

# **Once and Future Peacemakers: Continuity of Third-Party Involvement in Civil War Peace Processes**

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## Once and Future Peacemakers: Continuity of Third-Party Involvement in Civil War Peace Processes

**Abstract:** Despite the importance of having continuity in third-party involvement, many third parties lack the ability to commit as long-term peace guarantors. We argue that non-state actors and third parties with *vested interests* in peace and stability will be more likely to sustain involvement in post-conflict periods. Analysis of monthly level data from the Managing Intrastate Conflict (MIC) project confirms that third parties that have had wartime experience as conflict managers are more likely to get involved in post-conflict peace processes, regardless of whether the conflict management is in the form of peacekeeping missions, mediation or good offices; regardless of whether the third party is geographically proximate; and regardless of whether the third party is a state or non-state actor. The results also confirm that third-party geographic proximity and other measures of vested interests additively increase the propensity for postwar involvement. However, wartime conflict management experience matters less for third parties with vested interests, suggesting the additional importance of demand-side determinants of third-party conflict management.

**Keywords:** Peacekeeping; Civil war; Third-party intervention; Africa; Continuity

## Introduction

Third parties to armed conflict can serve a number of different roles to enhance the prospect of peace, including as peacemakers during active conflict and as post-conflict peacebuilders after major hostilities have abated.<sup>1</sup> These roles are often not mutually exclusive. Indeed, peacebuilders often provide crucial mediation and other forms of peacemaking amongst various groups which remain in a state of conflict that could escalate quickly.<sup>2</sup> Post-conflict peacebuilding is not typically separable from ongoing peacemaking. Moreover, many third parties have continuity of involvement from their roles during conflict to their roles after conflict.<sup>3</sup> For example, US and UN involvement in facilitating relative peace between Israel and Egypt since 1973 would not be well understood with an isolated look at just the efforts to establish a ceasefire during the October War or just the Kilometer 101 talks or just the Geneva Process or just the shuttle diplomacy or just the disengagement agreements or just the early-warning system installation in the Sinai or just the UN monitoring mission or just the Camp David Accords or just the Egypt-Israel peace treaty or just the billions of dollars of contingent aid.

Conflict management attempts are interdependent such that third-party peacemaking efforts during armed conflict often must be understood with an eye toward subsequent third-party efforts, and third-party efforts after major hostilities have subsided must be understood with an eye toward prior efforts.<sup>4</sup> Yet, much of the existing literature on third-party

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<sup>1</sup> Following Doyle and Sambanis, we use the term *peacebuilding* as a broad role that typically includes efforts by peacekeeping missions, see Doyle, and Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace*. For an overview of the peacebuilding literature, see Leib, “Shaping Peace.”

<sup>2</sup> Smidt, “United Nations Peacekeeping Locally”; Wall, and Druckman, “Mediation in Peacekeeping Missions.”

<sup>3</sup> Wright, and Greig, “Staying the Course.” Following convention, we draw a conceptual distinction between peace processes that occur *during* active armed conflict and peace processes that occur *after* hostilities have attenuated. This paper ultimately calls into question whether such a conceptual distinction is helpful.

<sup>4</sup> Beardsley, “The UN at the Peacemaking–Peacebuilding Nexus”; Beardsley, Cunningham, and White. “Mediation, Peacekeeping, and the Severity of Civil War”; DeRouen, and Chowdhury, “Mediation, Peacekeeping and Civil War peace Agreements”; Diehl, and Regan, “The Interdependence of Conflict Management Attempts”; Melin, “Escalation in International Conflict Management.”

peacemaking has overlooked variation in third-party continuity of involvement. It remains unclear whether and how third parties' prior peacemaking experience during civil conflict influence their future peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts in the aftermath of the conflict. In particular, little is known about why some third parties that have intervened during civil wars continue to invest in post-conflict peace processes while others do not.

In this article, we seek to understand the variation in the continuity of third-party conflict management *during* and *after* civil conflict.<sup>5</sup> Despite the benefits of continuity in third-party involvement throughout the different peace-process stages—we consider how continuity improves the information environment and provides an important signal regarding commitments to peace—third-party efforts during a conflict's lifecycle are often discontinuous.<sup>6</sup> As an extreme example, the negotiations that preceded the signing of the Arusha Accords that terminated the Rwandan Civil War in 1993 involved a complex array of third-party actors including regional states, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Western actors and the UN. Many of these third parties were uninterested or reluctant to help guarantee the terms of the Accords, and were content to place the onus onto a weak UN peacekeeping force. The genocide that erupted in April 1994 directly resulted from the lack of a third-party guarantee.<sup>7</sup>

**[Figure 1 about here]**

As a matter of empirical fact, there is substantial variation in the extent of third-party involvement during and after armed civil conflict. Consider Figure 1, for example, which

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<sup>5</sup> We define third-party conflict management as a wide range of efforts by actors which are not parties to the dispute to help reduce levels of violence in an armed conflict and maintain reductions in hostilities. The types of conflict management efforts encompass the functions described in Boutrous-Ghali's "Agenda for Peace" (UN A/47/277 - S/24111): preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

<sup>6</sup> Beardsley, *The Mediation Dilemma*; Werner, and Yuen, "Making and Keeping Peace."

<sup>7</sup> Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*.

depicts the variations in wartime and post-conflict third-party conflict-management attempts in the warring countries (panel a) and by the respective third parties (panel b) from 1993 to 2011.<sup>8</sup> On the one hand, as shown in panel a, countries such as Angola and Côte d'Ivoire experienced much more third-party involvement in the aftermath of civil wars than countries such as Sierra Leone and Uganda, even though they all had similar levels of third-party engagement during the periods of fighting. Guinea-Bissau experienced no postwar third-party involvement, even though there was substantial wartime involvement. On the other hand, as indicated in panel b, some third parties such as South Africa, the AU, and the UN all actively participated in wartime and post-conflict interventions, while other third parties were involved mainly in either wartime (e.g., Libya) or post-conflict (e.g., Guinea-Bissau) interventions. So, what explains the variation in the levels of third-party conflict-management continuity in civil wars like these aforementioned ones?

We argue that third parties with *vested interest* in peace between the warring parties are more likely to remain engaged as peace brokers and guarantors after hostilities have abated. The most basic expectation that follows is that third parties that were involved as peacemakers during periods of armed conflict are more likely than other third parties to be involved as conflict managers during the post-conflict period. We also expect for third parties that are neighbors of the combatants or that have strong aid or trade ties with the combatants to have more continuity in their involvement. Finally, we expect that non-state actors such as international organizations or non-governmental organizations to have more continuity in their involvement because of their orientations toward the provision of public goods and commitments to peace as an end in itself.

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<sup>8</sup> The data are from the UCDP Managing Intrastate Conflict (MIC) in Africa, see Croicu et al., “Mediation and Violence.”

To empirically test these expectations, we rely on a highly disaggregated UCDP Managing Intrastate Conflict (MIC) Africa dataset,<sup>9</sup> which allows us to gather information at the monthly level on the third-party—including states, international governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals—involvement during and/or in the aftermath of civil war. Our results confirm that third parties that have had wartime experience as conflict managers are more likely to get involved in the post-conflict peace processes, regardless of whether the conflict management is in the form of peacekeeping missions, mediation or good offices; regardless of whether the third party is geographically proximate; and regardless of whether the third party is a state or non-state actor. The results also confirm that third-party geographic proximity and other measures of vested interests additively increase the propensity for postwar involvement. However, wartime conflict management experience matters less for third parties with vested interests, suggesting the additional importance of demand-side determinants of third-party conflict management.

