Diplomacy, Peacekeeping and the Severity of Civil War

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Abstract: A large body of literature has demonstrated that third-party actions such as peacekeeping and mediation can promote the resolution of conflicts. Conflict termination is just one goal of third-party interveners, however, and we argue that actions such as mediation and peacekeeping can lead to a reduction in violence in *ongoing* conflicts. Mediation can contribute to reductions in battlefield violence by revealing information to combatants, helping them to implement partial settlements that represent steps toward peace, and by offering carrots and sticks that incentivize reaching settlement over continued conflict. Peacekeepers can help attenuate violence by being interpositioned between combatants and, in the case of more robust mandates, by working actively to prevent violence. We examine these expectations using monthly data on battle-related deaths in African intra-state conflicts, and find that mediation and other diplomatic efforts have a large effect in reducing bloodshed. We also find, consistent with existing work, that a greater number of peacekeepers leads to a reduction in violence. In addition, we find that mediation increases the effect of peacekeeping troops in decreasing battle-field fatalities, particularly at low numbers of peacekeepers. These analyses show that third parties, such as the UN, can rely on a range of tools to reduce violence and suffering in intrastate conflicts and that the success of third-party interventions cannot be judged solely on the basis of their capacity to fully end conflicts.

While all civil wars involve the loss of life, there is very large variation between and within conflicts in how many people are killed. The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths. Civil wars in Ethiopia in the 1980s and early 1990s, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka have also generated large numbers of battlefield causalities. At the same time, some civil wars, such as peripheral wars in India and Myanmar, while long-lasting, persist at a much lower level of intensity and result in far fewer casualties.

Since at least the end of the Cold War, the international community has devoted substantial attention to trying to resolve internal conflicts. A major motivation is to reduce violence and the suffering resulting from these wars. A growing scholarly literature has developed examining the effect of actions such as peacekeeping and mediation on the termination of civil wars and the duration of peace following ceasefires.[1] Additionally, some work suggests that the UN and other international actors can have a preventative effect, helping to deter the outbreak of civil war[2] or escalation of low-level conflict.[3]

Yet few studies examine the extent to which third-party actors succeed in attenuating violence in ongoing civil wars. This gap is unfortunate, because if reducing violence and suffering is the goal, actions that lead to a reduction in conflict severity without actually resolving conflict in high intensity wars arguably have a bigger impact, in terms of reducing loss-of-life and overall suffering, than resolving a low-intensity conflict.

In this article, we argue that international actors can work to reduce the level of violence in ongoing civil wars. In particular, we argue that mediators can contribute to a reduction in violence by revealing information to the combatants, helping the combatants to implement partial peace

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[1] See, for example, Walter 2002, Bercovitch and Gartner 2008, Doyle and Sambanis 2006, and Fortna 2008.

[2] Such as Beardsley, Cunningham, and White n.d.

[3] Such as Karreth and Tir 2013.

agreements that make steps toward peace, and by using carrots and sticks to incentivize settlement over continued conflict. We also expect peacekeeping to reduce civil war violence, for reasons similar to the arguments of Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon (2014). Moreover, we argue that the mechanisms through which mediation and peacekeeping can help attenuate violence are both additive—the mediators help reduce violence in ways that peacekeeping operations cannot and vice versa—and interactive—mediation serves as a type of force multiplier for peacekeeping. We also consider other third-party actions, including sanctions and condemnations, but do not expect them to have as large an effect.

We examine these expectations in an analysis of all intra-state conflict months in Africa from 1989 to 2008. Since mediated peace processes and peacekeeping deployments often occur simultaneously, it is important to examine their distinct contributions to reductions in armed violence within the same empirical framework. We find, consistent with our expectations, that mediation leads to a dramatic decline in battlefield casualties. We also find, consistent with Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon (2014), that peacekeeping reduces battlefield casualties. In addition, we show that peacekeeping and mediation have an interactive effect and that mediation increases the effectiveness of peacekeeping troops, particularly at low levels of peacekeepers. These results illustrate that mediation and peacekeeping can have important positive impacts on conflict beyond ending wars by reducing the level of violence in ongoing conflicts.

International Action and Violence Reduction

The UN and other international actors are quite active in internal disputes. In South Sudan, for example, the UN conducts a peacekeeping mission while, at the same time, various international organizations, governments, and non-governmental organizations promote negotiation and dialogue among warring parties. The civil war in Syria has experienced a different pattern of international

efforts to reduce violence—while the UN Security Council has remained so polarized that it has done little more than condemn acts of terrorism by ISIL and the use of chemical weapons—other UN entities, along with the Arab League, have been more active. Joint envoys of these international organizations and other representatives of various governments have worked to design peace processes and facilitate negotiations to try to stop the armed violence in Syria.

We argue that international actors, particularly the UN, can contribute to a reduction of violence in ongoing civil wars in two primary ways— through various diplomatic efforts (with the primary one being mediation) and through the deployment of force (primarily in the form of peacekeeping). Both occur frequently and, as discussed below, have been the subject of rich scholarship, but primarily in the area of conflict termination.

Diplomacy

The United Nations and other international actors are quite active in diplomacy related to civil war. Many civil wars now see early efforts at negotiation, and the UN—via the Secretary-General, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General or teams from the Department of Political Affairs—often deploys mediators and special envoys to seek a peaceful solution to these conflicts. These diplomatic efforts by third parties often bear fruit. For example, a number of studies have concluded that, once the non-random assignment of mediation is addressed, mediation makes negotiated settlement more likely (e.g., Beber 2012; Gartner and Bercovitch 2006).

Diplomacy can contribute directly to a reduction of violence in several ways even before and regardless of whether or not comprehensive settlements are reached. Mediators and other third parties facilitate the flow of information—e.g., through diplomatic functions such as the offering of good offices and fact-finding missions—which can help disputing parties overcome problems of uncertainty and mistrust that can be significant barriers to peace (Kydd, 2003, 2006; Savun 2007).

While Fey and Ramsay (2010) question how it is that mediators would be able to independently gather private information about the disputing parties, intermediaries can more indirectly reduce the transaction costs of negotiation and the learning that takes place as the disputants make offers and counter offers akin to Ramsay's (2011) negotiation model. Derouen and Möller (2013), for example, find that face-to-face mediated talks do especially well in reaching short-term settlement of a dispute.

Related, mediators can help the parties take incremental steps toward a comprehensive peace agreement.[4] For example, in 2001, while not a comprehensive settlement, under the auspices of Congolese president Laurent Kabila, both the Burundian government and the CNDD-FDD rebel group agreed to withdraw their forces from border regions in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), despite the rebels still rejecting the 2000 Arusha peace agreement, which was meant to end the civil war in Burundi proper.[5] While not terminating the conflict, such an incremental step reduced armed violence in the eastern DRC. Mediation can also lead to limited ceasefires meant to facilitate substantive peace talks, such as that agreed to by the Sierra Leone government and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in May 1999. This ceasefire was achieved with the mediation of US envoy Jesse Jackson and did not address the underlying dispute behind the violence. The ceasefire merely sought to "freeze" the frontline and establish a truce during which the peace talks that would address the underlying incompatibility would occur.[6] Even though the resultant peace talks failed to end the RUF-government conflict, the intervening truce served to reduce violence and suffering in the short-term. A related strategy is for mediators to pursue "localized ceasefires," which seek to achieve peace for shorter amounts of time and in limited areas as confidence and trust-building measures for combatants (Chounet-Cambas 2011, 29). This was a

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[4] Mattes (2016) has found that partial settlements improve the possibility of comprehensive settlement later.

