

**Diplomacy and other Forms of Intervention:
Combined Strategies and the Duration of Civil War**

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Much of the empirical literature suggests that outside interventions tend to lengthen the expected duration of civil wars; conversely, the policy community often acts as if they hold an opposing expectation for the outcome of intervention. We argue that the divergence can be found in how models of intervention are specified. We propose a model with three novel contributions: 1) we incorporate diplomatic interventions, 2) we model interventions that transpire in combinations, and 3) we include a decay function to account for the declining utility of an intervention. Our results suggest that diplomatic interventions are critically important for understanding the outcome of civil conflicts, and that the sequence under which military or economic assistance is combined with diplomacy has a profound effect on the expected duration of a conflict.

Introduction

How do outside interventions influence the course of civil wars? Do they contribute to war termination or do they have the adverse effect of prolonging the conflict? Recent research supports the notion that interventions influence the severity or duration of civil conflicts, but the outcomes of intervention strategies run counter to the expectations of those in the policy community who articulate and implement the intervention policies. The weight of the broadly empirical evidence suggests that outside military and economic interventions increase the duration and hostility levels, and make the termination of civil conflicts less likely (Balch-Lyndsay and Enterline, 2000; Regan 2000; 2002; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2000). This poses an empirical conundrum where the policy community anticipates one outcome from their actions yet the evidence suggests quite the opposite. The discrepancy between apparent expectations of the policy makers and the results from the scholarly community can be accounted for by a closer theoretical and empirical specification of models of third-party intervention, particularly, the sequencing of different combinations of interventions.

The implications of such a divergence between policy and evidence are considerable because the consequences from civil war are not constrained by the national frontiers in which they unfold. That is, the spillover effects threaten regional security on top of the localized consequences of the conflict. For example, Tajikistan's civil war was triggered in part by the civil war in Afghanistan, and the conflict in the Congo seems to be related to conflicts in neighboring states. In effect, internal wars can break down the regional security web, such that observing a civil war in a specific region increases the probability that in time, we will observe others in that region (Fearon 1999, Lake and Rothchild 1999). Moreover, the spillover effects are not limited to diffusion of fighting

but also to the depression of economic growth in neighboring countries (Murdoch and Sandler 2002). This regional dependency points to the increasing need for more comprehensive knowledge about the conditions under which outside actors can effectively contribute to the management of internal conflicts and civil wars.

A contemporary example of the need for more comprehensive research can be seen in the recent unfolding events in Liberia. The US and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) each floated publicly the prospects for intervening to stop the Liberian conflict, and at least from the US perspective, if intervening appeared to present the most viable alternative for ending the conflict, there seemed to be considerable uncertainty about how best to do so. The outcome of the interventions that did take place were effective at stopping the conflict, even if the process of getting to that point was somewhat labored. Most empirical evidence, would have suggested that third party efforts would not have been as successful as they appeared to be.

A growing body of empirical work has explored the role of outside parties in the management of internal conflicts, though the cumulative evidence is not convincing. Part of the problem, we argue, is that empirical models generally consider intervention as a dichotomous action engaged by the policy community, while the policy community conceives interventions as a more complex undertaking involving a range of alternative strategies and sequences. That is, our models account for whether an actor intervened or not, targeted the government or the opposition, or employed economic or military instruments. What we observe in the referent world, however, suggests that at minimum the range of options considered by potential interveners is broader, and at the extreme, issues of sequencing and timing are critical components of the intervention decisions. In

short, the empirical evaluations of interventions do not jive sufficiently with what we observe taking place around the globe.

The objective of this paper is to articulate a theoretical framework that integrates diplomatic, military, and economic instruments of intervention into a model of the expected duration of civil wars, and then subject this argument to empirical examination. We anticipate – and prior evidence will support the notion – that interventions influence the expected duration of a civil conflict, but that the specification necessary to uncover a “true” effect of interventions requires attention to sequence, timing and the ability of the opposition and the state to mobilize citizens in support of their cause. There are two major innovations to our research. First, we use newly generated data on all diplomatic interventions in civil conflicts during the post WWII period to test hypotheses about the mix of inducements or coercion and diplomacy. Diplomacy, we argue, is a critical component of any model of intervention. Second, we develop a model that incorporates the sequencing of intervention strategies to understand the effect on outcomes. Our argument will proceed as follows. Initially, we discuss some of the contemporary research that has attempted to systematically explore the onset of civil conflict and the role of interventions into them. Next, we present a theoretical model that accounts for the role of outside interventions and the conditions under which they should be most effective. This model motivates a series of empirical tests against data on interventions in civil conflicts, 1944-1999. Finally, we draw inferences from the results of our analysis about future theoretical development and contemporary policy. The results suggest that diplomacy is a critical component in determining the effect of outside interventions and they are effective tools of conflict management. Further, the performance of economic

interventions is conditioned by their combination with diplomacy and the sequence under which they are carried out.

