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Why Is There So Much Conflict
in the Middle East?

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The Middle East is one of the most conflict-prone regions—but why? The Collier-Hoeffler model of civil war provides the starting point for our analysis. In an application to Africa, Collier and Hoeffler found poverty to be the most significant predictor of conflict. For conflict in the Middle East, a more complex picture emerges. Consistent with Collier and Hoeffler, the authors find that economic development and economic growth, in addition to longer periods of peace, generally decrease the likelihood of conflict. They also find that ethnic dominance is significant, while social fractionalization is not. Contrary to Collier and Hoeffler, they find that regime type matters. Variables for the Middle East region, Islamic countries, and oil dependence are not significant. Conflict in the Middle East is quite well explained by a general theory of civil war, and there is no need to invoke a pattern of "Middle Eastern exceptionalism."

Keywords: Middle East; conflict; Collier-Hoeffler model; civil war

Conflict in the Middle East is a recurring feature in international politics, academic literature, and current news coverage. The fifty-five-year-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most enduring conflicts anywhere, but over the past twenty-five years, the region has also hosted two of the wars with the most international participants (Iraq in 1991 and 2003), as well as the bloodiest interstate war of that period (Iran-Iraq, 1980-1988). The region is also surrounded by other long-term conflict zones: Afghanistan, the Caucasus, the Horn of Africa, and Sudan. Internal and regional instabilities have combined with the close ties between Middle Eastern and arms-producing governments to make the Middle East the most militarized region in the world (Bureau of Verification and Compliance 2000; Sköns et al. 2002). In the extensive literature on international water disputes, the Middle East figures very

141

prominently (see, e.g., Lonergan 1997). The Middle East lags behind in economic, social, and political development (United Nations Development Program [UNDP] 2002). Reference is frequently made to "Middle Eastern exceptionalism"—that is, that there is something unique about the Middle East that makes the region prone to conflict, autocracy, and economic misery (see, e.g., Rubin 2002).

Since the 1950s, civil war has been the dominant type of conflict. In 2003, twenty-seven out of twenty-nine armed conflicts with more than twenty-five battle-related casualties were domestic and internationalized civil wars (Eriksson and Wallensteen 2004). In this study, we use a modified version of the model of civil war developed by Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002, 2004) to analyze the onset of civil conflict globally and in the Middle East region. Like Collier and Hoeffler, we restrict our analysis to intrastate armed conflict.

We first show that the Middle East indeed is a conflict-ridden region but that Asia and Africa are now equally or even more conflict prone. We compare the Middle East to other regions and find it to be characterized by authoritarian regimes, oil-dependent economies, Islam, and the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We discuss some contending approaches to the study of civil war. For a long time, the language of grievance dominated the civil war research agenda. Recently, more focus has been paid to the economic opportunity for rebellion. The Collier-Hoeffler model (subsequently called the CH model) has gained considerable prominence in the empirical study of civil war and has served as a basis for a widely publicized World Bank report on civil war (Collier et al. 2003). A modified version of the model used in their work on conflict in Africa (Collier and Hoeffler 2002) provides the design for the multivariate analysis. We next describe the model and the variables before presenting our empirical results and discussing their interpretation. Consistent with Collier and Hoeffler, we find that economic development and economic growth, in addition to longer periods of peace, generally decrease the likelihood of conflict. We also find that ethnic dominance is significant, while social fractionalization is not. In contrast to Collier and Hoeffler, we find that regime type matters. Variables for the Middle East region, Islamic countries, and oil dependence are not significant. Conflict in the Middle East is quite well explained by a general theory of civil war, and there is no need to invoke a pattern of "Middle Eastern exceptionalism."

CONFLICTS BY REGION AND TIME

Despite the prevalence of the image of the Middle East as conflict ridden, this point needs empirical scrutiny. Is the Middle East really more prone to conflict than other
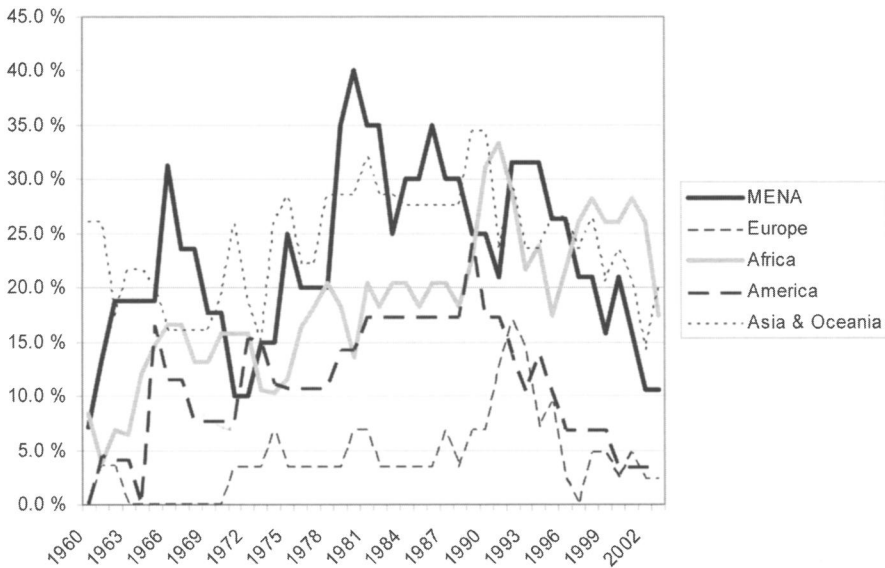
Figure 1: Relative Incidence of Armed Civil Conflict by Region, 1960-2003
SOURCE: PRIO/Uppsala conflict data (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Eriksson and Wallensteen 2004).
NOTE: In tallying the incidence of conflict, we include all years with ongoing conflicts but only for the con-
flict theater itself. We do not include outside countries that intervene in the conflict. We define the Middle
East as follows: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco,
Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (including North and
South Yemen). See Appendix 4 (online) for the definition of all regions.

regions? The distribution of conflict per region in Figure 1 is based on the International
Peace Research Institute (PRIO)/Uppsala conflict data set (Gleditsch et al. 2002;
Eriksson and Wallensteen 2004). The analysis includes all internal armed conflicts
(including internationalized internal conflicts) with more than twenty-five battle-
related deaths per year. The figure shows that, relative to the number of countries in
each region, the Middle East has competed with Asia for the position of the most con-
flict-ridden region for the better part of the period. However, after the end of the cold
war, this is no longer true. The incidence of conflict in the Middle East has declined
from the end of the 1980s, as is the case for other regions. The Middle East now has a
slightly lower incidence of conflict than Africa and Asia. Lacina and Gleditsch (2004)
find that conflicts in the Middle East are usually not among those with the highest
fatalities. The one exception is an interstate war, the Iran-Iraq War, which made the
Middle East the bloodiest region in the 1980s.

