Getting to the Table: Explaining the Incidence of Mediation in the Insurgencies of Indonesia

by

Keng Meng Tan

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Signature redacted

Signature of Author: .................................................................
Department of Political Science
September 5, 2014

Certified by: .............
Roger Petersen
Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by: .................................................................
Andrea Campbell
Professor of Political Science
Chairman, Graduate Program Committee
ABSTRACT

Indonesia has experienced six insurgencies since it declared independence in 1945. Of these insurgencies, three were resolved through negotiations. There is great variation in the manner the negotiations occurred. The state negotiated with Portugal over East Timor with the United Nations (UN) as mediator while negotiations with the Acehnese were first mediated by the Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) and later the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI). Finally, the state refused any mediators in the case of West Papua, where Indonesia's longest and bloodiest insurgency continues to take place. What explains the variation in the decision to have mediation and the choice of mediators? This is the central question of the thesis. In examining this variation, I hope to contribute to the literature on bargaining in insurgencies as well as examine the effectiveness of mediation, which is disputed.

I argue that a state that is not committed or has very low levels of commitment to negotiations will not have a mediator. The more committed the state is to negotiations, the stronger the mediator the state will seek. The level of commitment is a function of the balance of power between the incumbents and insurgents, domestic support, and international pressure for peaceful resolution. Domestic support is the pivotal factor with the military being the most decisive actor. Based on this argument, I develop a scenario-based framework in which states could possibly find themselves in and test it on the three cases of insurgencies in Indonesia. The findings show that the state was more committed to reaching a settlement in East Timor and Aceh than in West Papua and so had mediators to ensure the success of the peace processes, which would not have occurred otherwise. In addition, the findings also suggest that a hurting stalemate is not a necessary precondition for successful mediation, contrary to the literature on mediation. The thesis concludes by drawing some policy implications and directions for further research.
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GLOSSARY

ABRI  Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia)
AFC  Asian Financial Crisis
AI   Amnesty International
AMM  Aceh Monitoring Mission
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CoHA Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
COIN Counterinsurgency
CMI  Crisis Management Initiative
DDR  Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
EU   European Union
Frelilin Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente)
GAM  Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka)
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
HDC  Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
JSC  Joint Security Committee
KNIL Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger)
Kodam Military Area Command (Komando Daerah Militer)
Kopassus Army Special Forces Command (Komando Pasukan Khusus)
Kostrad Army Strategic Reserve Command (Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat)
Kowilhan Territorial Defense Command (Komando Wilayah Pertahanan)
LIPI Indonesian Institute of Sciences (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia)
MILF  Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF  Moro National Liberation Front
MPR  People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat)
MoU  Memorandum of Understanding
MSG  Melanesian Spearhead Group
NGO  Non-governmental organization
OIC  Organization of Islamic Conference
OPM  Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka)
PKI  Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia)
PNG  Papua New Guinea
POLRI Indonesian National Police (Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia)
Pribumi Sons of the soil
TKR  People’s Security Force (Tentara Keamanan Rakyat)
TNI  Indonesian National Army (Tentara Nasional Indonesia)
UN   United Nations
UP4B Unit for the Acceleration of Development in Papua and West Papua (Unit Percepatan Pembangunan di Papua dan Papua Barat)
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"If it is true that the breakdown in diplomacy leads to war, it is also true that the breakdown of war leads to diplomacy.”

Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War*

1.1 Incidence of mediation in the insurgencies of Indonesia

Indonesia has experienced six insurgencies since it declared independence in 1945. Of these six insurgencies, only three were resolved through negotiations with the insurgents. The negotiations in East Timor and Aceh were facilitated by different mediators while the negotiation in West Papua took place with no mediators. Mediation is essentially negotiation with the help of a third party. What explains the variation in the decision to have mediation and the choice of mediators? This is the central question of the thesis. All three insurgencies are protracted conflicts over intractable issues and between disputants who deeply distrust the other. I argue that the state was more committed to reaching a settlement in East Timor and Aceh than in West Papua and so had mediators to ensure the success of the peace process. Within the subset of East Timor and Aceh, the state had a greater commitment in East Timor and so sought a stronger mediator.

The East Timor insurgency started in 1975 and ended in 1999 with the creation of Timor-Leste. Talks between the state and insurgents were relatively unusual compared to the other two cases. Portugal acted on behalf of the insurgents and negotiated with Indonesia under mediation by the United Nations (UN). At points in time, the insurgent leadership participated in the negotiations as well. These talks paved the way for a referendum in 1999 and the resultant separation of East Timor from Indonesia. The Aceh insurgency started in 1976 and ended in 2005 with the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that granted Aceh special autonomy. While third-party mediation was similarly engaged in the Aceh peace talks, the mediators were different. The Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) mediated the peace talks from 1999 to 2003 after which the more influential Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) took over in 2005. While the two insurgencies have been put to bed, the fighting in West Papua continues. The insurgency started in 1962 and is the longest and bloodiest in Indonesia’s

history. Unsuccessful peace talks were held in 2011 without any third-party mediators. Thus, negotiations between the state and various insurgent groups in Indonesia exhibit variation. The state refused mediators in West Papua, switched to a more influential mediator in Aceh, and began negotiations in East Timor with an even more powerful mediator compared to the Aceh case.

1.2 Research question

As noted earlier, this thesis seeks to explain the variation in the decision to have third-party mediators and the choice of mediators. Indonesia had the UN, HDC, and CMI as mediators. Why did the state not stick to the same mediator for East Timor and Aceh and even refused mediation in West Papua? What was it about these mediators that the state had them as mediators in the first place and not other actors?

International mediation is essentially interference in the internal affairs of a state, which constitutes an infringement of sovereignty. Mediators can influence a state’s decisions by framing the negotiations and constraining the state’s behavior. States would expand blood and treasure to safeguard their sovereignty and leaders that fail to do so would be vilified and displaced from power. The idea of protecting sovereignty could possibly explain Indonesia’s refusal to engage a third-party mediator in the Papuan peace talks. However, this idea is at odds with Indonesia’s behavior in Aceh and East Timor. In Aceh, it appears the government wanted the benefits of mediation but not too much of them. In East Timor, the government began talks with an even stronger mediator, which had greater influence on the government’s decision making. The government gave up the most sovereignty in this instance that ended in the breakup of the Indonesian state.

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In examining this variation, this thesis will consider the following three puzzles. First, why has mediation not happened more often or earlier if crises are more easily defused with mediation? As Figure 1 illustrates, studies proved that mediation could increase the likelihood of conflicts ending in settlements and reduce tensions in the post-conflict period. Conflicts that had mediation are predicted to have a 55 percent chance of ending in formal agreements compared to the 25 percent for conflicts with no mediation. In the latter scenario, the conflicts were resolved either with force or negotiations without third parties. Furthermore, mediation has a 28 percent chance of achieving concessions from the challenger while no mediation only has a 14 percent probability. Finally, mediated crises have a 50 percent chance of reduced tensions in the next 5 years, which is twice the probability in cases of no mediation. Given the usefulness of mediation, incumbents should have preferred mediation to reduce the blood spilled and treasure expended. However, mediation in the case studies occurred only after decades of fighting. The West Papua insurgency is a prime illustration of the state’s refusal to enjoy the benefits of mediation. Among the three cases, it has the longest period of fighting before negotiations began and even then there were no mediators involved.

**Figure 1: Statistics on the effects of mediation and no mediation**

The second puzzle arises from the belief that democracies are generally more peaceful than other regime types. Scholars argue that democracies are more likely to peacefully resolve conflicts. Even though democracies are not as likely to grant independence as other regimes, they are more willing to accommodate minority groups that have lived in a particular territory for a

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7 Beardsley, *The mediation dilemma*, pp. 76, 78, and 81.
long period of time. The more democratic a country, the more likely it will grant concessions below independence such as reforms and autonomy. This democratic peacefulness argument does not explain well the pattern of negotiations in the three case studies. The argument could possibly account for the turn to mediation in Aceh, which happened when the authoritarian Suharto regime was crumbling and Indonesia was on the cusp of democracy. However, negotiations in East Timor began during the Suharto regime. Furthermore, the democratic peacefulness argument does not sufficiently explain why the democratic administrations of Indonesia took so long to negotiate with the Papuans. According to Polity, Indonesia’s democracy has strengthened since 1999 but the state only negotiated with the Papuans in 2011.

Third, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its member states have been active in mediating negotiations since 2000 but were relatively passive and sat on the sidelines previously. This research aims to understand why Indonesia did not seek mediation by ASEAN or its members. Emerging from the shadows of colonialism, ASEAN was originally formed in 1967 as an economic organization to foster cooperation and create growth in the region. Since then it has assumed the role of a security forum in which members can resolve differences peacefully and work together to deal with security concerns. While the regional organization has been successful in driving economic development, it has a lackluster record in the security arena. Critics have described ASEAN as a “talk shop” that is “big on words and short on action”. As one of the founders and strongest proponents of ASEAN, it is surprising that Indonesia did not have ASEAN mediate but had extra-regional help. A peace agreement facilitated by ASEAN would have greatly raised the profile of the organization. Thus, an understanding of ASEAN’s limited role in the peace talks is necessary to enable the organization to play a greater role in regional security issues.

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1.3 Argument of the thesis and operating parameters

I argue that a state that is not committed or has very low levels of commitment to negotiations will not have a mediator. The more committed the state is to negotiations, the stronger the mediator the state will seek. The level of commitment is a function of the balance of power between the incumbents and insurgents, domestic support, and international pressure. Domestic support is the pivotal factor for two reasons. First, the balance of power is a structural factor that could only constrain or afford, but not decide, the options of the state. Second, political leaders depend on supportive constituents to stay in power. This is especially the case in Indonesia where political leaders depend on the most powerful constituent, the military, for support. Leaders that have dared to cross the military have lost power either through a coup or when the military refused to clamp down on popular protests.

Implicit in this argument is the critical role that mediators play in defusing the crisis and ensuring peace by facilitating settlements and monitoring the combatants’ compliance. A possible explanation for the absence of mediators could be that the state has the capability to negotiate without external help. Negotiations are chosen over mediation when the conflict is simple, low intensity, and combatants have parity in power. However, the capability to negotiate does not sufficiently explain why a state will reject offers for any form of third-party involvement in the negotiations. A capable state that does not intend to negotiate in good faith and honor the settlement will not even agree to international observers, who could call out on insincere behavior or violations of agreement.

Based on my argument, I develop a scenario-based framework that systematically explains why states decide to negotiate and how they negotiate. The framework shows that the state essentially has two basic options to respond to an insurgency: fight or negotiate. Within the negotiate option, the state can choose to negotiate with or without a mediator.

The framework operates based on four parameters. First, the domestic and international actors are assumed to be rational. Domestic actors weigh the costs and benefits of fighting and negotiating before deciding on an option. Similarly, international actors do not blindly support the incumbents or insurgents but take the side that best advances their interests. Second, the framework applies to not just the onset but also the continuation of negotiation. Thus, it applies

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to overt negotiations in which the public, other than the negotiators, is aware of the peace talks. Negotiators sometimes initiate clandestine talks to avoid the fallout from an unsuccessful attempt or interference by unsupportive or ill-intentioned actors. However, the peace process has to be made known eventually to get the support of the public, which plays an indispensable role in implementing the settlement. Third, the identity of the insurgents is known. Insurgents hide among the population but negotiations cannot begin in the first place if there is no identifiable leadership. Finally, there is only one mediator for each peace process. It is common for disputants to put together a coalition of mediators for various reasons such as involving all stakeholders or satisfying the desire of disputants to get their allies on the mediation team. Thus, variables other than strength of mediator become a consideration. Moreover, a coalition of mediators introduces dynamics such as coordination problems among the group of mediators. This framework considers the basic scenario in which there is only one mediator to focus on its strength, which is the dependent variable of interest.

Apart from these four parameters, the types of regime, grievances, and demands are important variables in the literature on insurgency. However, I expect the framework to operate for different types of regime, grievances, and demands. Regime type influences the way in which domestic actors express their support but domestic actors still have a say one way or another through means such as voting or demonstrations. While some grievances and demands might take a longer time to resolve or are particularly sensitive, they are subjected to the same domestic and international factors. However, an important caveat on grievances and demands is the element of issue specificity. Part of being rational is to refer to precedents with similar grievances and demands in order to decide the current course of action. All three cases in this thesis involve an indigenous group that have suffered under the state’s policies and seek secession. The outcome in one event affects the domestic and international support in subsequent events. Moreover, their comparability also helps to isolate any confounding variables. Thus, the framework operates to its fullest when it looks at similar grievances and demands but lacks the roll-on effect when it looks across different grievances and demands.

There are two alternative arguments commonly used to explain the choice of mediators. The ties argument posits an agency-based explanation in which the state selects actors it has ties with. The supply side argument tells a structure-based explanation in which the state gets whichever mediator is available. However, a state would have ties with numerous actors and even if one of
them offers to mediate, why did it have to accept the offer? I argue that these two explanations are factors that shape the choice of mediators but secondary to the level of commitment.

1.4 Why insurgencies and mediation?

Why should we be concerned about insurgencies and mediation? Insurgency is the oldest and most common form of warfare dating as far back as AD 66 and has been used almost continuously.\(^\text{13}\) As Indonesia illustrates, incumbents could exercise its overwhelming power to deal with insurgents either by fighting or negotiating. If incumbents choose to fight, they could adopt an enemy-centric approach and actively hunt down insurgent leaders with the aim of decapitating the movement and hope that the insurgency would collapse without its leaders. Troops are deployed to kill or capture and turn the insurgents to obtain intelligence in a massive demonstration of force to deter potential insurgents from joining the ranks of a movement in which the risk of death is always around the corner. Alternatively, they could adopt a population-centric approach that is premised on Mao’s maxim that “the guerilla must move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea”.\(^\text{14}\) Incumbents undermine the insurgent movement by depriving them of the population’s support and eventually kill or capture the weakened insurgents.

In the second option, incumbents choose to negotiate and make concessions to avoid war with the insurgents. They can offer concessions ranging from simply paying off the insurgents to greater rights, more economic benefits, and even autonomy. In return, the insurgents agree to a ceasefire, put down arms, demobilize, reintegrate, or even pledge allegiance to the state. The ideological struggle between the incumbents and insurgents can sometimes be so intense that both parties cannot coexist within the same territory, as is especially the case when there are indivisible demands such as regime change and secession. Mediation could help to rein in passions and bridge the political cleavages in order for the adversaries to arrive at peace and break out of the conflict trap.

Incumbents have incurred certain costs using these options and produced varying results. Some argue that indiscriminate violence is counterproductive because it creates grievances among the population. When the non-combatants realize their chances of survival are the same regardless of their participation in the insurgency, their grievances would push them to join the


rebels. The state would have exhausted its resources and achieved the undesired effect of bolstering the insurgency. On the other hand, scholars such as Lyall have made the controversial argument that indiscriminate violence is actually effective in reducing insurgent attacks by degrading the rebels’ fighting capabilities. Furthermore, the population would be led to believe that the insurgents are the root cause of the violence. It would not have suffered if there were no rebellion. The effectiveness of the force option might be debatable, but what is clear and acknowledged by all scholars is that the use of force has punishing consequences on the population with well-documented cases of gross human rights abuses.

Similarly, the option to negotiate has also produced mixed results. Negotiations could indeed bring an end to the insurgency but in some cases the peace is short-lived when parties deliberately or unintentionally fail to honor their agreements. Incumbents bear a reputational cost when they choose to negotiate from the outset or after a period of fighting. The risk of being seen as weak and incompetent increases when the insurgents renege after benefitting from the agreement. If the incumbents use negotiations as a sham to stall for a later fight, they risk rendering the option of renewed peace talks unpalatable to both parties. The incumbents have proven to be deceitful and they themselves would be worried that the insurgents might be insincere. Given the costs and benefits associated with each option, why have some incumbents chosen to fight while others found negotiations preferable? What factors go into a state’s calculus when it decides the course of action? This thesis hopes to develop a framework that can explain beyond the variation in Indonesia.

This research is also motivated by three academic and policy implications of the findings. First, the study of bargaining and mediation in intrastate conflicts is relatively recent compared to the extensive literature in interstate conflicts. Research on intrastate conflicts has focused on the structural causes and the effects of economic and military interventions in terminating these conflicts. In the case of East Timor especially, most of the focus is on the Australian-led UN peacekeeping mission and subsequent referendum. Portugal’s role in the negotiations that led to the referendum is relatively understudied. Thus, I hope to contribute to the literature on

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bargaining in insurgencies by highlighting how variations in the strength of the mediator affect its involvement in negotiations. Existing research on mediation usually assume the process is driven by sincere intentions for a fruitful purpose and they do not distinguish between strong and weak mediators. Beardsley demonstrated that not all mediators are equal and not all mediations happen in sincerity. I further Beardsley's argument by developing a theory that seeks to comprehensively examine the factors determining a state’s decision to fight or negotiate.

Second, the effectiveness of mediation is disputed. Walter found that negotiations would always succeed if there were a third party to monitor compliance with the agreement. Variables such as the background of actors, demands, and ideology do not affect the success. Other scholars argue that military intervention, such as peacekeeping, are more effective than mediation in resolving the conflict. However, the perception that mediation is less effective could simply be a correlation, and not causation, between mediation and unsuccessful conflict management. States could have chosen mediation when they see the insurgency as intractable. This would create the impression that mediation is not as effective as the use of force. Thus, an understanding of when mediation occurs would contribute towards the study of the effectiveness of mediation as a tool of conflict management.

Finally, if mediation is effective in bringing about peace, the findings of this thesis could be used to create conditions to move combatants from the battlefield to the negotiating table. From the policy perspective, there are only so many resources to go around the many conflicts in the world. Intervention must be timed to assist states in crisis if they are to have optimal effect and not worsen the situation. Moreover, premature mediation could become counterproductive when it creates the impression of mediation as a foolish and risky endeavor.

1.5 Framework of the thesis

This thesis proceeds in two parts. In the first part, I present the theoretical argument that explains a state’s decision to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate. Chapter 2 further distinguishes between negotiation and mediation, discusses the factors leading to mediation, identifies the mediators, and examines how mediators broker peace. After the introduction on

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mediation, Chapter 3 develops my theory on the level of state commitment and lays out the two alternative arguments.

The second part tests the alternative arguments and my theory against the three insurgencies in Indonesia. A major challenge to formulating theories of military politics is that of oversimplification, which arguably is understandable given that each state has its unique history of civil-military relations. The study of insurgency is essentially an examination of the civil-military relations within the conflict-stricken state. Thus, I look at three cases of insurgencies to determine the generalizability of my theory across time. While these cases have their unique dynamics and are spread across time, they are comparable across the parameters of actors, causes, and demands.

Chapter 4 paints the civil-military relations landscape in Indonesia and establishes the basis of selecting the three insurgencies. This chapter provides the background to understand why peace talks progressed under some presidents but stalled under others. It illustrates the domestic pressure on the political leaders. Chapters 5 to 7 analyze the insurgencies in East Timor, Aceh, and West Papua in that order. The cases are not presented chronologically according to when the insurgency started but based on the time of negotiations. This arrangement reflects how experiences with actors in one insurgency influence peace talks in the other insurgencies. Apart from determining the validity of my theory and assessing the importance of the alternative explanations, I also seek to identify from the case studies any new factors that could influence the choice of mediators. The final chapter reflects on the findings and their implications for policy and discusses the directions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF MEDIATION

"The task of the mediator is to help the parties to open difficult issues and nudge them forward in the peace process. The mediator's role combines those of a ship's pilot, consulting medical doctor, midwife, and teacher."21

Martti Ahtisaari, Nobel Lecture, 10 December 2008

This chapter explores the process of mediation in four sections. First, mediation is defined and distinguished from intervention and negotiation. The general goals of mediation are also outlined. Second, the chapter looks at the factors leading to mediation in terms of the preconditions, disputants' motivations, and mediators' incentives. Third, the wide variety of mediators is sorted into three categories based on Waltz's level of analysis. Finally, this chapter discusses how mediators go about brokering peace.

2.1 Defining mediation and its objectives

In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Ahtisaari declared that conflicts are not inevitable and peace is a matter of will. The onus is on the adversaries to recognize the harm fighting has caused, put down arms, and forge peace through negotiations. What they sometimes need is a push towards peace, which could come from mediators. Both negotiation and mediation are non-coercive methods to reaching peace. Bercovitch and Jackson define negotiation as a process in which "actors communicate and exchange proposals in an attempt to agree about the dimensions of conflict termination and their future relationship".22 On the other hand, mediation is an extension of negotiations in which the disputants accept an offer for or seek assistance from a third party to resolve their conflicts. Mediation falls under the broader process of intervention, which describes a wide range of third-party activities. Among these activities, military intervention is one of the most common in which a third party sends troops into a conflict with or without the consent of the disputants in an attempt to drive the conflict towards the outcome it desires.

In contrast, mediation takes place within a specific set of parameters. First, unlike military intervention or sanction, the involvement of the third party must be mutually accepted by all disputants and the third party. Second, the mediator relies on non-violent techniques. Consequently, the good nature of mediation has been enshrined in international law. The 1907

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Hague Convention on the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes provides for "powers strangers to the dispute have the right to offer good offices or mediation even during the course of hostilities". Furthermore, "the exercise of this right can never be regarded by either of the parties in dispute as an unfriendly act".23

Figure 2 illustrates the mediation process as described in the literature.24 Disputants are engaged in some sort of conflict at the start. Subsequently, they decide to seek mediation under particular circumstances. For mediation to happen, disputants must be motivated and mediators have the incentive to intervene. These motivations and incentives are generally in terms of norms and benefits. The determinants of mediation also include a set of preconditions that favor successful mediation. When the conflict enters the mediation stage, how the mediator works is determined by a set of circumstantial factors that could be divided into preexisting, concurrent, and background. Preexisting factors refer to the identity of the disputants and the nature of their conflict while concurrent factors describe the identity of the mediator and ongoing mediation attempt. Finally, background factors refer to the geopolitical environment and any prior mediation efforts.25 After the mediator applies the selected approach, outcomes would be yielded for the disputants, mediator, and other third parties.

Where does my theory fit into the process? This thesis seeks to understand the state's choice of mediators and proposes its level of commitment as the variable that determines the choice. Thus, my theory falls under the disputants' motivations while the alternative explanation on supply side theory refers to the mediators' incentives. The literature suggests a broad range of tasks that mediators perform, which I conceptualized into four roles. They are the reframing of issues, facilitating the exchange of information, expanding the set of acceptable outcomes, and assisting with the implementation of the agreement. When disputants select mediators, they consider the ability of the mediators fulfill these four roles. While the difference in ability is a function of circumstantial factors, it is also attributable to the variations in the strength of the mediators. Stronger mediators have more resources and are better able to fulfill the four roles.

Disputants that are more committed to long-term peace would seek stronger mediators that are more competent in forging peace.

Figure 2: An overview of the mediation process

2.2 Determinants of mediation

Insurgency is a battle of commitment between the adversaries to outlast each other. As Kissinger remarked, “the guerilla wins if he does not lose [while] the conventional army loses if it does not win”. It is considered a victory for the insurgents if they continue to exist and co-existence is neither the ultimate goal of the incumbents or insurgents. Thus, skeptics argue that even if peace talks do occur and there is an insistent mediator, adversaries will seize every opportunity to break out of the talks and seek a decisive victory. Why then do adversaries seek mediation when they are committed to victory and fundamentally distrust each other?

Walter similarly emphasizes the incumbents’ preference to fight the insurgents. Incumbents would fight first to test the insurgents’ strength, weaken their bargaining power, and deter would-be insurgents. When then does fighting cease and transit to mediation? The literature on mediation argues that there are certain ingredients that must be present before the conflict is

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considered ripe for mediation. Furthermore, both the combatants and mediators have their own interests in the process.

2.2.1 Preconditions for successful mediation

There are three preconditions necessary for mediation to be successful. First, the contestants must be identifiable for talks to even begin. Incumbents want to know whose demands are representative of the movement and insurgents need to know who will deliver on the demands. After the demands are heard and concessions accepted, identifiable parties are necessary for the enforcement of the agreement. Violations cannot be punished without knowing who to punish.

This precondition is usually not an issue for the incumbents, which have an established government with clear leadership. Even though the political and military leaders might sometimes differ on the approach to the conflict, it is generally evident who is in charge. The problem lies mainly with the insurgents. Initially, the movement might prefer to stay in the dark to avoid being infiltrated or decapitated. The state cannot negotiate if it does not know who it is dealing with. Conversely, a movement operating in the open could be difficult to bargain with if the leadership changes regularly, there are many people claiming to be the leader, or the group splinters. Scholars such as Coser, Bloomfield, and Leiss argue that non-cohesive insurgent groups are more aggressive and provoke conflict with the incumbents to forge cohesion. These groups resist mediation and any attempts at peace. Faced with such a scenario, the state might find it more beneficial to fight than attempt to negotiate, especially if it believes the movement would rapidly collapse without effective and clear leadership.

Second, both parties recognize that the conflict is in a state of mutually hurting stalemate. A stalemate describes a situation of balance in which neither combatant has the military power and financial capacity to defeat the other without incurring unacceptable costs. The territory where the insurgency occurs remains contested by both parties. A stalemate can become comfortable given that neither party actually lost the fight. It is not sufficient to cause mediation as combatants can dig in to stem the hemorrhage and take time to reorganize. Sunk costs and the

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29 Modelski, "International settlement of internal wars", p. 143.
commitment to victory motivate them for another fight. On the other hand, a mutually hurting stalemate leads to pacification when both parties recognize they have completely exhausted their military capacity, financial resources, and political support. The situation is uncomfortable as inaction exacts a "high and rising cost". Both parties understand a military solution is not possible at an acceptable cost and bargaining is the only way to stop their losses.

Third, the external environment must be conducive for mediation. While an intrastate conflict is a domestic crisis, its dynamic is affected by the external environment. In their seminal piece, Fearon and Laitin argue that foreign support in terms of safe havens, training, supplies, and financial aid favors insurgents. There is no reason for combatants to stop fighting if there is an endless stream of foreign support. Even if there exists a mutually hurting stalemate, bargaining would not be successful if parties believe foreign aid would eventually arrive. Talks then would become a stall for time. Thus, external actors must stop funding the combatants to end their fighting capabilities and push them towards sincere talks.

2.2.2 Disputants' motivations for mediation

Why seek peace if the fight can be won? Insurgents have to fight because peaceful alternatives are not successful in having their grievances addressed and demands met. In turn, incumbents cannot negotiate without first fighting to avoid setting a wrong precedent. The often-repeated policy of not negotiating with terrorists reflects the fear that if the government relents even once, this would encourage others to forcibly extract concessions in the future. Therefore, negotiations would only occur when the costs of conflict are unacceptably high. By extension, mediation only occurs when disputants are unable to bargain successfully. While the desire to resolve a mutually hurting stalemate is the main reason for mediation, it is not the only reason why disputants choose mediation. There are three additional motivations influencing their decision.

First, disputants intend to use mediation as a stalling tactic. It is expected that when disputants chose mediation, they seek peace as an outcome. However, disputants could be

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working toward the devious objective of regaining strength for a later use of force. Disputants could be unable to win the current conflict at an acceptable cost or their fighting capacity could be stretched from simultaneously engaging in multiple conflicts. Moreover, disputants could be unable to exercise force if there are domestic and international pressures to end the conflict peacefully. Consequently, mediation offers a reprieve from fighting and provides protection against surprise attacks. Disputants could use the space to regroup, recruit, acquire intelligence, and obtain resources so they can resume fighting when they have strengthened their fighting capacity or the domestic situation becomes favorable.

Another insincere, albeit less devious, use of mediation as a stalling tactic is to hold out for a better bargain. Disputants still seek peace but they expect the negotiating power of the adversary to weaken. Given that strong mediators have the resources to manipulate disputants to reach an agreement quickly, disputants would intentionally pick weak mediators to slow down the negotiations. Thus, mediation provides disputants a cover from domestic and political pressure to end the conflict quickly.

Second, mediation directly and indirectly alters the balance of power between the disputants. Given the asymmetric distribution of power in an insurgency, sincere insurgents can use mediators to check against the overwhelming power of the incumbents. This provides a guarantee against cheating and devious objectives discussed earlier. In general, a triangle relationship exists between the mediator and disputants. The mediator can nudge the peace process forward, especially in a deadlock, by threatening to support one party in order to make the resistant party budge.

Mediation also indirectly alters the balance of power by drawing greater attention to the conflict, which could lead to disputants gaining support from other third parties. Insurgents benefit more from this indirect effect of mediation, which helps to publicize their cause and attract support in terms of membership and resources. When disputants enter into mediation, this confers recognition on the insurgent leaders as representatives of the population that support them. If a peace agreement is reached, their leadership would be legitimized by the struggle and concessions obtained. Thus, states are generally reluctant to have a mediator and even more

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33 Beardsley, *The mediation dilemma*, p. 20.
34 Ibid., p. 20.
resistant to holding talks in foreign countries where there would be greater publicity for the insurgents' cause.

Third, mediation provides political cover for undesirable outcomes.³⁵ Even though negotiation might be the prudent way to cut losses, leaders could face domestic sanctions for backing out of a fight. The sanctions become aggravated when necessary concessions are highly unpopular with the domestic audience. Mediators could provide a face saving platform for disputants to stop fighting without suffering domestic repercussions. Disputants could frame the initiation of dialogue and any concessions granted as doing a favor for the mediator. This assumes disputants have a preexisting excellent and important relationship with the mediator. The face saving platform is elevated if the bilateral relationship is more strategically important than the concessions granted. Thus, the disputants are not backing down but rather they are preserving a key bilateral relationship. Consequently, the set of mutually acceptable outcomes could also be expanded now that the population is onboard. Mediators could be seen as a trustworthy source of second opinion. Their presence could help to convince the uncertain domestic audience that the agreement is necessary and worthwhile.³⁶

Finally, the use of mediation to provide political cover is also related to its use as a stalling tactic. Given that strong mediators can push disputants past deadlocks and monitor commitments, insincere disputants will seek to undermine the peace process by picking a weak mediator. The calculation is that the weak mediator would not be able to prevent all violations of the peace process. When the disputants have regained enough strength, they could provoke a fight that would lead to the breakdown of the ceasefire. Subsequently, disputants could claim they made a valiant effort towards peace but the adversary is untrustworthy and the mediator is not able to protect against cheating. Thus, the disputants have no choice but to resort to arms to defend themselves.

Therefore, mediation does not necessarily occur only when there is bargaining failure between the disputants or when the situation is ripe for peace with the preconditions present, as commonly described in the literature. Disputants could have less than sincere motivations in engaging mediators. Identifying the incentives of disputants is important in studying the effects of mediation. As noted earlier, mediation is perceived to have less of a positive impact compared

to other forms of intervention. However, it could be that the cases of mediation are simply impossible or disputants are insincere. Mediation would appear to be not as effective as it really is.37

2.2.3 Mediators’ incentives for mediation

Mediation creates impure public goods, in which everyone enjoys the peace and there are some benefits exclusive to the mediators.38 Even though mediators stand to gain some private benefits, the cost of intervention could be considerably high. Mediation takes up time and resources, which is an issue especially for states and international organizations. Political leaders have to expend political capital to defend unpopular interventions with their constituents while member states could criticize organizations for not paying enough attention to other crises. Furthermore, the mediator’s reputation is tied to the outcome of the peace talks. If a settlement is produced, the success becomes a burden when the world expects the mediator to intervene in other conflicts as well. Conversely, the mediator looks incompetent if the talks fall through and conflict worsens. Given that the mediator bears the cost alone while others can free ride and enjoy some dividends of peace, why do mediators intervene? There are three main reasons why actors mediate.

First, mediators intervene for humanitarian reason to stop the bloodshed and immense suffering. This is the legitimation all actors use when they intervene in a conflict. News and social media capture the horrors of conflict and transmit them around the world, which have an effect of mobilizing the public to pressure their leaders to take action. This humanitarian impetus is reflected in the increasing growth of the norm of the responsibility to protect. Some mediators are described as “born to mediate” for their raison d’être is conflict management.39 They generally are international organizations, transnational non-government organizations, and transnational advocacy networks.

Second, the actor is affected by spillover costs from the conflict, which include the inflow of refugees and trade disruption. A consequence of colonization is the arbitrary segregation of the same ethnic group into different nationalities. When intrastate conflicts break out along ethnic lines, the ethnic kin in the neighboring state would be motivated to intervene and preserve the

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37 Beardsley, *The mediation dilemma*, p. 45.
38 Ibid., pp. 22-3.
interest of the group. Intrastate conflicts also pose long-term security threats, in particular by creating breeding ground for terrorism, which have destabilizing effects regionally and even internationally. Thus, neighboring states, major powers, international organizations, and other actors affected by the security situation intervene to contain the contagion of violence and stabilize the situation.

Third, intrastate conflicts provide a window to reshape influence and obtain benefits. In conflicts for secession or regime change, actors are motivated to mediate to preserve their existing interests, which depends on the incumbents remaining in power. Thus, these mediators work to produce settlements that offer concessions below secession or regime change. In general, mediators may earn the gratitude and achieve closer relations with one or both parties by helping them break out of the deadlock and resolve the conflict. They may maneuver the situation to make themselves indispensable for instance by agreeing to monitor the peace deal. In addition, a successful mediation would greatly increase the prestige of the mediator. Reputation is not merely an empty title but would be immensely useful especially for states that seek to become major powers. Thus, mediation becomes a competition for influence. Neighboring states and regional organizations are especially proactive in mediation to keep out rival powers or extra-regional actors from intervening. Some organizations, such as the Arab League and Organization of American States, go as far as to state that purpose in their charters. The conflict provides an opportunity for states to be seen as leaders and organizations to stay relevant. As noted earlier, the quest for reputation and influence could "condemn" actors to regularly mediate in order to check the influence of other potential mediators. If they fail to mediate, they could be seen as shirking their responsibilities of a leader.

