



Fixing Fragile States: A New Paradigm for Development (Praeger Security International)

Seth D. Kaplan

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Fragile states are a menace. Their lawless environments spread instability across borders, provide havens for terrorists, threaten access to natural resources, and consign millions of people to poverty. But Western attempts to reform these benighted places have rarely made things better. Kaplan argues that to avoid revisiting the carnage and catastrophes seen in places like Iraq, Bosnia, and the Congo, the West needs to rethink its ideas on fragile states and start helping their peoples build governments and states that actually fit the local landscape. *Fixing Fragile States* lays bare the fatal flaws in current policies and explains why the only way to give these places a chance at peace and prosperity is to rethink how development really works. Flawed governance systems, not corrupt bureaucrats or armed militias, are the cancers that devour weak states. The cure, therefore, is not to send more aid or more peacekeepers but to redesign political, economic, and legal structures-to refashion them so they can leverage local traditions, overcome political fragmentation, expand governance capacities, and catalyze corporate investment.

After dissecting the reasons why some states prosper and others sink into poverty and violence, *Fixing Fragile States* visits seven deeply dysfunctional places—including Pakistan, Bolivia, West Africa, and Syria—and explains how even the most desperate of them can be transformed.

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