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Orbis

Volume 50, Issue 1, Winter 2006, Pages 87-101

Humanitarian Intervention After Iraq: Legal Ideals vs. Military Realities

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2005.10.007>

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Abstract

The theory of humanitarian intervention has received new attention since the humanitarian crises of the 1990s and the United StatesTM becoming the world's sole superpower. The actual practice of humanitarian intervention, however, has declined. It is difficult to forge the political will for it when the countries composing the global organizations that could provide the political legitimacy disagree on an intervention, and with so few countriesTM mainly the United States and Great BritainTM capable of providing the required expeditionary forces. Moreover, the Afghanistan and Iraq wars have diminished the United StatesTM political will, military capability, and diplomatic credibility to conduct future humanitarian interventions. In particular, those wars precluded its intervention in the current genocide in Darfur. Regional bodies such as the African Union may be the only entities that can, with aid and training, undertake effective interventions.



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