When institutions are formed after the conflict and rules are rewritten, the close relations put the mediator in a prime position to benefit from these new institutions and rules. For instance, the mediator could secure lucrative business deals to rebuild the country that was severely devastated by the conflict. These benefits underpin the skepticism of altruistic intervention and their presence or absence is often used to explain the incidence of mediation.

2.3 The three images of mediators

The above section highlighted some mediators who intervene for various reasons. Waltz's three images of the international system provide a useful basis to organize the immense number

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40 Zartman and Touval, "International mediation: Conflict resolution and power politics", p. 34.
of possible mediators. There are certain benefits to using a particular level of mediator as well as shortcomings. The first level of mediator refers to individuals that do not officially represent a state or international organization. Instead, these mediators are private citizens acting on their own accord to facilitate dialogue between warring factions.\footnote{Bercovitch, J. and Schneider, G., "Who mediates? The political economy of international conflict management", \textit{Journal of Peace Research}, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2000), pp. 146-7.} Examples of this level of mediators include former statesmen, Nobel laureates, and businessmen. Theoretically, any person can become a mediator and technological advancements have afforded greater participatory power to the individual. As Choucri noted, a characteristic of the cyber age is the reduced barrier to political expression and activism.\footnote{Choucri, N., \textit{Cyberpolitics in international relations} (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012), p. 4.}

The notion of an individual mediator usually conjures the image of a high-ranking diplomat publicly calling for calm and flying into a conflict zone to mediate peace. It is important to make a distinction between this popular version and the private citizen given the differences in benefits and shortcomings they bring. The main benefit of individual mediation is the greater degree of flexibility possible compared to mediation by state-based representatives. Individual mediators are not encumbered by politics and can concentrate on devising measures to produce peace. Unlike official representatives, they are not accountable to anyone other than their own conscience to stop the bloodshed. Consequently, they are able to be creative in the mediation and experiment with new ideas. From the realist perspective, their lack of political affiliation might make their initiatives more palatable because they are seen as less threatening than states, which might have hidden agendas. Another benefit of individual mediation is that it enables one or both parties to back down while saving face. Given the mediator’s lack of official political affiliation, adversaries would be seen as making concessions for the sake of peace and not because they have succumbed to the pressure of the other party.

However, the individual mediator’s lack of political affiliation could also be a weakness. Without the support of states or international organizations, these mediators have a limited resource base. The success of mediation depends very much on their personal knowledge, skills, experience, and beliefs. They may be able to craft a settlement but have no resources to enforce it. Their lack of political restraints could also make them loose cannons whose efforts at peacemaking in one conflict could have knock-on effects on other conflicts.
The second level of mediator is states represented by a high-ranking official sent to facilitate talks between the adversaries. 43 While any state could theoretically offer to be a mediator, these states are usually a neighbor, donor, major power, or a combination of these identities. For instance, China assumes all three identities with respect to North Korea. In international relations, major powers commonly refer to states such as the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. However, middle powers such as Canada and the Nordic countries are also active mediators. There is a lack of consensus on the definition of middle powers. The most common definition in the literature ranks states according to their physical and material attributes and middle powers are those that fall in between countries above (great powers) and below (small powers) them. 44 Apart from the intuitive positional definition, a more useful definition is based on the behavior of middle powers. Such countries practice middlepowermanship, which is the “tendency to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems, tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes, and tendency to embrace notions of ‘good international citizenship’ to guide...diplomacy”. 45 Thus, major powers in this thesis refer to both great and middle powers.

As noted above, state representatives have a wider resource pool compared to individual mediators. In particular, states are able to back up mediation efforts with military force and they can confer or deny recognition, which is important in cases of secession or regime change. As Krasner argues, mutual recognition by other states forms the basis of a state’s sovereignty. 46 If a state is unable to pull off the mediation, it can seek the help of allies and other states to form a coalition. This builds up pressure on adversaries to reach a settlement. Even though the state has a substantial resource base, the effectiveness of the mediation also depends very much on the representative’s skills, capabilities, position in the country, and latitude permitted. A potential shortcoming in using state mediation is the uncertainty in the mediator’s intentions, which

46 Krasner disaggregated sovereignty into four types. First, interdependence sovereignty is the ability of the state to control cross border movements. Second, domestic sovereignty refers to the presence of domestic authority structures to regulate behavior within the state. Third, Westphalian or Vattelian sovereignty is the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other states and exclusion of external sources authority. Finally, international legal sovereignty is mutual recognition by other states. Krasner, S. D., “Abiding sovereignty”, International Political Science Review, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2001), pp. 229-51.
realism argues is problematic because states are self-interested and no alliance is permanent. Creating peace is a noble cause but the mediator could have a hidden agenda such as to achieve greater influence over the incumbent leadership. Even if the mediator has no hidden agenda, those seeking to derail the peace talks could easily distort the mediator's actions as being driven by foreign policy objectives than altruistic goals.

The third level of mediator refers to representatives of international organizations, transnational non-governmental organizations, and transnational advocacy networks. An international organization is a regional or global collection of states that was formed for a purpose with explicit rules governing the membership. Furthermore, members have a clear assignment of roles and the organization has a capacity for action.\textsuperscript{47} International organizations can bring more resources to the table and confer wider recognition than state-based mediators. In particular, the huge number of states means there is concerted effort with a division of labor. For instance, a ceasefire monitoring mission could be rotated among members to ensure the sustainability of the mission without losing its importance. In addition, international organizations are generally perceived to be more impartial than state-based mediators.\textsuperscript{48}

However, the very strength of an international organization could also be its weakness. Such organizations might face paralysis when members have difficulty coordinating with each other. The consistent failure of the UN to mediate the worsening civil war in Syria illustrates the plight of a mediator with tremendous resources but cannot effectively use them.\textsuperscript{49}

On the other hand, a transnational non-governmental organization comprises individuals across countries that are knowledgeable, have common interests, share the same worldview, and meet regularly to advocate their position.\textsuperscript{50} These organizations, or epistemic communities, generally recognize that the state is the principal actor in the international system. When states face an impasse or uncertainty about what actions to take and their outcomes, these knowledgeable individuals step up to reframe the issue and propose alternative policies. Such organizations are respected for their expertise and influence through publications and lobbying.\textsuperscript{51}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[49]{Sengupta, S. and Gordon, M. R., “UN mediator on Syria quits; French envoy says chemicals were used”, \textit{The New York Times}, May 13, 2014.}
\footnotetext[50]{Bercovitch and Schneider, “Who mediates? The political economy of international conflict management”, p. 148.}
\end{footnotes}
Similar to individual mediators, these organizations' lack of political affiliation makes them less inhibited in proposing peace options. Disputants would be more willing to test these ideas since as they view such organizations as less threatening than state-based actors. However, the limited resource base of these organizations could hamper their effectiveness in seeing through the peace settlement.

Finally, a transnational advocacy network has elements of both an international organization and transnational non-governmental organization. It also includes the media, academia, think tanks, local civil society, churches, and states that are not part of the international organization. Working globally on an issue area, these actors are “bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services”. Such networks are most common in high value issues concerning security, development, and peace on which activists advocate causes and promote policies. Membership is voluntary and the horizontal organizational structure enables information to flow faster than hierarchical organizations. A transnational advocacy network can be a very effective broker of peace given that it possesses vast resources and a collection of immensely determined actors. However, similar to international organizations, the effectiveness of transnational advocacy networks could be impeded by coordination problems within the ranks or major powers that are not part of the movement.

2.4 The four roles of mediators

Each of the four occupations Ahtisaari mentioned has its distinct function but all share a pertinent attribute that is a personal connection with the client. In an insurgency, the fierce ideological battle can make sitting down a difficult task. The mediator has to empathize with the plight of the parties, temper their passions, and move them to the negotiating table. Thereafter, the mediator helps to reframe the issues, facilitates the exchange of information, expands the set of acceptable outcomes, and assists with the implementation of the agreement.

The literature on mediation describes the functions of mediators in terms of three widely agreed upon mediation styles. First, mediators act as facilitators to pass information and organize the logistics required for the talks. Given that the disputants draw up the peace deal out of their own accord, facilitation is ideal for creating lasting peace. Second, mediators act as formulators to develop and propose new solutions to the contestants. Third, mediators use their leverage to

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manipulate the disputants into an agreement. This style promises a formal agreement will most likely to be reached. Some scholars argue that one of these styles is most effective at resolving the conflict and suggest the mediator should follow a particular style. On the other hand, scholars like Touval, Zartman, and Bercovitch recommend mediators to evolve their styles as the situation requires.

Instead of pigeonholing mediators to a particular style, I argue that all mediators should theoretically perform all four roles noted above. Some mediators perform a particular role with greater intensity than other mediators. While this difference is a function of circumstantial factors described above, it could also be attributed to the variations in the strength of the mediators. All mediators can reframe the issue but only stronger mediators can better perform the other three roles as they have more resources. On the other hand, weak mediators have limited resources to perform the remaining three roles as Figure 3 shows. Thus, disputants strategically select the type of mediator that best suits their interests and this is elaborated in Chapter 3.

**Figure 3: The four roles of mediators**

A critical role of the mediator is to exercise the power of narrative to reframe the issues underlying the conflict. Like a ship’s pilot, the mediator exerts a calming influence during periods of turbulence, charts a new course, and brings the parties forward with a steady hand. Scholars argue that some issues favor negotiation while others do not. These nonnegotiable

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issues, such as demands for regime change or secession, are considered zero-sum for which there is no room for compromise or accommodation. Fighting becomes the only option.

However, the mediator could convert zero-sum issues into positive-sum ones by reframing the problem. A frame is a perceptual tool that informs the interpretation and influences the response to the situation. For instance, incumbents may interpret secessionist battles as a challenge to their absolute authority. Consequently, forceful suppression is the only way to assert their authority. The mediator could reframe these battles as an expression of grievances, which a legitimate government is obliged to hear and address. Thus, mediators in general construct frames that seek to depoliticize and desecuritize the situation to take the use of force out of the picture and make peace more palatable. Contestants need the mediator’s help because they are so caught up in the conflict that they suffer perceptual rigidity. All mediators are able to exercise this power of narrative to reframe the problem and redefine the agenda. Since this power depends on imagination and not resources, this reframing function of the mediator against the strength is represented as a horizontal line in Figure 3.

The mediator also facilitates the exchange of information between the contestants. Drawing on the literature on interstate conflicts, a rational explanation for bargaining failure is the presence of misrepresented or private information. Contestants have an incentive to exaggerate their capabilities and resolve to obtain a better deal. It is also rational to keep some information private to reduce the consequences of cheating by insincere adversaries. Even if contestants disclose truthfully, there is no reason to trust the adversary but every reason to doubt the veracity of the information. After all, one does not live long by being careless. Therefore, the decision to fight before negotiation is the suboptimal outcome of rationality.

Fighting could be averted if there is a clear channel of communication and good flow of information. The mediator acts as a conduit between the contestants to deliver messages if face-to-face meeting is impossible or undesirable. For instance, it is common for the insurgent leadership to be in exile to avoid being killed and keep the movement alive. A meeting in person could also be undesirable given all the rhetoric, anger, and cultural peculiarities. Therefore, the mediator filters out the emotions and passes on the relevant information to the contestants.

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addition, the mediator could be asked to provide second opinions about the information to reduce the risks of misperception. Given that the same piece of message could be interpreted differently, the mediator could give an alternative interpretation based on the interaction with the sender. Moreover, the mediator could have more information of the overall situation than the recipient. Here, the mediator’s power of narrative also becomes useful.

Apart from the practice of shuttle diplomacy, the mediator is a valuable source of information. The mediator does not simply convey messages but could also provide information gathered from other sources such as intelligence activities and other relevant third parties. Contestants could verify their intelligence and dispel inaccurate media coverage by checking with the mediator. The relationship between this role and the mediator’s strength is linear. Stronger mediators have more access to information given that they have more resources such as satellites or money to buy intelligence.

Another role of the mediator is to expand the set of acceptable outcomes. Like a consulting doctor, the mediator faces patients who seek help with preconceived notions about their problems and the treatment options. After the mediator reframes the situation and provides new information, the contestants might become willing to resolve the conflict peacefully. Each contestant enters the bargaining process with a range of acceptable outcomes and an agreement would be reached if there were an overlap between the two. However, these concessions might be too narrow for an overlap. As the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described, the mediator then “becomes an interlocutor with each party to understand its core interests and concerns and to help it move away from entrenched positions to explore innovative options that might address its interests, as well as those of the other side”.

It might be the case that the contestants are keen on a settlement but there are multiple equilibriums. To solve this coordination problem, the mediator could provide a focal point to converge the expectations of the contestants and allow them to revise their acceptable outcomes. Contestants could check with the mediator if the revised concessions are feasible before offering them to the other party. If this does not work, the mediator could either open up options that the contestants closed off or inject alternatives to the pool of ideas. Contestants could be made receptive to previously disliked ideas through persuasion augmented by positive or negative

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inducements. A common stumbling point in talks is that the incumbents are only interested in negotiating an immediate ceasefire and reluctant to discuss what happens in the long-term such as institutionalizing rights. By dangling carrots and waving sticks, the mediator changes the contestants’ cost and benefit calculations and manipulates them towards a deal. Alternatively, the mediator could provide new options that were not thought of because the contestants do not possess the ability to fulfill that option. For instance, the incumbent does not have the technology to raise the productivity of agricultural farms in insurgent-contested territory. The mediator could offer machines and training to address the grievance of the insurgents.

In addition, the mediator’s role as a conduit is salient at this stage in which concessions are considered. Shuttle diplomacy becomes the preferred channel of communications over face-to-face meetings as parties adjust the concessions they are willing to make. Indirect talks help because they are less confrontational. The mediator could also use the process of delivery to weed out proposals that are sure to fall outside the range of mutually acceptable outcomes and highlight the feasible options. Thus, mediators make sure the stalemate does not transfer from the battlefield to the bargaining table. The possibility of a stalemate in negotiations is high as contestants have an incentive to bargain longer and harder to hold out for a better deal if the shadow of the future is long. If the contestants’ supporters are eager to reach a quick deal, the mediator could indirectly put pressure on the contestants by publicizing outlines of the fair offer.

As Figure 3 shows, strong mediators can expand more outcomes than weaker mediators just like how the more skilled the doctor, the more challenging and broader range of operations can be performed. In the mediation scenario, stronger mediators have more leverage over the contestants to make them open up previously rejected options. In addition, the stronger the

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59 Quinn, Wilkenfeld, Smarick, and Asal, “Power play: Mediation in symmetric and asymmetric international crises”, pp. 444-5.


62 Publicizing offers serves not only to speed up the bargaining process but it is also a practice of the democratic process. Ban reminded that while contestants and mediators usually keep the internal dynamics of the mediation process confidential, the population must be engaged to “establish appropriate expectations and to prepare the public for the outcome”. A communications strategy must be in place to “inform the population of the opportunity for constructive change and to engage them in active participation in reconstruction”. United Nations Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities”.

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mediator, the more alternative outcomes it can create with its resources. The curve eventually plateaus out since the number of outcomes is finite.

Finally, the mediator assists with the implementation of the agreement and ensure the disputants credibly commit to their promises. While all four roles are crucial in pushing the talks forward, this assistance is arguably the most important in ensuring long-term peace. Contestants have no incentive to stop fighting and negotiate if no concessions are offered or that they are credible. All four roles provide this incentive but only the assistance role can make the contestants negotiate sincerely when they understand that what happens at the bargaining table is not just cheap talk but will become reality.

Much like the midwife, the mediator delivers the agreement after a period of bargaining that entailed reframing the problem, exchanging information, and revising concessions. This can be a delicate period for there might be last minute changes or attempts to thwart the settlement. The mediator has to resolve any complications that might arise. Thereafter, the mediator assumes responsibilities similar to a teacher, which include nurturing the growth of peace, punishing infractions, and resolving disputes. These responsibilities are huge and as Ban elaborated:

“Mediation does not end once an agreement is signed. Formal and informal good offices or mediation are required throughout implementation. Different aspects of the agreement, such as restoration of security and basic services; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR); return of refugees and internally displaced persons; promotion of human rights; security sector reform; child protection; adoption of a constitution; holding of elections; rebuilding institutions’ establishing transitional justice mechanisms; and restarting the economy, are addressed at different times and details need to be negotiated and carefully sequenced.”

DDR is the most delicate aspect of the implementation process. Insurgents took up arms in the first place to protect themselves and express their grievances. Their ability to keep fighting is what pushed the incumbents to offer concessions. Insurgents feel apprehensive about giving up arms because the incumbents then lose the incentive to fulfill their pledges. The latter could renege on the agreement and resume the crackdown on the defenseless insurgents. Thus, scholars such as Walter argue that disarmament should be the last step in a successful peace agreement.


64 United Nations Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities”.

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Incumbents would be deterred from breaking the pledges while the insurgents would be confident enough to follow through with the peace deal. Alternatively, the mediator could assure both parties that their actions would be reciprocated by monitoring the progress, calling out on noncompliance, and punishing transgressions.

Therefore, it is ideal for the mediator to be involved in every step of the implementation. The mediator ensures both parties follow through with the agreement even though leaders may change and capabilities may shift. Moreover, the mediator ensures programs are properly administered to realize their desired effects. For instance, it is common for aid to be misappropriated by corrupt officials and not reach the people. The grievances then become exacerbated instead of being relieved. Given the resource intensity required of the mediator, the stronger the mediator, the more assistance that can be rendered. Stronger mediators could also sustain a longer period of involvement since it takes time to heal the cleavages within the population. Thus, the theoretical relationship between the degree of assistance and strength is linear. In practice, Beardsley argues that mediators seek to decrease the vulnerability of the contestants to defections and not the frequency of the defections. Contestants cannot rely on mediators indefinitely and the latter themselves have finite resources and other interests. Therefore, mediators would only intervene in the most serious infractions that threaten the strategic balance between the two disputants, upset the regional balance, or create a humanitarian crisis.

2.5 Conclusion

Mediation is a complicated process that involves the mutual consent of all disputants and the mediator. There are three preconditions necessary for mediation to be successful. First, the identities of the disputants must be known for talks to even begin and commitments to be accountable. Second, disputants must recognize that the conflict has entered a state of mutually hurting stalemate in which they are suffering unacceptable costs everyday but still unable to win decisively. Third, the external environment must support mediation. Apart from these preconditions, the incentives of disputants and mediators also shape the outcome of the

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65 Walter, "The critical barrier to civil war settlement", pp. 335-64.
66 Beardsley, The mediation dilemma, p. 36. This could explain the current situation in Iraq. It is in the interests of the United States to ensure the Maliki government would stay committed to creating a representative government and building a cohesive nation. Maliki managed to sideline the Sunnis over the years and the United States only intervened when Maliki's infractions enabled the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria to make advances into the country and threatened US interests and regional stability.
mediation. While disputants are motivated by the overwhelming cost of fighting, they could also engage a mediator to stall for time, alter the balance of power, and acquire political cover. For mediators, they bear great personal cost when they decide to intervene. They are motivated by humanitarian norms, defensive interests to address the spillover costs from the conflict, and the opportunity to reshape influence and obtain benefits. These mediators are generally private citizens, state representatives, and representatives of international organizations, transnational non-governmental organizations, and transnational advocacy networks.

The responsibilities are immense for mediators who help to reframe the conflict, facilitate the exchange of information, expand the set of acceptable outcomes, and assist with the implementation of the agreement. They ensure every step of the peace process is done carefully and not rushed simply for the immediate benefits of an agreement such as the lifting of sanctions. While peace is desirable, it should be done speedily and not with haste. Thus, mediators prevent problems from being swept under the carpet and help to establish conditions to guarantee long-term change.

This thesis proposes a connection between the disputants' incentives for mediation and the determinants of the mediators' approach. The ability of mediators to perform the four roles depends not only on the circumstantial factors, but also on the mediators' inherent strength. Disputants that are more committed to a peaceful resolution would select stronger mediators that can better fulfill all four roles. Chapter 3 develops my theory on the level of state commitment and lays out the two alternative arguments.
CHAPTER 3: EXPLANATIONS FOR THE CHOICE OF MEDIATORS

“All Wars are Follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will Mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their Differences by Arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the Cast of a Dye, it would be better than by Fighting and destroying one another.”

Benjamin Franklin, excerpt from letters written in 1783

“The UN Mission, and those Rwandans it was intended to secure, fell victim to an inflated optimism to which I contributed, thereby creating expectations that the UN did not have the capacity to fulfill.”

Roméo Dallaire, The Changing Role of UN Peacekeeping Forces: The Relationship between UN Peacekeepers and NGOs in Rwanda

This thesis started by laying out the various options that states have in responding to insurgencies. As Franklin maintained, fighting incurs great costs and peaceful alternatives to conflict resolution are preferable. Thus, I seek to systemically explain why states decide to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate. Specifically, I look closely at the decision to have third-party mediators and the choice of mediators. Existing explanations for the choice of mediators focus on three sets of mechanisms: mediator attributes, ties, and supply. This chapter is organized into four sections. The first section develops my commitment theory, which is operationalized in the second section to produce five possible scenarios states could find themselves in. Finally, sections three and four describe the ties and supply side mechanisms respectively.

3.1 Commitment level explanation

Scholars identified a list of desirable attributes mediators should possess such as trust, credibility, neutrality, and competence. The more attributes an actor possesses, the more it will be asked to mediate. However, this list is too expansive to be applied as a generalizable framework to understand the state’s choice of mediators. Some attributes are more pertinent than others in the highly contextual nature of insurgencies. Moreover, scholars disagree about the importance of particular attributes such as neutrality. Scholars such as Jackson and Young argue

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that neutrality is key to gaining the confidence of disputants. The neutral mediator does not take sides but acts based on the merits of the disputants’ claims. On the other hand, Zartman and Touval found that the mediator is chosen based on the results it can deliver and not its neutrality. Pakistan accepted Soviet mediation with India in 1966 at Tashkent even though the Soviet Union had a close relationship with India. While the Soviets would not want to jeopardize their relationship with India, Pakistan calculated that its growing connection with China would function as a check on any Soviet bias in the peace process. The Soviets would be dissuaded from openly siding with India to avoid pushing Pakistan closer to China. Furthermore, Pakistan could also benefit from having a mediator that has influence over India. Similarly, Walter argues that neutrality is not necessary. On the contrary, mediators partial to the weaker side could make the latter feel more secure and stay committed to the peace process.

Instead of using the entire expansive list of mediator attributes, I focus on the strength of the mediator, which is required in all cases of mediation. The strength of the mediator determines the techniques it could use to forge a settlement. States strategically select mediators based on the strength they could exert. Thus, my hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): States that are not committed or have very low levels of commitment to negotiations will not have a mediator. The more committed the incumbents are to negotiations, the stronger the mediator they will seek. The level of commitment is a function of the balance of power between the incumbents and insurgents, domestic support, and international pressure. Domestic support is the most important factor out of the three.

3.1.1 Alternative ways of operationalizing level of commitment

Reports and analysis of peace talks often refer to the seniority of the negotiating team to determine the sincerity of the combatants. A more senior official would be more representative of the government, command more influence, and generate more attention domestically and internationally. The literature on domestic audience costs argues this greater visibility gives the government a greater stake in the negotiations because its reputation is on the line. The government would negotiate carefully to avoid making statements it has to retract at a later time. It wants to avoid being sanctioned by the domestic audiences for backing down and poor

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leadership. However, the seniority of the negotiator might not always be an accurate indicator of the government’s sincerity as the government could seek to mislead the adversary and placate the international community.

Another commonly used indicator of commitment is the adherence to ceasefire agreements. Observers are ecstatic when a ceasefire is successfully brokered in a bitter fight for it suggests that the combatants might be willing to settle the dispute peacefully. Indeed, ceasefires do occur when combatants are unable to sustain the intensity of fighting and need to take a pause. However, combatants could use that pause to reorganize for subsequent military action. Moreover, they could enter into ceasefires to demonstrate they are in control of their forces. This signals that they are a highly disciplined organization with a clear leadership structure. In doing so, they strengthen their bargaining power since it would appear they are difficult to deal with militarily. Combatants could also agree to ceasefires simply to keep the violence at a politically acceptable level. These possible motivations for ceasefires highlight the fact that a ceasefire does not necessarily demonstrate commitment to peace. Neither is the breakdown of a ceasefire the lack of commitment. It could simply be an accident in which there were no peacekeepers to separate the forces, which kept running into each other.

Given that commitment is an amorphous concept, I examine the sources of commitment to determine the government’s sincerity instead of trying to find out what commitment would look like. These sources are domestic support and international pressure for peaceful resolution. They are influenced by the balance of power between the incumbents and insurgents.

This thesis builds on Beardsley’s concept of insincere motives in mediation. According to Beardsley, disputants could deliberately choose weak mediators in order to use mediation as a stalling tactic. They are motivated by three reasons to stall. First, the disputants want to stop the high short-term costs of conflict in expectation for the long-term benefits. Second, the disputants sense that their domestic audiences are losing the appetite for violence. They want to wait until the domestic audiences support the use of force once again. Third, the disputants expect the adversary’s negotiating position to decline further. These are indeed

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possible reasons for insincerity in mediation. To measure the costs of conflict, Beardsley looks at
the number of hostilities as an indication of conflict severity. For domestic audiences, he looks at
the number of instances in which domestic audiences pressure the government. Finally, he uses
the annual percentage change in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to measure the change in
negotiating position.

The three indicators Beardsley used are useful quantitative measures. However, they are too
narrow to capture the sources of insincere motivations. I seek to refine Beardsley’s indicators in
three ways. First, Beardsley did not specify who these domestic audiences are although he
appears to suggest they are the electorate. The group of domestic audiences comprises various
segments of the state and I disaggregate the group to identify which segment is the most
influential.

Second, incumbents do not respond only to domestic pressure and the level of hostilities is
not the only costs of conflict. I introduce the effects of international pressure, which can have a
bearing on the incumbents’ level of commitment. In pursuing violence, incumbents could also
bear reputational cost at the international level and face sanctions from third parties.

Third, the use of GDP might not be an accurate indicator of the state’s sincerity. Beardsley
argues that the state would be inclined to settle if its GDP is declining and unable to sustain the
fight. The insurgents recognize the state’s anxiety and would stall to weaken the state’s
bargaining position. However, a low level of GDP does not necessarily translate to ineffective
counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Skillful incumbents can work around financial constraints
and conduct successful COIN. For instance, they need to maintain a large standing army to
conduct sweeps. Instead, they could deploy minimal troops to coordinate and monitor the
population who would perform the sweeps. Hence, I use the state’s perception of the balance of
power, which subsumes both combatants’ bargaining position and the cost of fighting both in the
short and long terms. The balance would reflect the state’s belief if the conflict would be
winnable or not.

3.1.2 Level of commitment as the independent variable

The state’s level of commitment is a function of its perceived strength relative to the
insurgents, domestic support for peaceful resolution, and international pressure as illustrated in
Figure 4.
State’s perceived strength relative to the insurgents

The state’s perceived strength relative to the insurgents is a structural determinant of its decision to fight or negotiate. While the actual balance of power is relatively clear in an interstate war, the balance is not so clear in an insurgency especially when the insurgents hide among the population. Given that the military is responsible for fighting and providing the technical assessment of the situation, the relative strength is based on its perception.

This determinant refers to both the current and expected military balance between the government forces and insurgents. As the matrix in Figure 5 shows, there are four possible actions based on the perceived strength. If the state perceives its greater strength to remain in the future, it will choose to fight. It believes the weaker insurgents could be easily defeated and there is no reason to negotiate. The state would fight even harder if it thinks its strength would deteriorate in the future. It seeks to overwhelm the insurgents before its window of greater strength closes. Any mediation will be seen as “a stumbling block toward the achievement of

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The mediator might push for a “fair” solution, which the state believes to be disproportionate to its greater strength. Conversely, if the state sees itself as being consistently equal in power or weaker than the insurgents, it would choose to negotiate with the latter. However, if the equality or weakness were expected to be temporary, the state would engage in negotiations to stall for a later fight. Thus, the balance of power provides the context in which bargaining occurs.

**Figure 5: Possible actions based on the state’s perceived strength**

![Table showing possible actions based on the state's perceived strength]

**Domestic support for peaceful resolution**

However, the perceived balance alone does not determine the state’s behavior, which is also influenced by domestic and international actors. Domestic support is the most important determinant among the three given that the structure only constrains but cannot decide the state’s behavior. Furthermore, international actors can exert pressure but state leaders can shop for friendly foreign patrons. International pressure only works when the domestic leaders are receptive. However, leaders cannot look for new troops or citizens in the same manner as foreign supporters. Regardless of the regime type, leaders depend on the cooperation of their citizens to stay in power.

On the domestic front, domestic support is not the product of a unitary entity. Rather, there are four domestic constituents: the military, political leaders, population, and policy entrepreneurs. As noted above, I do not consider regime type to be a decisive variable that inclines or disinclines a state towards peaceful conflict resolution. Some scholars argue that the peaceful resolution of conflict is a democratic norm. Drawing on the Democratic Peace Theory, two democratic states would use peaceful means such as international arbitration to resolve their

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77 Kleiboer, “Understanding success and failure of international mediation”, p. 368.
disputes and not resort to war. As the number of democracies increases, the reach of the norm expands such that even non-democracies are pressured to resolve conflict peacefully because it is what “good” states do.\textsuperscript{79} Indeed, some international organizations make this norm a condition for becoming members. However, democratically elected leaders have been known to harshly repress minorities while authoritarian regimes have talked peace with rebels. Thus, regime type is a useful but not deterministic information. It is helpful in understanding the context in which the four domestic constituents interact with one another.

The central question in studies of civil-military relations asks “why do people with guns obey people without guns?”\textsuperscript{80} It looks at the triangle relationship among the military, political leaders, and population. The latter becomes even pertinent in studies of insurgency as they are the source of support for disputants. I draw on the civil-military relations literature and specifically highlight policy entrepreneurs as agents of change.

Among the four constituents, the military is the most influential in determining the state’s decision to fight or negotiate. Without the military in the first place, the state would be in Quadrant 3 of the matrix. It has no choice but to negotiate. The fact that the military gives the state a fighting chance is a reminder that the institution was created to protect the nation’s independence and preserve its territorial sovereignty. Thus, the military will put up the strongest resistance to demands such as secession and will willingly sacrifice blood and treasure to safeguard the integrity of the state. Once the bloodshed begins, the military is likely to dig in and keep fighting so the deaths would not be in vain and the cause is not lost.

It is certainly possible for the civilian leaders to order the military to stand down. However, the military’s control over intelligence gives it influence over the political masters. Huntington advocated a separation between the political and military sphere. Political leaders define the state’s goals and provide the resources needed by the military. They should allow the military to develop autonomously and formulate military strategies necessary to achieve those goals. However, this separation appears problematic from both the policy formulation and implementation perspective. Political leaders with no training in warfare depend on the advice of military leaders who are experts in the art and science of military operations to assess the degree of success and risk for any policy options. Military inputs are also necessary to prevent political

\textsuperscript{80} Barany, The soldier and the changing state, p. 39.
leaders from sacrificing military concerns for political gains. Moreover, the military is the best source of battlefield conditions. It can withhold critical pieces of intelligence and release them at specific times to nudge the political leaders towards its preferred option. When the policy is being implemented, the nature of insurgencies affords the military political roles. The military often has to perform the duties of the civilian administrator because the combat zone is too dangerous for civilians. It also plays the role of the diplomat as it is the face on the ground. While the political leaders are limited to policy formulation, the military is involved in both policy formulation and implementation.

Thus, Schiff calls for a targeted partnership between policy makers and military leaders in areas such as counterinsurgency. While still maintaining that political leaders have the final word in all matters of the state, Schiff suggests the military be involved in policy making on a specific issue for a limited duration. This ensures the military can contribute its expertise and both the political and military spheres can have a robust discussion. Consequently, the state can produce an effective and specific military strategy.81

Apart from its technical expertise, the military is also important to the political leaders in terms of regime stability. Authoritarian leaders depend on the military to enforce their will and provide the iron fist to crush any dissent. Democratic leaders govern by the mandate of the people and are wary of any military involvement in politics. The military hierarchical structure and tradition of absolute compliance does not fit completely with the grain of democracy. Thus, all political leaders seek to rein in the tremendous might of the military using a variety of ways. They could control the military's budget to keep a check on its activities, appoint trusted aides to positions of command, seek independent defense expertise, and strengthen the norm of an apolitical and professional military. Scholars such as Desch argue that civilian control of the military is the weakest when there are high internal and low external threats. Political factions could be fighting among each other, neglect state affairs, and jostle to secure the military’s support. They do not have the ability to apply those controls noted above. Given the low external threat and its role as the state’s guardian, the military can and will intervene domestically. It could support a faction it favors or simply become a junta.82

The population is the basis from which the political and military leaders draw their support. However, it is not the most decisive domestic actor. The population has limited access to information about the insurgency compared to the military. Furthermore, the military can still continue to fight even though its actions might not be perceived as legitimate without public support. Nevertheless, public support is still preferable even though it could be dispensable. For the military, public support has both material and psychological effects. The public could alleviate the military’s war fighting burdens by channeling resources and production to support the military. A whole of society approach would make war generation sustainable. Similarly, the military’s morale would be greatly raised if it believes the fight to be just and the cause to be the national will. This is especially so as the military see itself as the protector of the people.

