



Article

Conflicts on the Rise – Is Anticipatory Governance a Solution?

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Abstract

We can anticipate increases in world conflicts due to several factors. First, as COVID-19 and other infectious pathogens continue to race around the world, future epidemics and pandemics are likely to emerge given our failures to solve the root issues that cause them. This is expected to result in increased social tensions. Second, post-WWII UN agreements are increasingly being challenged or might even collapse, as can be seen in a number of violent conflicts around the world, most recently in the case of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Third, climate change, environmental pollution and water/food insecurity will likely force entire populations to move from their homes and home nations. Migration pressures will then likely further jeopardize various global agreements, most notably those relevant to human rights of refugees. Fourth, geo-political arrangements will be increasingly questioned, as one global hegemon continues to descend and the other one potentially rises. And, finally, social and political polarisation within nation states is expected to continue. All these issues have been taking place for several decades, recently, however, there has been an acceleration with changes compounding each other. Multiple aspects of change will thus need to be considered simultaneously as well as promptly.

This article investigates the potential of anticipatory governance to minimise conflict. It first identifies numerous public policy failures, either due to the outright lack of anticipatory governance or certain blind spots/detrimental assumptions within anticipatory public policy initiatives. It then provides several case studies where anticipatory governance has shown the potential to minimise conflict. The article concludes with a set of guidelines as to the type of anticipatory governance that is currently urgently needed in order to minimise existing and prevent future violent conflicts.

Introduction

As described by the UN, we have ushered a “New era of conflict and violence” (United Nations [UN], 2023). This means that “the nature of conflict and violence has transformed substantially since the UN was founded 75 years ago” (UN, 2023). Specifically,

...conflict and violence are currently on the rise, with many conflicts today waged between non-state actors such as political militias, criminal, and international terrorist groups. Unresolved regional tensions, a breakdown in the rule of law, absent or co-opted state institutions, illicit economic gain, and the scarcity of resources exacerbated by climate change, have become dominant drivers of conflict. (UN, 2023)

For example, in 2016: “more countries experienced violent conflict than at any point in almost 30 years. At the same time, conflicts are becoming more fragmented” (UN, 2023). In 2022, The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) reported a 27% increase in political violence in 2022 compared to 2021 (ACLED, 2023, p. 4). The World Bank (2022) also concludes that:

...violent conflict has spiked dramatically in the last decade, and the fragility landscape is becoming more complex. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has seen a series of massive setbacks to stability in regions across the world: from Asia and Africa to Latin America and the

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Caribbean and more recently in Eastern Europe. (The World Bank, 2022).

Moreover, the World Bank (2022) estimates that conflicts drive 80% of all humanitarian needs. This creates a vicious cycle wherein conflict, violence and poverty interlink:

...fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) present a critical development challenge that threatens efforts to end extreme poverty in both low- and middle-income countries. By 2030, up to two-thirds of the world's extreme poor could live in FCV settings. (The World Bank, 2022)

Finally, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates in its latest Sixth Assessment Report that “approximately 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in context that are highly vulnerable to climate change (high confidence)” (IPCC, 2022, p. 12). While the IPCC concludes that violent conflict is in the near-term more driven by socioeconomic conditions and governance than by climate change (IPCC, 2022, p.13), climate variability and extremes are associated with more prolonged conflict (p. 53) as well as violent interstate conflict, especially at higher global warming levels (p. 15).

Given these bleak forecasts, this paper asks: Can anticipatory governance (AG) assist in minimising conflict in the future? If so, what are some fundamental conditions (capabilities and systems) that are needed?

AG is defined by The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA, 2021) as a “nonpredictive approach to enhance present-day preparedness, including through building capacities in foresight and multi-stakeholder engagement, to steer away from possible future disruptive impacts”. Guston (2013, p. 218) similarly defines anticipatory governance as “a broad-based capacity extended through society that can act on a variety of inputs to manage emerging knowledge-based technologies while such management is still possible”. In the context of accelerating earth system transformation and their potentially disruptive societal consequences, “imagining and governing the future is now a core challenge for sustainability research and practice” (Muiderman et al., 2020, p. 1). Muiderman, Gupta, Vervoort & Biermann proceed to define anticipatory governance “to broadly mean governing in the present to adapt to or shape uncertain futures” (Muiderman et al., 2020, p.1). They also identify approaches to anticipatory governance that differ with regard to: (a) their conceptions of and engagement with the future; (b) their implications for actions to be taken in the present; and (c) the ultimate end to be realized through anticipatory governance (Muiderman et al., 2020, p.1).

