

# **A REGIONAL APPROACH TO CONFLICT PREVENTION AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

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## *Abstract*

Conflict prevention, management and post-conflict reconstruction is a field where regional cooperation has a great potential, but where the success stories are relatively few. The same is true for multilateral solutions and instruments. This only proves that the whole approach to conflict prevention and management is misconceived and too much focused on short-term 'fire-brigade' actions. The case studies in the paper show that conflict prevention and conflict management usually comes too late, with the wrong means, and that post-conflict reconstruction is poorly understood, underfinanced, and generally neglected. Hence, conflict management needs and can be redirected towards the root causes of conflict, but also towards the rather neglected post-conflict reconstruction phase. Although regional cooperation has a great potential, the analysis shows that the institutional preconditions for regional conflict management and conflict resolution are uneven and generally underdeveloped. Hence, a regional integration approach is needed to make this process sustainable. The paper rounds up discussing the intriguing but still unsettled relationship between the UN Security Council and regional approaches to conflict management.