Living in the Wrong Neighbourhood: State Failure and its Implications for Neighbouring Countries

Cases from Liberia and Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

Why and how do failed states affect neighbouring countries? The attention of the international community towards state failure has grown significantly in recent years, improving the understanding of this phenomenon; nevertheless, the knowledge about the influence of state failure on neighbouring countries remain scarce. This research aims at contributing to filling up the existing gap by analyzing two different cases of state failure –Liberia and Afghanistan– and its consequences on four of their neighbours –Sierra Leone, Guinea, Pakistan and Tajikistan. More concretely, this research investigates the importance of insurgency movements in the relationship between these countries. The research argues that failed states generate conflict-enhancing mechanisms –which might lead to conflict outbreak– in their neighbours through the creation of informal networks. The empiric evidence shows how insurgency-based informal networks have a decisive role in the outbreak of conflict.

Keywords: insurgency, armed groups, Failed States, informal networks, difussion

RESUM

Per què i de quina manera afecten els estats fallits als seus països veïns? L'atenció dedicada per la comunitat internacional a aquest fenomen s'ha incrementat en els darrers anys i ha millorat la nostra comprensió; tanmateix, encara sabem molt poc sobre la influència de la fallida dels estats en els seus estats veïns. Aquesta recerca vol cobrir aquest buit mitjançant l'anàlisi de dos casos de fallida estatal —Libèria i l'Afganistan— i de les seves conseqüències en quatre dels seus veïns —Sierra Leone, Guinea, el Pakistan i el Tadjikistan. Més concretament, s'investiga la importància dels moviments d'insurgència en la relació entre aquests països. Aquest treball sosté que els estats fallits creen mecanismes generadors de conflicte, que podrien causar-ne un esclat als estats veïns per la creació de xarxes informals. Les dades empíriques mostren de quina manera les xarxes informals basades en la insurgència tenen un paper decisiu en l'esclat del conflicte.

Paraules clau: insurgència, grups armats, estats fallits, xarxes informals, difusió.

RESUMEN

¿Por qué y de qué modo afectan los estados fallidos a sus países vecinos? La atención dedicada por la comunidad internacional a este fenómeno se ha incrementado en los últimos años y ha mejorado nuestra comprensión; sin embargo, todavía se sabe muy poco sobre la influencia de la quiebra de los estados en sus estados vecinos. Esta investigación quiere cubrir este hueco mediante el análisis de dos casos de quiebra del Estado —Liberia y Afganistán— y de sus consecuencias en cuatro de sus vecinos —Sierra Leona, Guinea, Pakistán y Tayikistán. En concreto, se analiza la importancia de los movimientos de insurgencia en la relación entre dichos países. Este trabajo sostiene que los estados fallidos crean mecanismos generadores de conflicto, hasta el punto de provocar un estallido de éste en los estados vecinos por la creación de redes informales. Los datos empíricos muestran el modo en que las redes informales basadas en la insurgencia tienen un papel decisivo en el estallido del conflicto.

Palabras clave: insurgencia, grupos armados, estados fallidos, redes informales, difusión.

CONTENTS

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All People's Congress
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group (see ECOWAS)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
HT	Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
INPFL	Independent Patriotic Front of Liberia
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NATO	North-Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PANAFU	Pan-African Union (Sierra Leone)
RFDC	Rassemblement des Forces Democratique de Guinée
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Programme
UIFSA	United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

"Rain does not fall on one roof alone"
African Proverb

1. INTRODUCTION[1]

Why and how do failed states influence their neighbouring countries? The failure of Somalia as a state was direly felt in its neighbours, especially Ethiopia and Yemen. Thousands of immigrants have crossed into Yemen seeking a better life in the oil-wealthy Arabic peninsula. At the same time, Ethiopia considered necessary to overthrown the Supreme Islamic Court from Somalia's government. To carry out such task, Ethiopian troops entered Somali territory in 2006 with a high number of casualties. Interestingly enough, countries such as Kenya have not suffered the effects of Somalia's failure to the same degree. The aim of this study will be to explore potential explanations of the questions posed and establish the ground for the development of a theoretical understanding of the problem.

Within the community of academics and policy-makers alike, state failure has been identified as one of the major threats to global security. The events of September 11, 2001 in the United States and the recent outbreak of piracy in the Gulf of Aden, which threatens one of the main maritime lines in the world, have increased the attention and resources devoted to state failure. Nowadays, both communities have gathered a considerable amount of knowledge on state failure as an intrastate phenomenon, but the effects of state failure on its neighbouring countries remain poorly researched. Several hypothetical ef-

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fects of state failure have been underlined by the academic research community (Bøås and Jennings 2005, Carment 2003, Kasfir 2004, Klare 2004, Rotberg 2004). Most of this research have been done within an institutional approach, taking into consideration only the pre- and post-failure stages, but not the actual scenario. By approaching the issue from this perspective, the importance of agency has been dismissed, leading to a lack of understanding of the phenomenon beyond the institutional realm and denying the social change linked with state failure. At the same time, critical approaches towards the issue have focused on the normative and conceptual idea behind state failure, leaving no space for research on the effects of the phenomenon in neighbouring countries. Therefore, the gap that needs to be filled is twofold. First, the understanding of state failure as social change has to be enhanced. Second, the influence of failed states on neighbouring countries has to be uncovered

One of the very first attempts to enhance the understanding of the effects of failed states on their neighbouring countries was done by Iqbal and Starr (2008). Through a statistical analysis, Iqbal and Starr (2008) conclude that failed states do not spread more failure, but rather help to create conflict in their neighbours, and these results were more robust when it came to contiguous states. Iqbal and Starr (2008) conclusions are therefore used as a departing point for this research, which will take advantage of the neatness and generalization power of their study and enhance its potential through a qualitative study.

Thus, the main aim of this paper will be to expand the knowledge and research on state failure, answering the research questions exposed at the beginning: Why and how do failed states affect their neighbouring countries? The paper will be based upon a hypothesis which states that failed states spread conflict-enhancing mechanisms through the creation and use of informal networks between the failed state and the neighbouring state. Conflict-enhancing mechanisms refer to those circumstances that help to create the characteristics necessary for the outbreak of the conflict, such as the creation of grievances, access to weaponry, or access to funding (Ohlson 2008).

Informal networks are those instances of relationship at all levels –economic, political, power, social– that are carried out outside the formal structures and institutions created by the state (Bøås and Jennings 2005). Obviously, informal networks appear in other situations, but the paper will remain within the realm of informal networks created in failed states. This hypothesis will be tested in two failed states, Liberia and Afghanistan. The paper will show that informal networks based on insurgency create conflict-enhancing mechanisms in neighbouring states, contributing decisively to the outbreak of war.

The organization of the paper will be as follows: in Section 2 the reader will be situated within the field, exposed to the history of research regarding state failure and presented the theoretical framework and the proposed theory. Section 3 will expose the research design and the case selection. Section 4 is dedicated to Liberia and its influence on its neighbours, to be concluded with an analysis of this case. Section 5 will be structured in the same way but dedicated to Afghanistan and its neighbours. Section 6 will analyse the results of the two cases in order to test the strength of the theory. Section 7 will be used as a summary of the whole research, drawing the main conclusions and providing avenues for policy-implications and future research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 SITUATING THEORY

The increased interest in state failure during the last years has generated a growing body of literature on the issue. This literature has been produced through different disciplines, but mainly International Relations and Peace and Conflict, two closely related disciplines that will be used to lay the foundation of this paper. State failure within these two disciplines is not free of controversy, mostly as a consequence of the conceptualization of the state that the term state failure implies. Zartman (1995) was one of the first to establish a definition of state

failure. He argued that state failure refers to "a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law and political order [of the state] have fallen apart" (1995:1). Zartman's definition has been widely used, but the use of the term state failure that some governments have implemented has created profound controversy in the realm of policy-making and academia. To avoid a debate regarding what the state is, and the western-based bias that some authors argue, this paper will stick to Zartman's definition, considering its concepts at a minimum level rather than at the level of western stable democracies that many policy-makers apply. At the same time, the concept of state failure will also carry the idea of social change that Bøås and Jennings (2005) and Hameiri (2007), among others, include in the term. Therefore, state failure, within this paper, will be understood as a social phenomenon based on a minimun-level understanding of the state's responsibilities and based on the idea of the state as the provider of human security (Bøås and Jennings 2005, Hameiri 2007). Human security is understood as stated by the United Nations Development Programme in 1994 (UNDP 1994). This document understands human security as the overcoming of the national security concept used during the Cold War era (Ullman 1981, UNDP 1994). Lack of human security is, thus, the cause and the consequence of state failure.