The relationship between armed civil conflict and an explanatory variable is often
endogenous. As a result of war, political institutions and economies are weakened,
ethnic minorities might flee, and so forth—in brief, the presence of an armed conflict
influences the main variables used to explain conflict, with the exception of geograph-
ical variables. Ongoing conflict also influences the quality and availability of data.

TABLE 1

The Regional Distribution of Armed Civil Conflict, 1960-2003

	The Americas	Europe and Caucasus	Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East and North Africa	Asia	All Countries
Number of armed civil conflicts	21	24	56	22	39	162
Percentage of country years (onset)	1.6	1.7	3.2	2.7	3.2	2.6
Percentage of country years (incidence)	11.8	4.4	19.5	23.6	24.3	15.9

NOTE: Numbers based on the PRIO/Uppsala conflict data set (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Eriksson and Wallensteen 2004). Intervening powers not included.

Gathering reliable statistical data is rarely the top priority of governments involved in armed conflict. These are two strong arguments for analyzing the onset (outbreak) of a new civil conflict rather than its incidence (or prevalence).[1] Also, the *incidence* of civil war conflates onset and duration. Many scholars argue that the causes of civil war duration are different from the causes of civil war onset (see Hegre 2004). Table 1 displays the regional pattern of conflict up to 2003.

In terms of conflict onsets, the Middle East does not stand out as the most conflict-prone region (see Appendix 5 [online] on our replication data page for annual data on conflict onsets by region). The average onset of conflict in the period from 1960 to 2003 in the Middle East is higher than the Americas and Europe/Caucasus but lower than sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The incidence of conflict is nevertheless almost as high as Asia and higher than any other region because conflicts in the Middle East tend to last for a long time.

In Appendix 2, we list all the conflicts in the Middle East ongoing in the period from 1960 to 2003. A variety of conflicts can be observed. Many are between a government and militant Islamists (Algeria 1991-2003, Egypt 1992-1998, Saudi Arabia 1979, Syria 1979-1982, and others). Several countries have also fought military factions (Iraq in 1963, Morocco in 1971, and Syria in 1966). In Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, changing governments have fought Kurdish separatists—since the early 1960s in the Iraqi case. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is persistent but mostly limited to Israel. For more than a decade (1975-1989), Morocco fought secessionists in former Spanish Sahara, and the various unifications of Yemen have also been followed by fighting between the government and secessionists (1962-1970, 1986, 1996). But what general patterns can be found in this variety?

THEORIES OF CIVIL WAR

Accounts of civil war have frequently referred to ethnic and religious hatred and to economic, political, and social discrimination. In the recent turn away from the tradi-

1. Collier and Hoffler (2002, 18) also refer to the "incidence" of civil war, but by this they mean "incidence of war starts," which we have called *onset*.

tional grievance-based rhetoric, some researchers suggest that greed (or opportunity) serves as a better explanation for civil conflict: "The true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance, but the silent force of greed" (Collier 1999, 8). Following Gurr (1970) and Ellingsen (2000), we see the outbreak of armed civil conflict as a combination of *frustration* (repression, suffering), *opportunity* (enough freedom to organize; access to finances, weapons, and soldiers), and a common *identity* (cohesion facilitates mobilization). Although we feature the CH model prominently, we include in the model variables relevant to all three general factors in civil war.[2]

The CH model provides valuable insight into the role of economic factors in civil war. A substantial body of literature deals with the relationship between civil war, economic growth, and natural resources (Addison, Le Billon, and Murshed 2002; Auty 2001; de Soysa 2002; Le Billon 2001). This literature emphasizes the crucial importance of access to finances in the form of foreign support for the insurgency, the availability to raise revenue through the extraction of resource rents, or indirectly through taxing goods passing through rebel-controlled territory. With the end of the cold war, foreign support for rebel groups has decreased, and such movements have increasingly been forced to generate their own revenue. In this new conflict environment, the line between civil war and crime has become increasingly blurred.

In brief, Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002, 2004) present two partially competing perspectives on civil war: high levels of grievance and opportunities for forming a rebel organization. Their analytical model focuses mainly on conditions that favor the formation of rebel organizations, and their econometric model predicts the probability of a civil war being initiated in a country during a five-year period. While both the opportunity and grievance factors are investigated, Collier and Hoeffler (2004, 25) conclude that "a model that focuses on the opportunities for rebellion performs well, whereas objective indicators of grievance add little explanatory power."

While economic inequality, political rights, ethnic polarization, and religious fractionalization were insignificant, natural resource dependence emerged as a significant factor in the CH study. Economic development and access to finance, in the form of foreign contributions or control over natural resources, provide the backbone of the opportunity explanation for civil war. A short time since last conflict always increases the risk of a new conflict. In their work on Africa, Collier and Hoeffler (2002) conclude that the main source of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa is the region's poor economic performance. In contrast to several empirical studies, Collier and Hoeffler find no effect of regime type. We reexamine this finding. We also question the usefulness of their natural resource dependence variable. In our analysis, we therefore extend and modify the CH model.

MIDDLE EAST EXCEPTIONALISM?

Middle East exceptionalism is mostly used to denote the region's resistance to democracy but also includes the region's lack of success in economic and social devel-

2. A useful recent review of the civil war literature is found in Sambanis (2002).

opment, a prominent example being the position of women, in addition to the persistent state of conflict (Kedourie 1994; Kramer 1996; Aarts 1999; Rubin 2002). Can conflict in the Middle East be explained by factors that are unique to the Middle East? Or is the Middle East just an unfortunate region where conflict risk factors have accumulated?

The borders of the modern Middle East region were drawn up by the victorious powers of the First World War, as laid out in the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement. The former core areas of the vast Ottoman Empire became the state of Turkey. The Armenian provinces were given to Russia, Lebanon and most of Syria to France, and modern-day Iraq and the rest of Syria to Britain. France controlled Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, while Britain was in charge of Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, and southern Yemen. By the mid-1960s, the people living in the areas drawn up as states or mandates by the Sykes-Picot agreement had achieved their independence.