The Literature on the Duration of Civil Conflicts

Empirical evidence suggests that the duration of civil conflicts tends to be a function of the characteristics of the conflict, the disputants, or the role of outside parties. For instance, Collier and Hoeffler (2001) develop an economic model of the duration of civil war with the primary explanatory variables including ethno-linguistic fractionalization (ELF), war in a neighboring country, the amount of forest cover, and the size of the population. Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000) present evidence to suggest that ELF, regime type, and external interventions all predict to an increase in the expected duration of a civil war. Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000) also develop an empirical model to account for the duration of civil wars using many of the aforementioned variables, but expanding the notion of intervention to include aspects of the strategy of the intervention, mainly the targeting of opposition or the government forces. They employ an event history analysis and demonstrate that interventions on behalf of both the government and the opposition have an effect of lengthening the war duration. Regan's (2000; 2002) analysis of outside interventions also finds that outside interventions influence the duration of internal wars, but they tend to lengthen, not shorten the expected duration. His analysis (2000) suggests that in general those conflicts with interventions are longer and more violent than those without interventions, and using a duration model (2002) demonstrates that outside interventions tend to prolong a conflict. This result is

consistent with Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000), and for the most part Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000).

Fearon (2001) argues that civil war durations exhibit a bi-modal pattern, with many lasting for less than two years, yet a considerable number extend well beyond 15-20 years. His primary explanation for the long running conflicts involves the notion that the encroachment by ethnic majority groups into the regions generally occupied by minorities leads to tensions associated with the resulting transfer of resources. That is, “Sons of the Soil” conflicts are more protracted than other more urban conflicts or those with less emotional or historical ties to indigenous lands. He also hints at the role of diamonds in lengthening a conflict. Further, Fearon and Laitin (2003) suggest that the average duration of a civil war currently underway is increasing as we move from the immediate post WWII period to contemporary times. In effect there is something about modern day civil wars that make them more intractable than others, or that there are some incredibly intractable ones that have been ongoing for a considerable period of time. From a somewhat different perspective, Walter (2002) demonstrates that the inability of actors to fully commit to the terms of peace agreements results in recurring cycles of violence among conflicting parties. In effect, the duration of a conflict is tied to the terms of a peace agreement and the effect of outside guarantees to enforce those terms – generally in the form of peacekeeping interventions.

Pre-Conflict Status Quo and the outcome of Interventions

A focus on the onset of civil war has a richer tradition than that of duration, and three general focal points tend to account for the incidence of civil war: distribution of resources, national wealth, and mobilization. We posit that the duration of a conflict and the effectiveness of outside interventions must be considered in light of the initial grievances that lead citizens to take up arms against their government. Fearon's (2000) "sons of the soil" argument lends credence to this position.

Grievances are at the core of the onset of civil violence. Absent a "cause", mobilization would be difficult or impossible in a magnitude sufficient to sustain a challenge to the state. Grievances associated with organized armed violence point to a pre-conflict condition that is less preferred than a new status quo, which is achievable only through battlefield victory or negotiation, though neither outcome is certain. The lower the probability of victory necessary for the rebels to take up arms, the lower the value of the pre-conflict status quo. That is, potential rebel soldiers evaluate their current conditions relative to what they might expect is possible if they respond to the call to arms. Grievances, therefore, give a metric for the rebels to judge the utility of alternative outcomes that might result from their participation in an armed rebellion. According to a 'rational peasant' argument, rebel soldiers will quit the fight when the expected payoff from fighting is less than that of a new status quo (Popkin, 1979; Muller and Weede, 1990; Lichbach, 1995; Mason and Fett, 1996).

The aggregation of grievances to a collective level is a function of whether there is a common identity to those who feel aggrieved. That is, a group can be more easily mobilized along identity patterns if the grievance is unique to that group. The severity of

the grievance will influence the ability of the state to make remedial changes, affecting the commitment of the rebel soldiers to the armed struggle. If the soldiers can be enticed out of the conflict by compromise offers, then it will be harder for the rebel leadership to hold together a coalition that has a sufficiently high probability of victory to make the value of fighting better than the new status quo. Collier and Hoeffler (2002) and others (Blomberg and Hess 2002; Collier, 1998) present evidence to suggest that greater national wealth is associated with a lower incidence of civil war, at least in Africa. Regan and Norton (2004; see also Collier, et al., 2001) also show that patterns of distribution of national wealth predict the onset of civil wars and lesser forms of anti-state violence.

Contemporary research focuses attention on ethno-linguistic fractionalization (ELF), or some indicator of the extent of cultural diversity (Reynal-Querol, 2002; Sambanis, 2001). The core of these arguments rests on the assumption that there are tensions associated with cross-cultural contact. Culture presents a form of identity that can – and often is – used to mark the distribution of resources within a country. Cultural cleavages per se are neither necessary nor sufficient to lead to internal conflict, but inequities in the distribution of resources along cultural lines facilitate the ability of rebel elites to mobilize in opposition to the government. In this respect, mobilization by activating idle identities, provides a critical component in the ability of a rebel organization to challenge a state (Fearon 1999). The leadership of a rebel organization has to overcome the free rider problem (Lichbach, 1995), and also present an alternative that would be better than the status quo, in spite of the risk and costs associated with its pursuit.

Efforts to mobilize potential soldiers, however, must confront actions by the state to hamper the mobilization effort. If the value of rebel participation is judged relative to the status quo, then the state has an incentive to make concessions that attempt to entice rebels soldiers from their organization. In effect, rebel leaders and the government vie for the loyalty of the rebel soldiers, who we can think of as value maximizers. Heath and her colleagues (2000; see also Collier and Hoeffler, 2001) frame this in terms of an economic model of labor inputs. The masses provide the labor necessary to wage war against a state, and they are willing to fight – or not – based on the price each side will pay for their labor. To Collier (2000), generating the resources required to ‘hire’ rebel soldiers gravitates toward capturing small and exploitable means of income. Diamond and precious gemstone mines are particularly suited for this purpose, as is the control and production of various forms of opiates. To the extent that the rebel leadership can generate sufficient resources to pay the price demanded by the labor, they will be able to mobilize effectively an army to challenge the government. Therefore, grievances are necessary, but not sufficient conditions of mobilization: what the fighting or the future after the fighting might bring are also important factors that play into the decisions of the potential rebel soldiers and shape the ability of the political entrepreneurs to mobilize potential recruits.