This paper aims to shed light upon the effects of state failure on neighbouring countries, but it will be also influenced by diffusion studies[2]. Therefore, it is important to understand the core idea behind diffusion and its implications. Stemming from the seminal work of Most and Starr (1980), diffusion studies have explored the different causal mechanism leading to the spread of civil unrest and conflict. Most and Starr argued that a phenomenon taking place outside the borders of a

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2. *State failure* and *state collapse* are two concepts that have been used interchangeably across the literature. Zartman (1995) uses state collapse as the definition of crumbling institutions in weak states. Nevertheless, lately the academic world has tended to understand state collapse as the complete destruction of any sort of authority in a given country, Somalia being the only clear case of state collapse (Rotberg 2004). This paper will use the term state failure to avoid misunderstanding and aiming at theoretical clarification. To clarify to the reader, the term 'neighbouring country' will always refer to countries bordering failed states

given country may "alter the possibility of subsequent events through diffusion or contagion" (1980:933). The effect of events happening in nearby regions has also been noted by Skocpol (1979), who pointed out the importance of cross-border relations in the rise of revolutionary events, which can also be applied to the importance of the effect of events taking place outside a country's borders on its internal affairs. More recently, Iqbal and Starr (2008) showed that the possibility of subsequent events also takes place in the particular case of state failure. Nevertheless, Iqbal and Starr (2008) argue that what is diffused is not state failure, but some of its more negative consequences. To understand its negative consequences, it is crucial to comprehend the nature of state failure from a theoretical perspective and apply the theoretical underpinnings to the hypothetical causal mechanisms behind state failure's spread of negative consequences. The theoretical analysis and framework used in this paper will focus on the effects of state failure on neighbouring countries, and therefore its theoretical underpinnings will stem from the comprehensive understanding of state failure that this paper will explore. This is done in order to isolate the effects of state failure per se from other possible influences such as civil war or international conflict, but keeping in mind the close relation of these two phenomenons with state failure.

State failure has traditionally been researched from an institutional-centred approach, paying little attention to the idea of state failure as social change. Most of the literature focuses on the institutions' capacity and the formal structures of the state (Bøås and Jennings 2005, Hameiri 2007 Cf. Howard 2008, Kasfir 2004, Rotberg 2004, Reno 2003). It has been widely studied how and why these institutions collapse, but the effects of this collapse and the social change involved once the institutions are gone have been researched less. Kasfir (2004) provides an initial analysis of the consequences, arguing that collapse is followed by an internal security dilemma that forces various groups to secure their survival. On the same vein, Klare (2004) states that in the absence of the state, non-state actors tend to take over the functions of the state. These non-state actors show an economic predatory behaviour in order to carry out state-like tasks (Klare 2004). Kasfir

(2004) and Klare (2004) among others, point out the importance and potential danger of these groups. They argue that non-state actors in a failed state may find incentives to expand their activities beyond the borders of the state and at the same time, other groups may take advantage of the chaos within the failed state to carry out their activities (Klare 2004). Nevertheless, their state-centred approach neglects the informal scope of these consequences as it only focuses in institutions. One of the results of this approach is a lack of systematic research on the effects of state failure on neighbouring countries. It is these informal configurations, not the failed structures of the state, which will be influencing neighbouring countries at the point when the state has almost disappeared. Thus, in order to establish a comprehensive theoretical framework, state failure has to be understood through the lens of those remaining after failure and not from the point of view of failed structures that are no longer functioning, and thereby, not influential. State failure, thus, should be understood as social change in the structures of action of the population remaining.

The institutional focus of much of literature on state failure neglects an understanding of failure as social change, thereby, a wider understanding of the consequences of state failure. Yet, few attempts have been made to set up analytical frameworks in which the state is not the only focus, enlarging the scope to other possible intervening variables (Bøås and Jennings 2005, Hameini 2007). Using the state as the unit of analysis reduces the range and scope of theory when it comes to comprehending the effects of state failure as social change and outside its borders. The institutional approach denies the importance of the informal structures of the population with the failure, their strategies to cope with its consequences and the effects on neighbouring countries (Bøås and Jennings 2005, Hameiri 2007, see also Esty *et al.* 1995, Howard 2008, Milliken and Krause 2002, Reno 2003, Rotberg 2002, 2004). As Bøås and Jennings (2005) point out, research on state failure takes into consideration formal elements of the state but it does not take into account informal configurations beyond the state's scope. Bøås and Jennings (2005) understand the conceptualization of state failure from a hu-

man security perspective rather than from a regime security perspective. Following a logic thought, state failure, first and foremost, means the failure of the formal state institutions and normative behaviours; the failure of the state. The substance (ousía) of the state, in Aristotle's terms, has failed, but the matter (hylé), the citizens and members of the state, remain. Hence, the unit of analysis in the research should be the matter of the state, that remains, and not the substance, that fades out. It is nevertheless important to evince some attention to the state, which is an end and a mean, as a symbolic representation of structural organization. The term state failure already implies a normative idea, and the aim, regardless of the theoretical approach, is to move the state from failure to strength. It is important to note that this paper does not try to focus on what strength is. Notwithstanding this, the constituencies of the state remain and are the best measure of the failure. A state does not fail in a vacuum, it fails insofar somebody is suffering the failure. It does fail to its citizens, and they have to cope with the consequences. Therefore, the understanding of the consequences of state failure should stem from the human point of view rather than from a symbolic and normative vision of the state.

Most of the literature on state failure points out that a state fails when it achieves neither legitimacy nor efficiency in the provision of human security, and, at the same time, the absence of human security becomes the direst consequence of failure. This definition is partly based on the work of Goldstone (2008) and the definition of the UNDP (1994) but for the aim of this paper it needs further clarification. Partly based on Goldstone (2008), it can be argued that a stable state must be effective and legitimate in the provision of human security in order to remain not-failed; by the same token, a failed state can be identified when it lacks effectiveness and legitimacy in the provision of human security. These two characteristics are necessary for a not-failed state, and the lack of them will prompt state failure. Hence, it becomes relevant to understand these two characteristics in order to explore the causal mechanisms that, stemming from the lack of legitimacy and efficiency in the deliverance of human security,

will affect neighbouring countries. In a nutshell, it is crucial to know the causes of state failure to understand the effects on neighbouring countries. Goldstone (2008) observes both legitimacy and efficiency from an institutional point of view, lacking an approach towards failure than includes human security (Bøås and Jennings 2005). For instance, Rwanda during the genocide in 1994 will not be considered, under Goldstone's understanding, a failed state since it was able to achieve a relatively high degree of effectiveness in carrying out its objectives and these objectives were carried out with the compliance of some segments of the population. Notwithstanding, Rwanda was clearly failing for most of its population in 1994, since human security was not provided.

States achieve effectiveness and legitimacy insofar they are able to deliver public goods to its constituencies. Holsti (1996) argues that states achieve legitimacy based on their performance delivering public goods.[3] Moreover, those receiving political goods must observe the state as the entitled entity in charge of the delivery process and they will do so if they are receiving public goods, always understanding these concepts at a minimum level. As Rotberg points out, public goods are "those intangible […] claims that citizens […] make on states" (2004:2). Hence, when a state is able to receive input from its citizens –the claims they make on the state– and is capable and willing to transform these claims into output, it will achieve effectiveness and be observed as legitimate by its constituencies. The lack of capability and/or willingness will render the state ineffective and illegitimate, and ultimately, failed. Nonetheless, the deliverance of public goods must be understood from a human security perspective and not solely from an institutional point of view. Efficiency and legitimacy imply first and foremost the capability to deliver human security –monopoly over the use of legitimate violence from the human security perspective, including all the identities and entitleing the population (Milliken and Krause 2002 Rotberg 2004, Reno 2003 UNDP 1994,

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3. Holsti (1996) recognizes the religious-based legitimacy of older forms of government, still beheld in some countries such as Saudi Arabia; nevertheless, he argues that performance-based legitimacy nowadays also apply to those countries.

Cf. Tilly 1990, Sen 1999, Bøås and Jennings 2005).[4] The lack of human security is the most acute consequences of state failure, and if we are to research any effect on neighbouring countries, it must stem from it. Thus, it becomes crucial to fully understand the nature of human security and the consequences of its absence. An absence of this factor can affect a neighbouring country in a distinctive way.