[5] Reuters. 1/10/2001. " UPDATE 1-Congo says Burundian army, rebels to withdraw."
[6] Reuters. 5/18/1999. " FOCUS-Sierra Leone rivals agree truce during talks."

strategy pursued by UN mediators in the Croat-Serb conflict in 1993 whereby they sought to resolve potential disputes and violations at the commander-to-commander level.[7]

In many cases, these negotiated settlements fail to fully resolve conflicts, and ceasefire agreements resulting from mediated peace processes often break down (Beardsley 2011). However, the limited breakthroughs remain meaningful when some, even if not all, of the combatants agree to stop fighting. Such was the case, for example, in the Burundian Civil War, where, under South African auspices, the rebel CNDD-FDD signed a ceasefire in 2002 and a power-sharing agreement with the government in 2003, but the National Forces for Liberation (FNL) continued to fight until 2008 (Cunningham 2011, Ch. 4). In this way a step-by-step mediated peace process can lead to a decrease in violence even if it does not end the war (Gartner and Bercovitch 2006).

Mediators can also affect the perceived costs and benefits of continuing to fight for the parties involved, by offering carrots and sticks. For example, Wilkenfeld et al. (2003), Schrodt and Gerner (2004) and Beardsley et al. (2006) find that mediators that use leverage to help resolve a dispute tend to be more successful in reducing hostilities and contributing to conflict abatement. As a form of leverage, intermediaries can offer material support as a means to make settlement more attractive—the promise by Carter for the United States to deliver a flow of continued economic and development aid to Egypt contingent upon its signing the 1979 treaty with Israel is a canonical example. On the flip side, mediators can threaten to withdraw material support as a form of negotiation leverage, akin to Gerald Ford's threat to "reassess" the provision of military aid from the USA to Israel when negotiations for a second Sinai disengagement agreement had stalled (Stein 1999: 176). This type of dynamic is observable in civil wars as well. In the Angolan Civil War, on the recommendation of the UN-appointed mediator, Alioune Blondin Beye, the UN Security Council threatened to freeze the financial assets of Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) if

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[7] Reuters. 11/23/1993. "Croats, Serbs sign further local ceasefire accord."

the organization did not disarm and withdraw from occupied territories.[8] Mediators can also threaten to withdraw less tangible diplomatic support that could affect the geostrategic positioning of the adversaries, akin to Jimmy Carter's threats to Anwar Sadat at Camp David—that Egypt would be less secure in preventing the Soviet Union and radical Arabs from gaining a foothold in the region without staunch US support—as Sadat's delegation prepared to leave prior to the conclusion of a peace agreement (Carter 1982: 392). Moreover, mediators might publicly blame an intransigent party, akin to James Baker's threats to the "leave the dead cat on the doorstep" of the parties most responsible for scuttling the Madrid peace process (Baker 1999: 188). Alioune Blondin Beye practiced a similar strategy in Angola, threatening in 1998 to publically resign his position as UN envoy to Angola if UNITA did not carry out its obligations under the Lusaka peace accords.[9]

Force

While the United Nations has operated peacekeeping missions since 1948, the use of peacekeeping has increased dramatically since the Cold War. UN Peacekeepers are currently deployed in missions in several conflict-torn countries, including the Central African Republic, Mali, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan. While, in some cases, peacekeepers are deployed to monitor the implementation of a peace agreement, in many others these missions are deployed while hostilities are still ongoing.

Peacekeeping serves at least two functions that could lead to a reduction in violence in ongoing civil wars. These parallel some of the mechanisms that Fortna (2008) finds to be important in explaining the ability of peacekeeping missions to reduce conflict recurrence. First, peacekeepers can be positioned between combatants, which directly reduces the ability of combatants to target one another. Related, one trend over the past decade is for many peacekeeping missions, and not

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[8] *Agence France Presse.* 6/30/1998. " Beye's death not to hinder Angolan peace process."
[9] *Agence France Presse.* 6/30/1998. " Beye's death not to hinder Angolan peace process."

just multilateral enforcement missions, to have more robust mandates, rooted in Chapter VII of the UN Charter, to use force against entities that threaten to disrupt the peace processes (Hultman 2013). The threat of the use of force by peacekeeping and multilateral enforcement missions against violations of the peace may help deter some would-be violations. In a sense, peacekeepers help fill voids in state capacity to enforce order. Indeed, Blair (nd) has found that, in situations characterized by effective and responsive peacekeepers, individuals comply well with peacekeeping efforts and thereby confer some amount of legitimacy to the authority of peacekeeping.

Second, peacekeepers can observe and publicize participants' commitment to ceasefires—or lack thereof—helping to overcome commitment problems and decreasing the incentives that combatants have to use violence. In situations in which actors have incentives for non-compliance with a ceasefire because they consider the potential for unambiguous detection to be sufficiently low, the peacekeepers can alter those calculations and deter would-be cheaters. All parties can step into a ceasefire with greater confidence that they will not be vulnerable to losing ground and being exposed to grave danger as a result of undetected noncompliance by their opponents.

Force and Diplomacy Working Together

In the preceding theoretical discussion we have outlined our expectations regarding the pacifying effects of both diplomatic activity and force deployments in reducing conflict violence. However, the reality is that force and diplomacy are often paired together and are complementary tools that third parties can use to ameliorate and resolve armed conflict. Indeed, one type of action without the other likely limits its efficacy. Smith and Stam (2003), for example, posit that third parties depend on material incentives to shape the incentives of the disputants to move toward a peace settlement, and that mediation without such material incentives is unlikely to much help conflict management efforts. From this logic, mediation without peacekeeping or other forms of enforcement is not likely to

provide much marginal benefit, but mediation when backed by force deployments is likely to be much more productive. Relatedly, Beardsley (2013) finds that diplomatic engagement without peacekeeping fails to resolve time inconsistency problems that contribute to conflict relapse.

Diplomacy may also serve a unique role in supporting force deployments in that diplomats can be active "on-the-ground" much more rapidly than peacekeeping contingents. Large peacekeeping forces may take time to fully deploy and may be hampered in their mobility. This was the case with the UNAVEM III mission in Angola, which took several months to deploy because of political wrangling among contributing and donor nations and because of the hazards of heavily mined roads inside the country, which prevented movement and deployment within the country (Hill 2005, 203). While peacekeeping missions are in the process of deploying, diplomats may serve an important "stop-gap" role in addressing disputes and flare-ups between combatants. And once peacekeepers are deployed, combining the strengths of both approaches may yield greater results in reducing conflict violence than only pursuing one conflict management tactic. For example, the UN mission in Croatia in 1993 combined a sizeable peacekeeping deployment (at least 10,000 troops) with a strategy of negotiating "local" ceasefires between Serb and Croat commanders and setting up phone connections between local combatants to resolve disputes.[10] It is likely that such local agreements would not have been possible without the leverage that the 10,000-strong peacekeeper deployment brought nor would the peacekeepers have been as effective if the infrastructure for local dispute resolution between commanders had not been in place. Accordingly, while we anticipate that both force and diplomacy are effective in and of themselves, we expect that the greatest potential for violence reduction is to be had when force and diplomacy work together and reinforce each other.

Research Design

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[10] Reuters. 11/23/1993. " Croats, Serbs sign further local ceasefire accord."

To examine the effects of diplomacy and peacekeeping on the level of violence in intrastate conflicts, we examine the correlates of the monthly counts of battle-related fatalities in active African intrastate armed conflicts from 1989-2008. While we attempt to rule out many plausible confounds and alternative explanations, it is important to note that, like most of the existing quantitative work on third-party intervention, we are unable to leverage exogenous sources of variation to provide strict causal identification. We posit, however, that strict causal identification has limited utility in understanding the potential impact of third-party processes, as if the interventions could ever be switched on and off as exogenous treatments. Many of the interventions in our study, especially diplomatic and peacekeeping activity, arise from negotiated processes among the protagonists and the third parties. Those processes themselves are likely to be an important determinant of the trajectory of de-escalation that would not be captured by exogenous assignment of the treatment. That is, we are principally interested in correlational inference in this study—we are interested in whether the cases that have various types of third-party intervention have different patterns of violence than cases that do not, and we anticipate that the processes that led to the occurrence of those interventions actually contribute to those observed patterns. Furthermore, an alternative explanation contending that positive associations between major UN peacemaking initiatives and violence reductions are the product of the UN cherry-picking its interventions is inconsistent with existing work (e.g., Fortna 2008; Gilligan and Sergenti 2003; Gartner and Bercovitch 2006) and the UN's incentive structure in which easy victories are not likely to confer substantial benefits.