However, anticipatory governance approaches are prone to futures fallacies (Milojević, 2020a, 2020b, 2021a, 2021b), especially in the area of dominant approaches to addressing conflict, which could be described as mostly reactive. Moreover, the quality of anticipatory governance and certain underlying assumptions behind it are not sufficiently addressed. For example, anticipatory governance is mostly linked to national security futures (OECD, 2022; Fuerth, 2011; Dreyer & Stang, 2013) and focused predominantly on external threats by human actors. In this context, national security is usually seen as a synonym for defence (Fuerth, 2009, p. 22), and the long-term strategy is utilised within the framework of military planning (Dreyer & Stang, 2013). Especially post-9/11, anticipatory interventions and anticipatory governance of (in)security have been aimed at stopping the proverbial “next attack” before it occurs (Stockdale, 2016, p. 5) via the narrative of “to kill him who is making ready to kill” (p.39). Finally, responses to ongoing conflicts are commonly ad hoc, rather than focused on conflict prevention and incipient (as opposed to actual) conflict (Fuerth & Faber, 2012). While national security and external threats discourses dominate, notions such as human security, positive peace, underlying causes of violence and conflict, and structural violence (to name a few) are largely absent from the anticipatory governance and conflict prevention discourses.

This article intends to provide insights into the possibility of constructively addressing violent conflict, or, more critically, the possibility of violent conflict via prevention. It also aims to provide an analytical lens through which to assess ongoing practices of anticipatory governance in relation to conflict prevention and minimisation.

Can conflict be prevented?

Before proceeding any further, a question of whether conflict can actually be prevented in the first place needs to be discussed. There are two schools of thought on the issue. The majority of theorists and researchers argue that conflict is unavoidable. No two humans are alike. We construct reality differently. Conflicts arise due to these

difference. There is also competition over scarce resources. The best we can do is to learn how to negotiate our differences/competitive urges and minimise conflict once it arises.

Another school of thought argues that such a view – conflict as given or natural – results from a particular set of assumptions common in some, but not all, societies and communities. They argue that human societies are organised on a continuum between two ideal or pure types: peaceful and violent societies. Most known societies fall somewhere in between, relative to the degree of peacefulness or aggressiveness within them. The further along the violent end, the stronger the assumption that conflict is not only inevitable but also necessary, even positive – e.g., an engine of change and growth. Peaceful societies, on the other hand, have a highly negative view of conflict. As a result, people in traditional peaceful societies and communities avoid confrontation and conflict as much as possible (Bonta, 1996; Fabbro, 1978; Fry, 2004). In order to do so, they develop strong internal controls to prevent conflicts. They avoid aggressive behaviour in order to not lose face. They also develop cultural technologies focused on the attitudes and behaviours needed to avoid a tense situation escalating into a full-blown conflict.

Contemporary societies are currently ranked according to their level of peacefulness and located on the peace-violence continuum by the Global Peace Index (GPI). Since 2007, the GPI has analysed the economic, political, and cultural determinants which foster the creation of a more peaceful society. The GPI measures societies' internal and external peacefulness. Importantly, it measures both negative peace (absence of violence and the fear of violence) and positive peace (cultural technologies, i.e., attitudes, institutions, and structures which lead to a more peaceful society).

Societies that are at the more peaceful end of the peace-violence continuum share a number of features, including no or a low: (1) number and duration of internal conflicts; (2) number of deaths from external organised conflict; (3) number of deaths from internal organised conflict; (4) number, duration and role in external conflicts; and (5) intensity of organised internal conflict (GPI, 2020). This is neither accidental nor purely a result of informed policies as multiple factors play a role. For example, there is a correlation between external and internal conflict: a greater level of internal peace correlates with lower external conflict (Global Peace Index [GPI], 2020, p. 86). Countries with positive external relationships are overall more peaceful and tend to be politically stable. They also have well-functioning governments, are regionally integrated, have low levels of organized internal conflict and greater interpersonal trust (IEP, 2011). Internal peace correlates strongly to “measures of intergroup cohesion and civic activism, which are key proxies to indicate the ability of particular societies to resolve internal political, economic, and cultural conflicts as well as external shocks” (IEP, 2011, p. 5).

