Cooperating for Peace and Security attempts to understand – more than fifteen years after the end of the Cold War, seven years after 9/11, and in the aftermath of the failure of the United Nations (UN) reform initiative – the relationship between U.S. security interests and the factors that drove the evolution of multilateral security arrangements from 1989 to the present. The editors take as a starting point the argument that this evolution has occurred along two major lines and within three phases. Either existing mechanisms have been adapted to address emerging threats, or entirely new instruments have been created – and these changes have largely taken place within the timeframes of 1989 to 9/11, 9/11 to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and 2003 to the time of this writing. Chapters cover a range of topics – including the UN, U.S. multilateral cooperation, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), nuclear nonproliferation, European and African security institutions, conflict mediation, counterterrorism initiatives, international justice, and humanitarian cooperation – examining why certain changes have taken place and the factors that have driven them and evaluating whether they have led to a more effective international system and what this means for facing future challenges.

Bruce D. Jones is the Director of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Dr. Jones’s work focuses on the role of the UN in conflict management and international security, global peacekeeping operations, postconflict peacebuilding and statebuilding, conflict prevention, the role of the emerging powers in the contemporary security environment, and the regional aspects of the Middle East crisis. He is the author of Peacemaking in Rwanda: The Dynamics of Failures (2001) and coauthor, with Carlos Pascual and Stephen Stedman, of Power and Responsibility: Building International Order in an Era of Transnational Threat (2009).

Shepard Forman is Director Emeritus and Senior Fellow of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. Prior to founding the Center, he directed the Human Rights and Governance and International Affairs programs at the Ford Foundation. Dr. Forman is coeditor of Good Intentions: Pledges of Aid for Postconflict Recovery (2000), Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement (2002), and Promoting Reproductive Health: Investing in Health for Development (2000), in addition to being author or editor of numerous books and articles.

Richard Gowan is Research Associate and Associate Director for Policy at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. He works on peacekeeping, multilateral security arrangements, and the relationship between the UN and the European Union. He has worked with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Croatia and published on the political philosophy of Raymond Aron. Mr. Gowan is also a Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations.
In memory of Thomas Franck (1931–2009), an exceptional scholar of international law and inspiring believer in international institutions, who played an essential part in the establishment of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University.
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Contributors

A. Sarjoh Bah is Research Associate and Program Coordinator for the Global Peace Operations program at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. He was previously Senior Researcher with the Peace Missions Program at the Institute for Security Studies and has also served as a consultant to the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and the European Commission. He was volume editor for the Annual Review of Global Peace Operations (Rienner) in 2008 and 2009 and also recently coedited A Tortuous Road to Peace: The Dynamics of Regional, UN and International Humanitarian Interventions in Liberia (ISS, 2005).

Sara Batmanglich is Senior Program Officer in the Preventing Conflict and Stabilizing Fragile States program at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. Previously, she worked in media, focusing on youth culture and globalization. Her research interests include the Middle East, U.S. policy in the region, and Iranian domestic and foreign policy.

Mats Berdal is Professor of Security and Development in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. He was formerly Director of Studies at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. He is a contributor to and coeditor of United Nations Interventionism 1991–2004, published by Cambridge University Press in 2007.

Sebastian von Einsiedel is Political Affairs Officer with the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). Previously, he worked on various aspects of the UN’s role in peace and security at the International Peace Academy, an independent think tank in New York. In 2004–2005, he served as a researcher with the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change and later on the follow-up to the Panel’s recommendations in the UN Secretariat. Von Einsiedel has also worked with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Brussels and the German Parliament.

Shepard Forman is Director Emeritus and Senior Fellow of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. Prior to founding the Center, he directed the Human Rights and Governance and International Affairs programs at the Ford Foundation, where he also was responsible for developing and implementing the Foundation’s
grant-making activities in Eastern Europe. He has served on the faculty at Indiana University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Michigan and authored two books on Brazil and numerous articles. He is coeditor, with Stewart Patrick, of Good Intentions: Pledges of Aid for Postconflict Recovery (2000), and Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement (Rienner, 2002).

Richard Gowan is a Research Associate and Associate Director for Multilateral Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. He was formerly manager of the Europe Programme at the Foreign Policy Centre (London), and he is the UN Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Ian Johnstone is Associate Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, and Nonresident Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. He has held various positions in the United Nations Secretariat, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the Office of the Legal Counsel. In addition to publishing widely on international law and organizations, he was recently volume editor and lead scholar of the Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2007 (Rienner, 2007) and editor of a special issue of International Peacekeeping, The US Role in Contemporary Peace Operations: A Double-Edged Sword? (2008).