Dependent Variable

To capture fine-grained temporal variation in conflict violence, we use Hultman, Kathman, and

Shannon's (2014, hereafter HKS) monthly count of battle-related deaths[11] in a government-rebel

conflict dyad—from the UCDP dyadic dataset (Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen 2008). To

obtain monthly counts of battle-related deaths, HKS use the UCDP Global Events Dataset (GED),

which records specific events of battle-related violence in all government-rebel dyads in Africa from

1989-2008. We aggregate the dyad-level counts of battle-deaths in HKS to the conflict-month—the

unit of analysis—since several of our independent variables are coded at the conflict level.[12] Months

during an active conflict in which no battle-deaths are observed in the GED are coded as having 0

battle-deaths. We treat conflicts as active until 12 months after the most recent non-zero count of

battle-deaths.[13]

Table 1: African intra-state conflict violence in conflict-months (1989-2008)

Conflict-months	Non-zero conflict-months	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
4025	1510 (37.516%)	62.133	370.382	0	9082

Table 1 shows the number of conflict-months in our data, the number of those which see at least

one battle-death, and descriptive statistics for the dependent variable—the count of battle-deaths in

a given conflict-month. There is substantial variation in the number of battle-deaths. Additionally,

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[11] HKS' count includes government and rebel combatants as well as noncombatants killed as a result of battle-related
violence.

[12] With this set-up, there may be more than one conflict in a given country at the same time. If, for example, there is a
territorial conflict occurring concurrently with an anti-government rebellion or multiple territorial conflicts, as in
Myanmar and India. However, the data are structured such that there can be only one center-seeking dispute—i.e. a
dispute over the government—at a time, and all center-seeking rebel groups are aggregated in this dispute.

[13] This differs slightly from HKS, who use a 24-month period. While our results are robust for the 24-month period, we
doubt that information about how many fatalities occurred after peacemaking efforts in the midst of two years of
relative peace can tell us much about the conflict-reducing potential of those efforts.

the proportion of conflict-months with no battle-deaths is substantially higher than those with at least one battle-death (62.484%). Further, the size of the standard deviation relative to the mean indicates that the dependent variable is over-dispersed. These two factors drive our choice of a zero-inflated negative binomial model for the analysis, which is discussed in more detail below.

Independent Variables

We focus on the effect of third-party conflict management efforts of two types—the deployment of force and diplomacy. We examine indicators of both realized action and intended action by using separate measures of on-the-ground engagement and UNSC resolution adoption that pertain to such efforts. That is, we consider two main mechanisms through which international involvements that include peacekeeping and diplomacy could lead to a reduction in violence. The first is through the actual action itself. International actions such as the deployment of peacekeepers and diplomatic activity such as mediation can directly affect battlefield violence in various ways by making violence functionally more difficult or less attractive to the combatants relative to alternative options. Second, international declarations (through, for example, UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions) signal intention by the international community to take future action, and this signaling may shape the expectations and thus behavior of the parties on the ground. The UNSC includes five permanent members with disparate preferences that have the ability to veto any resolution; thus, when a resolution is passed there is a clear signal of international commitment to ending the war and reducing its violence.[14] Resolutions themselves could lead to the attenuation of violence by changing the expectations of the conflict protagonists.

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[14] The importance of the divergence of preferences of UN members has been noted by Voeten 2005, Thompson 2009, and Chapman 2009, who find that UNSC resolutions serve an informational role precisely because they are so hard to pass.

To measure on-the-ground force deployments (peacekeeping), we use the main independent variable from HKS's study—a one-month lag of Kathman's (2013) monthly counts (in thousands) of the number of peacekeeping troops deployed to a specific conflict, which they find exerts a consistently negative effect on conflict violence. HKS differentiate between three types of peacekeepers—troops, police, and military observers—and include a count of each type. HKS find that peacekeeping *troop*s exert a consistently significant effect in ameliorating conflict violence, so we focus on peacekeeping troops in our analysis.[15] By including their key independent variable in the analysis here, we are able to examine whether their finding on peacekeeping holds when we include variables measuring other types of international effort and with a modified modeling approach.

To examine the on-the-ground effect of different diplomatic efforts, we use two main measures of these actions. The first is a measure of third-party mediation from the Managing Intra-state Conflict (MIC) data (Melander and Uexkull 2011)—a binary indicator coded as 1 if a given conflict-month sees third-party mediation. We define mediation as having occurred if the type of third-party talks in the MIC data is coded as "direct talks"—face-to-face talks between the two primary parties of the dyad in the presence of the third party. An example of this would be the African Union-mediated discussions held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 2005 between the Sudanese government and two Darfur rebel groups—the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement.[16] We also include a binary indicator generated from the MIC data for third-party diplomatic action outside of mediation, which includes indirect third-party talks, bilateral third-party engagement, unclear third-party participation in talks, good offices, and fact-finding missions.

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[15] In their analysis, HKS examine separately from peacekeeping troops the effect of peacekeeping police and military observers, finding that police exert no statistically significant effect on conflict violence and that there is a positive association between military observers and conflict violence.

[16] See, e.g., *Reuters*. 8/24/2005. "Sudan's Darfur talks to resume mid-September - AU."

An example of this would be the meeting that the President of Uganda held with the British

Minister of International Development and Cooperation in 2004 regarding conflict in the north of

the country. These talks were *bilateral*, because while they pertained to the Ugandan government's

conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), they did not involve representatives of the LRA.[17]

When third-party activity continues across multiple months, each month is coded as having

experienced the activity. In auxiliary analyses discussed below, we distinguish between UN and non-

UN third parties, and we also use the MIC data to code a variable for whether a non-UN

peacekeeping mission was deployed in each month.

To measure the intention of the UN to deploy force or enhance a diplomatic initiative, we

started with data on the content of UNSC resolutions (Beardsley 2013), which code actions

authorized or mandated by resolutions as well as the countries to which they apply. We use these

data to examine whether the signal of intention sent by these actions has an independent effect on

the level of violence in conflict while controlling for the on-the-ground action that follows. As such,

we focus on two types of UNSC resolutions: authorization of force and diplomatic action. We

separate authorizations of force into two variables measuring "new force" and "force

reauthorizations" because, unlike other types of UN action, force authorizations carry an explicit

expiration date that can only be extended with another resolution.[18] In all cases, we model the long-

term—but decreasing—effect of each UNSC action with an exponential decay function with a one-

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[17] See, e.g., BBC Monitoring-Africa. 4/8/2004. "Uganda: President in talks with visiting British minister."

[18] Resolutions that expand the scope and/or size of an existing mission are considered as "new force." Moreover, mandates that authorize "all necessary force" to be used are considered as "new force" because these mandates are sufficiently rare and, even when the "all necessary force" language is a reiteration of earlier resolutions, we assume that they indicate greater UN involvement than simple extensions of an existing mission.

year half life.[19] We allow also for UNSC actions to have a cumulative effect, so that a weight of "1" is added to the decaying effect of a prior resolution that mandated the same type of action and then decay continues to proceed. The effects of each type of UNSC action—i.e., diplomacy and force—are modeled separately.

We examined each resolution that was directed at a country in the sample period to determine whether it directly or indirectly related to a particular armed conflict occurring in that country and describe the coding procedure in the Appendix. Beardsley, Cunningham, and White (n.d.) have shown that both directly and indirectly relevant UNSC resolutions can reduce the likelihood that self-determination disputes escalate to civil war. Given this, we anticipate that both types of actions will have a potentially ameliorative effect on conflict violence. Accordingly, in our main analysis, we aggregate indirectly and directly relevant resolutions. However, in robustness checks, we also restrict the analysis to directly relevant UNSC actions and find comparable results.

