Civil conflicts have an unfortunate tendency to recur. 54 % of all conflicts since 1946 have been recurrences, and 66 % of all recurrences take place within 5 years of the original conflict termination. For a post-conflict government emerging from civil conflict, avoiding conflict recurrence is among the most critical priorities on the road to future peace and prosperity. Understanding and preventing the recurrence of conflict is an essential endeavor for both post-conflict regimes and their international advisors.

The overarching question of how and why conflicts recur is at the core of this dissertation. Over the last decades, this question has received a substantial amount of scholarly attention. Consequently, a considerable body of scientific literature has been produced, which codifies the conventional wisdom of the field. In this dissertation, I make three critical but constructive interventions into this scientific literature.

In the first article, I reassess the relationship between constitutional arrangements and conflict recurrence. Recent work suggests that constitutional arrangements that constrain executive power limit the risk of conflict recurrence by acting as implicit promises of rights protection. I argue that these promises may no longer be credible at very high levels of formal executive constraints, as excessive promises are often seen as 'too good to be true'. The argument is supported by quantitative evidence from post-conflict regimes (1975-2019) and illustrated through a brief case study of the eastern DR Congo. In short, the article reassesses the functional form of an established empirical relationship.

In the second article, I make the case for a disaggregated conceptualization of political inclusion. Rather than viewing political inclusion as a one-dimensional concept, I disaggregate it into its three levels: elites, organizations, and social groups. My main argument is that the conflict literature has failed to distinguish between these types of societal actors. I further illustrate the advantages of such a disaggregated conceptualization --- and the pitfalls of a one-dimensional conceptualization --- through a quantitative analysis of post-conflict episodes (1975-2016) and a brief case study of Liberia.

In the third article, I rethink the relationship between peacekeeping and conflict recurrence. The literature has identified a robust empirical relationship between peacekeepers and a reduced risk of conflict recurrence. However, exactly how this effect comes about is unclear. I review the proposed theoretical mechanisms in the literature and build a formal model as a synthesis of existing explanations. The result is a model of how peacekeepers reduce the risk of conflict recurrence that illuminates the underlying logic of existing theories and uncovers internal contradictions.

Independently, these articles represent empirical and theoretical interventions into existing scholarly debates. As a whole, they constitute a research project on the causes of conflict recurrence that examines specific mechanisms and types of actors separately within a coherent framework. In sum, the thesis constitutes a piece of cumulative and progressive political science that brings the study of conflict recurrence a modest but important step further.