The Role of Non-Official Diplomacy in a Multi-Track Approach to Peace: An Alternative Approach to Traditional Models of Mediation and Conflict Resolution

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in Political Science
in the
University of Canterbury
by
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University of Canterbury
2002
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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express a sincere thank-you to my parents. They have both supported me throughout my studies, encouraging me to carry on yet never pressuring. Most importantly, they have fostered my love of learning and encouraged all my endeavours unquestionably. In particular, I would like to thank them for their large part in enabling me to attend the International Student Symposium in Negotiation and Conflict Resolution at The Hague, the Netherlands. It was an unforgettable experience that has inspired me, both in my studies and in my personal life. Several other people also deserve credit for the completion of this thesis. The teachings of my supervisor, Professor Jacob Bercovitch, were the source of my initial interest in the field of mediation and conflict resolution. His continued support and encouragement have been great, and his wry sense of humour has kept me on my toes at all times. Doctor Richard Jackson, although a late addition to the project, has also provided support and advice that has been greatly appreciated. It was great to find someone who shares a similar interest in non-official mediation and its potential role in the response to violent conflict. Richard, I wish you the best of luck in your endeavours at the University of Manchester - their gain is definitely our loss. Thanks must also go out to various departmental figures – Jill and Philippa in the department office, and Judith Fretter, who diligently helps everyone with their last minute formatting and editing. Finally, thanks must go to my grandmother, Joyce, for housing and feeding me on all those overnight trips to Christchurch, to my partner Richy, for treating me to dinner when I couldn’t afford it and putting up with my bad moods during times of crisis, and to the rest of my family and friends, who have at all times maintained faith in my abilities.
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Abstract

This thesis proposes that the unique and intractable nature of contemporary internal conflict has necessitated a change in the way the international community responds to violent conflict. The inadequacies of current official and state-led approaches to mediation and conflict resolution suggest that conflict practitioners must place greater emphasis on establishing a more effective, alternative approach to the processes of mediation and conflict resolution. This approach should recognise and incorporate the potential role that non-official, or non-state actors, may have to play in a co-ordinated and “multi-track” approach to peace. Using the mediation activities of the Community of Sant’Egidio, a voluntary Catholic organisation based in Rome, as an illustrative example, this study finds that non-official mediators bring a unique set of benefits to the mediation process. It argues that non-official mediators – representatives of community groups, non-governmental organisations, religious leaders, or indigenous groups, for example – therefore have the potential to make a unique contribution to conflict resolution in the post-Cold War era. The research also finds that non-official mediation is faced with several potential weaknesses, or challenges, that may compromise the effectiveness of its efforts. It concludes, however, that the effectiveness of the Sant’Egidio mediation efforts in the case of Mozambique demonstrates that those challenges can be overcome, particularly when the actors concerned recognise that their efforts must occur as part of a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to peace that incorporates both official and non-official aspects of internal conflict. It is concluded, therefore, that mediation by non-official actors differs from traditional diplomatic concepts because it encourages mutual problem solving between the parties, addresses the psychological and relational aspects of the conflict, empowers actors at all levels and attempts to attack the root causes of the conflict. As a result, non-official mediation efforts have the potential to redress the gap between current (official and state-led) approaches and the remedies necessary to meet the challenges of contemporary internal conflict.
Introduction

The vast majority of international conflicts today are internal in nature, increasingly a result of tensions between regional or intrastate actors, as opposed to the influence or intervention of external actors that characterised international relations in the past. Without the ideological framework of the Cold War era, the resolution of internal conflicts has become increasingly challenging as the nature of the issues and the functions of violence have become more and more complex and in many cases, entrenched. Today, violent internal conflict is a particularly destructive and barbaric type of struggle, widely recognised as posing a serious threat to international peace and security. Consequently, foreign policy decision makers are faced with challenging decisions over when, how and who should intervene in situations of internal conflict, or even whether they should at all. States, regional and international organisations have begun to express concern and to take an interest in resolving internal crises, and they have employed a wide range of strategies to try and deal with situations of potential or actual violent conflict. Unfortunately, traditional concepts and theories of international mediation and conflict resolution, based around out-dated, state-centric assumptions about the nature and characteristics of violent conflict, have proven inadequate when faced with the difficult task of resolving the intra-state conflicts that have devastated countries like Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Burundi, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and the former Yugoslavia. The lack of an appropriate diplomatic response has subsequently led to an over-reliance on humanitarian relief and various forms of peacekeeping, neither of which effectively attack the fundamental and underlying causes of intra-state violence. Not surprisingly, internal conflict has resisted these types of attempts over and over again.

As a result of the inadequacies of current responses, broader concepts of mediation and conflict resolution are being sought and new directions proposed. It is increasingly recognised that in order to be more effective, practitioners need to develop more contemporary approaches to mediation and conflict resolution. In particular, it is necessary to come up with innovative ways of addressing the different demands, interests and belief systems that characterise internal conflict. This view increasingly points to a form of mediation and conflict resolution that must be based around multiple levels of intervention, what Diamond and McDonald (1996) term a
“multi-track” approach to peace. According to this methodology, the unique nature of contemporary internal conflict must be taken into account and new approaches formulated that attack the fundamental, underlying causes of conflict. In comparison to traditional models of mediation and conflict resolution, a “multi-track” approach to peace recognizes the value of non-official or non-state actors in the response to conflict within states, and attempts to incorporate them more effectively.

In line with this methodology, this research proposes that non-official, non-state actors - religious leaders, NGOs, community organisations, or prominent individuals like the Pope, for example - have a unique and crucial role to play within the alternative, co-ordinated and multi-track approach to peacemaking that is necessary in order to meet the challenges posed by internal conflict. Non-official conflict resolution work differs from traditional diplomatic concepts because it encourages mutual problem solving between the parties, addresses the psychological and relational aspects of conflict, empowers actors at all levels of the conflict, and attempts to attack the root causes of violence. Unofficial status also brings a unique set of benefits to the mediation process that gives non-official mediators some significant advantages over their official counterparts. It is not argued here that non-official actors should supplant the traditional roles of official state and government actors, but that the one cannot be completely effective in the context of internal conflict without the other. Consequently, it is crucial that they work together at multiple levels of society in a way that compliments rather than complicates parallel processes like peacebuilding and peacekeeping, in order to improve cooperation and co-ordination between them. Certainly this is one of the major challenges that peacemakers face today.

The Nature and Scope of the Research

The aim of this study, therefore, is to provide an analysis of how non-official actors can contribute to an alternative model of international mediation and conflict resolution that is geared specifically towards the challenges of internal conflict. Within the context of contemporary internal conflict, the role of non-official actors as mediators in a “multi-track” approach to peace is investigated, and the character and impact of their mediation activities is questioned and examined. By evaluating the impact of nonofficial actors as mediators, it is
hoped that this research will contribute to the literature investigating how mediation affects, and in turn is affected by, the context, the participants, the strategies and the nature of conflict. Such studies promote further understanding of the factors and conditions that determine the success or failure of mediation and contribute to the rapidly growing literature investigating the role of non-official actors in situations of internal conflict. With these factors in mind, the thesis presents a conceptual framework within which the reader can begin to understand the mediation efforts of non-official actors in the post-Cold War era of internal conflict. The framework is built around three key research questions:

- What are the conflict resolution challenges presented by the nature of contemporary internal conflict?
- What is the role and approach of non-official actors to the mediation of internal conflict?
- What strengths or limitations do non-official actors bring to an “alternative” mediation and conflict resolution process?

An understanding of the dynamics, structure and nature of the environment within which non-official diplomats must work is viewed as fundamental to analysing their role in the mediation and conflict resolution process. Consequently, chapter one outlines the context within which international mediation activity by non-official actors occurs. Recent trends in and approaches to violent armed conflict are outlined, and the characteristics of internal conflict are examined in some detail. Most importantly, the conflict resolution challenges created by the nature of internal conflict are presented, shedding light on why contemporary conflict has proven to be so intractable and difficult to resolve. Chapter two builds on this analysis by investigating how various international actors and institutions have chosen to respond to the threat of internal conflict. The traditional approaches to international mediation and conflict resolution that are currently favoured by many diplomats, statesmen and international organisations are critiqued, and it is argued that their efforts at peacemaking are at best, inadequate, and at worse, may exacerbate tensions. In closing, chapter two posits that the long-term, transformational approaches taken by non-official actors have the potential to redress the gap between current (official and state-led) approaches to internal conflict and the actual remedies necessary to meet the challenges of contemporary internal conflict. In order to substantiate this claim, subsequent
chapters focus on non-official actors and their role in the response to contemporary internal conflict. Chapter three documents the increasing influence of non-state actors in the modern context. The approach of non-official actors to the resolution of internal conflict is examined in some detail and the emergence of non-official diplomacy – that is diplomacy carried out by non-official groups like churches or other religious groups, charitable bodies, academic bodies, NGOs, civil associations and the like – is investigated. Within this broad conceptual framework, chapter four examines the unique nature of the non-official mediator. In doing so, it establishes more definitively why they may make more effective mediators in situations of internal conflict. It also highlights several potential weaknesses, or challenges, that their non-official status can present. Using the mediation activities of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique as an illustrative example, it is argued that the varied challenges of non-official mediation may be overcome when non-official diplomats work in conjunction with the other tracks, as part of an alternative conflict resolution paradigm geared specifically towards the challenges of internal conflict. In closing, the study comes to some general conclusions about non-official mediation, provides some recommendations for policy makers and suggests possible avenues for future research.

Barriers to the Research

Any study of non-official actors in the modern context must take into account the commonly acknowledged fact that assessing their performance is messy and difficult. First, there is an absence of a large body of reliable evidence on the impact and effectiveness of non-official actors, making it difficult to generalise. This is due in large part to the fact that those non-official actors that are involved in confidential, delicate mediation often feel that their credibility and effectiveness would suffer if their involvement in ongoing mediation were revealed (Edwards and Hulme 1996:4; Albin 1999:371; Mawlawi 1992-3:406). To complicate matters further, the associational cultures and/or contexts of non-official actors vary greatly from country to country and there are different individuals and groups that have a wide variety of interests and viewpoints. This makes the identification of a precise agency position difficult (Hulme and Edwards 1997:4). These difficulties are compounded by the long-term nature of conflict management work, which makes the contribution of non-official actors to any kind of
societal reconciliation hard to determine. By the time a conflict is resolved, many different factors and actors will have played a part, making it almost impossible to determine whether the actions of any one actor or group of actors made a difference (Aall 2001:379). This is the problem of determining cause and effect when multiple actors work on the same conflict (as is common in many situations of contemporary internal conflict). The case study approach to the study of non-official mediation that is taken here also presents difficulties - while the characteristics of an individual case may prove interesting, the limited focus of the study (in this case, the role of the Sant'Egidio mediators in the Mozambican peace process), makes it difficult to form the systematic generalisations about mediation by non-official actors that would be particularly helpful in furthering our understanding. Unfortunately, the extensive research necessary to come to those types of conclusions is beyond the scope of this study.
Chapter 1

The Challenges of Post–Cold War Era Conflict Resolution

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the context within which international mediation activity by unofficial, non-state actors occurs. In particular, it aims to provide the reader a better understanding of the problematic nature of internal conflict and the specific conflict resolution challenges it presents, thereby setting the scene for a more detailed analysis regarding the role that nonofficial mediators can play in such a context. Trends in violent armed conflict since the end of the Cold War are outlined, and evidence is produced to support the claim that wars within states, rather than between them, are currently the major threat to international peace and security. The various theories and approaches that have emerged in response to internal conflict are examined, and some basic conclusions about the major explanations are reached. The central part of the chapter – that is, the nature of internal conflict and the conflict resolution challenges that it presents – is approached in some detail after that, the point being to suggest why contemporary internal conflict is so intractable, so barbaric and so difficult to resolve.

The Contemporary Conflict Environment: Trends in Violent Conflict

Since the end of the Cold War in 1989, the threat of large-scale interstate war and nuclear destruction has receded. The beginning of the 1990s and the end of the Cold War were witness to increased optimism that the UN and other global institutions, freed from Cold War constraints, could take significant steps towards solving global problems, particularly the incidence of war which was no longer fuelled by superpower rivalry and injections of arms and aid. Talk of a “New World Order” emerged and there was fresh potential for international cooperation, apparently exemplified by the Gulf War in 1991 (Keen 1998:9). As the decade
progressed however, the failure of numerous attempts at humanitarian intervention by various international actors, optimistically coined the “international community”, caused great concern and the number of people dying as a result of violent conflict remained disturbingly high. In a confusing state of affairs, conflicts continued long after the old ideological explanations of the Cold War should no longer have applied (Keen 1998:10). Although the world experienced a decrease in the total number of major armed conflicts in the 1990s, it was also witness to the devastating and barbaric violence that characterised the persistent internal conflicts of that decade. Wars within states, as opposed to between them, replaced interstate war as the norm and today continue to pose a grave threat to international security – a threat to which the global community has, in large part, failed to effectively respond. At any point in the 1990s, more than one hundred million people were living lives blighted by conflict and natural disasters, while an average of thirty five million people were displaced from their homes (Weiss 1996:420). It has become increasingly clear that violent internal conflicts – because of their numbers, the civilian casualties involved, the use of increasingly lethal weaponry and their potential for triggering interstate wars, creating massive refugee flows and devastating local and regional economies – continue to constitute the gravest threats to peace, economic development and global security in the post-Cold War era (Mawlawi 1992-3:391). This scenario is commonly referred to as a situation of complex political emergency (CPE), a term used to describe a conflict crisis which is multi-dimensional, with large scale human rights abuses and profound human suffering. The conflict may be further complicated by natural disasters and is characterised by contestation, or even collapse, of the state (Lewer 1999: 7).