For the political leaders, regime type matters here in terms of how the population expresses its support for their policies. Democratically elected leaders depend on being representative of the people’s wishes to get reelected. Depending on the mood of the electorate, leaders could suffer reputational costs for backing down from a fight or they could be seen as strong leaders who manage to achieve a breakthrough in peace talks and forge durable peace. The advancement of social media enables people to express their displeasure directly to the political leaders. As noted above, these leaders might sacrifice military goals in exchange for short-term political gains from the population who might not be in the best position to assess the insurgency. Moreover, it is certainly possible for political leaders to seek peace with the insurgents in order to get their votes when they do not have sufficient support from non-insurgents. While the population might not have this degree of rights and freedom in non-democratic regimes, it can still “vote” with the feet by staging revolutions. Consequently, the military remains the ultimate guarantor of regime stability given its ability to put down rebellions.

Finally, policy entrepreneurs are agents of change. They could be a politician, civil activist, bureaucrat, or an officer. These agents are mentioned separately because they are considered mavericks within the establishment. For instance, they could be political elites who suggest a policy change while the rest of the political establishment persists with the current course of action. Policy entrepreneurs work by framing the facts to focus the attention and support of politicians, military leaders, and the population on their proposed policies. Their success depends

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on their position within the country and is ultimately checked by the military, which can stifle any dissent.

**International pressure for peaceful resolution**

International pressure could similarly be disaggregated into seven sources based on state and non-state based actors. These actors are major powers, neighboring states, donor states, international organizations, private citizens, and transnational non-governmental organizations. Transnational advocacy networks straddle both categories as they draw membership from states and non-state actors. These seven groups of actors were discussed in Section 2.3. They were also noted to be overlapping. For instance, a neighboring state could be a major power that provides financial aid to the incumbents. The neighbor could also be a member of international organizations and transnational advocacy networks that pressure the incumbents.

Major powers are the most decisive source of pressure among the seven actors. First, state actors have more resources than private citizens and transnational non-governmental organizations. In particular, state actors possess the ultimate source of pressure. They have standing armies that could be deployed to intervene in an intrastate conflict. Within the group of state actors, major powers can do what donor states do but not the other way round. Major powers can provide financial and material aid to the incumbents to gain influence. However, donor states could be smaller powers compared to major ones. Next, major powers are considered to be a greater source of pressure than neighboring states even though the latter poses a grave danger simply by being at the doorstep. Neighboring states could possibly deploy troops to intervene faster than major powers. Moreover, the incumbents interact with the neighboring states under a permanent shadow of the future. However, major powers could exert pressure on these neighbors to influence the latter’s degree of pressure on the incumbents. Finally, the comparison between major powers and international organizations is essentially a question whether international organizations matter in international relations. Realists believe that institutions matter only because states use them as agents to further their agenda. However, institutionalists argue that institutions develop a life of their own after creation and could have agendas independent of their constituent states. While I agree that institutions can set their own agendas, their plans are not likely to work without the support of their members. Furthermore,

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while international organizations are paralyzed by the search for consensus, major powers are able to act faster. Thus, major powers are the most influential because of their resources and the ability to utilize those resources quickly.

**Interaction of the three components of the level of commitment**

How do the three components interact to influence the state’s level of commitment? There are three basic causal pathways in which the components interact as Figure 6 shows. As noted earlier, the state’s perceived strength relative to the insurgents is a structural condition that constrains the options available to the state. It is a necessary but not sufficient determinant of the state’s level of commitment. Domestic and international actors are agents that can work around the structural condition. Thus, the first direction of influence is by the domestic actors on the balance of power. Domestic constituents can tip the balance in the state’s favor by deploying more troops to COIN operations. Political leaders can mobilize the entire population to support the war effort by producing military resources and gathering information. They could even organize segments of the population into paramilitary forces to augment the number of troops. Similarly, the international actors could tip the balance of power to favor the state. They could supply military assistance such as training, intelligence, weapons, and even troops. Moreover, they could also prop up the state’s economy to ensure the latter’s war machinery continues operating. Finally, the international actors could voice support to the state’s COIN operations. This helps to make the state’s use of force remain politically acceptable and the window of action stay open as long as possible.

**Figure 6: Pathways in which the three components interact**
International actors intervene out of their own accord mainly because they are affected by the spillover costs of conflict. Neighbors are affected by the exodus of refugees while allies are worried about the regime’s stability. Human rights organizations intervene because it is their raison d’état. But there are also other international actors that intervene only when the disputants appeal for them to do so. It is relatively easy for incumbents to seek foreign assistance through their established diplomatic channels but difficult for the insurgents. International reaction is usually triggered only after serious fighting and heavy casualties are reported. Thus, insurgents seek to publicize these events and portray themselves as victims to the incumbents’ brutality. They adopt a boomerang strategy as illustrated in Figure 7. Insurgents connect with sympathetic third parties to form a transnational advocacy network. Using the network, insurgents transmit messages and videos about their grievances and fighting and release them over social media for international consumption. When the Internet is shut down, insurgents rely on diasporas to internationalize their cause. The diasporas organize protests overseas and attend interviews to justify their position on global media. Consequently, domestic audiences in other states pressure their leaders to intervene. These international actors could tip the balance of power in the favor of the insurgents. Alternatively, they could pressure the incumbents to lower the degree of violence or even make concessions towards peace.

Figure 7: The boomerang strategy

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3.1.3 Mediator strength as the dependent variable

Beardsley describes weak mediators as those with no or little leverage and cannot perform many of the functions that stronger mediators are able to. Given their limited carrots and sticks, such mediators would not be able to provide attractive aid or credibly threaten sanctions. They might not have better information than the disputants about the latter's strength and resolve. Thus, weak mediators are only good at facilitating the talks.\(^{86}\)

Figure 3 is the beginning of my attempt to formalize and expand Beardsley’s description of weak mediators. I consider the entire spectrum of mediator strength from no to strong mediators and the corresponding degree of functions different mediators can perform. Furthermore, I also look closer at what makes a mediator weak or strong. In terms of function, I am in agreement that all mediators are adequate in reframing the issue and initiating negotiations. However, only strong mediators can proficiently facilitate the exchange of information, expand the set of acceptable outcomes, and assist with the implementation of the agreement. As the strength of the mediator decreases, the degree to which it can perform these three roles lowers correspondingly.

What explains the difference between weak and strong mediators as illustrated in Figure 3? The distinction between weak and strong mediators is essentially a matter of resources. Since reframing the issue is a matter of intellectual dexterity and does not depend on resources, weak mediators can be as competent as strong mediators. Thus, the dependent variable is measured in terms of the resources available to the mediator. These resources could belong to the mediator or deployed by other third parties in support of the mediation efforts. The mediator uses these resources to exercise leverage against the parties in the conflict as well as the international environment to arrive and abide by an agreement. Thus, a stronger mediator is able to push disputants towards a deal by providing more information and expanding the set of mutually acceptable outcomes. In addition, the stronger mediator has the ability to sustain the peace after the settlement by ensuring disputants uphold their promises and resolving any disputes that might arise. In contrast, a weak mediator might not be able to broker a deal because its limited resources means it could only provide some information and not be able to locate a mutually preferable agreement. Even if a deal is reached, a weak mediator might not have the necessary resources to enforce the deal and make commitments credible.\(^{87}\)

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\(^{87}\) Walter, “The critical barrier to civil war settlement”, pp. 335-64.
I define resources as the tools to exercise leverage with. They are military power, economic resources, reputation, and information. These four basic resources are generally in demand by the disputants and the international environment. For instance, a strong mediator has a good reputation that could be used to lend legitimacy. This good reputation also gives the mediator a stake in successfully resolving the conflict.

Leverage describes the way in which the resources are used and they could be generalized as either positive or negative. Given that the resources are desired by the disputants, leverage is essentially the manipulation of the disputants’ needs to soften up their reluctance and make them inclined to peace. Positive leverage, or “carrots”, includes raising the profile of the conflict, distributing humanitarian aid, providing financial loans, supplying information, and deploying peacekeepers to enforce a ceasefire. On the other hand, negative leverage uses the same ingredients as positive leverage but is intended to cause pain. Mediators can exert negative leverage to create or maintain a hurting stalemate to pressure the disputants into negotiations. These “sticks” include suspending military cooperation in other areas, denouncing the disputants, imposing sanctions, and withholding information on other areas. As noted earlier, the mediator and disputants exist in a triangle relationship. Leverage applied on one disputant could be intended to have an effect on the other disputant. This is especially the case for positive leverage in which the mediator threatens to support one party to force the other disputant into acquiescence.

Disputants are not the only targets of mediator leverage. Mediators can impose or remove costs and benefits on other actors in the international environment. As noted earlier, a conducive external environment favors successful mediation. Mediators do their best to put together a coalition of willing and supportive third parties. For those that are not part of the coalition, mediators can exert negative leverage on third parties that undermine the peace process. Furthermore, the costs and benefits could be applied directly to the conflict or on other issue areas the disputants care about. Therefore, a strong mediator has more resources to apply greater leverage to turn the disputants’ political dial compared to a weaker mediator.

Mediators need to maintain a delicate balance between the use of positive and negative leverages. Positive leverage rewards good behavior and its use is encouraged from the humanitarian perspective. However, the use of leverages could actually decrease the chances of a complete settlement of the conflict. Disputants could sabotage the peace process periodically and
then revive it to gain incentives from the mediator. On the other hand, negative leverages such as sanctions can cause pain but also suspend the ties with the disputants. Other third parties could take advantage in the lapse of influence to become closer to the disputants. Moreover, the liberal use of sticks could sour relations. Consequently, disputants could decide to forego even the carrots to be gained and withdraw from mediation, which is a voluntary process. The possibility of withdrawal also reinforces the importance of a supportive external environment. Disputants agree to mediation fundamentally because there is no other way out of the hurting stalemate.

The application of leverages should also be proportional to the behavior and consistent. Grieg and Diehl cautioned that the use of leverages, in particular security guarantees, create an environment that pushes disputants towards peace without the latter necessarily believing in peace sincerely. Once the mediator leaves and the artificial environment crumbles, disputants could be dissatisfied again and resume fighting. Thus, mediators must apply leverages consistently and not withdraw prematurely at the first semblance of peace.

3.2 How does the deductive framework operate?

This thesis proposes a framework that systematically explains why states decide to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate. The framework is derived from the interplay of domestic support and international pressure for peace resolution operating in the context of the state’s perceived balance of power. It must necessarily be grounded on the assumption of rationality to filter through the otherwise numerous permutations that could be derived from the three constituents of the state’s level of commitment. Consequently, there are five most likely scenarios a state could find itself in and they are outlined in Table 1.

The framework assumes the group of domestic actors is net rational on the insurgency. This implies they are able to evaluate the benefits and costs of their actions and modify their behavior accordingly to ensure they receive more benefits than the costs incurred. Rationality is assumed from the perspective of the domestic actors since what is rational to one might be irrational to the other. Due to the fog of war, rational actors could inevitably discover they had held false beliefs and made wrong calculations on hindsight. Furthermore, the assumption considers net rationality of the group as not all four constituents could be rational. In particular, the population could be

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88 Zartman and Touval, "International mediation: Conflict resolution and power politics", pp. 27-45.
whipped up by a nationalistic fervor and are not in a position to have sufficient information to make an informed decision. Since they do not have the responsibility of command, they could disregard the mounting costs in the fanatic pursuit for meager benefits. On the other hand, the military leaders are assumed to be the most rational since they are the most knowledgeable about the parity of capabilities compared to the insurgents and the battlefield conditions. As professionals of arms, they start a war with clear objectives and strategies to exert maximum pressure while putting their troops in minimal risk. Their traditional role of external defense makes them cognizant of the fact that they cannot afford to neglect the threat of foreign aggression as they put down domestic conflicts. Policy entrepreneurs and political leaders fall in between the population and military on the spectrum of rationality. These two actors have a greater degree of information but might not have the technical expertise to make a good judgment of the situation. Furthermore, political leaders could act irrationally on the insurgency to pursue other rational benefits. For instance, even though it is strategically unwise to continue fighting, political leaders could choose to fight to satisfy the nationalists in exchange for the immediate benefits of reelection. Given that the military is the most decisive actor among the domestic constituents, domestic support is net rational.

Table 1: Scenarios in the deductive framework (GOV: Government; INS: Insurgents; GOV>>>INS indicates the balance of power is overwhelmingly on the government’s side with the number of arrows indicating the degree of asymmetry)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>1 (T=0)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State’s perceived balance of power between GOV and INS</td>
<td>GOV &gt;&gt;&gt; INS</td>
<td>GOV &gt;&gt; INS</td>
<td>GOV &gt;&gt; INS</td>
<td>GOV &gt; INS</td>
<td>GOV &gt; INS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic support for peaceful resolution</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>Zero to low</td>
<td>Zero to low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International pressure for peaceful resolution</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome (DV)</td>
<td>Military action</td>
<td>No mediator</td>
<td>Weak mediator</td>
<td>Strong mediator</td>
<td>Stronger mediator than 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1 Scenario 1: Fighting as the initial response

Why do states fight a costly battle with insurgents instead of negotiate and avoid war? Fighting directly results in the loss of lives and destruction of property. Internal conflicts could send reverberating shock waves that paralyze the economy and undermine the social fabric of the nation. Conversely, negotiations save lives and preserve property. It creates an atmosphere of amicableness that ensures the country can continue to function without being disrupted by
internal strife. Scenario 1 addresses why states forego the seemingly attractive option of negotiations.

In all scenarios, the structure acts as a constraint on the options available to the state. Scenario 1 is the outset of the insurgency when the state perceives it has overwhelming power to crush the insurgents. The asymmetric nature of the conflict favors the state, which as an established institution has a standing army and economic mechanisms to fund the military effort. Its recognized identity in the international system allows it to request for foreign military assistance to deal with the conflict. Thus, the power balance affords the state both options of fighting and negotiating.

Domestic constituents favor the use of force as the first response for four reasons: reputation, private information, credibility of commitments, and pure intractable conflicts. First, insurgency is the “expression of a crisis of legitimacy and authority”. Insurgents openly challenge the state’s monopoly on violence within its borders. They launch attacks to demonstrate their prowess and sow fear within the population. In doing so, they seek to undermine the people’s confidence and separate the population from the incumbents. Thus, the state has to respond in kind to exert its dominance, reclaim its monopoly, and salvage its reputation. Reputation becomes particularly important when the insurgents demand secession from the state. As noted above, states will go to war with other states to protect its territorial integrity. The same goes for domestic demands for secession, which is a non-negotiable issue especially for the military and political leaders. These leaders are wary of setting a precedent for others to forcibly extract independence or lesser concessions if they simply negotiate with the insurgents. The empirical evidence demonstrates that secessionist disputes are the most likely to breakout in fights and least likely to reach a settlement. Even when the rare settlement does occur, concessions were granted only after a lengthy battle.

Second, rational states fight and bear material costs because they cannot locate a mutually preferable settlement. This bargaining failure happens especially when negotiations for self-determination are a non-starter. Generally, actors fail to bargain because of private information.

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on relative capabilities and resolve. The problem of private information is particular severe in insurgencies given that insurgents seek cover within the population and have the incentive to misrepresent their strength. They may also make threats and bluffs to bolster their reputation among the population. This makes it difficult for the state to ascertain the true numbers and resolve of the insurgents. Given the uncertainty in numbers and the tendency of insurgent groups to splinter, the state does not know who to negotiate with and finds it more straightforward to simply kill all the insurgents. In addition, the state is fearful that a precedent of negotiations would trigger a contagion of insurgencies as dissatisfied insurgent elements splinter and make new demands.

Third, the state has every reason to fight if it thinks the insurgents would not credibly commit to the negotiated settlement. This is one half of the vicious cycle in which the insurgents do not trust the state and so continues the armed struggle for fear of being cheated. In particular, sons of the soil wars are protracted because of the credible commitment problem. Such ethnic-based wars take place between a minority group located on the periphery and migrants from other parts of the state where they form the majority. The minority group sees itself as sons of the soil who are disadvantaged by the transmigration. Moreover, the majority cannot credibly commit to not exploiting the minorities either due to its history of exploitation or absence of credible guarantees of minority rights. Consequently, these grievances lead to the onset of insurgency and the earlier commitment deficit carries forward. Each party expects the other to renege on any peace agreement. Thus, killing insurgents and deterring aspiring insurgents appear to be the easiest way, especially when a lot is at stake such as a valuable piece of land.

Finally, the state could perceive the conflict as intractable and fighting is the only option. Both disputants are very different in terms of culture and political orientations. The only common ground between the two is a shared history of deeply rooted enmity. Both disputants fundamentally cannot co-exist and see no solutions to alleviate the hostility. Thus, the state has to fight to deter if not eliminate the insurgents.

Internationally, there is little pressure for peaceful resolution beyond the calls for restraint. The international community could be lacking in interest because there is a lack of media reports.

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on the conflict. Non-governmental organizations such as human rights groups could publish reports and urge governments to take action. However, whatever reports there might be could be overshadowed by other more pressing crises of the day. Governments are also sympathetic as they similarly value their territorial integrity. They cite the principle of non-intervention and reiterate calls for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Consequently, the incumbents have no intention of negotiations at this stage. They see insurgencies as a hammer and nail situation in which the best response is to inflict overwhelming pain on the insurgents. If the state chooses to negotiate later, it wants to do so from a position of strength. Fighting hard enables the state to weaken the bargaining power of the insurgents, probe their capabilities and resolve, and deter future challenges to its authority. Any settlement is intended to be long lasting given that the insurgents have paid a significant price and their fighting capabilities have been seriously degraded. Alternatively, if the state does not perceive negotiations to be possible in a protracted conflict, it could adopt a strategy of “mowing the grass”. Fighting is the only tool in the bag and its use is varied to make it sustainable both in terms of resources and international opinion. Insurgent attacks are a daily fact of life so the state conducts regular low-intensity attacks with the occasional high-intensity ones. The low-intensity attacks acts as a reminder of deterrence and signals restraint to the international community. On the other hand, the high-intensity attacks serve to severely degrade the insurgents’ capabilities and reduce the frequency between insurgent attacks.  

3.2.2 Scenario 2: Negotiations without mediators

If negotiation is off the table in the beginning, why do states negotiate down the road? Negotiations began when the fighting has gone on for some time and reached an impasse. While the military has significantly degraded the insurgents’ fighting capability, it is still incapable of fully defeating the insurgents. Moreover, the military has also incurred serious losses. This impasse is believed to be temporary as the military expects to regain in strength and win in the long run.

There is zero to low domestic support for peaceful resolution. The rational military knows it is unable to sustain the current tempo of operations and seek to pause the fight. Domestic constituents welcome a lull in the fighting in so far as it provides space to reorganize the military

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for a later crackdown. The military can take care of its casualties, recruit more soldiers, and replenish battle resources. The lull also affords the professional solider the time to study the insurgents’ tactics and devise countermeasures. Furthermore, the long duration of fighting allowed the state to “screen” the insurgents to identify the insurgent dynamics and their leaders. If there are multiple insurgent groups, the state can prioritize which surviving groups to target next.97

The four reasons that favor the use of force in Scenario 1 remain valid in this scenario. In addition, the military’s insistence on a battlefield victory is explained by the effect of sunk cost. Withdrawing from a fight could be seen as a betrayal of the fallen comrades. Political leaders are similarly wary of backing down as it would be seen as an admission of poor leadership. They have caused the population to suffer for an endeavor that was unwinnable to begin with. Consequently, the political and military leaders couch negotiations as a tactical retreat. Future violence is on the table since they have already paid a hefty price of violence. On the part of the population, the people may be willing to endure the short-term discomforts of war if they expect a tangible victory that will make the sacrifices worthwhile.

International actors are also rational. They weigh each disputant’s chances and consequences of winning before deciding whom to support. There are some criticism such as protests and voicing of concerns but still low pressure as states prioritize good relations with the incumbents. These condemnations bear little pressure as the state could perceive them to be cheap talk necessitated by humanitarian norms.98 There might also be little international attention as the state lies in the periphery of the international system. Moreover, there could be a ban on foreign media and the insurgents are unable to capture the world’s attention given the huge number of other groups competing for media coverage.99

Thus, the state’s level of commitment to peaceful resolution is low if not zero. The state will negotiate but without a mediator for two reasons. First, the state wants to avoid conferring recognition on and bolstering support to the insurgents.100 As noted earlier, insurgency is a crisis

of legitimacy for the state. When the insurgent leaders enter into mediation, they are seen as legitimate representatives of the population they are fighting for. This displaces the state from its rightful role as representative of the entire population. Furthermore, mediators commonly publicize the negotiation process to pressure the disputants and get more third parties to support the mediation. If talks fall through, interested third parties could become a source of military and financial support to the insurgents. Consequently, the state does not want the playing field to be leveled and have the insurgents enjoy parity at the negotiating table.

Second, the negotiation is merely a tactical expedient for future military action. Negotiations might not even touch on the possibility of a settlement but could be limited to the discussion of how humanitarian aid programs for non-combatants could be administered. Thus, the state wants to be able to easily dissolve peace talks and resume fighting without much repercussion. The presence of even the weakest mediator makes a quick exit difficult. Mediators have the incentive to deliver a successful settlement and will do everything in their power to keep the disputants at the bargaining table. As a participant of the talks, the mediator would gain inside information on the dynamics between the disputants and be able to point out which part is responsible for the failed peace talks. While the weakest mediator might not have the capacity to punish the responsible disputant, other third parties could act on its behalf. Even if the state does manage to get out of a mediated peace talk, it cannot resume fighting immediately to avoid upsetting the prior triangle relationship and pushing the mediator to side with the insurgents.\textsuperscript{101} Therefore, the state that expects an eventual military victory will negotiate but without mediators.

### 3.2.3 Scenario 3: Negotiations with weak mediators

If the state negotiates without mediators in Scenario 2, what makes them move to negotiations with mediators? The state’s perceived balance of power is similar to that in Scenario 2. There is still low domestic support for a peaceful resolution because the military and political leaders are insistent on a military victory. Sunk costs force the elites to dig in and wait until the military regains enough strength.\textsuperscript{102}

However, there is higher international pressure for peace than in Scenario 2. Neighboring states could have tolerated enough of the spillover costs and taken a personal interest in the conflict. Apart from the mounting death tolls, there could be momentous events such as natural

\textsuperscript{101} Beardsley, \textit{The mediation dilemma}, pp. 21, 79-80.
disasters, self-immolation of insurgent diasporas on foreign soil, or terrorist attacks by diasporas on third parties that support the incumbents. Investigative journalists persistently report on these events as well as the fallout from the insurgency and focus the international community's attention on the conflict. Human rights groups also actively lobby for third parties to take action and rein in the violence. Consequently, the international community expresses its displeasure through actions beyond voicing of concerns. They might impose sanctions, suspend military cooperation, and threaten to withdraw support to the incumbents. In addition, these third parties urge the disputants to accept mediation.

Consequently, the state has a higher level of commitment to a peaceful resolution than in Scenario 2 and chooses to negotiate with a weak mediator. The state is reluctant to negotiate and still holds out hope for a military victory. But at the moment, it cannot afford to further antagonize the third parties and tip them towards the insurgents. It allows for a mediator to demonstrate its commitment to resolve the issue. The third party could report the incumbents' sincerity at the negotiating table and alleviate some international pressure. Moreover, a mediator could be helpful in keeping an insurgent group in check while the state fights with other more pressing groups. The state could devote resources from a ceasefire to more pressing insurgencies and then break the negotiated ceasefire. To pull this off, the state requires a weak mediator.

The incumbents choose a weak mediator to deliberately limit the effects of mediation for three reasons. First, the state still wants to fight. Weak mediators are good at reframing the issue and passing information. However, they are poor at collecting intelligence and enforcing settlements. Given that they are unable to firmly hold a ceasefire in place, the incumbents could provoke a fight that would lead to the breakdown of the ceasefire. Subsequently, the state could claim it made a sincere effort towards peace but the adversary reneged on the ceasefire so it has no choice but to fight again. Second, if the state does follow through with the mediation, it still retains a high degree of latitude in dealing with an undesirable agreement. The mediator would be too weak to punish it for walking away from the negotiations. Third, a weak mediator enables the state to hold out for a better deal. A weak mediator allows the state to move the negotiations along slowly. If military action becomes untenable internationally, then the next best move is to get the best bargaining deal. States have a greater capacity to endure a war of attrition than insurgents. It will stall to hold out for more concessions from the insurgents when the latter's
bargaining position is weakening. Thus, the state chooses a weak mediator to assuage the international community while bearing less than sincere intentions.

3.2.4 Scenarios 4 and 5: Negotiations with strong mediators

While a stalemate describes the conflict in Scenarios 2 and 3, a hurting stalemate exists in Scenario 4 and 5. As noted earlier, a stalemate is a situation of balance in which neither disputant has the military power and financial capacity to defeat the other without incurring unacceptable costs. The disputants might be trapped in a situation they believe they could extricate themselves out of in the future. Hence, they negotiate in the hopes of regaining strength for a later victory. Instead of a balance between winning and losing, the stalemate becomes hurting when disputants continue to hemorrhage in resources and support. Negotiations become the only viable and rational option. The conflict is considered ripe for mediation as the extensive fighting has softened up the disputants.

Domestic constituents support a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The military leaders recognize that fighting is impossible without troops and resources. Earlier doubts caused by private information have also been dispelled by the protracted nature of the conflict. Repeated fighting has enabled disputants to discover the adversary's true strength and resolve. Both sides are willing to talk because they believe violence cannot produce their desired goals at a tolerable cost and their position will weaken in the future. They calculate that the benefits of mediation outweigh the cost in terms of sovereignty and legitimation of the adversary. In addition, the domestic constituents believe the deterrence effect has been established to some extent. The state only negotiated after a long period of fighting and the insurgents paid a heavy price. However, both disputants remain concerned about the credibility of commitments given that leaders change and the geopolitical environment shifts. If they were to make concessions, they want guarantees that the peace would be for the long-term.

While there is high domestic support for peaceful resolution, international pressure could be either low (Scenario 4) or high (Scenario 5) as in Scenarios 2 and 3 respectively. The state's level of commitment in Scenarios 4 and 5 are higher than in Situation 3 since the domestic constituents have overwhelming desire for peace. Theoretically, the level of commitment in Scenario 5 is higher than Scenario 4 given the added pressure from the international dimension.

104 Melin and Svensson, "Incentives for talking: Accepting mediation in international and civil wars", p. 254.
Consequently, the state seeks the help of a strong mediator to quickly stop the hurting stalemate and resolve the conflict. Given the protracted duration of hostilities, disputants have accumulated years of enmity. It is best to have a mediator filter away the heated emotions in messages between disputants. This not only prevents misinformation but also ensure the stalemate does not transfer to the bargaining table. Furthermore, the mediator can provide a second opinion on the events and reframe the issue to put traction into the peace talks.

A strong mediator is particularly important to expand the set of mutually acceptable outcome. If a solution were easy to come by, the disputants would not have fought till a hurting stalemate. The strong mediator can provide new options that afford some concessions without entirely giving in to the adversary. This helps the disputants to save face. Choosing a stronger mediator is also useful as they can bring more incentives such as humanitarian aid. In addition, strong mediators help guarantee peace after the negotiations by monitoring and assisting in the implementation of the settlement. The mediator could also deploy peacekeepers to protect the disputants from hurting each other.

3.3 Ties explanation

The ties argument posits an agency-based explanation in which the state selects actors it has ties with. Third-party intervention is a risky business even in mediation, which is supposed to be a non-violent technique. External parties could have an interest in prolonging the insurgency to achieve goals such as greater influence over the leaders, continued access to resources, and the weakening of the rival state. Even if the third party has no malicious intentions, introducing a third party fundamentally alters the dynamics of the negotiation. Given that conflict mediation takes place in a system of competing interests, values, and beliefs, disputants want someone who would look out for them. Therefore, trust is emphasized as a necessary precondition for mediators to be accepted and mediation to be fruitful.

Trust comes from ties, which could be derived from interactions that occurred before or during the conflict. For preexisting interactions, states seek out mediators who are former colonial administrators, share the same ideology, embrace a similar culture, are geographically proximate, and have symbiotic relationships. If decolonization happened amicably and both colonizer and colony maintain good bilateral relations, former colonial administrators are an

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106 Jackson, Meeting of minds, p. 129.
appealing choice since much of the current power structure was established under colonial rule. The administrators would understand the state’s history, culture, and context of the power struggle. Their knowledge and good relations put them in a favorable condition to forge an agreement, especially if the incumbents are dependent on their aid. However, disputants could be reluctant to have a former colonial administrator mediate to avoid losing nationalist support. The presence of the administrator could signal an unpleasant return to colonialism and suggests the incumbents were not ready for the responsibilities of independence.

States are also more likely to approach mediators that share the same ideology and embrace a similar culture. The definition of culture varies but is generally understood to be “a system of meaning and values shared by a community informing its way of life and enabling it to make sense of the world”. Bercovitch noted that this similarity in ideology and culture provides a psychological safety net that makes disputants open up and engage in productive dialogue. Apart from the feeling of familiarity, disputants and the mediator would also share a similar baseline in interpreting events and making decisions. The mediator would be better able to construct a suitable frame and communicate messages without confusions. Consequently, Bercovitch argues that disputants are more likely to seek mediators belonging to the same ideological bloc and these mediations are more effective than those by mediators of different ideology.

Mediators that share a colonial history, ideology, or culture are trusted because of their knowledge, values, and beliefs. States understand the dynamics of working with these mediators from their history of interaction. Neighboring states and partners in symbiotic relationships are trusted not only for the history of interaction but also for their commitment to resolving the issue. As noted earlier, neighbors often intervene in response to spillover costs. States are also more likely to seek out a neighbor to mediate the dispute because the spillover effects give the latter a stake in fostering peace. Moreover, the border area could be a safe haven for the insurgents given its distance from the center of state authority. Thus, the state needs to work with its neighbors to disrupt the safe haven and support for insurgents. Since geographical proximity is an immutable condition, a long-lasting agreement is only possible when the interests of the disputants and neighbors are addressed.

Partners in symbiotic relationships, such as trade and oil production, similarly have a stake in resolving the insurgency. While the relationship might not be permanent as geographical proximity, partners also depend on peace and stability for the continued well-being of their interests. A common grievance of insurgents is the unfair exploitation of local resources by the state in collusion with foreign actors. Thus, these partners are often implicated in causing the insurgency and the state could possibly seek mediation by these actors to reach a settlement accepted by all parties. This would directly address the source of unhappiness. Moreover, in involving the partners in a domestic emergency, incumbents could signal that they intend to continue with the symbiotic relationship and assure the partners.

Apart from preexisting interactions, states could also choose mediators who appear after the conflict has started. These mediators are usually transnational non-governmental organizations and advocacy networks, which are dedicated to conflict management. Before the disputants turn to negotiations, these actors consistently urge a peaceful resolution to the conflict and provide humanitarian relief. Their active presence on the ground familiarizes them with the context of the conflict, the disputants, and changes in the balance of power between the disputants. Furthermore, these actors could also observe changes in the willingness to negotiate and act when the window of opportunity opens. Their track record in mediation puts them in a prime position to be chosen by the state.

Therefore, disputants would only enter into confidentiality with third parties they trust, which is based on ties. This variable is measured in terms of the years of prior interaction and length of the shadow of the future. A history of interaction familiarizes both the disputants and third parties with the dynamics of cooperation. In particular, neighboring states and partners in symbiotic relationships offer another dimension of trust based on commitment. Disputants believe these two groups of actors would be committed to a durable and fair agreement. The hypothesis derived from this explanation is:

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11 Such actor is termed “insider-partial”. Disputants prefer insider-partial because of the trust developed from the history of connections. Moreover, these connections mean the actor would not desert the disputants post settlement but continue to stay on the scene to ensure the settlement lasts. Conversely, outsider-impartial describes mediators that are accepted for its distance and objectivity to the conflict. The importance of mediator neutrality is briefly discussed in Section 3.3. Kydd, A. H., “When can mediators build trust?”, American Political Science Review, Vol. 100, No. 3 (2006), p. 459.
Hypothesis 2 (H2): States are more likely to seek out third parties they have ties with than those they do not have relations with. The stronger the ties between the state and party offering mediation, the more likely the offer will be accepted.

This hypothesis complements my commitment level explanation by further narrowing the pool of suitable mediators. Once a state is committed to the peace process, it will look for a strong mediator that it has extensive ties with. The ties explanation works best in tandem with my commitment argument. If it operates alone, it has limited usefulness as it can only explain the presence but not the absence of mediators. Moreover, the ties explanation takes the intent to negotiate as a binary concept. The state either wishes to negotiate or it does not. If it wishes to negotiate, it will look for the closest third party. The explanation does not probe the strategic thinking behind the intent to negotiate.