Bruce D. Jones is Director of the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and consulting professor at Stanford University. He served in UN political missions in the Middle East and Kosovo, in the Office of the Secretary-General, and as Deputy Research Director for the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. He is series editor, Annual Review of Global Peace Operations, author of Peacemaking in Rwanda, and coauthor (with Stephen Stedman and Carlos Pascual) of Power and Responsibility: Building International Order in an Era of Transnational Threat (2009).

David M. Malone was recently appointed President of the International Development Research Center. He was Canadian High Commissioner to India and Ambassador to Bhutan and Nepal, 2006–2008. A former Ambassador to the UN and President of the International Peace Academy (1998–2004), he has written extensively about the political economy of war and peace, decisionmaking in the UN Security Council, the past and future of Iraq, American foreign policy, and public international law.


Cesare P. R. Romano is Associate Professor of Law at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, and a Director of the Project on International Courts and Tribunals. He has expertise in
the law and practice of international courts and tribunals. His most recent publications include *The Sword and the Scales: The U.S. and International Courts* (with D. Terris and L. Swigart, 2009); *The International Judge: An Introduction to the Men and Women Who Decide the World’s Cases* (2007); and *Internationalized Criminal Courts and Tribunals: Sierra Leone, East Timor, Kosovo and Cambodia* (with A. Nollkaemper and J. Kleffner, 2004).

Eric Rosand is Co-Director of the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation in New York and a Nonresident Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. Previously he served in the U.S. Department of State for nine years, including in the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. He is the coauthor of *Allied against Terrorism: What’s Needed to Strengthen Global Commitment* (Century, 2006) and numerous articles, book chapters, and reports on multilateral counterterrorism efforts.

Barnett R. Rubin is Director of Studies and Senior Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, where he directs the program on the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Previously, he was Director of the Center for Preventive Action and Director, Peace and Conflict Studies, at the Council on Foreign Relations. He has served as Special Advisor to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and advised the UN on the drafting of the constitution of Afghanistan. He has published extensively on Afghanistan, conflict prevention, state formation, and human rights.

Fiona Simpson is Research Associate for the Strengthening Multilateral Approaches to Nuclear and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction project at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. Previously, she worked for the UN’s Department for Disarmament Affairs and as an External Relations and Policy Officer at the IAEA in Vienna. Her recent publications include “IAEA Special Inspections after Israel’s Raid on Syria,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (The Bulletin Online, February 11, 2008), and the coauthored “Atoms for Peace and the Nuclear Fuel Cycle,” *Atoms for Peace: A Future after Fifty Years?* (2007, Joseph F. Pilat, ed.).

Stephen John Stedman is Senior Fellow at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation and professor of political science (by courtesy). He previously served as Research Director for the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and has also been a consultant to the UN on issues of peacekeeping in civil war, light weapons proliferation and conflict in Africa, and preventive diplomacy. He has written extensively on international conflict management and war in the twentieth century and, most recently, is coauthor (with Bruce Jones and Carlos Pascual) of *Managing Global Insecurity* (Brookings, 2009).

Abby Stoddard is a policy analyst in international humanitarian affairs, conducting independent and commissioned research in association with the Center on International Cooperation at New York University and the UK-based Overseas Development Institute. She is a founding member of Humanitarian Outcomes, an independent research team that provides evidence-based analysis to governments and international organizations on improving humanitarian response. Her prior work as an aid practitioner throughout the
1990s spanned such crises as Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. She is the author of *Humanitarian Alert: NGO Information and Its Impact on US Foreign Policy* (Kumarian Press, 2006), along with numerous articles and published reports.

**David Ucko** is a Trans-Atlantic Fellow at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) in Berlin and an Adjunct Fellow at the RAND Corporation. He is the author of *The New Counterinsurgency Era: Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars* (Georgetown University Press, 2009) and coeditor of *Reintegrating Armed Groups after Conflict: Politics, Violence and Transition* (Routledge, 2009).

**Teresa Whitfield** joined the Center on International Cooperation in May 2008 as a Senior Fellow and Director of UN Strategy, having been Director of the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum of the Social Science Research Council since early 2005. Her research interests include the United Nations, peace operations, and strategies to promote the resolution of internal conflict. Her most recent book is *Friends Indeed? The United Nations, Groups of Friends and the Resolution of Conflict* (United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007).