Despite many claims to the contrary, this type of internal conflict has not just appeared or “exploded” in the post-Cold War era¹. In fact, internal conflicts have consistently formed the vast majority of wars ever since decolonisation began to sweep the developing countries after 1945, and recent trends point to a steady increase in the numbers of intrastate violence from 1955 onwards. Classical interstate wars have declined dramatically compared to previous

¹ In 1990 and 1991 several new and highly visible internal conflicts erupted as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and many observers mistook these wars as the start of a new trend. In reality the perception that there was an “upsurge” in identity based internal conflict was due, in part, to definitional changes since similar conflicts had previously been interpreted with the Cold War paradigm of bipolar blocks (Sadowski 1998: Internet).
historical periods (see table 1.1) and now constitute only about eighteen percent of all wars since 1945 (Holsti 1996:25).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Average number of states in the central system</th>
<th>Number of central system interstate wars</th>
<th>Interstate wars/state per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1715-1814</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1815-1914</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1941</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1995</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the modern context, a disproportionate number of conflicts occur in what was formerly referred to as the “Third World2” – in fact, ninety percent of the 196 wars between 1945 and 1996 were in Third World countries (Schlichte 1999:35). Today, almost all contemporary internal conflicts are located in states of the Middle East, Africa, Central America, South Asia, Southeast Asia and more recently, in the Balkans and the Central Asian former Soviet Republics (Holsti 1996:82; Ayoob 1996:37). Many of these internal conflicts are persistent battles that have been simmering for decades, including the struggle for Kurdish autonomy in Iraq, Iran, and Turkey, the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy, the Sri Lankan War and long-standing regional insurrections in Burma, India, Sudan, Angola, and Indonesia (Sadowski 1998: Internet). Interestingly, in the latter part of the 1990s the number of internal conflicts has actually stabilised, while the incidence of interstate war has remained low (see table 1.1 and figure 1.1). This trend may be interpreted as positive, but analysts stress that there is no cause for complacency. Evidence from the 2001 Peace and Conflict Ledger, a report which surveys a half-century of global and regional trends in armed conflict and peacemaking, suggests that Africa, along with very poor and non-democratic states elsewhere in the world, will continue to experience serious warfare in the future – and will pose a series of challenges to those responsible for maintaining regional security and preventing humanitarian disasters. The Ivory Coast and the Central African Republic, for instance, are two poor African states that have collapsed into civil war in 2002. It is clear therefore, that continued international engagement

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2 The term “third world” refers to both the “old” third world that includes the underdeveloped, poor weak states of Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as the “new” third world states of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkans that emerged out of the breakdown of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.
and support is essential to sustain the positive stabilisation in levels of internal conflict observable over the past decade and to keep transitional states from reverting to autocracy and armed conflict.

![Figure 1.1 The Nature of Conflict in the International System](image)

**Analysing the Internal Conflicts of the 1980s and 1990s**

Cold War models of conflict, commonly used to describe violent conflict as it occurred between the 1950s and 1980s, no longer provide an adequate explanation for the complex, seemingly chaotic, and devastating internal conflicts of the post-Cold War era. To quote Maynard (1999: Internet):

> [...] in the early 1980s, the Cold War checkerboard globe was clearly divided between black and red, and superpowers moved, took positions, and plotted strategies in proxy wars of identity. Governments, opposition parties and insurgent groups all knew where their allegiance lay, who would supply them with armaments and training and to whom they could turn should they need assistance if turmoil erupted in their region. By the mid-1980s, the crisp colours and clear lines were fading, and by the end of the decade the game was no longer being played the same way.

While internal or "civil" wars were never simply a theatre for Cold War rivalries, it is arguable that superpower involvement and the importance of "ideology" obscured the role of internal forces in shaping conflict (Keen 1998:80). Nowadays, as superpower military assistance and foreign aid has decreased as a result of the new security situation, so has the ability of multi-
ethnic states to resist the new groups that have emerged to challenge the state (Shultz 1995:81). Similarly, since the end of the Cold War the availability of surplus arms, the discrediting of socialist ideologies, and the disintegration of totalitarian empires has contributed in important ways to the internal conflicts observable today (Kaldor 1999:4). Most of these conflicts, like those in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Liberia and Rwanda, no longer fit traditional Clausewitzian conceptions of war as an instrument of state policy:

When thinking about war, we usually conjure up the image of two countries arraying their military forces against each other, followed by combat between distinctively designated, organised and marked armed forces. The purpose of the fighting is to destroy the adversary’s capacity to resist and then to impose both military and political terms on the defeated party. This was the pattern in the 1991 Gulf War, World War I and World War II [...] (Holsti 1996:1).

Typically, therefore, war has been regarded as a contest between states or a “continuation of politics by other means” by diplomatic practitioners, military leaders and academic experts on international politics. However, such an approach has proven inadequate when applied to the intra-state, deconstructed settings and post-modern character of contemporary warfare (see Jackson 2002a; Kaldor 1999; Duffield 1998; Keen 1998). As an alternative, some observers have preferred to understand internal conflict in terms of its negative consequences, portraying the violence as disrupting the economy and interrupting “benevolent” progress. Despite a widespread tendency to do so (by the UN, governments, non-governmental actors and the media), the assumption that internal conflicts are a “breakdown” in normally peaceful political forms and interactions has also proven to be an inadequate explanation for internal conflict. There is now considerable evidence that the violence characteristic of internal conflict indicates that a special (new) kind of social system is being created – one that employs political violence for considerable objective (and subjective) reasons (Jackson 2002a:21).

The failure of prevailing assumptions about conflict to adequately account for internal violence has created a dilemma for analysts, who must find new approaches to explaining the conflicts of the last two decades. In response to the confusion, irrationality and unpredictability surrounding internal wars some have attempted to provide an explanation by invoking a kind of “chaos theory” where the end of the Cold War has freed tribal, ethnic and national rivalries that were
Figure 1.2  Major Armed Conflicts of the 1990s

once kept in check by strong regimes. At best, a primordial-type analysis such as this does not offer a strong explanation for internal conflict. At worst, it posits that ethnicity, and therefore ethnic rivalry, is something natural and ineffable - this may abort analysis altogether, ignoring the prosaic political and economic roots of conflicts that have ethnic, religious or communal elements and suggesting that attempts at conflict resolution are futile (Eller 1999:79; Keen 1998:10-11). “Ethnic” explanations tend to focus on mass-led dimensions that undervalue the considerable role of political elites in influencing the course of internal conflict, ignoring the logic of the perceived threats, constraints and opportunities behind elite choices in situations of ongoing political crisis (Jackson 2002a:5). A sole emphasis on issues of ethnicity and identity, therefore, is clearly somewhat inadequate in explaining all the forms of inter-group conflict observable in internal wars today.

Structuralist approaches offer an alternative explanation for internal conflict by analysing the broad social, political and economic factors that are purported to drive internal conflict (Jackson 2002a:6,7). Analysts have attempted to find correlations between the onset of internal violence and variables like social divisions, national attributes, levels of economic development, type of political system and international context, analysing each factor quantitatively in order to identify the economic and political determinants of war. Other structuralist accounts emphasise the role of state processes in internal war (see Ayoob 1995, 1996; Holsti 1996; Tilly 1975). In this view, internal conflict is a “normal” aspect of weak state politics and is a result of state-making by elites, who are forced by domestic and external pressures (particularly in developing countries) to rush the process, distorting a more natural evolution and raising hopes for (and fears of) the final goal. This makes the process of state-making in these regions particularly prone to violence, increasing insecurity and overloading the political and military capabilities of the state (Ayoob 1995:28).

Finally, some theorists take a constructivist approach to internal conflict. Here, the emphasis lies on the metaphorical and rhetorical power of kinship and attention is drawn to internal conflict as a social construct - a rational process that includes the formation of ethnic ideologies

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3 Note that the distinction between political and ethnic war is difficult to draw because most conflicts have elements of both (Gurr, 2000:10).
and the social construction, and sometimes even the conscious fabrication, of ethnic and national identities (including the invention of traditions and the rewriting of history). Such an approach concentrates on aspects like discourse (see Jackson 2002a), ideology and the role of intellectuals in the creation of propaganda (Govers and Vermeulen 1997: 13,19). The exclusive identity politics characteristic of internal conflict is therefore viewed as a constructive means of regulating behaviours and maintaining (some kind of) social order – a social construction used to encourage the violence that serves a functional and positive role for an ethnic or political elite and their followers in the competition for power, prestige and authority (Carment and Harvey 2001:7-9). This argument is supported by recent studies illustrating that contemporary violence is a type of “post-modern” conflict that involves substantial economic aspects, a diverse range of local, regional and international actors, and novel warfare strategies (Jackson 2002a:37). This approach offers an interesting insight into the nature of contemporary conflict, though it may risk ignoring the historical-developmental aspects of internal conflict (see Jackson 20014).

The varied analyses of contemporary internal conflict presented here make a particularly clear point – that is, there are a number of different explanations for internal conflict, as well as a great deal of debate about the factors contributing to its perpetration. Indeed, the difficulty in analysing, mediating or creating effective conflict resolution policies to deal with internal conflicts today lies in the fact that no one conflict is the same causally. Instead, there are many factors, historical, contextual and psychological, that may intensify the group grievances that lead to the political mobilisation of identity groups and the ensuing violence. In summary, several basic points are made:

- The internal conflicts of today no longer fit with traditional Cold War models of conflict. Analysts are therefore faced with the dilemma of finding a comprehensive explanation for these types of conflicts, which are commonly perceived as “chaotic” and “irrational” in nature or a “breakdown” in normally peaceful political forms;

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4 Jackson argues that though the form of internal conflict may have changed as a result of globalisation and other external factors (e.g. the end of the Cold War), its *substance* is still rooted in the historically grounded processes of the “weak state”. This means that internal conflict is not entirely new or ahistorical, but is instead the next developmental stage of “weak state” politics (2001:67-68,76).
Although the processes of identity (whether rooted in ethnic, religious, communal or other types of social definition) do have a contributory role in internal conflict, characterising these wars as “ethnic” in nature and inherently conflictual does little to explain them and ignores their fundamental political and economic roots;

- Internal conflicts are not merely a “breakdown” in a particular system, but may represent a more complex array of objective and rational manifestations of an alternative system. That system is particularly apparent in the “weak states” of underdeveloped nations and may have distinct political and economic functions for particular elements of those societies as they attempt to respond to the confluence of contemporary external factors brought about by the end of the Cold War and the intensification of globalisation;

- The “new” or “post-modern” wars of the 1980s and 1990s, while not necessarily a completely novel phenomenon, do display some troubling new characteristics and features that complicate analysis and contribute to the intractable nature of contemporary conflicts.

Responding to the Challenge of Contemporary Internal Conflict

A sophisticated and well-informed understanding of the characteristics and features of contemporary internal conflict is crucial if mediation and conflict resolution practitioners are to intervene more effectively. To date, the unique nature of contemporary internal conflict has proven very challenging (arguably too challenging) for those trying to establish peace, perhaps because the conflict resolution implications of its unique characteristics have not always been fully comprehended. Wars within states need to be better understood and the characteristics of internal conflict identified and analyzed exhaustively, because an enhanced understanding of the driving forces behind internal wars can lead to better ideas about how to avoid or stop them (Kaufman 2001:2). By investigating the nature of internal conflict, analysts can better understand the differences between internal conflict and traditional notions of conflict, as well as the implications of those differences for attempts at conflict resolution. Consequently, the next part of this study is dedicated to an analysis of the characteristics of internal conflict, as
well as the aspects of those characteristics that have proven particularly challenging to the diverse range of actors that have attempted to resolve them.

Internal Conflicts Tend to Occur in Weak and Illegitimate States

Internal conflicts tend to arise in the context of the erosion of the autonomy of the state and in extreme cases, even the disintegration of the state. Ayoob (1995:xi) points to a growing number of partially or totally failed states in the world (Afghanistan, Somalia, Liberia, Lebanon and Democratic Republic of Congo), most of which are mired in intractable conflict. Weak and underdeveloped states such as these are defined by a set of certain characteristics - economic weakness, low levels of legitimacy, institutional weakness, ethnic divisions, external vulnerability - that mean they are at far greater risk of experiencing internal war than strong states (Jackson 2002a:10). Post-colonial states are particularly at risk because in many cases colonial authorities favoured some groups at the expense of others (as in Rwanda) sustaining or even creating ethnic elites and cleavages. Consequently:

Some post-colonial states went on to thrive and despite great odds against them, many have gone on to become strong states, but for many the record has been one of communal wars, civil wars, rebellions, wars of secession, authoritarian and predatory rule, chronic political instability, and government change through bullets not ballots (Holsti 1996:101).