Presumably those factors that lead opposition groups to take up arms also provide some explanation for the duration of a conflict. For example, absent any remedial policy, if a conflict is rooted in distributional problems, then we would expect rebels to continue fighting until their grievances were addressed, at least in part. At the same time, some of the factors that lead to the onset can be mitigated by policy changes

and/or outside interventions. Therefore, addressing the problems that precipitate the war onset can be an efficient third-party strategy, in effect linking the type of the conflict or the goals of the opposing group to the conflict management strategy. Further, the rational opponent will give up on some demands as battlefield conditions point toward a lower probability of victory. That is, we can surmise that rebel groups take up arms when the status quo provides a lower payoff relative to the value of a probabilistic victory at some future period. Absent an estimation of the probability of victory that is appreciably lower than when the conflict started, the status quo is still an important determinant of when peace will prevail. We move next to articulate a model of the duration of civil conflicts, focusing primarily on the role of outside interventions.

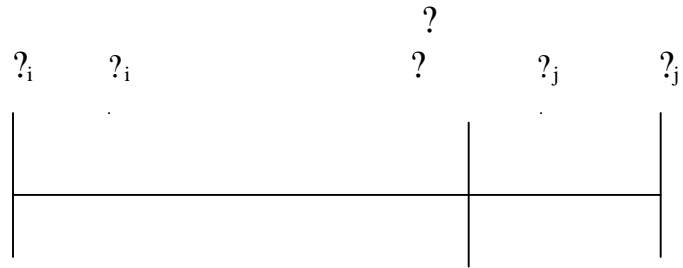
Outside Interventions

We can think about the influence of outside interventions in terms of changes in war adversaries' information and capabilities in the context of pre-conflict status quo conditions. Our particular interest is in how interventions generate movement from a rebel-held ideal point around which they have mobilized adherents to their cause. This might entail land reform, subsidies, redistributions, political access, the overthrow of the government, or any other policy change that would provide a better outcome than the pre-conflict conditions. Potential rebels face a choice of mobilizing militarily or trying to negotiate, or using one approach to facilitate movement on the other. To stop fighting and reach a peaceful settlement, an outcome via a negotiated route must hold a value greater than the pre-conflict conditions and less than the rebel ideal point. Even after an armed conflict is initiated we can assume that settling the conflict through negotiations is

generally an option because fighting is costly and the state would generally prefer mutual accommodation to continued conflict, given that the concessions are not too extreme. Further, we can assume that the current conditions are less preferable to what rebels could achieve through negotiation or victory; the outcome associated with victory is preferable to a negotiated settlement, but victory is not certain. In effect, the conditions that lead to rebel mobilization provide the minimum point beyond which continued fighting is the most preferred option; their reservation point reflects an outcome they would accept with certainty, even though not their ideal point. There is a similar – and most likely reversed – set of conditions held by the government. This is depicted in Figure 1. An intervention needs to manipulate conditions and options such that there is movement between the two reservation points θ_i and θ_j , and must be to the left of θ , which represents conditions extant at the onset of the conflict. θ_i and θ_j represent the rebel and government ideal points, respectively; θ_i and θ_j represent reservations points for each actor; θ represents the pre-conflict status quo (see figure 1).

The effect of bargaining within a civil war and the influence of outside interventions is to shift the status quo toward a position acceptable to both parties. Since θ is the condition at which the rebels took up arms, any movement toward resolution would have to be in the direction of the rebel ideal point. Alternatively, interventions can serve to convince the rebels that their expectation for such a shift is so low as to make continued conflict futile.

Figure 1
Issue Positions and Pre-Conflict Status Quo Conditions



The calculus in determining whether to fight or negotiate is a function of battlefield capabilities and reputational costs. Battlefield capabilities, moreover, influence expectations about victory and defeat, and in effect set up the conditions for thinking about the end of a civil war in terms of bargaining in the shadow of power (Powell, 2000). There are, undoubtedly, costs associated with political mobilization when the goals fall short of expectations, for instance, when the leadership agrees to settle short of the ideal point. For example, after investing manpower and capital, backing down incurs reputational costs to the rebel leaders, which significantly depresses their incentives to settle for terms they cannot justify to the group.

The relationship between the value of victory and a negotiated outcome can be manipulated by outside parties in proportion to the amount and type of resources an outside actor is willing to contribute. The costs of signing an agreement, moreover, has political ramifications, as we have seen recently in the Ivory Coast and appear to be part of the difficulties faced by the Palestinians and Israelis (Segal, 2002). At the core we face a rather complex environment where outside actors must manipulate expectations of victory and defeat along with the benefits associated with a potential settlement, and do so within the context of a specific conflict. This environment is made more difficult if

the resources available to the rebel leadership to pay selective benefits are considerable and readily accessible, as might be the case in diamond or opiate rich countries.

