DFID's Understanding of State Building in Fragile, Post-Conflict Countries

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Aim

Main question:

- Why and how some particular concepts and notions (fragility and state building) start entering into the mainstream of the literature and the policy agenda in specific periods of time?

Why (reasons of change)

- Evolution of the concepts of fragility and post-war state building since the end of the Cold War

How (processes of change)

- Understanding how this evolution has been reflected in the literature on post-war reconstruction, and how this has been incorporated into the international and British policy agenda

Essential Definitions

Fragile States:

- "Countries where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor" (DFID, 2005)

State Building:

- "Actions undertaken by international or national actors to establish, reform, or strengthen the institutions of the state and their relation to society" (Call & Wyeth, 2008)
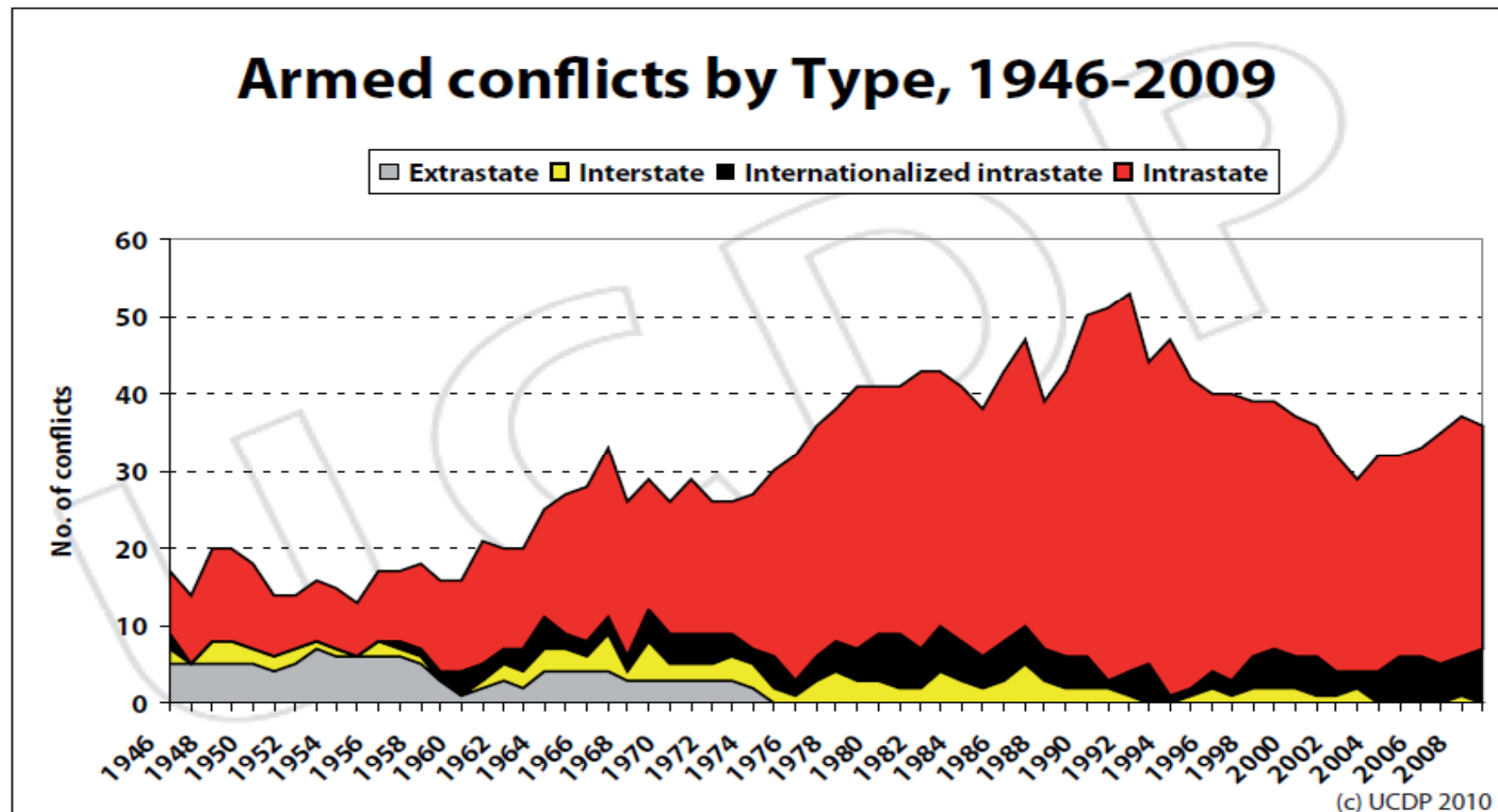
Pre-1990 evolution

End of World War II:

- State-led reconstruction and development efforts (West Germany, Europe, Japan)

From late 1970s – early 1980s:

- Washington Consensus:
  Deregulation, minimal role of the government, neo-liberal policies supported by Bretton Woods institutions

