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Mediating among Mediators: Building a Consensus in Multilateral Interventions

Timea Spitka
Sophie Davis Postdoctoral Fellow, Gender, Peace and Conflict Resolution, Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel
timea.spitka@gmail.com; timea.spitka@mail.huji.ac.il

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Abstract

The conditions under which multilateral international intervention are effective in ending a violent conflict is a critical question for scholars and practitioners. Scholarly studies have demonstrated the importance of a united intervention but have been in disagreement over the effectiveness of neutral versus partisan intervention. This article examines the conditions under which mediators construct a consensus on the type of intervention process. What are the factors that enable a consensus on a neutral versus a partisan intervention? Distinguishing between four types of international intervention processes – united-neutral, united-partisan, divided-partisan, and divided neutral and partisan intervention – this article argues that it is a united intervention, whether united partisan or united-neutral, that contributes to creating leverage on conflicting parties to end a conflict. The article examines consensus building among mediators within two divergent case studies: Northern Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* Timea Spitka received her PhD from Ben Gurion University. Her research has focused on conflict resolution, mediation, and intervention in violent conflicts. Dr. Spitka has worked for several international organizations including the United Nations and Oxfam. Her most recent book is *International Intervention, Identity and Conflict Transformation: Bridges and Walls between Groups* (Routledge 2015).

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External intervention in internal violent conflict has become complex, with concurrent intervention by states, regional organizations and international organizations. A vital question debated in mediation and international intervention literature is the effectiveness of neutral versus partisan intervention. A multilateral intervention presents a fundamental challenge since it is dependent on a consensus towards a neutral or a partisan intervention that engages appropriate intervention tools and a consensus on the desired outcome. This article argues that an effective multiparty intervention emerges from a consensus on a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention. Such a consensus can be formed around endogenous factors related to the conflict or exogenous factors related to political or strategic interests of the interveners. This article examines the paths towards such a consensus among mediators within the process, the tools and the outcome.

In a neutral intervention, the external actors intercede in an impartial manner without coercion against any of the groups in conflict. This may include impartial mediation, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping. In a partisan intervention, the external interveners purposely favor or disfavor a specific group at the expense of the opposing group(s). Partisan intervention may include coercive mediation, diplomatic or economic sanctions, military intervention, and strategies that take a side and favor one conflicting group over another. Distinctions can be made between bias by source or bias to the outcome. Bias by source refers to a mediator's closer ties with one of the groups in the conflict that ensures that mediator will guarantee the interests of their side (Svensson 2009). Biased mediators are anticipated to exercise their leverage to deliver their side (Zartman 1995; Svensson 2009). A bias by outcome refers to a bias related to the solution of the conflict (Kydd 2003).

Debates on the benefits and perils of partisan versus neutral intervention have been prevalent among many scholars (Nalbandov 2009; Regan 2002; Svensson 2007; Yoshihara 2010). Traditionally, mediation literature emphasized the importance of impartiality (Crocker 1999; Fisher 1996). But impartiality is not appropriate or effective in all contexts. Neutral interventions have been noted to be ineffective against powerful, uncooperative or aggressive actors (Krain 2005). Some studies of mediation have noted that biased mediators achieve greater degrees of success (Savun 2008; Svensson 2007). International

mediation can also be coercive and integrate forceful diplomatic, economic or military tools. Scholars remain divided over the appropriateness of such tools (Hehir 2010; Morris 2016). While partisan interventions are recognized as more effective against uncooperative actors, they have at times escalated conflicts (Ryan 1995). Partisan interventions, particularly those involving the military, have been shown to have unintended effects on civilians (Peksen 2011).

The debates in the scholarly literature have been divided and fall short in providing a framework for understanding the contributing factors for constructing a consensus among multiple mediators on intervention type. What has largely been overlooked is an analysis that takes account of attempts to reach a consensus among interveners on neutral versus partisan intervention in a multilateral setting. In more than half of the civil wars in the twentieth century, more than one state actor intervened (Aydin 2011). In cases of multilateral interventions, the decision to intervene in a neutral versus a partisan manner is fundamental, as divided intervention can lead to a loss of leverage and may escalate the conflict. Multilateral interventions reveal a complex relationship between military and humanitarian actors that can also leave civilians and interveners vulnerable (Lischer 2007). This article distinguishes between neutral and partisan processes that are united and arguably contribute toward ending the conflict and intervention processes that are divided and may serve to prolong or escalate the conflict. The analysis distinguishes between four types of intervention processes: united-neutral, united-partisan, divided-partisan, and divided neutral and partisan interventions.

As will be discussed in the theoretical and case study sections below, an effective multilateral intervention is related to the degree of consensus among key mediators toward a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention. Three vital areas of consensus are highlighted: (1) a consensus on a neutral or a partisan intervention process; (2) a consensus on the use of specific diplomatic, economic, military or other tools to augment the type of process; and (3) a consensus on the desired outcome. This research explores attempts to reach a consensus among mediators in two divergent case studies (Seawright & Gerring 2008).

United-neutral interventions were sufficient to end the conflicts in Mozambique, Ecuador/Peru, and Northern Ireland. Examples of united-partisan interventions have included international sanctions against the South African regime, and interventions in Liberia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Examination of the divergent case studies of Northern Ireland and BiH offers insights into the factors that contribute towards consensus on a united-neutral versus a united-partisan intervention. The two cases are similar in that they were resolved around the same time period and with the engagement of

American and European mediators. These cases have been selected to highlight two different types of consensus-building shifts: a shift towards a united-neutral intervention process, and a shift toward a united-partisan intervention. We will use process tracing to examine the shifts of bias among the external interveners in BiH and Northern Ireland leading to their mediated agreements. Neither case is ideally successful in that many issues remained unresolved due to power sharing agreements, but these challenges are beyond the scope of this article.

International and regional mediators played a significant role in ending conflicts in Northern Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Northern Ireland, the mediators were traditionally linked to the opposing groups and were effectively partisan. The shift toward a united-neutral intervention arguably contributed toward a more effective multilateral mediation process. In BiH, international intervention shifted in the first few years between a neutral and a divided neutral/partisan intervention that had little constructive impact on the conflicting groups beyond humanitarian assistance. In 1995, it was a united-partisan intervention that forcibly ended the conflict. This article does not seek to delve deeply into the complexity of the individual cases, which would be difficult given the limited space, but to examine the factors that contributed towards a consensus among international mediators on neutral versus partisan intervention in the two divergent cases.

Our arguments are built on research findings that the most effective types of external intervention are united (Nalbandov 2009; Regan 2002). United interventions are empirically more likely to succeed, while external players, supporting opposing sides, tend to exacerbate the conflict (Regan 1996). Unlike divided-partisan intervention where external players support opposing sides and add fuel to the fire, a united international intervention can have a transformative impact on the conflicting groups. There are currently many divided interventions where the international community has failed to gain a consensus and support opposing groups including in Syria, Israel/Palestine and Ukraine. Our study examines cases where a shift from a divided towards a united intervention was possible and we seek to understand the factors that explain the shift. We hope that the findings yield insight for building consensus in ongoing divided conflicts.