Determining when to settle a conflict is a problem rooted in information asymmetries. Each side to a conflict can estimate its own subjective probability of victory, though each side may be prone to estimation error. Though, the strength of negotiating demands and the willingness to make concessions are linked to the beliefs about the likelihood of prevailing in the conflict. The transfer of information within a bargaining situation is critical; neither side has a unilateral incentive to convey honestly their military capabilities, suggesting that information will be at best incomplete without an outside mediator. In other words, battlefield capabilities, resolve, and the terms of a settlement offer are critical factors in determining the outcome of a civil war, and each tends to be shrouded by uncertainty and misinformation. Each, further, can be manipulated by outside interventions.

The central role of a third party is exacerbated by two factors confronting the adversaries: a) the difficulty in signaling, and b) the inability to make a credible commitment (Fearon, 1999; Walter, 2002). That is, absent the transfer of information that reduces uncertainty, civil wars have an increased tendency to become protracted conflicts. An outside involvement that manipulates only the balance of capabilities tends to prolong rather than decrease the duration and level of violence in a conflict (Regan, 2000; 2002). A potential explanation for the deleterious consequences of military or economic interventions is that they increase rather than decrease uncertainty, increase the level of asymmetric information, and simultaneously increase the ability of one or both sides to resort to violence with some prospect of prevailing. To effectively reduce

uncertainty and information asymmetries diplomatic interventions may be necessary, either alone or in combination with other forms of influence. We think of this primarily in terms of third party mediation.

A mediator plays two primary roles of importance. First, she conveys information about demands, concessions, and expectations of battlefield outcomes. Battlefield conditions – or expectations about them – can be manipulated by information about potential military interventions supporting the opponent, or strategic and tactical information. The NATO threat to use force in Bosnia and Kosovo reflects this role. Second, a mediator can bring economic resources to bear that influence the value of a negotiated settlement; the greater the resources at her disposal, the more likely that her incentives will prove effective. For example, a third party can offer to contribute funds to “sweeten the pot” of a negotiated outcome. Development aid, reconstruction assistance, and loan guarantees reflect contemporary examples. The Oslo agreements that ended the first Palestinian Intifada attached economic support for the Palestinians as a condition for a peace agreement with the Israelis.

If civil conflicts were just a function of a lack of information, settling them would be easy. It is not. Two equally capable adversaries may find less value in a possible accommodation strategy than in continued fighting, if the settlement plan does not sufficiently address the pre-conflict status quo conditions. And under such circumstances each side may hold a reasonable expectation of victory and both may face extreme reputational costs from settling early. In other words, the most effective interventions will manipulate costs/benefits from a peace agreement, and the level of misinformation or strategic uncertainty about adversaries’ capability and resolve.

For example, the effect of military or economic support will be to increase an actor's estimation that they can prevail on the battlefield and therefore increase demands at the negotiating table. Two factors gravitate toward this expectation: 1) the value of the actual intervention increases capabilities, and 2) the knowledge that you are being supported increases the sense of efficacy of the cause. Both will lead to a more resolute position at the bargaining table. This increase in expectations and demands will make reaching a settlement more difficult. Furthermore, as a conflict drags on the organizational infrastructure of the opposition will be more firmly in place; given the rebels' increasing resistance to costs associated with protracted fighting, the government will have to attribute to the opposition a higher estimate of victory. In short, outside military or economic interventions will increase the degree of strategic uncertainty and potentially move the parties further from a settlement. Absent the critical diplomatic component we would expect outside parties to play a destabilizing role in civil conflicts. Prior evidence seems to bear this out (Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 2000; Regan, 2002). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H₁: Individual military or economic interventions will increase the expected duration of a conflict.

Diplomacy, on the other hand, provides a unique form of intervention because it requires the consent of both conflicting parties. Further, a mediator's explicit role is to attempt to use non-coercive means to help the parties reach a mutually agreeable outcome; in this sense it reflects an explicit attempt at conflict management. The

mediator can adopt an approach as minor as simply providing a forum for communication, or as involved as attempting to change attitudes and ideas. Regardless of the mediators approach, however, she also transfers information. This information can form the basis for judging the prospects for victory and payoffs from a negotiated settlement, and when combined with other forms of incentives or coercion the effect will be greater than the sum of the parts.

We would expect, therefore, that on average diplomatic interventions will shorten a conflict. We also anticipate an interactive effect, such that when combining diplomacy with military or economic instruments the influence of the individual intervention is exaggerated. That is, using one form of intervention to accelerate the effect of the other will increase the likelihood that a conflict will end more quickly, and that diplomacy is the lynch pin of this interactive effect. From this perspective the use of mediation frames the use of the other forms of intervention, and this framing forms a vital component in the strategy for managing a conflict via outside intervention.

If a diplomatic intervention can be used to develop a context for other forms of intervention, then the specific order or sequence under which that strategy is implemented is important in determining the outcome of the intervention effort. In effect, the sequence sets up the primacy of the instrument of the intervention and is much more effective than a randomization of strategies. Put differently, diplomatic efforts that precede either a military or economic intervention should have a greater effect on reducing the expected duration than economic or military instruments preceding diplomacy. At the core the sequence matters and the most effective strategy would place the transmission of information before the manipulation of capabilities or incentives.

More formally, we test the following hypotheses against the null hypothesis that outside interventions have no influence on the duration of civil conflicts.