We proceed as follows. First, we summarize existing research relating third-party conflict management in civil war to the durability of postwar peace. Second, we present our argument and expectations related to the continuity of third-party engagement during and following civil wars. Third, we introduce our research design to test the arguments and present our empirical analysis in the subsequent section. Our analysis provides some support for the arguments and highlights the relevance of third-parties' roles (if any) during the preceding peace processes when studying their efforts in post-conflict periods. We conclude with a brief discussion of implications.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## The Study of Third-party Intervention in Civil War

Studies on third-party conflict management in civil-war peace processes largely center on three related questions: (1) *why* do third parties intervene; (2) *how* do they intervene; and (3) *what* is the consequence of their interventions?<sup>10</sup> The record of third-party conflict management efficacy is mixed. On the one hand, some work has found that third-party involvement can help attenuate conflict and increase the stability of peace. A number of studies have examined how third parties use mediation to reduce the duration of civil wars.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Gartner, Bercovitch, and Beber have shown that the positive ways mediators can contribute to peace are especially observable once we account for the selection processes that send mediators to the toughest civil wars.<sup>12</sup> Studies have also shown a strong relationship between peace-operation deployments and a number of outcomes. Such outcomes include the stability of post-conflict peace,<sup>13</sup> the reduction in battle-related fatalities,<sup>14</sup> the reduction in one-sided violence,<sup>15</sup> the nurturing of effective governance,<sup>16</sup> the promotion of positive

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<sup>10</sup> Findley, and Teo, "Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars."

<sup>11</sup> DeRouen, and Möller, "The Short-Term Effects of Mediation on Low- Intensity Civil Wars"; Regan, and Meachum, "Data on Interventions During Periods of Political Instability"; Regan, Frank, and Aydin, "Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset"; Svensson, "Bargaining, Bias and Peace Brokers."

<sup>12</sup> Gartner, and Bercovitch, "Overcoming Obstacles to Peace"; Gartner, "Signs of Trouble"; and Beber, "International Mediation, Selection Effects, and the Question of Bias."

<sup>13</sup> DeRouen, and Chowdhury, "Mediation, Peacekeeping and Civil War peace Agreements"; Doyle, and Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace*; Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work*; Gilligan, and Sergenti, "Do UN Interventions Cause Peace?"; Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, "United Nations Peacekeeping Dynamics and the Duration of Post-civil Conflict Peace"; Smidt, "United Nations Peacekeeping Locally"; Walter, *Committing to Peace*.

<sup>14</sup> Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, "Beyond Keeping Peace"; Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis, "Winning the Peace Locally."

<sup>15</sup> Bove and Ruggeri, "Kinds of Blue"; Carnegie and Mikulaschek, "The Promise of Peacekeeping"; Di Salvatore, "Obstacle to Peace?"; Fjelde, Hultman, and Nilsson, "Protection through Presence"; Hultman, "UN peace Operations and Protection of Civilians"; Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War"; Kathman, and Wood, "Managing Threat, Cost, and Incentive to Kill"; Kathman, and Wood, "Stopping the Killing during the Peace?"; Melander, "Selected to Go Where Murderers Lurk?"

<sup>16</sup> Blair, "International Intervention and the Rule of Law after Civil War"; Doyle and Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace*; Joshi, "United Nations Peacekeeping, Democratic Process, and the Durability of Peace after Civil Wars."

peace,<sup>17</sup> and the containment of conflict.<sup>18</sup> DeRouen and Chowdhury,<sup>19</sup> as well as Beardsley, Cunningham and White,<sup>20</sup> consider the combination of mediation and peacekeeping deployments, and find that they are complementary in contributing to more durable settlements and the attenuation of violence.

On the other hand, studies have found that third parties can often interfere with the conditions necessary for durable peace. Greig and Diehl find that peacekeeping operations can interfere with the negotiations needed to fully resolve a dispute.<sup>21</sup> Werner and Yuen and Beardsley consider the long-term effect of third-party intervention and argue that peace agreements can be rather fragile if the third parties do not sustain their involvement into the post-conflict period.<sup>22</sup> Other existing work has shown that third-party involvement can lengthen the duration of fighting,<sup>23</sup> drain the resources of the warring states,<sup>24</sup> increase the time to reach negotiated settlement during civil wars,<sup>25</sup> contribute to the increase in criminal behavior,<sup>26</sup> and exacerbate post-conflict situations in those war-torn countries.<sup>27</sup>

Some studies point to variation in third-party motivations for involvement as a relevant factor in understanding the uneven performance of third parties as agents of peace. As Balch-Lindsay and Enterline argue, while there are reasons to believe that third-party interventions are intended to end a civil war as quickly as possible, some third parties

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<sup>17</sup> Mironova, and Whitt, "International peacekeeping and positive peace."

<sup>18</sup> Beardsley, "Peacekeeping and the Contagion of Armed Conflict"; Beardsley, and Gleditsch, "Peacekeeping as Conflict Containment."

<sup>19</sup> DeRouen, and Chowdhury, "Mediation, Peacekeeping and Civil War peace Agreements."

<sup>20</sup> Beardsley, Cunningham, and White. "Mediation, Peacekeeping, and the Severity of Civil War."

<sup>21</sup> Greig and Diehl, "The Peacekeeping–Peacemaking Dilemma."

<sup>22</sup> Werner, and Yuen, "Making and Keeping Peace"; Beardsley, *The Mediation Dilemma*.

<sup>23</sup> Balch-Lindsay, and Enterline, "Killing Time"; Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts."

<sup>24</sup> Bove, Gleditsch, and Sekeris, "'Oil above Water' Economic Interdependence and Third-party Intervention"; Findley, and Marineau, "Lootable Resources and Third-party Intervention into Civil Wars."

<sup>25</sup> Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, "Third-party Intervention and the Civil War Process."

<sup>26</sup> Di Salvatore, "Peacekeepers against Criminal Violence?"

<sup>27</sup> Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*; Jett, *Why Peacekeeping Fails*; Paris, *At War's End*.



intervene for less benevolent reasons.<sup>28</sup> For example, if third parties are motivated to prevent the risk of “war infection” from neighboring states,<sup>29</sup> they might be more effective in hastening the end of civil wars; by contrast, if they are opportunists interested in looting resource from neighbors or weakening their rivals, they may prefer to prolong civil wars.<sup>30</sup> Koga (2011) further compares the decisions of democracies and autocracies to intervene militarily into civil wars and finds that democratic third-party states are more likely to intervene when they see an increase in rebel capabilities or they have ethnic ties with the rebel groups, whereas non-democratic third-party states are more likely to intervene when there are lootable natural resources in play.<sup>31</sup> Although some scholarship has taken seriously the diversity of third-party motivations, much of the literature has paid insufficient attention to relating third parties’ motivations to the form, continuity and ultimately effectiveness of their interventions.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to overlooking the third-party motivations, many studies overlook how the experiences of the third parties in the process of managing conflict shape the form and function of ongoing and subsequent third-party efforts. When third parties intervene in civil wars, they can become more invested in the peace, and they can gain more local information on the combatants’ resolve and capability, as well as the local political economy and the post-conflict risk than those which have not been involved. Böhmelt finds that multiple mediation attempts are more effective when it is the same third party making the attempts.<sup>33</sup> The learning and diffusion literature in the study of foreign policy has suggested that learning and

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<sup>28</sup> Balch-Lindsay, and Enterline, “Killing Time.”

<sup>29</sup> Kathman, “Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions.”

<sup>30</sup> Findley, and Marineau, “Lootable Resources and Third-party Intervention into Civil Wars”; Findley, and Teo, “Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars”; Kathman, “Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions”; Kathman, “Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention”; Stavenhagen, *Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-State*.

<sup>31</sup> Koga, “Where Do Third Parties Intervene?”

<sup>32</sup> Carment, and Fischer, “Three’s Company?”

<sup>33</sup> Böhmelt, “Failing to Succeed?”

updating information (and belief) is an essential means of policy change.<sup>34</sup> By treating wartime intervention as separate from post-conflict intervention, we miss how third parties vary in the opportunities they have had to learn from experience, shaping their latter roles as potential conflict managers after major hostilities have ended.

### **Continuity and Third-party Involvement in Civil War**

We consider two channels through which continuity of third-party involvement from periods of armed conflict to post-conflict periods enhance the peace process. The first channel focuses on *local information*. As previous work has shown, information on post-conflict societies is often low.<sup>35</sup> Third-parties often serve a crucial role of reducing the protagonists' uncertainty.<sup>36</sup> Existing work has also emphasized how third parties that misunderstand the local context of their efforts might expedite the collapse of a peaceful order.<sup>37</sup> By serving as conflict managers during civil wars, third parties become better positioned to gain information on how to best tailor their efforts in those postwar countries.<sup>38</sup> According to this logic, third-party conflict managers gain hands-on information of the postwar parties, which is crucial for understanding which levers to pull. Once these wartime peacemakers commit to postwar involvement, their efforts will be more effective than others with more uncertainty about their return on investment.