Commonly, rule in weak states is unrepresentative and governments are incompetent and corrupt (Schultz 1995:80). A “personalisation of politics and the state” often occurs and leaders engage in a type of “caesarism” whereby they are entrusted with great power and tend to arbitrate in an absolutist form of government (Holsti 1996: 105). Instead of a socially cohesive society, there are usually a variety of communal groups contending for their own securities and for supremacy over their contenders. Thus, rule tends to be localised and a “perennial” contest exists between the “national” authorities representing the state and local power centres. These “local powerbrokers” command the effective loyalties of important segments of the population and pose a challenge to state rule. In their attempts to overcome this resistance, many governments rely on exclusive and coercive measures against these local power centres as well as against communal, religious or ethnic groups (Holsti 1996: 105,117).
This leads us to the question of why a regime, itself composed of supposedly rational individuals, would pursue a policy of escalating repression if such measures are ultimately counterproductive. We argue that the conditions of structural dependence characterising these regimes leave them without the institutional machinery, economic resources or political will to address opposition challenges through more accommodative programs of reform. Thus, escalating repression is perpetuated not because it has a high probability of success but because the weakness of the state precludes its resort to less violent alternatives (Job cites Mason and Krane 1992:31).

Commonly therefore, the state (or more appropriately the regime) is preoccupied with the short term; their security and their physical survival are dependent on the strategies they pursue for the moment (Holsti 1996:105). Job (1992) refers to this unique and particularly troublesome security environment as an “insecurity dilemma” where the state faces considerable internal threats (as opposed to the traditional external ones). With a mixture of careful manipulations, external support from powerful patrons, and a measure of fortune, state elites often manage to stay intact and maintain relative stability for long periods, despite internal disorder. However such regimes are always vulnerable to external or internal shocks. Thus, they are often forced to adopt divisive and conflict-producing strategies that secure their hold on power and carry significant risks of precipitating civil violence (Jackson 2002b: 40). Duffield (1994:51) terms this type of scenario “political survival in the context of permanent emergency”. In many weak states, the unrepresentative and authoritarian character of these regimes has spawned vicious cycles of violence and counter violence as regimes are challenged and react with brutal force (Ayoob 1995:41).

The “weak state” described here poses a considerable challenge to the processes of conflict resolution because it is an underlying cause of violence that must be reconfigured and reformed in order to avoid the “insecurity dilemma” that contributes to internal conflict. In order to mitigate the destabilising factors inherent in weak states and stop the violence, peacemakers face a very difficult task – the creation of strong states and the reconstruction of the weak ones. To accomplish this, the short-term perspective of current approaches must be replaced with reconstruction as a long-term strategy for stability. For success, it is crucial that the underdevelopment and ongoing economic crisis in states suffering from conflict is addressed. Capacity building must also assume a greater priority, especially in important areas such as law making, law enforcement and the judiciary (Jackson 2002b: 48). It is also essential that early warning and preventive diplomacy are better integrated into conflict resolution approaches –
many weak states exist on the verge of internal conflict and they must be monitored and assisted before large-scale violence erupts or war economies become entrenched. In the more immediate term, it is crucial to ensure a shift in focus from humanitarian aid to reconstruction that includes, in particular, the rebuilding of basic infrastructure and the promotion of local employment initiatives - especially the employment of demobilised soldiers, refugees and other war-affected groups (Bojcic and Kaldor 1997:170).

The tendency towards authoritarian and exclusionary forms of political discourse in weak states presents another key challenge. In order to effect change, peacemakers need to address the inflammatory discourses that prevail in these states and assist in replacing them with systems that promote participatory and inclusive politics. To do this, they must become more effective at determining the viability and form of the various participatory political options available in post-conflict states (like democratisation, power sharing and consociational variants).

Achieving “western” style concepts of democracy is not easy, nor is it necessarily appropriate in states where a number of different communal groups are often competing with each other. Because the boundaries of “nation” and “state” rarely coincide, “the idea that they [weak states] can therefore simply transform themselves from territorial creations called colonies into modern [and democratic] states is therefore flawed because the lines do not coincide” (Holsti 1996:99).

The task is complicated further by a clear conflict between the inherently violent, elite driven “state-making” (see Ayoob 1996) necessary for political survival in weak states, and the demands of democratisation and its associated human rights principles. Diplomats, mediators and other actors need to find a solution to the problem of reconciling the two processes with each other, as well as with internal demands for regional autonomy, devolution of powers and protection of minority group rights. This is not an easy task and it needs to be addressed much more creatively. The decision of state elites to democratise must also be firmly linked to the negotiated surrender of separatist groups where they exist, and the disarming of such groups should proceed in tandem with the implementation of any plans for autonomy or devolution of

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5 Jackson (2002a: 46-47) cites numerous preventive measures that can be applied when a state has been identified as being at risk such as: diplomacy and mediation, fact-finding missions, arms embargos, the creation of demilitarised zones, disarmament and decommissioning of weapons, the preventive deployment of military or civilian peacekeepers, and programmes to deal with economic and humanitarian crises.

6 Democratisation is defined here as increasing guarantees for the exercise of political and civil liberties, and political participation through the medium of competitive electoral politics (Ayoob 1996:48).
powers that may have been negotiated between the parties (Ayoob 1996:48). Closer attention should also be paid to timing and to pairing elections with power-sharing formulas that provide a safety net and ensure that politics do not become a zero-sum game (Hampson 1997:740). In addition, regimes that do not demonstrate a willingness to reform along these lines must be ready to face international condemnation, pariah status and even sanctions (Ayoob 1996: 48-49).

The types of activities described here – the reconstruction of states, early intervention and preventive diplomacy, the reconciliation of state-making with democratisation – all pose a daunting challenge to the international community because they require considerable resources and a commitment to long-term involvement in the countries concerned. As Jackson points out (2002a: 48), currently all these activities are considered peripheral to conflict resolution, and are only attempted in isolated instances. In order for real progress to be made, therefore, peacemakers must ensure that these kinds of “multi-track” activities assume a more central role. Ideally, they should regularly be applied alongside high-level diplomatic efforts to secure ceasefires or enforce political settlements (Jackson 2002a: 48). Until this task is taken seriously, it is likely that new conflicts will continue to emerge and the old, intractable conflicts observable today will continue to re-erupt in ever-lasting cycles of violence.

Internal Conflicts are Characterised by Policies of Exclusion

As we have seen, weak and underdeveloped states suffering from internal conflict tend to be characterised by repressive, authoritarian regimes. Typically, these regimes practice an exclusive and manipulative type of “identity politics”, mobilizing movements around ethnic, racial or religious identity for the purpose of claiming state power (see Kaldor 1999). These elites use “symbolic politics” (political activity that is focused on arousing emotions rather than addressing interests) as a convenient “tool” through which they can influence peoples’ subjective perceptions and belief systems in order to pursue rational economic and political goals (see Kaufman 2001). This type of politics tends to be based around different types of affinity - some are ethnic, some religious, some based on clan and lineage systems, while others are little more than temporary political factions and gangs that stand to lose or gain power depending upon their relations with central authorities (Holsti 1996:106, 124). Whatever aspect of identity these movements are based around, they tend to result in a conflict process that is
inherently particularistic and exclusive in nature (Jackson 2002a). Political or conflict “entrepreneurs”, who see opportunities for political gain, take advantage of societies’ polarisation to achieve political ends (Stein 2001:193). Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic did this when the state structure of Yugoslavia weakened following General Tito’s death in 1980, exaggerating Croatian violence against Croatian Serbs, as well as the Muslim threat to Serbia in Kosovo, as a pretext to consolidate and expand the political power of the Serbs (Stein 2001:193). For actors like Milosevic, identity politics provides a convenient and useful means by which they can mobilise and justify devastation and violence. In extreme cases (like those observable in Rwanda and Yugoslavia), other groups are characterised almost as if they are a different species leading, in the worst instances, to atrocities and genocide. The intensity of many contemporary internal conflicts testifies to the fact that politics based around these kinds of psycho-political motivations provide a very powerful form of mobilisation. As Holsti (1996:38) points out, no government merely pursuing traditional style interests could possibly mobilise a society to conduct a “people’s war” for thirty or more years, or maintain a war that resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths. In the case of Somalia for example, it took only a dozen American fatalities to force a withdrawal of American troops from a peacekeeping mission there in 1994. A commitment such as this pales in comparison to the deaths of 300 000 to one million people in Algeria, or 500 000 in Rwanda - the use of force in these locales is clearly of a fundamentally different character.

To achieve success in their war aims the political elite must also change the rules and norms of ethnical behaviour regarding the killing of friends and neighbours, deconstructing and replacing them with a “justified belief in self-defensive pre-emptive violence” (Jackson 2002a:13). To this end, extremist leaders use hostile, long-standing myths to sharpen differentiation, heighten grievance and increase fear (Stein 2001:193-194). Often, political entrepreneurs will attempt to create “totalising war discourses”, where existing alternative (non-violent) discourses that oppose their own war aims are deconstructed and discredited, and replaced with new discourses of hatred, fear and the justified use of extreme violence (Jackson 2002a:13). They will create or re-interpret ethnic identities, which are exploited in order to create new collective norms and

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2 Jackson cites Hodgsons (2000) definition of discourse as signifying “a socially and historically specific system of assumptions values, and beliefs which materially affects social conduct and social structure” (2002:8).
new or altered collective memories and histories (Jackson 2002a: 16). These types of hostile myths and images are not only cultivated by extremist leaders, but also exist in the cultural figures of these states - the journalists, novelists and academia for example (Kaufman 2001:206). Political groupings in internal conflict therefore tend to be “movements of nostalgia, based on the reconstruction of an heroic past, the memory of injustice, real or imagined, and of famous battles, won or lost” (Kaldor 1999:78). “Such ‘invented traditions’ refer to the past to avow a continuity with it, but this continuity is largely fictitious serving an ideological function as a legitimation of action and cement of group cohesion” (Eller 1999:83). As tensions rise and conflict escalates, “non-rational” factors start to occur in group discourses: groups dehumanise the “Other”; they form stereotypes; and they blame the Other for all negative developments in a habitual ritualised pattern (scapegoating). In such a scenario, “if we do not dominate, we will be dominated becomes a leitmotif” (Lederach 1997:15). These types of processes provide the means to make people willing to follow their leaders, contributing to a mythical belief that the opponent tends to engage in atrocities (or at least poses a very real threat) and to the normative view that retaliatory atrocities are therefore morally acceptable (Kaufman 2001:39). Consequently, ethical restraints on intra and inter-ethnic warfare are eroded. Sometimes this causes individuals or groups to act in exaggerated or potentially “irrational” ways because they define the identity-based violence defensively and provide themselves with a justification for their horrific acts (Tomov 1994: Internet; Kaufman 2001: 38). “Enemy images” aid this process, lessening the emotional and moral stress of the conflict and enabling participants to maintain a sense of the “good” self, (Maynard 1999: Internet; UNRISD/UNDP 1994: Internet).

Conflict entrepreneurs also work to overwhelm and submerge alternative oppositional spaces and voices – academic institutions, schools, families, religious institutions, the media, popular culture and the like. All of these pockets of resistance must be discredited and then bought under control, by state coercion if necessary (Jackson 2002a: 14). This often involves restructuring political rules and institutions to centralise power and limit the activities of opposition groups (Jackson 2002a:13):

In Zimbabwe, a nation wracked by ongoing political violence, the ZANU/PF government has made concerted efforts to destroy the universities as sites of alternative oppositional discourse by enlisting a few sympathetic academics to publicize studies confirming the governments view of history... and economic studies demonstrating the benefits of land-distribution. Having respected academics
taking such diverging positions in support of both the government and the MDC facilitates the discrediting of these institutions as authoritative discursive sites. The Church in Zimbabwe – once a powerful source of moral authority – has similarly been divided through deliberate government tactics. While the Jesuits, for example, have taken an active role in condemning state violence, other parts of the church have spoken out in support of the regime (Jackson 2002a:15).

In repressive and authoritarian regimes, domestic political conditions tend to make the population more receptive to this kind of elite manipulation because elites tend to dominate the instruments of communication and can more easily manipulate identities and mass images (Job 1992:26). The use of state radio by Hutu extremists as a means to encourage the extermination of Rwandan Tutsis was a potent example of state control over the instruments of communication, one that led to the manipulation of the general (Hutu) population and contributed to the horrendous genocide of 1994. The widespread availability of television, videos and radio intensifies these processes further, offering extremely rapid and effective ways of disseminating a particularistic message (Kaldor 1999:86) and building stereotypical visions in peoples’ minds (Job 1992:26). Typically, the elite-led identity processes described here are compounded from below (see Kaldor 1999; Keen 1998) as excluded and marginalized members of society (either civilians or low-ranking soldiers) actively embrace symbolic politics as a means to legitimise violence. Often, these low-level opportunists interact and work together with the top-level elites in order to achieve their mutual interests.

The identity processes described here pose several key challenges to the conflict resolution process. Identity-based issues such as these, which are related to competing identities, tend to be more difficult to resolve than interest-related issues: “The issues are not simply distributive, subject to bargaining, trade-off, and logrolling, but far deeper, tied to political constructions of Self and Other that create fear and hostility” (Stein 2001:197). Often, it is difficult for a peacemaker to effectively determine the most important root causes of the violence because the range of issues that underlie the conflict are submerged or subordinated as identity displaces other loyalties (Quinn 1999:27; UNRISD/UNDP 1994:Internet). In such a scenario, peoples’ identities and alliances tend to take on a single rather than multiple focus and social divisions deepen and harden. Thus, if the conflict is over identity, the positions at the table are not easily divisible or reconcilable (Sisk 2001: Internet). “Elements of compromise are characteristically missing in ethnic conflict and in their demands for separate or preferential justice ethnic rebels
seek terms that are ipso facto repulsive to the other side” (Zartman 2000:255). Thus, these types of conflict tend to be more intractable, less prone to political compromise and more likely to be non-negotiable (Sisk 2001:Internet).

