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International governance of war-torn territories

Since the mid-1990s, the United Nations and other multilateral organizations have been entrusted with exceptional authority for the administration of war-torn and strife-ridden territories. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eastern Slavonia, Kosovo, and East Timor, these organizations have assumed responsibility for governance to a degree unprecedented in recent history. These initiatives represent some of the boldest experiments in the management and settlement of intra-state conflict ever attempted by third parties.

This book is a study of recent experiences in the international administration of war-torn territories. It examines the nature of these operations—their mandates, structures, and powers—and distinguishes them from kindred historical and contemporary experiences of peacekeeping, trusteeship, and military occupation. It analyses and assesses the effectiveness of international administrations and discusses, in thematic fashion, the key challenges—operational and political—that arise in the context of these experiences. It also reflects on the policy implications of these experiences, recommending reforms or new approaches to the challenge posed by localized anarchy in a global context. It argues that despite many of the problems arising from both the design and implementation of international administrations—some of them very serious—international administrations have generally made a positive contribution to the mitigation of conflict in the territories where they have been established. This book is one of the first comprehensive treatments of recent attempts at international governance of war-torn territories.