3.4 Supply side explanation

The supply side explanation suggests the choice of mediators could be considered as a choice of opportunity in which a party offers to mediate. This explanation is based on the motivations of mediators, which as noted earlier is one of the determinants of mediation. Third parties become interested out of humanitarian norm and the desire to reduce spillover costs and seek benefits. However, there are so many conflicts for which the norm could be practiced and theoretically endless benefits to be sought. Given that third parties have finite resources, they must be wary of being “condemned” to mediate. Thus, they would only intervene in conflicts with a high degree of salience to them and they have the confidence of successfully brokering peace. This salience is measured in terms of the death toll, outflow of refugees, natural resources, and foreign investments in the country. Hence, states that are truly committed to peacefully resolving the insurgency and sincerely want a sufficiently strong mediator to help reframe the conflict, facilitate information flow, provide more options, and help implement the settlement could possibly find only weak mediators willing to intervene. On the other hand, states that are reluctant to make concessions could be pressured to accept mediation by third parties whose interests are tied to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

112 Touval urges third parties to worry less about how the situation might play out in the future but focus on the short-term consequences of the conflict. "Mediators ought to give greater weight to the likely near-term consequences of their choices because predictions of the near term are generally more reliable than those of the more distant future. Mediators can be certain that an ongoing war will produce casualties. Less certain is the proposition that cease-fires tend to break down, leading to the renewal of war, and causing higher casualties in the long term." Touval, S., Mediation in the Yugoslav Wars: The critical years, 1990-1995 (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 183.
In the context of the international system as a whole, peripheral states will have fewer mediators to choose from. Their neighbors become the most regular and assured source of mediation for proximity makes the conflict salient to actors in the region. Major powers might be interested in seeing the conflict peacefully resolved but do not want to divest resources from core areas to peripheral regions. It could also be politically sensitive for major powers to intervene in local conflicts. Instead, these powers could have weaker but eager mediators intervene on their behalf and lend their weight to these mediators. In such instances, major powers generally use the power of rhetoric and sanctions to pressure the disputants and support the mediation efforts. Thus, major powers would have continued to exercise its influence in the international system and attain the goal of peace in the periphery without diverting attention from core areas and carrying the burdens of mediation.\(^{113}\)

This supply side argument explains why even though Southeast Asia experiences a high frequency of civil war, the region receives the lowest level of attention from the international community compared to other regions.\(^{114}\) The hypothesis derived from this explanation is:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): States choose mediators depending on the third parties available. Conflicts that are less salient would have fewer and weaker mediators to choose from.

Unlike the commitment and ties explanations, the supply side explanation comes from the perspective of the mediators. Mediation depends on the consent of both the disputants and mediator. A committed state might seek a strong mediator but could only find a relatively weaker mediator given there are so many conflicts in the world. The lack of strong mediators could also explain why states in Scenario 3 are able to get away with a weak mediator despite high international pressure. Thus, the supply side explanation complements my commitment level explanation in providing a complete picture of the mediation. However, like the ties explanation, the supply side explanation does not function well alone in explaining the choice of mediators. It does not tell us whether the state wants mediators or which mediator the state would choose from a big pool of offers.

**3.5 Conclusion**

I propose a level of commitment framework to explain the state’s choice of mediators. A state that is not committed or has very low levels of commitment to negotiations will not have a


mediator. The more committed the incumbents are to negotiations, the stronger the mediator they will seek. Thus, the independent variable is the level of commitment while the dependent variable is the strength of the mediator. As commitment is an amorphous concept, the level of commitment is reasoned through three factors. First, the state's perceived strength relative to the insurgents circumscribes the choices leaders can make. Second, international actors can pressure domestic leaders to negotiate. Among these actors, major powers are the most influential given their resources. Third, leaders also have to assess domestic support for peace. Domestic sentiments are the most decisive out of the three factors since leaders depend on their constituents to stay in power. In particular, the leaders have to count on the military's loyalty and professional skills. On the other hand, the strength of a mediator is determined by the resources it has available to exert leverage on the disputants.

There are two alternative explanations that are secondary but complement my commitment level explanation. First, the ties explanation suggests that states are more likely to seek out third parties they have ties with than those they do not have relations with. Ties are the source of trust and they could come from a colonial history, shared ideology, similar culture, geographical proximity, symbiotic relationships, and a consistent active presence on the conflict. The stronger the ties between the state and party offering mediation, the more likely the offer will be accepted. Second, states choose mediators depending on the third parties available. Third parties would be more willing to offer mediation for conflicts that are salient to them. Consequently, conflicts that are less salient would have fewer and weaker mediators to choose from. With these three explanations established, the second part of the thesis tests my theory and the alternative arguments against the three insurgencies in Indonesia.
CHAPTER 4: INDONESIA’S CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS LANDSCAPE AND CASE SELECTION

"[The ABRI had to be given its share in governing Indonesia] because to hold it back is like putting a cork on the volcano of Merapi, which certainly will erupt at some stage."\(^{115}\)

Abdul Haris Nasution, *The Middle Way concept*\(^{116}\)

Sukarno, Indonesia’s first president, declared the nation independent in 1945 following the end of the brutal Japanese occupation during World War II. However, its independence was not recognized by the Dutch colonial authorities until 1949.\(^{117}\) The nation is incredibly diverse with over 360 ethnic groups residing in an archipelago of over 17,000 islands.\(^{118}\) This makes Indonesia the largest country in Southeast Asia by landmass. At 42 percent of the total population, the Javanese is the largest ethnic group in the nation. It used to be concentrated on the island of Java but the group is now spread throughout Indonesia under the state’s transmigration policies. The central challenge for the state is to keep all 17,000 islands together under the Indonesian flag and ward off any attempts by an ethnic group to claim one or more islands as a separate state. Rebels describe Indonesia as “a colonial construct” held together only by the brute force of authoritarianism.\(^{119}\)

This chapter has two sections. The first section outlines the changes in Indonesia’s civil-military relations landscape from the Sukarno regime to the current Yudhoyono presidency. As my framework proposes, the military is the most important domestic actor. One of the most important themes that would emerge from this outline is the importance of military support for regime survival in Indonesia. Next, the second section discusses the basis of case selection.

4.1 Indonesia’s civil-military relations landscape from Sukarno to Yudhoyono

Indonesia’s civil-military relations could be broadly categorized in two periods since its independence. The first period is characterized by the Middle Way concept during Sukarno’s rule and dual function (*Dwi Fungsi*) doctrine of Suharto’s New Order (*Orde Baru*) regime. After the resignation of Suharto, the dual function doctrine was replaced by the New Paradigm

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115 Mount Merapi is one of the world’s most active volcanoes and situated in central Java, which is one of the most densely populated areas in the world. When it erupted in 1930, the death toll was a staggering 1,300.
116 Nasution espoused the Middle Way doctrine when he was the Army Chief of Staff. He would go on to become the Minister of Defense and Chairman of the People’s Consultative Assembly.
117 Walter, *Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent*, p. 141.
doctrine, which was adopted by democratic administrations from Presidents Bacharuddin Yusuf Habibie to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The New Paradigm doctrine is the cornerstone of the reformation (Reformasi) of the state institutions in general and the professionalization of the Indonesian armed forces in particular.

Militaries have strong institutional memory and take pride in their traditions and history. Some may even be seen as overly rigid in terms of their roles and doctrines. While the negotiations with the insurgents took place under Presidents Suharto to Yudhoyono, an overview of the civil-military relations under Sukarno is useful in understanding the military’s psyche. Much of the military’s dual function and New Paradigm doctrines are anchored in developments during this period.

4.1.1 Civil-military relations under Sukarno (1945-67)

The Indonesian armed forces have its roots in the fierce but victorious independence struggle against the Dutch colonial rulers. Independent groups of militias were put together to develop a formalized and cohesive fighting unit known as the People’s Security Force (TKR). Thus, the Indonesian military perceives itself to be a “people’s army” created by the people and for the people. It espouses the concept of “being one with the people” and rejects the term “civil-military relations”. Military leaders believe the term to be a Western concept that creates an unpatriotic and redundant dichotomy between the people and its military.¹²⁰

Not only does the military saw itself as a people’s army, it also considers itself superior to the civilian political leaders, who had no part in its creation. The military, now known as the Indonesian National Army (TNI) from the TKR, was extremely dissatisfied with the political leaders and the parliamentary democracy system instilled after independence for two reasons. First, there were frequent changes in cabinets, money politics were the norm, and anti-centralist sentiments were spreading in the peripheral provinces. The Army Chief of Staff, General Nasution, blamed divisive politics for the instability in Indonesia.¹²¹

Second, the TNI felt itself being politically marginalized amid the chaotic political situation. Nasution complained that the military “operated in a very limited environment, named only in the sector of its military duties, and was nothing more than a dead instrument like the previous

KNIL [Royal Netherlands East Indies Army]. Thus, “when we lived under the atmosphere of liberalism, [the] TNI slowly but steadily lost its identity.” There is an apparent gulf between the civilians and military. While the military wanted to be more involved in nation building, the civilians saw the military as a means only for military ends and had no peacetime role. Furthermore, politicians sought to subordinate the military and formed alliances with ranking officers to serve their political needs. Military leaders saw this corrupting influence as a threat to the cohesiveness of the officer corps.

Domestic and international events subsequently propelled the marginalized military to the forefront once again. There were factions in the military that were unhappy with the recruitment and promotion policies. These soldiers lobbied the politicians to overturn the policies and added to the political chaos in the nation. Elsewhere, regional commanders in Sumatra and Eastern Indonesia toppled provincial governments in the late 1950s to express their dissatisfaction with the state of political affairs and marginalization of the military. They demanded a greater role for the military and the return of Vice President Hatta, who had resigned over a clash of opinions with Sukarno. While Nasution also desired more power for the military, he skillfully pursued this goal without challenging Sukarno’s rule. Instead, he successfully put down the regional rebellions and earned the gratitude of the President, who dissolved the parliamentary democracy system and established autocratic rule. Under this period of Guided Democracy, Sukarno granted the military greater institutional power. Political parties made way for functional groups in which the military was one of these groups.

The military’s importance was also emphasized by the refusal of the Dutch to transfer West Papua to Indonesia. In addition, the United States had also supported the regional rebellions with the expectation that they would lead to the collapse of Sukarno’s left-leaning government. Faced with this external turn of events, the military reiterated its unrivalled sacrifice that led to the birth of the Indonesian nation. They declared that the TNI’s destiny was to safeguard the integrity of Indonesia.

These events provided Nasution the opportunity for the military’s involvement in the political realm, which he justified with the Middle Way concept. Nasution drew on Clausewitz and developments in Eastern Europe in his conceptualization. Clausewitz had proposed the

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inseparability of politics and military affairs, which is encapsulated by the regularly cited “war is the continuation of politics by other means”. On the other hand, Eastern Europe provided a more contemporary reference. Nasution explained:

“In defending TNI’s position, I have strong arguments based on the history of struggle and the practice in Eastern European countries, where it is not the separation between the military and civilians that is being highlighted, but the totality of the participation of all elements of society and the people. I lean towards the Eastern interpretation that...finally, the political, military, economic, and cultural strategies have to come together into one concept of ‘great politics’.”

In Nasution’s view, coups are inevitable given the military’s inherent desire for power. The only way to avoid coups is to allow the military to participate in politics and institutionalize power sharing between the politicians and military. The Middle Way concept was thus a balance between Huntington’s separation theory and praetorian dominance. Nasution’s model was warmly welcomed by the officer corps, who embraced the TNI’s destiny but was short on ways to translate the seemingly mythical destiny into a legitimate raison d’état.

The Middle Way concept was implemented and its impact was visible in three areas. First, the National Council for Socio-Political Affairs was established with the service chiefs representing the military. This council effectively institutionalized the military’s involvement in politics and served as a platform for Nasution to further his concept and ideas. Second, martial law was declared to grant the military extra-constitutional powers and supplant the civilian bureaucratic leadership. Military officers took on leadership positions with the biggest changes in West Java and the Outer Islands. Even when martial law was lifted, the military’s presence in the civilian bureaucracy did not diminish correspondingly with the reduced extra-constitutional powers. Third, the military was given greater access to economic resources in the provinces. This enabled the military to be self-sufficient and dovetails with the territorial command system.

126 Mietzner. Military politics, Islam, and the state in Indonesia: From turbulent transition to democratic consolidation, p. 47
Given the thousands of islands and their geographic layout, Nasution and military planners thought a highly centralized military to be impractical even with rapid deployment capabilities. They believed a system of localized commands with specific areas of responsibility would be optimal for defense and political purposes. Troops in these Military Area Commands (Komando Daerah Militer or Kodam) would form close ties with the locals, build up in-depth knowledge about the terrain and local conditions, collect intelligence, and mobilize the locals to engage in guerilla warfare against aggressors as per Mao’s doctrine. Building on the preexisting regional setup from the independence struggle, each Kodam was established in parallel to the civilian administration from the village to the provincial level as Table 2 shows.\(^{129}\) This structure enabled the military to permeate the Indonesian society at every level and influence political decisions.

**Table 2: Parallel civilian and military structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of office</th>
<th>Civilian administrative structure</th>
<th>ABRI territorial command structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Governor (Gubernur)</td>
<td>Territorial commander (Kodam/Korem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Major General/Colonel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>District chief (Bupati)</td>
<td>Territorial commander (Kodim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Lieutenant Colonel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-district</td>
<td>Sub-district chief (Camat)</td>
<td>Territorial commander (Koramil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Captain/Lieutenant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Village chief (Kepala Desa)</td>
<td>Village Non-commissioned officer (Babinsa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(NCO)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The territorial command structure was also necessary from an economic perspective. During the revolutionary struggle against the Dutch, regional commanders received little funds from the center and depended on the locals for monetary support. This trend of self-financing through local means continued post-independence as the central government had limited funds. Troops engaged in corrupt practices such as rent seeking, extortion, and smuggling with the tacit approval of the military brass. They also exploited the local natural resources to fund their activities.

As noted in Chapter 4, budgetary control is one of the means by which civilian leaders can control the military. If the military can provide for its coffers, there is one less major reason to subordinate itself to civilian leaders, who cannot meet the needs of the military. This financial autonomy was indeed what made it possible for regional commanders in Sumatra and Eastern

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\(^{129}\) Lowry, R., *The armed forces of Indonesia* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1996)

Indonesia to rebel. To reduce the danger of military adventurism, Nasution split up regional commands after the rebellion to keep each Kodam manageable. Nasution’s Middle Way concept would eventually be further formalized by Suharto as the dual function doctrine. The territorial command system would officially be linked to the dual function doctrine and expanded to strengthen Suharto’s rule.

4.1.2 Civil-military relations under Suharto (1967-98)

Sukarno’s increasing left-leaning tendencies eventually brought about his downfall. The President had become closer to the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) in order to use it to balance the military’s political power. Furthermore, he had embarked on a course of confrontation against the West and Malaysia (Konfrontasi) and withdrew from the United Nations in 1965. The military was concerned and upset by the course Sukarno was taking Indonesia on. Following PKI’s failed coup in 1948, most of the officer corps had become anti-communists as they saw the coup as a betrayal to the unity of Indonesians against the Dutch. Moreover, Indonesia was increasingly isolated internationally for its violent actions and this further strained the nation’s already difficult economic situation.

The details of what culminated in 1965 to 1966 remain widely debated but the literature points to another uprising by the PKI, this time with the implicit knowledge and even support of Sukarno. On 30 September 1965, the PKI and officers with communist tendencies kidnapped and executed six army generals in a coup attempt. Major General Suharto, commander of the Army Strategic Reserve Command (Kostrad), survived the assassination and controlled the situation within the day. What followed the coup was a massive anti-communist purge that killed at least 500,000 people. Subsequently, Sukarno’s power was permanently weakened and he was eventually forced to hand over the presidency to the now Army Chief of Staff Suharto after about two years following the abortive coup. The gradual transfer of power was a deliberate attempt by the military to shun the image of praetorian domination and create the impression that the transfer of power was within the confines of the constitution. Moreover, the time allowed for the buildup of unhappy sentiments with the crumbling Sukarno regime that would tilt public opinion

131 Konfrontasi was an act of state-sponsored terrorism against the Federation of Malaysia, which included the current nation-states of Malaysia and Singapore.
in favor of military rule. As Hill and Mackie described, “the economy was in chaos, with inflation headed towards 1000 percent, while [the] central government was unable to maintain even the most minimal standard of administrative services”.

Suharto’s New Order regime (1967-98) prioritized national stability and economic development over political freedom. While Suharto presided over rapid economic progress, his rule is also remembered for the pervasiveness of the military in every layer of the Indonesian society. Suharto consolidated his power through the military apparatus, which was renamed the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) and incorporated the Indonesian National Police (POLRI). The ABRI built on the Middle Way concept and crafted the dual function doctrine. As defined by the ABRI, the dual functions are “possessed by and adhering to the Armed Forces as defense and security forces and as social forces...in conforming with Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution”. Pancasila was promulgated by Indonesia’s founding father, Sukarno, as the philosophical basis of the then-newly independent Indonesian nation. Its five principles are the belief in the one and only God (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa), just and civilized humanity (Kemanusiaan Yang Adil dan Beradab), unity of Indonesia (Persatuan Indonesia), democracy guided by the wisdom of deliberations among the people’s representatives (Kerakyatan Yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan, Dalam Permusyawaratan dan Perwakilan), and social justice for all Indonesians (Keadilan Sosial bagi seluruh Rakyat Indonesia). As a tool for state building and defense, the unity of the Indonesian state has the most direct relevance to the ABRI. Thus, the military positioned itself in “all fields of social life”. This sociopolitical responsibility covered the “ideological, political, social, economic, cultural, and religious fields”. Military officers were appointed to the cabinet, People’s Consultative

135 Indonesia Department of Defense and Security, Republic of Indonesia Armed Forces manual and dual functions of the Armed Forces (Jakarta: Indonesia Department of Defense and Security, 1982)
137 The dual function doctrine originated from the military’s guerilla war doctrine. In the struggle of independence against the Dutch following the Japanese occupation, the military sought to mobilize popular support to drive out the Dutch. The guerilla war doctrine stressed that “the guerilla cannot just emphasize fighting but must also stress political-psychological and socio-economic aspects”. Crouch, H., “Generals and business in Indonesia”, Pacific Affairs, Vol. 48, No. 4 (1975-6), pp.519-20.
Assembly (MPR), and state enterprises. They filled the top echelons of the bureaucracy and controlled the judiciary and state news agency. Thus, the military wielded immense power and far reaching influence. One of the most visible signs that it was Suharto’s power apparatus was the fact that Kodam commanders had to don the jacket of Suharto’s Golkar party.

The military’s business activities and territorial command structure continued from the Suharto era. Given that the official defense budget only covered 35 percent of the ABRI’s operating expenditures, the military continues to rely on self-financing activities to make up for the shortfall. Moreover, about 30 percent of the allocated budget was lost through corruption. Consequently, the military had to depend on both legal activities and illicit sources to meet its financial needs. As Figure 8 shows, these needs were met through three other channels. First, active or retired military officers were appointed to state owned enterprises such as banking, telecommunications, and power plants. The revenues from these enterprises were channeled to the ABRI. Second, each service of the ABRI had its own cooperatives and foundations that ran businesses such as hotels, manufacturing, and the wholesale distribution of goods. These two legal activities were augmented by illicit sources that include smuggling, trafficking, extortion, corruption, and guns for hire. The military exploited the pervasive nature of the territorial command structure to its full advantage in running this last tier of self-financing. Given the close contact between the troops and locals, the ABRI had plenty of moneymaking opportunities. For instance, local businessmen sought the help of territorial commanders to “facilitate” their businesses. The commanders would issue business licenses, calm labor unrests, resolve land disputes, smooth bureaucratic obstacles and provide protection.

139 Sebastian, L. C. and ljsgindarsah, “Taking stock of military reform in Indonesia”, in eds. Rüland, J., Manea, M., and Born, H., *The politics of military reform: Experiences from Indonesia and Nigeria* (Berlin; New York: Springer, 2013), p. 31; Rabasa and Haseman, *The military and democracy in Indonesia: Challenges, politics, and power*, p. 36. During the New Order, the Golkar party had three factions (tiga jalur): A, B, and G channels. The A channel referred to the ABRI faction headed by the ABRI commander while the B channel comprised bureaucrats led by the Minister for Home Affairs. Finally, the G channel consisted members who were neither part of the ABRI or bureaucracy. These members were headed by the Golkar party chairman. Thus, the military and bureaucracy were not neutral state actors. Hosen, N., *Shari‘a and constitutional reform in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007), p. 77.
142 Rabasa and Haseman, *The military and democracy in Indonesia: Challenges, politics, and power*, pp. 69-77.
for lives and property.\textsuperscript{143} Thus, the cash-strapped condition of the ABRI is useful in understanding why the military was resistant to autonomy and even secession of any province. The territorial integrity of Indonesia remains critical for security and economic reasons to date.

**Figure 8: The ABRI’s financing structure**

A clear implication of the ABRI’s immense economic activities is its organizational autonomy. The military can use the bottom three channels in Figure 8 to fund its activities and bypass any scrutiny associated with the use of state budgets, if there were even any checks and balances in the first place. While civil-military relations theorists warn such a self-sufficient military may one day become too powerful to be controlled, Suharto actually encouraged the military’s economic activities.\textsuperscript{144} From his experience as a regional commander, he believed the senior military commanders would become more loyal towards him as the patron that granted them additional sources of income. Moreover, a self-sufficient military would bear less strain on the state’s budgetary responsibilities.

Nevertheless, Suharto also implemented measures to keep the military under his command and ward off any challenges to his rule. The most important measure was to centralize the command of troops under the ABRI headquarters, which Suharto oversaw personally. All service commanders were downgraded to chiefs of staff and had no direct command and control powers. Moreover, the Ministry of Defense and Security was a purely administrative institution that is not part of the chain of command, unlike its counterparts in mature democracies.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{143} Crouch, “Generals and business in Indonesia”, p. 520.
\textsuperscript{145} Mietzner. *Military politics, Islam, and the state in Indonesia: From turbulent transition to democratic consolidation*, p. 55.
Suharto not only kept the territorial command system but expanded on it. The ABRI was organized similar to the Unified Combatant Command system in the United States where Combatant Commands are structured either on a functional or geographical basis.\textsuperscript{146} Likewise, the ABRI had tactical and territorial forces. Tactical forces were deployed to any area where their expertise was required. They include the Army Special Forces Command (Kopassus) and Kostrad. On the other hand, territorial forces had a specific area of responsibility and they formed the bulk of the ABRI.\textsuperscript{147} To keep the territorial commanders in check, Suharto reduced the powers of the Kodam commanders and created a layer of coordinating commands (Komando Wilayah Pertahanan or Kowilhan) for them to report to. Each Kowilhan was helmed by a Lieutenant General and oversaw several Kodams. Thus, Suharto effectively streamlined the process of control over the military and strengthened his grip by placing loyal officers at the level of Kowilhan.\textsuperscript{148}

The New Order regime eventually collapsed with the onset of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis (AFC). As O'Donnell and Schmitter argue, “there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence – direct or indirect – of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself”.\textsuperscript{149} Demonstrations became a regular occurrence as the people protested against the regime’s management of the crisis. Suharto was slow to react initially and subsequent austerity measures worsened the financial panic. As ordinary Indonesians struggled, demonstrations gained momentum as protestors vented their resentment against the decades of corruption and military oppression under the New Order. They demanded Suharto’s resignation and a transition to democracy. However, Suharto refused to resign and even sought reelection in the MPR. Kostrad troops led by Suharto’s son-in-law, Lieutenant General Prabowo Subianto, were also sent in to brutally quash the demonstrations through the territorial command apparatus.\textsuperscript{150}


\textsuperscript{147} Rabasa and Haseman, The military and democracy in Indonesia: Challenges, politics, and power, pp. 12-20.

\textsuperscript{148} Mietzner. Military politics, Islam, and the state in Indonesia: From turbulent transition to democratic consolidation, p. 55.


Suharto eventually resigned when he lost the support of the majority of the military led by General Wiranto. The military had undergone a significant generational change with the retirement of soldiers who fought in the independence struggle and the rise of the post-war officers. Reform-minded generals, such as then Lieutenant General Yudhoyono, refused to obey Suharto’s order to impose martial law. Instead, they supported the protestors’ demand for Suharto’s resignation and democracy.151

4.1.3 Civil-military relations from Habibie to Yudhoyono (1998-)

Following Suharto’s resignation, Vice President Habibie assumed the presidency (1998-9) and the dual function doctrine was replaced by the New Paradigm doctrine crafted by Yudhoyono and his team of reform-minded officers. Indonesians saw the ABRI as a corrupt and repressive apparatus used by Suharto to protect his regime. The ABRI was renamed the TNI to dissociate itself from the dark days of the New Order. It was also a subtle reminder to Indonesians of the immediate years after independence when the TNI was seen as a people’s army that had made sacrifices in the nation’s independence struggle.152

The New Paradigm continues to uphold Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. As part of the nationwide Reformasi campaign, military reforms would be introduced based on four principles. First, the TNI would be a professional, modern, efficient, and effective defense force. Second, it would take a neutral position in politics. Third, the TNI would gradually withdraw from everyday political involvement completely. It would not be at the forefront of politics. Fourth, the TNI would support Reformasi in terms of setting a clear agenda and prioritizing the reforms. As a supporting role, the military would not dominate decision making but work with civilian leaders in making national decisions.153

During Habibie’s tenure, the New Paradigm doctrine produced four major reforms. They are the separation of the POLRI from the TNI, declaration of political neutrality and withdrawal from Golkar, extensive electoral reforms with the military removed from formal politics, and the withdrawal of military appointees from civilian positions.154 While these are tangible reforms,
Nasution’s ideas continue to influence the TNI. Wiranto, commander of the TNI, reportedly said that:

"[The TNI was] not only an ‘instrument of the government’ like in Western countries; also not an ‘instrument of one party’ like in communist countries; and of course not some sort of ‘military regime’ that dominates the state. TNI is an ‘instrument of the people’s struggle’, as one of the national political forces, and with its participation in political life, TNI will never remain inactive."\(^{155}\)

Wiranto’s thinly veiled warning manifested itself over Habibie’s handling of the East Timor insurgency. Habibie was expected to be a caretaker president whose ascendancy to power was only because of his close connection to Suharto. His role was largely to serve out Suharto’s remaining presidential term that was due to expire in 2003. Habibie was widely seen as Suharto’s protégé having been recruited by the President to first work in the state enterprises and subsequently becoming the longest serving cabinet member. Unlike Suharto who had strong grassroots connection, Habibie appeared distant from the _prabumi_ or sons of the soil. As the Minister of Research and Technology, the German educated Habibie favored large technological projects in areas such as nuclear energy, steel, and plastics.\(^{156}\) These projects were ahead of their time as the _prabumi_ depended on agriculture for their livelihood. Moreover, the Indonesian economy could ill-afford these expensive projects.

Habibie also had a difficult relationship with the military in his ministerial years. For instance, he raised the ire of the military when he purchased 39 ships from the East Germany navy in 1994. The military brass saw this as an encroachment on its monopoly on military procurement by a civilian as well as a lost opportunity for kickbacks in such a lucrative deal.\(^{157}\) His nomination as vice president was backed by the military only because it was Suharto’s decision. Moreover, the President had installed a supportive Wiranto as the ABRI’s commander. The same support could not be said of the international community that was wary of Habibie’s


\(^{156}\) One of Habibie’s unrealistic plans was to build a nuclear power plant in central Java. It is a poor choice considering Mount Merapi is situated in the densely populated province. Ridder, K., “Protégé honours ‘father’: New president reaps big profits from relationship with Suharto”, *The Toronto Star*, May 22, 1998.

\(^{157}\) The ships were bought at a bargain price of $16.5 million in what was though to be a remarkable deal until Habibie followed up with a $1.1 billion proposal to make the ships seaworthy. At that point in time, $1.1 billion was three quarters of the state defense budget. The East German deal is just one example of Habibie’s interference in the military’s domain, which seriously irked the military leaders. It is also a reflection of Habibie’s impractical and erratic nature. Porter, D. J., *Managing politics and Islam in Indonesia* (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 146-7.  

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spending habits amid a poor performing Indonesian economy. Indonesia’s rupiah took a
nosedive to a historic low of 17,000 rupiahs to the dollar in response to the nomination. The
market’s reaction did not damper the military’s support for the Suharto-Habibie ticket. Instead,
the military leaders believed the nomination was simply a pretext to create economic turmoil in
Indonesia. Habibie himself remarked “it is a sad day if Indonesia’s leadership has to be
determined by the rate of the dollar and the prices of stocks”.\textsuperscript{158}

Habibie’s ascendency was grudgingly accepted by the military, which was reeling from a
poor standing among the population. The transfer of power from Suharto to Habibie was
constitutionally mandated and the military was reluctant to be seen interfering in politics.
Nevertheless, it was no secret where the real power was. In his short tenure, Habibie’s
administration was undermined by an uncooperative military that threatened to overthrow him in
order to secure his cooperation. The military had become factionalized around the time Suharto
resigned. As noted earlier, one faction led by Prabowo continued to support Suharto even though
Wiranto had urged the president to resign. Habibie revealed in his memoir that he was cognizant
of his poor standing in the military and afraid that the soldiers would turn on him. This
influenced him to make Wiranto his Minister of Defense and Security with the concurrent
appointment of TNI Commander, even though the expectation in the post-Suharto era was a
clean separation between the military and politics.

Habibie also recounted an incident in which he replaced Prabowo as the commander of
\textit{Kostrad} just 24 hours into his presidency. Prabowo had reportedly ordered \textit{Kostrad} troops to
move towards Jakarta and the presidential palace without the president’s approval or Wiranto’s
prior knowledge. Subsequently, a defiant Prabowo demanded a meeting with Habibie who feared
it could be an assassination attempt. Habibie was unsure about the allegiance of the presidential
guards and Prabowo was a revered general who previously commanded \textit{Kopassus}. His fears did
not materialize but the meeting was a heated one as Prabowo sought to retain his command and

even called Habibie naive.\textsuperscript{159} In another incident, there were rumors of a coup led by Wiranto if Habibie permitted an international peacekeeping force in East Timor.\textsuperscript{160}

Even though Suharto’s term was supposed to end in 2003, Habibie was pressed by the opposition and even by members of his Development Reform Cabinet to hold an election as soon as possible. Indonesians saw the Habibie administration as a continuation of the Suharto years, in particular his cabinet reeked of “corruption, collusion, and nepotism”.\textsuperscript{161} Indeed, many of Habibie’s cabinet ministers were Suharto era officials and the president had been reluctant to prosecute his predecessor. The public was also displeased with Habibie’s offer of independence to East Timor and this is elaborated in Chapter 5. Habibie sought to have Wiranto as his running mate but was declined by the general. His precarious presidency finally ended when he lost the MPR election in 1999.

President Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001) took office in a period when the TNI was undergoing incremental professionalization. The most significant piece of reform during his tenure was the appointment of the first civilian Defense Minister in more than five decades. Wahid attempted to assert civilian control of the military and replaced Wiranto with Juwono Sudarsono. Wiranto was kept in the National Unity Cabinet by way of a “promotion” to become Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs while still on active duty in the TNI. The position sounded important but in fact it had no real power, which was in the individual ministries. This was really a demotion but Wiranto still exercised tremendous influence given Wahid’s visual disability and constant travels. As a foreign diplomat commented, Wiranto has “usurped much of the presidency as far as domestic affairs are concerned”. The general reportedly decided the cabinet’s meeting agenda and led the discussions most of the time.\textsuperscript{162} Furthermore, Wiranto was also able to install his loyalists to key appointments in the TNI in a major reshuffle. Most of the reform-minded officers were either not promoted or deployed to

\textsuperscript{159} The meeting with Prabowo was scheduled to be at the presidential palace. Habibie’s family was brought to the presidential palace from another location by the military aides suddenly albeit respectfully. In Habibie’s words, he compared his family to the Romanovs who were massacred by the Bolsheviks. Habibie, B. J. \textit{Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy} (Jakarta, Indonesia: Ithabi Rekatama, 2006), pp. 91-100.


\textsuperscript{161} Lin, J. and Dorgan, M., “Suharto resigns change: Strongman yields to popular protests, hands over top job to key deputy”, \textit{San Jose Mercury News}, May 21, 1998.

peripheral provinces. Moreover, those who dared to suggest far reaching reforms such as the abolishment of the territorial command structure were pressured to resign.

Wahid and Juwono were cognizant of their delicate relationship with the military, which episodically pitted against the civilian leadership. Juwono warned openly at a MPR seating that “if civilian leaders aren’t able to develop a healthy and independent political life, then we will sooner or later return to a military-dominated role like in Pakistan or some African states”.

Amid the backdrop of a resurgent military, Wahid attempted to further separate the military from politics by ordering the early retirement of the generals in his cabinet, which included Wiranto and Yudhoyono. The latter was critical of Wiranto’s lacklustre support for reforms and had actually urged the president to make such a move. After retiring from the military, Wiranto was eventually dismissed from the cabinet as allegations of human rights abuses in East Timor mounted against him. While Wahid made some inroads at separating the military from politics, his attempts at cleaning up the TNI and inserting reformers faced challenges. For instance, the military leadership resisted Wahid’s order to fire Major General Sudrajat for challenging his authority. As the TNI spokesperson, Sudrajat frequently contradicted the president’s statements, especially those on Aceh. He also publicly suggested that Wahid was not the supreme commander of the military. The TNI leadership refused to execute the order citing its uncertainty as to “whether the President was in the right state of mind” when he gave that order.

On the whole, the military reforms were either carried out superficially or very slowly. In particular, the military resisted giving up its parliamentary seats and a trend emerged in which former soldiers traded their uniforms for the parliamentary jackets. The military continued its businesses because the central government could not provide sufficient budget. Exploitation of resources in provinces such as Aceh and other illicit activities were necessary to finance the military’s activities. The TNI’s reluctance to give up its power and interests explains why Wahid was appointed president even though he did not win the popular vote. A pliable leader was needed that would allow the military to continue dominating decision making.