While this article focuses on the potential for effect diplomatic activity and force deployments to lead to a reduction in violence, in the analysis we also consider the role of other types of international action—in part because similar observable expectations apply and warrant investigation, and in part because we want to control for alternative mechanisms. In addition to authorizing the deployment of force, and to engaging in diplomatic actions (such as mediation), international actors such as the UN also use sanctions to try to manage civil conflicts. The authorization of sanctions can provide a motivation for combatants to find a peaceful solution to civil war by raising the costs of fighting and/or the benefits of peace. Depending on how successfully they are implemented, sanctions can make non-compliance more costly (Bapat and Kwon 2015), providing greater incentive for peaceful settlement. Even if sanctions do not result in

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[19] This specification gives a UNSC action an effect of "1" in the month in which it is adopted by the UNSC, an effect of .944 the following month, which decays to .50 by twelve months, and so on.

an end to war, they could lead to a reduction of violence in an ongoing war by limiting the war-fighting capabilities of the parties.[20] For example, the sanctions authorized by Resolution 713 (September 1991) were directly intended to decrease the arms available to the various combatants in the former Yugoslavia at the onset of the Balkan civil wars and, if effective, these actions could have reduced battlefield casualties.

As another possibility for international involvement, the UNSC often issues resolutions deploring hostilities, non-compliance with prior UN directives or international agreements, or human rights violations in relation to civil wars. These condemnations are frequently-used tools by the UNSC, and have been issued in civil wars such as the Israel-Palestinian conflict, Georgia's conflicts with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and the wars in the former Yugoslavia.

To measure the authorization of sanctions and the issuing of condemnations, we also use the Beardsley (2013) data, which identify resolutions as authorizations of sanctions when they contain explicit demands and authorizations for the international community to restrict the trade, financial privileges or movement of specific governments or leaders.[21] We do not focus on indicators of sanctions implementation because of limitations in the availability of sanctions data during our time period and because the UN is not responsible for the implementation of sanctions in the same way that it carries out peacekeeping and diplomatic initiatives. Condemnations cover explicit statements

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[20] Hultman and Peksen (2015), however, find that both the threat of sanctions and use of economic sanctions lead to an increase in violence.

[21] Resolutions are coded for sanctions when they authorize new sanctions as well as when they call for the continuation or expansion of existing sanctions.

in the operative paragraphs that deplore actions such as hostilities, human rights abuses, and failure to comply with existing agreements.[22]

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[22] We also include in this category explicit threats—but not actual implementation—of sanctions or some other punishments.

Table 2: Third-party action in armed conflicts in Africa (1989-2008)[23]

Third-party action	Number of conflict-months	Percentage of conflict-months
Mediation (MIC)	286	8.89%
Other diplomacy (MIC)	798	24.81%
Peacekeeping troops	1068	26.53%
UNSC new force	100	2.48%
UNSC sanctions	40	0.99%
UNSC diplomacy	108	2.68%
UNSC condemnation	141	3.50%

Table 2 shows the frequency of each type of diplomatic action, UN peacekeeping troops, and UNSC resolutions in the 4,025 conflict-months contained in our data. These descriptive statistics show that both peacekeeping and diplomatic actions are common—approximately a quarter of conflict months contained some sort of diplomatic action as identified by the MIC data. Mediation is a bit less common, but still takes place in 9% of conflict months. Peacekeeping troops, meanwhile, are identified as present in conflicts for nearly 30% of the conflict months here.[24] UNSC resolutions are less common, although we note that the reported figures reflect only the months in which a resolution was adopted—the decay functions allow for the resolutions to have influence in subsequent observations.

[23] Data for the MIC variables is only for 1993-2008.

[24] In terms of descriptive statistics, the average number of peacekeeping troops deployed in a given conflict-month in our data is 906.048, with a minimum of zero and a maximum of 29,209. The standard deviation is 3,238.770.

Modeling Conflict Violence

To model conflict violence we use a zero-inflated negative binomial regression and report statistical significance based on standard errors that are robust to clustering on each conflict. This model not only accounts for the over-dispersion of battle-deaths in the conflict-month data, but also models separately the correlates of the absence of violence—the "0s" in the count of battle-deaths—and the correlates of the counts of violence for the cases with non-zero battle-deaths. More than 60% of the conflict-months in our data have zero battle-deaths (see Table 1), which is suggestive that separate processes are driving the occurrence of any battles and the severity of the battles that do occur.

With a zero-inflated model, we are able to specify separately equations of "no violence" and "violence severity." We include our key explanatory variables in both parts of the zero-inflated model in order to ascertain their effect on both the presence of violence and its severity. In some cases, control variables appear in both parts of the zero-inflated model, while in other cases, they appear in one and not the other, depending on our expectation of whether the variable is likely to affect the opportunity for battles to occur (no violence), the severity of the battles that do occur (severity), or both.

In line with HKS, we include in both stages a count of the number of different rebel organizations active on the rebel side of a conflict. Also in both stages of the model, we include a cumulative average rate of the number of battle deaths—i.e., the number of battle-deaths in the conflict up to that point, divided by the number of months the conflict has been active. This allows us to account for baseline levels of violence and some of the potential for serial dependence in the data.

In just the "zero" stage of the model—modeling the absence of violence—we include a binary measure of whether or not there is a ceasefire agreement in a given conflict-month,[25] used by HKS, because we expect that a ceasefire is most relevant to whether or not there is an opportunity for battles to occur. We also include a measure of the duration of the current episode of conflict, as well as a cubic polynomial of the number of months in the conflict in which there has been no violence to account for temporal dependence for the binary outcome of "no violence."[26] In just the "count" stage of the model, which measures conflict severity, we include from HKS the relative strength of the rebel group in the conflict in a five-level ordinal scale[27] and the natural log of the state's population[28] because conflicts with weak rebel groups and in low-population states have less potential to escalate to high counts of battle-related deaths.

Results

Table 3 shows the results from our main analysis, reporting the coefficients as incidence-rate ratios—where values greater than 1 indicate a positive effect and less than 1 indicate a negative effect. The greater the distance from 1—in either direction—the greater the magnitude of the effect. The results for both the "No battle-related violence (BRV)" and "BRV count" stages of the zero-inflated model are reported separately. Here, it is important to stress that the dependent variable at the "No BRV" stage is the absence of violence, so a coefficient greater than "1" indicates that the given variable makes any violence *less likely*.

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[25] From the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset (Harbom, Hogbladh, and Wallensteen 2006).

[26] See Carter and Signorino (2010).

[27] From Cunningham et al's (2009) Non-state Actor Dataset.

[28] From the CINC data (Singer et al. 1972).

We conduct three sets of analyses. In the first, we only include measures of diplomatic efforts and peacekeeping alongside the controls. In the second set, we include the four types of UNSC resolutions, allowing us to examine whether the signal of resolve provided by the resolution has an effect on battlefield violence. In the final set, we include all together, allowing us to compare the effect of the action (i.e. peacekeeping or diplomacy) and the resolution (resolve), and to examine whether each has an independent effect controlling for the other.