**Christine Wing** is Senior Fellow and Project Coordinator for the Strengthening Multilateral Approaches to Nuclear and Biological Weapons project at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University. She has a long history of nongovernmental organization (NGO)-based work on nuclear weapons issues, including as Program Officer for International Peace and Security at the Ford Foundation, and as coordinator of the National Disarmament Program of the American Friends Service Committee. She has also served as a consultant to the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the Ploughshares Fund and was Visiting Fellow at Princeton University’s Center of International Studies.
When I started the Center on International Cooperation (CIC) at New York University in 1996, I was seized by the problem of institutional, financial, and political impasses that precluded more effective multilateral cooperation in the post–Cold War world. From my perch as Director of International Affairs at the Ford Foundation, I had witnessed the failure of many donor governments to meet their international obligations, whether to international aid or to global peace and security. Time and again, the UN, the international humanitarian organizations, the International Court of Justice, and even the U.S. Department of State turned to private philanthropy (and increasingly, to the corporate sector) to seek funding for programs that were not only in the international public realm but basic to it. These programs ranged from humanitarian relief and resettlement efforts in the proliferating civil wars in Africa to clerkships, fact finding and translation at the World Court, and stabilization programs in the former Soviet bloc.

In those promising years between the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the preemptive “take the fight anywhere” Bush doctrine, the possibilities seemed ripe for improved multilateral cooperation to address the issues of poverty reduction, global health, cooperative security, environmental management, the expansion of human rights, and a comprehensive system of international justice. The premise was never a simple “all multilateralism is good,” but an effort to examine deeply the political, financial, institutional, and legal underpinnings of multilateral cooperation to address critical transnational and global problems that no single nation or small grouping of nations could address on their own.

In an effort to deal with the overriding national interest question, we initiated several projects that reflected diverse national motivations: international justice, a matter of signatory obligation; pledges of aid to countries emerging from conflict, an urgent matter of regional and global security; the UN conference on development and reproductive health, a matter of moral commitment; and mobilizing resources for humanitarian relief, state altruism of the highest order. Of course, none of these
motivations stood alone, and in none of these subject areas did a sense of common
good prevail over national interests.

Each of our projects paired researchers from the United States and other coun-
tries to ensure multi-angled analysis of multifaceted issues and resulted in an edited
volume of case studies and a set of policy recommendations. These ranged from the
structure and staffing of the International Criminal Court and better distribution
of international justice through ad hoc courts and tribunals to an improved archi-
tecture for postconflict reconstruction aid and peacebuilding. Given the overriding
importance of the United States in a moment of unipolarity, we undertook a major
study of multilateralism and U.S. foreign policy, with a set of recommendations on
how the United States could better engage in the multilateral arena.¹

Times have changed dramatically in the course of the Center’s ten-year history,
in terms of both the international environment for global policymaking and imple-
mentation and the proliferation of think tanks now devoted to the question of mul-
tilateralism. This book reflects both of these changes in its basic premise regarding
the shifting dynamics of power and the two worlds of multilateralism, as described
in the Introduction, and by including authors beyond the growing CIC family of
researchers. Because of the overriding concern with global security and the chang-
ing nature of real and perceived threats, the Center’s focus, apparent in this volume,
has shifted away from a general concern with multilateralism per se to a tighter con-
sideration of the link between broad areas of global concern and more traditional
notions of political and military security.

I am extremely grateful to my initial partners in this effort – Rita Parhad, Stewart
Patrick, Cesare Romano, and Abby Stoddard – and to our original supporters at
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motion what has become an important inquiry into the workings (and failings) of
multilateral cooperation. I am especially pleased to have passed on the Center’s
directorship to Bruce Jones, an accomplished scholar, a public policy expert and
realist, and a person whose political antennae are constantly downloading the right
signals. He and his team of able researchers and staff supporters are moving CIC
ever closer to the practice of multilateralism while maintaining a high standard of
policy analysis and increased cooperation with leading policy institutes and state
parties around the world.

Shepard Forman, New York, 11 June 2009

¹ Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engage-
ment (Rienner, 2002).
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Finally, when three people get together to edit a volume of this type, they will almost certainly require a fourth person to keep everything in order. Sara Batmanglich has played this role superbly. Thank you, Sara.