Related, third parties with prior engagement have had time to cultivate a relationship and reputation with the key stakeholders, who, in turn, have had time to learn about the biases

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<sup>34</sup> Checkel, "Why Comply?"; Crescenzi, *Of Friends and Foes*; Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy"; Simmons, and Elkins, "The Globalization of Liberalization."

<sup>35</sup> Garriga, and Phillips, "Foreign Aid as a Signal to Investors"; Mattes, and Savun, "Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements."

<sup>36</sup> Duursma, "Information Processing Challenges in Peacekeeping Operations"; Lindley, *Promoting Peace with Information*.

<sup>37</sup> Autesserre, *Peaceland*; Mac Ginty, and Richmond, "The Local Turn in Peace Building"; Paris, *At War's End*.

<sup>38</sup> Böhmelt, "Failing to Succeed?"

and tendencies of the third parties. As Kydd argues, mediators with a reputation as a trustworthy broker can help combating parties build trust in one another.<sup>39</sup> The situation thus becomes one where, in the case of a third party sincerely invested in long-term peace, the key stakeholders use the third party to efficiently assess the trustworthiness of the other side. Conversely, in the case of a third party less interested in the stability of peace, the key stakeholders successfully anticipate the potential for the third party to be unhelpful. Compared to third parties that lack prior peacemaking engagement, those with such prior engagement will be better equipped to contribute to further progress in the peace process or at least will be less likely to lead the protagonists astray.

The second channel emphasizes the *signaling effect* of continuous third-party engagement after a conflict. Werner and Yuen, and Beardsley have argued that third-party involvement can produce rather fragile agreements if the third parties do not sustain their involvement into the post-conflict period.<sup>40</sup> The decision to remain involved in post-conflict peace processes can signal a commitment to monitoring and enforcement, which, in turn, reduces the potential for the combatants to abandon an agreement and enhance their commitment to post-conflict recovery.<sup>41</sup> The signals sent by ongoing third-party involvement can also enhance the investment of the actors in the rule of law and legitimate fora of contestation.<sup>42</sup> If warring parties gain in their confidence in the potential for an agreement to stick, they will, in turn, be more prone to invest in post-conflict peace rather than in the potential for conflict relapse.

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<sup>39</sup> Kydd, “When Can Mediators Build Trust?”

<sup>40</sup> Werner, and Yuen, “Making and Keeping Peace”; Beardsley, “Agreement Without Peace”; Beardsley, *The Mediation Dilemma*.

<sup>41</sup> Coyne and Boettke, “The Problem of Credible Commitment in Reconstruction”; Walter, *Committing to Peace*.

<sup>42</sup> Braithwaite and Kucik, “Does the Presence of Foreign Troops Affect Stability in the Host Country?”

Third parties' decisions to remain engaged can also be viewed as signals to the international community of their confidence in the post-conflict recovery.<sup>43</sup> Positive signals from third parties with deep knowledge of the conflict can foster stronger collaboration between other third parties and the warring parties, making third-party involvement more effective. Potential outside investors often lack the information needed for establishing robust partnerships, which may decrease the amount of international assistance for the post-conflict states, slow down the recovery progress, and increase the risk of war resumption. The signals can serve as a substitution for direct information,<sup>44</sup> and thus reduce the uncertainty for at least some prospective third-party investors.

These benefits of conflict-management continuity notwithstanding, third parties often are not willing to remain engaged in the post-conflict states. Once hostilities have subsided, third parties are prone to turn their attention to other pressing foreign policy objectives, and they would prefer to free ride on the efforts of other actors that could serve as peace guarantors. In the data that we analyze below, only about 40% of wartime third parties remain committed to the post-conflict peace process.

We focus on the *vested interests* of the third parties as key factors for why some decide to invest in post-conflict states while others do not. Third parties may have pre-existing vested interests in peace in a given conflict, or they may have developed vested interests in the process of helping to broker the peace.<sup>45</sup>

Regarding pre-existing vested interests, those third parties that stand to lose much from the renewal of conflict, such as those in close proximity that are at risk for conflict spillover and those with strong economic ties, will be more likely to contribute as conflict

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<sup>43</sup> Biglaiser and DeRouen, "Following the Flag."

<sup>44</sup> Garriga and Phillips, "Foreign Aid as a Signal to Investors"; Mody, Razin and Sadka, *The Role of Information in Driving FDI Flows*.

<sup>45</sup> For a study of how the ties between the third parties and the protagonists affect the likelihood of mediation, see Böhmelt, "International Mediation and Social Networks."

managers in postwar periods.<sup>46</sup> The logic is akin to that of Kathman,<sup>47</sup> who finds that military interventions in civil wars are more likely as the likelihood of conflict diffusion and contagion increases. Also related, Rost and Greig find that states are more likely to conduct peacekeeping in countries experiencing civil war that have strong ties, including trade ties, with the potential intervener.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, Stojek and Tir find that UN peacekeeping operations are more likely to be authorized to countries that have strong trade ties with the permanent-five members of the UN Security Council.<sup>49</sup>

The type of third party also relates to variation in the intrinsic interests in maintaining peace. By their nature, state actors are most prone to the free-rider problem that limits their willingness to contribute to conflict management efforts after major hostilities have ended. States are hard pressed enough to find the resources necessary for maintaining their own security, much less for maintaining the security of other states. Non-state actors are likely to have a greater interest in ongoing conflict management as an end in itself. IGOs such as the UN carry clear mandates to address pressing security threats in the international system when collective action is susceptible to the free rider problem.<sup>50</sup> NGOs are also more likely than states to be motivated by a principled desire to see human security improved, even if this does not well characterize all NGOs.<sup>51</sup> Compared to states, IGOs and NGOs will be more likely to invest in post-conflict peace processes because their core values are more in line with such a use of resources.

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<sup>46</sup> Greig and Regan (2008) argue and find that similar interests motivate third parties to offer mediation in civil wars, see Greig, and Regan, “When do They Say Yes?”

<sup>47</sup> Kathman, “Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions”; Kathman, “Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention.”

<sup>48</sup> Rost, and Greig, “Taking Matters into Their Own Hands.”

<sup>49</sup> Stojek and Tir, “The Supply Side of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.”

<sup>50</sup> Beardsley and Schmidt, “Following the Flag or Following the Charter?”

<sup>51</sup> Murdie, *Help or Harm*.

In addition to the pre-existing vested interests in the maintenance of stability in a given conflict, third parties can develop a vested interest that enhances their potential to contribute to conflict management after conflict has de-escalated. In the most basic sense, third parties that served as peacemakers have an interest in protecting their earlier investment in peace. If helping to maintain peace is less resource-demanding than helping to reduce violence after a relapse in conflict, third parties will prefer to bear the burden of the former so as to avoid the burden of the latter. We thus posit that, compared to third parties that were not involved as peacemakers during periods of conflict, third parties that were involved as peacemakers are more likely to be involved in conflict management during periods after major hostilities have subsided.

Joining the previous strands, we expect the pre-existing interests in peace and the interests that were cultivated in the process of peacemaking to reinforce one another. Those third parties which stand to lose the most from a resumption of hostilities will be the most interested in making sure that their earlier peacemaking efforts come to fruition by further enhancing the information environment and providing strong signals of commitment through continuous involvement. Those third-party conflict managers which do not have vested interests in stable outcomes—their interests might be more strongly tied to the positions of the outcomes in the issue space or the projection of influence—will have less of an incentive to protect their investment in peace and stability. This implies an interactive effect in which the experience of serving as a peacemaker is especially conducive to continuity in involvement for those third parties with pre-existing vested interests in peace.