The subjective perceptions and belief systems associated with identity politics also have a great impact on the course of conflict (sometimes even more than objective realities). Enemy images and collective beliefs tend to become central to and well embedded within larger belief systems – over time, even the entrepreneurs who manipulate identities and create myths to bolster political loyalty actually come to believe what they have learned. This makes those images extraordinarily resistant to change and creates a serious obstacle to conflict resolution (Stein 2001:194):

Once formed, enemy images tend to become deeply rooted and resistant to change, even when one adversary attempts to signal a change in intent. The images themselves then contribute autonomously to the perpetuation and to the intensification of conflict. Stereotyped images generate behaviour that is hostile and confrontational and increase the likelihood, therefore, that an adversary will respond with hostile action. [In addition] the well-established tendency to discount inconsistent information contributes significantly to the persistence of stereotypes. People also tend to actively seek and interpret information that confirms the negative image (Stein 2001:189, 196).

This contributes to each group living within a sense of “imagined reality” concerning its own worth relative to other groups, its own sense of entitlement, and of the threat being posed to its well-being by other groups. Such an “imagined reality” precludes the possibility of individuals within identity groups coming to the decision to change their own stand or position, as they do not view this as a potentially useful solution to the situation:

On the surface, for example, it seems that the Armenians and Azerbaijanis should have easily been able to devise a mutually acceptable autonomy scheme for Mountainous Karabagh. But the Armenians, with their historical myths about genocide and lost territories, felt that only the outright transfer of the territory to Armenia would suffice. The Azerbaijanis, in contrast, with their identity focus on the state’s integrity and with their prejudices about Armenians, felt driven to reject not only such transfer, but any substantial autonomy for Karabagh at all (Kaufman 2001:206).

“War discourses” in countries suffering from internal conflict (narratives that are strongly influenced by perceptions of difference) also seal off alternative ways of typifying the world,
excluding alternative self-definitions of the group. Discourses that offer an alternative to violence are not usually accessible and as a consequence, certain kinds of [non-violent or alternative] thoughts are foreclosed, along with certain kinds of action (Jackson 2002a:8):

The power of war discourses rests in their ability to allow personal consciousness and political consciousness to coexist but not to confront one another. In other words, even if there is within an individual a questioning doubt about the war they are fighting, ‘there are no newspapers, no radio stations, no alternative language in which he can frame his doubts and discover that other have doubts just like him’ (Jackson cites Ignatieff 2002a:8).

Thus, this type of conflict tends to selectively favour solutions of no-change that perpetuate the existing state of affairs (Tomov 1994:Internet). In a conflict situation where exclusive identity discourses like this exist, peacemakers need to better appreciate and understand the psychological, social and political processes that create and reinforce hostile images. If they are to be effective, they must address interests in the broader context of images and identity, identifying the conditions and strategies that promote the learning that can effect change (Stein 2001:203). As is evident from the many years of relatively peaceful coexistence - including intermarrying - between Serb, Croat, and Muslim Bosnians, between Russian and ethnic Chechens, between Tajik Kulyabi and Garmi, and between Armenians and Azeris –differential identities are not themselves a cause of violence (Maynard 1999:Internet). Analysts and strategists therefore need to move away from the predominant conception of identity as something immutable and fixed, towards a better understanding and analysis of how it can be affected or changed (see Stein 2001). In order to achieve this they must obtain a better understanding of the processes of identity construction and of the relationship between the processes of identification and conflict management and resolution, a factor commonly overlooked in contemporary conflict and peace studies (Tarja Vayrynen 1999: 125).

Most importantly, peacemakers need to counteract the efforts of political entrepreneurs and other actors that attempt to manipulate identity for their own ends. They need to think systematically about ways of neutralising “totalising war discourses” – the ethnic bashing, scapegoating, hate mongering, and propagandising that are often precursors to violence (Brown 1996:599) – and finding creative ways to replace these with democratic and inclusive discourses (Jackson 2002a: 8). There are a number of peacemaking measures that might be utilised in order to achieve this: the pursuit of inter-group negotiations and cooperation; the widespread
and accessible provision of contradictory images; reassuring those that feel threatened by the security dilemma; or efforts to bring the groups (not only leaders) together to change their hostile attitudes. Localised “islands of civility” (see Kaldor 1999) that have not been destroyed must be supported, thereby creating a context where alternative non-exclusive political constituencies can be fostered. Skilled mediators can, and should, contribute to these processes by making a concerted effort to include civil society in the mediation and conflict resolution process, and following a conscious strategy of building on local initiatives (Kaldor 1999:122). Throughout the mediation process they can also emphasise the positive aspects of identity (values of responsibility, fairness and compassion) as important elements of honour and reputation and appealing to the “best” in the tradition of an identity (Stein 2001:204). Undoubtedly, it is crucial that the popular culture and historical teaching that encourages exclusive ethnic politics is changed, recasting ethnic myths and eroding the basis of hostility over the long run. NGOs and governments can play a particularly important role by encouraging the creation of new cultural outlets, thereby promoting interethnic reconciliation and non-chauvinistic national mythologies. In addition, they can condemn and delegitimise the processes of exclusionary, identity based politics: “foreign criticism of media bias, historiography and school curricula is potentially the most effective long-term policy tool available for discouraging war” (Kaufman 2001:217).

The final point to emphasis is that peacemakers must intervene at an early stage of the conflict. By doing so they act before violence has undermined trust and prevent polarisation based on identity issues. Currently, violent internal conflict often escalates to a painful level of destruction before serious attempts at conflict management or resolution begin – it is only after repeated failures that the parties begin to negotiate the issues. Unfortunately by that stage the hostile images are so embedded as to preclude the learning necessary for image change and tolerance of others’ identities. The crucial point here is that once conflict becomes violent, or begins building toward violence, all parties’ options for conflict resolution narrow dramatically. Peacemakers must therefore make a more concerted effort to engage the parties earlier and at a deeper level, so that the intense enmity caused by violence conflict can be avoided (Stein 2001:204). The benefits of the approaches described here are multi-faceted but unfortunately, they are widely underestimated in current conflict resolution interventions and receive little attention and few resources (Kaufman 2001:40).
Internal Conflicts almost always have Regional and International Dimensions

Though conflicts within states are termed “internal” and are generally localised, the intensification of the processes of globalisation has meant that internal conflicts also involve a myriad of transnational connections. As a result, there is a strong tendency for internal violence to spread as greater numbers of actors actively participate in, or are drawn into, the violence. Out of fourteen intra-state conflicts examined in 2000, ten spilled over into neighbouring states – and three of the four remaining countries in conflict were island states, where spill over must overcome a natural barrier. Virtually all the conflicts studied elicited the direct political, economic or military involvement of other states and multinational organizations (SIPRI Yearbook 2001:Internet). Indeed, in the “new wars” observable today, “the distinctions between the internal and the external, between aggression (attacks from abroad) and repression (attacks from inside the country), or even between the local and the global, are difficult to sustain” (Kaldor 1999:2). Most commonly, internal conflicts involve partisan intervention (direct or indirect) by outside states (Ganguly and Taras 1998:68). Although some neighbouring states can be the innocent victims of internal conflicts, the actions of others, referred to by Brown (1996) as “bad neighbours”, are deliberate and active attempts to contribute to the conflict, often leading to military escalation and regional instability (Brown 1996:571). Sometimes intervention is only moral support through diplomatic statements and speeches, but more often, particularly among neighbours, external support includes logistics, sanctuary, military training, transport arms and supplies, advisers in the field and cross-border raids (Gurr 1993: 4-5). Often, the internal divisions evident in weak states provide opportunities for powerful external actors to intervene in internal disputes:

Laws of neutrality no longer apply because those that are militarily weak rely on outsiders for arms, logistical support and sanctuary. Arms merchants, drug cartels, and a bevy of foreign sympathizers organized into “support groups” transform the war from a local enterprise into a vast transnational undertaking (Holsti 1996:38).

President Mobutu of Zaire provided a potent example of a “bad neighbour” when he used Rwandan and Burundian Hutu refugees in order to enhance his own role as a regional mediator, while at the same time instrumentalising them in order to destabilise the Tutsi-led governments of neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi (Nkundabagenzi 1999:280). In another instance of inflammatory meddling, Cold War interventionism had a direct and long-term impact – even
today, conflict resolution is still hampered by the massive militarisation of many regions that occurred as a result of superpower rivalries (Jackson 2002b: 33). Another form of destructive intervention is economic exploitation by outside states, particularly the wealthy industrialised countries of the West. In particular, weak, dependant states suffering from internal conflict “offer outsiders with the means of assuring that they have access to third world resources, privileges and terms for the operation of multi-national corporations that would not be available in countries with real governments, real regulations and real tax systems” (Holsti 1996:137).

This development results in a situation where the tacit support of external actors (the officials of “developed nations”, aid agencies and international creditors for example), ends up protecting authoritarian and repressive political units instead of supporting the role of state authority - the purpose for which they were actually designed (see Reno 1997).

Even when external involvement or intervention is undesirable, the great powers and stable, industrialised countries of the “developed” world are often inextricably drawn into conflict. Ayoob (1995:196) terms this process a “contagion of instability” where stable and powerful states cannot realistically remain free of the turmoil that exists in a group of states that is four times its size (that is, the rest of the world). This occurs for several reasons: many of those states possess strategic resources that are important to the West (e.g. the oil in the Gulf States); some have acquired nuclear capabilities that could wreak havoc globally (e.g. Pakistan, India, and Israel) or they engage in international terrorism that threatens the security of the “developed” nations; while others could possibly enmesh great powers in their conflicts (particularly those in Central Asia and the Caucasus). In addition, refugee flows across borders tend to create enormous human suffering and place tremendous pressure on host states, not only in neighbouring countries but also increasingly on the developed countries of the West (Ganguly and Taras 1998:68). The politics of identity also has a tendency to spread, as all identity-based groups tend to spill over borders and majorities in one country are often a

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8 Refugees tend to place an immense economic burden on the host society, as well as representing a permanent source of tension between the refugees and the host populations – economically, because they are competing for scarce resources, politically, because they are pressuring host governments to take action so that they can return home, and security-wise because their camps are often used as bases for various radical factions (for example, the use of Hutu refugee camps as a base for Hutu militias that contributed to the mobilisation of violence in neighbouring Zaire) (Kaldor 1999:108).
minority in another (e.g. the Tutsis in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire or Russians in most post-Soviet states) (Kaldor 1999:107-109).

The ethnic match lit by Hutus in Rwanda struck a tinderbox of fragile regimes and multiethnic societies and ignited the widest regional conflagration in modern African history. The Israel-Palestinian conflict similarly embroiled all of Israel’s neighbours and sparked wider regional wars as the Arab states supported the Palestinians in three full-scale wars (Stein 2001:195).

This process is compounded by the global and regional dispersal of communities. Diaspora, or ethnic kin separated by international borders, can facilitate internal wars by passing on financial and political support to various sub-state actors (Jackson 2002b: 30). For example, the Irish in the United States, Sikhs in Canada, Basques in Central America and Jews around the world help to create networks of connections, sources of funding, moral support, and sometimes illegitimate trade in arms and drugs. These networks reinforce and sustain communal struggles thousands of mile away (Holsti 1996: 133). All the factors described here are very difficult to contain and often combine together to reproduce conditions of conflict and nurture new forms of violence. Certainly, the “predatory social condition” described here can be identified in a number of regions or “bad neighbourhoods” around the world: the Balkan region surrounding Bosnia-Herzegovina; the Horn of Africa including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan; Central Africa, especially Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire; and Central Asia, from Tajikistan to India (Kaldor 1999:109).

Difficult enough to resolve on their own, when internal conflicts in these areas draw in surrounding states and spill across national boundaries, the task of conflict resolution becomes all the more problematic (Jackson 2002b: 30,32). Escalation becomes easier and more likely, and de-escalation becomes harder - conflict resolution harder still. The introduction of additional sets of interests and additional resources into the equation intensifies escalatory dynamics and “wars become hotter and they last longer” (Brown 1996:600). Often, it becomes very difficult to separate the internal and external aspects of the conflict, complicating conflict resolution further. However, “bad neighbours” and meddling interventions by external actors are discrete problems that can be identified and targeted for action. Their decisions are not necessarily immune to international pressure and the international community can try to use their information gathering skills and leverage to influence the course of events, identifying
conflicts at risk or inflammatory actions by actors external to the conflict, and acting promptly to stop them (Brown 1996:600). Outside actors can also intervene in various ways to limit the less deliberate effects of the “contagion of instability” and ensure greater regional and international security, for example effectively managing the risks posed by refugees, taking preventive measures to stop the spread of identity-based issues or providing support to communities at risk. Unfortunately, the past record of such interventions has at times been questionable – humanitarian aid has often been manipulated and diverted to warring parties, refugee camps have been used as headquarters for militia leaders and peacekeepers have been drawn into the violence. It is crucial, therefore, that the NGOs, states and international organisations that act in situations of internal conflict reconfigure current approaches and responses that, while well intentioned, may internationalise internal conflict and contribute to its spread.