Table 3: Third-party intervention and conflict violence

Third-Party Activity and Battle-Related Fatalities

	PKO, MIC		UNSCR		PKO, MIC, UNSCR	
	BRV count	No BRV	BRV count	No BRV	BRV count	No BRV
PKO troops (lag, per 1,000)	0.917	1.018			0.942	1.038
	(<.001)	(0.268)			(0.043)	(0.212)
MIC mediation (lag)	0.649	1.768			0.670	1.712
	(0.029)	(0.034)			(0.025)	(0.0419)
MIC other diplomatic int. (lag)	1.438	0.512			1.350	0.533
	(0.035)	(0.006)			(0.074)	(0.001)
UNSCR new force weight (lag)			1.035	1.396	0.927	1.159
			(0.848)	(0.047)	(0.473)	(0.435)
UNSCR sanctions weight (lag)			1.138	1.220	1.480	0.989
			(0.524)	(0.484)	(0.018)	(0.970)
UNSCR diplomacy weight (lag)			0.768	0.730	0.879	0.811
			(<.001)	(0.109)	(0.010)	(0.240)
UNSCR condemn weight (lag)			1.183	0.766	1.200	0.846
			(0.121)	(0.059)	(0.026)	(0.204)
UNSCR renew force weight (lag)			0.880	1.071	0.750	1.089
			(0.315)	(0.642)	(0.002)	(0.569)
UNSCR other weight (lag)			0.727	0.919	0.886	0.917
			(0.215)	(0.592)	(0.641)	(0.584)
Number of rebel groups	1.075	0.887	1.009	0.859	1.075	0.878
	(0.030)	(0.127)	(0.866)	(0.138)	(0.036)	(0.102)
Rebel strength	1.572		1.412		1.541	
	(<.001)		(0.088)		(0.043)	
Population (ln)	1.269		1.219		1.189	
	(0.00530)		(0.212)		(0.058)	
Prior battle related violence rate	1.007	0.996	1.003	1.000	1.008	0.997
	(<.001)	(0.037)	(0.025)	(0.868)	(<.001)	(0.240)
Ceasefire		2.157		2.000		2.314
		(0.006)		(0.007)		(0.006)
Episode duration		0.998		0.997		0.998
		(0.322)		(0.046)		(0.167)
Peacemonths		4.632		5.047		4.463
		(<.001)		(<.001)		(<.001)
Peacemonths^2		0.789		0.783		0.795
		(<.001)		(<.001)		(<.001)
Peacemonths^3		1.012		1.012		1.011
		(<.001)		(<.001)		(<.001)
Constant	1.160	0.500	4.816	0.385	2.138	0.558
	(0.871)	(0.016)	(0.357)	(0.004)	(0.498)	(0.053)
alpha	2.062		2.732		1.976	
	(<.001)		(<.001)		(<.001)	
Observations	2,637		3,366		2,637	

Values are incidence-rate ratios; p-values in parentheses

The analyses in Table 3 support the violence-reducing effect of peacekeeping identified by HKS. In both count models, a greater number of peacekeeping troops is associated with fewer battle-related fatalities, and the effect is statistically significant. The sign on the coefficient is as expected in the inflation models (showing that more peacekeepers make zero battle-related deaths more likely), but these results are not statistically significant. Given that we analyze the effect of peacekeeping at the conflict-month rather than dyad-month level, and that we control for other

forms of third-party involvement, these analyses provide further support for the findings in HKS that peacekeeping troops reduce the severity of civil conflicts.

We also find strong evidence that, beyond the presence of peacekeeping troops, third-party conflict management can reduce violence. Specifically, third-party mediation efforts exert a strong pacifying effect at both stages of the zero-inflated model. This suggests that mediation is associated with reductions in conflict violence at all levels of conflict, even to the point of leading to no fatal violence. In terms of substantive effects, predictions generated from the model suggest that conflict-months that have had third-party mediation efforts in the prior month see approximately 21 fewer battle-related fatalities on average.[29] Put differently, a conflict-month that has had no third-party mediation in the prior month is expected to see approximately 52 battle-deaths on average, while a conflict-month that has seen prior third-party mediation is expected to see 31.[30] This effect for mediation is particularly striking when we compare it to predicted fatality counts for different levels of peacekeeping generated from our model and find the predicted number of battle-deaths does not drop to 31 until deployments reach approximately 7,000,[31] suggesting that mediation is associated with a very strong pacifying effect when placed in context with other third-party interventions. This is not to suggest that mediation is a *replacement* for boots on the ground, since the two often occur in concert. In further analysis below we explicitly model the interaction of peacekeeper deployments and mediation.

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[29] The predicted effect is 21.436 fewer deaths with a 95% confidence interval of (33.846 fewer and 9.025 fewer).

[30] The predictions are 52.551 battle-deaths (43.198, 61.905) and 31.116 battle-deaths (22.551, 39.681), respectively.

[31] On average, the predicted number of battle deaths in a given month with a prior month deployment of 7,000 peacekeeping troops is 31.084 (21.202, 40.965), whereas the predicted count of battle-deaths with no peacekeepers is 50.364 (41.088, 59.640).

Beyond active mediation efforts, we find that UNSC resolutions that authorize diplomacy have a strong effect on reducing violence at the count level, but not to the point of ending violence. However, while statistically significant, the effect of the UNSC resolutions authorizing diplomacy does not appear to be as strong as the mediation itself. Predictions generated from the model suggest that a conflict-month that saw no UNSC diplomatic resolutions in prior months has, on average, approximately 50 battle-deaths, while a diplomatic resolution in the prior month reduces this to approximately 46 deaths. As Figure 1 shows, the predicted effect does increase with the weight of multiple, recent UNSC diplomatic resolutions. However, the predicted efficacy of these resolutions approaches that of actual mediation only at very high (and rare) values and then with a very high level of uncertainty surrounding the predictions.

Figure 1: UNSC Diplomacy Resolutions and Battle-related Fatalities in African Civil Wars (1993-2008)
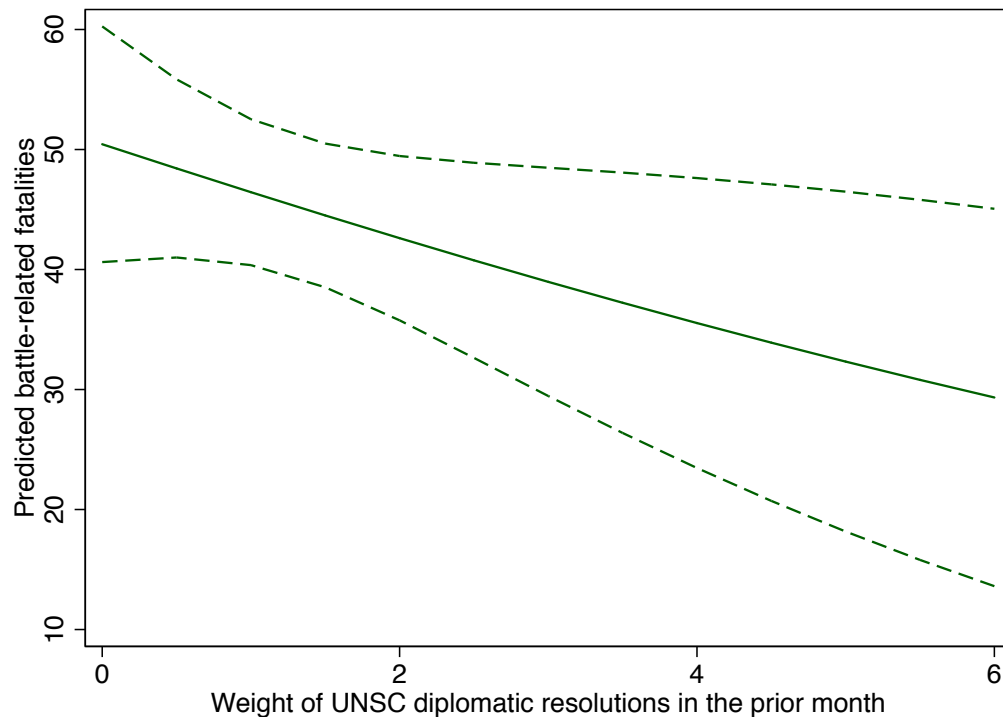
It is important to stress that these results for mediation and diplomatic resolutions are robust to the inclusion of HKS' peacekeepers measure as well as a dummy variable for non-UN peacekeeping (see Table 5 below), which demonstrates that diplomatic efforts do not necessarily require accompanying "boots on the ground" to reduce violence.