Given the above discussions, we propose the following hypotheses on third parties' decision to remain engaged after a conflict:

*Hypothesis 1: Third parties with vested interests in preventing armed conflict relapse are more likely to commit to postwar conflict management.*

*Hypothesis 2: Third parties with wartime involvement experience in civil war countries are more likely to commit to postwar conflict management.*

*Hypothesis 3: Third parties with wartime involvement experience in civil war countries will be especially more likely to commit to postwar conflict management when they have vested interests in preventing armed conflict relapse.*

## **Research Design**

### ***Data and Dependent Variable***

To examine these hypotheses, the data sample draws from the UCDP MIC in Africa data set.<sup>52</sup> The MIC data set has highly disaggregated information on third-party (including states, IGOs, NGOs and individuals) involvement during and in the aftermath of civil war, which enables us to examine directly the effects of third parties' conflict management experience and vested interests on their involvement during periods after major armed-conflict episodes have ended. Figure 2 shows the geographic locations of the twenty-two (post-)conflict countries in our study.

**[Figure 2 about here]**

Our unit of analysis is the *third-party-post-conflict-month*, which is a unique combination of the post-conflict months and the potential third parties. The set of post-conflict months spans up to twenty-four months after a conflict episode has ended. The risk of conflict resumption in the first two years after conflict is especially high,<sup>53</sup> which means that further conflict management is a salient consideration during this period.

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<sup>52</sup> Croicu et al., "Mediation and Violence."

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

To minimize sample selection bias, we need to study third parties that could plausibly intervene as a conflict manager in a given armed conflict. We thus define potential third parties using five criteria: first, we include all third parties present in the MIC data set; second, we include all the neighboring states of these twenty-two countries;<sup>54</sup> third, we take all third parties that provided development aid to these warring states during the same time period;<sup>55</sup> fourth, we include all the countries that have been the suppliers of conventional arms to these twenty-two countries;<sup>56</sup> and finally, we include all the African countries other than these twenty-two countries. In doing so, we identify 179 total potential third parties, among which 49 are non-state third parties (including individuals, IGOs, NGOs, etc.).<sup>57</sup>

We merge the MIC data with the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Data set,<sup>58</sup> which has the start and end dates of the armed-conflict episodes. After coding information about the third-parties' involvement during the armed conflict episodes, we limit the sample to the post-conflict period, up to 24 months. This procedure yields a total of 1,353 post-conflict months and 240,834 observations. Among the 1,353 post-conflict months, 141 (10.42%) of them experienced at least one instance of third-party involvement; 114 (8.41%) of them included third parties that intervened during and after civil wars, and 55 (4.07%) of them experienced involvement by neighboring third parties.

Our dependent variable, *third-party involvement*, is a binary indicator of whether a potential third party participated in conflict management (defined by the MIC data) in a given

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<sup>54</sup> We use 400 miles as the minimum distance to define neighbors in the CShapes data, see Weidmann, Kuse, and Gleditsch, "The Geography of the International System."

<sup>55</sup> Data on development aid are from the AidData project, see <http://aiddata.org/aiddata-research-datasets>.

<sup>56</sup> The arms transfer information is from the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, see <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>, Accessed on January 30, 2020.

<sup>57</sup> Table B1 provides a summary statistic of the types of third parties. A simple logistic regression in Table B2 further reveals that third-party wartime experience and neighboring third-party are positively associated with post-conflict involvement. See Table B3 in the Appendix for a complete list of these 179 potential third parties.

<sup>58</sup> Gleditsch et al., "Armed Conflict 1946-2001."



*post-conflict month*.<sup>59</sup> Note that while some third-party activities may span more than one month, we code the *onset* rather than the *prevalence* of third-party involvement in a given post-conflict month.<sup>60</sup>

## **Explanatory Variables**

One of the key explanatory variables is *third-party wartime MICs*, which is a count of the third-party involvement events *during* the armed-conflict episode preceding the post-conflict period.<sup>61</sup> This variable captures the extent to which the third party was active as a conflict manager during the period of hostilities in which there were at least 25 annual battle-related fatalities.

Turning to measurement of *vested interests*, we use a *neighboring state* variable as one measure of a third-party's vested interest in the maintenance of peace in a war-torn country.<sup>62</sup> Due to the potential for conflict to diffuse and generate other externalities such as refugee flows, neighboring third parties are most likely to suffer costs from renewed conflict and thus have an interest in seeing peace preserved.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, neighboring third parties can embody greater legitimacy compared to remote third parties.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> The MIC data set records different types of third-party involvement such as peacekeeping, mediation, and consultation. For our purposes, we simply coded for the participation of a third party in any form of conflict management in the post-conflict period.

<sup>60</sup> For example, for a mediation event that spans across multiple months, we only code it for the first month.

<sup>61</sup> In our robustness checks, we disaggregate the types of third-party wartime involvement.

<sup>62</sup> Previous research has shown that states are more likely to intervene militarily in a civil war when there is a potential for conflict contagion, see Kathman, "Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions"; Kathman, "Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention."

<sup>63</sup> Buhaug, and Gleditsch, "Contagion or Confusion?"; Gleditsch, "Transnational Dimensions of Civil War"; Kathman, "Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions"; Salehyan and Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War." See also Balch-Lindsay, and Enterline, "Killing Time."

<sup>64</sup> Duursma, "African Solutions to African Challenges."

We create a dichotomous variable for whether the third party is a neighbor of the country that experienced the intrastate armed conflict. Neighboring states are defined as having minimum distance less than 400 miles using the CShapes data.<sup>65</sup>

Also relevant to vested interests is the type of third party. We include *non-state third-party*, which is a dichotomous indicator of whether the third party is a non-state actor. As additional indicators of vested interests, we also run models with explanatory variables that measure the extent to which the third party provided arms transfers and foreign aid to the country that experienced armed conflict. *Arms transfer third-party* measures the annual arms transfers with the third party, from the SIPRI arms-transfer data.<sup>66</sup> *Aid third-party* measures the annual amount of foreign aid from the third party, from the AidData project.<sup>67</sup>

### ***Control Variables***

As a control variable, we include a measure of previous third-party post-conflict involvement—*third-party postwar MICs*—because the potential for involvement in the current period is presumably a function of how much involvement the third party has already had. The autocorrelation in the dependent variable is both substantively interesting to model directly—it reveals the extent to which there is inertia in third-party conflict management—and a potential nuisance if not addressed.<sup>68</sup> Given the time-series cross-sectional format of the data, we use a decay function to operationalize third-party involvement in the post-conflict period.<sup>69</sup> We thus assume that there is a fading imprint of third-party involvement

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<sup>65</sup> Weidmann, Kuse, and Gleditsch, “The Geography of the International System.”

<sup>66</sup> See <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>, Accessed on April 30, 2019.

<sup>67</sup> Tierney et al., “More Dollars than Sense: Refining Our Knowledge of Development Finance using AidData.” See <https://www.aiddata.org/data/aiddata-core-research-release-level-1-v3-0>, Accessed on April 30, 2019.

<sup>68</sup> The motivation has roots in the concern for duration dependence—we want to account for changes in the underlying baseline probability of involvement as the time since previous involvement changes, but we also want to account for the extent of the previous involvement. See Carter, and Signorino, “Back to the Future”

<sup>69</sup> Decay functions have been widely used in economics, physics, and political science to model processes in which effects dissipate at varying rates, see Hegre et al, “Toward a Democratic Civil Peace?”; Knutsen, Nygard,

over time.<sup>70</sup> Specifically, we use a one-year *half-life* as our scaling time (in this case, meaning 12 months)<sup>71</sup> and the decay function can be written as:

$$\widehat{N}_{t+1} = C_t * N_t * e^{\lambda * t} \quad (1)$$

$$\widehat{N}_{t+1} = C_t * N_t * e^{-.05776227 * t} \quad (2)$$

where  $\lambda = -.05776227$  is the decay rate,  $t = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  is the  $n$ th post-conflict month with  $\max(n) \leq 23$ .  $C_t \in \{0, 1\}$  is a binary indicator function of whether there was third-party conflict management at time  $t$ ,  $N_t$  denotes the initial quantity of the decay function at time  $t$ , and  $\widehat{N}_{t+1}$  is the new quantity at time  $t + 1$  when re-scaling by the decay function.