In Internal Conflict Violence often has Economic Functions

In contemporary internal conflict traditional ideological and political objectives, such as regime overthrow or secession, often overlap with chauvinistic ethno-nationalist and/or economic aims (Jackson 2002b: 34). As revenues for both patronage and coercion decline (usually as a result of economic crisis), the leaders of states embroiled in internal conflict have been forced to adapt, often towards the direct military control of resources and populations. Many traditional conflicts like those ongoing since the Cold War period – Sudan, Somalia, Colombia and Angola, for example – are now exhibiting similar adaptations, particularly towards the formation of entrenched war economies (Jackson 2002b: 45). In extreme cases, political violence no longer has political goals but is aimed at securing the material base of the militias and enriching their leaders (Schlichte 1999:43). In the face of the collapse and decline of formal economic

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9 The dual aims of UNITA (Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola) in Angola of overthrowing the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Liberacao de Angola) government and maintaining control over rich diamond-producing regions exemplifies the expanded conflict goals of actors in contemporary internal conflicts (Jackson 2002a:34)

10 The economic benefits of war are often particularly appealing for disaffected youth, or “youthful enforcers” and they tend to play an important role in the violence. Commonly these unemployed and marginalized youths, searching for opportunities, are recruited by local political entrepreneurs to assist in their bids for wealth and its associated power, a pattern that occurs throughout Africa in particular (Reno 2000:8).
structures the apparent "chaos" of civil war is used to further local and short-term interests, which are frequently economic in nature\textsuperscript{11} (Keen 1998:11).

This divisive and exclusive form of politics cannot be disentangled from its economic basis. The various political/military factions plunder the assets of ordinary people as well as the remnants of the state and cream off external assistance destined for the victims, in a way that is only possible in conditions of war or near war. In other words, war provides a legitimation for various criminal forms of private aggrandizement while at the same time these are necessary sources of revenue in order to sustain war. The warring parties need more or less permanent conflict both to reproduce their position of power and for access to resources (Kaldor 1999:110).

The emergence of a political economy such as this, which includes asset transfer from the weak to the politically strong, is extremely destructive and creates ever-deepening poverty and misery - once systemic, asset transfer becomes synonymous with cultural genocide and the destruction of group rights\textsuperscript{12} (Duffield 1994:52, 55).

\[\text{In Sudan}\] An essential aspect of asset transfer ... was a long-term process of political marginalisation and the stripping of the Dinka [ethnic group] of all legitimation. Without this, the violent appropriation of Dinka cattle during the mid 1980s could not have taken place. In the eyes of the Baggara raiders, the Dinka were not fit to hold such wealth (Duffield 1994:55).

The states and groups involved in these "war economies" tend to operate through a mixture of seemingly bizarre cooperation and confrontation, even when on opposing sides. In Liberia, for example, opposing sides avoided pitched battles and militias preferred to prey on civilians, only rarely attacking each other. In Sierra Leone, government and rebel forces acted together to control and partially depopulate resource-rich areas, coordinating their movements in and out of villages and sharing the spoils between them. Similar forms of cooperation have included advantageous trading arrangements with the "enemy", paying ransoms to each other for captured fighters and selling arms and ammunition to the other side (Keen 1998:17-18). The limited fighting, and at times cooperation between opposing factions, only makes sense when it is examined within the context of the war economy, where such behaviour enables the various factions to maximise the economic benefits of war. As Keen (1998:10) points out, often the

\textsuperscript{11} Keen (1998:12) notes that this does not mean that identity and ideology do not also play an important role.

\textsuperscript{12} Duffield notes that the more direct or coercive the form of transfer, the more likely it is that "winners" have mobilised ethnic, national or religious sectarianism as justification for their extra-legal activity (1994:52).
emphasis of these wars is not on “winning” but on controlling production and trade and controlling, raiding, and exploiting civilians (Keen 1998:10). Warring factions in internal conflict have certainly been innovative in developing various means of “predatory capital accumulation” to suit the changed conflict context (Goodhand and Hulme 1997: Internet). The immediate tools for economic gain usually involve breaking the law and includes activities such as pillage; protection money; illegitimate control over trade; labour exploitation; land appropriation and; stealing humanitarian aid supplies (Keen, 1998:15). A potent example of the devastation caused by these types of strategies occurred in Liberia’s Lofa County, where armed groups of youths unaffiliated with any major faction succeeded in looting the population to such an extent that ninety percent of its people left. Fighters themselves eventually faced starvation when they found that there was nothing left to steal (Reno 2000: 9).

Corruption is integral to the kinds of political and economic control described here and it is a systematic, deliberate result of this type of efficient predatory behaviour. State offices are occupied to bring personal wealth, status, and acclaim to their holders, who then dispense rewards to their followers and supporters. The extent of personal enrichment and public theft can be staggering: the total amount of stolen money that elites have “parked” in foreign banks in Africa alone “may conceivably be close to the total debt burden of the sub-continent”, that is about $150 billion (Holsti 1996:114). The bureaucracy also practises theft and extortion widely and once established, it successfully resists all efforts of reform emanating from the society, hindering attempts at conflict resolution (Reno 2000:4). Typically, the local political and economic environment described here becomes part of a wider “parallel economy” with regional and international dimensions, constituting a new kind of “globalised informal economy” (Kaldor 1999:104). This parallel economy is not mere smuggling or illegal dealing, but a more complex, extensive and established system. In the drug economies of Latin America for example, entrepreneurs and politicians developed powerful cartels that have had a historic regional and international impact (Duffield 1994: 55-56).

The economic functions of violence that characterise contemporary internal conflict present a major problem for peacemakers. The political economy of internal war described here is an inherently authoritarian, violent and disaster producing structure (Duffield 1994: 58). Short-term economic pressures and competition place a premium on particularly violent behaviour among
the various groups. Even for those who would prefer to pursue less violent, longer-term strategies (like protecting the population in exchange for payments), this option is not viable because of the immediate need to acquire as much wealth as possible to buy guns and attract more followers - or risk extinction at the hands of competitors (Reno 2000: 8). In extreme cases, the use of violence to appropriate resources has become an independent force in these types of protracted conflicts (Schlichte 1999: 43). As a product of war and with the use of force as their power base, warlords or militia leaders are not interested in a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict (Schlichte 1999: 47). The same may apply to their followers who "with no employment opportunities, lack of food, and lack of physical security, have few incentives to lay down arms" (Berdal and Keen 1997:813). Winning may also not be a desirable alternative to the status quo because it removes the legitimacy that war confers on actions that would be punishable as crimes in times of peace (Keen, 1998:12). This challenges several assumptions that currently underpin the literature on conflict resolution: First, that war has only negative consequences for local populations (and it is therefore in their best interests for wars to end) and second, that winning is the combatants overriding aim (Keen, 1998:13). If peacemakers want to intervene successfully, they must therefore reassess traditional assumptions, not merely focussing on the causes of violence but also acquiring a better understanding of the functions of violence when formulating approaches. Just as warlords and militia leaders have been innovative and creative in their attempts to secure their economic bases, then so must the individual, state or organisation attempting to intervene.

To achieve more lasting solutions, we need to acknowledge that, for significant groups both at the top and at the bottom of society, violence is an opportunity rather than a problem...taking better account of the economic agendas that can emerge in civil wars would significantly improve conflict-resolution initiatives and the effectiveness of international aid (Keen, 1998:13).

Conflict resolution proponents must therefore come up with viable alternatives to the status quo that will provide incentives to the warring factions to cease the violence - this involves meeting the needs and interests of those carrying out and perpetrating the violence. Most importantly, third parties need to recognise that the economic agendas of parties to a conflict are likely to have a distorting effect on the quality of outside assistance provided (Berdal and Keen 1997:807). Certainly, the construction of political economies that will make resort to violence both unrewarding and unnecessary should be of primary concern (Keen and Berdal 1997: 800,
819). This does not mean that a “political” analysis should be completely abandoned in favour of an “economic” one – rather, it must be recognised that contemporary internal conflicts have been characterised by the interaction of political and economic agendas. Unfortunately, these types of tasks demand a level of analysis and local understanding not usual in conventional diplomatic practice (Duffield 1994:66).

In Internal Conflicts Violence Tends to be Privatised

Globalisation has widened the number and type of actors who now participate in internal conflict. Along with the principal protagonists (government armies and armed insurgent groups), it is not uncommon to see a range of internal groups, such as informally organised militias, warlords, criminal gangs, drug cartels and indigenous NGOs and associations, either directly involved with the fighting or at least cooperating with important factions. External parties representing international constituencies also tend to be drawn into the conflict, for example humanitarian agencies, peacekeepers, mercenaries, and international entrepreneurs (Jackson 2001:69). The prevalence of such a diverse range of actors reflects the loss in the state’s monopoly over legitimate violence, which creates an environment that is ripe for a multiplicity of different types of fighting units to attempt to establish their own control on violence (see table 1.2).

In such a conflict scenario, conventional concepts of war do not apply and rules no longer govern the conduct of combat. New types of fighting units emerge that may be both public and private, state and non-state, or mixture of these. These groups are usually small in scale and they tend to lack the hierarchy, order and vertical command systems that have been typical of past military forces, being much more fluid in structure. Commonly, they exhibit an absence of discipline and consist of diffuse centres of power13 (Maynard 1999:Internet). In this “postmodern” kind of warfare, combatants appear to be essentially untrained, ordinary citizens of all ages and social status. “Rather than highly organised armed forces based on a strict command hierarchy, wars are fought by loosely knit groups or regulars, irregulars, cells and not

13 Maynard (1999:Internet) notes that in protracted conflicts, both the organization and training within these groups appear to improve over time.
infrequently by locally-based warlords under little or no central authority” (Holsti 1996:20). In contrast to wars of an earlier era, there is typically no clear sequence of war - no clear beginning, no declarations of war and very few conflicts that actually end with peace treaties: “In wars of the “third kind” there are no fronts, no campaigns, no bases, no uniforms, no publicly displayed honors, no point s’appui, and no respect for the territorial limits of states (Holsti cites Van Creveld 1996:36).

Government loss of control over the exercise of violence creates an environment that makes conflict resolution very difficult. Those with alternative or moderate views face significant difficulties in attracting followers and solving the material problem of arming them in the midst of competing armed groups (Reno 2000:8). The diffuse nature of power also tends to make peace talks more difficult. There are often a myriad of opposing parties seeking to control and represent a forceful opposition to the government, each of whom represents different types of interests and demands and different parts of the disaffected population (Ronnquist 1999:151). Commonly, there is a lack of unity among the factions, meaning that they may not be able to agree on the nature of the issues or even on the dispute in general. It therefore becomes very difficult for an outside intervener to determine and address all of the issues involved in the conflict (Quinn 1999: 21,27; Ronnquist 1999:151). Often, the parties may be in conflict with each other, undermining their potential for success of general aims even further (Holsti 1996:113).

Effective peacemaking requires relatively coherent parties with clear and effective leaders, yet as we have seen, the parties in internal conflict are often loose militias with ambiguous organisational structures, weakly developed interests, and no peacemaking capabilities beyond the gun (Sisk 2001:Internet). Often, group representatives do not possess adequate negotiation skills, or even an articulate ideology or sustained critique of the political and social situation (Reno 2000:8). This lack of discourse or ideology means that the parties cannot effectively articulate what they are demanding. The lack of discipline between the warring factions means that groups tend to be divided, unable to agree on tactics and have leaders that are in competition with others for the position of supreme spokesperson, thus they lack the valid spokesperson necessary for effective negotiation or mediation. In addition, mediators
commonly tend to make the mistaken assumption that the leaders of these disparate and diffuse groups actually have the power and legitimacy to effect the changes that they are discussing at the negotiating table (Job 1992:30). In the context of internal conflict, this is clearly a false premise. Because factional leaders and warlords do not exercise the same degree of control over their own forces and the level of organisation is less, these types of military units are prone to disorder and unbridled action that can compromise the peace process. When combined with the fact that there are so many different parties, the threat of “spoilers” (a particular individual or group that is either excluded from the peace process or is disadvantaged by the resulting agreement) is increased significantly. Sometimes, even when the struggle seems won and victory or negotiations are near, breakaway leaders are tempted to make a separate deal for a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.2 Military Units Involved in Internal Conflict (Kaldor 1999)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domestic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paramilitary Groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most common type of fighting unit. Autonomous groups of armed men, generally centred around an individual leader and usually composed of redundant soldiers. May include common criminals. Often established by “legitimate” governments who use them as a means of distancing themselves from the more extreme manifestations of violence. Often established by “legitimate” governments who use them as a means of distancing themselves from the more extreme manifestations of violence. Difficult to distinguish from non-combatants as they rarely wear uniforms. The use of child soldiers is not uncommon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Armed Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular troops often become prey to the loss of state legitimacy and experience cuts in military spending, training and the like. Soldiers commonly seek out their own sources of funding. Often, local army commanders act as local “warlords”, as in Tajikistan, or engage in criminal behaviour. Regular forces soon become relatively indistinguishable from private paramilitary groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Foreign Troops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operate under the umbrella of international organisations, particularly the United Nations. Increasingly common in internal conflict. Usually not directly involved in the war, although their role is very significant and there have been incidences where they have become involved in the violence (e.g. Russian peacekeepers in Tajikistan).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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14 An example is the pre-1994 Rwandan government, which recruited unemployed young men into a newly formed militia (the interahamwe) linked to the ruling party (Kaldor 1999:93).
15 A good example of this is the firm Executive Outcomes which played a crucial role in the Sierra Leone regime’s attempts to battle rebels, rein in wayward clients, control resources and satisfy overseas creditors (Reno 1997).
16 In Tajikistan, for instance, whole communes were embroiled in the fighting, involving farmers, brigade leaders, and business owners. Other than membership in mostly very young political parties and the creation of a new national guard, there was minimal pre-organized structure (Maynard 1999:Internet).
17 Stein defines “spoilers” as militant ethnic activists that foment social polarisation when new political arrangements that would cut across ethnic cleavages seem likely (2001:194).
part of the aggrieved group on terms more favourable to the government. Occasionally, "negotiation itself can delegitimize a leader as his [sic] rivals hew to a harder line" (Zartman 2000:255). A good example of "spoilers" are the militant Hutus of Rwanda, who sabotaged an agreement reached by moderate Hutus and Tutsis because they anticipated their exclusion from political power. Another kind of spoiler might be groups within society who perceive that a peace agreement would threaten their access to the spoils of war and the alternative system of profit that they have created. Spoilers present a significant challenge to mediators who must create the right mix of inducements (positive and negative) so that potential saboteurs in the peace process have few incentives to defect and wreak a settlement later on, a difficult and complex task (Hampson 1997:734).

