

## ABSTRACT

### CAN THE SWISS MODEL OF CONFEDERATION BE APPLIED IN AFGHANISTAN?

The post-Cold War world is marked by ethnic and religious violence. The conditions of many countries in the world today are similar to past conditions in Switzerland. Over the centuries, the Swiss have created a model of confederation that brings together four different cultural groups and two different religious traditions. Over time, this confederation transformed a divided land of ethnic conflict into the unified Switzerland of today.

A historical comparative analysis is used. First, we examine the Swiss Model of Confederation and the empirical record of how internal and external conflict decreased, over time, as the Swiss applied the principles of the Swiss Model in their own context. Second, Switzerland and Afghanistan are compared and contrasted. Both countries are land-locked, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual countries that lie along historic trade routes and were surrounded by historic imperial powers. This thesis finds that the principles of the Swiss did work to decrease internal and external conflict in Switzerland. This thesis finds that the principles of the Swiss Model of Confederation are applicable to Afghanistan for two reasons. They have been shown to work in a realistic, moderate scale setting. They also have the potential to work because they can create unity and lower conflict without violating the cultural identity of the people involved or violating the sovereignty of the ethnic groups involved.

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