We also control for the level of violence in the postwar period. To define the *count of postwar violence*, we use the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) data to count the aggregate number of events of political violence in the country since the end of the most recent armed conflict episode. The UCDP GED dataset defines an event as “an individual incident (phenomenon) of lethal violence occurring at a given time and place.”<sup>72</sup>

Since one of the core explanatory variables is the count of wartime conflict-management events, it is important to control for the duration of the conflict, which could have a mechanical correlation with wartime conflict-management engagements. We take the natural log of *conflict duration*, which is the length of the most recent episode of armed conflict, measured in days.

Following existing work, we control for the *regime type*, *total population*, and *GDP per capita*, as each of these variables are plausibly related to the feasibility of third-party

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and Wig, “Autocratic Elections”; Regan, and Aydin, “Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars”; Serdyuk, Zaccai and Zaccai, *Methods in Molecular Biophysics*.

<sup>70</sup> Beck and Katz, “Modeling Dynamics in Time-Series-Cross-Section Political Economy Data”; Watt, Mazza and Snyder, “Agenda-setting Effects of Television News Coverage and the Effects Decay Curve.”

<sup>71</sup> Knutsen, Nygard, and Wig, “Autocratic Elections.”

<sup>72</sup> Croicu, and Sundberg, “Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset.”

involvement both during and after armed conflict. We use Polity IV's *Polity2* scores as our measure of regime type. This variable varies from “-10” (most autocratic) to “10” (most democratic).<sup>73</sup> We use the *Polity2* score both for third parties (if any) and for warring states. Data on population and GDP per capita for warring states are taken from the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI) and are both logarithm-transformed in our analyses.<sup>74</sup> We also control for the outcome of conflict, and include *ceasefire*, *government victory*, *rebel victory*, and *low activity*, as binary variables. We use termination by *peace agreement* as the baseline reference. Data on conflict outcome are taken from the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset.<sup>75</sup>

We include a count of *peaceful months* that have elapsed for each subject as well as the square and cube of this count in order to account for the underlying changes in the propensity for conflict relapse and thus an additional source of autocorrelation.<sup>76</sup> Table A1 in the appendix displays the summary statistics for the variables in this paper.

### ***Modeling Strategy***

Given the binary nature of our dependent variable, we use a logistic regression model to estimate the likelihood of third-party involvement in postwar states as peacebuilders. However, the traditional logistic regression models often suffer from separation problem in situations where a linear combination of the predictors is perfectly predictive of the dependent variable.<sup>77</sup> This is a potential issue in this project given that the third-party's continuing engagement in postwar states is relatively rare and the large size of observations

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<sup>73</sup> Marshall, and Jaggers, “Polity IV Project.”

<sup>74</sup> World Bank Group, “World Development Indicators.” Note that these variables are measured at a yearly level, so there is limited temporal variation on them in our models with monthly level data.

<sup>75</sup> Kreutz, “How and When Armed Conflicts End.”

<sup>76</sup> Carter, and Signorino, “Back to the Future.”

<sup>77</sup> Zorn, “A Solution to Separation in Binary Response Models.”

resulting from our *third-party-post-conflict-month* unit of analysis. We thus follow the recommendation of Gelman et al. (2008),<sup>78</sup> and use a Bayesian logistic regression approach. Essentially, the Bayesian logistic regression model first scales all non-binary variables to have mean 0 and standard deviation 0.5 while for binary input variables the model rescales them to have mean 0 and to differ by 1 in their lower and upper conditions. It then places independent Student-t prior distributions on the coefficients. Following Gelman et al. (2008), we use the default Cauchy distribution with center 0 and scale 2.5 for all our model coefficients except for the constant. The resulting posterior mode can be used as a point estimate, and the standard errors can be obtained from the curvature of the log-posterior density. One further advantage of using a Cauchy prior can help stabilize the model estimation when we include the cubic polynomial terms.<sup>79</sup> As such, we can interpret the outputs in the same way as we usually do for classical logistic regression.<sup>80</sup>

## Results and Discussions

Figure 3 provides a visualization of the coefficients in the main models.<sup>81</sup> From the results, we find evidence for our hypotheses that third parties with wartime involvement experiences and other sources of vested interests are more likely to be involved in post-conflict conflict management. The regression coefficients in Model 1 *for third-party wartime involvement, neighboring third-party, third-party aid and third-party arms transfers* are positive and statistically significant. These results confirm that third parties with strong vested interests in

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<sup>78</sup> Gelman et al., “A Weakly Informative Default Prior Distribution for Logistic and Other Regression Models.”

<sup>79</sup> Carter and Signorino, “Back to the Future.”

<sup>80</sup> Gelman et al., “A Weakly Informative Default Prior Distribution for Logistic and Other Regression Models.” All the estimations are performed by the *bayesglm* function from the *arm* package in **R**.

<sup>81</sup> Full model results are provided in the appendix. Table A2 displays the first set of results. Models 1-3 of Table A2 only focus on state third parties while Models 4-5 of Table A2 include non-state third parties. Models 4-5 thus exclude attributes that only apply to state third parties and add an indicator of whether the third-party is a non-state actor. We note that previous research suggests some non-state actors such as the UN and African Union (AU) have vested interests in managing regional conflict, see Gartner, “Signs of Trouble.”

the wellbeing of the post-conflict state are more likely to serve as conflict managers after armed conflict episodes have subsided.

**[Figure 3 about here]**

Models 2-3 add an interaction term between *neighboring third-party* and *third-party wartime MICs*, which is statistically significant and with a negative coefficient in both models. Contrary to Hypothesis 3, the presence of vested interests appears to be a substitute, not a complement, for wartime involvement.

Also inconsistent with expectations, we observe in Models 4 and 5 that non-state actors are not more likely—and indeed might be less likely—to be involved as postwar conflict managers. Moreover, the evidence indicates that wartime involvement has less of a relationship with postwar involvement when the third party is a non-state actor. States, including non-neighboring states, do just as well if not better than non-state actors and neighboring states in maintaining continuity of involvement.

To better interpret the interaction effects, we plot the predicted probabilities of post-conflict involvement against the counts of third-party wartime involvement for both neighboring third parties and non-neighboring third parties in panel (a) of Figure 4. We follow Hanmer and Ozan Kalkan<sup>82</sup> and use an “observed-value” simulation-based approach to compute the predicted probabilities in the interaction model. That is, in each simulation we only vary the value(s) of the variable(s) of interest while allowing all other variables to take their observed values rather than their “average” values in the sample data; after we average the predicted probabilities of the variable(s) of interest in the sample data in each simulation,

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<sup>82</sup> Hanmer, and Ozan Kalkan, “Behind the Curve.”

we repeat this procedure 1,000 times to obtain a distribution of the “average predicted probabilities.” The graph illustrates that the effect of *neighboring third-party* on the likelihood of post-conflict involvement is positive for moderate levels of wartime third-party activity. That is, when the number of wartime third-party management events are fewer than about 20, neighboring third parties have a higher predicted probability of becoming involved in post-conflict peace processes than non-neighboring third parties, holding other variables at their observed values. We also observe that the effect of *third-party wartime involvement* is positive regardless of whether the third party is a neighbor or not.

**[Figure 4 about here]**

Panel (b) of Figure 4 plots the predicted probabilities of post-conflict involvement against the counts of third-party wartime involvement for both state actors and non-state actors. We do not observe much difference between state and non-state peacemakers in their propensity to follow through and maintain continuity of involvement as conflict managers.

What might explain the findings in which it appears that wartime involvement actually matters less for third parties with vested interests? We propose, and leave to further research to fully investigate, that third-party conflict managers that are too interested in the outcomes of a conflict might be eventually seen as unwelcome by key protagonists in the conflict. The hypotheses posited above focus on the *supply side* of involvement continuity. When considering the *demand side* and the interests of the disputing actors, the results are consistent with a scenario in which the disputing actors recognize that they eventually have to own whatever terms of peace are decided and thus cannot be dependent on indefinite heavy-handed third-party involvement. Third parties that have high interests in managing a conflict may eventually become unwelcome to one or multiple parties to the conflict.