Rotberg (2002, 2004) and Reno (2003), among others, argue that security is the principal political good that states should deliver to its citizens.[5] Security is understood by these authors under the conceptualization created by the seminal work of Max Weber (1958). States, argued Weber (1958), can be considered as such only if they are able to wield a monopoly on violence with the legitimacy of its constituencies. The exercise of this monopoly within concrete borders is what confers stateness to the state. The idea Weber proposed portrays the state as the sole source of legitimate use of violence. In case any other entity, e.g. armed rebel groups, is able to exercise violence within the established borders of the country and without being counteracted, the state is not fulfilling its requirements as a state —or more in line with Rotberg and Reno's thoughts— it is a failed state. This understanding of the state entails a vision in which the coercive forces are the core of state creation and social change (Cf. Tilly 1990). War-making, and the entities in charge of war-making, create states, as proposed by Tilly (1990). Nevertheless, the understanding of legitimate monopoly on violence used throughout this paper goes several steps beyond Weber's premise. A state is delivering security to its citizens insofar those citizens can feel safe from other actors, from the state itself and, in ad-

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4. Holsti (1996) distinguishes between vertical and horizontal legitimacy, but both concepts are included within this theoretical definition of state failure. Vertical legitimacy implies the securitization of citizens and the creation of wealth. Horizontal legitimacy, on the other hand, implies the inclusion of all ethnic groups within the idea of the state. In addition, there is, argues Holsti (1996), and international dimension of legitimacy. This idea does not need further exploration due to the nature and approach of this paper.

5. The core idea behind the concept of security as a political good is found in the classic sociological literature. Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau conceptualized the idea of *social contract*. The population, in an attempt to avoid an insecure scenario, relinquished some of their individual rights. In exchange, the state, as the holder of those rights, provides security and order to its citizens.

dition, their human security needs are cover. Unbridled repression, lack of economic or health security and state violence can be used to securitize a regime, but it does not securitize its citizens. Thereby, a state that preys upon its citizens can be labelled as secure using an institutionalist point of view but not from a human security perspective. North Korea might be the best example.

When human security is not provided, always at its minimum level, a space is open for the acquisition of security through informal channels outside the state's realm. This situation is specially significant in a failed state, where none of the human security elements are present. It is specially acute the absence of political and personal security as defined by the UNDP (1994). This aspects of security become predominant in the absence of a more broad human security and dominate the relationship and social change. The vacuum created, as stated by Klare (2004) and Kasfir (2004), will most likely be used by non-state actors with predatory behaviour, state-like structures, or a middle point between both. According to Klare (2004), Kasfir (2004) and Rotberg (2004), political and personal security will tend to be the first space threaten by non-state actors and, stemming from the theoretical knowledge of the discipline, the focus of the paper. The space emptied by the failure of the state and filled informally by non-state actors will be based in insurgency movements due to the predominant character of political and personal security.

2.2 THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

In order to answer the question of why and how failed states affect neighbouring countries, the paper will be lead by the hypothesis which states, based on the existing theoretical inferences and stemming from them, that failed states spread conflict-enhancing mechanism through the establishment of informal networks between the failed state and the neighbouring state. As stated in Section 1, the hypothesis is partly based on the conclusions of Iqbal and Starr (2008). They demonstrate, through a statistical model, that a failed state does not spread more failure, but rather conflict-enhancing mechanisms (Iqbal and Starr 2008). The outbreak of conflict will be, thus, the dependent variable

of this research. Outbreak of conflict is understood as the moment in which a struggle of any kind becomes violent and reaches 25 battle-related deaths, a criteria used by the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP) (Eck 2005).

The causal mechanism explored in the following sections is based on the particularities of state failure, and will be explored based on the conceptualization and understanding of human security previously stated and the importance of political and physical security. The presence of informal networks within security elements will transform them into conflict-enhancing mechanisms on the other side of the border. The consequences of these informal networks suggest a causal path towards neighbouring countries. In this way, neighbouring countries will observe how the likelihood of conflict in their territories increases when informal networks are present. It is worth noting that conflict-enhancing mechanisms do not create conflict by themselves but rather enhance the reasons, resources and resolve of armed groups (Ohlson 2008).The lack of human security in a failed state can spread conflict-related effects beyond its borders through the actions of uncontrolled armed groups. The informalization of relationships and lack of enforcing agencies opens a multidirectional opportunity for armed groups and non-state actors to expand beyond the given borders of a state (Buhaug and Gleditsch 2008). The opportunity is multidirectional since it can be steered in two directions; (i) groups from the failed state carrying out cross-border activities or even settling down in a neighbouring country and (ii) groups from the neighbouring country using the failed state as a sanctuary from where to carry out their attacks. Not encountering counter-activities and being the executants of the monopoly of violence –without legitimacy– blurred the importance of international borders and international law –which in some post-colonial states is already a weak concept– and the possibility to enforce them upon armed groups. In the first direction of the causal mechanism, an armed group already controlling a piece of land will find incentives in enlarging their scope of action to other regions, regardless of international borders. Cross-border activities and the destabilization of neighbouring countries can be ben-

eficial for an armed group's goal mostly when it is driven by greed, but also when it only waves grievance-based reasons. If an armed group is able to expand beyond the borders of the original state, it can have access to new resources, gain control over new population groups, and extend its informal network of contacts and supplies. State failure, and the lack of security that it entails, open a window of opportunity for these kinds of cross-border activities. Nevertheless, groups require connections on the other side of the border in order to expand successfully.

In the other direction of the causal mechanism, state failure on the other side of the border decreases the relative mobilization cost of a possible insurgent movement. As showed by Salehyan (2007), is extremely useful for rebel groups to maintain operational bases on the other side of their country's border, and having sanctuaries increases the chances of success. The state they are fighting will face a higher cost if it pursues the fighting beyond its borders –thus entering other state's soil and violating international law. The fact that the hosting state has failed enormously decreases the cost related with establishing bases, therefore, it will increase the rebel group's capabilities and strength, providing them a sanctuary far from the reach of the government they are fighting. Failed states, thus, increase the prospects of civil conflict in neighbouring countries widening the capabilities of armed groups to use their soil and also exporting their own armed groups thirsty for resources, networks and informal channels. The lack of security is what allows these cross-border activities by armed groups, since the rebel groups will not encounter any legitimate force to curtail their activities. In addition to the dangers of expansion of rebel groups' activities, the issue of unoccupied soldiers may increase the possibilities of conflict-enhancing effects crossing borders. Many fighters are born and have grown up in war-like environments and the lack of activity –which entails lack of wages and looting possibilities– is an incentive to spark a war in the region. The situation they used to find themselves –living in refugee camps, or maintaining weak or even nomad bases in forest regions– increases the incentives for mobilization.

In summary, insurgency problems enhance conflict in the neighbouring country when armed groups use the failed state as a safe haven or armed groups from the failed state cross the border in order to spread their power, influence and sometimes their revenues.

3. METHODOLOGY AND CASE SELECTION

To carry out the research, a qualitative approach has been selected based on two reasons. Firstly, any research regarding state failure becomes problematic due to the small number of available cases. This difficulty, considering the amount of time and resources available for this paper, rules out the possibility of a large-N study. Some large-N studies regarding state failure have been carried out, more notably Howard (2008) and Iqbal and Starr (2008). For the interest of this paper –the influence of state failure on neighbouring countries– Iqbal and Starr (2008) already achieved the benefits of a large-N study; however, they lack the systematic explanations about causality that only small-N studies can achieve (George and Bennett 2005). Secondly, the causal mechanisms carefully described in the theoretical framework can only be explored through the use of intensive small-N studies (George and Bennett 2005). The epistemology behind large-N and small-N research remains similar; nevertheless, the lack of systematic research in this particular field leaves the researcher with the need to deeply explore causal mechanisms rather than general non-causal trends –which, at the same time, was already done by Iqbal and Starr (2008). The most accurate way to theoretically explore those causal mechanisms is with a small-N study based on a process-tracing (George and Bennett 2005).