The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 has been the source of considerable regional conflict and instability, and the protracted conflict has hampered political and economic development in the entire region. Due to its geographic location and resources (notably oil), the Middle East is generally considered to be of great strategic importance to the main players in world politics. The political economy of the Middle Eastern states has given them a particularly strong level of integration in the world economy. There is also a uniquely close relationship between Israel and the United States. Great-power bickering and external intervention continue to influence the region today, with the U.S.-U.K. invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 as just one of several examples. We will proxy Middle East exceptionalism by using a Middle East dummy in our empirical analysis. There is no compelling theoretical reason for including such a variable. It simply measures whatever factors that are peculiar to the Middle East that we have been unable to measure more directly. The empirical analysis will show that, in fact, there is no reason to posit any such regional exceptionalism.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The Middle East region remains the world's authoritarian stronghold and has yet to experience a wave of democratization (Huntington 1991). Of the region's nineteen states, only Israel and Turkey qualify as more or less democratic. Israel obtains maximum scores on the Polity index in the entire period (1960-2000). On the Polyarchy index, which includes participation, it scores from 28 to 37 (the maximum is 47). Turkey's score roller-coasts from very low to very high on both indices. The democratic deficit in the Middle East resides in a complex set of circumstances. There has been extensive debate about the role of Islam. Fish (2004) finds, in a multivariate cross-national analysis, that Islam is robustly associated with autocracy and attributes this mainly to the subordination of women in Islamic states (although this is not required by the Koran). Donno and Russett (2004), on the other hand, find that this is more characteristic of Arab states than of Islamic countries generally. The colonial experience, continued foreign influence, and persistent conflict have not encouraged democratic tendencies either. Yet, other countries have broken out of such postcolonial authoritar-

ianism. More important, in most of the Middle Eastern countries, the basis of the economy has not produced social and economic development with modernism and democracy as favorable by-products. In particular, heavy dependence on oil production is not conducive to democracy (Ross 2001).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The main sources of economic income and activity in the region stem from natural resources, workers' remittances, foreign aid, agriculture, and small businesses. Industry plays a minor role in most Middle Eastern economies, and economic development has generally been state driven (Owen and Pamuk 1999). The role of natural resources is particularly important to an analysis of the causes of civil war. While some researchers emphasize the importance of resource scarcity to conflict (Homer-Dixon 1999), others argue that resource abundance drives conflict because control of natural resources provides a source for financing rebellions and personal wealth for rebel leaders (Collier and Hoeffler 2002; Le Billon 2001). Along the same lines, rentier-state theory argues that resource-dependent states are likely to develop authoritarian political systems and economies with low diversity (Beblawi and Luciani 1987). Sachs and Warner (1995) found that resource-abundant economies grow at a slower rate than resource-poor ones. A combination of population growth and an increasing portion of people with higher education has led most Middle Eastern governments to swamp their bureaucracies with new graduates. Further hampering economic development is the high military spending, largely funded by oil income.

RELIGION

The birthplace of three world religions, the Middle East today is overwhelmingly Muslim. Much conflict and friction has occurred between the two major strands of Islam: Sunni (about 85 percent) and Shia Islam. Iran is the only Shia Islamic republic. Shia Muslims constitute the majority of the populations in Iraq and Bahrain, and significant Shiite minorities are found in Lebanon and Syria. Sunni and Shia each have several sects and subbranches. Inter-Islamic rivalry and conflict has been present since the religion's early history. Several countries have experienced internal Shia-Sunni conflicts (Lebanon, Iraq, Syria), and the Shiite Iranian regime is feared by its Sunni Islamic neighbors. Jews constitute 80 percent of the population in Israel, while Christians constitute significant minorities in Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Egypt, and Iraq.

Islam and Islamic law (Sharia) are derived from the teachings of the Koran and the practice of the Prophet Mohammed (Sunna). Muslims vary in their rigidity of adherence to Islamic teaching, in the same way as Muslim states vary in the degree of application of Sharia law. Consequently, very diverse expressions of Islam are found around the world.

The role of Islam in political and organizational life—variously called Islamism, Islamization, fundamentalist Islam, and political Islam—has increased in the period

that we study. In 1928, Hassan al-Banna founded the first Islamist group, the Muslim Brotherhood, in Egypt. However, it was not until the 1950s that the Brotherhood and other Islamist organizations gained popularity. Secular ideologies have generally failed in the region. Various versions of radical socialism failed in the 1950s and 1960s, and pan-Arabism did not fare much better in subsequent periods. Since the late 1970s, Islamic groups have gained greater support and have become more potent political and social players. Woltering (2002) suggests that there is little about Islam per se that accounts for the growth of political Islam and that one should look to political, social, and economic explanations. In some areas, Islamist groups have supplemented or even replaced the government as social service providers. An important membership base has been the masses of the educated unemployed. Frustration on a personal as well as political level—a continued sense of humiliation through covert and direct foreign support for repressive regimes as well as direct foreign intervention—has left many disillusioned with their own governments, as well as those of the major Western powers. This makes support for an Islamic solution an attractive option, if not the only one.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002, 2004) used a five-year period design to predict the probability of conflict breaking out in each period. This approach can be seen as a discrete-time duration analysis of peace periods (Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998, 1261f.). All duration analyses raise the problem of time-varying covariates: some variables, such as regime type, can change over the duration being studied, so that neither the value at the start or the end of the period is representative for the whole period. The most common solution to this problem is to include more and shorter time periods (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004, 95ff.). Most quantitative analyses on the causes of civil war are conducted on the basis of country-years, a short enough basis to ensure that time-varying covariates are representative. Therefore, we apply the CH model to an annualized data set. In addition to changing the structure of the data set, we use a different threshold for conflict. Instead of the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths required by the Correlates of War project, we include conflicts with a threshold of 25 battle-related deaths per year from the PRIO/Uppsala conflict data set. Due to data constraints for some of the explanatory variables, the statistical analysis is limited to the period from 1960 to 2000.

STATISTICAL MODEL

We employ a logistic regression model in our analysis. Logistic regression analysis is appropriate when the dependent variable is dichotomous and skewed. However,

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3. On the basis of simulations, King and Zeng (2001, 157) conclude that these biases should be addressed when the distribution on the dependent variable is at least 5 to 95 percent.

when the dependent variable is very skewed,[3] standard logistic regression models can report biased estimates (King and Zeng 2001). We correct for this bias by using King and Zeng's (2001) RELOGIT procedure. STATA Version 8.2 (StataCorp 2003) was used to run the analyses.[4] We use a time-series, cross-section data set in which the assumption of independence between observations is rarely met. We employ the Beck, Katz, and Tucker (1998) method for the control of time dependence, using cubic splines.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:
ARMED CIVIL CONFLICT

The dependent variable is internal and internationalized internal conflict. We will use the term *armed civil conflict* to denote both types. An armed conflict is defined by the PRIO/Uppsala conflict data as "a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths" (Gleditsch et al. 2002, 618).[5] Internal conflict "occurs between the government of a state and internal opposition groups without intervention from other states." Internationalized internal conflict "occurs between the government of a state and internal opposition groups with intervention from other states" (Gleditsch et al. 2002, 619). Onset is defined as the eruption of a new conflict (a unique ID in the data set) and a change in the conflict's sub-ID.[6] The dependent variable is censored in the remaining years of the conflict since a country in a continuing state of civil war cannot experience a transition from peace to war. This censoring includes cases in which the onset occurred before 1960. The variable is coded 1 for all onsets and 0 otherwise.