[Figure 5 about here]

In order to further evaluate the explanatory power of our measures of third-party vested interests and wartime involvement, we plot the receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves of some of the models in Figure 5. The ROC curve displays a model's potential predictive success by plotting the proportion of third-party postwar involvement activities correctly predicted against the proportion of false positives ("1 – specificity") at different cut points for positive predictions. The better a model fits, the greater the area under the curve (AUC). In Figure 5, we include a ROC curve for a model with control variables only, a model with the addition of the *neighboring third party* variable using classical logistical regression, and our full Bayesian logistic Model 3, respectively. Having information about the vested interests and wartime involvement of third parties significantly improves our ability to predict (in sample) third-party peace-building activities.

In additional models presented in Figure 6, we disaggregate the types of third-party involvement in the postwar states by focusing on whether *wartime peacekeeping*, *mediation* or *good office* experiences have similar effects on their likelihood of post-conflict involvement.<sup>83</sup> The *third-party wartime peacekeeping* and *third-party wartime mediation experience* constitutive terms are positive and statistically significant, while the coefficients of the interactions with the *neighboring third-party* variable are not statistically significant. A third-party state's peacekeeping and mediation efforts during a conflict increase the propensity for postwar MIC involvement, and those relationships are not much conditioned

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<sup>83</sup> Models 1-3 of Table A3 focus on state third parties while Models 4-5 of Table A3 include non-state third parties. In Model 1 of Table A3, we include *third-party wartime peacekeeping* and interact it with *neighboring third-party*. In Model 2, we examine the (conditional) effect of *third-party wartime mediation experience*, where mediation is defined as the involvement of a third-party during indirect or direct talks. In Model 3 of Table A3, we focus on the effect of *good offices*.



by the geographic proximity of the third party. While there is not enough evidence of interaction effects, we at minimum observe that wartime conflict management additively increases the expected post-conflict engagement.

**[Figure 6 about here]**

The results related to *third-party wartime good offices experience* are much more fully consistent with expectations. We observe positive and statistically significant coefficients on both the constitutive and interaction terms, suggesting that third parties that offered wartime good offices are more likely to be involved in post-conflict states, especially in neighboring states. This provides limited support for the expectation that third parties have a heightened vested interest in maintaining their involvement into the post-conflict period when they are geographically proximate.

In each of the models presented so far, the coefficients on the constitutive *neighboring third-party* variables are statistically significant and positive. Again, neighboring states are more likely to be involved in post-conflict peace processes. In considering interactions with actor type, we find that both wartime mediation and wartime good offices remain positively associated with post-conflict involvement, regardless of whether the third party is a state or non-state actor.

Together, our model results in Tables A2 and A3 provide support for our theoretical argument that third parties that have had wartime experience as conflict managers are more likely to get involved in post-conflict peacebuilding processes, regardless of whether the conflict management is in the form of peacekeeping, mediation or good offices; regardless of whether the third party is geographically proximate; and regardless of whether the third party is a state or non-state actor.

## Conclusion

We know from prior work that third parties are often fickle in their commitments to continue to assist disputing parties after major hostilities have ended. As a result, many negotiated settlements that involved a third-party conflict manager break down in the long run, and might even become more fragile than bilateral negotiated settlements.<sup>84</sup> Our study sheds light on when third parties are more fickle than others. With a better understanding of third-party interests in remaining maintaining continuity of involvement, advocates for peace can gain a better understanding of the long-term benefits of peacemaking initiatives and be able to direct additional resources toward those post-conflict countries that lack a third-party champion that is committed to the long-term robustness of the peace.

Our findings clearly show that third parties that were involved as conflict managers—as peacekeepers or mediators or as providers of good offices—during wartime are more likely to be involved in peace processes in the immediate aftermath of major hostilities. We also find that neighboring states are more likely to become involved in post-conflict periods, but, inconsistent with expectations, we do not find much evidence to suggest that neighboring states are especially more likely to have continuity of involvement. We also do not find evidence to support an expectation that non-state actors such as IGOs and NGOs would be especially likely to maintain continuity of involvement. The results actually suggest that third-party continuity is less likely when the third parties have high vested interests, raising the importance of considering demand-side interests as well as supply-side interests.

We leave to future work the question of whether the wartime experience and vested interests improve the efficacy of third-party conflict management. On the one hand, a higher

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<sup>84</sup> Gartner and Bercovitch, “Overcoming Obstacles to Peace”; Mattes, and Savun, “Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements.”

proclivity for post-conflict involvement can help with keeping the incentives for peace high, as well as with providing early-warning monitoring of the potential for conflict relapse. On the other hand, a higher proclivity for involvement may just further delay the ability for the disputing parties to reach a robust self-enforcing peace that no longer depends on external assistance.

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## Supplementary Material

Supplementary material and replication data for this article is available at

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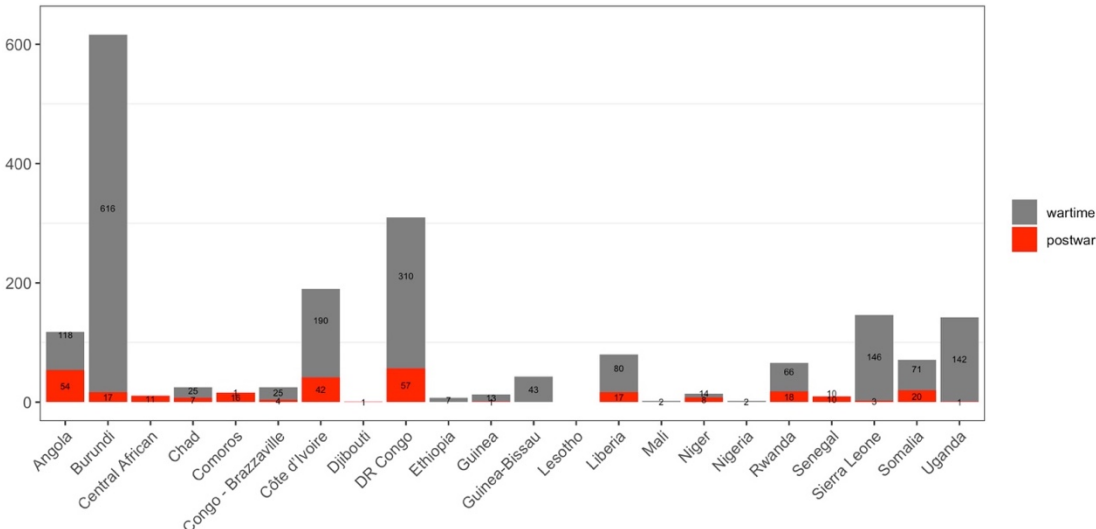
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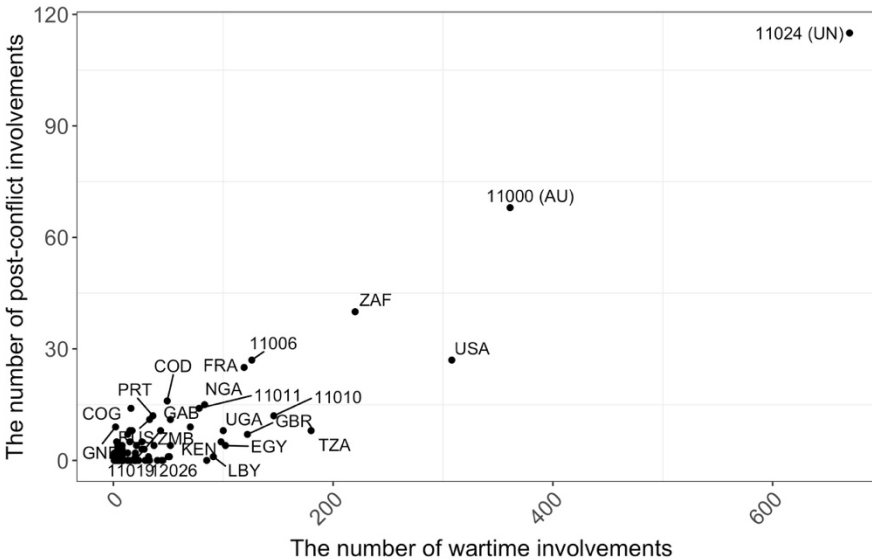
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### Figure 1. Third-party involvement during and following civil wars



