



# From Kosovo to Kabul: human rights and international intervention

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First published 2002 as *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention* New edition published 2006 by Pluto Press 345 Archway Road, London N6 5AA and 839 Greene Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 [www.plutobooks.com](http://www.plutobooks.com) Copyright © David Chandler 2002, 2006 The right of David Chandler to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by. In *From Kosovo to Kabul*, David Chandler has written an important book on international intervention. The analysis that follows convincingly argues that the new prominence of a 'human rights discourse' in international politics transformed and challenged the nature of international law (Chapter 5), modern international warfare (Chapter 6) and interstate relations in the international system (Chapter 7). Chandler's argument is less plausible, however, in presenting developments in transnational NGOs (Chapter 2), the rise of a so-called 'ethical foreign policy' of Western governments (Chapter 3) and the recent emergence of normative human rights theory in Western political science (Chapter 4) For ten years, the language of international intervention has been transformed. The UN and Nato's new policy of interventionism - as shown in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor - has been hailed as "humanitarian action", part of a new "ethical" approach to foreign policy. The establishment of an international criminal court and ad hoc tribunals for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia reflect this shift in perception, which has been welcomed by world leaders, government critics and even NGOs. David Chandler offers a rigorous critique of this apparently benign shift i

When there are grave human rights violations, MSF argued, international actors have a right to intervene to stop them. While states have long launched military interventions against other states, they have only recently begun to justify their actions in humanitarian terms. The 1990s witnessed an unprecedented number of interventions ostensibly carried out in defence of human rights. The military campaign was designed to prevent a humanitarian disaster - the forcible expulsion of Kosovo's majority Albanian community by Serb forces. The first so-called 'humanitarian war' was controversial because it was not sanctioned by a UN Security Council resolution as the Charter mandates. Chandler, David. *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention*. London, Sterling: Pluto Press, 2002. Pp. Xv + 268; Åsterdahl, Inger (ed.). *Is Intervention Humanitarian? Protecting Human Rights and Democracy Abroad*. Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Report No. 62. Stockholm: Elanders Gotab, 2002. Pp. 98. Humanitarian intervention, despite its description by one of the authors reviewed here as a "new principle" (Chandler, at 131), is an ancient phenomenon, although it has always been subject to only intermittent the 18 David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention* (London: Pluto, 2002), p. 135. 19 Statement by Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela, at the General Debate of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, September 15, 2005; available at <http://www.embavenez-us.org/news.php?nid=1745>. 63 Evarist Baimu and Kathryn Sturman, "Amendment to the African Union's Right to Intervene: A Shift From Human Security to Regime Security," *African Security Review* 12, no. 2 (2003), p. 42. It is worth noting that Libya's initial proposal for the amendment specifically identified "internal unrest." 64 UNSC 5015th meeting, S/PV.5015, July 30, 2004, especially pp. 10-12.