Scholarly literature on international mediation and interventions in violent conflict has commonly been examined separately. But mediation is not only what takes place inside the mediation room; it is generally accompanied by diplomatic, economic or military actions that fall under the wider umbrella of intervention. This study addresses this oversight and combines literature of mediation and intervention to analyze attempts by actors and representatives

of a state or international bodies to intervene in an ongoing conflict with the designated goal of contributing towards its resolution. Debates on the effectiveness or success of a type of intervention have also tended to be limited to short-term impact and removed from considerations related to ethics. Indeed, much of the research on the effectiveness of neutral versus partisan intervention has ignored issues related to human rights and the responsibility to protect civilians (Kathman 2011; Wood 2012).

Scholars that have taken ethics into account commonly shun partisan interventions. "One of the most important lessons learned is that for third-party interventions to improve human rights, impartiality is essential" (Hafner-Burton 2014). Pattison (2015) noted that states have a moral duty to engage in international criticism in response to serious mass atrocities. Although partisan intervention risks escalation and may contain unintended effects, there are cases where neutral intervention is both ineffective and inappropriate. This study argues that neutral and partisan intervention may both be appropriate given the context. However, its effectiveness stems from a consensus among the interveners on the type of intervention, the tools and the outcome.

Neutral versus Partisan Intervention in a Multilateral Intervention

There are many contradicting claims regarding the effects of multilateral intervention. Multiparty mediation may lead to serious coordination problems. Organizing international mediators in a conflict is indeed a lot like herding cats (Crocker 1999). A coalition of interveners can increase the complexity of the mediation process, since the large number of interveners implies greater heterogeneity of interests that can undermine the effectiveness of an intervention (Bohmelt 2011). However, multilateral mediators are able to create synergy due to combined efforts and can potentially be more effective than a single mediator. Our research notes that effectiveness is related to the degree of consensus among mediators, most notably agreement on a neutral versus a partisan intervention, agreement on the tools, and a consensus on the outcome.

Practitioners and scholars alike agree on the importance of a united intervention. "Experience in such varied places as the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Cyprus, Mozambique, Central America, and Central Africa points to the growing need for comprehensive thinking and coherence or unity of action" (Crocker 1999: 695). Reagan and Abouharb (2002: 53) note that "the worst possible condition for an intervention is when there are interventions already supporting the opposing party." By empowering opposite sides, a divided intervention is likely to deepen a conflict. Divided intervention was common

during the Cold War, when the US and the Soviet Union intervened on opposing sides, generally heightening the conflict (Khachikian 1999).

Much research has linked reasoning behind partisan versus neutral international intervention to the bias of the intervener. Saideman (1997) argues that ethnic politics influence which states support which groups. First, ethnic ties between the intervener and one of the groups in conflict increase the chances of external intervention. Second, regardless of their goals, groups are better situated to bargain or fight if they have external allies (Ryan 1995; Saideman 2002). Groups which have powerful ethnic guarantors take advantage during mediation to increase their bargaining power if they anticipate external support. However, "ethno guarantors" or those who support external groups on the basis of a similar ethnic identity may withdraw their support or use leverage to place pressure on a group. As noted by Byrne (2000), external ethno guarantors can play a destructive as well as a constructive role. Much of it depends on agreement concerning the type of intervention and tools.

Scholarly literature on the effectiveness of neutral versus partisan mediators is in fundamental dispute. Mediator impartiality is not recognized by many scholars as either necessary or vital (Bercovitch 2003; Kydd 2003). Biased mediators are thought to be more effective because they are trusted by groups on their side (Kydd 2003). They are also thought to be more effective in using their leverage (Greig 2012; Svensson 2007). As noted by Greig (2012), in power mediation, the mediator not only controls the issues under discussion and develops potential settlement terms to the conflict but actively uses resources to leverage an agreement by the parties. If powerful enough, and particularly if in favor of the stronger party, biased interventions may rapidly end a conflict through an outright victory (Ryan 1995: 65). However, forcibly ending a violent conflict does not necessarily mean a long-term resolution or is related to human rights and the protection and well-being of all civilians.

Svensson (2015) highlighted four causal mechanisms that increase the effectiveness of biased mediators including: higher motivation to offer incentives to the side close to them, ability to gain accurate information, a better position to get the negotiating parties to make concessions, and greater ability to use their leverage. There are several key challenges: whether the biased mediator uses the leverage; whether the bias is related to endogenous or exogenous aspects of the conflict; and how the bias functions within a multilateral mediation setting with regards to the use of diplomatic, economic or military tools. In a multilateral mediation, the leverage is only effective if the mediators agree on the appropriateness of economic, diplomatic or military tools.

The choice between neutral and partisan interventions is fundamental in a multilateral setting especially when it comes to leverage. Examining the

relationship between bias and leverage in international organizations (IO), Lundgren and Svensson (2014) found that member states that provide support to both sides of the conflict outperform IOs in comparison to when member states remain disinterested. The findings suggest that IOs which support each side of the conflict are able to draw on those relationships to address fears of exploitation and make more credible guarantees (Lundgren & Svensson 2014: 318). A study by Menninga (2015) likewise noted that balanced mediation, where each side has a mediator that protects its own interests, improve the chances of a successful mediation. However, the studies make an assumption that mediation coalitions cooperate and balance each other, which in practice is not always the case.

Leverage can indeed be a powerful tool if and when it is used effectively. A frequent example of leverage is US mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The US is commonly perceived as the only state capable of convincing Israel to make concessions. At Camp David II, Americans led a biased process in which the content of the proposal was also notably biased. However, according to scholars supporting biased mediation, this created opportunities and the failure was with the parties and not the mediation (Svensson 2015). Although it is true that the US is in a position to influence and use its leverage, it is questionable whether it does so effectively. Camp David II was a failure of a biased process and is a more accurate example of what not to do in a mediation process (Spitka 2015). In addition, the US has shielded Israel from any pressure or leverage by other international actors such as the United Nations (UN), European Union, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Thus, rather than being an example of an effective biased intervention, US mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict demonstrates the problems with bias related to exogenous factors and how leverage can be lost when there is no consensus and different interveners support opposing sides.

Partisan intervention can be related to exogenous factors linked to the bias of the intervener or endogenous factors connected to the conflict. An intervention can be partisan against a side because of a biased intervener or because the state or actor is perceived to have crossed certain red lines. Distinguishing between when a partisan intervention takes place due to exogenous versus endogenous factors is not always a simple matter, since mediators may present themselves as neutral but be giving clandestine support. The distinction between neutral and partisan intervention may be dependent on perceptions, what is agreed in principle and what takes place in practice. Thus, the scope of neutral versus partisan intervention may be distinguished based on three elements: principles, practice and perceptions (PPP) (Spitka 2015). Intervention may be neutral in principle, but partisan in practice. For instance, countries

may agree on united-neutral diplomatic intervention in principle, but be covertly supporting one of the sides. Intervention may also be neutral in principle and in practice but still be perceived as partisan by the conflicting groups.