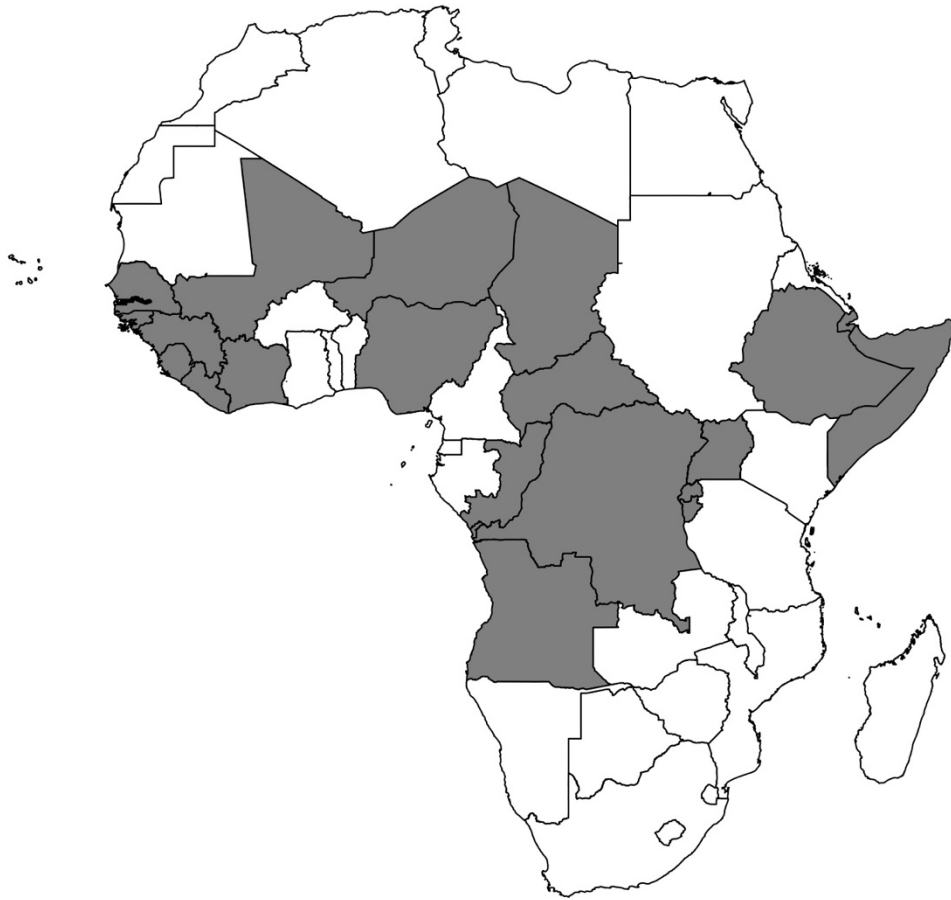
(a) Variation of third-party involvement in warring countries



(b) Third-party involvement in wartime and post-conflict period

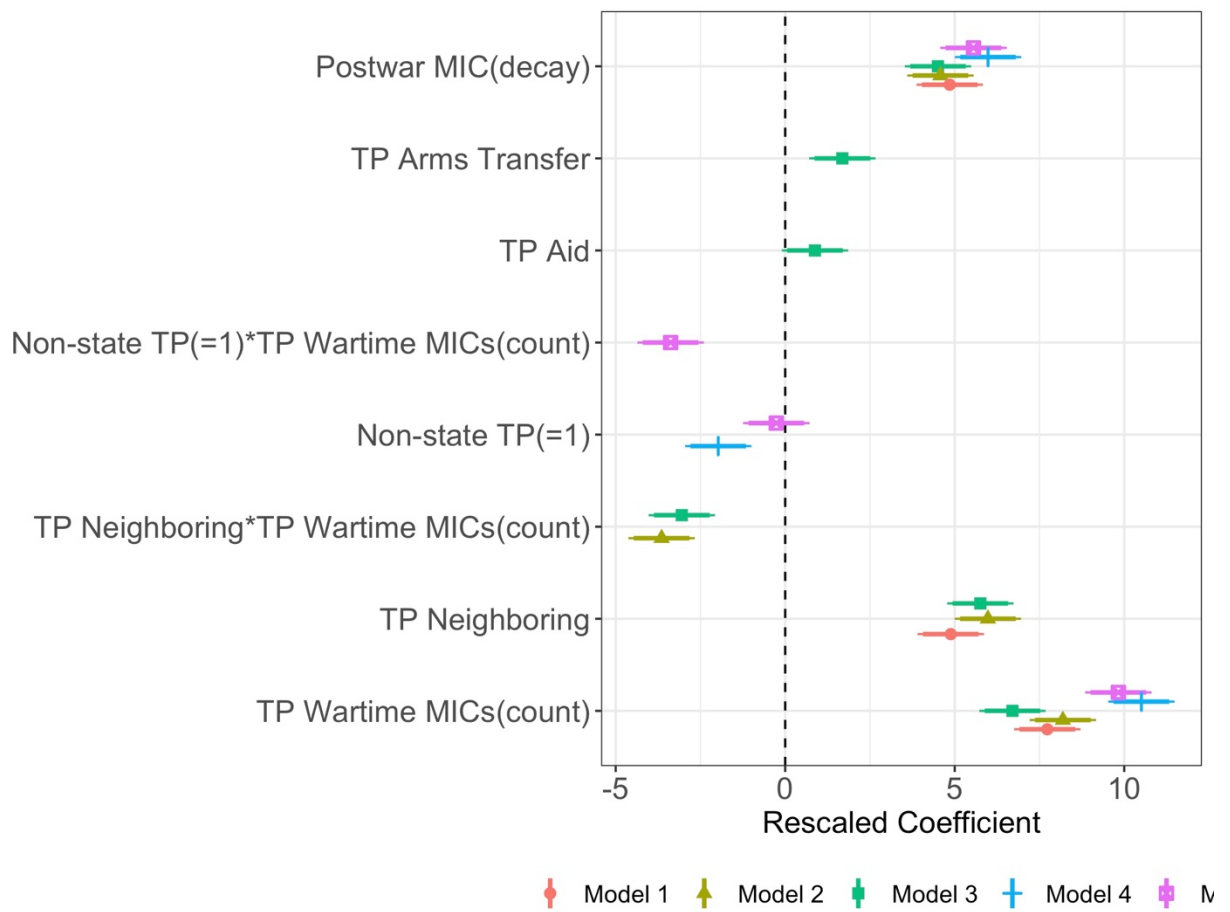
*Note:* Panel a of Figure 1 displays the counts of third-party involvements during wartime and postwar periods within warring countries. Panel b of Figure 1 shows the variation of involvement by third parties. Digital numbers represent the ID of third-party non-state actors. Full names of the non-state actors are listed in the appendix Table B3.