In the period analyzed in this article (1960-2000), 168 armed civil conflict onsets were recorded. Armed civil conflict remains a rather rare event that occurred in only 3.4 percent of all country-years.[7]

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4. The RELOGIT procedure is not a maximum likelihood estimator, so we do not report log-likelihood values.

5. A state is defined as an internationally recognized sovereign government controlling a specified territory or an internationally unrecognized government controlling a specified territory whose sovereignty is not disputed by another internationally recognized sovereign government previously controlling the same territory.

6. A sub-ID is by default 0 and changes when the conflict has fewer than twenty-five battle-related deaths over a period of ten years; the conflict type changes from internal to internationalized internal and when the opposition changes completely (Strand, Wilhelmsen, and Gleditsch 2003, 3).

7. The PRIO/Uppsala data set contains several conflicts that broke out at a time when there was already a conflict going on in the same country (e.g., in large countries such as India and Indonesia). Simultaneous conflicts pose a methodological challenge since studies of armed conflict onset usually study transitions from peace to war, omitting consecutive years of war. Urdal (2002) coded two different variables, "Onset1" (armed conflicts that erupted in a state of peace) and "Onset2" (all armed conflict onsets regardless of whether the conflict broke out when another conflict was taking place in the same country). The difference between the two coding schemes did not influence Urdal's results much. To follow the Collier-Hoeffler (CH) design, simultaneous conflicts are censored. This analysis includes all outbreaks of (new) armed civil conflicts as defined by the PRIO/Uppsala data set's conflict ID and sub-ID.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The CH model includes gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, economic growth, natural resource dependence, ethnic dominance, social fractionalization, time since last conflict, population size, and geographical dispersion. We measure income and economic growth from the World Bank's real purchasing power parity (PPP)–adjusted GDP per capita, log-transformed. Natural resource dependence is proxied in three ways: data from *World Development Indicators* (World Bank 2002) are used to calculate the ratio of primary commodity exports to GDP. The same source was used to create the oil dependency and mineral dependency variables: the value of oil and mineral export to GDP, with the cutoff point set to 40 percent. We subtract the mean of oil and mineral dependence to minimize collinearity (Friedrich 1982, 822). The dummy for ethnic dominance is 1 if a single ethnolinguistic group makes up 45 to 90 percent of the total population and 0 otherwise, based on data from *Atlas Narodov Mira* (Department of Geodesy and Cartography 1964). This variable was copied and extrapolated from the original CH data set. We created a slightly modified variable, *ethnic dominance, Islam*. The eleven countries with significant Shia minorities were changed from 1 to 0 on ethnic dominance. Other religions could, of course, also have been subdivided, but this would have been a major project of its own. We gave priority to a more realistic coding of Islam as the dominant religion in the Middle East. Social fractionalization is a combined measure of ethnic and religious fractionalization. Following Collier and Hoeffler (2002, 26-7), ethnic fractionalization is measured by the ethnolinguistic fractionalization index, which measures the probability that two randomly selected individuals from a given country do not speak the same language. Data are only available for 1960. Using data from Barrett (1982) on religious affiliation, Collier and Hoeffler constructed an analogous religious fractionalization index. Following Barro (1997), Collier and Hoeffler also aggregated the various religious affiliations into nine categories: the fractionalization indices range from 0 (*completely homogeneous*) to 100 (*completely fractionalized*). The social fractionalization index is calculated as the product of ethnolinguistic fractionalization and religious fractionalization. Data for total population in each country were taken from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators* from various years. The variable was logged. For their measure of geographical dispersion, Collier and Hoeffler generated a Gini coefficient of population dispersion for each country, set to 0 if the total population is evenly distributed around the country and 1 if it is concentrated in one area. Data were only available for 1990 and 1995. For earlier years, we copied the 1990 value, and for 1991 to 2000, we used the 1995 value. We added two variables measuring regime type: the Polyarchy index of democracy, developed by Vanhanen (2000), ranges from 0 (*least democratic*) to 47.11 (*most democratic*). Polyarchy is a multiplicative index combining measures of political competition and participation, defined as in Dahl (1971). In additional analyses, not reported in table form, we used the Polity measure of democracy (Jaggers and Gurr 1995).

Following Beck, Katz, and Tucker (1998), we control for temporal dependence through a variable measuring time since last conflict and cubic splines. Time since the last conflict counts the number of whole years since the end of the last conflict in that

country. The spline variables were constructed with the BTSCS program (Tucker 1998).

We follow the Correlates of War (2002) country numbers in our definition of regions. We define a country as Islamic if it is a current member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The OIC was established in 1969, but all current members are assigned the value 1 and nonmembers the value 0 for the entire period. All current members had a substantial Muslim population before the OIC was established. The following countries are members of the OIC: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, *Brunei*, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, *Maldives*, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, *Palestine*, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, *Surinam*, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. Countries in italics were not included in the data set.

For a more detailed description of the independent variables, see Appendix 3 on our data Web page.

RESULTS

First, we present the general result of the CH model of civil conflict applied to an annualized data set and with some additional variables included. We then address conflict in the Middle East and North Africa region. Several variables are introduced to better capture the religious difference in the region, the importance of regime type, and more detailed data on natural resources. Collier and Hoeffler (2002) found that wealth, economic growth, social fractionalization, and longer periods of peace reduced the propensity for conflict (see Appendix 1 for their original table). Primary commodity dependence and a large population increased the risk for conflict. Ethnic dominance, geographic dispersion, and the sub-Saharan Africa variables were positive but not significant.[8]

Table 2 presents our annual analysis with the lower threshold for conflict and our specifications of the variables. Moving to an annualized design using a different conflict data set, we find a slightly different picture of the causes of civil war. Globally, high levels of economic development and growth and longer periods with peace decrease the likelihood for conflict, consistent with what Collier and Hoeffler (2002) found. We find ethnic dominance to be significant (at the 10 percent level), while social fractionalization is not. A high score on social fractionalization implies a large number of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups within the country. According to Collier and Hoeffler, high fractionalization should impede mobilization to conflict. This is not supported by our findings. That the presence of a dominant ethnic group

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8. However, Collier and Hoeffler (2004, 39) generally find ethnic dominance to be significant in their combined opportunity and grievance model.