Our approach stems from three theoretical cornerstones. First, I argue that an effective multilateral intervention arises from a consensus among key mediators on a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention. Second, a united multilateral intervention builds on a consensus among international mediators on the appropriate diplomatic, economic, military or other tools to augment a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention process. Third, a united intervention stems from a consensus on a desired or a 'successful' outcome. However, the consensus can be based on endogenous factors related to the conflict or exogenous factors related to the intervener. We argue that discussions of a 'successful' outcome cannot ignore issues related to ethics and is most likely to be effective when consensus on the type of intervention is linked to endogenous factors of the conflict.

Consensus on the Type of Intervention

In a multiparty intervention, it is helpful to distinguish between neutral, partisan, divided and united interventions. This typology outlines four different types of interventions: united-neutral, united-partisan, divided-partisan, and divided neutral and partisan (see Fig. 1). In a united-neutral intervention process, key international mediators intercede neutrally. In a united-partisan intervention process, key interveners intercede partially on behalf or against the same side. In a divided-partisan intervention, key actors intervene partially on opposing sides of a conflict. Lastly, in a divided neutral/partisan intervention, some of the key interveners intercede in a neutral manner while others intercede in support of or against one of the groups in the conflict.

In many ways, a united-neutral intervention is the optimal strategy of an effective multilateral intervention. Neutral intervention ensures that external interveners are impartial, not supporting opposite sides and thus not escalating the conflict. A neutral intervention is more likely to attain consensus and international legitimacy based on international law and authorizations by international bodies such as the UN. Neutral interventions are also less likely to contribute to civilian casualties and more likely to improve human rights (Hafner-Burton 2014). Finally, a united-neutral intervention is the most likely to do no harm and impact negatively on the security and well-being of all civilians.

However, neutral interventions may not be sufficient, effective or ethically responsible to end every violent conflict. As noted by former UN Secretary

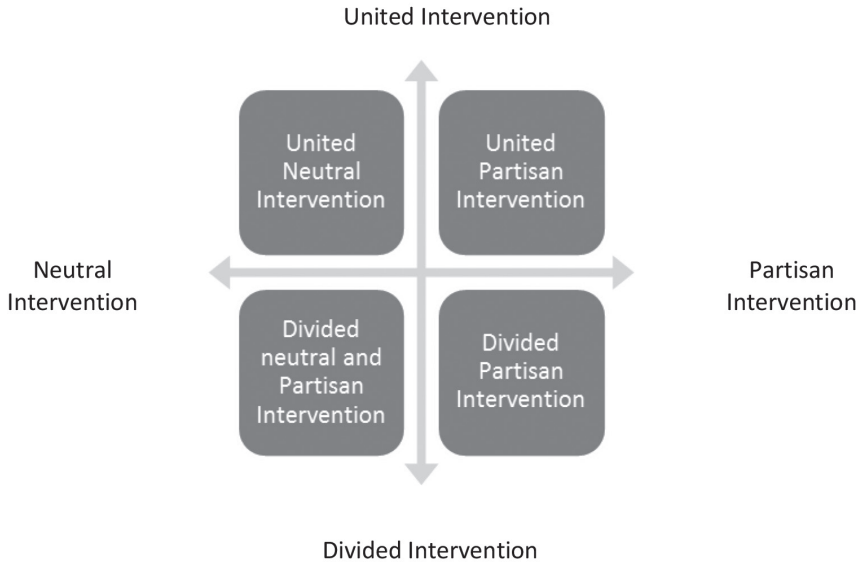

FIGURE 1 *Types of intervention strategies*

General Kofi Annan "impartiality does not – and must not – mean neutrality in the face of evil" (Annan 1999). The challenge with a neutral intervention is that in the case of a powerful, uncooperative group or a state, a neutral intervention may not be forceful enough to end serious atrocities and war crimes. The potential effectiveness of a neutral intervention is largely dependent on the ability and willingness of the leadership of conflicting groups to prevent atrocities against civilians and play a constructive role in transforming their own conflict. As argued by scholars examining severe cases of atrocities and genocide, neutral intervention may have little impact on powerful non-cooperative actors. As noted by Lischer (2007), relying on a purely humanitarian response to civil war and genocide is an ineffective and potentially harmful placebo.

A partisan intervention is the most common type of process by leading intervening states including the US, Russia, France and Britain (Regan 2002). In the case of multiparty intervention, the support of opposite sides in the conflict can most likely contribute to fueling a conflict. A divided-partisan intervention is the least ideal type of intervention since it carries a risk of lengthening the conflict, escalation and other unintended consequences. Regardless of intention, by supporting opposing sides in the conflict, interveners can escalate the conflict. Research by Aydin and Regan (2011) notes that balancing behavior

prolongs fighting by more than 90 percent. Supporting opposing sides "results in little incentive to negotiate, make concessions or capitulate on the combatant side and instead, lead to a stalemate situation." For a partisan intervention to be effective within a multiparty intervention, mediators need to shift toward a united-partisan intervention.

A united-partisan intervention has the potential advantage of rapidly ending a conflict since interveners are united in favor or against the same side and can work in unison to force a resolution. However, taking sides and forcibly ending a conflict sits on shaky ethical ground since the consensus may not necessarily be related to humanitarian or endogenous concerns linked to the conflict. A consensus on a partisan intervention can be formed around endogenous factors related to the conflict or exogenous factors related to the strategic interests of the interveners. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norms were construed as part of an effort to ease an international consensus on interventions designed to protect civilian populations. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005 and 2009, the R2P was created to pave the way for collective international actions when a state fails to provide protections for its people threatened by the most grave human rights crimes. R2P came to life following the failure to intervene efficiently and effectively in conflicts in Rwanda and BiH. As noted by Bellamy (2010: 159), R2P is a label that can be attached to particular crises to generate the will and consensus necessary to mobilize decisive international responses. However, R2P norms have been subject to much discussion with little agreement on its implementation in the most divisive conflicts. The lack of consensus on R2P in conflicts such as Syria, and the use of R2P for a military intervention and regime change in Libya is indicative of the challenges of multilateral consensus in partisan interventions.

Many complex multilateral international interventions can be classified under the rubric of divided neutral and partisan intervention. This can also be a transition stage between different types of interventions, as will be discussed in the BiH case study. In a divided neutral and partisan intervention, some key interveners intercede in a neutral manner while others support or take measures against one of the groups in the conflict. Although not the least favorable option, since unlike divided-partisan interventions, a mixed intervention might not necessarily escalate a conflict, it is also far from ideal. Divided neutral and partisan interventions are likely to weaken the strength of intervention tools. In addition, they may create conditions where some international interveners are operating against one of the sides in the conflict, while other key actors are intervening in a neutral manner. This "oil and water" situation may also be perilous for external actors on the ground. For example, in a military intervention where one international actor is engaged in a military campaign

while another is creating "neutral safe areas," citizens as well as the external actors may be placed at risk.