Finally, the power asymmetry between the various parties in internal conflict is usually unequal, complicating attempts at resolution. The government is usually one of the parties and, even though it may be weak and under threat, it still tends to start from a superior position – it has legitimacy, sovereignty, allies, access to resources and a national military usually better equipped and trained than their adversary. For the minority groups and factions concerned, the question is therefore commonly one of survival. They are faced with a security dilemma, as laying down arms is not a viable option because it makes them vulnerable to reprisals from the government, which retains its arms. Rebels balance out this power asymmetry through asymmetry of commitment – that is their total and exclusive commitment to rebellion. Rebellion becomes their sole concern and anything less than their ultimate goal is unacceptable. This situation leaves little room for negotiation and results in a conflict that is absolute, zero-sum and involves high levels of polarisation (Quinn 1999:23). In addition, settlements reached when the parties differ greatly in resources are likely to codify the inequalities and inequities inherent in the asymmetrical relationship. Mediators, negotiators and conflict resolution proponents therefore need to investigate and understand the various measures available that will influence in a positive way the balance of power between the parties – a considerable challenge as they must take care not to reach an agreement that will alter at the negotiation table the reality on the battlefield or in the streets (Kriesberg 1989: 418).
part of the aggrieved group on terms more favourable to the government. Occasionally, "negotiation itself can delegitimize a leader as his [sic] rivals hew to a harder line" (Zartman 2000:255). A good example of "spoilers" are the militant Hutus of Rwanda, who sabotaged an agreement reached by moderate Hutus and Tutsis because they anticipated their exclusion from political power. Another kind of spoiler might be groups within society who perceive that a peace agreement would threaten their access to the spoils of war and the alternative system of profit that they have created. Spoilers present a significant challenge to mediators who must create the right mix of inducements (positive and negative) so that potential saboteurs in the peace process have few incentives to defect and wreak a settlement later on, a difficult and complex task (Hampson 1997:734).

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Internal Conflict has a Devastating Impact on Civilian Populations

Contemporary internal warfare has become widely characterised by atrocities, human rights abuses and widespread violence. Indeed, one of its most disturbing aspects is the increasing use of strategies and goals that utilise extreme forms of violence, usually against civilians. Fighting tends to range in a continuum from large-scale and sustained conventionally-based warfare, like the war of UNITA against the MPLA in Angola – to low-intensity guerrilla-style warfare – such as the LRA insurgency in Uganda (Jackson 2002b: 34). Protagonists make use of the new technologies that globalisation brings, in particular the advances in weapons such as small arms that are light, accurate, and easy to use: “the rifles, grenades, mines, Kalashnikovs, undetectable landmines and small rockets that are the hallmark killing devices of the guerrilla bands, warlord ‘armies’ and ‘militias’ ” (Holsti 1996:132). In contrast with the wars of the past, decisive battles are few and attrition, terror, psychological trauma, and actions against civilians characterise “combat” (Holsti 1996:20). Humiliation, mental cruelty, terror, torture, rape and in extreme cases, murder, are commonly employed by protagonists to the conflict. These techniques are used to get rid of those whose identity is different, to foment hatred and fear, and to achieve population expulsion through means such as mass killings, forcible resettlement and a range of political, psychological and economic techniques of intimidation (Kaldor 1999: 110). Civilian populations are the often the objects of “ethnic cleansing”, or rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons from another ethnic or religious group (Holsti 1996:39). In its most extreme form, this may involve campaigns of genocide, such as occurred in Rwanda in 1994 or Yugoslavia in 1995, the aim of which is to murder the most significant part or all of an ethnic group in order to achieve a “Final Solution” to the threat of ethnic diversity and to the power and demands of identity groups. Kaufman’s description of events in the former Yugoslavia illustrates the cruel realities of contemporary internal conflict:

Serbian paramilitary forces swept into defenceless towns, murdering indiscriminately in order to terrorise the Bosnian Muslim population into fleeing. In some cases, the killers set up ambushes and machine-gunned their victims in flight. In other cases, they rounded up the population, singled out educated men for murder, shipped the remaining men to concentration camps, and expelled the women and children. Women were often gang-raped, the men typically beaten and tortured before being killed or imprisoned. While the perpetrators of these acts were normally outsiders,
local Serbs also participated, shipping their neighbours to concentration camps and identifying their acquaintances on the executioners’ lists (2001:1).

The use of deadly weaponry and extreme violence in internal conflict can perform several useful functions for the protagonists. Openly violent, heroic and spectacular conflict may force external third parties to take a stand, whereby they may also have to acknowledge both sides to the violence as political entities, conferring recognition (Moller 1999:24). Putting up a struggle may be also be a precondition for the recognition of an identity by the “Other” and indirectly also for self-identity: “the very act of fighting, with the accompanying “putting ones life at risk”, may be a precondition for the development of a ‘we’ feeling. It separates ‘us’, from ‘them’, ‘self’ from ‘other’. When no collective memories exist – new ones may be created by war” (Moller 1999:24). Violence can also be more appealing than negotiation or election processes, which imply legitimacy for the state, as well as the acceptance of co-existence with other communities (precisely what many religious, ethnic, or nationalist movements do not want). In contrast, violence has a holy writ and a spiritual end: “by elevating a temporal struggle to the level of the cosmic, [activists] can bypass the usual moral restrictions on killing” (Holsti cites Juergensmeyer 1993:112). What is more, for those that participate, the violence can also be a form of empowerment: “it transforms man (generic) from a passive object into an active subject of political participation” (Berdal and Keen 1997: 801). In Sierra Leone, violence definitely seemed to serve an important psychological function for rebels who, previously the ignored and exploited youth of the village, got thrills out of “turning the tables” and humiliating chiefs and village “big men” (Berdal and Keen 1997: 801).

Thus, violence can provide the warring parties with a powerful means of mobilising those who have traditionally remained passive (Holsti 1996:119). In many cases, this strategy works and “they [the protagonists] turn everyone” writes John Chipman “into participants and so give every individual – not only organised groups, parties, factions or alliances – a personal stake in the outcome” (cited by Holsti 1996:39). Involving civilians in the violence also creates collective guilt and provides a convenient way to protect leaders from carrying sole culpability.

Consequently, the lines between combatants and non-combatants are often heavily blurred and it
can be very difficult to distinguish between the military and civil\(^{18}\) (Kaldor 1999:110). Conflicting groups live in close proximity and conflict often occurs in their immediate communities so that “the difference between contemporary internal conflicts and traditional conceptualisation of international conflict is the immediacy of the experience” (Lederach 1997:13). Communities are often intermingled so that battle lines cut through cities, towns and neighbourhoods. Even children are drawn into conflict. In Africa in particular there has been an alarming rise in the forcible recruitment of children into rebel armies - current estimates point to around 200,000 child soldiers on that continent alone (Jackson 2002b: 31).

As a result of these developments, there has been a dramatic increase in civilian casualties over the past decade, concurrent with increasingly high levels of violence (see figure 1.3). Today, non-combatant or civilian fatalities make up ninety percent of total casualties (Kaldor 1999:8). Civilian casualties in the wars of Africa have been particularly high (see table 1.3). Gurr (1991:153) estimates that between 0.5 million and 1.7 million Africans died from government policies of genocide or “politicide” in the 1980s, while the United Nations estimates that 3 million people have died in the Democratic Republic of Congo alone since 1998. The violence also produces massive numbers of refugees, exacerbating the disorder typical of internal conflict further (Maynard 1999:Internet). The figures are staggering: 100,000 Hindus escaping the war in Kashmir, half a million seeking safe haven from the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan,  

\(^{18}\) The author notes that direct participation in internal wars actually tends to be relatively low - in Bosnia only 6.5 percent of the population took part directly in the prosecution of the war (Kaldor 1999:110)
two million refugees from the 1994 genocidal slaughter in Rwanda, to cite just a few examples (Holsti 1996:40). In many cases, these refugees become the source of new conflicts, such as in Sierra Leone and Zaire in 1996 (Jackson 2002b:31). Internally displaced people (IDPs) are also a central humanitarian challenge of our time, outnumbering conventional refugees by two-to-one and nearly always receiving less protection (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002). Certainly, the lives of millions of people, many of them innocent victims, have been uprooted as a result of internal conflict (Ayoob 1995:174).

The cruel violence and fervour characteristic of these types of high-intensity, identity-based conflicts demands tremendous individual energy and as a result, they tend be either short-lived or characterised by intermittent bouts, followed by recuperative lulls19 (Maynard 1999:Internet). Certainly, the hatred does not end with the conflict - after each bout of violence the members of each side must live or work together to form a common government. Consequently, the potential for internal conflict never really ceases - the situation will remain controlled or degrade into conflict depending on the circumstances (Quinn 1999:26). Typically then, these types of wars last for decades: Kashmiris have been fighting on and off, either for independence or annexation to Pakistan, since 1948; minorities in Myanmar have sustained armed resistance against the central government since the 1960s; and until achieving independence in 2002 the East Timorese had resisted incorporation into Indonesia since 1975 (Holsti 1996:20). Indeed, the majority of societal conflicts20 have been underway for a long time – seventeen years being the median – and they may endure for many more years in spite of concerted efforts to contain them (Gurr, Marshall and Khosa 2000:Internet).

The violence and endemic hatred in internal warfare poses one of the most difficult challenges to peacemakers. In the wake of such abhorrent behaviour, conflict remains highly politicised, obtains international dimensions, and becomes even less manageable than it could have been

19 This pattern is corroborated by the number of conflicts in this decade that have emerged and subsequently fallen off the list of major armed conflicts (Maynard 1999:Internet).
20 Azar (1990) defines the term “protracted social conflicts” as conflicts distinguished by the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such fundamental needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation (Lewer 1999: 7).
Table 1.3: The Number of Victims Resulting from Conflicts in Africa since 1972
(Nkundabugeni 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population in Millions (1995)</th>
<th>Duration of War</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Victims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1983-present</td>
<td>500,000/1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1970-91</td>
<td>450,000/1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1979-92</td>
<td>450,000/1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1975-present</td>
<td>300,000/500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1992-present</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1980-87</td>
<td>100,000/500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1988-present</td>
<td>400,000/500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1994-present</td>
<td>500,000/1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>100,000/300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1988-present</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1989-1997</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1991-2002</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1996-present</td>
<td>2/3 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

otherwise (Ter Gabrielian 1999:Internet). Indeed, it is very difficult to work together politically and economically in the aftermath of ethnic, religious or communal violence - a classic example of this is the conflict between the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians in the former Yugoslavia. Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi are identifiable as other examples of conflict that have proven particularly resistant to efforts to contain conflict or to promote better governance. The experience of internal conflict in these countries can cause widespread long-term psychological damage throughout the population, a type of trauma that is very difficult to deal with in post-conflict situations: “Civil wars and the atrocities carried out by the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing and other human rights abuses leave deep psychological wounds. These scars do not heal easily and, if left to fester, can lead to renewed outbreaks of violence as victims seek revenge” (Hampson 1997: 736). The “comprehensiveness of public participation” adds another complicating factor to intervention attempts because everyone appears to be involved: the elderly, women, children, teachers and priests, as well as relatives of mixed blood. Knowing what is at stake in these types of wars (i.e. survival) all members of the targeted group in internal conflict, be it ethnic, religious or politically defined, must see themselves as participants, even if only reluctantly. The impetus and acceptance of a political settlement must therefore come not only from the disputants themselves but also from the population as a whole, because without general support for a settlement the long-term success of any agreement is untenable (Quinn 1999:21). Hence, for effective intervention a wide array of
formal and informal communication modalities is necessary, indeed fundamental, to a far-reaching and sustainable peace process (Otis 1999:Internet).