TABLE 2
Accounting for Armed Conflict 1960-2000:
The Collier-Hoeffler Model with PRIO/Uppsala Data

	β	*Standard Error*	p	*dPr (Onset)*[a]
ln GDP per capita	–0.37	0.082	< .0005	–0.035
GDP growth	–7.78	2.38	.001	–0.026
Primary commodity exports	0.072	2.53	.977	–0.0073
Primary commodity exports squared	1.35	4.33	.755	
Social fractionalization	0.000011	0.000058	.852	0.00082
Ethnic dominance	0.32	0.23	.158	0.0062
ln Population	0.16	0.084	.063	0.015
Geographical dispersion	0.99	0.57	.082	0.011
Years in peace	–0.13	0.10	.204	
Spline 1	–0.0014	0.0014	.300	
Spline 2	0.00061	0.00089	.498	
Spline 3	–0.000056	0.00023	.814	
Constant	–2.93	1.33	.028	

NOTE: n = 3,601. Primary commodity exports and primary commodity exports squared are represented together. See King and Zeng (2001) for details on the computation algorithm used. GDP = gross domestic product.
a. Shows the change in probability for observing onset in a given year when each variable changes from the 5th to the 95th percentile, holding all other variables at their mean values.

yields a higher risk of conflict is in line with findings in Gurr (1993). Hegre et al. (2001) find a weak correlation between fragmentation and civil war, while Ellingsen (2000, 228) finds that "multiethnicity does increase the propensity for domestic violence." However, in both cases, political and socioeconomic factors were found to be more important in predicting conflict: political and economic factors influence the centrality of ethnic identities, play a major role in the possibility for conflict mobilization, and affect whether conflict escalates to a violent level.

Primary commodity dependence is not significant in our analysis. The natural resource variable lumps together all kinds of natural resources, ranging from beverages and food to oil, metals, and diamonds (Collier and Hoeffler 2002, 16). Several scholars have argued that the variable is too wide to measure conflict-related natural resources very meaningfully (de Soysa 2002). We therefore break down natural resource dependence into dependence on oil and minerals.

WHAT CAUSES CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002, 2004) demonstrate that poverty is the most important element explaining conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. What explains conflict in the Middle East? We examine the descriptive statistics to see if the Middle East region scores systematically differently on one or more variables compared with sub-Saharan Africa and the global average (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics, 1960–2000

	All Countries					Africa					Middle East				
	n	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	n	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	n	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita	5,250	7.42	1.58	4.34	10.94	1,595	6.07	0.88	4.44	9.05	602	7.89	1.22	5.50	10.77
GDP cap growth	5,168	0.019	0.070	−0.722	1.55	1,556	0.0090	0.068	−0.40	0.67	590	0.017	0.080	−0.44	0.42
Oil dependence	3,082	0.00	0.109	−0.0349	1.10	710	0.00071	0.12	−0.035	1.05	435	0.100	0.21	−0.035	1.10
Oil dependence squared	3,082	0.012	0.068	0.00	1.22	710	0.014	0.070	0.00	1.10	435	0.055	0.15	0.00	1.22
Oil dependence (dummy)	3,082	0.025	0.156	0	1	710	0.035	0.1844	0	1	435	0.12	0.32	0	1
Mineral dependency	3,276	0.00	0.038	−0.0142	0.40	799	0.013	0.060	−0.014	0.398	433	−0.0041	0.021	−0.014	0.14
Mineral dependency squared	3,276	0.0014	0.0082	0.00	0.16	799	0.0038	0.015	0.00	0.158	433	0.00048	0.0017	0.00	0.019
Social fractionalization	4,972	1,811.09	1,934.96	4	6,975	1,530	3,537.82	1,988.69	20	6,975	625	251.81	236.43	4	938
Ethnic dominance, Islam	5,077	0.46	0.50	0	1	1,530	0.36	0.48	0	1	650	0.55	0.50	0	1
Islam (dummy)	5,802	0.33	0.47	0	1	1,651	0.50	0.50	0	1	766	0.95	0.23	0	1
Logged population	5,652	8.94	1.55	4.81	14.06	1,625	8.42	1.27	5.38	11.62	751	8.59	1.45	4.81	11.13
Geographical dispersion	4,817	0.60	0.20	0	0.97	1,530	0.58	0.18	0	0.86	610	0.61	0.26	0.0030	0.92
Polyarchy	5,159	0.00	12.81	−10.30	36.81	1,408	−7.23	5.57	−10.30	17.36	666	−6.20	9.29	−10.30	27.22
Polyarchy squared	5,159	164.11	206.00	0.0019	1,354.75	1,408	83.30	42.70	0.035	301.26	666	124.58	101.00	0.80	740.76
Middle East (dummy)	5,802	0.13	0.34	0	1										
Primary commodity exports/GDP	4,982	0.15	0.15	0.0020	1.20	1,490	0.18	0.14	0.0090	0.57	655	0.25	0.24	0.0060	1.198

153

The Middle East is home to some of the richest as well as the poorest countries in the world but is, on average, much better off than sub-Saharan Africa and slightly better off than the global average. However, economic development in the Middle East has been oil dependent and state driven and has not followed the modernization path of economic diversification, occupational specialization, and mass education (Inglehart 1997). The Middle East is the world's most oil-rich region (but does not rank as high in minerals).

Middle Eastern countries stand out as extremely homogeneous, while African countries are highly fractionalized. Contrary to Collier and Hoeffler's (2002) work on Africa, we find that ethnic dominance increases the risk of conflict. The Middle East scores higher than Africa and the global average on ethnic dominance. However, as originally coded, this variable does not account for the divisions within Islam. When we use our recoded variable (ethnic dominance, Islam), where countries with significant Shia minorities are given a 0, the Middle East scores much lower on ethnic dominance than Africa and the global average.

Authoritarian and democratic regimes are generally less prone to conflict than regimes with middle-range scores (Hegre et al. 2001; Fearon and Laitin 2003). Both Africa and the Middle East score significantly less democratic than the global average.

Populous countries are more prone to conflict, mainly because larger populations are more likely to host more sources of conflict. Middle East countries are generally small, and population size does not account for conflicts in this region. We now add modified ethnic dominance, regime type, and natural resource dependence to the analysis.

A REVISED MODEL

In Table 4, we examine the three variables proxying Middle East exceptionalism. To the CH model, we have added dummy variables for the countries in the Middle East region, Islamic countries, and countries where oil constitutes more than 40 percent of total exports. The Middle East dummy is not significant (model 2), so the region as a whole is neither more nor less conflict prone than the rest of the world. This corresponds well with Table 2. We then examine other features of the suggested Middle East exceptionalism.[9]

IS IT ISLAM?

Are some religions more aggressive and conflict prone than others? Huntington's (1996, 258) clash of civilization thesis predicts increasing conflicts between Islam and the West, claiming that "Islam's borders are bloody, and so are its innards." According to Huntington, Muslims are involved in a disproportionate percentage of violent con-

9. As a check on the robustness of the results, we have run the same model with incidence of armed civil conflict as the dependent variable instead of onset. The Middle East dummy variable is now positive and significant, confirming that conflicts in the Middle East tend to last longer. The other results are quite similar.