Consensus on the Intervention Tools

International mediation can be supplemented with humanitarian assistance or more partisan tools such as diplomatic coercion, economic sanctions and military intervention. A united international intervention draws its strength from a consensus among key multilateral mediators on the use of diplomatic, economic, military, or other appropriate tools. A consensus is particularly essential in the case of a partisan intervention. Partisan intervention tools can include sanctions, boycotts, divestment, and shaming, as well as forceful military action against a conflicting group or state. An effective united-partisan intervention entails agreement among mediators on the operationalization of particular tools.

Recent research has pointed to the effectiveness of non-military coercive tools such as sanctions, and naming, blaming and shaming. Naming and shaming can inform about abuses, frame perpetrators as pariahs, damage their legitimacy and ultimately lead to policy changes (Krain 2012; Pattison 2015). Murdie & Peksen (2014) also note the effectiveness of human rights organizations (HRO) that target a regime in the popular press, "mobilizing others to take actions to protect a repressed population from ongoing abuse." Diplomatic shaming is only effective if there is a working consensus, at least among the key interveners.

Diplomatic, economic or military tools are as effective as they are united. The lack of consensus in Syria is demonstrative of attempting to mediate a conflict without an international consensus on neutral or partisan intervention and the operationalization of appropriate tools. Annan's strategy in Syria was to harness multilateral power to create leverage stemming from a joint international approach (Hill 2015). Annan emphasized that only a united international community can compel both sides to resolve the conflict, however, the international unity was not forthcoming. UNSC resolutions that advocated for the use of coercive measures were vetoed by either Russia or China. The 11 resolutions that passed stayed clear of coercive measures or actions that would compromise Syrian sovereignty (Tocci 2016). When attempting to mediate an end to the Syrian crisis, Annan prioritized a united international intervention and cited lack of international support in his resignation (Hill 2015). The Western permanent members of the Security Council (US, UK and France) operated under a unipolar logic that Annan's multilateral efforts to bridge international divisions were a luxury that could be dispensed with (Hill 2016: 471).

Consensus on the tools is challenging not only because of a divided international context but motivations of the interveners, and potential unintended effects. Although a consensus for international intervention under the R2P norm was reached in Libya, the subsequent military intervention orchestrated by NATO became a source of much discord (Tocci 2016). The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) noted that NATO abused emerging powers' good faith and overstepped the UN's mandate (Stuenkel 2014). Use of military tools as a preventive measure raises many concerns for scholars and practitioners alike. Paris (2014) pointed to several structural problems utilizing preventive intervention, including mixed or questionable motivations of the interveners, collateral damage or unintended consequences, mission expansion, inconsistency in implementation, and the challenge that an intervention can prevent larger atrocities. Reaching a consensus on the tools, in particular coercive tools, is one of the primary challenges in forming a united intervention.

Consensus on the Outcome

Consensus among international mediators on the desired outcome is a fundamental aspect of united interventions, whether partisan or neutral. Outcomes can include the type of power sharing, a detailed peace agreement or an agreement on principles. Outcomes can be in favor of the government or the rebels. Government-biased mediators tend to lead to arrangements that are beneficial for the government side, such as government-sided amnesties, while rebel-biased mediators promote institutional peace arrangements that benefit rebels, such as rebel-based guarantees and power sharing arrangements (Svensson 2009: 463). Most current peace agreements contain some type of power sharing arrangement, including the two cases examined later in this article. Power sharing is internationally the most common strategy for dealing with conflicting groups subsequent to a violent dispute (Hoddie & Hartzell 2003).

Consensus on a desired outcome can stem from endogenous factors related to the conflict or exogenous factors related to political, strategic or economic interests of the interveners. Mediations take place in the context of international power politics and the desire to make peace is intertwined with other motives (Zartman & Touval 1996: 447). Evidence suggests that third-party political and strategic considerations are powerful determinants of how interveners intercede (Findley 2015). Reaching a consensus, particularly towards a partisan intervention that favors one side over the other, is the fundamental challenge.

Evaluation of successful versus failed outcomes is one area of dispute. Ending violent behavior is the most common measurement of a successful outcome (Regan & Aydin 2006). Nathan (1999) suggested that successful mediation

stems from the termination of hostilities and advent of democratic governments. Since most agreements fail, implementation of the outcome is another measure of success. Studies have noted that mediation by international organizations and by the US has a higher correlation of success (Wallensteen & Svennson 2014). For the conflicted groups, an outcome supported by the UN or by the US may thus have greater value than one concluded only between themselves. However, this is related to the level of legitimacy of the particular intervention. A consensus on the outcome based on endogenous factors related to the conflict is far more likely to gain international legitimacy.

The most recent discussions of legitimacy in international interventions have been centered on R2P. Debates in academia as well as in the public sphere commonly frame discussions on the potential for atrocity prevention and military intervention in terms of the R2P (Hehir 2015). However there is a wide gap between international norms and practice in international intervention. Although international norms have been helpful in outlining guidelines for legitimate interventions, the post-September 11 environment has evaporated much legitimacy in international intervention. "The use of military force to protect human life had been an international priority, but the Al-Qaeda attacks were a political earthquake – changing the strategic landscape, international discourse, and international agenda" (Weiss 2004: 136). Reaching a consensus on the type of intervention has been a fundamental challenge in many current conflicts including Syria, Israel/Palestine and Ukraine.

Opting for a partisan versus neutral intervention is fundamental, affecting the existing balance of power among the conflicting groups. We argue that a shift from a divided intervention towards a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention can have an impact on the power dynamics between the groups. A shift from a divided to a united intervention may tilt the balance between the parties affecting their behavior and the dynamics of the conflict. A shift towards a united intervention is also likely to contribute towards improving the effectiveness of the intervention and a consensus on the outcome.

The subsequent sections will examine attempts to build consensus among key mediators on the type of intervention in two case studies: Northern Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Northern Ireland, the research will examine consensus building from a partisan towards an arguably united-neutral intervention. In the BiH case, the research will analyze disputes between neutral or partisan interventions and the eventual consensus towards an arguably united-partisan intervention. Endogenous and exogenous factors played significant roles in constructing the consensus in both cases. Due to the complexity of the conflicts and the available space, the reader is encouraged to probe external sources for more background on these cases.

Case Studies

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Consensus among International Mediators on a Neutral or a Partisan Intervention

From the beginning of the war in BiH, there was a difference between the way American and European policymakers perceived the conflict and the manner in which they envisioned it should be resolved (Bildt 1999). The American administration was first among the key US/EU/UN international intervention triangle to advocate for a partisan approach, but did not act years into President Clinton's administration. In principle, the Americans favored a military campaign in line with what was interpreted in Washington as Serbian aggression, but were disinterested in becoming actively engaged. Europeans and the UN embarked on neutral diplomatic solutions that focused on humanitarian assistance and ceasefires. The transition toward a united-partisan intervention was an arduous diplomatic battle between the key American, European, Russian and UN mediators.