We do not find strong evidence that other types of third-party action are able to reduce conflict violence. UNSC resolutions that authorize new force deployments do have a strong positive relationship with "no battle-related violence," but this relationship is statistically insignificant when the actual deployments of peacekeepers are included in the model. In line with HKS, this suggests that the effect of UNSC peacekeeping resolutions is in the actual deployment of peacekeepers, not in the resolve that the resolutions themselves may signal. UNSC resolutions that renew existing

peacekeeping mandates do have a statistically significant effect in reducing the counts of battle-deaths, but this effect is only present when controlling for peacekeeper deployments.[32]

We also find that a number of third-party interventions—including non-mediation diplomacy (MIC), UNSC condemnations of combatants, and UNSC authorization of sanctions—are associated with *increased* violence.[33] It is likely that this stems from a selection effect, whereby severely violent conflicts are more likely to attract third-party action than more subdued ones (Gartner and Bercovitch 2006). Unlike peacekeeper deployments and mediation, it may be that sanctions, condemnations, and non-mediatory diplomacy by themselves are unable to subdue the severe violence of the conflicts to which they are directed. In this way, the positive correlations with violence of these variables reduces the plausibility of selection effects explaining our main findings regarding the negative correlations pertaining to the mediation, diplomatic UNSC action and peacekeeping variables. Such an explanation would need to explain why some types of third-party intervention are going to the "easy" cases while others are going to the more difficult ones.

As an additional check into the potential for selection effects, we examined the trends of violence around the mediation initiatives to see if mediation occurs as conflicts are already trending toward violence reduction. In actuality, as demonstrated in Figure 2, mediation typically occurs when there has been significant violence preceding the mediation initiative.[34] The negative numbers on the

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[32] This result is somewhat puzzling, since we would expect the force renewal resolutions to pick up much of the ameliorative effect of peacekeepers when actual peacekeeper deployments are excluded from the model. One possibility is that the renewal interval matters—when renewals occur at shorter intervals, this variable will tend be higher. If the interval is correlated with both the numbers of troops deployed and the severity of violence, this might explain the observed results.

[33] This finding on sanctions is consistent with that of Hultman and Peksen (2015).

[34] Figure 2 includes all the armed conflicts that had an instance of mediation during a time window of no more than twelve months of "peace." When there are multiple instances of mediation, the time since mediation resets—we do not

x-axis in the figure can be thought of as the time until mediation occurs, and the positive numbers as the time since mediation occurred. We see considerable amounts of violence before mediation, and little afterward. Moreover, we do not see a downward trend in violence that precedes mediation, as if the conflicts were heading toward peace or already had peace at the time of mediation.

Figure 2: Trends of Violence around Mediation Attempts
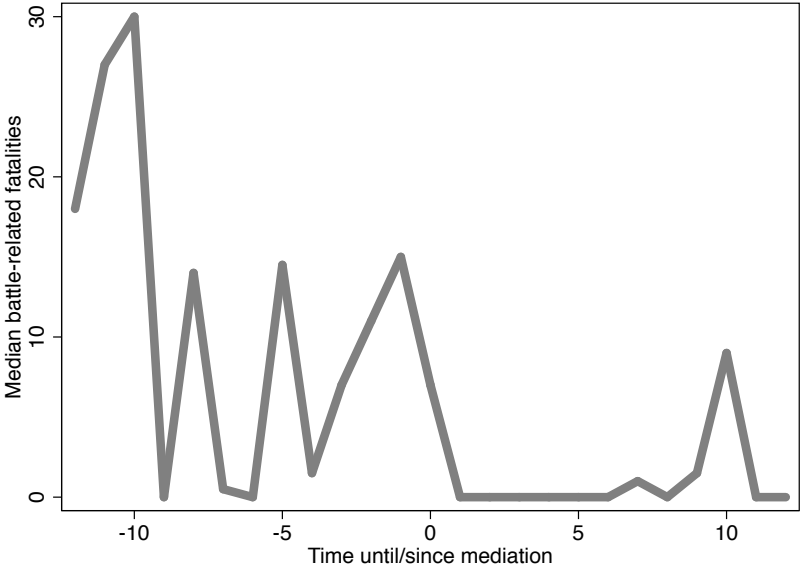
Conditional Effects

Figure 3: Peacekeepers and Battle-related Fatalities, conditional on mediation

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consider these as time until mediation. When the armed conflicts have more than twelve months without any battle-related fatalities, they are eligible to start counting as time until mediation again (the time until mediation includes both cases that have yet to experience any mediation and cases that entered into a prolonged period of peace after mediation but then conflict relapsed).
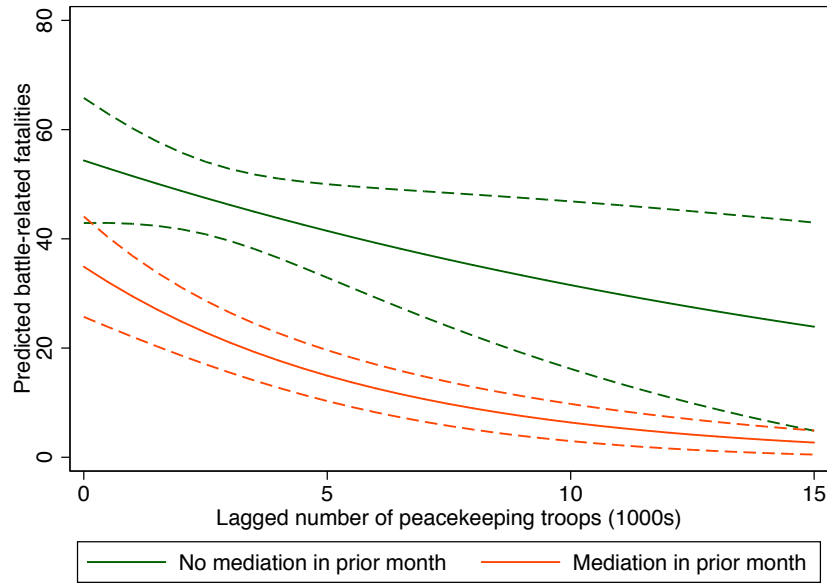
In the analyses in Table 3 we examine peacekeeping and diplomacy independently, controlling for the other action, but, as we argue above, it is likely that the different actions that third parties can take to ameliorate conflict violence are complementary. Accordingly, we explicitly modeled the effect of mediation, conditional on peacekeeping deployments by including in our model an interaction of mediation with HKS' measure of peacekeeping troops. The full results from this model can be seen in Table 4, while Figure 3 plots the predicted battle-deaths from this model at different levels of peacekeeping, conditional on mediation. The conditional effect, which is statistically significant in the count equation, appears modest when plotted substantively. The space between the two lines' confidence intervals demonstrates a significant pacifying effect for mediation at a broad range of peacekeeping-levels. Moreover, the consistent negative slope on both lines demonstrates a significant pacifying effect of peacekeeping with or without mediation. Further, the much steeper initial slope for the line plotting the effect of peacekeeping when there is prior mediation suggests that at least at low-to-middling levels of peacekeepers, additional peacekeepers

further enhance the gap between the potential for violence with mediation and the potential for

violence without mediation.[35]

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[35] These results are consistent with a separate analysis (not shown) in which we estimated models

with an interaction term for third-party mediation (MIC) and UNSC resolutions authorizing new

force.