Conclusion

Since the end of World War II, conflicts within states have continued to devastate many regions, particularly in underdeveloped “weak” states. Certainly, internal conflict has proven to be a particularly intractable and destructive form of conflict. In recent years, it would appear that internal conflicts have also evolved somewhat, taking on a number of characteristics that are proving particularly challenging for those actors attempting to resolve them. These include divisive policies of exclusion, a tendency for violence to spread to other nations, the advent of war economies, private control over the means for violence and severe human rights abuses against civilians. These changes, and the devastating effect they have had on the countries concerned, have evoked a wide range of attempts by various international actors at resolution. Subsequently, table 1.4 provides a summary of the challenges presented by contemporary internal conflict, and the following chapter examines the extent to which current diplomatic approaches meet the challenges that have been identified.
### Table 1.4 The Key Conflict Resolution Challenges of the Post-Cold War Era

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Key Conflict Resolution Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak and Illegitimate States</td>
<td>Early intervention in at-risk states. Capacity building and the long-term reconstruction of society so that it can function properly and avoid the “insecurity dilemma” of weak states. Determining the viability of various political options. Reconciling democratisation and human rights protection with the processes of state-making. Better understand the psychological, political and social processes that create and enforce hostile images. Identify the conditions and strategies required to change peoples’ misperceptions and antagonistic identities. Counter-act the exclusionary efforts of the political leadership and elite. Intervene early before violence undermines trust and society becomes polarised around identity issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies of Exclusion</td>
<td>Reconfigure current international responses that contribute to the spread of violence. Identify “bad neighbourhoods” and “bad neighbours” and take preventive action to mitigate the escalation and spread of internal conflicts. Limit the unintentional effects of the “contagion of instability” by ensuring greater regional and international security. Consider the economic functions of violence when formulating approaches. Be innovative in providing viable alternatives to the status quo - need to provide an incentive to stop the violence by meeting the needs and interests of those carrying out and perpetrating the violence. Re-examine the causes and effects of the parallel economy and mitigate the effect of economic activities. Reconfigure humanitarian policy and relief aid so that it does not support the warring parties. Redefine roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional and International Dimensions</td>
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<td>Violence that has an Economic Function</td>
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<td>The Privatisation of Violence</td>
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<td>Key Challenge: Articulate alternative models and approaches for dealing with the unique characteristics of contemporary internal conflict</td>
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Chapter 2

The Inadequacies of Current Diplomatic Responses

Introduction

Despite the pervasive and vicious nature of internal violence, it has only recently begun to receive the attention it deserves from strategists, analysts and conflict resolution scholars. During the Cold War, the belligerent groups were sometimes supported by regional and/or superpowers, but the conflicts concerned remained confined to a country or a region and did not assume international significance (Mehrotra 1999:1). Any attempts at intervention by the United Nations were usually blocked by the superpowers, or in cases where intervention was sanctioned, they tended to be a chaotic, disorganised response that only exacerbated conflict (for example in Biafra in 1967, or the Congo in 1960). During this period, the superpowers clearly followed a conflict management technique based on control, containment and crisis avoidance, whereby their possession of nuclear weapons avoided direct confrontation between them (Quinn 1999:31). In the post-Cold War era the situation has changed dramatically. As we have seen, in recent years internal conflicts have taken on some disturbing “new” characteristics and have continued to resist concerted attempts at conflict resolution by a variety of different actors. The devastation resulting from these persistent internal conflicts, coupled with the emergence of human rights and a growing emphasis on international institutions, has necessitated a change in the attitude of states and international organisations and they have begun to express concern and to take an interest in resolving intrastate conflict (Mehrotra 1999:1). As a result, when they conclude that the responsibilities of state sovereignty are not being met these actors are sometimes choosing to intervene, particularly when they have received international sanction for intervention.\footnote{External engagement by states, international organisations and non-state actors may be motivated by a number of reasons, particularly the worry that internal conflicts may proliferate and the violence spread to include other }
States have a long history of intervention in the internal affairs of others and, in the modern context, large segments of the international community have been willing to endorse strong collective action in a wide range of situations, including genocide, interference with the delivery of humanitarian relief, violation of cease-fire agreements, collapse of civil order, and irregular interruption of democratic governance (Lake and Rothchild cite Stephen Krasner 1996: Internet).

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the type of interventions that international actors and institutions undertake in response to the threat of internal conflict. In doing so, the chapter critiques the traditional approaches to international mediation and conflict resolution that are currently favoured by many diplomats, statesmen and international organisations attempting to mediate in situations of internal conflict. Most importantly, it establishes that there is a significant gap between the how those actors choose to respond, and the actual response that is necessary if we are to effectively meet the challenges presented by internal conflict. In closing, the chapter points out a clear need for conceptual innovation that will lead to further development of an alternative model of international mediation and conflict resolution, a model that this research argues should include unofficial, non-state actors as integral players.

The Story Thus Far

Unfortunately, the increasing willingness of the international community to intervene does not necessarily mean that those interventions are always successful in meeting the challenge of internal conflict. Thus far, attempts at international mediation and conflict resolution have failed to live up to expectations. Past efforts at settlements have rarely been successful in the long-term, commonly resulting in settlements that are flimsy and unlikely to last without constant monitoring and adjustment. Mediation success in protracted civil wars of an ethno-political nature has been especially low, at around ten to twenty percent (Fisher 2001: Internet). Consequently, “the oft-cited success rates of international mediation and negotiation may be illusory and short-term” (Richmond 1999: Internet). Certainly, experienced United Nations negotiators tried for years to resolve or reduce conflicts in Afghanistan, Angola, Haiti, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia, all without success. Rather, in many cases, their mediation efforts...
only seemed to extend or aggravate the conflict (Richmond cites Touval 1999: Internet).
Jackson (2001: 331-332) points to a “full and comprehensive” list of conflicts that have been
failed by the mediation process, failures that further compound the “lack of faith” in the ability
of the international community to respond effectively to internal conflict: in Angola, vicious
fighting erupted in 1992 despite a “full and final peace settlement” being mediated the year
before; genocide followed closely on the heels of the mediation efforts that led to Rwanda’s
Arusha Accords, and some would argue were partly responsible for it; US and UN led mediation
efforts in Somalia collapsed disgracefully in 1994; and mediation in the Balkans has failed to
solve any of the underlying issues, resulting in an uneasy peace that necessitates the presence of
thousands of NATO troops. The list goes on – Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra
Leone, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Israel-Palestine are all internal conflicts
that continue despite numerous international mediation efforts. “Many of these countries have
suffered from post-settlement relapses of conflict and many more (Bosnia, Georgia, Cambodia,
Sierra Leone and Chad) are in a precarious position, perpetually on the brink of a return to large-
scale conflict” (Jackson 2001:79). With a record such as this, it must surely be concluded that
current mediation approaches have serious limitations as a response to contemporary internal
conflict.

Consequently, in the absence of new or effective forms of diplomatic approaches, the
international community has tended to over-rely on peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention
(Jackson 2001: 334). While many lives have been saved, the widespread use of humanitarian
relief aid as a favoured response to the “complex emergencies” that characterise internal conflict
has proven to be a short-term approach, arguably even a substitute for durable political solutions
(Maynard 1999: Internet). In addition, aid is frequently exploited by the warring parties and can
inadvertently contribute to the perpetration of violence (see Duffield 1994; Anderson 1996).
Similarly, various United Nations’ attempts at peacekeeping (sanctioned under the Chapter VI
mandate to monitor peace agreements), while increasingly multi-functional in character, have
not provided a solution to conflict (Lake and Rothchild 1996: Internet). Other measures taken to
influence the warring parties, such as attempts to assert international regimes, have also had
little impact on the actions of leaders or their militant followers who are commonly isolated
from world pressure (Lake and Rothchild 1996: Internet). More coercive measures have hardly
fared better - sanctions have failed to have any effect on the level of conflict in states like
Liberia, Somalia, Zimbabwe and Angola, while direct military intervention (in pursuit of peaceful objectives) by unilateral actors like the United States has proven to be questionable in the context of contemporary internal conflict:

Just bombing something or somebody (as seems to have been the instinctive US approach to the Bosnian debacle) often exacerbates the problem, rather than solving it ... unclear lines of authority make it near impossible to find those actually deserving the punishment [of a military response] ... even if the actual culprits are duly punished they tend to lack the power to bring an end to the behaviour of their subordinates, due to the nature of conflict in complex emergencies ... Finally, there is a tendency for external actors to withdraw at the first sign of loss of life or the spilling of blood on their side. Since intrastate wars are characterised by everybody killing everybody else, it is a dangerous illusion to believe in a casualty-free involvement (as the US seems to), and indecent and irresponsible to withdraw when the illusion of clean and bloodless war fighting is revealed as such (Moller 1996: Internet).

On top of all this, the international community has often failed to intervene at all – even when it has arguably been “morally bound” to do so. In Africa in particular, there have been many instances when the world’s worst conflicts have been practically ignored. International inaction in Bosnia, Rwanda and other places has even encouraged the military leaders in those countries to press on with their abuses, as they observe that the international community is often not prepared to follow up on threats to intervene. In Rwanda, one of the first acts of the Hutu extremists (in April 1994) was to kill ten Belgian peacekeepers in a test to see how the world would react. When the United Nations pulled out the majority of its remaining peacekeepers in response, the extremists took it as proof that the international community would not intervene to stop the ensuing genocide. The lack of resolve to intervene demonstrated here is closely tied to domestic public opinion in the countries concerned – in the post-Cold War world, attempts at deep and sustained interventions in intra state conflicts commonly encounter strong public resistance in the advanced industrial countries, who are reluctant to take on the challenge of risky humanitarian interventions in distant countries (Lake and Rothchild 1996: Internet).

Understanding the Mediation Process

As we have seen, there is evidence to suggest that the models of international mediation and conflict resolution currently applied to most internal conflicts are ineffective, and at times even
harmful, to the peace process. But what exactly is mediation, and what does the mediation process involve? Mediation, as it is defined here, is understood as a form of bargaining in which the parties to a dispute seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, a party not directly involved in the conflict to resolve their differences without invoking or applying the authority of the law (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001:14). The third party involved may be a government official whose country is not a direct party to the dispute, someone associated with an international body like the United Nations or, as in the case of Track II or unofficial diplomacy, representatives of a non-government organisation. At the international level, mediation has for centuries been an integral part of the standard practice of diplomacy (Fisher 2001:Internet). Certainly, mediation has a long history of involvement in international relations - the Greeks frequently resorted to mediation to avert violent conflict, as did the Romans and the Italian city-states of Renaissance Italy (Crocker et al. 1996:5). Traditionally, the most active mediators of international conflict have been diplomats, UN officials and state representatives, with the United States being the most active mediator of international conflicts since 1945 (Zartman and Touval 1996:457). Since the end of the Cold War, international and regional organisations have also become increasingly prominent as mediators, as "freed from the restraints of the bipolar paradigm, they rushed into mediation and conflict management", with varying levels of success (Zartman and Touval 1996:459). Most recently, non-state actors - prominent individuals and non-governmental organisations for example - have also begun to play a progressively more important role:

Recent years have been witness to the involvement of many states and organisations in the mediation of violent conflict, including the United Nations (in the Vietnam-Cambodia dispute, in Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, the Afghanistan conflict, and the Iraq-Kuwait dispute); the Pope (in the Beagle Channel dispute); the Organisation of African Unity (in Tanzania-Uganda, in Rwanda and in South-West Africa); the League of Arab States; Algeria (in the US-Iran hostage crisis); the United Kingdom (in the Rhodesia-Zimbabwe dispute); former US President Jimmy Carter in Haiti; former US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and the United States (in numerous mediation attempts in Middle East conflicts). Less formal (e.g., Quaker mediation efforts) or institutionalised (e.g., mediation by individuals) mediation of international conflict also occurs on a daily basis (Bercovitch 1998:237).

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22 Some non-state actors, the Quaker religious organisation for example, have been involved in conflict mediation for many years.
The mediation process described here is one that is entered into freely by the disputing parties, who retain control over the process as well as the substance of the agreement (Fisher 2001:Internet). It is the disputing parties that determine whether mediation is conducted formally or informally, in secret or in the open, by top leaders or low-level representatives, or with closed or open-ended agendas (Jackson 2001:332). Mediation may also span a spectrum of behaviour ranging from passive activities, for example acting as a go-between, to highly active activities like putting pressure on the parties (Quinn 1999:34). It is a therefore a highly flexible form of voluntary, non-binding decision making that should not be viewed as a consistent process or a set of discrete activities, but as a continuous set of related processes involving actors, relationships, decisions, resources and settings (Jackson 2001:332). Thus, success is ultimately contingent on not one, but a collection of factors (see figure 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent Conditions</th>
<th>Current Conditions</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Nature of the Mediator</td>
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<td>Nature of the Dispute</td>
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### The Shortcomings of Traditional Mediation and Conflict Resolution Approaches

#### Diplomatic Assumptions

As we have observed, the processes of international mediation have met with little success in the context of contemporary internal conflict. This is because current diplomatic approaches suffer from a number of key limitations and weaknesses that hinder their attempts at intervention. The first of these is that current approaches to international mediation are "fundamentally flawed" because they are based around misperceived and misinterpreted underlying assumptions about the nature and causes of internal conflicts (Jackson 2001:332). This insistence on thinking about
organised violence in inherited ways, coupled with an inability to understand the character and logic of the “new wars” (Kaldor 1999:113) results in “diagnostic failure [that] is then, unsurprisingly, translated into remedial intervention failure” (Jackson 2001: 333). Diplomatic approaches have an unrelenting tendency to view internal conflict in traditional Clausewitzean terms, despite that fact that state-centric approaches like this commonly prove ineffective when applied to the deconstructed and diffuse settings of contemporary internal conflict. Current attempts at mediation and negotiation still tend to be centred on conceptions of war and conflict reminiscent of an earlier era. Indeed, diplomatic practitioners, military leaders and academic experts on international politics continue to regard war as a contest between states, a characterisation of war that is also found in the Charter of the United Nations, in hundreds of bilateral and multilateral treaties between states, in government defence ministries, and in standard textbooks on international politics and security studies (Holsti 1996:1):

Consequently, the general field of study has focussed on great power activity and statesmen have concurred and insisted that the major powers hold special responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security – what recent analysts have largely overlooked is that most of the war and killing since 1945 has occurred far away from the central battlefields of the Cold War in Europe and Pacific Asia. Instead of the traditional great powers, relatively new and weak states have become the focal point of conflict and they can no longer be analysed from a Cold War perspective as they have been [...] Key analytical concepts such as balances of power, hegemony, alliances, deterrence, power projection and a whole range of geopolitical ideas derive from the European and Cold War experiences, yet their relevance to post-1945 wars is highly problematic (Holsti 1996:13-14).