Peaceful neighbourly relations are apparent between countries that “reject conflict as a means of dispute settlement, encourage strong diplomatic and business links, and tend to avoid aggressive diplomatic posturing” (IEP, 2011, p. 21-22). Based on these indicators, we could deduce that contemporary societies with a higher degree of peacefulness and low levels of violence are also those that avoid and minimise conflict in general.

In summary, more peaceful societies and communities utilise discourses, including the futures discourse, with a goal of preventing conflict in general and violent conflict in particular. Discourse about the future or even futures is like any other discourse, “rooted in a life, a society, and a language that [has] a history” (Foucault, 1973, p. 372). This discourse about the future/futures can be (and is) used for various purposes and strategies. Anticipatory governance is no exception. It can be (and is) used to cause and fuel, or, alternatively, prevent and minimise violent conflict.

Futures and anticipation causing and fuelling violent conflict

When futures and anticipation cause and fuel violent conflict this could be considered a policy failure as well as futures fallacy – given that the outcome is contradictory to the officially proclaimed goal and vision of a preferred future (of more peace). As seen in the examples that follow, this is either due to the outright lack of anticipatory governance or due to certain *blind spots* or (perhaps better to say) *detrimental assumptions* within anticipatory public policy initiatives.

Most commonly, violent conflicts are an extension of building tensions and the resulting reactive, ad hoc responses from all sides involved. The distinction between an aggressor and a victim is frequently blurred, especially in cases of protracted conflict. Each side then selectively chooses events from history to support their case (Milojević, 2008).

Unfortunately, when futures and anticipation, including anticipatory governance approaches, are used this does not automatically improve the situation. In fact, a futures discourse can make the situation worse.

The first way in which futures and anticipation can cause and fuel violent conflict is via the discourse of inevitability. For example, in 1990, as reported in the *New York Times*, the US Intelligence predicted that the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will “break apart, most probably in the next 19 months, and that civil-war in that multi-national ... country is highly likely” (quoted in Gallagher, 2003, p. 37). Similarly, the resulting “descent of Yugoslavia into the civil war ... [was] a widely predicted outcome” (Halpern and Kideckle, 2000, p. 40) anticipated by “all Yugoslav experts” (Bennet, 1995, p. 181). This is an example of how anticipation created a self-fulfilling prophecy further propelled by reactive, past-oriented approaches wherein old-style diplomacy was used, ad hoc and sporadically (Milojević, 2013, p. 207). In addition, very few significant preventative initiatives took place. Instead, the futures discourses were about the inevitability of violent conflict which in itself created an environment wherein people would have “at least an axe behind every door [so to not be] surprised again” (Doder, 1993). This was supported by discourses of “a certain naturalization, a purely racist perception of what went on in Yugoslavia, treating things there as a kind of almost natural catastrophe, as if a kind of primal ethnic hatred exploded there, tribal war, everywhere against everyone else” (Žižek 1999).

Another way in which futures and anticipation can cause and fuel violent conflict is via the related discourse of future threats [to the national security] and pre-emptive [violent] action. For example, in June 2002, US President George Bush (2002a) declared that “We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge”. Later that same year, he cited US President Kennedy’s speech from 1962 in which Kennedy stated that “we no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation’s security to constitute maximum peril” (Bush, 2002b). He used the vague notion of futures threats (“Well, we don’t know exactly, and that’s the problem”) to assert an “urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring” (Bush, 2022b). This speech presented “his rationale for war against Iraq to a lay, public audience” by “normalising ‘threat’ functions in multiple ways to construe a particular vision of futures reality” (Dunmire, 2005). And while discussing multiple futures options, it was clearly this vision of the future which was privileged over alternative ones (Dunmire, 2005). This was also the case under different (i.e., Clinton/Gore) US administration, wherein forward engagement very quickly became forward deployment (Fuerth, 2009, p. 15-16).

Third and also a very common way to cause and fuel violent conflict is via extrapolating the (violent) past into the future. An example of this is Russian President Vladimir Putin’s discussion “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians” (2021). To “have a better understanding of the present and look into the future, we need to turn to history”, he argues (Putin, 2021). Like the future constructed by President Bush, this history is also discursively constructed in a certain way to privilege one option, one perceived reality amongst many. In this context, peace histories are conveniently forgotten (Boulding, 2000). Instead, the focus is on the warrior past – “this indomitable generation fought, those people gave their lives for our future, for us” (Putin, 2021) – to justify present warrior informed narratives and actions. Like in the case of the former Yugoslavia, naturalization and racist perceptions also play a role – i.e., “the blood ties that unite millions of [Ukrainian and Russian families], one people” (Putin, 2021, emphasis added).