Table 4: Effect of mediation, conditional on peacekeepers

	Peacekeeper & Mediation Interaction	
	BRV count	No BRV
MIC mediation (lag)	0.722	1.655
	(0.072)	(0.073)
PKO troops (lag, per 1,000)	0.955	1.036
	(0.117)	(0.305)
Mediation*PKO troops	0.895	1.009
	(0.003)	(0.883)
MIC other diplomatic int. (lag)	1.354	0.534
	(0.066)	(0.010)
UNSCR new force weight (lag)	0.932	1.159
	(0.497)	(0.419)
UNSCR sanctions weight (lag)	1.439	0.988
	(0.022)	(0.968)
UNSCR diplomacy weight (lag)	0.862	0.809
	(0.007)	(0.223)
UNSCR condemn weight (lag)	1.21	0.85
	(0.011)	(0.213)
UNSCR renew force weight (lag)	0.751	1.082
	(0.001)	(0.599)
UNSCR other weight (lag)	0.891	0.91
	(0.623)	(0.544)
Number of rebel groups	1.075	0.878
	(0.036)	(0.100)
Rebel strength	1.546	
	(0.033)	
Population (ln)	1.188	
	(0.065)	
Prior battle-related violence rate	1.008	0.997
	(<.001)	(0.250)
Ceasefire		2.339
		(0.005)
Episode duration		0.998
		(0.163)
Peacemonths		4.46
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^2		0.795
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^3		1.011
		(<.001)
Constant	2.133	0.56
	(0.502)	(0.054)
alpha	1.97	
	(<.001)	
Observations	2,637	

Values are incidence-rate ratios; p-values in parentheses

One possible concern with the especially strong joint pacifying effect demonstrated in Figure 3 at low-to-middling levels of peacekeeper deployments is that peacekeeper deployments of this size combined with mediators are more likely to go to conflicts that are already in the process of pacifying on their own. Large-scale peacekeeper deployments without mediators may be more likely to go to more violent disputes so as to establish the conditions on the ground necessary for mediation to occur. The inclusion in our analysis of a number of controls for past and ongoing conflict dynamics—i.e., prior violence rate, ceasefires, and conflict episode duration—bolsters our confidence that the observed joint effect of peacekeeping and mediation does not stem from some other underlying conflict dynamic. Moreover, as we saw in Figure 3, it does not appear that mediation occurs in the midst of conflicts that have already started enjoying violence reductions. Further, the pacifying effect for mediation is evident at a wide range of peacekeeper deployments, which should provide added confidence that the efficacy of mediation is not limited to low-to-middling levels of peacekeeper deployment going to more pacific conflicts. In our robustness checks discussed below, we also address this concern with additional specifications that explicitly take into account the prior trend in conflict violence, and there is no change in our findings.

Identity of Third-Party Intervener

In this article, we have focused primarily on the United Nations since it is the most prolific actor in international conflict management. In further analyses, we separate UN interventions from those enacted by other third-parties—e.g., IGOs, regional security organizations, and individual nations. Table 5 shows results from a model which includes a dummy variable from the MIC data indicating the involvement of a non-UN peacekeeping mission in a particular conflict and a variable that splits the MIC mediation dummy into UN and non-UN mediation activity. The results show that the non-UN peacekeeping dummy is negatively associated with the count of battle-deaths in a conflict while

positively associated with instances of no battle-related deaths in a given conflict-month. Both coefficients are statistically significant. This indicates that the pacifying effect of peacekeepers is not strictly limited to UN forces and complements HKS' main findings. While from these findings we cannot ascertain the relative effectiveness of different non-UN peacekeeping forces—e.g., African Union, European Union, or ECOWAS—these results suggest that the effect of peacekeeping is driven by the practical effect of third-party "boots on the ground" and not the particulars of the more distant institution from which the peacekeeping mission originated. This is consistent with our findings in the main analysis that it is the presence of UN peacekeepers that has a pacifying effect, not the resolutions dispatching the peacekeepers.

In terms of disaggregated mediation, UN activity appears to drive the overall efficacy of mediation in the main results. While there is some imprecision in the coefficient estimates ($p\sim.20$ in both cases), the coefficients indicate that UN mediation is both negatively associated with the count of battle-deaths and positively associated with incidence of no battle-deaths in a conflict. In contrast, the results for non-UN mediation are inconsistent. In the count model, the coefficient indicates a negative effect, but this is far from conventional levels of statistical significance ($p=.706$)—in the model of "zero incidence," the effect is actually negative, indicating that non-UN mediation corresponds to some level of violence above zero battle-deaths.

Table 6: UN and non-UN intervention in conflict

UN and Non-UN Involvement

	UN & Non-UN Involvement	
	BRV count	No BRV
PKO troops (lag, per 1,000)	0.936	1.029
	(0.010)	(0.372)
MIC other diplomatic int. (lag)	1.354	0.556
	(0.061)	(0.015)
UNSCR new force weight (lag)	0.951	1.296
	(0.657)	(0.216)
UNSCR sanctions weight (lag)	1.538	1.109
	(0.001)	(0.710)
UNSCR diplomacy weight (lag)	0.886	0.795
	(0.037)	(0.164)
UNSCR condemn weight (lag)	1.184	0.827
	(0.025)	(0.223)
UNSCR renew force weight (lag)	0.761	1.049
	(0.001)	(0.787)
UNSCR other weight (lag)	0.870	0.826
	(0.582)	(0.332)
Number of rebel groups	1.073	0.867
	(0.045)	(0.069)
Rebel strength	1.556	
	(0.045)	
Population (ln)	1.169	
	(0.095)	
Prior battle related violence rate	1.008	0.998
	(<.001)	(0.288)
Ceasefire		2.741
		(0.001)
Episode duration		0.997
		(0.129)
Peacemonths		4.445
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^2		0.794
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^3		1.011
		(<.001)
Non-UN peacekeeping (lag)	0.494	1.884
	(0.001)	(0.080)
UN MIC mediation (lag)	0.771	1.426
	(0.207)	(0.190)
Non-UN MIC mediation (lag)	0.894	0.432
	(0.706)	(0.020)
Constant	2.447	0.577
	(0.418)	(0.069)
alpha	1.992	
	(<.001)	
Observations	2,637	

Values are incidence-rate ratios; p-values in parentheses

Robustness Checks

We conduct three additional analyses to examine the robustness of these findings. One possible

concern is that third-party intervention is more likely to go to conflicts where violence is already

decreasing, and so the violence-reducing effects that we find for mediation and diplomacy are due to

those actions being directed at conflicts that would have become less violent regardless of the

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intervention. This is addressed by HKS with regards to peacekeeper deployments. They include in their analysis a measure of "Battle Violence Change"—the change in the three-month moving average of battle-related violence between the previous three dyad-months and the three months prior to this (HKS, 13). We do the same (Table A1, in Appendix), aggregating the dyad-month measure to conflict-month, and find no substantive change in our results, providing confidence that mediation and diplomatic action actually serves to reduce violence rather than just being directed at already-pacific disputes. We also applied this check to our finding regarding the conditional effect of mediation and peacekeeping, and the results were essentially the same.

As noted previously, we include both directly and indirectly relevant resolutions in our weighted UNSC action indicators. As an added robustness check, we restrict the UNSC action indicators to only those resolutions coded as directly relevant and find comparable results (Table A1, in appendix). With this there is a modest loss of precision for the coefficient estimate pertaining to UNSC diplomatic resolutions in the count model (p=.107, two-tailed), but the direction of the effect remains unchanged. In this specification, the MIC mediation indicator remains significant at the 0.05 level. The results remain suggestive that UNSC initiatives can play a strong role in ameliorating conflict violence, even when accounting for other third-party mediation.

In a further specification, we recoded our measures of mediation and non-mediation diplomatic engagement to consider indirect talks (e.g., shuttle diplomacy) to be a form of mediation in addition to direct talks (e.g., face-to-face talks with a third-party present). The results from this analysis (Table A2, in Appendix) show that while mediation remains statistically significant in the "no violence" portion of the model, it is no longer significant in the count portion (p=.557)—though the effect is still in the negative direction. This suggests that to be most effective in reducing violence, third-party diplomacy should be in the form of face-to-face talks between belligerents

overseen by the third-party, consistent with Derouen and Möller (2013). Weaker measures of diplomatic-engagement, such as shuttle-diplomacy, do not appear to have the same pacifying effect.

Conclusion

Over the last two decades, international actors have devoted increasing attention to managing intrastate conflicts. A substantial body of research has suggested that various efforts—such as mediation and peacekeeping—can make significant contributions to the resolution of intrastate conflict. Indeed, some have gone so far as to argue that the decline in the incidence of civil war over the last several decades is in large part due to international conflict resolution activity (Goldstein 2011).

Despite these efforts, however, a large number of civil wars are still fought. Our analysis suggests that the positive effect of international efforts is not limited to the production of comprehensive peace agreements. Rather, it suggests that efforts such as peacekeeping and mediation can actually reduce the level of killing in ongoing wars as well as resolve them.