Two failed states have been selected for this paper, Liberia and Afghanistan. Considerable amounts of literature have been devoted to the identification of failed states, without a concrete and universal

classification of what a failed state is and what it is not.[6] In the theory-section the underpinnings for the identification of a failed state has been laid. In addition, every study of state failure has included these two cases as clear examples (see Rotberg 2004, Howard 2008, Iqbal and Starr 2008). Nonetheless, both Liberia and Afghanistan border several countries; therefore it is important to select some of the bordering countries in order to create a feasible research design. In this way, four cases will be selected by creating two pairs for each failed state. This strategy will enhance the explanatory power of the within country analysis and at the same time, increased the reliability of the structured focused comparison. Therefore, the influence of Liberia's failure will be studied in Sierra Leone and in Guinea, being these the first two cases. For the Afghan's failure effects will be measured in Pakistan and Tajikistan, which are the other two cases. The selection of the four cases, as stated above, is not happenstance. In two cases, Liberia-Sierra Leone and Afghanistan-Pakistan, the influence of the failed state on the neighbouring country has helped to create conflict or at least it was one of the main enabling forces behind conflict. It can be argued that the conflict in Pakistan and Sierra Leone would not have happened without the influence of the failed state. On the other two cases, Liberia-Guinea and Afghanistan-Tajikistan, the influence of the failed state does not seem that clear and no conflict has broken out in relationship with the failure of Liberia or Afghanistan.[7] The election of these four pairs is made in order to test the strength of the theoretical framework and increase the generalization capability of the research.

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6. Probably one of the more accurate classifications is done by the Fund for Peace. The classification is based on the score of all the countries in several categories. For more information, visit: http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140 [accessed March 6th 2009]

7. It is important to note the particularity of the Afghanistan-Tajikistan case. The Tajik civil war did not break out as a consequence of the Afghan failure, therefore, the variation on the dependent variable –conflict in the neighbouring country due to the failure of the country– still remains within the same category than Guinea. This issue is more explained in the Afghanistan-Tajikistan section.

4. LIBERIA'S FAILURE AND ITS INFLUENCE IN SIERRA LEONE AND GUINEA

4.1 LIBERIA–SIERRA LEONE

The civil war in Sierra Leone had its starting point in north-west Liberia. The original command of the RUF, Foday Sankoh, Abu Kanu and Rashid Mansaray, took advantage of their Libyan-created links with Charles Taylor to sow the seed of their struggle in Liberia (Abdullah 2004).[8] At the end of the 80's several would-be revolutionaries joined the pan-African path established by Muammar al-Qaddafi in his 'Green Book', spreading the teachings of the book and travelling to Libya in order to acquire military training (Abdullah 2004, Gberie 2005). Some years later, during Taylor's tour to find support for his upcoming struggle, the future commander of the RUF joined the Liberian adventure.[9] On Christmas Eve in 1989 Taylor's forces crossed the Liberia-Cote d'Ivore border and started the civil war that definitively collapsed the country. The more collapsed the Liberian state got, with four different groups fighting each other in 1990, the bitterer the effects on Sierra Leone were.[10] The NPFL carried out several incursions in Sierra Leone, but in March 1991, the RUF made its appearance with a 100-strong man invasion of Sierra Leone at Bomaru in the Kailahun District, from NPFL-controlled territory in Liberia.[11]

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8. Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh met in Ghana in 1987, but strengthen their link in Libya in 1988, while pursuing ideological and military education provided by the Libyan regime and his foreign policy of the '80: spreads revolution (Abdullah 2004). Many coups and wars in Africa in the '80 and '90 have a link with Libya (Gberie 2005, Ellis 1999).

9. Charles Taylor travelled different West African countries in order to find support for its struggle, including Sierra Leone (Abdullah 2004).

10. In 1990 four groups controlled Liberia. Taylor's NPFL, Johnson's INPFL, ECOWAS forces and the remaining of the AFL.

11. This statement is contradicted by Gleditsch *et al* (2008:485). They argue that the NPFL never attacked Sierra Leone, but rather used the RUF as a proxy-army. Nevertheless, attacks from Liberia were already reported at the end of 1990, before the 'presentation' of the RUF.

The group that entered Sierra Leone in March 1991 was composed mostly of non-Sierra Leonean fighters, although the core of the group was Sankoh, Kanu and Mansaray's leadership (Nilsson 2008, Richards 1996).[12] The remaining forces were Sierra Leonean economic immigrants and soldiers on loan from NPFL (Nilsson 2008). Despite the composition of the RUF during the first attack on Sierra Leonean soil, the armed group can be traced back to the anti-regime movements in Sierra Leone during the 70s and 80's. These movements were influenced by Qaddafi's Green Book, and assembled as student associations, mostly the PANAFU (Abdullah 2004). The student-based organizations were gearing up rebellions against the neo-patrimonial regime in Sierra Leone alongside lumpen and criminal ranks but the crackdown on these groups in 1985 sent several future rebels into exile[13] (Rashid 2004). The crackdown in 1985 also united the lumpen groups with the students. This union did not bring lumpen youth within the educated ranks of student unions, but allowed them to soak in the revolutionary message that was about to be promoted by the RUF a few years later (Rashid 2004).[14] In addition to this, the leaders of the movement left the country, radicalized their message and searched for safe havens from where to carry out their revolution, finding a helping hand in the Liberian failure.

As the struggle consolidated in Sierra Leonean soil during the first months of the quarrel, the RUF ranks were becoming more and more Sierra Leonean in character, but the link with Liberia was not broken. Gradually, the RUF composition was mirroring the original anti-government movements, combining lumpen and educated members. With the time also the lumpen ranks within the SLA also joined the RUF as 'sobels' (Nilsson 2008). The RUF became even more Sierra Leonean when Charles Taylor decided to withdrawal part of its troops

12. There is some polemic about the exact composition of the 100-man strong force that entered Sierra Leone in 1991, mostly about the social origin of the Sierra Leonean immigrants recruited. For more information see Richard (1996) and Abdullah (2004).
13. The unrest in 1985 was the peak of several years of Pan-African leftist movements fighting against Siaka Stevens' regime.
14. It is important to note that the main student's union, PANAFU, refused in 1987 a call for recruitment coming from the future RUF.

from Sierra Leone in order to counterattack the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) (Nilsson 2008). This decision temporally dried up Liberian supplies and the RUF survived only by the desired of maintain the conflict expressed by Freetown government through the supply of weapons to the RUF while they were fighting them (Nilsson 2008).

Yet, the relation and use of Liberia's failure by the RUF was not limited to the initial months of the struggle. The RUF struggle waned and waxed with different degrees between 1991 and 2002, but not its beneficial use of the havoc in Liberia. Although the RUF was poorly equipped and most of its ranks were abducted, its struggle was made possible by the economic and logistical support anchored in Liberia. RUF soldiers were trained in Liberia under the supervision of the NPFL (UN 2000). Liberia was also a safe haven for RUF-members' relatives, and even hospitals in Liberia were used to treat war-related wounds (UN 2000). The main supply line of arms and military-related equipment was coming from Liberia.[15] A panel of experts described the links between Liberia and the RUF as 'unequivocal and overwhelming' when it comes to arms trafficking (UN 2000:8). A lax air legislation and the near-collapsed state of the Liberian state between 1989 and 2002 allowed heavy air-traffic in the region, mostly used to sustain RUF's struggle (UN 2000).[16] Nevertheless, the RUF's use of Liberia spans all levels, ranging from the use of their uncontrolled state apparatus to gain access to weapons, to cross-border ground attacks and retreats.

The clear link between the Sierra Leonean insurgency and Liberia needs further clarification from the other side of the border, Liberia. During the first months and years of their struggle the NPFL encountered fierce opposition from different groups, among them, ULIMO and the ECOWAS troops. These two groups enjoyed the support of Freetown's government; therefore, it was in NPFL's interest to desta-

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15. Sierra Leone suffered an arms embargo during its civil war, skilfully ignored by several arms traders and even nations (UN 2000).
16. Infamous names of the arms-trade business are related with the conflict in Sierra Leone, such as Talal El-Ndine and Victor Bout. For more information see UN (2000).

bilize Sierra Leone, aiming to halt the support. Moreover, the destabilization of the already-weak border between the countries would allow the NPFL access to the diamonds fields (Bøås 2001). Although Sierra Leonean in essence, the first RUF group that entered Sierra Leone was mostly a spin-off of the NPFL seeking resources and destabilization and turmoil in Freetown (Bøås 2001). The later developments of the RUF noted above clearly shows the Sierra Leonean character of the RUF.

4.2 LIBERIA–GUINEA

The Guinean Government has been deeply involved in the failure of Liberia, collaborating with troops and giving resources and diplomatic support to different groups –from Doe's government to the LURD– but especially the latter (HRW 2005, ICG 2005). During the Liberian conflict the Government of Conté supported firstly the armed groups fighting against Charles Taylor. After the leader of the NPFL was elected, Guinea gave its support –in the form of arms, sanctuaries and logistical support– to the LURD (ICG 2005, HRW 2005). This anti-Taylor support created enmity against Conté's regime in Liberia, especially among Taylor's allies. The peak of this confrontation was reached with the attacks on Guinea in 2000 and 2001. The groups carrying out these attacks were supported by Charles Taylor and also by the RUF, which was closely connected to –some may argued even controlled by– Charles Taylor (ICG 2004, UCDP 2009). Although the RFDG claimed responsibility for the attacks, the presence of Liberian fighters and regional warriors trained and armed by Liberia shed light upon the link between the enmity between Taylor and Conté and the attack (HRW 2005, ICG 2005). The attacks, however, did not escalate further, and can easily be labelled as part of the Liberian war.