Moreover, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is yet another example of futures fallacy and public policy failure, given that the proclaimed goal of containing NATO has in fact resulted in NATO’s expansion precisely as a result of the invasion.

Globally, similar discourses of potential national security threats, inevitable conflict/violence, extension of a violent past into the future and the need to militarily pre-empt violence by utilising violent means of conflict management are used to validate increasing militarisation and military conflict resolution strategies. For example, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people in New York, the US government used the futures discourse to embark on a global war on terror that has since killed over 929,000 (Watson Institute, 2023). In addition to huge human cost, the estimates of financial expenditures by the US for the post-9-11 wars is over 8 trillion USD (Watson Institute, 2023). Given the number of dead, wasted resources and the resulting conflict escalation (ISIS, Syria, Yemen, as well as within the global context) this is one of the most striking policy failures in recent times. None-the-less, both 9/11 and more recent Russian aggression on Ukraine, strengthened by discourses outlined above and which accompanied these events, resulted in continuous increase in world’s military expenditure, from 996

billion in 1998 (SIPRI 2018), to 1.73 trillion in 2017, to over two trillion USD (\$2113 billion) in 2021 (SIPRI 2021; SIPRI, 2022, p. 1). These global militarisation trends in themselves are a factor which will most likely continue fuelling violent conflict in the future – both as the privileged means of conflict management and in terms of resources not being spent to address the causes and conditions which give rise to violent conflict in the first place.

Anticipatory governance in itself is therefore not a solution. Rather, previous examples show that certain practices related to anticipatory governance directly fuel and enhance violent conflict and will continue to do so. Unfortunately, this seems to be a rather common practice of political actors' use of hegemonic images of future reality to achieve their shorter-term political goals (Dunmire, 2011, emphasis added). As briefly discussed, the cost of these discourses is incredibly high in both human life and economy. Moreover, the cost of privileging these (violent conflict management promoting) futures discourses over others, is also a huge environmental degradation, negative political/cultural impact and long-term psychological trauma (Milojević, 2013). But in this area, data-driven anticipatory governance (Maffei et al., 2020) is seriously lacking, as most of the data in relation to the true costs of violent conflict and violent conflict resolution/prevention is conveniently discounted or made invisible (Milojević, 2013).

Futures and anticipation preventing and minimising violent conflict

I have previously argued that to break the cycle of *violence begets violence* and of common *reactive responses* or, alternatively, *proactive violent conflict prevention*, investigation and articulation of alternative peace histories, present peace/nonviolent practical strategies as well as the articulation of overt eutopian (desired futures) peace-oriented visions are all simultaneously necessary (Milojević 2008, 2013, 2022). The image of the future and action towards it also need to be *integrated* for meaningful peacebuilding (Boulding, 1988). Otherwise, when an image and action are not consistent, or rather, even antagonistic (as in using violent methods to create peaceful outcomes) long-term solutions have always shown to be unstable. This may also be a result of a lack of sufficient stakeholder engagement. Therefore, an *anticipatory democracy* (Toffler, 1970; Bezold, 2010; Ramos, 2014) wherein large-scale citizen engagement is utilised is also critical. Most importantly, such engagement needs to include dissenting views – i.e., by individuals and groups that provide alternative insights into how conflict *can be resolved nonviolently*. This is because, as argued before, anticipatory governance exists within a particular context. If that context is violence promoting, so will be anticipatory governance.

Certainly, there are countless case studies where anticipatory governance has shown the potential to minimise conflict. For example, in 1991, Macedonia – now officially recognised as North Macedonia – proclaimed its independence from the SFR Yugoslavia. The process was peaceful, moreover, North Macedonia managed to remain at peace during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. In 2006, Montenegro separated from rump Yugoslavia and Serbia also peacefully. Both former Yugoslav republics and now independent countries did so via a nonviolent political process, i.e., via a referendum. Critically, the referendum question for Macedonia mentioned multiple futures options – including the right to once again unify with the former republics of Yugoslavia. This was also done with the view of avoiding violent conflict (Maričić, 2021) – a critical intention to create an alternative self-fulfilling prophecy of peacefulness. Montenegrin leadership also prioritised keeping Montenegro out of the war (Dobbs, 1999). Finally, civil society and antiwar movement in Montenegro played a key role as well (Radulović, 2021). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss why some parts of the former Yugoslavia experienced violence and others did not, these historical facts attest that the discourses about the inevitability of civil wars after the dissolution of Yugoslavia were not only detrimental but also inaccurate. It also attests to the importance of committing to the nonviolent outcomes and strategies and thus governing within such context and futures vision.