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TABLE 4

Accounting for Armed Conflict 1960-2000:

Revising the Collier-Hoeffler Model

</div>

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
GDP per capita	–0.37***	–0.37***	–0.34***	–0.45***
	(–4.52)	(–4.37)	(–3.99)	(–4.58)
Economic growth	–7.78***	–7.72***	–7.71***	–10.96***
	(–3.27)	(–3.32)	(–3.34)	(–4.81)
Natural resource dependence	0.072	–0.035	0.10	1.63
	(0.03)	(–0.01)	(0.04)	(0.55)
Natural resource dependence squared	1.35	1.07	0.94	2.51
	(0.31)	(0.26)	(0.21)	(0.58)
Social fractionalization	–0.000011	0.000019	–0.000075	–0.000058
	(–0.19)	(0.32)	(–0.13)	(–0.74)
Ethnic dominance	0.32	0.31	0.35	0.51*
	(1.41)	(1.38)	(1.55)	(1.83)
ln Population	0.16*	0.14*	0.17**	0.35***
	(1.86)	(1.73)	(2.03)	(2.62)
Geographic dispersion	0.99*	0.97*	0.83	0.49
	(1.74)	(1.73)	(1.42)	(0.69)
Middle East dummy		0.55		
		(1.64)		
Islam dummy			0.34	
			(1.37)	
Oil dummy				–1.14
				(–1.04)
Peace-years	–0.13	–0.13	–0.13	–0.0089
	(–1.27)	(–1.32)	(–1.31)	(–0.07)
Spline 1	–0.0014	–0.0015	–0.0015	–0.00056
	(–1.04)	(–1.10)	(–1.11)	(–0.33)
Spline 2	0.00061	0.00065	0.00066	0.00026
	(0.68)	(0.73)	(0.74)	(0.22)
Spline 3	0.000056	0.000049	0.000046	0.000044
	(0.24)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.13)
Constant	–2.93**	–2.90**	–3.30**	–4.63**
	(–2.20)	(–2.17)	(–2.42)	(–2.38)
n	3,601	3,601	3,601	2,272
Number of conflict onsets	89	89	89	58
Sample average onsets (percentage)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6

NOTE: Robust z-values in parentheses. GDP = gross domestic product.
*Significant at the 10 percent level. **Significant at the 5 percent level. ***Significant at the 1 percent level.

flicts between religious and ethnic groups. The Middle East is a region where Islam dominates. Perhaps our analysis should focus on Islamic countries rather than on the Middle East. However, the statistical analysis reveals no evidence for an effect of Islam on intrastate conflict (model 3). The Islam dummy variable is positive but far from significant.

What about Islam's "bloody innards"? Our modified variable—ethnic dominance, Islam (which takes account of the distinction between Shia and Sunni)—displays approximately the same values as the original one. This reinforces the conclusion that any dominant ethnic group increases the risk for conflict, but Islamic dominance no more so than other cases of dominance.

IS IT OIL?

On the background of the recent conflicts in Africa (Angola, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and others), natural resource abundance has been suggested as an important factor in conflict. Easily lootable natural resources such as alluvial diamonds, gemstones, and drugs provide a financial base for rebel groups (Le Billon 2001). Oil is indisputably the most important natural resource in the Middle East. Does oil fuel or finance conflict? An oil dummy variable (1 = countries where more than 40 percent of exports derive from oil) does not increase the risk for conflict (model 4). Neither does an interaction term between oil and the Middle East.

Smith (2004) found, using a continuous measure of oil export dependence, that civil war and antistate protests were slightly less likely in oil-dependent states in the period from 1960 to 1999 and that regime durability was higher. Model 5 in Table 5 presents our findings with a continuous variable for oil and mineral resources. We do not find significant support for either a linear or a curvilinear relationship between internal conflict and oil dependence. (However, there was a high fraction of missing observations on this variable.) When we exclude all Middle East countries from the analysis (model 7), polyarchy is significant at the 10 percent level, and the significance of polyarchy squared is strengthened. These are the only important effects of excluding the Middle East countries.

IS IT AUTHORITARIANISM?

Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002, 2004) did not find any influence of regime type on conflict and excluded it from their model. However, several other empirical studies find a curvilinear relationship between democracy and conflict (Hegre et al. 2001; Fearon and Laitin 2003). Democracies are expected to experience less civil war because fewer sources of grievance are present, while authoritarian regimes have fewer conflicts because opposition is harshly repressed. Our analysis in Table 5 (model 6) clearly confirms the curvilinear relationship between conflict and democracy. The first term is positive, while the squared term is negative.[10] The two terms combined are significant. Collier and Hoeffler's failure to find a curvilinear relationship between regime type and conflict is probably due to their use of five-year periods. Given the curvilinear nature of the relationship, the high level of authoritarianism cannot by itself account for the high level of conflict in the Middle East.

10. Running the analysis with the *Polity* variable yielded similar, although weaker, results.

TABLE 5
Accounting for Armed Conflict, 1960-2000:
Extending the Collier-Hoeffler Model

	Model 5	*Model 6*	*Model 7*
GDP per capita	–0.41***	–0.34**	–0.39**
	(–4.40)	(–2.53)	(–2.43)
Economic growth	–11.05***	–10.73***	–13.00***
	(–4.72)	(–4.31)	(–5.04)
Social fractionalization	–0.000030	–0.000091	0.000080
	(–0.39)	(0.12)	(0.93)
Ethnic dominance	0.53*	0.52*	0.46
	(1.85)	(1.79)	(1.41)
ln Population	0.24*	0.24*	0.26*
	(1.95)	(1.95)	(1.94)
Geographic dispersion	0.41	0.62	1.60*
	(0.55)	(0.84)	(1.74)
Oil dependence	2.93	1.94	–3.02
	(1.12)	(0.72)	(–0.68)
Oil dependence squared	–3.69	–2.28	12.34
	(–0.61)	(–0.42)	(1.49)
Mineral dependence	2.75	2.11	–0.010
	(0.41)	(0.33)	(–0.00)
Mineral dependence squared	–5.16	–0.94	6.42
	(–0.15)	(–0.03)	(0.23)
Polyarchy		0.019	0.041*
		(1.04)	(1.95)
Polyarchy squared		–0.0026*	
	–0.0033**		
		(–1.91)	(–2.14)
Peace-years	–0.031	–0.021	–0.025
	(–0.24)	(–0.16)	(–0.17)
Spline 1	–0.00085	–0.00069	–0.00042
	(–0.50)	(–0.38)	(–0.21)
Spline 2	0.00045	0.00035	0.000052
	(0.39)	(0.28)	(0.04)
Spline 3	–0.00	0.000019	0.00015
	(–0.01)	(0.05)	(0.34)
Constant	–3.29**	–3.68**	–4.35**
	(–2.01)	(–2.16)	(–2.25)
n	2,265	2,153	1,903
Number of conflict onsets	58	54	44
Percent onset (percentage)	2.6	2.5	2.3

