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War, Civil Unrest, Failed States, and other Extreme Threats to Marketing Systems

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Well-functioning markets and marketing systems are intended to enhance and to sustain the survivability and security of societies and the people who comprise them (e.g., Fisk 1967; Layton 2007; McMillen 2002; Shultz 2007; Wilkie and Moore 1999; World Bank 2014). For myriad reasons – natural or human-induced cataclysms and resource scarcity to list a few examples – marketing systems sometimes are disrupted or fracture (e.g., Shultz 1997; in press). This can have profound and often horrific effects on individuals, families, communities, countries, regions, and occasionally – at least twice in the form of two World Wars – global upheaval. The costs to human well-being are almost unfathomable and difficult to calculate (e.g., UNDP 2015, UNHCR 2015). By some accounts, various forms of violence cost \$9.46 trillion per year, about 11% of Gross World Product (Institute for Economics and Peace 2014); the Iraq debacle alone has been estimated to cost trillions of dollars, when calculating the systemic ripple-effects, over time (Stiglitz and Bilmes 2008; Three Trillion Dollar War 2015). This special session assembles scholars conducting research in countries and regions suffering the effects of devastation or pronounced disruption from war, civil unrest, and other forms of persistent or acute violence, poor governance, natural disasters, extreme environmental conditions, or combinations of all or some of these existential and societal threats. Perhaps, through greater discussion and understanding, engagement and provisioning technologies, we macromarketers can be catalysts to better-functioning and safer marketing systems, to the benefit of the local and global stakeholders of them.

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