H₂: Diplomatic interventions will decrease the expected duration of a civil conflict;

H₃: In combination with military or economic instruments of intervention, a sequence in which diplomacy precedes the military or economic initiative will be more effective than when diplomacy follows either form of intervention.

Research Design

The hypotheses are tested against data on civil conflicts in the post WWII period (1945-99). We operationalize civil conflict as organized armed violence within a country that results in at least 200 fatalities. The data were originally described in Regan (2000; 2002) and incorporate aspects of the conflict, the combatants, and any outside intervention. The conflict month is the unit of analysis. Data on interventions are recorded systematically at the level of the month and are disaggregated into military, economic, and diplomatic efforts by third parties. There are over 13,000 conflict months incorporating 153 individual conflicts, and approximately 1400 interventions in 102 of the conflicts. Among the competing parametric models of survival analysis, we have chosen to test the model with a Weibull parameterization. This distribution makes the assumption that there is a monotonic increase or decrease in the baseline hazard with respect to time (Box-Steffensmeier et al. forthcoming). The shape of the hazard is an

empirical question and our preferable strategy is to avoid imposing a distributional assumption over baseline hazard without any theoretical guidance.¹

Operationalization of Variables

We operationalize the primary explanatory variables related to outside interventions as follows:

- 1) *Military and economic interventions* are recorded in terms of whether the third party provided resources that were targeted at the authority structures and they were convention breaking (see Rosenau, 1968; Regan, 2000). The interventions are recorded at monthly intervals and are deflated over time². Data were derived from public sources and are described fully in Regan (2000; 2002).
- 2) *Diplomatic interventions* are operationalized in terms of third party involvement in efforts to mediate the conflict. We adopt a definition of mediation from Bercovitch (1997, Bercovitch et al. 2000) where mediation is a noncoercive, nonviolent and, ultimately, nonbinding form of intervention. Mediators enter into a conflict to affect, change, resolve, modify, or influence the outcome. The mediator can represent a state or a non-state actor. The key dimension is that this third party acts independently to facilitate a settlement or resolution to the conflict. The effect of diplomatic interventions is also deflated over time in accordance with those of military and economic interventions. Data were derived from public sources such as the New York Times, Keesings Contemporary Archives, Fact on File, and case specific historical treatments. Mediations are recorded dichotomously in the month that they begin. There are a total of 414 attempts to mediate these conflicts.
- 3) We operationalize the *strategy of intervention* in terms of the combination of individual interventions and the sequence under which they are implemented. Based on the theoretical setup we have proposed, diplomacy is the core

¹ We checked the effect of the assumption about the underlying shape of the distribution against a Cox model and found no significant differences in the interpretation of the results. That is, all of the coefficients demonstrated the same substantive effects, though magnitudes and significance levels did vary somewhat. We use a Weibull model because it allows a time-metric making easier the transformation facilitating an intuitive interpretation of the results.

² We deflate the effect of each intervention to account for the fact that the impact of interventions fades from the memory of the war combatants over time. In other words, the memory factor is a critical component of the effectiveness of third-party strategies which “diminish[es] across time for the simple reason that memory fades” (Box-Steffensmeier et al., 2003). The functional form of the decay is $.99^x$, where X is the number of months since the last intervention. The effect of one intervention stops at the month of any subsequent intervention into that conflict.

strategy that effectively shapes the incentives of the war adversaries to continue fighting and it can be used in combination with military or economic aid. Using the raw data on interventions, we create dichotomous indicators that reflect the combination of diplomatic/military interventions and diplomatic/economic interventions that are within fix periods of each other. We then record the two alternative sequences that describes the combination. That is, either diplomacy can precede the military/economic intervention or follow them. We use a five-month period to define our combination of interventions. These combined interventions are introduced as decay functions into the analysis.

- 4) *Opposing interventions* are recorded in terms of interventions that take place in an offsetting pattern of targets, also subject to the decay function articulated above. For example, if an intervention supported the government the next intervention into the conflict would have to support the opposition for it to be recorded as an opposing intervention. If there are multiple interventions recorded in a given month, and they support opposing actors, each is considered part of the opposing intervention. All diplomatic interventions are considered neutral and are not recorded as opposing a prior intervention supporting either the government or the opposition.
- 5) The *number of interventions* in each conflict is recorded in terms of the sum of all interventions regardless of the target.

We include four control variables that have been theoretically linked to the onset or duration of civil wars:

- 1) *Intensity* is operationalized in terms of the average number of fatalities per month over the course of the conflict;
- 2) *size of opposition forces*, is derived from the sources identified above. The range is from the hundreds to the tens of thousands;
- 3) Conflicts were categorized in terms of the *identity of the primary opposition* group. The typology incorporates religious, ethnic, and ideological groups. Because of the arguments about the role of identity, we create a dichotomous indicator reflecting ideological versus ethno-religious conflicts (Regan, 2000);
- 4) We operationalize *Extractable* resources in terms of three categories of exploitable commodities: diamonds, other gemstones, and opiates. Both diamonds and other gemstones – such as rubies, sapphires, and emeralds – are located in specific regions that can be controlled by rebel movements, and are small and easily transportable. Opiate production – poppy and coca – is also adaptable to specific locations and is transportable and easily marketable. We make the assumption that if a country produces any of these extractable resources in one year, then they have access to do so in all years. A diamond mine, for instance, does not go away simply because production declines in

any particular year. We record two general categories, diamonds and gemstones, and opiates. Data for diamond, gemstones and opiate production are derived from the Diamond Registry, the National Gemstone Association, and the US Drug Enforcement Agency, respectively.