Another society that avoided a full-scale civil war is South Africa in the aftermath of the apartheid. Once again, detailed analysis of how and why that happened is beyond the scope of this paper. It is however, important to mention the role played by nonviolence committing leaders (such as Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu). The commitment to nonviolence and prevention was explicitly mentioned in the South Africa's Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1995. The use of the past and the future existed within that context. Specifically (Republic of South Africa, 1995), the Act mentions that:

...it is deemed necessary to establish the truth in relation to past events as well as the motives for and

circumstances in which gross violations of human rights have occurred, and to make the findings known in order to *prevent a repetition of such acts in future* [emphasis added];

...the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 ... provides a historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterized by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and a *future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence* for all South Africans, irrespective of colour, race, class, belief or sex [emphasis added].

More recently, in the aftermath of a violent and traumatic act, another leader, the Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinta Ardern provided a similar future vision, with a similar intention of preventing violence by any and all:

Let us gather with love, in peace, for this family, so that they may truly live again, so that we all may truly live again ... [we have a] responsibility *to be the place that we wish to be*. A place that is diverse, that is welcoming, that is *kind and compassionate*. Those *values* represent the very best of us. (Ardern, 2019, emphasis added)

From these brief examples and relevant peace and conflict studies' findings/literature, we can conclude that some of the key elements of anticipatory governance more likely to prevent and minimise violent conflict include:

- The awareness of *multiple futures options*, both violent and nonviolent;
- *Constructive use of the past* – i.e., as a warning of events not to be repeated or as remembering peace histories;
- *A commitment to nonviolent options in the present*;
- Utilisation of *strategies to achieve goals with nonviolent means*, e.g., referendums and legal acts; and
- Utilisation of *narratives to achieve peaceful futures* – e.g., public discourses that promote unity and peaceful co-existence of diverse groups of people.

For example, some of those discourses were present in the aftermath of the post-Soviet *Perestroika* (restructuring) and *Glasnost* (openness), resulting in many positive developments, including in global demilitarisation. The end of the Cold War saw a reduction of the world's total military expenditures from 1.42 trillion in 1988, to 994 billion in 1996 and 996 billion in 1998 (SIPRI 2018). Until the recent conflict related to Ukraine, the discourse in the US was of a new possibility and unity with its historical adversary, Russia. As stated by the former US President George Bush in the already cited speech (2002a), the new reality is of “a new Russia, ... a country reaching toward democracy, and our partner in the war against terror”. Some other previously antagonistic countries also managed to create unity, as is currently manifested in the European Union. On the other hand, a failure of integration or even strategic partnership between EU and Russia, post *Perestroika* (whomever is to be *blamed more* for this failure), has propelled further violent conflict, and is yet another major policy and anticipatory governance failure in recent times. Therefore, what is also needed for a longer-term, sustainable peace is to keep on *expanding unity*, or at least a good neighbourly relationship with others, in the *context of a commitment to nonviolent conflict prevention and resolution*.

Going back to the Global Peace Index, while the 163 countries analysed and ranked differ greatly, it is also possible to highlight key elements found to be associated with more peaceful environments and structures of peace and, subsequently, lower levels of conflict in general. According to the GPI, these elements, which are interdependent and positively reinforce each other, are: (1) well-functioning government, (2) sound business environment, (3) equitable distribution of resources, (4) acceptance of the rights of others, (5) good relations with neighbours, (6) free flow of information, (7) high levels of education and (8) low levels of corruption. The 2020 GPI report also includes the Ecological Threat Register (ETR), which combines a confluence of ecological risks with positive peace and economic coping capacity of societies (GPI, 2020). Anticipatory governance which focuses on these elements, rather than predominantly on national security and external threats etc., would thus be in a much better position to prevent the possibility of violent conflict arising in the first place.