The clearest link between Guinea and Liberia is shown through the Guinean support of the LURD (HRW 2002). The LURD's bases were established in Guinea, although the government denied it. The support became more apparent after the attacks in 2000 and 2001 (ICG 2005). After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Liberia, Guin-

ea faced several problems with its support to military factions, endangering its own security and stability (ICG 2005). Several groups remained active in Liberia hoping to overthrow Conté, as well as recruiting Conté supporters. Several reports (HRW 2005, ICG 2005) argued that different groups were recruiting former regional soldiers in Liberia in order to set up an armed group able to fight against the Conté regime. No attacks have taken place so far, and the new political situation in Guinea creates a new unknown scenario for this group. Moreover, ICG (2005) points out the risk of ex-LURD soldiers, both Liberian and Guinean, returning to Guinea. These soldiers, after the end of the conflict in Liberia, returned to the Forest Region in Guinea –bordering Liberia– and remained inactive and, most importantly, they have not been demobilized.[17]

Despite what is stated above, Guineans did not engage in informal relations with the Liberian failure. Most of the links between Guinea and Liberia that concerned any form of insurgency followed formal channels, mostly through the Guinean government. The two groups sponsored by the government of Guinea –ULIMO and LURD –did not follow informal paths for their creation, their main asset being official support.

4.3 WITHIN-COUNTRY ANALYSIS: THE IMPLICATIONS OF LIBERIA'S FAILURE ON ITS NEIGHBOURS

Why did conflict erupt in Sierra Leone, but not break out in Guinea after Liberia's failure? In theory, both countries had authoritarian regimes and the failure of Liberia created great opportunities for the full-fledged outbreak of conflict, but that was not the outcome. The reason lies in the difference in the informal character of relations between both countries.

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17. The Forest Region probably contains several armed groups that have sought a sanctuary far from the reach of any other army or government. These groups are composed mostly of Liberia-war fighters in retreat. These groups have constantly joined different armed groups or acted independently. Nevertheless, it is extremely difficult to assess their importance, their numbers, or their strength.

Insurgency in Sierra Leone was informally linked to the vacuum of power in Liberia. The creation of RUF was possible since no authority was able to enforce law in the country. The security situation in Liberia, combined with the informal networks created between the Sierra Leonean insurgency and the Liberian insurgency, led to the birth of the RUF. The ranks of the RUF were Sierra Leonean immigrants in Liberia and the lumpen youth population of Sierra Leone, which mirrored the anti-government movements of the 1970s and 1980's. In the case of Guinea, the armed groups involved with the failure in Liberia were mostly controlled by the government. The ULIMO and the LURD were allegedly formed and funded by the Guinean government as an attempt to get a stake in the Liberian conflict. These groups followed formal channels and were therefore easily controlled by the Guinean government. The fact that both ULIMO and LURD were controlled by the Guinean government averted any possible extension of these groups' struggle inside Guinea. Once the Guinean government lost interest in Liberia, the lack of informal networks and the drying up of resources coming from the Guinean government condemned the LURD to extinction. The RUF on the other hand was able to maintain its struggle due to its informal connections with Liberia. The difference between the informal relations of RUF with Liberia and the formal relations of the ULIMA and LURD with Liberia are also observable in the processes of them acquiring arms. The RUF enjoyed a synergic informal relation with Charles Taylor, which allowed a constant flow of weapons in both directions, but mostly from Taylor towards the RUF. Moreover, RUF's forces were able to establish strong informal links with Liberia and use the havoc in the country to train, hide and regroup troops.

5. AFGHANISTAN'S FAILURE AND ITS INFLUENCE IN PAKISTAN AND TAJIKISTAN

5.1 AFGHANISTAN–PAKISTAN

The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan has always been turbulent. Since Pakistan gained independence in 1947, Afghanistan has been the strategic depth that Pakistan lacks (Hussain 2005).[18] During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan funded, armed, and helped the insurgency movements, or mujahedeen, to fight against the Soviet-like regime in Kabul. Thousand of fighters, both Afghans and Pakistani, were trained in tribal areas in the north-west of Pakistan (Hussain 2005). After the withdrawal of the Soviet Army and the total collapse of Afghanistan, Pakistan maintained its interest in the country, supporting the Hezb-e Islami group against the other militias fighting for power. The Pakistani support shifted towards another group which originated within Pakistani territory, the Taliban. The Taliban entered Kabul in 1996 with the support of Pakistan and with many Pakistani nationals within its ranks (Hussain 2005). With the American- and UK-led invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan shifted its support again, this time towards the American and British army. However, the nexus between the Taliban and its supporters in the tribal areas of Pakistan did not follow the new policy of Islamabad (Hussain 2005). The Taliban used the tribal areas to retreat, challenging the authority of the Pakistani government.

The Taliban in Pakistan have transformed into a powerful force since then, both in terms of military and support, gaining control of several regions in the tribal areas. The government, unable to tackle

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18. Pakistani officials assessed it to be dangerous not to have a friendly Afghanistan. The geostrategic reason was the lack of 'strategic depth' or retreat capacity, in case of an Indian invasion in the East. For more information about the Pakistani motivation and interest during the Soviet invasion, see Hussain (2005).

the insurgency and the increasing power of the Taliban, has entered into several negotiations with them while at the same time launching a fierce military operation against them. As the time of writing the conflict remains unsolved. The Taliban now control several regions, especially in Waziristan, and have been able to impose Sharia law in a considerable number of regions.

The relationship between armed groups and insurgencies in Afghanistan and Pakistan during the last 40 years is deeply rooted in networks of collaboration and common ideologies (Hussain 2005). Since the failure of Afghanistan in 1989, cross-border activities have taken place almost on a daily basis between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Nevertheless, armed groups already engaged in cross-border activities active during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Hussain 2005). Geostrategic and religious considerations by the Pakistani leadership resulted in a close collaboration between the anti-soviet groups and the Pakistani state (Hussain 2005). The origins of the Afghan 'jihad' between 1979 and 1992 are found in Pakistan, as described by the soviet ambassador in Afghanistan at the time (Hussain 2005).[19] These groups were being protected and sometimes assisted by the Pakistani army in order to avoid the communist takeover of Afghanistan, among other reasons (Hussain 2005). Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP), became the operational centre of the Afghan Islamic insurgency (Hussain 2005).

The withdrawal of the Soviet Union and the collapse of Afghanistan did not lesser the involvement of Pakistan in the Afghan milieu. During the fierce power struggle, Pakistan maintained a clear support to the Hezb-e Islami fight against Ahmad Shah Masoud's militia, the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UIFSA) (Hussain 2005). A relative loss of influence over the events in Afghanistan forced Pakistan to shift their support to an emerging Pashtun group spawned in the madrasas of the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas

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19. Alexandre Puzanov, Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan in 1978 reported "propaganda, dropping in of weapons and diversionary groups which are being prepared in Pakistan to topple the PDPA regime" (quoted in Hussain 2005:102).

(FATA), the Taliban (Hussain 2005).[20] This group seized power amid the collapsed of Afghanistan in 1996, but was overthrown by the UIFSA at the end of 2001; nevertheless, the relationship between the Taliban and Pakistan was not over.