Outcome Variable

We operationalize the outcome in terms of the end of the conflict. The month in which the conflict ends is coded one; all other months are coded zero. Of the 153 conflicts in the post WWII period, 30 were ongoing as of the end of 1999 and are right-censored in the analysis. The outcome, therefore, is the change of state between an ongoing conflict and the end of the conflict.

Results

The discussion of our results proceeds as follows. First, we present the simplest model to account for the effect of military, diplomatic, and economic interventions along with two controls for the national wealth and identity of the opposition. The results are presented in an accelerated failure time metric, which roughly translates into a unit change in the hazard of failure, or put differently, the likelihood that a conflict ends in the next period, given that an intervention occurs in the current period. Positively signed coefficients indicate that the intervention acts to increase the duration of the conflict whereas negative coefficients imply shorter durations. The results suggest that diplomatic interventions dramatically reduce the expected duration of a conflict, economic interventions tend to prolong a conflict, and military interventions are unrelated to the expected duration of a conflict. For example, a diplomatic intervention increases the probability that a conflict ends by about 3.3 times over a conflict without a diplomatic

intervention. Economic interventions by themselves, on the other hand, appear to increase the likelihood that the conflict will continue by about 50%. This interpretation is, however, made more complicated by the decay function used to model the effects of interventions over time, though we will address this when we interpret the full results (see Model 1).

Table 1 about Here

Accounting for the lingering effects of an intervention is important because the implemented policies do not happen as discrete events. That is, we can think of military support for either the government or the rebels as taking place at a specific point in time, but the impact of that support will undoubtedly play out over a more extended period. For example, the impact of military aid in the form of weapons is not confined to the specific month during which they were transferred. In fact, as long as they are not captured, degraded, or destroyed, they will continue to contribute to the capabilities of the recipient. A question – and one that must be addressed by the policy community – is how quickly will an intervention degrade when placed into a hostile environment. We consider this to be an empirical question, and one that cannot be answered *ex ante*. The decay function that we build into the effects of interventions posits that there is a rather steep decline in the value of an intervention, but the rate of decline tapers off over time. That is, we impose a condition where there is a large initial effect of an intervention, but one that becomes muted over time. We tested for the sensitivity of our results to the decay specification by using the inverse relationship – one with a large lingering initial effect that drops precipitously thereafter. Our results suggest that our original

specification is much stronger and accurate and that the “boost” from an intervention is rather short-lived.

At the core, we interpret the results of the effects of interventions as demonstrating that economic and diplomatic interventions have their greatest effect at the time they are implemented, and that this influence declines at a decelerating rate. More directly, diplomatic interventions increase the likelihood that a civil war ends in the next month but as the period of time from the point of the diplomatic effort increases, the effect of the intervention decreases. For economic interventions, although they will initially increase the expected duration of a conflict, the debilitating effect on the duration of a conflict decreases over time. We present this result graphically to show the effect of an initial intervention and the subsequent degrading of that effect over time (see figure 1).

Figure I about here

Next we present the results of a more complete model (Model 2) in which we control for the sequence under which more complex approaches to intervention takes place. The model accounts for instances where economic or military instruments of intervention were used in conjunction with a diplomatic effort, and also for whether the economic/military aid preceded or followed the diplomacy by up to five months. While the effect of individual interventions holds to the pattern in the more basic model, the effect of different combinations and sequences demonstrate that it does matter how various components of an intervention are sequenced. When either military or economic instruments precede a mediation attempt, the effect is either to prolong the expected duration of a conflict (economic intervention first, diplomatic intervention second) or it bears no relationship to the outcome (military intervention first, diplomatic intervention

second). However, when mediation is used before either military or economic support, the effect is dramatically different. In a combination of economic instruments with diplomacy, if diplomacy is the first strategy in the sequence, we would expect the duration of a conflict to be reduced by about 20 times over a sequence where diplomacy follows economic support. The magnitude of this difference suggests that the choice of strategy is vitally important in terms of the duration of the conflict, and that framing an intervention in terms of conflict management makes an important contribution to the outcome.

In Model 3 we build on the second model to include a number of factors that have been linked to the duration of civil wars, specifically exploitable resources, the size of opposition forces, and the intensity of the conflict. The results of the analysis confirms those from the earlier models, that the sole use of economic support for an actor in a conflict tends to lead to longer conflicts, and that mediation by itself does help to decrease the duration of a conflict quite dramatically. Further, the combination of economic and diplomatic interventions and the sequence under which they are implemented make a considerable difference in how long we might expect a conflict to last. Military interventions in combination with diplomacy remain statistically insignificant. The results also suggest that countries with opiate production face stiffer challenges by opposition groups than do those who produce diamonds or other gemstones, a result consistent with arguments about exploitable resources fueling civil wars though in ways somewhat orthogonal to the popular notion of diamonds. Further, opposing interventions shorten a conflict, a result somewhat counter to earlier evidence (Regan, 2002). The intensity of a conflict is both a statistically and substantively

significant predictor of the duration of a conflict, suggesting that highly intense conflicts are more likely to end sooner. Identity fault lines around which the opposition groups are organized appear to be an important determinant of the expected length of a conflict. That is, religious and ethnic conflicts have a longer expected duration than ideological conflicts, which suggests that the success of the third-party strategies even if the right type and the right sequence is employed, is significantly constrained by the factors that led to the onset of the war.