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165 Wanandi, “Challenge of the TNI and its role in Indonesia’s future”, p. 95.
166 Pereira, “Can the soldiers still call the shots?”.
168 Even though Megawati won the popular vote, the legislature appointed Wahid as it believes he would be more pliable than Megawati. Walter, *Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent*, pp. 159-61.
desire of the military that propelled Wahid to presidency also led to his downfall. Wahid had come under fire for corruption and massive demonstrations demanded his resignation. Instead of supporting him, the MPR convened impeachment proceedings against him. Like Suharto, Wahid appealed to the TNI and POLRI for support in declaring a state of emergency and dissolving parliament. He publicly acknowledged his doubts as to whether the TNI and POLRI would support him. Indeed, the police chief became a leading critic of Wahid’s threat to implement a state of emergency.\textsuperscript{169} The TNI also wanted Wahid to go for interfering in the TNI’s promotion process and had tanks surround and aim at the presidential palace.\textsuperscript{170}

The MPR installed Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri to succeed Wahid. Megawati (2001-4) is the daughter of Sukarno and has a rocky relationship with the military prior to her ascension. The military had deposed Sukarno, orchestrated her removal from her political party, violently attacked her supporters, and practically robbed her of the presidency in 1999.\textsuperscript{171} However, Megawati developed better relations with TNI when she was in Wahid’s cabinet. Observers remarked that she had “gone to considerable lengths to display her closeness to the armed forces”. Despite the international outrage over the military’s atrocities in East Timor and Aceh, Megawati “even praised the murderous Kopassus...saying that only certain individuals were to blame for past problems”.\textsuperscript{172} Moreover, both Megawati and the TNI shared strong nationalist sentiments and the same approach in dealing with threats to the unity of Indonesia. For instance, Megawati strongly supported the military’s proposal to forcibly suppress the Aceh rebellion while Wahid disapproved.

On the part of the TNI, the leaders stood behind Megawati because she had the support of the politicians, was a staunch conservative, and most importantly willing to protect the interests of the military. Megawati not only had the backing of her party but also the support of most of the parties in the MPR. As one general described, “everything is in her favor...[and the military] can’t ignore this growing support for her”. The politicians’ choice sat well with the military for Megawati had staunchly advocated the preservation of Indonesia’s unity and hit back at foreign powers such as Australia and the United States for interfering with Indonesia’s domestic affairs.

\textsuperscript{171} Rabasa and Haseman, \textit{The military and democracy in Indonesia: Challenges, politics, and power}, pp. 43-4.
\textsuperscript{172} Murdoch, L., “Megawati emerges as the general’s choice”, \textit{The Age}, June 2, 2001.
Moreover, the military believed Megawati would move Reformasi at a slow pace and shield the military from international calls of prosecution for human rights abuses.\textsuperscript{173}

During Megawati’s tenure, three major reforms were carried out and they were the passage of the Armed Forces Act in 2004, removal of the military faction from MPR, and the introduction of direct presidential elections.\textsuperscript{174} Apart from the lack of prosecution for human rights violations, the military’s hopes also materialized in the form of continued self-financing activities. These ran precisely against the grain of the Armed Forces Act, which stipulated the main role of the military is external defense and it is forbidden from economic activities.\textsuperscript{175} Some observers remarked that the TNI appeared even stronger than it was during the New Order regime. A former US defense attaché to Indonesia suggested that “anyone who seriously thought that the TNI would soon surrender its massive powers, abandon its dominant position in society, remove itself from a huge business empire, and meekly return to the barracks, is seriously out of touch with reality”.\textsuperscript{176} Megawati eventually stepped down after losing the first presidential election to Yudhoyono.

President Yudhoyono (2004-14) came into power following a landslide electoral victory against Megawati in which he secured 60.9 percent of the vote to Megawati’s 39.1 percent. In her three years of presidency, Indonesians had come to realize Megawati was not an effective or capable leader that could connect with the masses and revive the economy. They wanted a reliable leader that could improve their basic living conditions and found such a person in Yudhoyono. The former general was charismatic and projected a sense of confidence. This softer side of his was balanced by his tough and decisive image, which was supported by his military career. Indonesians were assured by his reformist credentials that electing a former general does not signal a return to the New Order era but a step towards democratic consolidation. It was precisely this nature of direct presidential elections that worried the military. While the constitution was amended to remove the military from the MPR and provided for direct elections, the TNI had resisted the amendments over fears that the public might elect a president that would curtail the military’s interests. It did not want to be in a situation in which it pits against the president that enjoys the support of the people.

\textsuperscript{173} Pereira, D., “Indonesian military wants Gus Dur to step down”, \textit{The Straits Times}, April 18, 2001.
\textsuperscript{174} Mietzner, \textit{The politics of military reform in post-Suharto Indonesia: Elite conflict, nationalism, and institutional resistance}, pp. 60-3.
\textsuperscript{175} Sebastian and Ilsigendarisah, “Taking stock of military reform in Indonesia”, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{176} Murdoch, “Megawati emerges as the general’s choice”.  

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The military’s fears of being weakened turned out to be unfounded. It is often asked “whether a retired military or police officer is considered a civilian or military man”. The conclusion is that “it is difficult to believe that a retired military or police officer has no emotional links or organizational loyalty to their previous institutions”. Yudhoyono strengthened the military as an institution but also sought to control it. After he came into power, Yudhoyono consolidated his power by appointing his military academy classmates to leadership positions in the TNI. In addition, Yudhoyono also avoided pushing the TNI too hard on reforms. For instance, the Armed Forces Act required the military to transfer all its businesses to the government by 2009. Just before the deadline expired, Yudhoyono issued a decree that reiterated the requirement and also created a committee to oversee the transfer. However, the decree was lax in that there was no clear deadline by when the transfer should be completed and the majority of the committee members were military officers with interest in keeping the businesses. Yudhoyono’s defense minister even publicly supported the TNI’s business activities as a mean of financing security and defense operation.

Yudhoyono is the longest serving president since Suharto and will step down later this year after he completes his second term in office. Constitutional limits prevent Yudhoyono from seeking a third term. His succession is a litmus test of the state of civil-military relations, in particular the political neutrality of the TNI. The recently concluded and closely fought 2014 elections saw Prabowo pitted against the Governor of Jakarta, Joko “Jokowi” Widodo, who does not come from the military. Jokowi was portrayed by the Prabowo camp as soft and incapable of leading Indonesia while observers were concerned about the possible election of a former general they believed to have committed serious human rights violations in his term as the commander of Kopassus and Kostrad. Predictably, there were reports of activists trying to secure the support of high-ranking officers. As Prabowo disputed the tight election results, fears arose that the military would rig the ballots to swing the results in favor of Prabowo. Leading Indonesian newspapers warned “a partisan TNI could create conflict and even foment civil

war...[and called on] the TNI to stay out of politics and put their whole energy into securing the nation from external threats”. 182

The president publicly called out on these reports and fears at a meeting with the military brass. He stated that he was aware of suggestions that the officer corps “ought to abandon their president and not to listen to him, because he is in ‘a sinking ship’...[and] it is much better to follow a bright new star”. He reminded the military to stay neutral and not undo the years of difficult reforms for the good of the nation. In response, the military leaders explicitly ordered the troops to stay in the barracks. They also promised to investigate and punish any violation of the law that orders the soldiers to stay neutral and not vote in the elections. The Army Chief of Staff vowed to stay neutral “right down to the lowest level of command at the village level” and not discredit the TNI by showing favoritism. 183 With the election declared in favor of Jokow, this episode also suggests a remarkable degree of control exercised by the Yudhoyono administration over the military. There is also a strong sentiment against the military’s involvement in politics. Nevertheless, the reformation is not complete. The military still self-finances some of its activities, territorial command structure has not been fully reformed, and the military brass still desires economic and political power.

Tracing the changes in Indonesia’s political landscape from Suharto to Yudhoyono highlights the important role of the military in ensuring regime stability. While Megawati and Yudhoyono have relatively good relationships with the TNI, the other presidents have found themselves on the bad side of the military. Table 3 summarizes major events in Indonesia’s civil-military relations and also shows the key events in the three insurgencies that took place along side changes in the civil-military relations. As Chapters 5 to 7 elaborate, a decisive factor influencing negotiations is the ability of the president to control the military. This explains why even though Suharto’s successors were receptive of negotiating with the insurgents and there were international pressure to negotiate, they often yielded to pressure from the military to forcibly suppress the insurgencies. It also explains why Yudhoyono has significantly more, but still not complete, freedom in pursuing negotiations.

### Table 3: Major events in Indonesia’s civil-military relations and insurgencies (Yellow boxes for East Timor; Green for Aceh; Blue for West Papua)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major events in civil-military relations</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major events in insurgencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Indonesia declares independence after World War II with Sukarno as the first president. - Guerilla war with the Netherlands, which still see Indonesia as its colony.</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dutch recognizes Indonesia’s independence.</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collapse of parliamentary democracy following coups by regional military commanders. - Introduction of Guided Democracy marked by the institutionalization of the military in politics under the Middle Way concept.</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Kostrad commander Suharto puts down communist coup. - Massive anti-communist purge kills 500,000. - Sukarno’s power permanently weakened.</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>West Papua insurgency begins as Indonesia forcibly annexed the territory despite the Dutch objections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President Suharto (1967-98)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sukarno hands over the presidency to Suharto and the New Order era begins. - Middle Way concept expanded into the dual function doctrine that justifies the military’s involvement in every aspect of Indonesian society including economy and domestic security.</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>East Timor insurgency begins as Indonesian troops enter the territory to stop Fretilin and at the “request” of the majority of East Timorese. - UN refuses to recognize the incorporation while Australia and the United States tacitly approved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Aceh insurgency begins as special treatment is rescinded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Indonesia and Portugal negotiate over East Timor with UN mediation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Santa Cruz massacre broadcasted internationally and the United States suspends military assistance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Massive demonstrations demand Suharto’s resignation and democracy as a result of the AFC. - Suharto seeks reelection and orders military to crack down on demonstrators. - Military splits between pro-Suharto camp led by Prabowo and reformists Wiranto and Yudhoyono.</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President Habibie (1998-9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suharto resigns and Vice President Habibie steps in to serve out his remaining presidency. - Nationwide reforms begin and New Paradigm replaces the dual function doctrine. - The military declares political neutrality, ceases the secondment of officers to the civil service, and separates from the national police but business activities continue. - TNI commander Wiranto is appointed Defense Minister.</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Indonesia continues to negotiate with Portugal with UN as mediator. - Habibie offers autonomy to East Timor in a major departure from established policy with high domestic support. - Letter from Howard agitates Habibie who subsequently offers independence to East Timor. - Biak massacre in West Papua went unnoticed internationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>East Timorese reject integration and Habibie suffers domestic backlash. - Violence in East Timor results in further sanctions and suspension of military activities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### President Wahid (1999-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Wahid appoints first civilian defense minister. Wiranto promoted to Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs while still in the military and stacks the TNI with his loyalists. The TNI's business continue. Wahid negotiates with GAM with HDC as mediator, despite low domestic support after East Timor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Wahid orders military members in the cabinet to retire from the TNI and dismisses Wiranto from the cabinet over allegations of human rights violations in East Timor. Wiranto stacks the TNI with his loyalists. Humanitarian Pause signed but repeatedly violated as TNI pursues comprehensive approach crafted by Coordinating Minister for Political, Social, and Security Affairs Yudhoyono.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Wahid delegates power to Vice President Megawati as corruption allegations gain traction. MPR commences impeachment proceedings against Wahid over corruption charges. The TNI refuses to support Wahid and surrounds the presidential palace with tanks. Wahid approves special autonomy for West Papua despite low support from Indonesians and Papuans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### President Megawati (2001-4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>MPR installs Megawati as president. Observers indicate the TNI appears stronger than during the New Order regime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Armed Forces Act passed and mandates the end of the military's business activities. Other reforms include removal of military faction from MPR and introduction of direct presidential elections. 24 US Senators wrote to Annan to appoint a special representative for West Papua.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### President Yudhoyono (2004-14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Yudhoyono defeats Megawati in the first direct presidential election with a landslide victory. New president strengthens control over the military by appointing loyalists to key positions. Boxing Day tsunami devastates Aceh and rekindles international interest in the peace process. Peace talks with GAM resume under a new mediator, CMI, with the support of all domestic actors, except the military.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Australia signs the Lombok Treaty that recognizes Indonesian sovereignty over Papua and declares non-interference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Two US Congressmen urge the UN to appoint a special representative for Papua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>US Congress holds first hearing on Papua and 50 Congressmen urge Obama to make Papua a priority. Vanuatu becomes the only nation to recognize West Papua as a state. Three-day Papua Peace Conference, without any mediator, was unsuccessful in resolving the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Yudhoyono proposes upgraded autonomy for West Papua amidst low domestic support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Yudhoyono due to step down over term limits and warns the TNI to stay neutral in the hotly contested presidential election. TNI publicly declares neutrality and orders troops to stay in barracks. A military outsider, Jokowi, defeats Prabowo in the presidential election. PNG vetoes West Papua's bid for observer status in the MSG.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Case selection

This paper uses a subnational comparison method, which is one of the most promising approaches in civil conflict studies, to identify what caused the variation in the state’s choice of mediators.\textsuperscript{184} The case study approach complements large-n quantitative analysis by drawing out the causality between the independent and dependent variables. This is particularly important given the highly contextual nature of insurgencies. In doing so, this approach could reveal any additional variable that was not considered in the theorizing of the framework.\textsuperscript{185} However, the case study method potentially faces the problem of overdetermination. The approach does not allow one to confidently reject competing mechanisms as not valid.\textsuperscript{186} Instead, this paper argues that my commitment theory is more important and better explains the variation than the two alternative theories.

To select the cases, I first survey the insurgencies that have occurred in Indonesia. As listed in Table 4, the state has experienced six insurgencies since its independence in 1949.

Table 4: List of insurgencies in Indonesia since independence\textsuperscript{187}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurgency (Year)</th>
<th>Insurgents</th>
<th>Causes of insurgency</th>
<th>Demands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madiun communist rebellion (1948)</td>
<td>Communists</td>
<td>Political differences</td>
<td>Regime change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darul Islam rebellion (1948-62)</td>
<td>Muslim militias</td>
<td>Indonesia ceded West Java to the Netherlands</td>
<td>Regime change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permesta rebellion (1958-61)</td>
<td>Civil and military leaders</td>
<td>Stunted economic growth</td>
<td>Economic and political reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Papua (1962-)</td>
<td>Indigenous people</td>
<td>Annexation and state exploitation of resources</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Timor (1975-1999)</td>
<td>Indigenous people</td>
<td>Annexation and state exploitation of resources</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh (1976-2005)</td>
<td>Indigenous people</td>
<td>State exploitation of resources</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The case comparison method works best when the cases are comparable to isolate any confounding variables. Thus, the insurgencies in West Papua, East Timor, and Aceh are selected as case studies because they are similar across all three dimensions of actors, causes, and


\textsuperscript{185} Walter, Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent, pp. 133-4.

\textsuperscript{186} Staniland, “Between a rock and a hard place: Insurgent fratricide, ethnic defection, and the rise of pro-state paramilitaries”, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{187} The alleged uprising in 1965 by the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) is excluded from the list, as it does not meet the definition of an insurgency. Rather, the uprising was more of a coup in which communist-leaning military officers kidnapped and executed six army generals. Moreover, the coup was never definitively attributed to the PKI. Schonhardt, S., “Veil of silence lifted in Indonesia”, \textit{The New York Times}, January 18, 2012; Tan, A. T. H., “Terrorism and insurgency in Southeast Asia”, in ed. Tan, A. T. H., \textit{A handbook of terrorism and insurgency in Southeast Asia} (Cheltenham, UL; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2007), p. 10.
demands. By selecting these three cases, I control for the effects of ethnic differences, causes, and demands in affecting how the state deals with the insurgency. As Figure 9 shows, all three insurgencies are sons of the soil wars in which a minority group on the periphery is disadvantaged by migrants from other parts of the state where they are the majority. The insurgents belong to the minority ethnic groups that were subjected to the government’s transmigration policy that aimed to “Javanize” the region. Controlling the ethnicity of the insurgent groups is important as social psychology studies have shown that an in-/out-group bias exists among segments of society. It could be possible that the central Javanese government might be softer on a peripheral Javanese insurgent group than a peripheral ethnicity minority.

All three insurgencies have a resource component in which state exploitation of natural resources have created grievances that galvanized the insurgency. This also means that the domestic elites have interests in all three provinces. Even though the state did not annex Aceh, the Aceh insurgency is still comparable to the other two because the Acehnese viewed themselves as a distinct nation under the fold of the Indonesian state.

Finally, all three insurgent groups share the same demand for secession from the Indonesian state and have been trapped in conflict for decades. Given the indivisible nature of territorial sovereignty, secessionist demands are particularly difficult and conflicts over them tend to last longer. In contrast, the state might be more open to demands such as reforms. Therefore, these three cases present similar demands on the state motivated by similar grievances and initiated by similar minority groups. Their duration and the staggering number of lives killed or displaced is a key impetus for this study.

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4.3 Conclusion

The Indonesian nation was born out of a fierce revolutionary struggle against the Dutch. Following its independence, the struggle for nationhood now manifests itself in the preservation of the unity of the provinces and its many islands. Its civil-military relations is best described in terms of the regime type of the nation. Under the autocratic Guided Democracy and New Order eras, the military regarded itself as the nation’s guardian whose unrivalled sacrifice means it would vigilantly ensure the stability of the nation. When the politicians caused upheavals in the nation, the military openly entered politics to exert what it considered to be a stabilizing influence. In return, Sukarno and Suharto used the military to consolidate their rule. The territorial command structure, as provided by the Middle Way concept and dual function doctrine, was the most defining feature that firmly anchored the military in politics and every aspect of social life.

On the other hand, subsequent democratic administrations have tried to curb the organizational autonomy of the military by introducing reforms such as the official withdrawal of the military from politics and business, appointment of a civilian defense minister, and separation of the POLRI from the military. The attempts of democratic presidents have produced varying degrees of success. Habibie initiated the reforms but could not continue them as he was unable to shake off his deep connections with Suharto. Wahid made some bold moves but softened his stance due to his political misadventures. Megawati introduced several reforms but sought to foster a good relationship with the military. Finally, Yudhoyono appears to be the most in control of the military and presided over the peak of Indonesia’s democratic consolidation.
While changes in regime type have diminished the military’s political power, they have not displaced the military as the most decisive actor in domestic politics. The rise and fall of presidents highlight the fact that the military’s support is a necessary and could be even a sufficient condition of regime stability. In order to secure the military’s support, presidents have to listen closely and develop good relationships with the military. This is a key point in my proposed framework that seeks to explain why states decide to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate. Changes in the military’s position were arguably pivotal in producing policy reversals. The proposed framework is tested on the cases of East Timor (Chapter 5), Aceh (Chapter 6), and West Papua (Chapter 7).
CHAPTER 5: THE EAST TIMOR INSURGENCY (1975-99)

"[East Timor was a problem for Indonesia] but only as bothersome as a pebble in a shoe...however, I have to admit that in its final years, the East Timor problem was no longer a mere pebble in the shoe but had become a veritable boulder, dragging down Indonesia's international reputation to one of its lowest points." 


The East Timor insurgency, which began in 1975 and ended in 1999, is the first case study as this was the first instance of mediation among the three insurgencies. Moreover, the conclusion of the East Timor insurgency has a strong influence on the domestic attitudes towards the insurgencies in Aceh and West Papua. Negotiations mediated by the UN between Indonesia and Portugal began in 1984 but it was really during Habibie's presidency that the peace process accelerated and succeeded. There was more progress during the 17 months under Habibie than the 14 years under Suharto. Thus, the central question in this chapter is what explains Habibie's decision to have the UN continue mediating and the acceleration in the peace process? This chapter has three sections. It starts by describing the background of the insurgency and then looks at how the proposed commitment framework can explain the acceleration and success of mediation under Habibie. Finally, the third section discusses the alternative explanations.

5.1 Background of the insurgency

East Timor's journey to statehood was a long and arduous one. It was a Portuguese colony for about four hundred years before being a part of Indonesia for the next twenty-five years, and only achieved statehood after thirty months under the UN's administrative authority. The Indonesians had little interest in East Timor, which was not part of the group of islands that declared itself the Indonesian nation in. However, Indonesia's interest grew following the Carnation Revolution in Portugal that overthrew Caetano's authoritarian regime. With the domestic political turmoil, the Portuguese became increasingly distant about the affairs in its colonies. Political parties emerged in East Timor divided along the lines of independence from Portugal and integration with Indonesia. The Suharto administration maintained that it recognized the authority of the Portuguese over Indonesia and expressed that it had no territorial ambitions to incorporate East Timor. Furthermore, it supported an orderly decolonization based on the will of the East Timorese. Portugal would subsequently withdraw completely and

suddenly from East Timor leaving an administrative vacuum and an island of inhabitants with competing visions of the future.

It was in this context of power vacuum that Indonesia felt compelled to absorb East Timor for three reasons. First, constant fighting between the pro-independence Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) and pro-integration parties resulted in an exodus of tens of thousands of East Timorese into Indonesian West Timor. This severely affected social and economic conditions in West Timor and the Indonesian government struggled to attend to the refugees. Furthermore, Fretilin regularly shelled bordering Indonesian villages and conducted raids into the villages to steal food. Second, Suharto was worried that the left-wing Fretilin would take power and enable the communist to establish a foot hold right at Indonesia’s doorstep. Following the Madiun rebellion and the communist purge, a left-wing Fretilin was antithetical to the Suharto regime. Thus, Indonesia declared it would not allow an independent East Timor governed by Fretilin. Third, Indonesia maintained that it was acting on the wishes of the majority of the political parties to integrate East Timor. After Fretilin unilaterally declared independence, other political parties sought to integrate with Indonesia. These parties appealed to Suharto to provide military and economic aid to protect the East Timorese, who considered themselves Indonesians based on strong cultural and ethnic connections.\(^{191}\)

Thus, the Indonesian government supported by right-wing Timorese elements quickly mobilized to quash Fretilin. Subsequently, Indonesia annexed East Timor in 1975 despite the UN resolutions calling for East Timorese self-determination. Since then, the Indonesian military cracked down harshly on the secessionist Fretilin movement. Resentment mounted as the state exploited East Timor’s resources. While the UN was clear it was against the annexation, the United States and Australia notably did not disapprove to preserve good relationships with Indonesia. In particular, Australia signed the Timor Gap Treaty with Indonesia that provided for joint exploitation of natural resources in the Timor Sea.

Mediated by the UN Secretary-General and his personal representative, negotiations between Indonesia and Portugal began in 1984. While the fight was between the Indonesian government and Fretilin, negotiations occurred with Portugal as it was recognized by the UN to be the proper authority for its colony East Timor. Indonesia also agreed to the choice of Portugal as the two nations could not agree on which party was the “legitimate representatives of East

\(^{191}\) Alatas, *The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor*, pp. 11-4.
Moreover, Portugal saw a moral obligation to restore peace in East Timor. The insurgency concluded in 1999 when East Timor was handed over to the UN following a referendum that allowed the East Timorese to determine their future. In the referendum, the East Timorese could choose to accept autonomy provided by integration or reject autonomy. The second option implied Indonesia would rescind the 1975 integration and set East Timor on the path to independence. About 78.5 percent voted to reject autonomy and subsequently the UN appointed a Transitional Administrator to prepare East Timor for statehood. East Timor finally became an independent state in 2000 and is now known as Timor-Leste.

5.2 Commitment level explanation

Mediation in stark terms is the infringement of a state’s sovereignty. Even though the UN assertively intervened in the conflict, Habibie could have exercised his sovereign right to exclude the UN out of the negotiations. However, he continued to have the UN mediate the conflict. With the UN as mediator, Habibie effectively enabled about 184 states to have a say over its domestic affairs. Given that states value sovereignty and would go to war over it, why did Habibie continue to have the UN mediating?

5.2.1 State’s perceived balance of power relative to insurgents

The situation in East Timor fits Scenario 5 in my proposed commitment framework. From the outset of the insurgency, Indonesian forces had about 15,000 troops in East Timor with the capability for reinforcements. This number swelled to more than 35,000 over the next year with the deployment of air patrol and special forces to prosecute the Fretilin insurgents, which numbered between 5,000 to 10,000. As the conflict continued, security forces were able to control most of East Timor but still faced pockets of resistance as the islands’ mountainous terrain and rebels knowledge of the geography favored the insurgency. Fretilin built bases on mountains that provided good observation posts and communications. It also established a

192 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 66.
194 Smith, Peacekeeping in East Timor: The path to independence, pp. 33-57; Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 317.
network of safe houses in the urban centers. At its peak, Indonesia had 60,000 troops on the
ground supported by local militias.\textsuperscript{197} It conducted an extensive intelligence operation and even
used the local civilians to conduct sweeps in the well-documented “fence of legs” (\textit{pagar betis})
operations.\textsuperscript{198} Despite the superiority in numbers, security forces remained unable to eliminate
the insurgents. The military was taking heavy casualties from an insurgency that was rapidly
draining the state’s limited resources. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent but the
secessionist movement could not be completely wiped out.\textsuperscript{199} When the situation descended into
an all-out clash between the pro-integration and pro-independence forces, the TNI realized it
could not stabilize the situation without the help of UN peacekeepers.\textsuperscript{200}

\textbf{5.2.2 Domestic support for peaceful resolution}

Habibie and his foreign minister, Alatas, were two policy entrepreneurs that pushed hard for
a peaceful resolution of the East Timor conflict. Assuming the presidency as a result of the AFC,
Habibie understood that reviving the economy was his top priority and that it must take place
within the context of democratization. He viewed the insurgencies in East Timor, Aceh, and
West Papua, as “three pressing national issues that had the potential to disrupt political and
economic stability, and obstruct the implementation of reform”. Furthermore, he considered the
East Timor issue to be the most important given the relentless international attention on the
matter. Consequently, he was determined to resolve the issue in a permanent and internationally
acceptable manner before the election of a new president. This would allow the new
administration to dedicate themselves to \textit{Reformasi} and focus on improving the economy.\textsuperscript{201} It
would also reduce the foreign interference in the economy, such as the World Bank suspension
of aid, in the name of East Timor.\textsuperscript{202}

The president had came to see East Timor as a burden dragging down the rest of Indonesia.
Since its incorporation, the central government consistently provided for 93 percent of East
Timor’s budget and this was many times more than what was given to other provinces. Despite
the best efforts of the Indonesian government, it continues to be seen unfavorably by the East

\textsuperscript{197} Smith, \textit{Peacekeeping in East Timor: The path to independence}, pp. 40-1.
\textsuperscript{200} Alatas, \textit{The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor}, p. 219.
\textsuperscript{201} Habibie, \textit{Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy}, pp. 131-3.
\textsuperscript{202} Ibid., p. 213.
Timorese and criticized by the international community. Consequently, the desire to have reforms proceed unimpeded and the feeling of a lack of gratitude propelled Habibie to accept the autonomy proposal suggested by Alatas. The foreign minister had first brought up the idea of granting special autonomy in the aftermath of the Santa Cruz massacre, which is discussed in the next section. With Indonesia facing mounting international pressure and the negotiations with Portugal in a logjam, Alatas thought the autonomy would be acceptable to all parties and resolve the issue for good. Suharto rejected the idea, which had contained no specific provisions, on the basis that East Timor was already being given special treatment such as greater budget. The sacrifices and deaths of thousands of East Timorese and Indonesian troops would be in vain if any more autonomy was given.

On the other hand, Habibie and his cabinet “did not give much thought to the East Timor question” and immediately accepted the proposal as a quick way out of the situation. In subsequent meetings with the Timorese resistance leaders on the provisions of autonomy, Habibie would express his agreement that almost all of their demands were reasonable and could be accommodated. A fateful letter from Australian Prime Minister John Howard made Habibie offer a second option that Alatas thought was a result of the president’s “impetuous” and “unpredictable” style. In the letter, Howard proposed granting special autonomy with a view of holding an act of self-determination after five to ten years, much like the arrangement between France and its colony New Caledonia. The letter irritated Habibie, who thought there was a “lack of appreciation by certain Western countries of the major concessions his Government has already made”. Consequently, he decided to offer an option of immediate separation in part anger and partly because he did not want to leave “time bomb” for succeeding administrations. He would later on repeatedly express that if East Timor wanted independence so much, he would just give it to them so he could concentrate on the other 26 provinces.

Habibie managed to secure the support of his entire cabinet, which continued to be preoccupied with the dire financial situation. Alatas had earlier warned the president that the

203 Habibie, Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy, pp. 362-3.
204 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 103.
205 Ibid., p. 135.
206 Habibie, Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy, p. 458.
207 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, pp. 149-50.
208 Ibid., pp. 163-4.
option would most likely face opposition from nationalists in Indonesia, military and their family, and the pro-integration East Timorese. Thus, he was surprised that even the military hardliners in the cabinet accepted the second option. The military had also not rejected to the first option of autonomy earlier. Wiranto, who was Defense Minister and concurrently the TNI commander, only urged the president to not repudiate the decree for the 1975 integration as well as orders for military operations in East Timor. This would continue to legitimize his troops presence and actions and avoid charges since they were merely acting on orders of the state.\textsuperscript{209} Alatas subsequently realized that the president and military leaders were confident the East Timorese wanted integration and would opt for autonomy. In fact, Habibie was more concerned about not giving too generous an autonomy to avoid setting a precedent for other restive provinces than the possibility that the East Timorese would vote for independence.\textsuperscript{210} Wiranto’s agreement to both options one and two could also be understood in light of the harsh international sanctions that threatened to cripple the development of the underfunded TNI.

However, Habibie gradually became worried when Alatas’s warning came true and a domestic backlash against the second option emerged. While Indonesians were previously silent on the autonomy option, they came to perceive the offering of the second option as an “abandonment” of Indonesia’s unitary policy and “betrayal” of those who have sacrificed. The public started to ask hard questions and the unhappy sentiments peaked when East Timorese overwhelmingly rejected autonomy. Habibie and the TNI were “shocked” by the result as their predictions had optimistically suggested a comfortable margin of victory. Indonesians thought Habibie had brought about “national humiliation and a loss of national pride” and that the loss of East Timor signaled the “beginning of the fragmentation of Indonesia”.\textsuperscript{211} Habibie himself was called the “Father of the Disintegration of the Nation”.\textsuperscript{212}

Similarly, legislators that had agreed to autonomy without much thought began to turn on Habibie. Their support for a peaceful resolution sank as they contemplated rejecting the result of the referendum. However, international opinion was a key consideration as the Chairman of the MPR committee responsible for drafting the decree to rescind the integration sought Alatas’s

\textsuperscript{209} Alatas, \textit{The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor}, p. 153.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid., p. 164.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid., p. 228.
\textsuperscript{212} Habibie, \textit{Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy}, p. 324
assessment of the repercussions for Indonesia’s position in the international community. Alatas warned that:

“...such a rejection would be seen as repudiation by Indonesia of its commitments as enshrined in an international agreement and as non-compliance with binding UN Security Council Resolutions. Such an act, therefore, would have far-reaching consequences, ranging from condemnation by the Security Council to the application of economic and/or political and military sanctions by the international community.”

The MPR eventually accepted the result but also issued a decree on national unity expressing “East Timor will be the only province to split from Indonesia”. Furthermore, the MPR also expressed its unhappiness towards Habibie by rejecting his accountability report. Similar to the State of the Union address, the report was an account of his policies and achievements since assuming the presidency. The East Timor issue figured heavily in the report as he tried his best to convince the MPR of his best intentions. Ultimately, the accountability report was rejected by a majority of the legislators and was a prelude to the presidential election in which they once again expressed their dissatisfaction. It is thus ironic that Habibie was incredibly determined to resolve the East Timor issue and use it as his signature achievement to stay on in the presidency.

There was also a decline in the military’s support for the UN’s presence when the organization pressured Habibie to accept peacekeepers into East Timor. Violence had escalated dramatically as pro-integration forces refused to accept the outcome and clashed with pro-independence supporters. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that Habibie declared martial law at the urging of Wiranto. Annan expressed his concern and his spokesperson announced that “the Indonesian Government had 48 hours to show that martial law was effective”. Alatas was offended by the tone of the statement and warned in return “not to issue ultimatums”. He further expressed disbelief at the idea that the Security Council could deploy a peacekeeping force as it would have “to shoot its way into East Timor”. Habibie himself knew his presidency would become untenable if he permitted foreign troops on Indonesian soil, as East Timor was technically still a province. A foreign force would also be anathema to the domestic public. Indeed, the TNI idea found the idea so repugnant that Wiranto reportedly

216 Ibid., p. 173.
confronted Habibie when it seemed the president might yield to UN pressure. The general unequivocally stated that the military would not accept the peacekeepers under any circumstances. Subsequently, the confrontation sparked fears of a coup against a president who had struggled to control the military.\textsuperscript{217} As the international community steadily exerted greater pressure on Indonesia to accept the peacekeepers, Wiranto changed his mind when he realized his troops could not contain the all-out clashes.\textsuperscript{218}

5.2.3 International pressure for peaceful resolution

International pressure played a significant role in accelerating the peace process by making it costly for the Habibie government to let the East Timor issue remain unresolved. The importance of international opinion was already a major factor during the Suharto administration. Habibie himself acknowledged that he could not afford to ignore global opinions, especially those from centers of power such as the United States, given their impact on his reform agenda. His main concern was uninterrupted international monetary aid to revive the Indonesian economy but the East Timor problem proved to be a distraction to his reform efforts.\textsuperscript{219} International pressure came in two phases with the United Nations applying pressure from the beginning and subsequently supported by major powers such as Australia and the United States. The second phase of pressure would prove instrumental in accelerating the course of events.