The Taliban enjoyed the international support of Pakistan, but the state of collapse in Afghanistan fostered an increase in the informal relations between the Taliban and their counterparts, the Pashtuns in Pakistan. They especially found support among the FATA, without the knowledge of Pakistani authorities (ICG 2006). The UIFSA threw the Taliban from power with the support of an American- and UK-led international coalition. This enhanced the state of collapse in Afghanistan and pushed some of the Taliban towards their origins, the FATA and the NWFP in Pakistan (Hussain 2005). Moreover, ousting of the Taliban had another crucial effect on Pakistan. The Pakistani government sided with the anti-Taliban forces in order to avoid the military fury of a wounded US government and engaged, at times just verbally, in the anti-Taliban fight (Sinno 2008).[21]

It is crucial to understand the aim of the Taliban and the groups related to them. Their ultra-orthodox religious ideas go beyond established borders, and the whole Muslim world is their possible stage of action (Kepel 2002, Rashid 2002). Their intentions, according to their statements, reach beyond power, and are found on a more spiritual level (Kepel 2002). The main benchmarks of their ideology are the imposition of sharia law, and creating a normative Islamic society that live according to the rules of the Koran. Nevertheless, as will be pointed out later, the Taliban, being mostly a Pashtun group, also created regional ethnic tensions, (Hussain 2005). Most likely, they aim at controlling all the Pashtun regions and want to impose their radical religious view there (Hussain 2005, ICG 2006, Kepel 2002). Gearing

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20. The FATA and the NWFP are the tribal areas in Pakistan bordering Afghanistan. These areas enjoy a special status and do not follow provincial or federal legislation (Gunaratna and Nielsen 2008). In addition, Baluchistan also borders Afghanistan in the south.
21. The US, after the attacks of September 2001, launched a "war on terror"; their first target being the Afghan government and the terrorist network Al-Qaeda. Pakistan, in a drastic turn in its policies and in fear of the US reaction, supported the 'war on terror' and became one of its major defendants.

up with Pakistani groups and creating a somehow homogeneous actor points to this objective (ICG 2009b).

The Taliban fighters entering Pakistan in 2001 and 2002 were mostly Pashtun, although Arabic and Central Asian fighters were also among those crossing the porous border (Gunaratna and Nielsen 2008). The involvement of Pakistani nationals, and more importantly, the increasing involvement of Pakistani indigenous groups have shifted the outlook of the Taliban and their objectives substantially. Several Pakistani groups, religiously related to the ultra-orthodox Deobandi Islam preached by the Taliban, have taken advantage of the surge of militants in the FATA and NWFP to increase the strength of their struggle (ICG 2009b). Nowadays, all these groups have merged and represent a loosely homogeneous actor with stakes on both sides of the border. In March 2009, Taliban groups in Pakistan were acting on both sides of the border and entailed several different nationalities, although they were predominantly Pashtun (ICG 2009).[22]

The ouster of the Taliban has been felt extensively in Pakistan, leading to the FATA and the NWFP gaining more strength (ICG 2006, 2009b). Overthrowing the Taliban pushed several members of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda towards Pakistan, in search of a safe haven (ICG 2006).[23] The Taliban merged with the local population of these tribal areas, receiving support and shelter from different local militias and tribal leaders (ICG 2006). Taliban leaders used their connections and networks in the FATA and NWFP to gain power in the provinces. The network of madrasas and kindred militant groups has been utilized to recruit disfranchised young people to fight the Soviet after

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22. It is possible to find Uzbeks, Arabs, Muslim Europeans and East Asians among the foreign fighters (ICG 2006, 2009b).
23. The treatment and categorization of the Taliban as a terrorist group makes it difficult to distinguish the line that separates Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, if there is any; therefore, this paper will treat both groups as a unique unit of analysis. The close links created between both groups before and after the ouster of the Taliban allows for the homogenization of their activities. ICG (2009b) assesses that a group called 'Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan' has been loosely coordinating all the activities of all the Taliban-oriented groups in the FATA and NWFP since 2007.

their invasion of Afghanistan (Hussain 2005). The Taliban used these networks to impose their power over some provinces in the FATA and the NWFP (ICG 2009b). The compliance of the local tribe leaders, or maliks, is difficult to assess.[24] Evidence points at a close collaboration between maliks and the Taliban (ICG 2006). Nevertheless, these local tribal leaders have received large amounts of money for their services (ICG 2006). In addition, Taliban fighters have killed several maliks recently, and their authority has dwindled gradually as the Taliban strength increased (ICG 2006, 2009b).

In June 2002, less than a year after the ouster of the Taliban, the Pakistani intelligence (Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI) had already gathered information about the activities of Taliban fighters on Pakistani soil, moving troops to the FATA in order to curtail the activities of these groups (ICG 2006). The Taliban in Pakistan have been active since then, expanding the war in Afghanistan inside Pakistani borders and engaging the Pakistan Armed Forces into the struggle. The Taliban's intentions and range of action have been decisive in their relationship with the Pakistani government. As part of the 'war on terror', the Pakistani army moved the FATA and NWFP in order to hunt down the leaders of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in their territory (ICG 2006). Nevertheless, time demonstrated that these leaders and fighters were not only a temporary presence in Pakistan.

The de facto authority of Taliban groups in the FATA and the NWFP, now under the loosely unified command of Baitullah Mehsud and the Tehrik-i-Taliban in Pakistan, has been challenged by the Pakistani army, creating a long conflict throughout the region.[25] The reason behind the Pakistani army's involvement in the fight against the Taliban is twofold. On one hand, Islamabad saw that it was losing its weak control over the FATA and NWFP, and these uncontrolled areas were

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24. The *maliks* system was inherited from British colonial rule. The British created a special position in the tribal areas in order to forge friendly elites. The maliks receive money from the state and they maintain a powerful status in the daily decision-making process of the communities (ICG 2006).

25. The authority of Mehsud is questionable since several confrontations between different groups under his auspice have occurred since 2007 (ICG 2009b).

also being used by other groups, especially in Punjabi areas and in Khasmir (ICG 2009b). On the other hand, increased US pressure on the Pakistani government accelerated the military intervention, leaving no space for early political solutions (ICG 2009b). The war between the Pakistani army and the Taliban, sometimes supported by NATO air strikes, has seen full-fledged conflict during the last years, and remains unsolved (ICG 2009, UCDP 2009c).

It is worth noting that the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Taliban in Pakistan are, in theory, two separate organizations with two separate leaders (Acharya et al 2009). Both movements consider themselves pieces of a bigger mechanism, the Taliban, and collaborate in several situations. Their objectives are the same, and they fight together in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the Pakistan Taliban also runs their own agenda, targeting objectives outside Afghanistan and the FATA and NWFP region (Acharya et al 2009). It is impossible to draw a line between the groups, mostly due to their shared Pashtun identity and to the centuries of cross-border activities between Afghanistan and Pakistan. At best, it is possible to distinguish which operations are part of the resistance against the ISAF-NATO forces, and which operations target Pakistani-only objectives.

5.2 AFGHANISTAN–TAJIKISTAN

Before embarking on any analysis regarding the relationship between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, it is important to shed light upon the civil war that took place in Tajikistan between 1992 and 1997, and the role Afghanistan played in the war. In 1992, Afghanistan was already a failed state, and Tajikistan was a recently created republic after the breakdown of the Soviet Union (Jonson 2006). During Gorbachov's government, Tajikistan acquired several rights within the frame of the Soviet Union, and definitively created a national identity (Joson 2006). The civil war that took place during the first years of independence was a direct consequence of the power vacuum created by the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the Afghan factor did have an influence on the duration of the conflict, and some

authors argue it also played a part in the motives behind it, but not in the creation and escalation of it (ICG 2001, 2009c, Jonson 2006:40-43, Rashid 2002). The reasons behind the civil war in Tajikistan, according to ICG (2001), Jonson (2006) and Rashid (2002), were local, and Afghanistan's failure did not influence the outbreak of the conflict. The conflict in Tajikistan, using counterfactual logic, would have broken out even without the failure of Afghanistan a few years earlier. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstanding and biased analysis of a country already plunged into a conflict, the analysis of Tajikistan will be done starting at 1997, the last year of the civil war. Moreover, the final objective of this paper is to shed light on the effects of state failure on the outbreak of civil war in neighbouring countries; therefore, the study of the Tajik civil war remains outside the scope of this research.

Since the end of the civil war, Tajikistan has plunged into an unstable situation. The political system, commanded by president Emomali Rakhmon, has progressively dwindled and become more and more corrupt, raising the already-high level of poverty in the country (ICG 2009c). Ethnic tensions have arisen throughout the country but no policies have been enforced in order to tackle them (ICG 2009c). The violent civil war and the mismanagement of Rakhmon's government have destroyed what little infrastructures were left behind by the Soviets (ICG 2009c). Nowadays, most of the country faces energy blackouts during most of the winter, and the mountainous geography of Tajikistan increases the isolation of several regions (ICG 2009c). As a consequence of the unstable situation in Tajikistan, thousands of young Tajiks have emigrated as seasonal workers to its wealthy neighbours. Nevertheless, the current economic crisis is reducing the amount of available employment abroad, thus also reducing the remittances that were sustaining a considerable percentage of the Tajik population (ICG 2009c).