Next we turn to develop a more intuitive description of the result of our analysis by providing a calculation of the marginal effects of changes in predictor variables on the expected duration of a conflict. We report these results in Table II. As a baseline model for these calculations, we use a set of conditions that very closely approximate the civil war in Sierra Leone. There are a couple of reasons for this choice. First we believe the results make more sense when framed in terms of an actual event; second, this is a protracted conflict where third parties intervened with military and economic assistance, but the conflict did not experience any diplomatic intervention in its whole spell. In this case, conflict management efforts functionally failed to terminate the conflict early in its life cycle. Our model predicts a conflict lasting 103 months; the actual conflict in Sierra Leone lasted 101 months, with interventions coming rather late in the conflict (after the 69th month).

One way to evaluate our results is to ask what would have happened if an intervention strategy had been designed differently from that which did transpire. Interestingly, an early economic intervention (in the first month) would virtually wash out any possibility of avoiding a protracted conflict since the predicted duration of the

war in this case is well over its real-life duration; that is, it would increase the war duration by 121% over the baseline duration. However our model predicts that a military intervention in the first month would reduce the duration of the conflict to 58 months, a reduction of 44% from the baseline. Early diplomacy would reduce the expected duration to only 14 months, which is a decrease over expectations from the model of about 86%. We find the most interesting results when we examine the effects of combining economic or military aid with diplomacy. We posit that the intervention takes on an explicit conflict management objective, and combines the information and resources useful for the combatants to make informed choices, that is, combined strategies facilitate the revision of the perceptions of the combatants' subjective probability of prevailing and their adversaries' resolve.

One of the key inferences from Table II is that if diplomacy preceded the military interventions, the duration would be reduced by 95%, which indicates that the war would terminate in its fourth month. Second, a combination of diplomatic and economic interventions in the right sequence would lead to 96% decrease in the life of the civil war, with a predicted duration of three months. In short, there is a dramatic difference in the effect of military or economic interventions depending on how they are used in conjunction with diplomacy. It seems to matter considerably not only that diplomacy is part of the intervention package, but also the sequence in which the different components are used.

Table II about here

This direct interpretation is, however, made more complicated by the decay function that we imposed on interventions. To depict the substantive effect of the impact

intervention strategies on the duration of a conflict, we computed the predicted duration for the alternative sequences of a strategy combining economic and diplomatic interventions. The results provide a stark view of the importance of sequencing different aspects of an intervention. At the first month there is a difference in the expected duration of about 55 months, given an economic and diplomatic intervention. That difference is accounted for solely by the order in which the two components of the intervention strategy are administered. Using the wrong sequence results in longer expected durations. This dramatic difference, moreover, decreases in impact over time, to the point where by about the 70th month the impact of those earlier interventions becomes mute. The inference we draw from this is that interventions that have an explicit focus on conflict management are more likely to be effective at stopping the violence than those that focus first on manipulating relative capabilities. In effect, the strategy for managing internal conflicts is as important as the tools at the disposal of potential interveners (see Figure 2).

Figure II about here

Conclusion

A number of studies of outside interventions into civil wars have demonstrated that interventions are not effective methods of reducing the amount of violence or the duration of the conflict. These empirical results appear to run counter to expectations in the policy community. We have argued that interventions and the strategic environment in which they are implemented are more complex than has generally been captured by a

dichotomous coding reflecting the existence of an intervention. We posited, first, that diplomacy as a form of intervention was critically important to understanding all other types of intervention, and second, that when combined with diplomacy the sequence under which military or economic instruments are used is just as important as the interventions themselves.

Using a duration model, and three novel advancements to research on interventions (diplomatic interventions, sequencing, a decay function), we demonstrate that, a) diplomatic interventions are effective conflict management strategies that dramatically changes the course of the civil war, and b) the right sequence of intervention efforts is also vitally important for war termination and settlement. For example, diplomacy can overcome the debilitating aspects of economic interventions if it is employed before the economic assistance is offered.

The inferences we draw from our analysis suggest that first, conflict management is a complex business that requires the manipulations of relative capabilities, information, expectations about losses and gains and benefits from a negotiated settlement. The policy community would be well served by thinking in terms of strategies and sequences when designing interventions. Second, the theoretical implications point toward thinking closely about information and the degree of asymmetry (Kydd, 2003) in bargaining situations. Models of intervention, that is, should pay close attention to the conditions under which interventions are implemented and the expectations of the combatants.

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Table I.

