

Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution (Syracuse Studies on Peace and Conflict Resolution)

By Stephen Zunes, Jacob Mundy

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The Western Sahara conflict has proven to be one of the most protracted and intractable struggles facing the international community. Pitting local nationalist determination against Moroccan territorial ambitions, the dispute is further complicated by regional tensions with Algeria and the geo-strategic concerns of major global players, including the United States, France, and the territory's former colonial ruler, Spain. For over twenty years, the UN Security Council has failed to find a formula that will delicately balance these interests against Western Sahara's long-denied right to a self-determination referendum as one of the last UN-recognized colonies. In the first book-length treatment of the issue in over two decades, Zunes and Mundy examine the origins, evolution, and resilience of the Western Sahara conflict, deploying a diverse array of sources and firsthand knowledge of the region gained from multiple research visits. Shifting geographical frames--local, regional, and international--provide for a robust analysis of the stakes involved.

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Editorial Review

Review
The Western Sahara is one of the world s last vestiges of colonialism. In this thoughtful and impressive analysis, Stephen Zunes and Jacob Mundy provide valuable insights on the importance of enabling the people of the Western Sahara to determine their own future through a democratic referendum. --the late Senator Edward Kennedy

This book is a timely and scholarly synthesis presented with clarity and comprehension. Backed by their fieldwork, the authors consider Western Sahara s irresolution as a consequence of not only competing nationalisms (and interfering actors), but also of conflicting imaginations of polity and society. --Phillip Naylor, author of France and Algeria: A History of Decolonization and Transformation

The authors offer a multifaceted analytical overview of the ongoing conflict surrounding the territory, and the thus-far failed efforts to resolve it. In doing so, they provide a nuanced portrait of the history and internal political dynamics of Morocco and the Western Sahara; the complicated role played by neighboring countries, especially Algeria... and Mauritania, as well as those of key western countries, most importantly the United States and France. --Political Geography

About the Author
Stephen Zunes is professor of politics and international studies at the University of San Francisco where he chairs the program in Middle Eastern Studies. He is the author of Tinderbox: U.S. Middle East Policy and the Roots of Terrorism. He was named Peace Scholar of the Year for 2002 by the Peace and Justice Studies Association.

Jacob Mundy is a doctoral candidate at the University of Exeter's Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, and author of several book chapters and articles on North African politics. He is Amnesty USA's Country Specialist for Morocco and Western Sahara, and served as a consulting external analyst for the International Crisis Group for the Western Sahara conflict.

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