These findings are important, because they suggest that international actions have a positive effect that has, with the exception of peacekeeping, to date been unrecognized. Many of the conflicts that receive the most international attention—such as those in Syria and South Sudan—are incredibly bloody, and the level of violence can suggest that the ability of third parties to do anything constructive is limited. Our analyses suggest, however, that, on average, civil wars would be even bloodier without international efforts such as peacekeeping and mediation. The presence of severe armed conflict in the face of international intervention does not necessarily represent the categorical failure of international efforts to reduce violence and suffering in civil war.

The first key policy implication from our study, then, is that scholars and policymakers evaluating the success of different international efforts should use a broader metric than the full

resolution of the conflict. To fully gauge the effectiveness of third-party conflict resolution and mediation efforts, researchers should examine the severity of violence in conflict as well as its total resolution.

A second implication is that achieving these positive effects is not free, and indeed requires the investment of significant resources. We do not find a pacifying effect for UNSC resolutions that authorize sanctions or comprise condemnations—actions that are (relatively) low cost for the UN. Rather, diplomatic actions such as mediation and deployments of peacekeepers have the largest effects. Much of the discussion of efforts by states and bodies such as the UN to respond to these conflicts focuses on the costs of doing so, and these costs can be substantial. We show that the benefits can be as well.

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Appendix

Coding of UNSC Resolutions

A resolution was considered to be directly tied to a conflict if the combatants (rebel or government) would understand it to be addressed to them and their conflict. In many cases, this included resolutions that explicitly mentioned the rebel side in the conflict, such as UNSC Resolution 1653 in January 2006 condemning the Lord's Resistance Army's "brutal insurgency." Also considered directly relevant were resolutions that authorized or re-authorized peacekeeping missions with operations in the country. For example, Resolution 891 (December 1993), which extended the mandate of the UNOMUR mission to monitor the Ugandan-Rwandan border for illicit arms flows was considered directly relevant to both the Ugandan and Rwandan intra-state conflicts at that time. Finally, resolutions that applied to a broader regional conflict to which the country-specific combatants (government or rebel) were active participants were also considered directly relevant to the country-specific internal conflict. Many of the resolutions pertaining to the Second Congo War (1998-2003) and its aftermath fell into this latter category, given the internationalization of the conflict and the operations of rebel groups and government forces from Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and other countries inside the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)/Zaire. An example of such a resolution would be 1445 (December 2002), which called for the "demobilization and repatriation" of foreign fighters in the DRC. While the only rebel groups explicitly mentioned in 1445 are Rwandan—e.g., *The Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda*—this was coded also as directly relevant to the concurrent conflict in Uganda, given the presence of Ugandan rebels inside DRC at the time.

Resolutions were considered indirectly relevant if they did not meet the threshold for direct relevance discussed above, but still applied to a broader countrywide or regional conflict to which the conflict combatants were *plausible* participants, though not active ones. An example of this type

includes Resolution 1044 (January 1996), which condemned an assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak by Sudan-based Islamist militants in Ethiopia. Given the Islamist character of the Egyptian conflict and the related affiliation of the would-be assassins and their origins in Sudan, there would be plausible potential for the Egyptian conflict to spill over into Sudan or a regional Islamist-inspired conflict—though this did not ultimately occur.

Resolutions were considered to have no relevance when they did not meet the criteria for either direct or indirect relevance. An example of a resolution with no relevance to a conflict, despite having some relevance to the country in which it was occurring would be Resolution 926 (June 1994), which terminated the mandate of the UN Observer Group in the Aouzou Strip in northern Chad—site of an inter-state armed conflict between Chad and Libya. While the Chadian government-*Conseil National pour le Redressement* (CNR) conflict was ongoing at the time of the resolution, the Aouzou Strip was on the other side of the country from the operations of the CNR. Further, there was no evidence of any historical connections between the Chad-Libya inter-state conflict and the CNR insurgency. Since the CNR was neither an active (direct relevance) nor plausible (indirect relevance) participant in the Aouzou Strip conflict, Resolution 926 was coded as having no relevance to the Chad-CNR conflict.

Table A1: Controls for violence change and only direct UNSC actions

Robustness Checks

	Change in violence		Only Direct UNSC Action	
	BRV Count	No BRV	BRV Count	No BRV
UNSCR new force weight (lag)	0.918	1.156	0.996	1.269
	(0.395)	(0.443)	(0.978)	(0.210)
UNSCR sanctions weight (lag)	1.465	0.988	1.406	0.857
	(0.019)	(0.966)	(0.086)	(0.643)
UNSCR diplomacy weight (lag)	0.892	0.812	0.924	0.834
	(0.030)	(0.245)	(0.107)	(0.413)
UNSCR condemn weight (lag)	1.204	0.845	1.228	0.868
	(0.021)	(0.196)	(0.013)	(0.326)
UNSCR renew force weight (lag)	0.744	1.090	0.720	0.996
	(0.002)	(0.558)	(0.000)	(0.980)
UNSCR other weight (lag)	0.888	0.918	0.892	0.828
	(0.641)	(0.586)	(0.711)	(0.400)
PKO troops (lag, per 1,000)	0.943	1.038	0.930	1.038
	(0.048)	(0.208)	(0.031)	(0.192)
MIC mediation (lag)	0.682	1.715	0.678	1.726
	(0.030)	(0.040)	(0.025)	(0.049)
MIC other diplomatic int. (lag)	1.330	0.532	1.344	0.530
	(0.092)	(0.010)	(0.063)	(0.008)
Change in violence	1.000	1.000		
	(0.083)	(0.899)		
Number of rebel groups	1.075	0.879	1.072	0.870
	(0.036)	(0.103)	(0.042)	(0.089)
Ceasefire		2.307		2.476
		(0.006)		(0.005)
Prior battle related violence rate	1.008	0.997	1.008	0.998
	(0.000)	(0.240)	0.000	(0.251)
Peacemonths		4.446		4.538
		(0.000)		0.000
Peacemonths^2		0.795		0.791
		(0.000)		(0.000)
Peacemonths^3		1.011		1.012
		(0.000)		(0.000)
Episode Duration		0.998		0.998
		(0.162)		(0.216)
Rebel Strength	1.510		1.471	
	(0.049)		(0.063)	
Population (ln)	1.169		1.200	
	(0.104)		(0.038)	
Constant	2.583	0.561	2.165	0.541
	(0.416)	(0.055)	(0.481)	(0.038)
alpha	1.962		2.005	
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
Observations	2,637		2,637	

Table A2: Mediation coded to include indirect talks as well as direct talks

Robustness Checks

	MIC Mediation includes indirect talks	
	BRV Count	No BRV
UNSCR new force weight (lag)	0.941	1.16
	(0.558)	(0.433)
UNSCR sanctions weight (lag)	1.493	0.99
	(0.019)	(0.974)
UNSCR diplomacy weight (lag)	0.887	0.808
	(0.048)	(0.239)
UNSCR condemn weight (lag)	1.207	0.853
	(0.024)	(0.229)
UNSCR renew force weight (lag)	0.731	1.081
	(0.001)	(0.612)
UNSCR other weight (lag)	0.864	0.912
	(0.583)	(0.569)
PKO troops (lag, per 1,000)	0.941	1.038
	(0.055)	(0.203)
MIC mediation (indirect, direct)	0.864	1.661
	(0.557)	(0.049)
MIC other diplomatic int. (lag)	1.194	0.511
	(0.233)	(0.006)
Number of rebel groups	1.071	0.877
	(0.043)	(0.099)
Ceasefire		2.391
		(0.004)
Prior battle-related violence rate	1.008	0.997
	(<.001)	(0.198)
Peacemonths		4.5
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^2		0.793
		(<.001)
Peacemonths^3		1.011
		(<.001)
Episode duration		0.998
		(0.192)
Rebel strength	1.512	
	(0.059)	
Population (ln)	1.134	
	(0.198)	
Constant	3.598	0.547
	(0.280)	(0.045)
alpha	1.991	
	(<.001)	
Observations	2,637	