End of the Cold War

Armed conflicts by Type, 1946-2009

Reconsidering the state

- Phase 1: Early reflection (1990s – 2000)

- Phase 2: Post-shock recovery (2001 – 2004)

- Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005 – today)

Phase 1: Early reflection (1990s-2000)

Historical events
- State-led development of the Asian Tigers
- Longer-term approach to post-war recovery (Cambodia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone)

Academic literature
- Criticism to the orthodoxy of that time (Leftwich, 1993)
- Good governance agenda (Grindle, 1997)

International policy agenda
- First reconsiderations of the role of the state (An Agenda for Peace, World Development Reports, Promotion of good governance)

British policy agenda
- Initial commitments to weak and ineffective states in DFID WP and speeches

Phase 2: Post-shock recovery (2001-2004)

Historical events
- 9/11
- Interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq

Academic discourse
- Good enough governance agenda (Grindle, 2004)
- Burgeoning literature on state building (Fukuyama, 2004, Paris, 2004)

International policy agenda
- State weakness sees as a threat to security and development
- First policy answers to tackle state weaknesses (LICUS)

British policy agenda
- PRDE team (later fragile states team) uses the concept of state fragility

Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

Historical events
- Post-war reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq

Academic literature
- Inclusiveness and legitimacy (Ghani, 2005, Rocha Menocal, 2010)
- Merging of state building and peacebuilding (Brahimi, 2007, Call & Cousens, 2007)
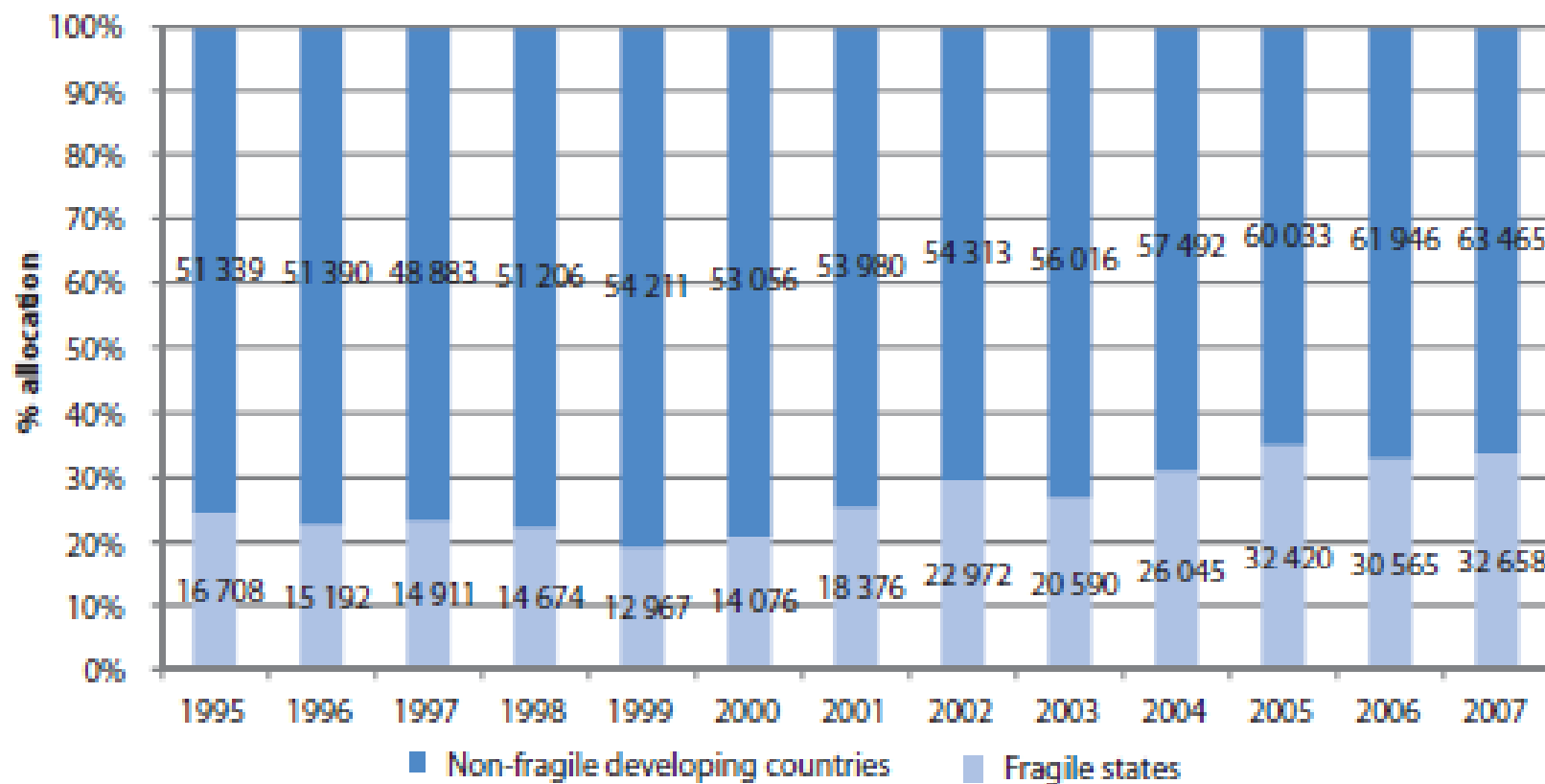
International policy agenda
- State building as policy answer to fragility (OECD DAC)
- Capacity development, bottom-up approaches (Paris Declaration, g7+)