During the years of ethnic-Tajik control of the government in Kabul, Tajikistan's anti-government opposition sought refuge in Afghanistan (Jonson 2006). The Taliban's ousting of the ethnic Tajik government in 1996 ironically meant a bigger effort was needed by the interna-

tional community to put an end to Tajikistan's civil war (Jonson 2006, Rashid 2002). The threat of the Taliban increased soon after the General Peace Agreement was signed in June 1997 (Rashid 2002). Masood's UIFSA received increased support from Tajikistan and other countries after the Taliban advanced into Tajik areas in Afghanistan. At some point during 2000, Taliban forces were eyeball to eyeball with the Russian troops protecting the Afghan-Tajik border (Rashid 2002).[26] Tajikistan was then used as the main entry point for supplies directed at Masood's UIFSA, and the Tajik government offered all its support to the group (Jonson 2006). With the intervention of the US and UK-led troops in Afghanistan after the attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001, the prospects of the UIFSA –renamed Northern Alliance– drastically changed, and so did the perception of the Taliban threat in the eyes of the Tajik government.

The fast victory of the Northern Alliance, with the decisive support of the US and UK-led international force, meant a relief for the Tajik government. The Taliban left Kabul and withdrew to the east and south of the country, far from Tajikistan. With the set-up of a new government with Tajik representation, the situation partly improved and the Taliban were no longer a security threat to Tajikistan (Jonson 2006). The situation has worsened over the years, and Tajikistan has not been able to play the role of 'middleman' that Russia and the US intended (Jonson 2006). The Afghan-Tajik border remains porous and unpatrolled, and Afghanistan remains unstable. Nevertheless, the Tajik national identity still remains stronger than any possible support for the Taliban orthodox Islam. As a consequence, no anti-government groups have created informal networks. Simply speaking, Tajiks won the Afghan war against the Taliban, and no group has, so far, sought the support of the Taliban and taken advantage of the security situation in Afghanistan to initiate a conflict

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26. Russia deployed troops on the Afghan-Tajik border in 1993 as part of a bilateral agreement. However, the deployment has been highly polemical on both sides of the border and Russia's intentions are still unclear. For more information see Jonson (2006) and Rashid (2002).

in Tajikistan. Moreover, the northern part of Afghanistan remains slightly more stable than the rest of the country, rendering it more difficult for any armed group to seek refuge and to establish informal networks in the region. As an example, the most Islamist militant group during the civil war in Tajikistan, the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), which shared the same orthodox interpretation of Islam with the Taliban, did support the UIFSA during the Afghan conflict (Rashid 2002). Therefore, it is so far unimaginable to see an Islamic group seeking the support of the Taliban to fight the Tajikistan government.

Nevertheless, Tajikistan still faces another threat with a direct link to Afghanistan, namely the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami (Party of Islamic Liberation, HT). These two groups, listed as terrorist groups by several organizations, maintain a direct link with the Taliban and have a Pan-Central Asian scope of action, which obviously includes Tajikistan (Rashid 2002). The threat of the IMU, the most active group in the region, is exacerbated by the tensions of Tajikistan with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. However, IMU is said to have its operational base on Afghan soil, and enjoys the support and help of the Taliban (Cornell 2005). Indeed, the IMU was formally founded in Afghanistan (Cornell 2005). In addition to their use of Afghan soil, the IMU is believed to have bases in the Tajik section of the Ferghana Valley (ICG 2002). The position of the IMU in Afghanistan was initially weakened during the first years after the ouster of the Taliban; nevertheless, with the resurgence of the Taliban, the IMU has again gained a sanctuary for its central command. The support of the IMO in Tajikistan remains low, according to ICG (2002), but its Pan-Central Asian agenda and the increasing strength of the Taliban in Afghanistan and in Pakistan threaten the stability of Tajikistan. Moreover, the possible future presence of American bases in Tajikistan could further endanger the weak stability of the country (ICG 2009c). The presence and interest of the IMU in Tajikistan is unclear, and the lack of control of the Tajik government of the Ferghana Valley increases the lack of information regarding IMU's presence in the country.

Afghanistan's failure seems to be the driving force behind the conflict in Pakistan, and it can be argued that the conflict in Pakistan would have not broken out without the failure in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the failure in Afghanistan did not, apparently and keeping in mind the particularities of the Tajik case, help to create conflict in a highly unstable country such as Tajikistan. What are the reasons behind this different outcome? According to the logic exposed above, Pakistan has created strong informal networks in Afghanistan, and these networks took advantage of the lack of security, representation and wealth in order to carry out their own fight. In the case of Tajikistan, these informal networks have not been present, and most of the relations between Tajiks and Afghans are done through formal networks, even during the Taliban years.

The success of insurgency in Pakistan is clearly related to the creation of informal networks between Pakistan and Afghanistan. These networks are mostly based on the porous border between the two countries –more specifically, along the borders between FATA, NWFP and Afghanistan. The two directions of the insurgency have taken place in Pakistan. Afghan groups, namely the Taliban and Al Qaeda, sought refuge in Pakistan due to the establishment of informal networks during the war against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. These networks have challenged the Pakistani authority in the FATA and NWFP, and this has prompted a fierce conflict between Pakistan and these groups. In addition, Pakistani groups have used these informal networks to carry out their struggle against the Pakistani government. The lack of authority in Afghanistan allowed both groups to acquire the resources and grievances needed for the outbreak of conflict in Pakistan. However, in the case of Tajikistan, these networks have been channelled though the Tajik government's support to the UIFSA-Northern Alliance. After the failure in Afghanistan this group and the relationship it enjoys with the Tajik government have averted any incentive to challenge its authority within Tajikistan. This behav-

iour has been seen both during the Taliban years and after the ouster of the Taliban. However, in the Pakistani case, these groups did not rely upon the Pakistani government in such a manner that they would have been able to act independently and thus be able to challenge the Pakistani authority when needed.

6. ANALYSIS: ASSESSING THE IMPLICATIONS OF STATE FAILURE ON NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

For the four cases analysed in this paper, the creation of insurgency using the informal networks between the failed state and the neighbouring state seems to be crucial to the outbreak of war. As the theoretical framework pointed out, the creation of informal networks taking advantage of the lack of security in the failed state opens an opportunity for armed groups on both sides of the border. The use of this opportunity will create conflict-enhancing mechanisms in the neighbouring country. The outbreak of war in Pakistan is primarily due to the creation of informal networks between the insurgency in Afghanistan and groups in Pakistan. The creation of informal networks between these two groups can be observed in both directions of the mechanism. On one side, groups from the failed state cross the border into the neighbouring countries, enhancing the prospects of conflict outbreak. Afghan groups were able to settle in Pakistan thanks to the existence of informal networks. These networks allowed the Afghan groups to find refuge and hide among the population. The protection and help provided through these informal networks created a safe haven for the Afghan groups in Pakistan. The same situation is observed in Sierra Leone. The informal networks linking Charles Taylor's insurgency with the RUF allowed the NPFL several entrances into Sierra Leone. NPFL troops were fighting alongside the RUF in Sierra Leone

and the withdrawal of these troops was directly felt by the RUF. This shows the importance of the informal links between both groups for the outbreak and continuation of conflict in Sierra Leone. It is worth noting that the actions of these networks were only possible due to the lack of security in the failed state.

Insurgency groups from neighbouring countries use the failed state as a sanctuary for their task. Both Pakistani and Sierra Leonean groups have used the failed state as a safe haven, again utilizing the informal networks that were created in the countries. Sierra Leone's RUF was created in Liberia and launched its first attack on Sierra Leonean soil from Liberia. Most of RUF's troops were trained in Liberia and used the failed state as a place to retreat. Pakistani insurgency movements did apparently not launch their first attacks from Afghanistan; nevertheless, it is important to note that most of the Taliban fighters in Pakistan received their baptism by fire in Afghanistan. In addition, several Pakistani fighters have been found fighting along the Taliban in Afghanistan. The networks created between the groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan did not follow any official channel, and did not even do so under the Taliban government. The link is based on the madrasas in Pakistan and the historically porous border separating the countries. In the cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia, the informal networks used were originally created in Libya, during the 'revolutionary' training of Taylor and Sankoh. None of these networks follow any official path. The madrasas have never been controlled by any other authority except the religious groups behind them. The ideology and close collaboration between Afghan and Pakistani Taliban is deeply rooted in the nexus created in the madrasas. The Libyan link is, on the same vein, informal, since Libya has not been able to retain any control over the leaders 'educated' within their territory. Therefore, it can be argued that the insurgencies in Pakistan and Sierra Leone were possible thanks to the informal networks created between these groups and the groups in the failed state.