Duration Model of Interventions in Civil Conflicts			
Variable	Model I Estimate(s.e.)	Model II Estimate(s.e.)	Model III Estimate(s.e.)
Constant	5.344*** (1.189)	5.338*** (1.206)	4.764*** (1.115)
Diplomatic Intervention	-2.055*** (.458)	-2.062*** (.522)	-1.979*** (.440)
Military Intervention	-.535 (.400)	-.404 (.458)	-.843* (.455)
Economic Intervention	.972* (.527)	1.113* (.634)	1.065* (.611)
Ethno-Religious Conflict	.691** (.341)	.694** (.345)	1.198*** (.304)
GDP	-.0002 (.0004)	-.0002 (.0004)	-.0003 (.0004)
Econ Interven 1st, Diplomatic 2nd		1.879** (.772)	.614 (.787)
Diplomatic 1st, Economic 2nd		-3.223*** (.741)	-2.071** (.764)
Military 1st, Diplomatic 2nd		-.233 (.688)	-.434 (.627)
Diplomatic 1st, Military 2nd		-.537 (.678)	-.483 (.646)
Opposing Interventions		-.291 (.462)	-1.082** (.421)
Size of the Opposition			3.43E-06* (1.99E-06)
Number of Interveners			.100*** (.025)
Intensity			-.0002*** (.00002)
Gemstones			-.097 (.334)
Opiates			1.250** (.493)
Shape parameter	.582 (.044)	.581 (.045)	.680 (.051)
N	13201	13201	13605
Log-likelihood	-269.406	-266.228	-233.678

Note: 1) Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors, 2) the estimates are from accelerated failure time model, 3)

*** = p < 0.01, 4) ** = p < 0.05, 5) * = p < .10

Figure I. Expected Duration of the Civil War in Sierra Leone, Individual Interventions in the 1st Month

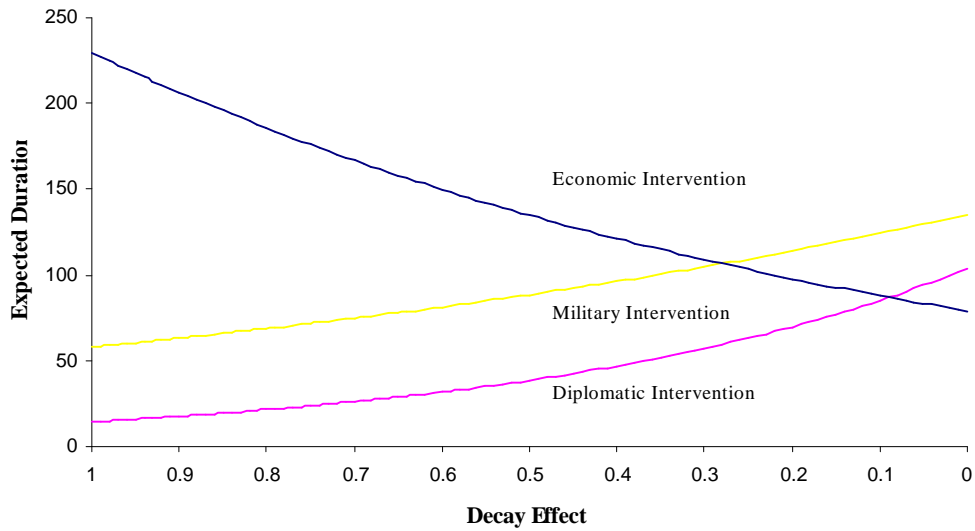


Figure II. Expected Duration of the Civil War in Sierra Leone, Combined Interventions in the 1st Month

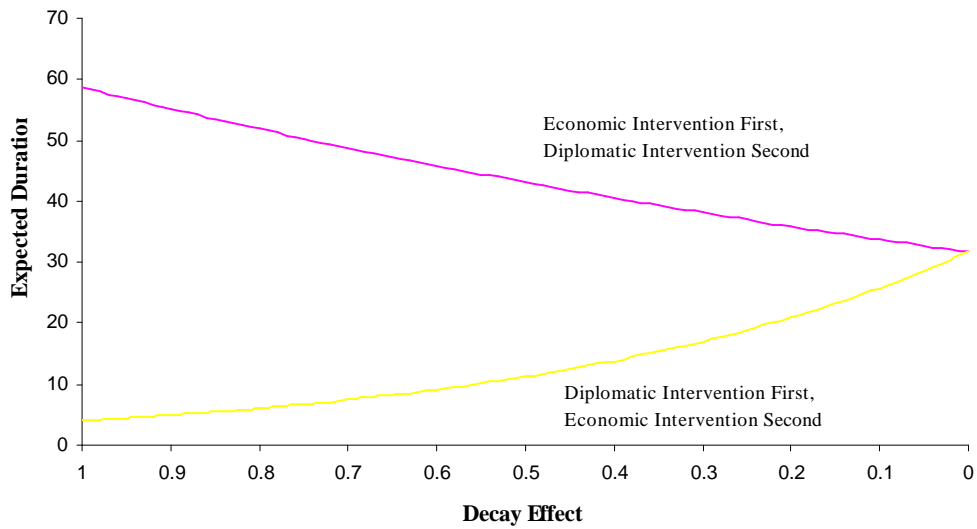


Table II. Predicted Durations - The Sierra Leone Case, 1991-1999

	Duration (in months)	% ? in Duration
Base Model	103	-
Diplomatic Intervention	14	-86
Military Intervention	58	-44
Economic Intervention	229	+121
Economic Intervention First, Diplomatic Intervention Second	58	-43
Economic Intervention Second, Diplomatic Intervention First	3	-96
Military Intervention First, Diplomatic Intervention Second	5	-94
Military Intervention Second, Diplomatic Intervention First	4	-95

Note: The baseline duration places all covariates at their mean and mode based on the actual data for Sierra Leone. Individual interventions are assumed to be occurring in the first month of the conflict. In complex interventions, the strategy, which comes first in the sequence is assumed to be occurring in the first month and the second strategy occurs with at most a five month lag. In this civil war, there is no diplomatic intervention in the whole spell but the case has experienced military and economic interventions.