British policy agenda
- Proactive engagement with state building and fragility (more articulated answer to post-conflict state building, more funds to fragile states)
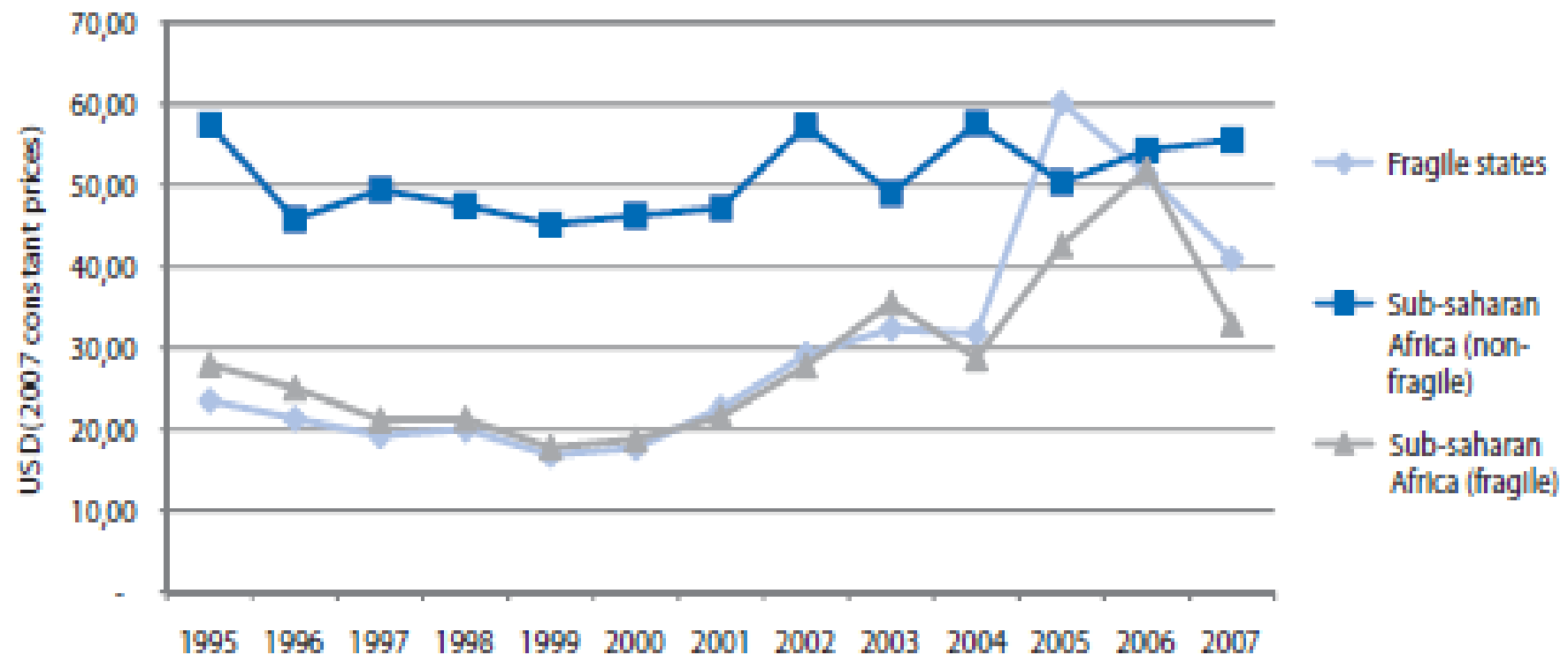
Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

ODA to fragile and non-fragile states 1995-2007 (Source: OECD DAC)

Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

Per capita ODA to fragile and non-fragile states: 1995-2007 (Source: OECD DAC)

Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

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British policy in fragile environments

Increased engagement with fragility and post-war state building

- UK global leadership of the in the field of development (OECD DAC)

Whole of government approaches

- Comprehensive response to fragility (Stabilisation Unit, Conflict Pools)

Increasing synergy with the academic literature

- Promotion of a better reflection on fragility and state building (Integrated approaches, increased funding to governance research)

Conclusion

Why (reasons of change)

- Triggers: political or economic drivers, different examples of successful recovery or development, historical convergence or sudden events
- Old visions, remedies and policies no longer sufficient to face an international mutated environment

How (processes of change)

- Reflection on different concepts and solutions at academic and policy level
- Re-evaluation or modification of old notions and policy answers
- Introduction of new approaches
- Progressive convergence, synergy and exchange between academic literature and policy-making