Between the eruption of the Yugoslav conflict in 1991 and the height of the BiH war in 1994, the European Commission (EC) and the UN were the main sponsors of various peace efforts. The March 1992 Lisbon Agreement, negotiated by EC representative Lord Carrington and Portuguese Ambassador Cutileiro, was a last minute attempt to prevent the BiH from sliding into violence. Signed by BiH President Aliya Izetbegovic, Bosnian Serb representative Radovan Karadzic and Croatian Bosnian representative Mate Boban, the agreement proposed ethnic power sharing and devolution of the central government. However, with encouragement from the US, which promised recognition of an independent BiH, Bosnian and Croatian representatives backed away from the plan (Gibbs 2009). This was the first of many disputes that undermined a united effort.

Subsequent to the failure of this agreement, BiH declared independence prompting a planned attack from Serbia. Through military superiority and the use of paramilitary units recruited and trained in Serbia and the Bosnian Serb army equipped by Serbia, in the first six weeks of the conflict, Serbian forces took over two-thirds of BiH territory, ethnically cleansing hundreds of thousands of Bosnian Muslims. The ethnic cleansing included rapes, destruction of property, organized extortions, looting and massacres (UNSC 1994). Top European mediators treated the sides as equally guilty for the violence and called for ceasefires that went ignored. Partisan proposals, favored by the US, were viewed with distain. According to chief EU representative Lord Owen,

"In late June 1992 the US government had argued for effectively 'taking sides' in favor of the legitimate government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of those representatives of Bosnia's Muslims, Serbs and Croats who favored a viable multi-ethnic Bosnia Herzegovina and opposed the violent strategy and tactics of what they called the 'terrorist wing' of Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party of Bosnia …" (Owen 1997: 49). Owen disagreed calling this strategy "unrealistic" and arguing European policies had to reflect the new reality that President Izetbegovic was now in control of only about 11 percent of the country, given the extent of ethnic cleansing (Owen 1997: 51).

Owen condemned the US for their 'unconstructive meddling and criticism.' In Lord Owen's eyes American meddling only prolonged the conflict. "From the spring of 1993 to the summer of 1995, in my judgment, the effect of US policy, despite being called 'containment,' was to prolong the war of the Bosnian Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina" (Owen 1997: 365). According to Owen, the Clinton administration encouraged Bosnian Muslims to reject the Vance-Owen Peace plan without offering the Bosniacs any concrete alternative or military assistance. The peace plan, which received the backing of the UN, involved the division of Bosnia into ten semi-autonomous regions. Owen lamented that "had the Clinton administration supported the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, we would have been able to carry it out" (Owen 1997: 38). Although the plan was rejected, its effects were devastating since the maps applied by the mediators to divide the territory were used by extremists to take over territory and justify ethnic cleansing (Campbell 1998).

By 1993, the failure of the ceasefires, the extent of the violence against civilians, and the reliance on humanitarian assistance referred to publicly as a "band aid for a gun wound" became increasingly embarrassing for the EU and the UN. In light of the evidence of atrocities committed by mainly Serb paramilitary forces, NGOs began pressuring the international community toward a more partisan approach (Helsinski Watch 1993: 7). To protect the remaining Bosniac (Muslim) civilians from further ethnic cleansing, the UN declared Bosnian-held cities surrounded by Serb forces (Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Gorazde, Bihac, Zepa and Tuzla) as UN "safe areas." By formalizing areas for the protection of only Bosniac civilians, the UN in effect took sides in the conflict, but was completely ineffective in protecting the Bosniacs. The mixture of neutral and partisan policy was not only ineffective in preventing atrocities, it gave those in "safe areas" a false sense of security and made lightly armed UN troops vulnerable to attack and kidnappings.

The shift towards a partisan intervention was problematic for Russia, which on the one hand wanted to continue to support Serbia, but on the other hand,

was not interested in being sidelined by Western powers. Moscow was frustrated by the non-cooperation from Bosnian Serbs and hoped to use its influence to divide Bosnian Serbs from Belgrade. By 1994, Russia was getting fed up with the behavior of the Bosnian Serb leadership, which disregarded every international initiative. Bosnian Serb bombardment of UN safe area Gorazde in April 1994 was a tipping point. Russian mediator Vitalii Churkin exclaimed,

> Bosnian Serbs must understand that [with] Russia they are dealing with a great power and not a banana republic. Russia must decide whether a group of extremists can be allowed to use a great country's policy to achieve its own aims.... If Bosnia's Serbs fire so much as one more [mortar] at Gorazde, a tremendous crisis will erupt that will plunge the Serbian people into disaster
>
> LYNCH 2001: 28

The establishment of the Contact Group in 1994 was designed to formulate a united international policy on BiH. The Contact Group was comprised of representatives from the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain and France, which all increasingly favored a partisan approach against the Bosnian Serbs. While Russian President Boris Yeltsin was under pressure from nationalists at home to support the Bosnian Serbs, he was also eager to demonstrate that Russia could force Bosnian Serbs to stop their offensive. Russia was eager to confine decision making on Bosnia to where it had procedural powers, such as the UN Security Council and the Contact Group (Johnson 2001: 293). The Contact Group became engaged in territorial debates with the focus of forcing the Bosnian Serb leadership to withdraw from large sections of territory they had taken over. Agreed to by the Foreign Ministers, the Contact Group Plan divided Bosnia into two entities: 49 percent of the land was to remain in the hands of the Bosnian Serbs and 51 percent given to a Croat–Muslim Federation.

For the Americans and Europeans, the shift toward a partisan policy was also related to exogenous factors. The fear of an Islamic threat in the midst of Europe played a crucial role in the shift for both Europeans and the US. Abandoned by Europe and the US, the Bosniac (Muslim) leadership turned to the Middle East and specifically Iran for assistance. Despite the UN arms embargo, arms equipment and Mujahedeen, were successfully smuggled into Bosnia, which became a common worry for the EU and the US. In a declassified document, French and US diplomats agreed that there would be far reaching problems if Bosnia were extinguished and Muslims worldwide will draw unacceptable conclusions. They feared the possibility of a fundamentalist Bosnia if

the Muslims there perceived themselves as having been betrayed by the West.[1] Russia stood against a partisan approach, but with the collapse of the Soviet Union had its priorities elsewhere.

Consensus on the Use of Appropriate Tools

A consensus on the use of appropriate tools, particularly military force and economic sanctions, was another source of division for the international interveners. Russia disapproved of economic sanctions against Serbia and the use of the military was a source of much dispute. The 1993 UN Resolution 820, which imposed restrictions on imports and exports to Serbia, did eventually convince Belgrade to shift its policies and begin to distance itself from Bosnian Serbs. In December 1994, the UN Security Council put forth a resolution to tighten the sanctions which Russia vetoed. Russian Federation representative, Mr. Lavrov, noted that Serbia had begun to cooperate, and tightening the sanctions regime would be illogical and politically inadmissible.