The UN was a constant source of pressure that kept the issue on the international agenda. In the immediate aftermath of the incorporation, the Security Council swiftly adopted Resolutions 384 and 389. Following these two resolutions, the General Assembly annually issued resolutions that urged the Security Council to keep the East Timor issue on the agenda and reaffirmed “the inalienable rights of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence, and the legitimacy of their struggle to achieve that right”. However, the Assembly’s resolutions became increasingly watered down over the years as the number of supporters decreased. The significant departure from earlier resolutions came in 1982 when the Assembly took out the reaffirmation and only called on the Secretary-General to initiate consultations.\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{218} Alatas, \textit{The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor}, p. 219.
\textsuperscript{219} Habibie, \textit{Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy}, pp. 206-8.
Even though Indonesia's occupation of East Timor was gradually losing traction on the international agenda at this period in time, it still bothered Suharto for Indonesia to be seen as a colonizer when Indonesia itself had fought a bitter struggle against the Dutch.\textsuperscript{221} It was for this reason that Suharto accepted the offer by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in 1982 to mediate the dispute between Portugal and Indonesia. Alatas initially saw no need for mediation as the resolutions were increasingly weaker and believed the issue would drop off the UN's agenda eventually. However, the Secretary-General convinced him that the process would take considerable time and Indonesia would continued to be seen in a bad light during that period.\textsuperscript{222}

When Habibie assumed the presidency, he would similarly express displeasure at the accusations of colonialism. He would reiterate that Indonesia never planned to colonize East Timor as it was against the 1945 Constitution. Instead, its incorporation into Indonesia was the wishes of Timorese.

Apart from the willingness to negotiate, the fact that Indonesia cared about international opinion was also demonstrated by the huge amount of resources poured in to make things appear normal on the ground. For instance, security forces tried to clean up the city centers, after a bloody battle from which they emerged victorious, in anticipation of a visit by the Secretary-General. The enormity of the task was best captured by the then Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Philip Habib, who described the operation as "more than a Potemkin village; it's a Disneyworld castle to construct".\textsuperscript{223} The care with which the Indonesians took was also mentioned in a declassified report by the Central Intelligence Agency, which stated "Jakarta has been more concerned about the international reaction to its invasion than about overcoming resistance in the Portuguese territory".\textsuperscript{224}

However, the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 proved to be a pivotal event that undone the efforts to portray normalcy and put the East Timor conflict back at the top of the international agenda. A Portuguese parliamentary delegation was scheduled to visit East Timor as part of the ongoing negotiations to ascertain progress on the ground. However, Portugal cancelled the visit after Indonesia objected to one of the accompanying journalists whom it considered to be pro-

\textsuperscript{221} Alatas, \textit{The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{222} Ibid., pp. 31-2.
Fretilin and anti-Indonesian. The pro-independence activists in East Timor did not take the cancellation well as they had planned to organize demonstrations during the visit to further sensationalize their cause internationally. Subsequent clashes between the pro-integration and pro-independence camps left several dead and a ceremony was planned at the Santa Cruz cemetery to mourn their deaths. The peace ceremony degenerated into violence when pro-independence activists taunted and assaulted the security forces. A report by the National Commission of Inquiry convened by the Indonesian government to investigate the incident stated that:

"...a spontaneous reaction took place among the security personnel...without command, resulting in excessive shooting at the demonstrators.... At the same time, another group of unorganized security personnel, acting outside any control or command, also fired shots and committed beatings...."

Suharto immediately expressed his regret at the incident and swiftly established the inquiry committee. Alatas was also sent to the United States, United Kingdom, France, the UN, and other major powers to explain the incident and control the fallout. However, the damage to Indonesia's international reputation was done. International journalists witnessed the shooting and British photojournalist Max Stahl even captured the entire massacre on film, which would later be made into a documentary. From the Indonesian government's perspective, the foreign media had distorted and blown the incident out of proportion. It also considered the adverse reporting to be extremely biased from the start for two reasons. First, journalists reportedly encouraged the pro-independence demonstrators so they could take photographs and videos of the protest. Second, Portugal had announced over the media about the cancellation and only informed the Secretary-General three days after the press release. It publicly blamed Indonesia for violating the "fundamental principles of the right to inform and be informed” over the objection to the pro-Fretilin journalist. The Indonesians saw this as an attempt to tarnish Indonesia’s international reputation and weaken its negotiating position. Thus, this had the effect of conditioning the media to think of Indonesia as the antagonist in the whole issue. Describing the pivotal nature of the Santa Cruz massacre, Alatas wrote that:

"...the violent Santa Cruz incident on 12 November 1991 had dealt a severe setback to Indonesia’s efforts at peacefully solving the East Timor problem, from which it would never be able to fully recover. In fact, 12 November 1991 constituted a watershed in Indonesian

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225 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 58.
226 Ibid., pp. 54-5.
diplomacy on East Timor and since that date, international support for Indonesia’s position inexorably declined while that for the independence movement in East Timor markedly increased." 227

Alatas would also bear personal costs following the massacre. The widely respected diplomat, best known for brokering peace between the Cambodian government and Khmer Rouge in 1991, was tipped to be a frontrunner for the UN Secretary-General position. However, Suharto reportedly dissuaded his foreign minister from seeking the candidacy to avoid even more international attention on the East Timor issue. 228 In the years after the Santa Cruz massacre, the international spotlight on East Timor remained. Events such as the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 to Timorese resistance leaders gave greater international legitimation to the secessionist movement.

The Santa Cruz massacre thus triggered the second wave of international pressure for a peaceful resolution, in particular the United States and Australia shifted their policy on Indonesia’s incorporation of East Timor. As noted in the earlier section, Alatas proposed granting autonomy to extricate Indonesia from the logjam in the post-Cold War geopolitical environment. Human rights and democracy have overtaken communism from the international agenda. Habibie himself was also cognizant of the declining levels of international support for the integration of East Timor and attributed that trend to the end of bipolarity in the international system. There is no such thing as permanent allies, only permanent interests.

During the Cold War, the United States, Australia, and their allies supported Suharto for his anti-communist position. These countries did not protest the violent purge of communists in 1965 that eventually propelled Suharto to power. Neither did they object to the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia. For the United States, declassified memos by Secretary of State Kissinger showed it was of utmost importance to develop “increasingly varied and close bilateral relations” with Indonesia, which was “the largest and most important non-Communist Southeast Asian state and a significant Third World country”. Moreover, the United States was also keen to maintain a presence in Southeast Asia following the setback in the Vietnam War. As “first among equals” in ASEAN, Indonesia would be valuable in anchoring an American presence in Southeast Asia. In addition, it would be an important economic partner given its strategic

227 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 64.
maritime location and abundance of oil and other natural resources.\footnote{The National Security Archive [United States of America], “East Timor revisited”, http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB62/. Accessed July 1, 2014.} Thus, when Suharto sought President Ford’s blessing for the deployment of troops in East Timor, Ford expressed his understanding and said he “will not press” the Indonesians. Kissinger also told Suharto “it is important that whatever you do succeeds quickly” as international and American opinion could become unfavorable if the conflict deteriorated. He further cautioned that the use of US-made weapons could create unhappiness within the United States, especially Congress. Nevertheless, he would not let this tie the Indonesians’ hands and would work to frame the incorporation as an act of self-defense rather than invasion.\footnote{The National Security Archive [United States of America], “East Timor revisited”.}

The concern that Congress might not be as supportive materialized in the aftermath of the Santa Cruz massacre. Congress immediately terminated US assistance to the TNI under the International Military Education Training. In the years after, Congress was more active than the White House in exerting pressure on Indonesia. It banned the export of light arms and riot control items, blocked the sale of F-16 fighter jets, and lobbied the Clinton administration to cancel military exercises with the Kopassus until conditions in East Timor improved. The pressure further increase when violence escalated after the 1999 referendum. Furthermore, Portugal also threatened it would pull out of Kosovo if the United States did not continue to support the peace process in East Timor.\footnote{Bertrand, J., \textit{Nationalism and ethnic conflict in Indonesia} (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 142, 193.} Consequently, Clinton further suspended all military-related programs and supported the World Bank’s and International Monetary Fund’s decision to suspend badly-needed aid to Indonesia. He also warned of further sanctions if Indonesia did not accept international peacekeepers.\footnote{Sutter, R. G., \textit{The United States in Asia} (Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), pp. 104-5.} In addition, some members of Congress also publicly expressed support for self-determination in East Timor. An independent UN Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation found the support of the United States to have a major effect on the actions of the Indonesians and held it responsible for not pushing for peace earlier.

It noted that:

"US supplied weaponry was crucial to Indonesia’s capacity to intensify military operations from 1977 in its massive campaigns to destroy the Resistance in which aircraft supplied by the United States played a crucial role…. US Administration officials refused to admit that the primary reasons that East Timorese were dying in their thousands was the security
policies of the Indonesian military.... In response to the massive violations that occurred in Timor-Leste in September 1999, President Clinton threw the considerable influence of the United States behind efforts to press the Indonesian Government to accept the deployment of an international force in the territory, demonstrating the considerable leverage that it could have exerted earlier had the will been there."233

Australia’s policy shift in 1998 not only had an even bigger impact on Indonesia’s East Timor policy but also affected Habibie’s presidency and regional sentiments about Australia in Southeast Asia. In the immediate aftermath of the incorporation, Australia adopted a policy of non-recognition of Indonesia’s sovereignty over East Timor. It had not opposed the invasion as a communist East Timor could enable the Soviets or Chinese to use the island as a naval base and threaten Australia.234 It was also for strategic reasons that Australia reversed the policy of non-recognition. The policy was damaging to bilateral relations with Indonesia, which could create both political and economic difficulties and threaten important Australian interests. While some Indonesian ministers agreed to separate the Timor issue from the overall bilateral relations, an increasing number of ministers and politicians had come to perceive Australia to be an “irritating, uncertain, and unpredictable element” in Southeast Asia. Consequently, as internal memos revealed, senior Australian officials urged the Fraser government to recognize the incorporation before bilateral relations deteriorate significantly and affect relations with other Southeast Asian states. Moreover, only a few countries had made statements that were “little more than ritualistic public positions” against the integration. If Australia did not reverse its position, it would “risk becoming increasingly isolated and standing against the drift of international opinions”.235 The Australian ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott, also supported the recognition stating that even the “American Government regards integration now as the only viable outcome of East Timor’s decolonization”. He noted that in a cablegram to Canberra that:

“...we are not dealing simply with the matter of living with ourselves. We are dealing with a question of living in the South East Asian region in which certain developments, which we may not necessarily have liked, have nevertheless occurred and with which other countries in the region have already come to terms.”236

233 The National Security Archive [United States of America], “East Timor revisited”.
234 Habibie, Decisive moments: Indonesia’s long road to democracy, p. 209.
236 Ibid., pp. 834-7.
Thus, Australia prioritized better relations with Indonesia over the fighting in East Timor. It steadfastly maintained its public support even after the Santa Cruz massacre. Australia reiterated that “the Indonesian annexation and acquisition of sovereignty over East Timor is irreversible”. The Australian Foreign Minister further declared that “the best way of advancing those [East Timorese] interests is through a process of dialogue and assistance within the framework of a recognition of the Indonesians’ claims over the territory”. However, there were increased demonstrations in Canberra by pro-independence supporters. These demonstrations raised greater awareness of human rights violations in East Timor among Australians, who criticized the government for its support of Indonesia. Thus, Australia subtly encouraged Indonesia to respect human rights without damaging the bilateral relations.

Australia undertook a “historic policy shift” in 1998 from recognizing the irreversibility of the incorporation to calling for a period of autonomy before eventual self-determination. The window for change was opened by the fall of the New Order regime, which ushered in a president that was eager to build up his democratic credentials. The Howard administration thought it would be a great opportunity to garner more support from the domestic public, who had consistently spoken out against the human rights situation in East Timor. Moreover, Australia could strengthen its leadership in the region if it could engineer the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Consequently, Howard wrote a letter to Habibie expressing his view that the interests of Indonesia, East Timor, and Australia were “best served by East Timor remaining part of Indonesia”. However, it would be wise to address the demand for self-determination in order to reach a long-lasting resolution of the issue. To this end, Howard suggested building “into the autonomy package a review mechanism along the lines of the Matignon Accords in New Caledonia”. As noted earlier, Habibie had immediately offered autonomy as the first option upon becoming president. The Matignon Accords, signed between France and the independence element in New Caledonia, postponed a referendum on the final status of the colony for at least

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ten years and allowed a compromise solution to be implemented in the meantime. In Howard’s view, the “successful implementation of an autonomy package with a built-in review mechanism would allow time to convince the East Timorese of the benefits of autonomy within the Indonesian Republic”. 239

While the Australians thought the letter to be understanding and would be well taken, Habibie’s reaction could not be further. An angry Habibie was mad at the example of the Matignon Accords, which compared Indonesia with France and implied Indonesia to be a colonizer like France was to New Caledonia. Moreover, Habibie felt that he had made a great deal of concession as offered in the autonomy package yet was still being attacked internationally and by a trusted partner. He immediately rejected the idea of delaying self-determination and instead he offered the second option of secession. As he reasoned:

“Why should we continue to carry the political and financial burden of governing and developing East Timor, continue to be responsible and be blamed by the world whenever something goes wrong and then, after five to ten years, only to be told by the East Timorese: ‘Thank you, but we now want to be independent’?” 240

Alatas described Habibie’s decision to be “taken in haste, from sheer frustration by those unaccustomed to the strain of international acrimony”. 241 Australia’s abrupt policy change severely strained the bilateral relations as illustrated by the abrogation of the Australia-Indonesia security agreement that had just been signed four years earlier. An Indonesian minister also told the Australian ambassador: “We are neighbors, we have to work together. But to be honest, we don’t trust you and we don’t much like you now.” Southeast Asian leaders also viewed Howard’s actions negatively. For instance, the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister publicly noted that Australia was “not sensitive to Southeast Asian feelings” while Singapore’s Senior Minister thought it was “imprudent for a prime minister to write a letter in the terms Howard did to an erratic and temporary president”. 242

The later pressures from the United States and Australia, which are both major powers and donors to Indonesia, augmented the persistent efforts of successive Secretaries-General. With pressure coming from more actors, Annan created the “Friends of the Secretary-General for East Timor” that included the United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, and New

240 Alatas, The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor, p. 149.
Zealand. Annan had established the group to provide faster technical and material assistances for the referendum without having to go through the General Assembly or Security Council. Furthermore, he wanted to pre-empt the creation of a contact group on East Timor by Australia that could potentially crowd the negotiating table and complicate matters. However, as Alatas realized subsequently, the Friends provided more than technical and material assistances but were also used by Annan to consolidate and coordinate the international pressure on Indonesia. While the first phase of international pressure by the UN helped to keep the issue on the global agenda, the second phase most notably by the United States and Australia dramatically accelerated the search for peace.

### 5.2.4 Outcome

As my framework suggests, the strength of mediator is determined by its level of resources, which enables it to perform the four roles to varying degrees. The UN competently fulfilled all four roles throughout the mediation process. While Indonesia thought the absorption of East Timor as a response to the appeals of Timorese, the UN framed the issue as colonization. This really upset the Indonesians and motivated them to engage in negotiations. Subsequently, the UN was actively involved in arranging meetings, communicating preferences, and suggesting possible options such as referendum or selective consultations. The UN clearly had the ability to assist in the implementation of the settlement as it could afford recognition, which is desired by the insurgents. In addition, the “Friends of the SG” provided the technical, material, and financial resources to carry out the agreement. The UN had also offered several times before the referendum to deploy peacekeepers to address the violence in the territory. Why did Habibie allow the UN to continue mediate knowing that it was a strong mediator? It was able to remain as the mediator during Habibie’s presidency as there were high domestic support and international pressure for peaceful resolution. On the international side, the reversal in policy by the United States and Australia not only enabled the UN to continue mediating but also accelerated the peace process. The UN, which had exerted constant pressure, skillfully multiplied the pressure by forming a “Friends of the SG”.

Before the referendum, there was high domestic support because the Indonesians were preoccupied with reviving their economy. Policy entrepreneurs, Habibie and Alatas, saw that

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244 The UN’s role as a conduit became particularly important given that Portugal had severed diplomatic ties with Indonesia and the issue was particularly sensitive domestically when the negotiations first began.
reforms could only proceed if international pressure over East Timor was taken off Indonesia's back. However, ordinary Indonesians and politicians viewed the UN mediation unfavorably after the referendum. The UN was only able to stay on because these two domestic constituents were cognizant of the international ramifications of rejecting the results. The military's reversal on the deployment of a peacekeeping force is significant as it initially refused to yield to international pressure and got the president onboard. However, it changed its mind when it realized it could not handle the situation. This supports my proposed framework in two ways. First, the military is the most decisive actor among the sources of support and pressure. Second, the military's reversal validates the assumption that the military is rational and would vary its support based on the perceived balance of strength relative to the insurgents. Thus, the commitment level explanation (H1) is valid and sufficient.

5.3 Alternative explanations

According to the ties explanation, states are more likely to seek out third parties they have ties with than those they do not have relations with. Indonesia has been a member of the UN since 1950 and interacted with the organization on the issue from the beginning of the incorporation. Subsequently, the UN actively mediated the negotiations since 1984 with a succession of three Secretaries-General taking a keen interest in the situation. These leaders are Perez de Cuellar, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and Kofi Annan. In particular, Annan had been in his role for more than a year when Habibie became the president. Moreover, the Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Alatas noted that Indonesia has been careful to accord respect to the UN. Given that the UN is a familiar actor both on the issue as well as diplomatic relations on the whole, the ties explanation (H2) is valid.

On the other hand, the supply side explanation suggests that the choice of mediators is based on availability. Third parties would only care to mediate if they are interested in the issue. The involvement of the UN could be traced back to when Portugal requested the Security Council to convene in 1975 over Indonesia's incorporation of East Timor. Subsequently, the Security Council adopted Resolution 384 that expressed regret at the failure of Portugal to discharge its responsibilities as East Timor's administering authority and also called on Indonesia to

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245 Alatas, *The pebble in the shoe: The diplomatic struggle for East Timor*, p. xii.
246 Ibid., p. 46.
immediately withdraw its forces.\textsuperscript{247} The Council also swiftly passed Resolution 389 in April 1976 that authorized the Secretary-General to continue observing the developments on the ground.\textsuperscript{248} In 1982, the General Assembly adopted a resolution that called on the Secretary-General to “initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem”.\textsuperscript{249} Perez de Cuellar acted on this clause to bring Portugal and Indonesia to the negotiating table. This implied mediatory role would prove useful as Portugal had cut diplomatic ties with Indonesia following the incorporation. Successive Secretaries-General were similarly eager in the peace process. Annan was especially active in putting together pressure on Indonesia to the extent that one UN official described him as “the desk officer for East Timor”.\textsuperscript{250}

The supply side argument also explains why ASEAN or its members were not involved in the mediation. ASEAN was established under a geopolitical environment in which member states that had struggled for independence were once again used as proxies to advance the interests of major powers. Furthermore, states in the region were engaged in political and territorial disputes that often led to the use of force. The region was thus unfavorable for the economic developments that members desired. Consequently, ASEAN adopted the principles of mutual respect and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states.\textsuperscript{251} Thus, they hesitated to say or do anything that might be construed as interfering in the internal affairs of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{252} Moreover, the members feared that the separation of East Timor could trigger other secessionist movements in the very ethnically diverse Indonesia. In turn, this would create regional instability as mini-island states become engaged in ethnic rivalries. Key ASEAN leaders stated that “nobody wants and nobody sees any benefit in the breaking up of Indonesia”.\textsuperscript{253} Arguably, the ASEAN states also had their hands full in dealing with the 1997 financial crisis. The crisis was triggered by the collapse of the Thai Baht, which sent shockwaves across the region. ASEAN

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{249} United Nations, “37/30 Question of East Timor”.
\bibitem{250} Robinson, G., \textit{If you leave us here, we will die}: How genocide was stopped in East Timor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 191-2.
\end{thebibliography}
states had to manage the fallout and some even sought foreign aid.\footnote{Goldstein, M., *The Asian financial crisis: Causes, cures, and systemic implications* (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 1998), pp. 7-22.} Thus, the supply side explanation (H3) is valid.

Both the ties and supply side explanations are useful in understanding why a committed Habibie picked the UN given that there are numerous potentially strong mediators. However, while both explanations sufficiently account for the choice of the UN, they are secondary to my commitment level explanation as they do not address the sovereignty puzzle.

5.4 Conclusion

Figure 10: Level of commitment framework applied to mediation by the UN

What explains Habibie’s decision to have the UN continue mediating? The commitment level framework provides more than an explanation for the choice of mediators but also elucidates the acceleration in the peace process by drawing out the dynamics between domestic and international actors within the context of the situation on the ground. As Figure 10 shows, there was high domestic support for a peaceful resolution. Indonesians were suffering after the AFC and focused on getting the economy back in order. Habibie had consented to the UN’s continued involvement because he wanted to get its pressure off his back so he could concentrate on reforms and reviving the economy. The military adopted a low profile in a bid to salvage its tarnished image and also supported the peace process. Both Habibie and the military believed the
East Timorese would want to stay in Indonesia. Subsequent policy reversals by the United States and Australia further pushed Habibie to offer the radical idea of separation. International pressure was also instrumental in making the Indonesian public accept the result of the referendum. Ordinary Indonesians and politicians wanted to reject the result but were warned of the severe repercussions of doing so. Similarly, the military’s support for continued UN presence dropped after the referendum. Habibie had to refuse the UN’s offer to deploy peacekeepers because the military was strongly against the idea. The president himself also saw this as an incursion into Indonesian sovereignty. Subsequently, the TNI’s support rebounded when it realized it could not handle the worsening situation on the ground without the UN’s help. Peacekeepers were finally allowed in. The change in the military’s support shows that the military is the most decisive actor, especially when the civilian leaders are unable to control it. Furthermore, this incident also demonstrates the limits of international pressure. Finally, conditions on the ground can change the rational military’s concern with sovereignty.

The ties explanation validly suggests that the UN was a familiar actor in the search for peace having been involved since 1984. Moreover, Indonesia is a member of the UN and this creates a shadow of the future effect on the interactions between the two. Thus, the preexisting deep interactions make it reasonable for the UN to continue mediating. Similarly, the supply side explanation validly points out that successive UN Secretaries-General took it upon themselves to find a peaceful solution to the insurgency. Indeed, these alternative explanations sufficiently account for the choice of the UN mediator. However, they are still secondary to my commitment level explanation as they do not address the underlying sovereignty puzzle. The UN might have offered to continue mediating but Habibie had the sovereign right to refuse. This is most clearly illustrated when Alatas warned that the UN peacekeepers would have to shoot their way into Indonesia without the government’s blessings.

The turn of events in East Timor hardened the Indonesians’ attitude towards the secessionist movements in Aceh and West Papua. Indonesians would not tolerate the breakup of the unitary republic. While the Aceh insurgency has been resolved, the conflict in West Papua continues. The different outcomes are addressed in the next two chapters.

"Peace in Aceh was a priority that I publicly set for myself during last year’s presidential campaign and after my government took office in October. But real political opportunity came knocking only after the tsunami last December." 255


The second case study looks at the Aceh insurgency, which started in 1976 and concluded in 2005. The central question in this case is what explains the variation in mediators over the course of the peace process? The chapter is organized in four main sections. The first section presents a background of the insurgency while second and third sections apply the commitment level framework to the mediation by HDC and CMI respectively. Finally, the alternative explanations are considered in the fourth section.

6.1 Background of the insurgency

Aceh was originally an independent sultanate until the Dutch colonized it along with the other islands that comprise modern day Indonesia. Unlike East Timor and West Papua, Aceh is part of the group of islands that declared itself an independent Indonesian state. However, it has a troubled history with the Javanese center. As a condition for joining Indonesia, the Acehnese had demanded equitable treatment and autonomy for its contribution to the struggle against the Dutch. The Acehnese, which practiced a more conservative form of Islam, saw themselves as distinct from the secular Javanese. The special treatment was short-lived as Jakarta administratively subsumed Aceh under the North Sumatra province a year later. Feeling betrayed and angered by the center’s “Javanization” program, the Acehnese staged a rebellion in 1953 that was only quelled when the Sukarno government restored Aceh’s special status. The center also promised more equitable treatment and better socio-economic standards. What emerged from the rebellion was a stronger Acehnese identity and the belief that Aceh is distinct from the rest of the country. It was also this belief that led to the 1976 Aceh insurgency.

Suharto’s New Order regime rescinded the special treatment given to Aceh. It sought to strengthen its rule over the once renegade territory by aggressively deploying troops that permeated every level of society and introduced more Javanese into Aceh. The state’s exploitation of Aceh’s natural resources in collusion with foreign capital continued under Suharto. Even though Aceh contributes nearly a quarter of Indonesia’s total gas and oil output, it

remains one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia. As a result of the state’s harsh treatment and unfair policies, the Acehnese formed the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) to fight for independence. The state responded forcefully by declaring Aceh a “Military Operations Area”. Martial law was introduced and a large-scale counterinsurgency campaign was underway. The government finally entered into peace talks with the insurgents in 1999 mediated by HDC. However, the peace talks failed in 2003 and both sides resumed fighting.

Negotiations finally reopened with CMI as the mediator two years later. The insurgency was peacefully resolved after almost 30 years with the conclusion of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding in 2005. Under the agreement, Aceh was to be granted special autonomy that included the right to establish political parties and participate in elections. Non-organic territorial forces would be withdrawn and amnesties for rebellion given. In return, GAM was to be completely disarmed and it would recognize Indonesia’s sovereignty over Aceh. Furthermore, an Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) formed by the European Union (EU) and ASEAN troops would ensure both combatants abide by the agreement. At the time the Memorandum was signed, Aceh remained one of the poorest provinces with an inflation rate of 17 percent compared to the 7 percent in other provinces.


In examining the mediation by HDC, two sets of questions about its initial involvement and subsequent continuation in the peace process must be asked. First, why did Wahid decide to negotiate after the military approach has been applied for so long? Moreover, why was a new and untested non-governmental organization (NGO) chosen as mediator if negotiations had been so important to Wahid?

Second, why did Wahid and Megawati continue to have HDC mediate when the NGO proved to be a weak mediator? Observers such as human rights NGOs saw inherent weaknesses in the way the peace process was organized. For instance, the committees that were established to implement the Humanitarian Pause did not have any power to punish violations, which occurred as soon as the ceasefire began. Acts of violence such as forced disappearances, summary executions, and armed clashes continued as both disputants used the opportunity to


257 The TNI insisted on the more politically acceptable term “Humanitarian Pause” as “ceasefire” implied that the insurgents were belligerents equal in status to itself.
reorganize themselves. These actions impeded the delivery of humanitarian aid and led observers to call for UN involvement or the presence of a stronger third party with the capacity to "monitor, enforce, and punish violations of the pause".\textsuperscript{258} Thus, the incumbents' commitment to negotiations must be looked at to explain HDC's continued presence.

6.2.1 State's perceived balance of power relative to insurgents

The insurgency was at Scenario 3 during the period of HDC's mediation. Prior to the onset of the mediation, the military was reeling from the collapse of the New Order era. It was particularly sensitive to the use of force as the public saw it as an apparatus for repression. Moreover, there were increasing allegations of grave human rights violations. However, the military gradually recovered its tarnished reputation and exercised its influence once again. Troop levels continually increased to unprecedented levels. However, the security forces remained incapable of fully defeating the insurgents and had suffered casualties. For instance, about 30,000 security forces were deployed to combat the 3,000 GAM insurgents by the middle of 2001. Despite the 10 to 1 numerical superiority, the poorly disciplined and organized incumbents made little progress. Nevertheless, they believed in eventual victory, especially after the assassination of GAM's military commander Abdullah Syafi’ie in 2002. Military leaders believed this weakened the morale of the insurgents.\textsuperscript{259}

6.2.2 Domestic support for peaceful resolution

Following the East Timor referendum in which the Timorese voted for secession, the Aceh insurgency became Jakarta’s most important domestic problem. Wahid emerged as the policy entrepreneur who sought to change the current course of repressive military action. His reconciliatory position on the issue was a departure from his predecessors and it is easy to see why the military had doubted the president was in the “right state of mind”. Apart from releasing political prisoners and withdrawing extra-territorial troops, Wahid even launched investigations into human rights abuses in Aceh. This threatened to further undermine the military’s tarnished reputation and had the effect of straining Wahid’s relationship with the military.

It was Wahid’s personal belief that negotiations would result in peace if given enough time and patience. The insurgents are not enemies of the state but “brothers of a different political


\textsuperscript{259} Miller, M. A., \textit{Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh} (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 105 and 112.

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persuasion”.\textsuperscript{260} It was in this belief that Wahid had previously supported a referendum by the Acehnese. As Wahid explained in an interview:

“Requests by the Acehnese for a referendum are reasonable. Why not? Whatever the final decision of the Acehnese people, it must be honored. If there was a referendum in East Timor, why should there not be one in Aceh? That would be unfair. But I’m sure they won’t leave the country. I know the Acehnese people.”\textsuperscript{261}

To this end, Wahid decided to open negotiations with GAM. However, his initial attempts were rebuffed by the insurgents, who did not trust Wahid for the state’s history of force against them. Wahid also had problems identifying the insurgent leadership for negotiations as a result of the brief splintering of GAM.\textsuperscript{262} Thus, when HDC volunteered to mediate, Wahid immediately accepted the offer. The insurgents were willing to negotiate with international mediators for two reasons. First, the Acehnese did not trust the incumbents to credibly commit to a peace deal given the history of exploitation and broken promises. Second, the insurgents wanted international recognition and support for their secessionist cause. International attention would make it harder for the Indonesian government to renege on any settlement.

Wahid was also quick to accept the offer and not look for other mediators because his plans had little domestic support. While a few of his non-military cabinet ministers and him believed an internationally mediated peace process would ward off Aceh’s secession, the other three groups of domestic actors disagreed. The insurgents had argued that “if East Timor was granted the right to vote on its future, then there is no reason Aceh should not be next”. This led to a flurry of news headlines that ominously warned “Indonesia was falling apart”.\textsuperscript{263} Indonesians saw Aceh as an important territory not only for its resources but also its symbolic meaning to the Indonesian state. Aceh had played a critical role in resisting the Dutch and is part of Indonesia’s independence story. Moreover, Aceh was considered the bastion of Malay culture and national identity. Thus, the attitude of Indonesians towards the Acehnese hardened after the East Timor referendum. Prior to the referendum, the Acehnese were seen as victims who suffered under Suharto’s repressive regime. In contrast, they were seen as “perennial troublemakers” who were

\textsuperscript{260} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid., p. 59.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., p. 78.
\textsuperscript{263} Walter, Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent, pp. 155-6.
not grateful after the state has accommodated them so much such as by giving special autonomy.\textsuperscript{264} The public’s support for military action strengthened as violence escalated in Aceh.

Political leaders believed rebellions should not be accommodated and also supported the use of force to keep the country built with “blood, sweat, and tears” together. They declared that the Acehnese would “suffer a beating” and were extremely critical of the peace process.\textsuperscript{265} Wahid’s slow management of the sectarian conflict in Maluku added to the unhappiness of the politicians.\textsuperscript{266} On the HDC peace process, the main objection they raised was the involvement of an international actor in a domestic affair. By negotiating with GAM in Geneva, this could attract greater international attention that could bring about more pressure from abroad. This was indeed GAM’s strategy. As Syafi’ie explained, a peace agreement in Geneva was just half the way to independence. Instead of guns and bombs, the rest of the fight would be fought with political and diplomatic efforts.\textsuperscript{267} In addition, the politicians were also displeased by the government’s level of representation at the peace talks. Wahid had sent the Indonesia’s UN ambassador and the politicians thought this legitimized the insurgents as a state actor. GAM would be seen as equal to the Indonesian government while its military wing was the TNI’s counterpart.

Similarly, the military was consistently opposed to making overtures of peace for fears Aceh would go down the road of East Timor and other restive provinces would follow suit.\textsuperscript{268} Given that the military is the most decisive domestic actor, the ability of Wahid to control the TNI explains the level of overall domestic support for peaceful resolution. Early in Wahid’s presidency, the military was under strong pressure to withdraw from political life and the president had implemented reforms such as the appointment of the first civilian defense minister and ordered the retirement of ministers who were still on active duty in the TNI. However, the generals still exercised considerable influence in the background as described in Chapter 4. Given the unfavorable domestic situation, the TNI decided to publicly support the president while working to undermine his efforts.\textsuperscript{269} It was under such an atmosphere that Wahid ordered the withdrawal of non-organic troops and initiated peace talks with the insurgents. The peace

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{264} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 59-60, 83.
\textsuperscript{265} Walter, Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent, pp. 163-4.
\textsuperscript{267} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{269} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 71.
\end{footnotesize}
talks faced difficulties from the beginning, which Wahid and supporters of the process believed to be attempts by the security forces to undermine the process. For instance, security forces assaulted about 20 Acehnese in the process of hunting down Syafi’ie, whom Wahid had the intention of engaging in peace talks with. Security forces eventually cited miscommunications for the raid on Syafi’ie.\textsuperscript{270}

While domestic support was low at the beginning of the peace talks, it plunged when supportive leaders were replaced by hawks and even Wahid himself gradually abandoned the peace process. One of these leaders was the civilian defense minister, Juwono, who was a strong proponent of \textit{Reformasi}. Juwono had boldly proposed to dismantle the territorial command system beginning in Aceh. He reasoned that the TNI was “the most sensitive to the civilians [Acehnese]” and its reformation could alleviate the climate of hostility. However, Juwono suffered a stroke and was replaced by Mahfud Mahmodin, who had no knowledge or experience in defense issues. Instead, he was appointed by Wahid based on personal connection and his appointment proved detrimental to the peace process. Even though Mahfud was a civilian, he was such a staunch proponent of the military approach in Aceh that one politician described him to be “more military than the military”. Apart from Mahfud, other key cabinet members who supported the use of force included Vice President Megawati and Coordinating Minister for Political, Social, and Security Affairs Yudhoyono.\textsuperscript{271}

Wahid had intended to use the negotiations as an attempt to exert civilian control of the military. However, his attempt faltered and he even turned to the military for support when he faced impeachment by the MPR on charges of corruption. To defuse the mounting political crisis, Wahid delegated the duty of running the country to Megawati and this effectively hardened the incumbents’ position against the insurgents. Wahid’s loosening of control over the military was apparent from the TNI’s blatant disregard of the Humanitarian Pause that was signed in 2000. One military commander even declared that COIN operations would continue as usual under his command. With Wahid increasingly marginalized on the Aceh issue, the cabinet and military adopted a comprehensive approach proposed by Yudhoyono. The military would continue to abide by the Humanitarian Pause to convince the insurgents of the government’s good intention and persuade them to stop fighting. However, security operations would not stop as long as

\textsuperscript{270} Miller, \textit{Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh}, p. 79.
\textsuperscript{271} Ibid., pp. 60-6.
attacks on government forces continued. As Yudhoyono explained, “the government will not hesitate to take stern measures against anyone breaking the rules”. The belief underlying this persuasive-repressive policy, as argued by Mahfud, was that “if we [the security forces] act firmly and forcefully for just a short while, we may be able to convince the rebels that a dialogue is the best way to settle the problems of Aceh”. 272 Any viable hope for a peaceful resolution also diminished when Wahid, the political entrepreneur, supported the dual-track approach. Wahid hoped to gain the TNI’s support by giving in to its demands for more COIN operations. Moreover, his action would deflect attention away from his corruption scandals.

