Peacebuilding
Further praise for *Peacebuilding*

“This timely and intellectually stimulating volume offers a theory embedded approach to designing and implementing more effective policies to tackle complex world issues such as terrorism, North–South relations, and good global governance. Essential reading for students, researchers and policymakers.”

Nimet Beriker, Sabanci University


Thania Paffenholz, Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Switzerland

“A tour-de-force study of peacebuilding that offers long-term, sustainable solutions in a world of complex and interrelated challenges.”

Janie Leatherman, Fairfield University

“This bold and wide-ranging book outlines how the U.S. and its partners can avoid the Iraq’s and Afghanistan’s of the future by using available tools of problem-solving and conflict analysis/resolution and applying more deliberately the known lessons from international successes in multi-dimensional conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building – rather than defaulting to piecemeal, unilateral, stove-piped programs that are often ineffective and may worsen the problem. Relating conflict resolution techniques to practical challenges in confronting conflicts, terrorists, and failed states and to the current “whole of government” discourse, this tour de force argues the advantages of a self-interested but pro-active “new realism” in achieving mutual security in our post-9/11, globalized world.”

Michael S. Lund, Senior Associate for Conflict and Peacebuilding, Management Systems International
Peacebuilding

Preventing Violent Conflict in a Complex World

Dennis J. D. Sandole
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The genesis of the idea for this book began with an exchange of e-mail messages between Dr Louise Knight, editorial director for Polity Press in Cambridge, England, and me a few months before the annual convention of the International Studies Association in San Diego, California, in March 2006. Dr Knight had determined that both she and I would be in attendance at that conference – she as an exhibitor and I as a presenter – and that we should meet to discuss how we might be able to work together. At the conference we had a pleasant discussion. I informed her how impressed I was with Polity’s second edition of what was fast becoming a classic: *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* by Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. She told me about some other new ideas she had for Polity, including one in which I might participate, Polity’s series on “War and Conflict in the Modern World.” When I told her that one of the courses I had recently designed which could be relevant for books in that series was on peacebuilding, she invited me to contemplate doing a brief volume on that theme, which I could subsequently use as a text for the course. I accepted her invitation and the results are in the pages that follow.

In addition to Dr Knight, I have worked with her colleagues Rachel Donnelly, Emma Hutchinson, David Winters, Neil de Cort, and Caroline Richmond, each of whom has assisted me in making the transition from idea to completed product more likely. That transition became especially problematic
when a period of illness intervened to throw all my plans to the wind. Nevertheless, despite multiple, successive “estimated dates of completion,” none of which came to fruition, the volume was finally completed and submitted!

That eventual success can only be attributed to my life partner, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste (PhD), who gave up on her own life to ensure that mine remained viable. Ingrid also read through each chapter and the entirety of the manuscript to ensure that, among other things, painkilling medication was not also killing off attention to detail, coherence, and all the other qualities that we take for granted when writing for professional publication.

Saira Yamin, my graduate research assistant, who is completing her doctoral dissertation at ICAR on failed states, also read through the chapters individually and the entirety of the manuscript, plus worked on the index with me. Everything about Saira, including her Pakistani origins, outstanding participation in one of my peacebuilding courses, and work on state failure for her dissertation, made her especially helpful in this regard.

To all these good people, plus Dr Knight and two anonymous reviewers, I owe gratitude, but responsibility for what follows falls on me alone!
This book is dedicated to the new generation of post-zero-sum, post-Machiavellian problem solvers who recognize that, in the postmodern world, national interest is global interest and global interest is national interest and that those who fail to adjust to the “new reality” with an appropriate “new realism” become a part more of the problem than of the solution.
Shortly after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, which arguably “changed the world” in irreversible ways, I entered the office of my physician in Northern Virginia with the view that, since he was a native New Yorker, he would be profoundly affected by the destruction of the World Trade Center as well as by the more immediate destruction of parts of the Pentagon. When I raised the issue, his response was more reflective than visceral: “Well, we obviously have to learn to do some things in the world differently!” This volume, part of Polity’s series on War and Conflict in the Modern World, is an effort to explore and spell out just what that might mean.

Framed as such, this volume represents an admittedly ambitious opportunity to shape the thinking and policies of the political leadership of the world’s powers post-9/11, as well as to offer an introduction to peacebuilding for, among others, university students – two intended audiences that are actually not that far apart considering the record of peacebuilding efforts to date (see chapter 3). Complementing research in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 to understand the motivations of those who are prepared to kill themselves in order to kill others (see chapter 4), the effort to influence the thinking and behavior of national, international, and transnational policymakers was accelerated by the run-up to the passionately contested 2008 US presidential elections.1

Projects to influence political leadership, often by former insiders, have a colorful pedigree, reflecting a “public–private
partnership” model associated with Niccolò Machiavelli and others before him (e.g., Kautilya in India and Sun Tzu in China). In his classic The Prince (Il principe, written in 1513), Machiavelli described how successful leaders actually behaved (and, therefore, as they should, a posteriori, behave) in what has come to be regarded by some as unethical and noxious, yet for others brilliant policy guidelines for political leaders. For example, his advice to “a Prince on the Subject of the Art of War” includes the following sentiments:

A prince ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything else for his study, than war and its rules and disciplines; for this is the sole art that belongs to him who rules, and it is of such force that it not only upholds those who are born princes, but it often enables men to rise from a private station to that rank. And, on the contrary, it is seen that when princes have thought more of ease than of arms they have lost their states. (Machiavelli, [1532] 1998)

Underlying Machiavelli’s recommendations were not only his reading of Greek and Roman history but also his personal experiences with, and observations of, the political leadership of his native Florence and elsewhere in medieval Europe during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These included his own arrest and torture by the Medicis after they returned to power – the very same people for whom Machiavelli had written and dedicated his book (specifically, Lorenzo “the Magnificent”).