The use of military force had been advocated by the US but was initially blocked by the Europeans and Russians. In March 1993, the UN Security Council authorized the use of force to enforce UN mandated safe zones, but the force was limited and under UN authority. While Moscow flexed its muscles towards Bosnian Serbs, it was adamant that any NATO actions remain under the authority of the UN. Russia did not object to a narrow NATO engagement that consisted of 'pin prick' strikes against unpopulated areas and strikes on Serb forces that violated UN provisions (Johnson 2001: 293). By 1994, there was a growing consensus between the EU and US on the benefits of using NATO power to bomb Bosnian Serb positions. The use of NATO stemmed from the strategic decision to bring in Turkey to curb an Islamic threat, and bring back NATO from the dustbin of the Cold War. Fearing its irrelevance, US and key European policy makers agreed that NATO should be used to attack Bosnian Serb positions and forcibly end the BiH conflict. As was noted by top European mediator Lord Owen, "I was to become even more convinced over the next few months that NATO should be the main forum for Bosnian discussions because it involved not only Canada and the US but also Turkey, which was important for our credibility with the Islamic nations" (Owen 1997: 225).

Pointing to evidence of atrocities and non-cooperation from Bosnian Serbs, the Contact Group pushed for use of NATO to bomb Bosnian-Serb positions. In 1995, as a response to unabated shelling of Sarajevo by Bosnian Serbs, NATO,

1 General Sewall's visit to Paris US document, PTQ9406, E142, declassified August 2005, p. 6. Accessed at: http://intelfiles.egoplex.com/bosnia-train-equip/.

with authority from the UN, responded with an air campaign. The UN/NATO connection in BiH has been described as an "oil and water" mix as it consisted of parallel neutral and partisan policies. In retaliation to NATO airstrikes, the Bosnian Serb military took hundreds of UN hostages, chaining them to NATO targets such as ammunition dumps and bridges. Carl Bildt who replaced Lord Owen as the EU chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia noted that "the humiliation of the UN forces in the hostage-taking which followed in May [1995] made a strong response necessary" (Bildt 1999: 19). President Clinton in attempting to convince British Prime Minister Major, pushed for a bombing campaign on the grounds that "it is better to go out with a bang than with a whimper; otherwise we go out with our tail between our legs" (Chollet 2005: 17).

The massacre at Srebrenica also played a role in convincing key European policymakers toward a more robust partisan intervention. In Srebrenica, where almost 10,000 unarmed Bosniac men were massacred while under the protection of the UN, the Dutch stationed there were not only unable to prevent the massacre, but their kidnapping obstructed the potential of a NATO airstrike. According to US National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, "The turning point was in 1995 after Srebrenica. European public opinion shifted, and our allies were not looking forward to another winter on the ground in Bosnia where the humanitarian mission would be struggling. The European mood shift allowed us to proceed with military actions that helped to produce the Dayton Accords" (Lake 2006). On August 25, NATO received the green light from the UN to begin intensive air strikes. Although Russia objected to the bombing campaign, it remained committed to being part of the final push towards an agreement. The military intervention was instrumental in bringing the conflict to an abrupt halt. Chief US mediator Richard Holbrooke threatened Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian Republic with air strikes if they did not comply with the demands of the international community. With NATO as the ultimate force behind him, Holbrooke pressed for a speedy mediation to end the conflict.

Consensus on the Outcome

By 1995, Europeans and Americans had reached a consensus on the desired outcome that included rolling back some of the Bosnian-Serb takeover, strengthening ties between the Croats and Bosniacs, and the removal of BiH from influence of the Middle East. The Contact Group agreed on a confederation model in which the Muslim/Croat Federation would control 51 percent of the territory and Republica Srpska 49 percent. Although the plan included incentives in case of acceptance and threats in case of rejection, the plan was not negotiable. "The Contact Group Plan was presented to the belligerents on

a take-it-or-leave-it basis without their prior consultations and involvement" (Schwegmann 2000: 5).

The Dayton Peace Agreement, which ended the conflict in 1995, was drawn up during an intensive three-week period under the threat of bombardment. The Agreement was mediated and designed on the basis of the Contact Group plan to divide the territory between the three ethno-religious groups. Invited to participate in the final talks at Dayton were the leaders of Croatia and Serbia, Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milosevic respectively, who had little interest in a functioning BiH. Although the final agreement included annexes on human rights and the rights of refugees, the mediators devoted most of their focus to how to carve up the Bosnian territory and ensure that each group gained proportional territory and political representation. Little or no attention was devoted to group integration or functioning of the future state.

As noted by General Sewall, US interests were focused on "stabilizing the area … removing it from the influence of Muslim extremists who arrived from the Middle East" and leaving "the area as quickly as possible by rapidly arming and training a Bosnian army."[2] In return for US assistance, Bosnia severed its ties with Middle Eastern countries. As a US declassified document noted, "Bosnia terminated its military relationship with Iran at our insistence and a vacuum now exists in military support to Federation Military Forces."[3] This vacuum was quickly filled by multimillion dollar pledges of military support from the US and European countries.

It was a united-partisan intervention that ended the conflict in Bosnia, in effect forcing the Bosnian Serbs into cooperation. The external intervention altered the balance between the parties, strengthening the Bosniacs and the Croats at the expense of the Bosnian Serbs. Exogenous factors, namely the removal of BiH from Middle East influence and the wish to strengthen NATO, played a significant role in building a consensus. Endogenous factors including the massacre at Srebrenica and the kidnapping of UN troops helped to justify the need for a partisan intervention. Shifting the balance of power worked to end the conflict but was less successful in the creation of a viable state. Although the fragile agreement has been dependent on external financial and political support, the peace agreement has held.

2 General Sewall visit to Paris August 1996, Unclassified US document, PTQ9406, E142, declassified August 2005, accessed at: http://intelfiles.egoplex.com/bosnia-train-equip/.

3 Declassified document, PTQ7584, E110, July 1996, p. 2 PTQ7584, E110.

Northern Ireland

Constructing a Consensus among Mediators on the Type of Intervention

Reaching a consensus on a united intervention in Northern Ireland was a long and arduous process. Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, the US and the EU played pivotal roles as interveners, but only in the 1990s did they reach a working consensus on how to end the conflict. The UK and Ireland had the role of both mediators and ethno guarantors, with entrenched ties to the groups in conflict. The British governments, whether Labor or Conservative, were dependent on votes from the Ulster parties and pursued a partisan position to manage Northern Ireland (Dixon 2001). Until the 1990s, the US and the Europeans, did not wish to meddle in what was perceived as an internal British affair.