NOTE: Robust z-values in parentheses. GDP = gross domestic product.
*Significant at the 10 percent level. **Significant at the 5 percent level. ***Significant at the 1 percent level.
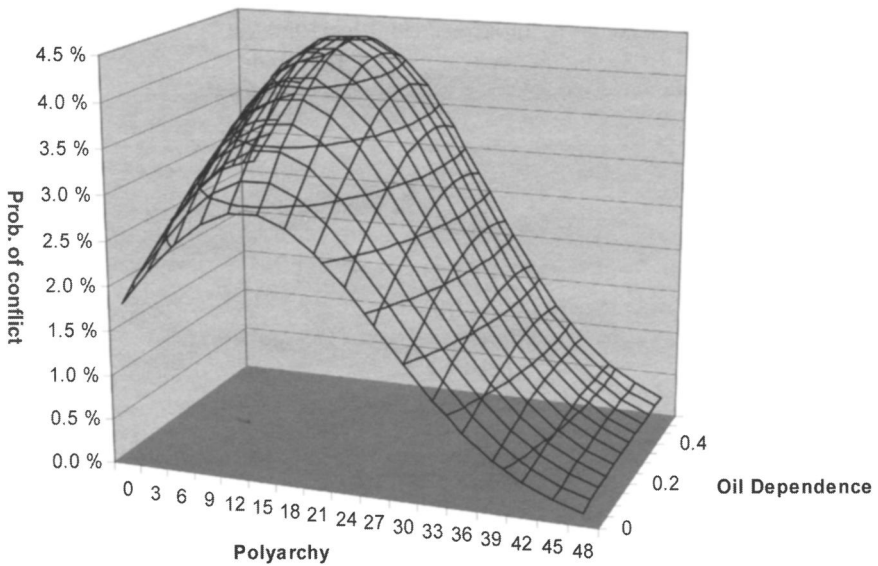
Figure 2:   The Effect of Regime Type and Oil Dependency on the Probability of Armed Civil Conflict (Based on Model 6 in Table 5)

IS IT OIL AND
AUTHORITARIANISM COMBINED?

Figure 2 displays a clear curvilinear relationship between regime type and conflict. The relationship between oil dependency and conflict remains weak, yielding an insignificantly higher risk for conflict for high levels of oil dependence and medium score on democracy. We found no significant results for interaction variables between economic development and, respectively, oil, Islam, and regime type; nor did we find one for oil dependence and semi-democracy.

Economic growth and economic development are the two most important variables in our analysis. Poor countries that are trapped in poverty seem to be the most war prone, with an average probability of conflict onset at 8.8 percent, more than 5 percentage points higher than the global average. We are unable to report any strong findings for raw material dependence. Figure 2 presents the effect of oil dependence from model 6 in Table 5. It is both small and statistically insignificant. The same figure illustrates the effect of the political regime variable. While this effect is statistically significant only at the 10 percent level, the effect portrayed in the figure clearly outperforms that of oil dependence. An average semi-democracy is close to 3 percentage points more likely to experience a conflict onset than is a full democracy.

TABLE 6
Comparing Observed and Predicted Probability of Civil Conflict

All Armed Civil Conflict	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	n
Sample					
Conflict onsets (observed)	0.025	0.155	0	1	3,601
Predicted risk of onset (average					
of individual country predictions)	0.026	0.029	0	0.938	3,601
Sub-Saharan Africa					
Conflict onsets (observed)	0.032	0.177	0	1	1,180
Predicted risk of onset (average					
of individual country predictions)	0.036	0.027	0.0004	0.266	1,180
Middle East and North Africa					
Conflict onsets (observed)	0.035	0.183	0	1	347
Predicted risk of onset (average					
of individual country predictions)	0.026	0.019	0.0007	0.113	347

NOTE: This table is based on model 1 in Table 4.

A MISSING PIECE?

Are we missing one or several factors in the analysis of armed civil conflict in the Middle East? Do the variables in the CH model fail to register the sources of conflict in the Middle East? We examine the regional differences between sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa by comparing the data set's actual observed conflict onsets with the model's predicted probability of conflict for the sample and the two regions. The results are presented in Table 6. For Africa, the predicted incidence and the actual onset are almost the same. For the Middle East, the difference between observed conflict onset and predicted value is rather large. While observed conflict is 3.5 percent, the predicted incidence is almost 30 percent lower at 2.6 percent. Does the CH model favor variables that explain conflict in Africa and overlook variables that are of importance to conflict in the Middle East?

Including the modified ethnic dominance variable produced almost no change in the values. Thus, incorporating the divide between Shia and Sunni Muslims adds little explanatory value to the model.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has dominated domestic, regional, and world politics for more than five decades. Due to our research design, this conflict is not included in our dependent variable: the conflict broke out in 1948 and falls outside the period included in this study. Nevertheless, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has spurred both interstate and intrastate conflict and hampered economic integration and social development in the region. Is it the conflict between Israel and Palestinians that accounts for conflict in the region? Dummy variables for all the countries neighboring Israel, as well as one for Israel and its neighbors, were constructed and added to the analysis. None of them was significant.

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

This study has found no support for Middle Eastern exceptionalism regarding the causes of conflict. There is nothing mysterious or particular about conflict in the Middle East or in Muslim countries. Conflict is quite well explained by a general model of civil war, although the model underpredicts the probability of conflict in the Middle East. Collier and Hoeffler (2002) conclude that Africa would have seen less conflict if the region had achieved economic development at the world level. The Middle East has enjoyed much greater prosperity than Africa but would undoubtedly benefit from improved economic development. Nevertheless, deciphering the Middle East's correlates of conflict is a more complex task.

In the Middle East and North Africa, abundant access to oil has created a peculiar regional system as well as ties to the international markets and political actors. The failure to modernize and democratize has not led to major internal rebellions in the Middle East. So far, oil money has bought some of the countries enough carrots and sticks to keep their populations quiet. But what will happen when the oil wells run dry? Deteriorating economic conditions and the lack of democracy in the Middle East may well create a fertile base for grievance-based rebellions.