A fundamental difference in tone between this volume and Machiavelli’s, however, is that this book is about sustaining life on a fragile planet – notably the life of the planet itself. It is not, therefore, just about keeping one ruler or group of rulers in power or maintaining the privileged hegemony of one country through a series of zero-sum actions and reactions which, by definition, are at the expense of others. By
implication, this volume is also designed for the concerned citizen – the “local” – as a correlate of the university student, in part to generate “bottom-up” pressure on “The Prince” to do what is practical (which may have been part of Machiavelli’s original purpose), as well as to stimulate empathy for the policymaking enterprise and interest in eventually joining its ranks.

The aftermath of 9/11, including the epiphenomenal “Global War on Terror” and the US-led military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, drove US policy at the expense of nearly all other issues during most of the eight years in office of former President George W. Bush. It also tested the moral staying power of the “indispensable” nation’s commitment to the rule of law and human rights. America-watchers worldwide have been monitoring the impact of the “Bush legacy” on Barack Obama’s foreign policy agenda since his inauguration in January 2009 as America’s 44th and first African American president (see chapter 5). Their objective has been to explore to what extent Obama (and other leading policymakers) will do the “right thing” with regard to climate change, poverty, state failure, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and other elements of the global problematique, among them the worst financial and economic crises since the Great Depression.

One example of the complexity inherent in the current global problematique is that “doing the right thing” with regard to the financial and economic crises may mean reaching widespread consensus on the proposition that “global problems require global solutions.” By contrast, on the more traditional front of national security, doing the right thing may mean yielding to the Hobbesian magnetism of “every man for himself,” motivating even the “high priests” of the European Union toward virulent nationalism and protectionism (see Sandole, 2002b).
I decided to enter the fray to help distill coherence out of chaos, to assist in laying the foundation for a primer on survival which focuses on survival in a broader sense than that envisioned by Machiavelli. The means identified for achieving this ambitious goal include making the case that policymakers must tackle all aspects of the global problematique if they want to deal successfully with any one of them. The means also include mining peacebuilding theory and practice to identify and provide concerned citizens and introductory students, as well as policymakers, with the vision, frameworks, and other tools (“checklists”) necessary for constructing a “post-realist” problem-solving paradigm – a “new” or “cosmopolitan realism.” The underlying premise is that the postmodern world is increasingly characterized by complex, interconnected problems that cannot be solved by a single actor. Attempts to deal unilaterally with any one pressing issue at the expense of others with which it is interconnected only reinforces the phenomenon of “unintended consequences.” The perception of increasing empirical validation of the primary proposition of complexity theory – “that everything is connected to everything else” (Waldrop, 1992) – has been assuming a surreal, law-like regularity.

Accordingly, if the prime minister of a country plagued by civil war wants to invite the concerned international community to help design and implement a “post-conflict peacebuilding” intervention in her country, she will have to work with colleagues who deal with, among other issues, conflict transformation, interfaith dialogue, trauma healing, gender relations, local security, reconciliation, poverty management, disease eradication, economic and social development, infrastructural reconstruction and, yes, global warming.

The arguments, frameworks, and insights in this volume may be compelling and persuasive for many, even to the point of seriously undermining their cherished beliefs and values.
The potency of prevailing paradigms can be such, however, that a modern-day Machiavellian might pay attention to the global problematique and the various linkages connecting its elements and still wind up in a zero-sum world of enemies and friends, win–lose strategies and tactics. As a consequence, he may never appreciably “feel” the core anomaly in Machiavellianism that “national interest is global interest” and, conversely, “global interest is national interest.”

The “residual Machiavellian” will not, therefore, be persuaded by any effort to advance the agenda of “cosmopolitanism” or “new realism” (see Sandole, 2006a) in order finally and resolutely to supersede “classical realism.” Classical realism, whose origins can be traced to Thucydides and his chronicles of the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens over two thousand years ago, is, if nothing else, resilient. For example, at one point in the well-documented negotiations between Athens and the island state of Melos in 416 BC, the Athenian ambassadors declare to their Melian interlocutors: “The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must” (Thucydides, 1951, p. 331). These sentiments have resonated with many political leaders since then, among them the occupant of the Oval Office during the first decade of the twenty-first century. They will continue to have their adherents, as has been clear in the acrimonious debates, including within the European Union, on how to deal best with financial and economic crises.

On the assumption that my physician was on the right track with his realization that, after 9/11, “We have to learn to do some things in the world differently,” we now move on to chapter 1 to address peacebuilding and the complex world within which it is contemplated, designed, and implemented – a world beyond the imaginations of Thucydides or Machiavelli, although the likes of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, among others, would have made sense to