Shifts in British and Irish partisan support for the respective ethno-national groups increased pressure on the groups to transform. Although the loss of partisan support was not taken lightly, it opened the door for more constructive political engagement. US mediation was fundamental in promoting an inclusive process and bridging some of the divides between London and Dublin. The removal of clandestine financial support from the US to the Nationalist cause was also fundamental for the transformation of Republicans and the eventual decommissioning of the IRA. An agreement on the use of soft tools, mainly diplomatic and political legitimacy and economic incentives for the peace process, convinced some of the key local leaders to shift towards a political solution to the conflict. Diplomatic and economic leverage only began to have an effect once a consensus was reached on the type of process, tools and outcome between Washington, London and Dublin.

A critical change took place in British positions when London began to acknowledge the link between the internal and the external causes of the conflict (Beggan 1999). The army and the secret service were the main tools used by Westminster to deal with what was perceived as a security issue. Although the British army was initially sent in as peacekeepers, the role of British soldiers became partisan as they took strong measures to eradicate extremism, primarily among the Catholic community (Tuck 2007). The conflict suffered from spirals where actions taken as part of London's counterinsurgency campaign were directly linked to an increase in the level of violence (Tuck 2007).

The end of the Cold War changed the regional reality and opened up further opportunities for British and Irish overtures. As noted by Guelke (2012), "The end of the Cold War made it possible both for the British government to declare that it had no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland and for this to be accepted by the Republican movement." The 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement was the first step toward a united British and Irish intervention. At

the behest of the Republic of Ireland, the New Ireland Forum was established to seek a regional solution to the conflict. The Forum reflected a shift in Irish policies towards a less partisan approach. Within the Forum, the Irish government for the first time recognized the identity and the interests of the Unionists (Jesse 2006). Although the UK government of Margaret Thatcher rejected all of the Forum's options for the future of Northern Ireland, they became the basis for new talks and led to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. As part of the Agreement, London and Dublin committed themselves to resolving their own differences.

In 1992, the newly elected Taoiseach of Ireland, Albert Reynolds, moved Fianna Fail and his new Irish government towards accommodation with Britain. He entered into two parallel dialogues: first with Britain and second with prominent nationalist Northern Ireland politicians John Hume, from Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) and Gerry Adams from Sinn Fein. Reynolds, Humes and Adams worked to establish a common nationalist position that would be used as a base for all-party talks (Mitchell 2001). Ireland pushed for Sinn Fein to be at the negotiating table in return for IRA's ceasefire and a compromise on the demand for unification with Ireland. The Republic of Ireland also softened its stance on Article 2 and 3 of its constitution that called for the unification of the Island of Ireland.

Significant change took place in 1993 when Britain softened its stance on self-determination and having Northern Ireland as its exclusive domain. The Downing Street Declaration (DSD) stated that any future agreement had to be based on the entitlement of people on both parts of the island to "exercise the right of self-determination" (DSD 1993). The Declaration was well received by the nationalist and the republican leadership. As commented by Adams (2003: 165): "[i]t was clear to me that the Downing Street Declaration marked a stage in the slow and painful process of England's disengagement from her first and last colony, Ireland." IRA's ceasefire of August 1994 was largely a response to the DSD.

The US became directly engaged in the Northern Ireland conflict in the 1990s, following the election of President Clinton. Nationalists within Northern Ireland had always looked to America for support and welcomed deeper US engagement. The Troubles prompted the formation of a number of American expatriate organizations, including Irish Northern Aid (NORAID) (Guelke 1996). NORAID was closely tied to the Provisional IRA and collected considerable sums for the Republican cause. Arms shipments to the Provisional IRA had been secretly sanctioned by the US Central Intelligence Agency due to fears that the Provisional IRA might otherwise turn to the Soviet Union for support (Guelke 1996: 524).

Despite deep objections from Britain, in 1994 Washington gave Gerry Adams, the head of Sinn Fein, a visa to visit the US. Adam's much-publicized visit helped to legitimize Adams and secure Sinn Fein as a representative in the peace talks.

> Subsequent visas, the privilege of raising funds in the United States, invitations to the White House and the Capitol Hill, and the continued support of the Clinton administration reinforced the call to Sinn Fein to engage in the process of political dialogue
>
> ARTHUR 1999

Washington was clear, however, that the political legitimacy was dependent on a commitment to a peaceful resolution.

Increasing cooperation between Britain and Ireland was unwelcomed by hardline Unionists; however, it played a key role in its transformation. In 1995, the British and Irish governments formulated a neighborhood agreement that outlined a new institutional relationship between Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. The Framework Document (FD) specified creation of cross-border institutions, launching North-South and East-West intergovernmental bodies. Top unionist Ian Paisley branded FD as a "nefarious conspiracy" and claimed that the British and Irish governments were "planning the eventual betrayal and dismantling of the Union" (Cash 1996: 211). However, John Taylor of the more moderate Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) spoke on the need to promote Unionism in a manner that would gain support in Northern Ireland, Britain, Ireland, US and the EU. "The onus is upon the Unionists to convince the SDLP and the Dublin Government of our willingness to cooperate and to normalize relations based on democratic will and the resolve of the people in the two parts of the island," said Taylor (Cash 1996: 216).

Consensus on the Use of Appropriate Tools

The key interventionists, the UK, Ireland, EU and the US, agreed on non-partisan diplomatic and economic tools to convince the conflicting groups toward a peaceful resolution. The toolbox included deeper integration into the EU, stronger economic ties with the US and Ireland, inclusion of representatives in talks, and decommissioning of weapons. Deeper integration within the EU and regional economic cooperation were constructive in building bridges between the conflicting groups. Northern Ireland became a top recipient of regional aid, which played a role in boosting the economy and heightened public support for the peace process. Following its rapid economic growth during the 1990s, the Republic of Ireland became known as the Celtic Tiger. The

prospect of economic growth subsequent to a peace agreement was utilized to give incentives to Northern Ireland political leaders, as well as to the public. Unionist leadership could no longer point to Irish economic backwardness as a disincentive for increasing ties with the Republic of Ireland. Northern Ireland's business community pushed for deeper cooperation and the importance of a peace agreement stressing the linkage between peace and economic growth and prosperity (Ben-Porat 2008).

London acquiesced to the contribution of US mediation, by former Senator George Mitchell, with a focus on the thorny issue of disarmament. Mitchell played a key role in overcoming one of the largest hurdles to the actualization of the peace talks. The proposed all-party talks were stalled on a chicken or egg dilemma: decommissioning prior to talks or talks toward decommissioning. The recommendation to conduct decommissioning in parallel with discussions was a compromise that was eventually used to start up the talks. Other recommendations included having all parties join the talks and holding elections which would determine who would participate in the negotiations (Crocker 1999: 444).

