to help reduce military expenditure burdens. Inter-state conflicts, for example, can sometimes be ameliorated through confidence- and security-building measures, or conflict resolution processes, that make use of well-known transparency and tension-reduction measures, some of which focus on military expenditures. States making a bid for regional hegemony (for whatever reason), however, would be considerably less susceptible to external pressure or inducements of this sort. With respect to alliance and security relationships, although these can sometimes provide greater security or balance an unbalanced regional conflict, they can also unfortunately project "global" rivalries and conflicts into an region (as occurred during the Cold War), and result in stability at higher levels of expenditure and armaments. Close relationships between patrons and clients can also lower the "opportunity cost" of perpetuating regional conflicts or even fighting wars.[2] When external support can be counted upon, the incentive to pursue cooperative solutions to conflicts is reduced. Conversely, external security assurances (and the active role of outside powers in peace processes) may sometimes decrease the intensity of insecurity in a region, especially where weapons of mass destruction may be involved.[3]

Among the six sets of domestic determinants listed in Figure 4, probably the most important is the strength of the state itself. In many newly-independent or post-colonial states, often the very *idea* of the state does not enjoy popular support from the citizens, especially if it is an artificial or colonial construct (as is the case in much of Africa, for example). Iraq, the Sudan, and Nigeria, for example, are all products of the colonial experience, and groups such as the Kurds, Southern Sudanese, or Ibos have all at one time or another pushed for a radical redrawing of state borders. Of course, as the United Nations Secretary-General has pointed out in the *Agenda for Peace*, "if every ethnic, religious or linguistic group claimed statehood, there would be no limit to fragmentation, and peace, security and economic well-being for all would become ever more difficult to achieve."[4] There is, however, in principle no reason why the aspirations of different groups cannot sometimes be accommodated within common political institutions, given sufficient resources and flexibility.

In addition, the lack of legitimacy or the repressive nature of many regimes often undermines the possibility for the peaceful resolution of domestic conflicts. Disaffected groups that are victimized by predatory or oppressive regimes pose (from the perspective of the ruling elite) a great threat, and hence

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[2] See, with respect to the effect of arms transfers on regional conflicts, see William Hartung, "Arms Transfers as a Tool for Conflict Prevention: Patterns of Weapons Deliveries to Regions of Conflict, 1985-1994," unpublished paper, 1995.

[3] One example would be the American role in the Israeli-Egyptian relationship since the 1973 war. For a brief discussion of the role of security assurances in the nuclear non-proliferation debate, see Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 612-613.

[4] "Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the summit meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992," General Assembly Document A/47/277, 17 June 1992, para. 17.