Loot-seeking behavior aimed at controlling oil revenue does not characterize civil war in the Middle East, and Collier and Hoeffler's looting argument appears to be less applicable than in Africa. The concept of the rentier state provides a more fruitful explanation for the current and upcoming economic and political challenges faced by oil producers in the Middle East. These economic and political challenges fit better into the traditional grievance-based perspective on civil war. Lack of economic and political opportunities provides a fruitful base for frustration and opposition. Unless the regimes become increasingly repressive, the future is likely to hold growing political unrest and even civil war in the Gulf area. Sick and Potter (1997, 12) suggest that the Gulf countries are experiencing "a crisis in slow motion." The economic and political effects of oil—corruption, slow growth, and authoritarianism—create a basis for grievance-based conflict. The growth of political Islam is, to a large extent, a result of these forces.

The regime change strategy in Iraq is not likely to dramatically change the Middle East's status quo in which the region's authoritarian regimes have remained in power to a large extent due to external (particularly U.S.) support. These regimes have little legitimacy and put the West in an awkward light in many Arab eyes. Although the authoritarian regimes so far have been successful in quelling serious political and domestic armed conflict, they have not successfully constructed solid economic and social platforms for the future. The incumbent regimes face serious challenges to provide food and jobs to their populations (UNDP 2002). Ensuring diversified economic development remains the key to preventing future conflicts. Improved management of resources, natural as well as human, and the development of more transparent and legitimate, if not democratic, regimes provide the most efficient means toward preventing new conflicts—in the Middle East as in other developing regions.

APPENDIX 1
Accounting for Civil War, 1965-1999:
Results from Collier and Hoeffler (2002)

	β	Standard Error	β	Standard Error	β	Standard Error
ln GDP per capita	-0.950	0.245***	-1.053	0.289***	-0.965	0.244***
GDP growth $t-1$	-0.098	0.041**	-0.103	0.042**	-0.098	0.042**
Primary commodity exports	16.773	5.206***	16.691	5.175***	15.989	5.218***
Primary commodity exports squared	-23.800	10.040**	-23.532	9.958**	-22.942	10.023**
Social fractionalization	-0.0002	0.0001***	-0.0002	0.0001**	-0.0002	0.0001**
Ethnic dominance	0.480	0.328	0.449	0.331	0.431	0.330
Peace duration	-0.004	0.001***	-0.004	0.001***	-0.004	0.001***
ln Population	0.510	0.128***	0.473	0.137***	0.547	0.130***
Geographic dispersion	-0.992	0.909	-0.994	0.907	-0.775	0.933
Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) dummy			-0.370	0.526		
French SSA dummy					-0.885	0.791
n	750		750		750	
Pseudo-R^2	0.22		0.22		0.23	
Log-likelihood	-146.84		-146.50		-146.10	
Number of wars included	46		46		46	

SOURCE: Reproduced from Collier and Hoeffler (2002, 16, Table 1). Used with permission.

NOTE: Collier and Hoeffler did not report the value of the constant in their article.

*Significant at the 10 percent level. **Significant at the 5 percent level. ***Significant at the 1 percent level.

APPENDIX 2
Intrastate and Internationalized Armed Civil Conflicts in the Middle East, 1960-2003

ID	Sub-ID	Location	Side_A	Side_B[a]	Begin
2930	0	Algeria	Algeria	Various Islamic groups	**1991**-2003
2980	0	Egypt	Egypt	al-Gamaa al-Islamiyya, al-Jihad al-Islamiy, Tala i al-Fath	**1992**-1998
1060	1	Iran	Iran	KDPI	1966-1968, **1979**-1988, 1990, 1993
2450	0	Iran	Iran	APCO	**1979**-1980
2440	0	Iran	Iran	Mujahideen e Khalq	**1979**-1982, 1986-1988, 1991-1993, 2000-2001
1620	0	Iraq	Iraq	Military faction	1963
1620	1	Iraq	Iraq	SAIRI	1982-1984, 1987, 1991-1996
1740	0	Iraq	Iraq	KDP, PUK	1961-1970, 1973-1993
1370[b]	0	Israel	Israel	Palestinian insurgents	1949-2003
1630	1	Lebanon	Lebanon	Various organizations, Syria, Israel	1975-1990
2350	0	Morocco	Morocco, Mauritania	POLISARIO	**1975**-1989
2150	0	Morocco	Morocco	Military faction	**1971**
2210	0	Oman	Oman, Iran, Jordan, United Kingdom	PFLOAG, South Yemen	1972-1975
2460	0	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Juhayman movement	**1979**
2020	0	Syria	Syria	Military faction	**1966**
2020	1	Syria	Syria	Muslim Brotherhood	1979-1982
2490	0	Tunisia	Tunisia	Résistance Armée Tunisienne	**1980**
2600	0	Turkey	Turkey	PKK/KADEK	**1984**-2001
2900	0	Turkey	Turkey	Devrimci Sol	1991-1992
3100	0	Yemen	Yemen	Democratic Republic of Yemen	**1994**
1330	1	Yemen (North)	Yemen (North), Egypt	Royalists	**1962**-1970
1330	1	Yemen (North)	Yemen (North)	National Democratic Front	1980-1982
2650	0	Yemen (South)	Yemen (South)	Faction of Yemenite Socialist Party	**1986**

NOTE: This list is derived from the PRIO/Uppsala database on armed conflict (Gleditsch et al. 2002, www.prio.no/cwp/armedconflict). These conflicts add altogether up to 190 conflict-years and 16 years with conflict onsets in the Middle East in the period from 1960 to 2003. For a list of the countries in the Middle East, see the note to Figure 1. We have included here only the conflicts that took place in the Middle East. The only countries in the Middle East to intervene in conflicts outside the region were Libya (in Chad, 1965-1990; in Uganda, 1978-1979; and in the Central African Republic, 2001) and Turkey (in Cyprus, 1974, and in Yugoslavia, 1999). These conflicts are excluded here, along with the conflict between the United States and al Qaida, where Jordan is listed as an intervening power. Several Middle East countries (such as Israel and Syria) have intervened in countries such as Lebanon and other countries in the region. These conflicts are included, but only the country where the conflict was taking place is counted in the data on conflict onset or incidence. The years marked as bold are those that are included as onset observations in our analysis. The remaining years are censored. Since the Uppsala definition of conflict focuses on the incompatibility and the parties involved in the conflict, it can be difficult to distinguish between the onset of a new conflict and a continuation of an existing one. The conflict ID identifies a new separate conflict, but we also include a new sub-ID as an onset. A new sub-ID is coded if the conflict has failed to reach the twenty-five battle-related casualties threshold for ten consecutive years or if there is a complete change on the opposition side. We do not include shifts from internal armed conflicts to internationalized internal armed conflicts as new sub-IDs. Only conflicts initiated in 2000 or earlier are included in the statistical analysis.

a. For details of the Islamic opposition groups in Algeria and for the full name of other groups indicated by their initials only, see Gleditsch et al. (2002, Appendix 1) and Eriksson and Wallensteen (2004, Appendix 1).

b. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is censored because the onset predates the period studied here.

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