

# Lecture 19

## Conflict and Violence

# Idea 1: Self-interest

- Biological evolution has led to an innate sense for individuals to satisfy their individual-interests
- Examples: mating opportunities, finding resources, obtaining status.

## Idea 2: Control of Self-interests with Institutions

- Humans are social creatures, thus resolve many of their problems cooperatively.
- Free-riders, thieves, and other overly selfish people can inhibit cooperation.
- As a result, all human societies achieve cooperation through the use of social institutions that generate rewards and punishments.

## Idea 3: Innate In-group Pre-disposition

- As a result of living in an environment of culture, or living with social institutions, humans have evolved an innate sense of living within cultural “ingroups”
- Most humans, without strong incentives (rewards or punishments) will cooperate and share, **AT LEAST WITH INGROUP MEMBERS...**

# Idea 4: Institutions Define Boundaries of Cooperation

- Humans will cooperate with the people they share an institutional affiliation.
- Thus, we expect cooperation to often be bounded by ingroups.
- Understanding cooperation (and conflict) requires attention to the cultural boundaries that define different human societies and sub-groups within these societies.

# Idea 5: Groups will Cooperate to Compete

- In-group cooperation can lead to **between group competition**.
- Cooperative institutions can scale up competition from individuals and families, on up to tribes, regions, ethnic groups, states, or even civilizations.
- Conflict can be more severe when individuals cooperate to fight each other (war).

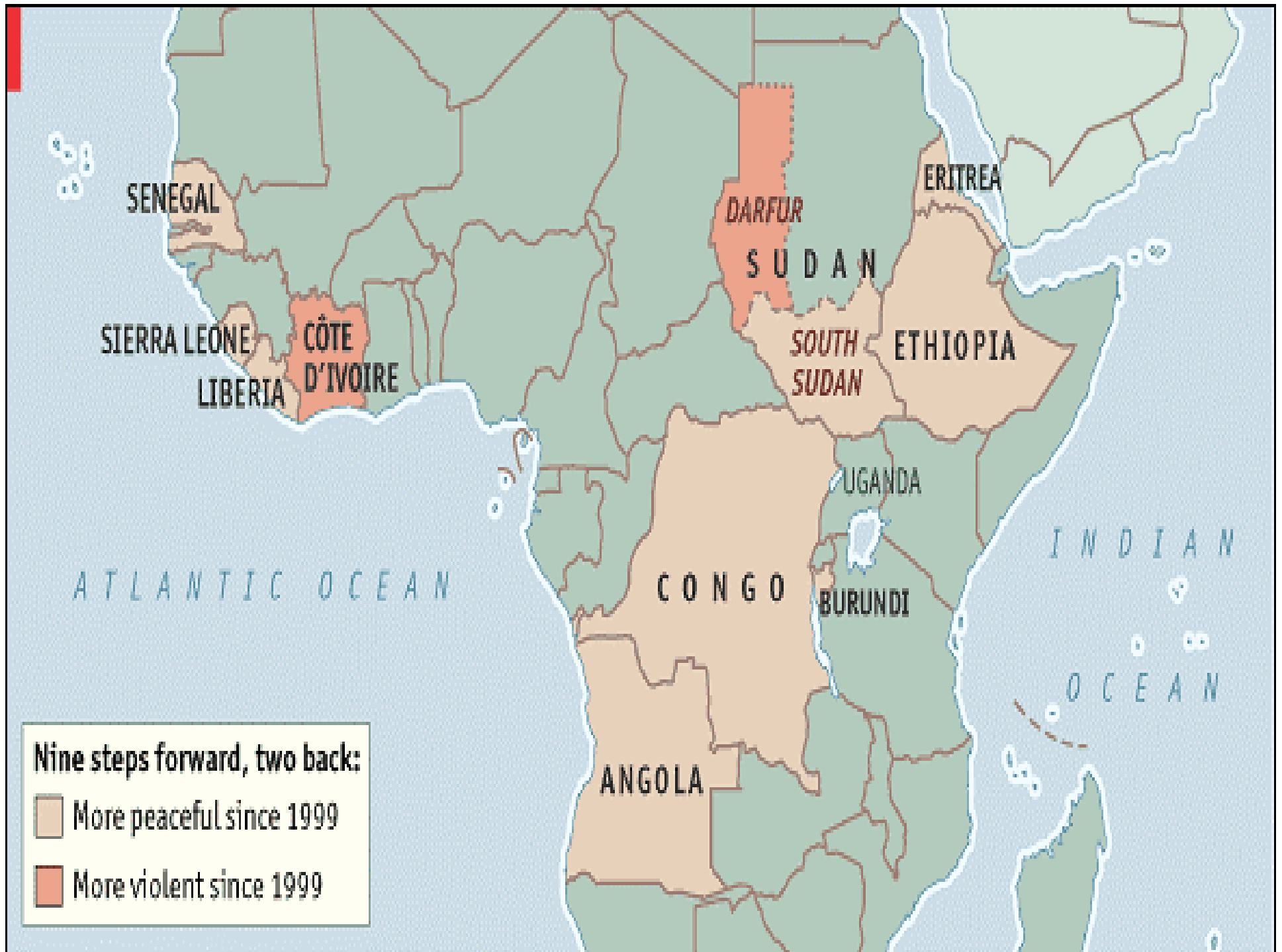
# Summary: Cooperation and Conflict

- The topics of cooperation and conflict go together. The emergence of cooperative groups can lead to within-group cooperation, but between-group competition and conflict.
- One must look at how both individuals and groups satisfy their goals.
- Sometimes the most cooperative groups (e.g., Mafia organizations) create the most conflict within societies.

# “Root Causes of Violent Conflict in Developing Countries”

- 8/10 of the worlds developing countries are suffering, or recently suffered, large scale violent conflict
- Africa has had some of the worst problems in the last 30 years
- WHAT ARE THE ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT?
- What ROLE DOES ETHNICITY/RACE play?





# The Cultural Dimension to War

- As discussed above, cultural ingroups can define between group conflict.
- Seeing this, many people attribute conflict to “primordial” ethnic passions.
- Article says that this is incorrect, because a person’s culture (and identity) is also constructed and chosen
- IN SUM, Frances Stewart favors a CIRCUMSTANTIALIST explanation; wars are mainly about economics and politics

# Economic Factors which Predispose War

- 1.) Group motivation hypothesis
- 2.) Private motivation hypothesis
- 3.) Failure of social contract
- 4.) Green war hypothesis

# Conclusion

- Social identities in themselves often are not the main source of conflict.
- Social and economic differences causes conflict (disputes) among people.
- Once disputes emerge, people often seek resolution of these by using collective groups defined by various identities (e.g., race, ethnicity).