While negotiations were made possible under Wahid, they increasingly faltered under Megawati’s administration. Ordinary Indonesians and politicians continued to see the Acehnese as ingratiates and supported the increased use of military force when insurgent attacks escalated. What really brought domestic support for peaceful resolution to a new low was the dominance of military and civilian hawks during the Megawati administration. As noted earlier, Megawati was a staunch nationalist. She was reportedly “still bitter” over the breakup of East Timor from the nation her father had fought to build. 273 While she supported peace talks, in part because of international pressure, it was more rhetoric than tangible actions. Ceasefire violations happened with greater frequency as her administration preferred the traditional security approach to talks and accommodation.

Even though Megawati was a staunch nationalist, it was really her dependence on the military and passive leadership that allowed the military and civilian hawks to determine the state’s response. Megawati was slow on reforms and generally refrained from interfering in the TNI’s affairs unlike her predecessor. 274 Thus, when Megawati had to placate international pressure and resisted some of the military’s demands, the military was “not bothered”. Some TNI officers commented that “the most important thing is Ibu Mega, unlike Gus Dur [Wahid], seems to better understand the sensitivities of the military”. 275

Indeed, Megawati awarded key positions in her cabinet to pro-military civilians and retired military hardliners. Furthermore, she empowered her ministers to make most of the decisions. Critics argued that she had “no strategy of how she wants to run the country” and one minister

272 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 81-3.
273 Ibid., p. 105.
274 Mietzner, The politics of military reform in post-Suharto Indonesia: Elite conflict, nationalism, and institutional resistance, p. 34.
even commented that her passiveness would help her stay in power because “she doesn’t do enough to create annoyances”. Thus, the comprehensive approach continued under Yudhoyono, who retained the position of Coordinating Minister for Political, Social, and Security Affairs. The military brass became increasingly outspoken about their doubts on the insurgents’ sincerity for negotiations and publicly declared their preference for force. For instance, the TNI commander said he was trained for war, not negotiations, and so would use force to end the insurgency. The Kostrad commander also announced that there should be “no more dialogue...the rebellion has to be crushed”.

6.2.3 International pressure for peaceful resolution

While Wahid was driven by a personal belief in negotiations, his initiation of peace talks were also meant to strengthen his democratic credentials abroad. International pressure played an even significant role by ensuring peace talks continued despite the increased intensity of COIN operations. The two main sources of international pressure came from donor states and major powers, which were also donors to the Indonesian government.

The United States was interested in a peaceful resolution for two reasons. First, it was generally keen to develop closer bilateral military relations with an eye on securing Indonesia’s support for the war on terrorism. As the country with the world’s largest Muslim population, Indonesia’s support was important to deflect criticism that the Bush administration’s campaign was actually an attack on Islam. Moreover, the closer relations would enable the United States to aid Indonesia’s efforts to eradicate domestic terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah that had links with al-Qaeda. To this end, the United States would fund training programs for the TNI and POLRI. However, the Bush administration was concerned the warming relations would stall as the TNI came under increasing allegations of human rights violations in Aceh. What happened during the Clinton administration over East Timor would repeat itself. Second, the United States had invested heavily in oil and natural gas in Aceh and was concerned that the deteriorating situation would disrupt the production.

Consequently, the United States encouraged the revival and continuation of the peace process. It signaled its interest by sending high-level State Department officials to persuade the Indonesian government and GAM to pursue peace talks. When the ceasefires were repeatedly

276 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 103.
277 Ibid., p. 117.
278 Ibid., p. 112.
broken, the Bush administration warned Megawati of a possible “hardening of Congressional
attitudes" if Indonesia completely withdrew from the peace process.279 Secretary of State Colin
Powell also withheld $50 million in funding for the TNI and POLRI until Megawati promised to
continue with the reformation of the military. While Megawati acknowledged the strong US
pressure, she held out that the government would not negotiate indefinitely.280

Apart from the United States, the United Kingdom was also concerned that the escalation of
violence would dampen the warm bilateral military relations. It would be difficult to stay on
friendly terms if the Indonesian security forces continued the harsh repression in Aceh.
Furthermore, the British was also disturbed by the use of 10 British Hawk jets in Aceh for
Operation Flying Dagger.281 When the British ambassador to Indonesia approached Yudhoyono
to express his concerns that British military equipment were being used for internal repression,
Yudhoyono attempted to placate the ambassador by explaining the aircrafts were used to conduct
reconnaissance over Western Indonesia to ward off piracy attacks in the Straits of Malacca. The
British was unsatisfied and warned that it would continue to monitor the usage of the fighter jets.
The effect the warning had on the Indonesians was apparent when American Bronco jets were
used instead in the sequel to Operation Flying Dagger.282

Pressure from international donors also helped to sustain the hobbling peace process. Both
disputants had planned to sign a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) on 9 December
2002 and the Japanese government thought international support could encourage momentum for
the agreement.283 Thus, it convened the largest group of donors known as the Tokyo Conference
on Peace and Reconstruction in Aceh on 3 December 2002. Its members included the United
States, Japan, EU, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and United Nations Office for the
Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.284 The group pledged to fund reconstruction and

279 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 119.
280 Ibid., pp. 112 and 9.
281 Operation Flying Dagger (Operasi Rencong Terbang) was a 60-day air campaign with the aims of protecting
Indonesia’s gas and oil industries and other vital economic interests, monitoring the use of airspace in Aceh and
North Sumatra, and restoring security in Aceh. Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and
autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 119.
282 The Indonesian air force described the second round of air operations as “both directly and indirectly...related to
the TNI operation” to “administer shock therapy to GAM”. Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s
security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 119.
283 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [Japan], “The preparatory conference on peace and reconstruction in Aceh”,
284 The conference was attended by more than 70 representatives from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany,
Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United
development projects and provide humanitarian aid through the establishment of an Aceh trust fund if a peace deal could be reached. Indonesia could not afford to alienate this economically powerful bloc of actors and pass up the opportunity for foreign funding. On the part of the insurgents, they became interested in negotiating as the international spotlight became brighter. This led to a break through in the peace process with the signing of the CoHA on 9 December 2002. In a later instance, Megawati had withdrawn negotiators from another round of peace talks after the insurgents insisted on changing the date of the meeting. As she was prepared to order new COIN operations, the American and Japanese ambassadors intervened and spoke with Megawati and her vice president respectively. This led Megawati to halt the operations and grudgingly consented to the later meeting.285

6.2.4 Outcome

HDC was able to mediate in the first place, not only because it offered to, but also mainly because Wahid had the intention to negotiate but faced difficulties in talking to the insurgents. GAM distrusted Wahid and wanted international attention. Moreover, while Wahid was able to exert some degree of control over the military, the rest of the domestic constituents were generally not supportive of negotiation. Wahid did not have the luxury to look for other mediators and thus settled for HDC.

The already low domestic support for peace talks plunged when Wahid faced political challenges and looked to the military for help. This enabled the military to enjoy greater freedom in intensifying military action and the trend continued with an even amenable Megawati. However, international pressure helped to keep the disputants at the negotiating table. Thus, Wahid and Megawati needed to continue the peace process, albeit half-heartedly, to satisfy the international community. HDC’s weak mediation power would serve their comprehensive approach. The NGO was able to get the peace talks started, communicate information, and even managed to arrange two ceasefires in 2000 and 2002. However, HDC proved to be a weak mediator when it could not expand the set of acceptable outcomes. It had concentrated its efforts on arranging ceasefires purely for the delivery of humanitarian aid without discussing the demands or related issues. Even then, it was not able to monitor the ceasefires and deal with


violations. Consequently, Wahid and Megawati could tout the presence of HDC as an effort towards peace while the TNI could exploit the mediator’s weak monitoring capability to take attack the insurgents.

This tactic culminated in 2003 when the Megawati administration decided to withdraw from the peace process in a manner acceptable to the international community. Despite the CoHA, violence had escalated over the months with both disputants blaming the other for provoking the attacks. The Joint Security Committee (JSC), which was established by HDC and staffed by retired Filipino and Thai soldiers, was unable to control the violations. Its offices were burnt down and the observers were withdrawn. Jakarta accused the insurgents of being “in material breach” of the ceasefire and the use of the term “material breach” was intended to appeal to the major powers. The United States and UN had previously used the term in 2002 to condemn Iraq for not complying with disarmament obligations. Citing the escalating violence and the inability of the JSC to resolve the situation, the Megawati administration called for an emergency meeting with the insurgents and put forth unrealistic demands. GAM expectedly rejected the new conditions and Jakarta announced it had exhausted all means of peacefully resolving the conflict. The government’s perception that HDC was a weak mediator was confirmed by the immediate declaration of martial law on the day the emergency meeting collapsed. A “shock and awe” operation was also conducted the next day consisting of a massive surge of 30,000 TNI soldiers and 14,000 POLRI troops, rocket attacks, and aerial support. It was unlikely for this huge amount of firepower to be moved overnight and could only suggest that the Megawati administration was confident the ceasefire would not hold and the peace process would breakdown. Therefore, Wahid and Megawati had strategically chosen a weak mediator to placate the international community while retaining the ability to pursue the military option. The commitment to negotiations explanation (H1) is valid and sufficient.

6.3 Commitment level explanation: Mediation by CMI (2005)

Following the breakdown in negotiations in 2003, Megawati imposed martial law in Aceh and only downgraded the status to civil emergency rule in May 2004. The TNI conducted intensive COIN operations for two years and seriously degraded the fighting capabilities of

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286 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 80-2.  
288 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 123-5.
GAM. Security forces regained control of the city centers and drove the insurgents into the countryside. They also surpassed the declared goal of disarming 5,251 rebels by capturing 5,871 rebels. While regaining control of the populated areas was a big victory and key goal of COIN, the TNI was not able to fully eliminate the insurgency that now persists in the rural areas. Days before the tsunami, Aceh’s territorial commander indicated that the military operation will continue to crush the remaining 2,500 GAM insurgents armed with 844 guns. In contrast, the state had about 30,000 TNI troops and 18,000 POLRI officers. This number of security forces was unprecedented and comprised organic territorial troops as well as augmentees from other Kodams. Given that the incumbents appear more than capable of fighting a protracted conflict, why did Yudhoyono choose to renew negotiations with a stronger mediator in the form of CMI instead of HDC? Why was CMI able to stay on as mediator and see the negotiations to fruition?

6.3.1 State’s perceived balance of power relative to insurgents

Commitment for renewed negotiations could be largely attributed to a fortuitous event in December 2004 that shifted the state of insurgency out of Scenario 3 to a situation best described by Scenario 5. On December 26, 2004, Aceh was struck by a tremendous tsunami caused by a 9.1-magnitude underwater earthquake. Over 170,000 people died and homes along the coastline were literally wiped away. More than 500,000 Indonesians were left homeless and the damage totaled $4.5 billion. As a comparison, decades of fighting have killed more than 15,000 and displaced thousands. The huge death toll and horrifying destruction by the sudden event jolted both the domestic and international community.

The military was hit especially hard by the tsunami. While the TNI did not admit its casualty figures, analysts reported a death toll of at least 10,000 troops with some units entirely wiped out and an entire hierarchy of commanders perished in the tsunami. Communications were also disrupted and facilities damaged. To describe the TNI as being decimated by the tsunami is “probably a technical understatement”. Indonesia had to depend on foreign militaries to conduct disaster relief operations as the TNI was “below strength, under equipped, and under

289 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 125.
290 Ibid., pp. 149-50.
trained”. Thus, the tsunami temporarily took the edge off of the military’s capacity to fight. However, the military deployed an additional 12,000 troops the following month to other areas of Aceh not struck by the tsunami.

6.3.2 Domestic support for peaceful resolution

Yudhoyono had put together a cabinet that was cohesive, if not supportive of peace talks with the GAM. For instance, the post of Coordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Security was filled by retired Admiral Widodo Adi Sutjipto, who was the TNI commander under Wahid and Megawati. During his tenure as the TNI commander, he had supervised intensive COIN operations against GAM. Widodo was also a long-time ally and friend of Yudhoyono. In his new ministerial position, Widodo avoided publicly contradicting the president and even declared support for the peace process. His relationship with the president stands in contrast to that with Wahid, whose orders to fire the TNI spokesperson he resisted. The appointment of Minister for Home Affairs was also significant given its responsibility of domestic governance and control of the POLRI. It was given to another Yudhoyono loyalist, retired Lieutenant General Mochtar Ma’ruf, who was also a member of the reform-minded officer corps. Ma’ruf held a clean human rights record and was previously sacked from the TNI for refusing to participate in the attack against Megawati’s supporters. On the whole, Yudhoyono was able to put his house in order by appointing capable loyalists with the necessary experience and expertise to the cabinet. The appointment of loyalists to key positions is not new in Indonesia. However, what was different was that ministers have to sign contracts that were renewed annually based on indicators such as performance and allegations of corruption.

The Indonesian government was more willing to negotiate under Yudhoyono, who thought the tsunami created an opportunity to reach a compromise. The Acehnese could put an end to their suffering and receive help to rebuild their homeland. On the other hand, the military and politicians would be satisfied that the unity of Indonesia is preserved. To this end, Yudhoyono had Vice President Jusuf Kalla personally oversee the mediation efforts. Kalla was the other policy entrepreneur in this situation. Known for his ideological commitment to peacefully

295 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 151-2.
296 Yudhoyono, S. B., “Peace deal with Aceh is just a beginning”. 127
resolving conflicts, Kalla had previously facilitated talks to put an end to sectarian violence in restive provinces such as Maluku, Ambon, and Sulawesi. When he was still Megawati’s Coordination Minister of People’s Welfare, Kalla also had secret informal meetings with trusted intermediaries to explore ways to restart the Aceh peace talks. Considering the peace talks were not part of his ministerial portfolio, this initiative emphasizes his conflict management credentials and was one of the three reasons why Yudhoyono chose Kalla.\textsuperscript{297} The vice president was also an ideal candidate given his non-military background. Furthermore, as the chairman of the ruling party in the MPR, he would be in a better position to persuade legislators to support a settlement.\textsuperscript{298}

Even though a policy entrepreneur had emerged and the cabinet was supportive, they only formed one half of the sources of domestic support. Any overtures for peace still had to depend on overcoming military resistance and courting the support of Indonesians. By the time Yudhoyono entered office in 2004, Aceh had receded from being a major political issue for the nation. Ordinary Indonesians were satisfied with the course of action taken by Wahid and Megawati who had sought peace and generously offered special autonomy to Aceh. Thus, there were high levels of national support for martial law and emergency rule when the HDC-mediated talks broke down and hostilities resumed. The insurgents were seen as “ingrates with an unrealistic set of expectations”.\textsuperscript{299} Even though Yudhoyono pledged to bring peace to Aceh during the elections, he did not deviate from the current approach beyond appointing Kalla to explore means to revive the peace talks. No troops were withdrawn and no amnesty was granted to Acehnese political prisoners. He also did not apologize for the human rights violations or order probes into these violations. In fact, he actually extended the civil emergency status by six months with monthly review of the status. There were other more pressing issues such as the economy and Yudhoyono himself admitted that he had no “specific agenda in Aceh” other than the efforts by Kalla.\textsuperscript{300}

The military approach persisted until the fateful tsunami devastated Aceh and triggered a change of heart among the insurgents and ordinary Indonesians. GAM unilaterally announced a ceasefire to enable aid workers to collect the bodies and help the survivors. Furthermore, the

\textsuperscript{297} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 151.

\textsuperscript{298} Kingsbury, Aceh: A personal account of the Helsinki peace process, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{299} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{300} Ibid., p. 154.

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tsunami shocked the insurgent leadership so much they were resolved to avoid further bloodshed in the aftermath of the tsunami. The tsunami had acted as a “circuit breaker” that stopped the recurrent conflict and provided the space for both incumbents and insurgents to assess the direction of the conflict. 301 It was also momentous in that GAM was already leaning towards negotiations before the tsunami had struck. Months of low-key informal meetings by Kalla and his intermediaries had secured help from CMI to mediate the peace talks. After the tsunami, GAM gave up whatever reservations they had about negotiations. Thus, both parties wanted to negotiate but were wary that peace talks could be exploited to prepare for later offensives as had happened so often under HDC. 302 The solution was to get a strong mediator that could enforce the negotiated peace deal. The fact that CMI was a strong mediator was also instrumental in renewing negotiations. With a former president as the mediator, GAM attained its demand for international attention. Moreover, CMI offered a new and non-Indonesian structure for negotiations, which HDC was not able to provide. A key aspect was to hold the peace talks in Helsinki. 303

Domestic sentiments on the whole were supportive of negotiations as they felt pity for those suffering and were reluctant to fight when the international spotlight was on Aceh. Some scholars observed that “sadness seemed to bury the will to fight”. 304 Moreover, the tsunami gave the domestic elites the pretext to settle for peace without being seen as reversing their position against making concessions. 305 As the Minister for Justice and Human Rights Hamid Awaluddin explained, “it’s all about the lives of so many people”. 306 The larger frame of humanitarian assistance overshadowed the perennial perception that Aceh was a secessionist province, which required a hammer and nail approach.

As my framework proposed, the support of the TNI is the most critical factor determining the incidence and success of peace talks. Even though the politicians and public were supportive of negotiations and there was a passionate policy entrepreneur, the TNI could potentially undermine the process simply by deploying troops and ramping up tensions. Furthermore, the

301 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 155.
303 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, pp. 155-6.
306 Saraswati, M. S., “It’s about the lives of so many people”, The Jakarta Post, August 18, 2005.
TNI knew the civilian leaders could not afford to alienate the institution if they seek to remain in power. Indeed, the TNI continued to favor the military approach despite the huge number of TNI troops and Acehnese killed in the tsunami. As foreign humanitarian assistance poured into Aceh, the TNI sought to control the internationalization of the insurgency by confining the movements of relief workers to areas struck by the tsunami. All foreigners had to obtain permission before venturing out of Banda Aceh and Meluaboh and the TNI also limited media coverage of the tsunami. These proved to be mammoth tasks as more than 3,000 foreign troops, 2,000 foreign civilian aid workers, and numerous journalists descended on Aceh. While the TNI struggled to contain the impact of foreign presence, it showed no signs of stopping the COIN campaign in other parts of Aceh not affected by the tsunami. For instance, about 12,000 troops arrived in January 2005 to bring the number to an unprecedented 50,000 in Aceh. This struck fear among the Acehnese that the TNI would exploit the tsunami to ramp up the violence on the distracted GAM insurgents.\textsuperscript{307} The peace talks would certainly fail despite the best efforts of Yudhoyono and Kalla and the support of the population. GAM would have no choice but to fight.

Fortunately, Yudhoyono was able to rein in the hawks in the military. As noted in Chapter 4, Yudhoyono arguably exercises the greatest control over the military and enjoys the greatest respect than his democratic predecessors. His military background enables him to understand the military’s psychology and the soldiers see him as one of them. To convince the TNI to support the peace process, Yudhoyono personally met with the military brass at the TNI headquarters for about three hours to explain his rationale and answer questions. He was careful not to be seen as betraying nationalist principles as well as letting the sacrifices of the TNI go to waste.\textsuperscript{308} The Cabinet Secretary described the meeting as fruitful and “there were no questions regarding the issue”. Furthermore, Yudhoyono was also able to exercise control by appointing his long-time allies and friends to key positions. For instance, the TNI commander General Endriartono Sutarto had publicly declared during Megawati’s presidency that he “would choose war to end the Aceh problem, not negotiations”.\textsuperscript{309} However, Sutarto softened his rhetoric and warned the TNI not to challenge Yudhoyono, who had retained him as the TNI commander. Sutarto told dissenting officers, who saw the destruction of GAM as a necessary condition for peace, that

\textsuperscript{307} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 157.
\textsuperscript{309} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 160.
they must leave the TNI if they want to oppose the president.310 With the military now behind the peace process, domestic support on the whole for peaceful resolution is high.

6.3.3 International pressure for peaceful resolution

My proposed framework argues that high domestic support is necessary and sufficient to make incumbents committed to peace and choose a strong mediator. In such a situation, high international pressure plays a critical role in sustaining the strong domestic support. Thousands of foreign troops and aid workers as well as journalists poured into Aceh and their presence created an unprecedented international awareness of the insurgency. Leaders such as the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and US Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed their shock at the enormity of the devastation.311 Interests in reviving the peace talks increased as sporadic fighting between the incumbents and insurgents disrupted relief efforts. Consequently, the international community pressured the government to negotiate with the insurgents so they can provide aid and rebuild Aceh.312 Groups of ambassadors also met with the GAM leadership in Finland to push for negotiations based on respect for Indonesia’s territorial integrity.313

Yudhoyono also saw the broader implications of the increased international attention on Aceh. How he manages the insurgency and relief efforts would be interpreted in terms of the state of civil-military relations and democratization in Indonesia. Thus, he felt pressured to use the window of opportunity presented by the tsunami to demonstrate civilian control of the military as well as the fact that democracy is consolidating under his presidency.314 Moreover, a successful peace settlement could further undercut the military’s claim that it plays a vital role in Indonesia’s political life by defending against secessionist movements.

6.3.4 Outcome

Compared to HDC, CMI was a much stronger mediator. Both mediators were able to initiate peace talks and communicate information and demands between the disputants. However, given their different amount of resources available, they performed the remaining two roles of mediators to different degrees. As I proposed earlier, stronger mediators can better expand the set of mutually acceptable outcomes and assist in the implementation of the agreement. Mediators

expand the set of outcomes by adding options or using carrots or sticks to make disputants receptive of an option they previously rejected. CMI’s Martti Ahtisaari had more political weight and experience compared to the non-governmental HDC. He enjoyed direct access to the UN and EU leadership. Furthermore, the EU made clear it was willing to go beyond providing humanitarian aid for the tsunami to financially supporting CMI’s peace initiatives. Ahtisaari was also able to secure the Finnish government’s technical support by drawing on his personal connection to the Finnish president and foreign minister.\textsuperscript{315}

With these resources, Ahtisaari worked to find a settlement both parties would agree. He operated based on the principle that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”. This was different from HDC, which had taken a piecemeal approach and sought a ceasefire before discussing substantive issues. In effect, CMI forced the disputants to come to an agreement, instead of only a ceasefire, before foreign aid would be fully released. This enabled the insurgents to make the biggest concession to take independence off the list of demands. Moreover, the government also replaced “special autonomy” with “self-government”, which created an appearance of greater self-determination and was more palatable to the insurgents. The all-or nothing principle also reduces the fear of cheating in which one party benefits from a number of concessions and then resuming hostilities.\textsuperscript{316}

CMI’s support from the UN and especially the EU suggested that it would have better ability to monitor any settlement. Part of the discussion was to establish AMM consisting of troops from EU and ASEAN members. The AMM was empowered with greater authority than the previous monitoring teams under HDC. It had the power to investigate and adjudicate alleged violations of the settlement as well as amnesty cases.\textsuperscript{317} This is a considerable cession of sovereignty by Indonesia.

Given that CMI was such a strong mediator, why was it chosen in the first place and allowed to continue mediating to fruition? The high domestic support and international pressure for peaceful resolution made the state highly committed to negotiating a peace deal. Politicians and ordinary Indonesians were struck by the devastation. The president, having experienced “deep personal anguish and emotion” on his inspection of Aceh after the tsunami, was able to change

\textsuperscript{316} Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid., p. 159.
the status quo from the use of military force to peace talks after the fateful disaster. Hardliners in Indonesia predictably slammed the power of the AMM. Retired chief of staff of the TNI, Lieutenant General Syahnakri, summed up the sentiments:

“No one’s monitoring [the AMM]. They can monitor and decide and cannot be vetoed, but who can ensure their independence? Who can ensure that what happened in Timor Leste wouldn’t reoccur?”

However, the president had good control of the military and was able to continue with the peace talks. Therefore, the commitment to negotiations explanation (H1) is valid.

If CMI was able to marshal UN support, why did Indonesia not seek direct UN mediation? What explains the difference in mediators between East Timor and Aceh? According to my commitment theory, the president wanted a strong mediator but not so strong that it did not have any leeway from a settlement. A UN settlement would be more forceful than one by an NGO. Furthermore, Yudhoyono faced significant resistance to negotiations from the military. Memories of East Timor remain fresh and the UN was seen as breaking up East Timor from Indonesia. Thus, the UN would be an unacceptable mediator to the domestic constituents. Domestic pressure could also explain why Australia was not the mediator even though GAM’s political advisor, Damien Kingsbury, is a prominent Australian academic. Indonesia’s relations with Australia were in a rough patch given Australia’s leading role in the UN peacekeeping mission in East Timor. Therefore, the explanation (H1) is valid and sufficient.

6.4 Alternative explanations

There appears to be no historical connection between Indonesia and HDC. HDC was created in 1999 and based in Switzerland. It was involved only because it volunteered to mediate. On the other hand, CMI appears to have some connection with the government but the relationship is still tenuous at best. The Finnish NGO was created in 2000 by former Finnish president Ahtisaari who became involved through a series of personal connections. Kalla’s assistant had befriended a Finnish businessman, Juha Christensen, who tried to act as an intermediary between the government and GAM. When GAM refused to meet because Christensen was only a private

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319 Miller, Rebellion and reform in Indonesia: Jakarta’s security and autonomy policies in Aceh, p. 160.
citizen, Christensen approached Ahtisaari to mediate. Thus, the explanation (H2) that states select mediators based on ties, such as history, ideology, culture, and geography, is not valid in the HDC case. While the explanation holds for CMI, I find it to be insufficient given Indonesia and CMI were weakly related.

According to the supply side explanation, the choice of mediator is based on availability. It appears to explain why HDC and CMI became the mediator. HDC was first drawn to Indonesia because of East Timor and subsequently sent representatives to Aceh when the insurgency escalated. As a nascent organization, HDC was looking for a conflict to resolve that would give it mediation credentials and be known internationally. Similarly, CMI was involved because Ahtisaari agreed to mediate. The supply side explanation also accounts for why ASEAN members did not mediate the insurgency for the reason of non-intervention. However, the explanation does not adequately address the change of mediators from HDC to CMI. Presidents Habibie, Wahid, and Megawati had continued to engage HDC as a mediator even though earlier rounds of peace talks were unsuccessful. For instance, the Humanitarian Pause agreed upon in 2000 fell apart in 2001 because HDC was unable to enforce the ceasefire agreement. Why did Yudhoyono seek CMI and not HDC? Thus, the explanation (H3) is valid but not sufficient.

6.5 Conclusion

My proposed commitment framework explains the choice of mediators by asking three key questions. First, why did Wahid decide to negotiate with the GAM insurgents after decades of fighting and sought mediation by HDC? Second, why did Wahid and Megawati continue to engage the services of HDC, which proved to be an ineffective mediator, but Yudhoyono switched to a stronger mediator in the form of CMI? Third, why was CMI able to stay on as mediator and see the negotiations to fruition just within a year when HDC tried unsuccessfully for four years?

Figure 11 illustrates the explanation for the occurrence and continuation of mediation by HDC. The perceived balance of strength suggests the state could continue to fight. Wahid was the policy entrepreneur that saw the Acehnese as brothers with different political opinions. Wahid was able to initiate negotiation because the TNI was busy consolidating itself in the aftermath of the New Order era. When HDC offered to mediate, he immediately accepted the offer because the insurgents would not negotiate otherwise. Moreover, he did not have the window to look for better mediators given the low domestic support from the other politicians and ordinary Indonesians. As noted in the diagram, Wahid’s support declined when he sought the military’s support to survive politically. Over the next few years, the domestic support for the peace process remained steadily low into the Megawati presidency. The TNI increasingly exerted its influence to veto the peace process. However, major powers and donors pressured the government to continue the peace process. Consequently, Wahid and Megawati adopted a comprehensive approach that kept the negotiation going but permitted the TNI to conduct security operations. HDC’s continued mediation kept the talks going but its weak capacity to enforce ceasefires enabled the TNI to take military action.
Things took a turn for the better after Yudhoyono assumed the presidency as illustrated in Figure 12. Yudhoyono was able to realize his willingness for peace talks by appointing Kalla to personally oversee the peace process. The Boxing Day tsunami proved to be a fortuitous event that dramatically increased domestic and international support to peacefully resolve the insurgency and alleviate the suffering of the Acehnese. Political leaders and ordinary Indonesians felt sad over the plight of the Acehnese while the international community urged disputants to stop fighting so aid and reconstruction could continue unimpeded. However, the TNI still had the desire for military action and had deployed more troops into areas not struck by the tsunami. Fortunately, Yudhoyono was able to rein in the military and ensure the peace process succeeds.

Scenario 5 is a best, not complete, fit of the conditions under which CMI mediation occurred. This situation demonstrates that a hurting stalemate is not a necessary precondition for successful mediation as commonly suggested by the literature. The TNI deployed more troops and wanted to win. There was not really a hurting stalemate even after the tsunami’s devastation. Thus, the Aceh case study reinforces the idea that the state’s perceived strength relative to the insurgents is a structural condition that only constraints the options available to the state. It is a necessary but not sufficient determinant of the state’s level of commitment. Domestic and international actors
are agents that can work around the structural condition. In the Aceh case, Yudhoyono was able to control the military and commit the incumbents to mediation. While it is reasonable for domestic support for peace to be inversely correlated to the perceived strength, this case study suggests the need to consider more permutations. In particular, the incidences of strong mediators when the state is still overwhelmingly stronger than the insurgents.

Both the ties and supply side explanations do not sufficiently address the question. First, there was no prior connection between Indonesia and HDC, which was just established. CMI also did not have a history and was an unfamiliar mediator that Yudhoyono and Kalla became acquainted with through trusted intermediaries. Second, both HDC and CMI agreed to mediate. However, the supply side explanation does not address the change in mediators from HDC to CMI.
CHAPTER 7: THE WEST PAPUA INSURGENCY (1962-)

“These [security] forces don’t understand Papuan culture and values. To the military, the smallest indication of ‘chaos’, any sign of disobedience against government policy is viewed as an act of rebellion or part of a separatist movement. However, isn’t it natural to shout out aspirations in such a democratic country?”


The third case study looks at the longest and bloodiest insurgency in Indonesian history. Started in 1962, the insurgency in West Papua continues to date. The Yudhoyono government unsuccessfully negotiated with the insurgents in 2011 without any mediators. This is a deviation from the other two insurgencies, which had mediators. Why did the Yudhoyono administration negotiate without any mediators? The conflict has claimed the lives of between 100,000 to 400,000. This is more than 10 times the death toll in Aceh and approximately 4 times that in East Timor. By comparing only Aceh and East Timor, a possible reason for the swift resolution in East Timor could be the staggering death tolls. However, this reason does not stand when the West Papua insurgency is introduced. Given the high death tolls, the West Papua insurgency should have been resolved with greater urgency. The Yudhoyono government should have engaged mediators as in the other two insurgencies. This chapter explains the puzzle in the same structure as the earlier two cases. A background of the insurgency is first presented, followed by the application of the proposed commitment framework, and then an evaluation of the alternative explanations.

7.1 Background of the insurgency

Two sovereign nations – Papua New Guinea (PNG) on the east and Indonesia on the west – currently make up the island of New Guinea. The Indonesian half of New Guinea used to be known as Western New Guinea, Irian Jaya, or West Papua. In 2003, the Indonesian government administratively divided West Papua into Papua and West Papua. Nonetheless, the commonly used term “West Papua insurgency” refers to the conflict across the Indonesian half of New Guinea.