**Figure 2. Geographic locations of the warring countries**



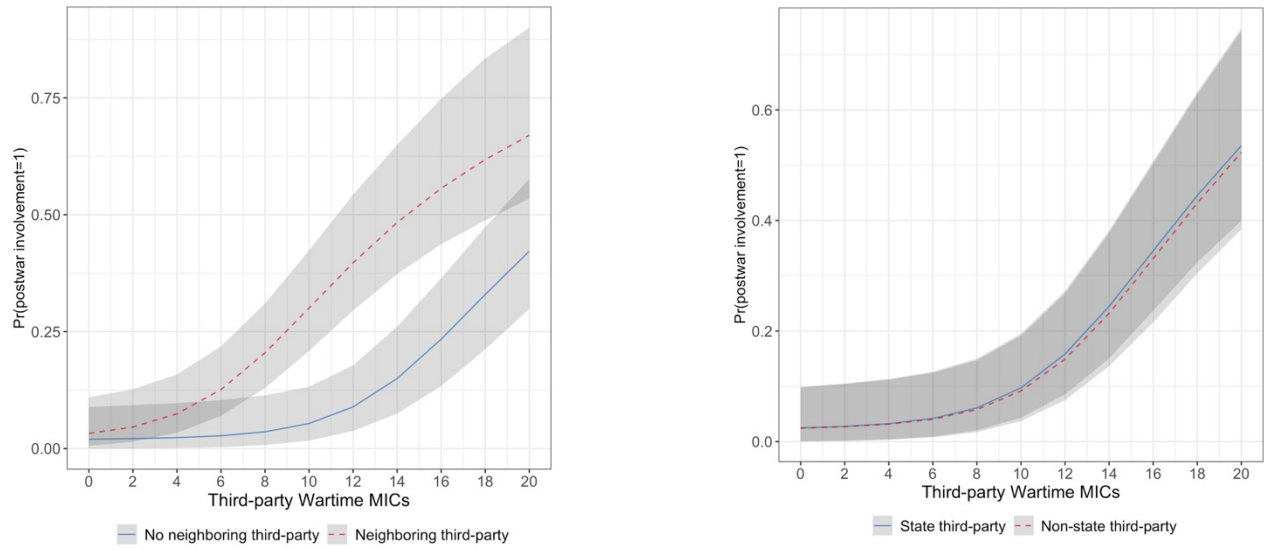
*Note:* Figure 2 shows geographic locations of the 22 countries in our sample data set. The gray areas denote countries in the sample data set. These countries include DR Congo, Burundi, Chad, Guinea, Uganda, Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, Comoros, Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria.

**Figure 3. Coefficient plot for Bayesian logistic regression on post-conflict involvement**



*Note:* Figure 3 shows the rescaled coefficients with 90% and 95% CIs for our independent variables in Table A2. Coefficients for control variables are omitted.

**Figure 4. Predicted probabilities for postwar involvement by potential third parties**

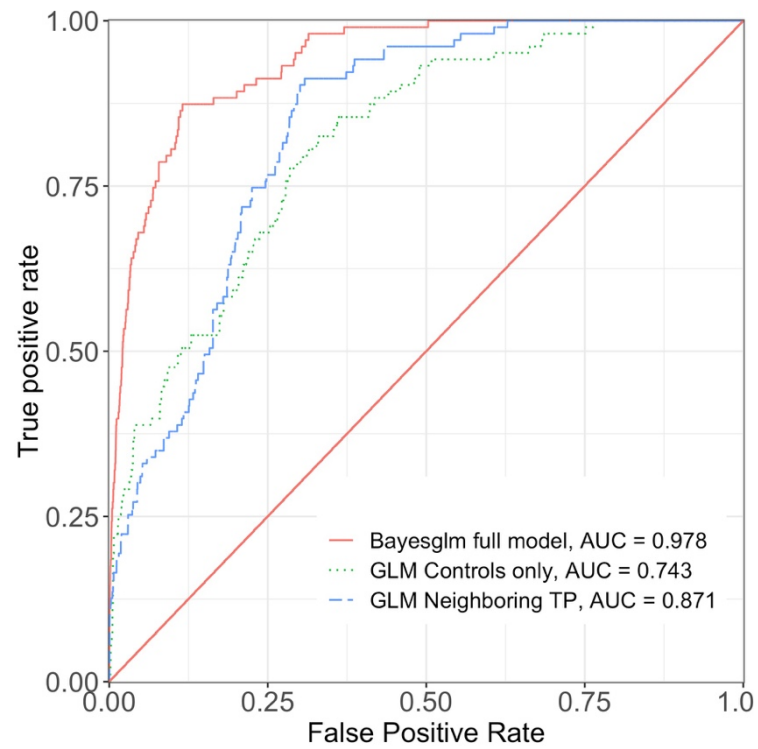


(a) Neighboring third-party analysis (Model 3)  
5)

(b) Non-state third-party analysis (Model

*Note:* Figure 4 shows the interaction effects for Model 3 and Model 5 in Table A2. The colored areas denote the 95% CIs. The colored areas denote the 95% CIs while allowing other variables to take their true values in the data via 1000 simulations.

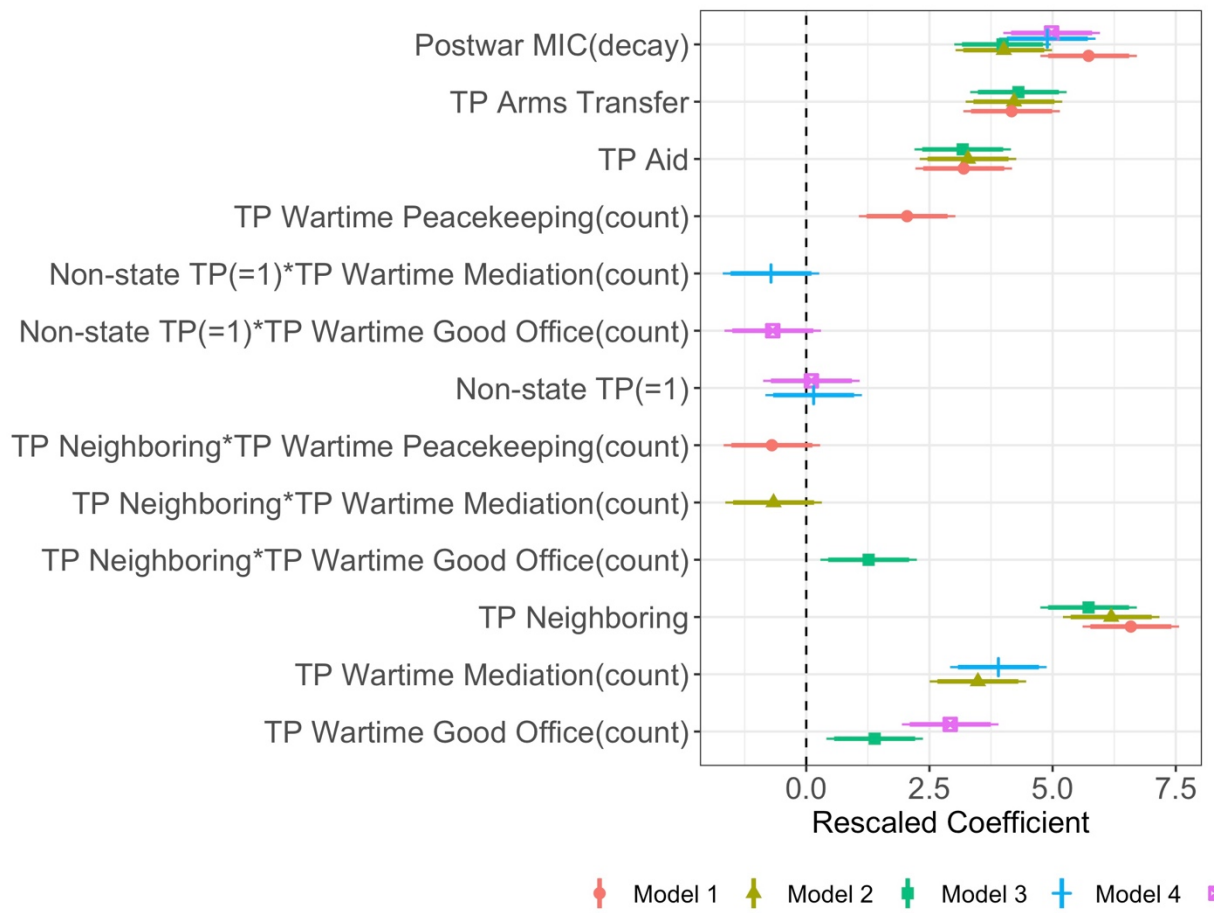
**Figure 5. Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) plots**



*Note:* Figure 5 shows Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curves for a comparison of the Bayesian logistic regression (Model 3 of Table A2) with classical logistic regression models.



**Figure 6. Coefficient plot for Bayesian logistic regression on post-conflict involvement**



*Note:* Figure 6 shows the rescaled coefficients with 90% and 95% CIs for our independent variables in Table A3. Coefficients for control variables are omitted.