Facilitating the discussions, Mitchell was adamant that all parties, including those with affiliations to paramilitary groups, be included in the talks. He instigated the "Mitchell principles of non-violence and democracy" in which participants in talks had to agree to the "use of democratic and exclusively peaceful means of resolving political issues" (Mitchell 2001). The election of Tony Blair in the UK led to the first official meeting between the leaders of Irish Republicanism and a British Prime Minister. Two months after the election of Tony Blair, the IRA announced its second ceasefire. The pressure on the Republicans to transform came not only from London but from the general public and the US. As Adams became an accepted political actor by the international community, his domestic constituency widened and he became representative of the broader public (Grove 2001). Increasingly, Adams took on a more moderate tone for domestic and international audiences alike. "In 1996 and 1997, his more inclusive strategies coincided with his need to convince the Clinton administration that he was keeping up his end of the deal by trying to get his (potential) domestic audience behind a permanent peace agreement" (Grove 2001: 385). By 1998, London and Dublin had also ironed out their own differences and utilized diplomatic and economic leverage to push for a workable arrangement.

Consensus on the Outcome

The multilateral mediation that produced the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was a two-year process that encompassed eight political parties from Northern

Ireland and heads of governments from the UK and Ireland. Consociationalism had been promoted by Britain as the essential political solution to the Northern Ireland conflict, however, certain red lines were not to be crossed. The shifting of British policies was key in the change of tide. "An important reason why unionists refused to share power with nationalists was… because, as British nationalists, they preferred the default of direct rule from Westminster to the risk of power sharing with Irish Nationalists" (McGarry 2001). Until the 1990s, the Republic of Ireland also supported the republican and nationalist leadership in its attempts to separate from Britain and join the Republic of Ireland.

Mitchell played a key role in managing a mediation process that was inclusive, in terms of representation as based on elections, women's parties and moderates as well as former extremists. The elections in May 1996 were conducted with the aim of producing a broad inclusive selection of delegates to participate in the peace talks, which included members of numerous parties, moderates, extremists and women. It was the moderate SDLP that proposed the D'Hondt-based power-sharing formula, and David Trimble's UUP accepted (McGarry 2015). The D'Hondt method, a mathematical formula regarding allocation of party seats, favors large parties and coalitions. The SDLP and UUP also came to an agreement that the First Minister and Deputy First Minister would be equal in powers and be elected by a concurrent majority of registered nationalists and unionists. This negotiated compromise, however, later became a source of dysfunctional government.

The "ethno-guarantors" Britain and Ireland played a substantial role in the design, as well as ensuring the implementation, of the power-sharing arrangement. The largest push towards common positions came from the British and Irish governments (Mitchell 2001). The two governments negotiated a united position on changes in the Irish and British constitutions, prisoners, policing, criminal justice and on a new British-Irish Council. As outlined by Mitchell, "Blair and Ahern played a central role in these negotiations. They obviously had developed a warm personal relationship; that made progress possible. They didn't just supervise the negotiations; they conducted them. Word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, the compromise came together" (Mitchell 2001: 175).

Consociational accommodation had been agreed on as the main outcome of the agreement. Consociational principles were evident in the failed 1973 Sunningdale Agreement. The most significant difference between Sunningdale and the GFA was the role of Britain and Ireland. Unlike the GFA, Sunningdale focused on relations between groups in Northern Ireland, ignoring the external dimension. For Britain until the 1990s, interference of the Republic of Ireland was not tolerated.

The GFA substantially widened the role of the Republic of Ireland and changed the role of Britain. The GFA has its share of critics and challenges but has transformed the conflict from violence to the newly designed, if at times dysfunctional, political institutions. The British shift toward neutral policies opened the door for a ceasefire and all-inclusive talks. Although some of the hardline Unionists perceived British policies as a betrayal, GFA led to shifting of Unionist policies and ultimately to the beginning of a transformation of Unionism. Less partisan influence from Dublin and economic and political incentives from the US, also transformed Nationalism and Republicanism, giving space to a political resolution of the conflict.

Conclusion

Scholars and practitioners have tended to underestimate the importance of mediating between mediators, in particular, the choice between neutral and partisan intervention. In a multilateral intervention, the degree of consensus among mediators on the type of intervention impacts on the effectiveness of the tools and the outcome. Reaching a consensus among mediators on the type of intervention was vital towards an effective multilateral intervention in Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina. By the 1990s, key mediators in Northern Ireland became united in a non-partisan approach and more effective in using diplomatic and economic tools. The loss of backing from Britain and had an impact on Unionist' goals and strategies. The shifting of positions by the Republic of Ireland closer to that of Britain had a parallel impact on the strategies and goals of the nationalists and republicans. The united-neutral interventionist approach was also the result of the vital US role in bridging the gaps between London and Dublin and the growing predominance of the EU.

In the case of BiH, the unification of European and American intervention processes was an arduous diplomatic battle. Neutral intervention proved to be insufficient and ineffective to stop atrocities against the civilian population. The violence continued unabated for many years and it was a combination of endogenous and exogenous factors that played a fundamental role in formulating the consensus towards a united-partisan intervention. The massacre of civilians in UN designated safe areas and the kidnapping of the UN troops eased public support and international legitimacy for a partisan intervention. Fear of influence from radical elements in the Middle East and the strategic desire to strengthen NATO facilitated US and European consensus toward a military intervention. Russia was engaged sufficiently to allow her to play a role and not torpedo the shift towards a partisan intervention. Although the

united-partisan intervention ended the conflict, the international community has had to remain present to ensure the viability of the peace.

This article emphasizes the importance of consensus among multilateral mediators on a united-neutral or a united-partisan intervention. Departing from scholarly research that favors neutral or partisan interventions, this research argues that effective multilateral intervention stems from a consensus on the type of intervention, tools and the outcome. While a single biased mediator can be effective behind closed doors, in a multilateral context, intervention can be united-partisan, united-neutral, divided partisan or divided neutral and partisan.

Consensus building needs to shift beyond coordination and coherence towards decisions on neutral or partisan interventions, ideally based on endogenous and not exogenous factors. The current research on neutral versus partisan interventions is divorced from ethics and debates on international norms related to R2P. These norms suggest that legitimate partisan interventions be based on endogenous realities, namely the protection of civilians subject to war crimes, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and genocide. R2P norms are useful tools for drawing a line between neutral intervention and a partisan intervention legitimized due to conflict-related atrocities.

Mediating between mediators is a fundamental step towards an effective international intervention. Mediation is commonly examined based on what happens behind closed doors; however, mediation takes place in an increasingly multipolar global context. Leverage becomes complex in multipolar settings where mediators are not necessarily cooperating. A divided intervention, where states support opposing sides, is not only ineffective since it weakens the tools; it also risks escalating the conflict. A united intervention requires consensus on a neutral versus partisan intervention process, the tools, and the outcome. A shift towards a united intervention, whether united-neutral or united-partisan can be fundamental towards an effective intervention. International consensus is commonly built around a combination of exogenous, as well as endogenous factors. With numerous active interveners, multilateral mediation needs to be institutionalized to ensure that decisions on neutral versus partisan intervention are made on the basis of endogenous and not exogenous factors.

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