Tajikistan and Guinea have not seen insurgency movements in their territory in relation to the failed state next to them. Tajikistan movements in Afghanistan have crossed the border between both countries

in both directions; nonetheless, the links between groups in Tajikistan and groups in Afghanistan are purely formal. The government of Tajikistan assisted and sustained the UIFSA-Northern Alliance, formalizing the networks of this group with Tajikistan. Because of these official links, no reason could be found by the UIFSA to challenge the authority of the Tajik government in Tajikistan. In the case of Guinea, the same pattern is observable with the ULIMO-LURD. The link between the group and the Guinean government had the same effect as in the Tajik case, rendering any insurrection against their main sustainers without motive. The very survival of these two groups was tied to the formal character of these links. Interestingly enough, the trend found in Pakistan and Sierra Leone, where armed groups used informal networks to create an insurgency, might be taking place in Guinea. Some reports argue that ex-soldiers are being recruited in Liberia to fight against the Guinean regime, taking advantage of the state of havoc still at place in some parts of the country. The shift between formal and informal networks can threaten the Guinean government. It is worth noting the important difference between the two possible directions of the mechanism in Sierra Leone and Pakistan. In the Pakistani case, the main trigger behind the outbreak of conflict has been the presence of Afghan Taliban in the FATA and NWFP. The Taliban, perfectly intermingled with the local population and using the informal networks to carry out their global struggle, challenged the authority Pakistan held over FATA's and NWFP's territories. Pakistan suffered when groups from the failed state entered their territory and enlarged the scope of their struggle. These groups have become more Pakistani with time, and to this day, both Taliban –Pakistani and Afghan– remain theoretically separated. This does not mean that the other direction of the mechanism, groups from the neighbouring country using the failed state as a sanctuary, did not play an important part in Pakistan. Pakistani Taliban have been crossing the border almost on a daily basis, and have probably at some point been using the 'safety' of Afghanistan to hide, retreat or acquire more supplies. In Sierra Leone, the most important direction of the mechanism was the opposite, namely, armed groups from the neighbouring country using

the failed state as a safe haven. The conflict in Sierra Leone broke out when RUF's troops entered the country from Liberia. The RUF used the havoc in the failed state to establish a safe haven. In Liberia, they were able to train and retreat far from the reach of the SLA. Both directions of the causal mechanism are related to the informality of the networks. Groups have entered Guinea and Tajikistan from Liberia and Afghanistan, but the lack of informality of the networks that allowed for such entrance has spared the countries from conflict.

Recapitulating, insurgency seems to demonstrate its importance as an explanatory variable. The different outcome of the cases can partly be explained by the presence of informal networks in Pakistan and Sierra Leone, and the lack of such networks in Tajikistan and Guinea. It seems clear that informal networks create conflict-enhancing mechanisms in two different directions in the neighbouring countries; armed groups use the failed state as a safe haven and armed groups from the failed state enlarge the scope of their actions and enter a neighbouring country. In the cases with no outbreak of conflict, the baseline for conflict was relatively similar –nevertheless, the lack of informal networks explains why both directions of the causal mechanisms are not present. Without informal networks, armed groups cannot use the failed state as a safe haven, which is clear in the Guinean case. Moreover, without informal networks, armed groups from the failed state might not, find incentives to expand their struggle into the neighbouring state, such as in the case of Tajikistan. It is not the existence of networks –which existed in all the cases with varying intensity– that explains the different outcome, but rather the informal character of these networks. Informal networks were only found in Sierra Leone and Pakistan.

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE FINDINGS

The research presented above needs to be evaluated critically in order to strength its validity and generalization power. The outbreak of conflict in Pakistan and Sierra Leone can be understood as an accumulation of grievances and protracted conflict since 1950 (Fearon and

Laitin 2003). At the same time, the cases of Pakistan and Sierra Leone will perfectly fit Ayoob's theoretical framework (1995). These two explanations stress the importance of decolonization and inherent post-colonial weakness as a cause of war. In addition, the cases of this study could be contemplated as part of a Regional Security Complex (Buzan and Weaver 2003). The security of Pakistan and Sierra Leone is intimately linked to their neighbours. Based on this idea, failure on their neighbours will endanger their security and might generate outbreak of conflict. Nevertheless, the theoretical approach of this study aims at enhancing the understanding of a particular event –state failure– and tries to present its influence as a possible influential element in the outbreak of conflict. Therefore, the findings of this study should not be considered against other theories, but rather as a useful addition to them.

Concerning the methodology used, the use of qualitative studies implies a trade-off between validity and generalization. In order to avert the lack of generalization power as much as possible, the study attempted to study completely different cases. Using this technique, regional, cultural and economic particularities could be avoided to a certain degree. Nevertheless, the research findings have to be contemplated keeping in mind the limitations of qualitative studies. The findings of this research point out some causal mechanism that seems to be above the concrete particularities of each case. However, the particularities of each case make it impossible to draw a general extension of the conclusions to pertain to other situations. The cases in this study were selected based on previous knowledge of the circumstances and bearing in mind the resources and time limitations of the enquiry. Notwithstanding this, the small amount of failed states and the early stages of the research on the effects of state failure should bestow certain degree of power of generalization to the findings of this research.

A second limitation of this project is found in the empirical information used to analyse the underpinnings of the theoretical construct. Informality is already an evasive subject of analysis, and even more so when only secondary sources can be used. In addition, questions can

always be raised regarding the impartiality and accuracy of any secondary source used. This study has tried to avoid these shortcomings by using a considerable range of sources with different origins.

Overall, this paper can be classified within the early stages of research on the effects of state failure on neighbouring countries, and its systematic focus has been on the causal mechanism affecting neighbouring states. The use of secondary sources, the trade-off of generalization power, and the case selection has been done in order to better use the resources available to shed light upon the field of research. The research lacks the parsimoniousness of well-established theoretical constructs and it should be considered as a first attempt to shed light upon the relationship between failed states and their neighbouring countries from the perspective of their citizens. The robustness of certain results, both positive and negative, should be further tested in other cases and against other theoretical frameworks in order to achieve the richness of the accumulative power of science.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This research has attempted to enhance the scientific knowledge of state failure; more concretely, to explore the influence of failed states on neighbouring countries. The theoretical framework leading this paper argues that state failure spreads conflict-enhancing mechanism through the creation of informal networks based on the lack of security. The research has been guided by the hypothesis explored in section 2, which states that the creation and use of informal networks between the failed state and its neighbouring countries explains the outbreak of conflict in some neighbouring states. Logically, according to the hypothesis, the lack of informal networks explains the lack of conflict in some neighbouring states. In order to test the hypothesis and refine the theoretical framework explaining the causal mechanism, two cases have been analysed, Liberia and Afghanistan. The selection of the cases is based on the dependent variable, the outbreak

of conflict. As explained in Section 3, each case has been divided in two units of analysis, one case with conflict and one case without conflict. The unit of analysis is the relationship between the failed state and one of its neighbours. In the case of Liberian, the selected units of analysis are Sierra Leone and Guinea. In the case of Afghanistan, the units selected are Pakistan and Tajikistan. In order to test the hypothesis and the theoretical framework, the three variables have been scored in every unit of analysis, aiming at explaining the different outcome of the dependent variable.

The empirical evidence gathered for this research show the validity of the explanatory variable. The creation of insurgency-based informal networks seems to explain the different outcome in the units of analysis. Pakistan and Sierra Leone, the cases with conflict outbreak, suffered a widespread creation of insurgency-oriented informal networks towards Afghanistan and Liberia, respectively. These networks between the failed state and the neighbouring state seem to explain the outbreak of insurgency in the country. At the same time Tajikistan and Guinea, the cases without conflict, also lack insurgency-based informal networks with the failed state. In Tajikistan and Guinea the insurgency movements acting in the failed state were controlled or supported by the government, therefore, the networks were formal. The governmental support averts any possibility of challenging the authority of the government in the neighbouring country.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The interest in failed states has been growing during the last five years, fostered by events like the 9/11 and the problem with piracy in Somalia. This research points out to some possible policy implications, mostly based on the role of informal networks between failed states and neighbouring countries. It seems clear that state failure increases the likelihood of conflict in neighbouring states, and this research has showed an initial understanding of the causal mechanism behind this transmission. Thus, policy makers should take into consideration the possible channels of transmission, increasing their understanding of

informal networks between the countries, mostly when these informal networks are managed by armed groups. The systematic control and understanding of armed groups and informal networks becomes crucial in order to avoid conflict in neighbours of failed states.

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