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The island of New Guinea was split under colonial times with PNG under British and German colonial rule while the Dutch controlled West Papua. Papuans in the Dutch controlled territory had little contact with people from other regions of modern day Indonesia. When the ethnic groups in these other regions mobilized to create an independent Indonesia in 1945, the Papuans were not part of the group. Instead, they saw themselves as a distinct nation based on ethnicity. After the Dutch officially recognized Indonesia's independence in 1949, it still retained control of West Papua much to the displeasure of the Sukarno government. The Indonesians argued that West Papua, as part of the Netherlands East Indies, belonged to Indonesia and embarked on a military campaign to forcibly annex the island. Both parties eventually signed the New York Agreement in 1962 that mandated a referendum for the Papuans to determine their future. However, the referendum in 1969 was a sham as the Indonesian government suppressed free speech. Instead of being opened to all adults as the Agreement mandated, voting was restricted to 1025 Papuans selected and pressured by the military to vote in favor of integration with Indonesia. The UN “took note” and did not overturn the results of the sham plebiscite. In doing so, it implicitly supported the integration. Kissinger also advised President Nixon not to bring up the issue during his meeting with Suharto to avoid expressing the US position on the referendum, which it knew to be a sham. However, if Suharto raises the issue, Nixon should say that the United States “understand[s] the problems they face in West Irian”. Neither did Australia nor the Netherlands deny the results in the interests of preserving stability and good relations with Indonesia during the Cold War era.

Years of brutality from the forceful annexation to the rigged referendum had created a Papuan nationalism that crystallized in the form of the Free Papua Movement (OPM). The Papuans wanted the power to decide their future. They sought independence. The government responded with a heavy hand by deploying the military, which had a free rein and could kill any Papuan suspected of being an OPM supporter or separatist. Muslim fundamentalist-based militia

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326 Bertrand, *Nationalism and ethnic conflict in Indonesia*, pp. 135, 144-60.
327 Telegram between US officials in Indonesia to Washington revealed their lack of confidence as to whether the plebiscite would be meaningful in the first place given that the Papuans were essentially “Stone Age illiterate tribal groups” and that “free elections among groups such as this would be more of a farce than any rigged mechanism Indonesia could devise”.
groups were created to crack down on the predominantly Christian Papuans.\textsuperscript{329} The government also imposed a ban on foreign media, which made it difficult to create international awareness of the severity of the conflict.\textsuperscript{330} Resentment swelled not only because of the brutality but also from the exploitation of the Papuan land and marginalization by the state. Despite its immense resources, the Papuans remain one of the most impoverished among the Indonesian provinces. It is ranked 32\textsuperscript{nd} out of 33 provinces on the Human Development Index and 31 percent of the Papuans live below the poverty line. “Javanization” programs also displaced the indigenous culture. A glimmer of hope appeared in 2011 when the government and a coalition group of insurgents held a three-day peace talk with no mediation. Unfortunately, the peace talk did not bear any fruit and revealed intractable differences between the two parties. For instance, both parties could not even agree on the format of negotiations.\textsuperscript{331} Military action continues in West Papua.

\textbf{7.2 Commitment level explanation}

Before the Papua Peace Conference took place in July 2011, a human rights group released a comprehensive report in June about the human rights conditions in West Papua. The group, Imparsial, noted that decades of repressive military action have created a “non-conducive situation where local people and the military have become mutually suspicious”. Human rights violations mostly go unpunished and those that were fortunate to be investigated only ended with light punishments.\textsuperscript{332} There is a deep sense of injustice and distrust among the Papuans and this motivated them to have international mediators that could make the government’s commitment credible. It is in this context of a serious trust deficit that makes it puzzling why Yudhoyono did not have mediators at the peace conference and why the general policy of no mediators exists. Mediators can help to establish trust not just by making commitments credible but also improve communications and reduce misperceptions between the disputants.

\textbf{7.2.1 State’s perceived balance of power relative to insurgents}

The situation in West Papua best fits Scenario 2 of my proposed commitment theory. By the time the peace talk was held in 2011, the insurgency had softened into a low-level conflict. With


\textsuperscript{331} International Crisis Group [Belgium], “Indonesia: Hope and hard reality in Papua”.

\textsuperscript{332} Saragih, B. B. T., “Military omnipresence brings gloom to Papua”, \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 11, 2011.
the end of the insurgencies in East Timor and Aceh, the state was able to pour thousands of troops into Papua and reinforced border patrols. Papua became the most heavily militarized province in Indonesia. The ban on foreign media created a permissive environment in which troops were able to act with complete impunity. Extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and torture were commonly used as a form of governance. As the Australian ambassador noted about the military’s behavior, "the sense of Irian Jaya being on the periphery means there are fewer constraints on the activities of security forces". Even though the conflict has dragged on for more than 40 years and the military is unable to fully wipe out the ethnic based secessionist movement, the military expects to eventually win in the long run.

7.2.2 Domestic support for peaceful resolution

Why did the Yudhoyono government then decide to negotiate when the TNI had overwhelming power and insurgents were gradually weakening? As in the Aceh insurgency, Yudhoyono emerged as a policy entrepreneur that advocated a change in the militaristic approach in West Papua. Prior to the conference, he had made repeated visits to the territory and stressed his desire to “solve the problem in Papua in a peaceful, just and dignified manner” hopefully before the 2014 presidential elections.

The president’s preference for a peaceful approach comes across in two major policies designed to address the grievances underlying the insurgency. First, Yudhoyono proposed to increase autonomy in Papua. As early as 1999, a small number of Indonesian politicians have suggested granting autonomy a way of addressing grievances and undermining the basis for independence. The governor of West Papua, who was appointed by the central government, proposed giving autonomy in areas such as sole responsibility for finance. However, his proposal was flatly rejected by Papuans who staged a massive demonstration that descended into a riot. Nevertheless, the Law on Special Autonomy for Papua was passed in 2001 with the objective of speeding up development and quelling the restive province. The local government was empowered to establish development programs funded by the state, which has since injected more than 30 trillion rupiahs. Unfortunately, the well-intentioned autonomy exacerbated the

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tensions between the Papuans and government officials. A report by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) found two major problems with the special autonomy. Unlike the autonomy package for Aceh, the autonomy in West Papua was hastily drafted by NGOs and academics without the inputs of the disputants. The law was then swiftly passed as a stopgap measure to placate the Papuans. Apart from the lack of ownership, the funds ended up being diverted to the pockets of corrupt officials while the Papuans continued to live in abject poverty. Papuans came to see the autonomy as “a trick for certain parties to get the money and for immigrants to come in and further marginalize them”.

Consequently, Yudhoyono decided to upgrade the 2001 autonomy to “Special Autonomy Plus” in an effort to salvage the autonomy status. The revision would incorporate inputs from the Papuans and other stakeholders and its major addition is granting clemency to all political prisoners in West Papua. Furthermore, the local provincial government would have more authority in engaging the OPM to discuss matters of improving local living conditions. These concrete plans were announced in 2013 and is significant not just for its contents but also the timing. At that point in time, an increasing number of OPM members was laying down arms and surrendering to the security forces. The OPM was weakening but Yudhoyono still wanted to talk.

The second policy was the establishment of the Unit for the Acceleration of Development in Papua and West Papua (UP4B) under the vice president’s office. In an acknowledgment of the poor outcome of the 2001 autonomy law, the UP4B was created to provide “win-win” programs that address the needs of the local communities on a sustainable basis. The hope is better integration with the Indonesian nation. To achieve this, the unit coordinates with ministries, state agencies, non-government institutions, and local authorities in planning and providing facilities and development programs. It is also empowered to monitor the status of the development programs. Apart from a developmental agenda, the UP4B is also tasked with engaging in constructive dialogues on sociopolitical issues, in particular Papua’s political status.

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337 The Jakarta Globe [Indonesia], “After a decade of autonomy, Papua remains on edge”, The Jakarta Globe, November 21, 2011.
However, while the president was interested in peaceful dialogue, the politicians and military were not as keen. The Papuans have organized several congresses to unite the Papuans and discuss their political and human rights with independence as the ultimate goal. Each session was met with a heavy-handed crackdown by the security forces with the police chief saying he will “finish” whoever supports secession. In one instance, the chairman of the MPR committee on defense stated that the military and police “should have been firmer”.341

On the issue of autonomy, the popular sentiment was that if Indonesia was to disintegrate, it would begin in Aceh and West Papua.342 Thus, the military and most of the politicians were against autonomy in the first place. As noted in the East Timor case, Habibie and his cabinet were afraid a too generous autonomy package would backfire encourage other provinces to seek autonomy as well. When Wahid disregarded the concerns and promised autonomy, they dragged their heels in realizing the autonomy for fear that “the genuine implementation of the special autonomy law will open up more space for the movement for self-determination”.343 Megawati delayed the process further by administratively dividing the province in 2003. Plans for autonomy had to be placed on hold as the provincial government sorted itself out. Thus when Yudhoyono announced the expanded autonomy, the political leaders expressed puzzlement at the president’s intentions and felt that the 2001 autonomy had given far enough. As the Deputy Speaker of the MPR Priyo Budi Santoso questioned, “how far should the Papuan autonomy extension?”344 Consequently, overtures to the insurgents have always been piecemeal and secretive to avoid alarming the hardliners in the MPR and military.345 Even though Yudhoyono might have a good control of the military and is popular with Indonesians, the MPR’s approval is needed to implement the “Special Autonomy Plus”. Yudhoyono’s proposal would not work if the MPR opposes it at every corner. Moreover, time is also a concern given he is due to step down in late 2014.

Apart from the desire to safeguard the unity of Indonesia, the TNI’s corporate interests also account for their lack of support for peaceful overtures. Confirming my framework, the military has been the most influential actor in the local administration since the incorporation even though the civilian governor theoretically is the head of the administration. A State Department

343 Walter, Reputation and civil war: Why separatist conflicts are so violent, p. 164.
344 Ambarita, B. and Isidorus, R., “Police, separatists clash on 50th anniversary of integration of Papua”, May 1, 2013.
report in 1968 stated that the then governor “made no effort to exert his theoretical leadership”. Consequently, this created a culture in which businesses in Papua directly “hire” the soldiers to provide security, put down protests, and quell disruptions at work. While the Yudhoyono government has further consolidated democracy, he was careful not to explicitly shut down all the TNI’s legal and illegal sources of funding. Human Rights Watch further pointed out that the TNI and POLRI oppose opening up Papua in order to get promotions from suppressing the insurgents. These forces crack down harshly on the slightest dissent to create the impression of an emergency in Papua so the area would remain close and they could justify their presence there.

The desire to keep the Papuan conflict behind closed doors is also shared by ordinary Indonesians, who view the involvement of foreign actors as an infringement of Indonesian sovereignty. When a Papuan advocate opened a “Free West Papua Campaign” office in England, the Yudhoyono government was criticized for not acting “more decisively against an individual diplomatic effort” and demonstrates weak Indonesian diplomacy. Such a sentiment has led the LIPI to urge Indonesians to “put aside paranoia of foreign parties” and be open to the involvement of international mediators in the Papua conflict. Indeed, this “paranoia” of foreign influence has even led the POLRI to scrape a multimillion dollar training program in West Papua funded by New Zealand after there its intelligence though the program’s motives to be suspicious.

7.2.3 International pressure for peaceful resolution

Despite the best efforts of the Papuans to draw international attention to their cause, international support has generally been low as states prioritize good relations with an Indonesia, which is more prosperous and stable than it was during the repressive Suharto era and the nascent turbulent reform period. The ban on foreign media and international humanitarian bodies in West Papua also played a major role in keeping the issue out of the public eye. Officially,

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346 The National Security Archive [United States of America], “Indonesia’s 1969 takeover of West Papua not by ‘Free Choice’”.
347 Saragih, B. B. T., “Military omnipresence brings gloom to Papua”.
foreign journalists can seek permission from the Ministry of Information but the approval process is agonizingly slow. Even in the rare chance of approval, the journalists would be accompanied at all times by a minder from the National Intelligence Body. While domestic journalists are allowed, their objectivity is doubtful. A leaked official document reportedly showed the TNI employs over two dozen Indonesian journalists to act as informers in Papua and warned them to be careful of foreign interference. Consequently, Papuans have come to describe their situation as “the silent genocide”.

Compared to the first two cases, Australia and the United States did not apply heavy pressure on the Yudhoyono government. In fact, Australia has been relatively silent on the Papuan conflict in hopes of mending bilateral relations following its major role in the East Timor insurgency. Indonesia considered Australia’s policy shift on East Timor and the subsequent deployment of Australian peacekeepers as a gross betrayal of Australia’s earlier promise to support Indonesia. Subsequently, Australia has sought to mend ties as it repeatedly emphasized in major policy documents, such as the Defense White Paper, that “Australia’s strong partnership with Indonesia remains our most important regional strategic relationship”. Bilateral relations appeared to be warming when both nations signed the Lombok Treaty in 2006. The security treaty cemented the two countries’ cooperation in the areas of defense, law enforcement, maritime security, and aviation safety. It also recognized Indonesia’s sovereignty over West Papua. As a precautionary measure, Article 2 of the treaty specified the “non-interference in the internal affairs of one another”. The treaty is of great importance to Australia not only because it fosters better relations but also because it needs to pass through Indonesian territorial waters to access seven of its top ten trading partners. Thus, successive prime ministers have reiterated that “Australia recognizes, recognized in the past, and will recognize in the future, the territorial integrity of the Republic of Indonesia that includes Papua”. Moreover, Australia

believes the Papuans “can have the best possible life and the best possible future as a part of an indissoluble Indonesia”. 359  

The biggest test of the state of bilateral relations and Australia’s commitment to the Lombok Treaty came shortly after the agreement was signed. 43 Papuans sought asylum in Australia after security forces cracked down on them for flying the separatist movement’s Morning Star flag in direct contravention of Indonesian law. The Howard administration was caught in between maintaining good relations with Indonesia on one hand and protecting human rights on the other. It was afraid their presence in Australia would stir up the sympathy of Australians, who would in turn pressure the government to pressure Indonesia as had happened over East Timor. However, the Howard administration also acknowledged that the Papuans would be persecuted if they were deported. 360 The administration’s subsequent decision to grant temporary protection visa created a bitter diplomatic furor that only subsided when Australia sent the Papuans to PNG. Australia continues to send Papuans seeking asylums to refugee camps in PNG that are located very near the West Papua-PNG border. 361  

On the other hand, the United States has been relatively more active than Australia in addressing the military operations in West Papua. Twenty US senators wrote to Annan in 2004 to appoint a UN Special Representative to Indonesia to monitor the West Papuan conflict. The Special Representative would “make recommendations regarding steps the UN Security Council and General Assembly might undertake to end the troubling and deadly conflicts” in the territory. Four years later, two Congressmen wrote another letter to the Secretary-General urging the appointment of a “senior official with responsibility to pursue the creation of a senior level dialogue between the government of President Yudhoyono and Papuan government and civil society leaders to be mediated by a UN Security Council Representative”. 362  

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs also held a hearing for the first time on the conflict. Papuans and human rights observers gave their testimony about the human rights violations, in particular the 1998 Biak massacre. The Kopassus chained hundreds of Papuans and threw them in the ocean. The military would later claim, when the bodies washed up, that they

360 Purcell, M., “Indonesian ties strong enough to stand straight talk on Papua”, The Age, March 10, 2010.  
were victims of a tsunami that happened along the coast of PNG. Unlike the Santa Cruz massacre, there were no reporters on the ground to cover the situation, which explains why the massacre was covered up.\textsuperscript{363} Following the hearing, 50 Members of Congress wrote to Obama about the alleged genocide by the Indonesian government against the Papuans. They urged the President to "make West Papua one of the highest priorities of the administration".\textsuperscript{364} While Obama did raise the issue to Yudhoyono, the congressional hearing and letters to the Secretary-General pale in comparison to the level of pressure Congress applied on Indonesia over East Timor.

A surprising source of support came from Vanuatu, which was the only UN member state to recognize West Papua’s claims of independence. The Melanesian nation passed the “Wantok Blong Yumi Bill” in 2010 that recognized West Papua as a separate nation.\textsuperscript{365} Under the bill, Vanuatu would also seek observer status for West Papua in the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) and bring the issue of Indonesia’s annexation to the International Court of Justice through the General Assembly.\textsuperscript{366} Vanuatu identified with the Papuans and was motivated by its own struggle for independence to support West Papua. Formerly a British and French colony, Vanuatu was subjected to harsh colonial rule and the people were determined to be free even though they might not survive on their own given the lack of economic development.\textsuperscript{367}

West Papua’s efforts to raise international awareness through Vanuatu have been unproductive. The Papuans essentially tried to apply the boomerang strategy by appealing to a sympathetic Vanuatu when their demands were repeatedly ignored by the Indonesian government. Vanuatu would then help to deliver their messages and seek the support of the MSG and UN to exert pressure on Indonesia to listen to the Papuans’ demands.

However, the boomerang strategy failed because Indonesia was able to secure the support of the rest of the MSG and no other UN member state supported the Papuans. The MSG, which

\textsuperscript{363} Radheya, R., “Mirroring West Papua”, \textit{The Jakarta Globe}, April 29, 2014.
\textsuperscript{365} Auckland University of Technology [New Zealand], “Vanuatu to seek observer status for West Papua at MSG and PIF leaders summits”, \url{http://pacific.scoop.co.nz/2010/06/vanuatu-to-seek-observer-status-for-west-papua-at-msg-and-pif-leaders-summits/}. Accessed July 1, 2014.
\textsuperscript{366} Radio New Zealand International [New Zealand], “Vanuatu to seek UN General Assembly support for ICJ opinion on Indonesia’s Papua”, \url{http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/191049/vanuatu-to-seek-ungeneral-assembly-support-for-ici-opinion-on-indonesia-s-papua}. Accessed July 1, 2014.
consists of Fiji, PNG, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, is an economic grouping created to speed up development among the members. While Vanuatu supports West Papua, the other three members prioritized better economic relations with Indonesia over West Papua. These states affirmed Indonesia’s sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention. Indonesia has worked over the years to enhance bilateral relations and economic ties with the three members in an attempt to assert greater influence in the region and disrupt support for West Papua. As an indication of its influence, it holds observer status in the MSG. On the other hand, in an apparent nod to Indonesia’s claim over West Papua, PNG vetoed Vanuatu’s proposal to grant observer status to West Papua in the MSG.

7.2.4 Outcome

There was low domestic support for peaceful resolution on the whole. Moreover, the parity of power favored the TNI such that Yudhoyono does not even need to negotiate with the weakening OPM insurgents in the first place. There was also low international pressure to address the use of force as international actors valued good relations with Indonesia. Thus, it was only with Yudhoyono’s intentions of peace that negotiations began. The absence of mediators is recognition that domestic audiences are sensitive to foreign influence after East Timor. Furthermore, the absence of mediators could save the president from having to push concessions through an unreceptive legislature, which would be a prickly process. It also reflects the limit that policy entrepreneurs can do to change the established policy. Policy entrepreneurship requires striking a balance between the desire for change and the resistance from the various domestic audiences, especially the most influential military. Therefore, the commitment level explanation (H1) is valid and sufficiently explains the absence of mediators.

7.3 Alternative explanations

If the ties explanation is valid, then the Yudhoyono government did not have any mediators in the 2011 peace talks because there was no third party the government was close to. However, this hypothesis is clearly invalid given Indonesia’s extensive and deep diplomatic relations. The government could have chosen any of the previous mediators, especially HDC and CMI, which it

369 Pearl, H., “SBY’s visit to Fiji seen as widening influence among Pacific Islands”, The Jakarta Globe, June 18, 2014.
knows their mediation style. Moreover, the mediation by these two actors produced results that were generally concordant with the government’s intended outcome. Finally, Yudhoyono’s Vice President Boediono had announced that the administration welcomed international donors but not to provide mediation.\textsuperscript{371} Thus, the ties explanation (H2) is invalid.

The government’s refusal to have international mediators also disproves the supply side hypothesis (H3). On the other hand, it could be that there were simply no mediators available. However, the CMI reportedly offered to mediate the 2011 peace talks but Jakarta rejected the presence of any international mediators.\textsuperscript{372} It has long been OPM’s goal for international mediation by actors such as the Netherlands and UN in order to achieve international recognition.\textsuperscript{373} Therefore, it appears that both hypotheses can only account for the occurrence but not the absence of mediation.

7.4 Conclusion

Figure 13: Level of commitment framework applied to West Papua

Why did the Yudhoyono government not have international mediators in the 2011 Papua Peace Conference, especially when there is a deep sense of distrust between the disputants? As

\textsuperscript{371} Allard, T., “Room for improvement in Papua, says visiting leader”, \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, March 9, 2011.
\textsuperscript{372} Makabori, P., “Papuan coalition seeks deal with Jakarta through Finnish mediation”, \textit{Radio New Zealand International}, October 2, 2007.
\textsuperscript{373} Vermonte, “Separatism in Papua”, p. 284.
Figure 13 shows, my commitment level framework argues that the state had very low level of commitment and chose to negotiate without a mediator to avoid tying itself to the peace process. There was low international pressure for a peaceful resolution of insurgency. Major powers such as the United States and Australia prioritized good relations with Indonesia and were relatively silent on the issue. A neighboring state, Vanuatu, failed to garner international support because other neighboring states such as those in the MSG also placed economic relations with Indonesia over the conflict. On the domestic front, all the actors except for the policy entrepreneur did not see the point of a peace deal. They thought much has been offered to the insurgents, which have been seriously weakened. It was only the presence of a policy entrepreneur, Yudhoyono, that negotiations even began in the first place. The president has a good control over the military and was able to explore negotiations without undermining the stability of his presidency. However, there was a limit to how the peace process could be conducted as he was cognizant that the domestic constituents were sensitive to foreign interference. Finally, the perceived strength suggests the states could fight. Like the Aceh case, this case study once again supports the idea that this variable is a structural condition that does not sufficiently determine whether negotiations take place and with what kind of mediator.

In addition, a comparison of the three insurgencies highlights the importance of windows of opportunity. Even though Yudhoyono presided over the insurgencies in Aceh and West Papua, the format of negotiations was similar until a window of opportunity for change opened in Aceh. Yudhoyono had only directed Kalla to revive peace talks but negotiations were low on his agenda. It was only when the tsunami captured the world’s attention and produced high international pressure that created a window of opportunity for change. On the other hand, the Biak massacre arguably was one of the worst atrocities to happen in West Papua and comparable to the Santa Cruz massacre. However, unlike the momentous events in Aceh and East Timor, there was no international attention on the Biak massacre. Without the international pressure, there was no window of opportunity for change.

The ties and supply side explanations do not validly explain the absence of mediators. Given Indonesia’s extensive diplomatic relations, it could have sought help from one of the many third parties as well as previous mediators. Furthermore, the government rejected CMI’s offer to mediate. In fact, the Yudhoyono administration made it clear that it would not allow international mediators into the Papuan conflict.
The ties explanation presupposes a disputant with the desire to seek peace through mediation. Thus, it is unable to account for cases in which there are no mediators. Furthermore, intent is a binary concept in the ties explanation that does not enable a deeper understanding of the variations in the type of mediator. On the other hand, the supply side explanation only looks at the incentives of mediators. While it is important to look at why mediators intervene, it similarly does not explain the preferences for particular mediators. The proposed commitment level framework can explain the preferences for particular mediators as well as the absence of one.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.1 Explaining the patterns of mediation in the insurgencies of Indonesia

Insurgency is the oldest and most common form of warfare. It is also the expression of a crisis of authority and legitimacy for the incumbents. There are a few options incumbents could choose to respond. They could apply force in an enemy- or population-centric manner to physically wipe out the insurgents or deprive them of the population’s support. Alternatively, they could choose to negotiate with the insurgents and save lives and property in the process. From these two fundamental options, they could employ derivations such as using negotiations to stall for time to prepare for a fight. Each response comes with corresponding costs and benefits that the incumbents must carefully consider and decide on the best course of action for the situation. This thesis proposes a framework that systematically explains why states decide to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate.

The focus of this thesis is on the incidence of mediation because of two major puzzles. First, why has mediation not happened more often or earlier? Studies proved that mediation can increase the likelihood of conflicts ending in settlements and reduce tensions in the post-conflict period. Second, international mediation is essentially an infringement of sovereignty as it interferes in the internal affairs of a state. With the disputants’ consent, mediators help to reframe the situation, provide information, expand the set of mutually acceptable outcomes, and help to implement the settlement. They essentially do so by applying sticks and carrots to maneuver disputants towards peace. Given that sovereignty is the basis for a state’s existence, why do disputants consent to give up some of their sovereignty?

I use the subnational comparison method to identify the reasons behind the decision of states to fight or negotiate and the way they negotiate. Indonesia provides three suitable cases for comparison. The three insurgencies are sons of the soil wars with the goal of secession from the Indonesian state.

Moreover, the state’s handling of the insurgencies prominently exhibits the two major puzzles. The earliest incident of mediation was the insurgency in East Timor where the UN mediated talks between Indonesia and Portugal that resulted in the separation of the province. In the case of Aceh, the state first negotiated for four years under HDC before the talks broke down. A new mediator, CMI, was engaged when the peace process was revived a year later. Finally, the state simply negotiated with the Papuans without the assistance of a mediator. The West Papua
insurgency is particularly striking given that it is the longest and bloodiest conflict. The state had already ended the first two insurgencies but it only entered into negotiations years later. Even then, it did not have any mediator despite a glaring lack of trust between the disputants. Furthermore, the state seemingly welcomed the benefits a strong mediator brings in East Timor, which would also mean a greater influence on the government’s decision making. However, the government appeared to want the benefits of mediation but not too much of them in the first round of mediation under HDC. Subsequently, it was willing to accept a stronger mediator.

To explain this variation, I proposed a commitment level explanation. I argue that a state that is not committed or has very low levels of commitment to negotiations will not have a mediator. the more committed the state is to negotiations, the stronger the mediator the state will seek. The level of commitment is a function of the balance of power between the incumbents and insurgents, domestic support, and international pressure. Domestic support is the pivotal factor with the military being the most decisive domestic actor.

There are also two alternative arguments commonly used to explain the choice of mediators. The ties argument suggests the state prefers actors it has deep connections with while the supply side argument posits the state gets whichever mediator is available. I argue that these two explanations are factors that shape the choice of mediators but secondary to the level of commitment. These three explanations are tested against the three cases to examine their validity and the results are shown in Tables 5 and 6. The commitment level explanation is found to be the most comprehensive argument that best explains the choice of mediators in all three insurgencies.

**Table 5: Explaining the choice of mediators in East Timor, Aceh, and West Papua**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanations</th>
<th>East Timor</th>
<th>Aceh – HDC</th>
<th>Aceh – CMI</th>
<th>West Papua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment level</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ties</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
<td>Not valid</td>
<td>Valid; insufficient</td>
<td>Not valid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply side</td>
<td>Valid; sufficient</td>
<td>Valid; insufficient</td>
<td>Valid; insufficient</td>
<td>Not valid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Commitment level explanation of the incidence of mediation in East Timor, Aceh, and West Papua (PE: Policy entrepreneur; MIL: Military; POP: Population; POL: Politicians)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived strength</th>
<th>East Timor</th>
<th>Aceh – HDC</th>
<th>Aceh – CMI</th>
<th>West Papua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Current low / Future low</td>
<td>C: High / F: High</td>
<td>C: High / F: High</td>
<td>C: High / F: High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived strength</td>
<td>High support</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- MIL: High/Low then High</td>
<td>- MIL: Low</td>
<td>- POP: High/High</td>
<td>- POP: High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- POP: High/Low</td>
<td>- POP: Low</td>
<td>- POL: High/Low</td>
<td>- POL: Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>High pressure</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment level</td>
<td>Scenario 5</td>
<td>Scenario 3</td>
<td>Scenario 5</td>
<td>Scenario 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediator</td>
<td>UN</td>
<td>HDC</td>
<td>CMI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2 The commitment level framework and policy implications

A goal of this thesis is to identify the policy implications from examining the insurgencies. There are two major policy implications. The first is that negotiations need not wait until the conflict has entered an impasse or a hurting stalemate. What really matters is that there are policy entrepreneurs willing to make a change. However, the policy entrepreneur must be in a position of power to control any dissent from the military and drum up support from the political leaders and population.

Second, the findings support the argument that international pressure, such as sanctions, is effective in pushing states towards a particular course of action. Political leaders might resist but they can only do so if the country is strong enough or there are other international actors to circumvent the sanctions. This suggests a coalition or an international body is best able to exert pressure that cannot be wriggled out of. The UN is in a prime position to do so.

These implications have direct relevance especially to the West Papua insurgency in which the peace talks have failed and there is no sure indication when the peace process will resume. There is however a glimmer of hope with the election of Jokowi. The president-elect has taken on a conciliatory tone towards the Papuans and promised to open up the territory to foreign media and aid workers. Furthermore, there appears to be stronger civilian control over the TNI.

What can the international community do to revive the peace process and push for peace in West Papua? Any recommended action has to take into consideration two concerns of the international community. They want to avoid damaging good bilateral relations with Indonesia as well as prioritize resources for more pressing conflicts. Consequently, the most viable way forward is for the international community to appeal to Jokowi’s reformist agenda. Indonesia’s major defense and economic partners could convey through private meetings that the world would see the way
Jokowi handles the West Papua conflict as an indication of his reformist credentials and the state of democratic consolidation in Indonesia. Furthermore, they could offer funding and development packages to encourage the new administration to take steps towards peace.

8.3 **Further directions for research**

As Barany noted, “the ultimate measure of a theory is its usefulness in illuminating diverse phenomena”.\(^{374}\) This thesis hopes to propose a framework that is generalizable across time and space. In examining the three cases of insurgency in Indonesia, the framework was applied to insurgencies across time but within the same country. Thus, there are two possible directions to take this research further to determine how generalizable the framework is and what are its limits.

The first possible direction is to perform another set of case studies and compare with Indonesia. This represents an incremental step in testing the generalizability of the framework and is another opportunity to look closely at how the framework unfolds to reveal the causality within another set of cases. This second subnational comparison could look at other ASEAN states that have negotiated with secessionist groups. A country of interest is the Philippines, which provides two such cases.

First, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) insurgency started in 1972 and continues to date after numerous rounds of negotiations between the state and MNLF that produced four major peace agreements. These negotiations were mediated by Libya and Indonesia with the support of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). As the demand of the MNLF has changed from seeking secession to autonomy since 1976, the focus could be on the Libyan mediated negotiations between the state and MNLF in 1976 when the insurgents still demanded independence to ensure the case studies are comparable. Similarly, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has softened its stance from the demand for independence to the pursuit of a sub-state status in 2010. The MILF splintered from the MNLF in 1978 when the latter settled for autonomy.\(^{375}\) Mediation efforts by Malaysia since 2001 have bore fruit with the conclusion of a long-awaited peace agreement in March 2014.\(^{376}\) Therefore, there is variation in the negotiations between the Philippines and insurgent groups. In the MNLF insurgency, the state sought the help of Libya and the OIC even though the second largest international organization refused to confer

\(^{374}\) Barany, *The soldier and the changing state*, p. 25.


membership status on it but recognized the insurgents. On the other hand, the state did not go far but sought the help of its neighbor to mediate talks with the MILF. As in the cases of Indonesia, why did the Philippines not have the same mediator in both insurgencies? What was it about these mediators that the two incumbents had them as mediators in the first place and not other actors?

An overview of the MNLF and MILF cases reveals two motivating reasons to examine the cases. First, the Philippines agreed to have the OIC mediate when the organization does not recognize its sovereignty but accepted the insurgents as an observer. The state’s behavior is in contrast to earlier discussions on how the Indonesian government refuses to have third-party mediators to avoid giving recognition to the insurgents. It is puzzling that sovereignty does not appear to be the prime concern to the Philippines. Second, both cases also mark the initial attempts of ASEAN states to intervene in the internal conflicts of other member states. This is a departure from the Indonesian cases in which the ASEAN states cited the principle of non-interference. A study of the MNLF and MILF cases could produce implications that could help the organization play a more active role in the region. Apart from these two motivating reasons, the civil-military relations in the Philippines provide a highly interesting context to analyze the incident of mediation in the two insurgencies. The Filipino military’s position as the most important domestic constituent is emphasized by the numerous coups attempted, which at its peak counted six attempted coups in one year. This is an average of one coup every two months. Although the Philippines has never had a successful coup, political leaders have been displaced from power when the military threw its weight behind revolutions.

The second possible direction is to conduct large-n quantitative analysis. As noted in the case selection section, the case study approach complements large-n analysis by drawing out the causality between the independent and dependent variables. However, it does not allow one to test if the theory holds under various parameters and in a broader universe of cases. The dataset should be built based on negotiations that are overt and took place either with zero or one mediator. Subsequently, the types of regime, grievances, and demands should be included. Table 7 provides an indication of the other data to be collected.
Table 7: Data to be collected based on the level of commitment framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Data to be collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent variable: Level of commitment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of commitment</td>
<td>(Reasoned through the three factors)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Perceived Strength relative to insurgents | - Duration of conflict  
- Security forces to insurgent ratio |
| Domestic support for peaceful resolution | - Presence of political entrepreneur (Yes or no)  
- Support of population (Opinion polls or voting)  
- Support of political leaders (Legislature voting)  
- Support of the military |
| International pressure for peaceful resolution | Categories  
- No response  
- Voicing of concerns  
- Sanctions and suspension of military training  
- Suspension of bilateral ties |
| **Dependent variable: Strength of mediator** | |
| Mediator strength | Ability to perform the four roles |

Some of the data are not readily available in quantitative terms and must be coded into categories and assigned a number. They include the level of commitment, support of the military, international pressure, and mediator strength. Once the data is collected, the main test is to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of commitment and the strength of mediator. Another important test is to determine the significance of the perceived strength relative to insurgents given that this thesis has shown that a hurting stalemate is not a necessary precondition for successful mediation. Apart from these tests, other tests include checking if the types of regime, grievances, and demands affect the validity of the framework.
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