general and region specific tools in a coherent theory of conflict prevention and management, which will be done in the next volume.

The foundation is laid by the introduction chapter and Peter Wallensteen's chapter that puts the different concepts into their positions and examines their mutual relationship and challenges to the concepts. Wallensteen's chapter analyzes the concepts of direct and structural prevention, the differences between applicability and operationality and the problems thereof. He also focuses on regional security building and the regionalization of the concepts in Northeast Asia. This is followed up by Chyungly Lee that ties the theoretical foundations to the practical applicability in Northeast Asia and the implementation of prevention measures in the region. She addresses the distinctions between the security and peace paradigm and makes a comparison with structural and direct prevention. Lee notes that both the security and peace paradigms have drawbacks in the region, and suggests an approach of realist constructivism to move forward. This is followed by two chapters by Niklas Swanström

and Mikael Weissmann that examine the regional structures, and, respectively, the formal and the informal mechanism for preventing and handling disputes. Shoichi Itoh, Vladimir Ivanov and Daojiong Zha examine a practical case - the energy security sector - with a major, unprecedented impact on national security. They propose that energy cooperation should be seen as a means both to prevent further conflicts as well as managing existing ones. This is mirrored by Kyodok Hong's chapter that takes the energy issue as one example that offers the possibility of both conflict and cooperation. Interestingly, energy is an issue that takes the face of a conflict, but carries the force of cooperative possibilities if the political and economic elites are brave enough to engage in cooperation rather than competition. The bulk of the book looks at the individual political entities' perception of conflict prevention and management. Arthur Ding, Ingolf Kiesow, Hiroshi Kimura, Kyudok Hong and Yao Yunzhu each presents a national perspective on how prevention and management could function. They also discuss the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the limitations to each of the concepts. In this way, they provide an overview of the political entities' view of what constitutes a threat. It should be noted that each of the author represents themselves and not their national governments, nor their institutions. There is a wide gap between the different authors both regarding the perceptions of the concepts and the understanding of the root causes of the regional conflicts. However, they are united in their understanding of the necessity of finding tools for handling and preventing conflicts. This is noted shortly in the final chapter that also looks at the future and the necessary undertakings to minimize conflicts and monetary losses.

Taken together, this provides the reader with an overview of the theoretical development in and outside the region, national perceptions and engagement in prevention and management, as well as a section on the practical applicability of the concept in the region. This is in no way a complete overview of the region, nor is it a theoretical merger of different concepts. These aspects are left for a second volume in this matter.