Another way to measure and work towards positive peace is via the UN's Sustainable Development Goals indicators (UN, 2019). SDGs are simultaneously a vision of the future and a blueprint for “*shared prosperity* in a

sustainable world – a world where all people can live productive, vibrant and *peaceful lives on a healthy planet*” (UN, 2019, p. 2, emphasis added). Finally, the UN SDG reports highlight the detrimental role conflict and other forms of violence have for sustainable development and other quality of life indicators. It thus seems logical that conflict prevention, especially violent conflict prevention, and/or conflict minimisation, should at least be attempted by various anticipatory governance initiatives.

Conclusion

New forms of governance should be, among other things, ways by which humanity collectively imagines, invents, and constantly re-imagines and re-invents preferred futures. (Dator, 2007, p.8)

To summarise the previous discussion and conclude the article, I utilise Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), a method used in strategic planning and futures studies to more effectively shape the future (Inayatullah, 2004, Inayatullah and Milojević, 2015; Inayatullah et al., 2022). I also use the Change Progression Scenario Method to outline four key options for the future (Milojević, 2005; Ministry of Higher Education, 2018; Inayatullah et al., 2020; Inayatullah, 2021).

Two CLAs which summarise the discussion are as follows:

Table 1: CLA Futures and anticipation causing and fuelling violent conflict vs. Futures and anticipation preventing and minimising violent conflict

Levels:	CLA 1 Causes and fuels violent conflict	CLA 2 Prevents and minimises violent conflict
Litany	Violent histories (data and events) Possible future threats to national security forecasts Proactive violent conflict prevention actions – resources gathering and personnel training/utilisation	Peace histories (data and events) Descriptions of peaceful futures Actions in the present that match positive future visions – i.e., visions of positive peace, unity, peaceful coexistence of diverse groups Investments in positive peace initiatives
Social Cause	Practices of militarism, nationalism and imperialism Privileging of violent conflict management	Practices of diplomacy and peace education Legal systems for conflict prevention and minimisation Civil society, antiwar movement Globalisation (cultural) towards unity A commitment to nonviolent conflict resolution enshrined in values and laws
Worldview	Violence promoting A belief that conflicts and violence cannot be prevented Extrapolation of violent past into the future Inevitability – single future Exclusion of minority groups	Nonviolence and positive peace promoting A belief that conflicts and violence can be prevented Focus on peace histories Multiplicity of futures options – both violent and nonviolent Social inclusion of minority groups
Myth/metaphor	Conflict as an engine of change and growth Enemies in the past and from the future They are different from us They only understand, respond to and respect violence	Conflict as a vehicle for unity and peaceful co-existence Violence and manifest conflict about losing face They are like us They are also political subjects, with desired futures visions and agendas

Depending on how much anticipatory governance moves left or right between these two *pure/ideal models* of CLA as presented in the table, we can anticipate different governments to follow four key Change progression scenarios:

1. Scenario 1, a *no change model* of increased conflicts with old rules of governance and old violence promoting worldviews;
2. Scenario 2, a *marginal change* model of changes around the edges, for example, by using new technologies to monitor weak signals of conflict development;
3. Scenario 3, an *adaptive change* model of anticipatory governance that works across worldviews and start moving towards conflict prevention nonviolently; and
4. Scenario 4, a *radical change* model where the current and future assumptions are dramatically challenged, multiple futures options investigated and there is a commitment to nonviolent conflict resolution.

The type of anticipatory governance that is currently urgently needed in order to minimise existing conflicts and prevent future violent conflicts would exist in the context of the right column of the CLA table and in the context of both an adaptive and radical change scenario models. This type of governance would ensure not only negative peace – i.e., absence of direct, physical violence, but also positive, even holistic peace – i.e., the presence of policies

and actions which would ensure prevention of conflict and violence arising in the first place. Those integrated visions-actions are vocalised within civil society and anti-war/nonviolent social movements. They are also outlined in many policy documents and guidelines, including in the Global Peace Index and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The examples mentioned in this article are not the only ones or even perhaps the best ones as this is dependent on a specific time and local place. Still, all the examples of futures and anticipation preventing and minimising violent conflict and the context which is necessary for this to occur are an improvement to the existing violence promoting visions-actions. It is within the former that anticipatory governance needs to find inspiration in order to start ending the existing cycles of violence and creating meaningful as well as sustainable futures of peace. Anticipatory governance then must include positive peace building initiatives, beyond national security and external threat constructs.

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