

# **United Nations and Civil War in the Post-Cold War Era: A Study of Responses, Limitations and Possibilities**

## **Abstract**

The end of the Cold War ushered in a significant shift in the landscape of global conflict, with civil wars eclipsing inter-state wars as the primary threat to international peace and security. The research examines the United Nations' responses to the proliferation of intra-state conflicts in the post-Cold War era, analysing its evolving approaches, inherent limitations, and potential for more effective engagement. The research also explores the increasing willingness of the UN Security Council to interpret internal armed conflicts as threats to international peace, paving the way for interventions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Case studies of UN involvement in civil wars, including peacekeeping operations, humanitarian interventions, and peacebuilding initiatives, has been analysed to assess their effectiveness and identify recurring challenges. These challenges often stem from the complex nature of civil wars, including deeply rooted political grievances, ethnic divisions, and the involvement of non-state actors. Furthermore, the study has delved into the limitations faced by the UN in addressing civil wars. These include the principle of state sovereignty, the difficulty of obtaining Security Council consensus, resource constraints, and the complexities of navigating politically charged environments. Ethical dilemmas associated with intervention and the long-term sustainability of peacebuilding efforts has also been highlighted in the thesis. The thesis examines the capacities of the UN to respond effectively to civil wars. This includes strengthening early warning mechanisms, improving the coordination of UN agencies, fostering inclusive peace processes, addressing the root causes of conflict, and promoting greater accountability for human rights violations. By critically analysing past responses and acknowledging existing limitations, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the UN's role in mitigating and resolving civil wars in the contemporary era and to identify pathways for more impactful future engagement. The thesis content is distributed in 6 substantive chapters and an Introduction and a Conclusion to the thesis followed by Bibliography.

**Keywords:** #Civil War, #International Peace and Security, #Post-Cold War Situations, #Security Council, #United Nations