In short, current day analysts, strategists and practitioners continue to simply transfer the concepts, practices and solutions diagnosed for war between states over to the contemporary problem of wars within states – an approach that does not work in the Somalias, Rwandas, Myanmars and Azerbaijans of the world (Holsti 1996:14-15).

Power Politics

Official diplomacy, based as it is around state interests, represents stylised and formal communication between official and sovereign representatives. The mediation activities of major players (states, the UN, regional and international organisations) can be understood within the context of “power politics”, based upon the tradition, norms and culture of western
diplomacy and operating at the level of the state. This (mistaken) approach to diplomacy, rooted in the formation of the state system, continues today despite the fact that many internal groups may be contesting the nature and legitimacy of that very system (Lederach 1997:16). The mono-dimensional nature of the power-based mediation described here means that it can do little more than manage short-term strategic interactions, particularly given the fact that under the auspices of a state sponsor or the UN, it must observe the norms of international law and society (Richmond 1999:Internet). The fact that many states and international organisations (the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the Organisation of American States for example), are hindered by specific political and legal restrictions against “intervention” in the internal affairs of member-states has certainly been identified as a major problem in the response and resources available for dealing with contemporary conflicts (Lederach 1997: 15). Commonly, power-based mediation also involves the manipulation and co-ordination of the parties’ interests in order to reach an agreement (usually through the use of coercion and leverage), an approach that can prove counterproductive in situations of internal conflict (Zartman and Touval, 1996:456; Richmond, 1999:Internet):

[...] State and inter-governmental mediators frequently deviate from the logic of mediation and resort instead to power-based diplomacy.... and... as a result the mediator's endeavours heighten the suspicion, fear and anger of beleaguered disputants and are consequently ineffectual if not counter-productive (Williams cites Laurie Nathan 2001:345).

The “Entry” Problem

Diplomats continue to make the incorrect assumption that groups enmeshed in internal conflict operate according to defined hierarchies of power, and that the way to manage them is to identify and work with the relevant authorities (Jackson 2001:333). Though this strategy may work well when clear structures of authority exist, in the context of internal conflict, with its multiplicity of fluid groups and alliances and diffuse decision-making power, it is inflexible and inappropriate. Because it is based around the state, this approach is inherently biased against non-state actors - top-level talks tend to be horizontal in nature and usually involve “leaders speaking only to other leaders” (Kaldor 1999:122). Such a high level process leaves little room for the sub-state actors that characterise internal conflict, whose separate legitimacy tends to be unrecognised and subsumed by officialdom. Hence the “entry” problem observable in many
current situations of international mediation – governments may not even allow official mediators to meet non-state actors because in doing so they confer legitimacy upon them. Indeed, this was a key obstacle to talks between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation for decades. Diplomatic actors are also more likely to be biased against non-state actors. For example, it is unlikely that a state or intergovernmental mediator would ever contemplate secession as a solution to the conflict, and would more likely to try and enforce the territorial status quo (Jackson 201: 333). In addition, a Realpolitik approach prevails amongst official diplomats that assumes that the leaders of the parties involved in negotiations actually speak for the people that they represent, or worse still in many cases, that they actually have the legitimacy that will enable them to implement the measures that might be agreed upon. Hence, “agreements tend to be based on exaggerated assumptions about the power of the warring parties to implement agreements” (Kaldor 1999:120). Leaders are commonly characterised as having significant, if not exclusive, power and influence – power is primarily perceived in the form of a hierarchy in which top leaders are in a position to make decisions for, and to deliver the support of, their respective constituencies. This is questionable in the context of internal conflict, where power may be far more diffuse and fractionated. In situations such as Bosnia, Somalia and Liberia for example, the degree to which hierarchial power is operational is decidedly unclear and there are many leaders who may not fall in line behind the more visible leaders (Lederach 1997: 41). The danger of these kinds of assumptions lies in their tendency to raise the profile of (sometimes criminal) warring groups and individuals, and confer public legitimacy on them. When external actors should be isolating these actors, they are instead legitimising them, “putting illegitimate warlords in the same category as the general population” and treating them as representatives of the people, which they are clearly not (Kaldor 1999:124).

Focus on Interest Based Issues

Current approaches to international mediation also make the mistake of assuming that internal conflict is merely a breakdown in the mostly rational political relations of states. Responses are therefore orientated toward reinstating the status quo. “Conceiving of conflict in this way, diplomats aim to find compromises that will restore the status quo and return the relationship back to its ‘normal’ state of affairs” (Jackson 2001:333). Various soft or hard forms of mediation are employed, the logic of which is based on the assumption that if a power sharing
arrangement – some sort of “balancing” act – can be forged between the faction leaders, then the conflict can be terminated (Jackson cites Hampson 2001:333). As we have seen, internal conflicts are not merely a “breakdown” in a normally peaceful political system, but are instead a direct result of a particular kind of politics with its own kind of logic. From this perspective, many current internal conflicts are the direct result of deliberate, rationally calculated strategies aimed at accumulation by state and non-state elites (Jackson 2001:333). In order to transform the system, therefore, practitioners must take a comprehensive approach to the actors who operate it, and the setting in which it is rooted (Lederach 1997: 18).

"The traditional diplomatic approach of cobbling together a pact among factional leaders is only a superficial palliative in such settings [...] as such, mediation needs to move from its obsession with negotiated outcomes, to placing equal importance on the process and the relationship of the parties" (Jackson 2001: 333, 335). Currently, it is assumed that armed conflict is primarily motivated by interests and the important role that psychological factors (like subjective perceptions and belief systems), play in contemporary internal conflict is largely ignored. In addition to political and economic incentives, internal conflicts tend to be characterised by subjective elements – misperceptions, stereotypes, enemy images and deep-rooted fear and insecurity – that have a decisive influence on the conflict:

These dynamics and patterns, driven by real-life experiences, subjective perceptions and emotions, render rational and mechanical processes and solutions aimed at conflict transformation not only ineffective but also in many settings irrelevant or offensive. To be at all germane to contemporary conflict, peacebuilding must be rooted in and responsive to the experiential and subjective realities shaping people’s perspectives and needs. It is at this very point that the conceptual paradigm and praxis of peacebuilding must shift significantly away from the traditional framework and activities that make up statist diplomacy (Lederach 1997: 24).

Thus, negotiations over substantive interests and issues alone will not solve the underlying conflict dynamics and may even hinder attempts at resolution (Jackson 2001: 334). “When emotions are allowed to surface in such a way as to remain at a manageable level at which they can be handled by the participants in negotiation, the old, formal diplomacy is likely not only to prove inadequate, but it also might miss opportunities of new insight and even reconciliation” (Volkan 1991:4). As long as the crucial subjective (and psychological) aspects of internal violence are ignored, internal conflicts will continue to re-erupt because, on their own, interest-based approaches have little effect on the security problematic of the weak state (Jackson 2002a:
47) and will rarely, if ever, provide the “just” solution necessary to satisfy the warring factions. It is the underlying system and causes that must be transformed (Richmond 1999:Internet).

Short-Term, Mono-Dimensional Approaches

The mono-dimensional nature of power-based mediation also means that traditional mediation processes lack co-ordination with other peacemaking activities at different levels, preferring instead to make the incorrect assumption that the interests of the citizens will filter up to form the national interest and influence the formation of foreign policy. This approach does not mirror the issues and actors engaged in intractable internal conflict. This failure to operate at all levels of the conflict was well illustrated in the case of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia:

.... There were two quite distinct forms of international involvement. One was the high level talks and missions. The other was, in effect, a new form of humanitarian intervention. The latter, it could be argued, did in fact represent a considerable innovation in international actions both in its goals and in its scale and the way it fostered cooperation between international institutions and civil society. However, it was fatally thwarted by the contradictions between what was happening at the humanitarian level and what was happening at the level of high politics and, connected with this, by misconceptions about the political and military nature of the war.... the fundamental problem was conceptual, the failure to understand why or how the war was fought ... By assuming that “fear and hate” were endemic to Bosnian society and that the nationalist represented the whole of society, the international negotiators could see no other solution but the kind of compromise which the nationalist themselves wished to achieve. By failing to understand that “fear and hatred” were not endemic but were being manufactured during the war, they actually contributed to the nationalist goals and helped to weaken the internationalist humanitarian outlook (Bojicic and Kaldor 1997:163-164).

There is no doubt that diplomats have consistently failed to engage civil society and local actors in a serious dialogue that is on a par with the warring parties. Indeed, there is a clear tendency on the part of Western political leaders to dismiss such initiatives as “worthy but insignificant” –negotiator David Owen’s comment in Yugoslavia that “citizens can’t make peace” is noteworthy here (Kaldor 1999: 122). This kind of attitude was also reflected in US embassy efforts in Mogadishu, where a local Somali driver commented on the negotiation process:

Everyone agrees that these men [the protagonists] have caused so much unnecessary suffering in this country. We understand that the US embassy had to deal with these men. But did the embrace have to be so fast so public? They are all war criminals in my view. What the outside world should be doing is giving them the message that,
yes, other leaders should be allowed to emerge. Why didn’t the US embassy also invite religious leaders, elders, women, professionals, when Aideed and Ali Mahdi met, to let these men know that these are the people they have stolen power from? It is a great pity that they did not think of it. It sent all the wrong signals (Kaldor 1999:123).

Clearly, current efforts at international mediation are significantly limited by this tendency to ignore public sentiment and along with it, the source of conflicts that are based on long-held, broadly based animosities (CCPDC 1997:48). The failure to take seriously alternative sources of power demonstrates the short-term approach to conflict resolution taken by current diplomats, as well as their misunderstanding about the character of power and the relationship between power and violence in contemporary internal conflict (Kaldor 1999:123). To their detriment, official approaches are characterised by a short-term orientation. Official attempts at intervention usually occur only once a conflict reaches crisis level, despite the fact that the nature of internal conflict clearly necessitates early intervention (before polarisation and the embedding of enemy images occurs). Official diplomats also tend to focus on the signing of a peace agreement, with their interest ceasing at the implementation stage:

All too often, international mediation ends with the parties’ signatures to general peace agreements, as this is perceived to be the official end of the conflict [...] the ad hoc choice of mediators and strategies and the failure to coordinate multiple diplomatic ‘tracks’ commonly results in a failure to follow through, too often resulting in the signing of peace accords which fail at the implementation stage (Jackson 2001:334,335).

A good example of this is El Salvador, where the failure to implement land transfer schemes (due in large part to lack of donor support) was the most serious threat to the fragile peace which was bought by the 1992 peace accord. Indeed, Berdal and Keen argue (1997: 809, 811) that the failure of the mediation process to follow through and meet the needs of ex-combatants, to integrate them into civilian life, and to reform “old power structures” is to a very large extent, responsible for the gloomy experience of intervention attempts in recent years.

The Public Nature of the Mediation Process

Official diplomatic attempts at mediation tend to be highly visible. A great deal of attention is paid to the movements of the players, their statements and their chosen positions. The mediation process itself also receives a great deal of press coverage and airtime. Ledearch
argues that visibility and public profile are essential components descriptive of this level, and that they are actively sought by the actors at this level, both to represent the concerns of a leader’s constituency and to secure his or her own position of influence. However, the highly public nature of many official diplomatic initiatives can be highly problematic for the mediation process. Due to their high public profile, the protagonists generally become locked in to the positions or stance that they take on conflict issues and they are under tremendous pressure to maintain those positions vis-à-vis their adversaries and their own constituencies (Lederach 1997: 40). This contributes to a lack of flexibility and constrains their ability to make the positional changes that may be necessary for the resolution of the conflict. Acceptance of anything less than their publicly stated goals is seen as weakness or loss of face. It also precludes face-saving and behind the scenes deals, and exposes every move of the conflicting parties to the scrutiny of their people and the international community (Arthur 1999: 495). The public nature of official diplomatic approaches also contributes to the “entry” problem associated with internal conflict, as issues of status and legitimacy become a public issue. Consequently, in the public model of mediation, parties tend to speak more to the media and to their constituencies than to their counterparts in the mediation process. This is unlikely to be effective in the context of internal conflict, which requires the facilitation of communication between the parties and attention to identity-based issues. It is more likely that an unofficial and private pre-negotiation phase, where issues of status, negotiating format, venue and agenda can be discussed without the aforementioned pressures, is more appropriate in the situations of internal conflict — it is only when the substantive issues are being discussed that the parties would then move to public negotiation (Jackson 2001: 334).

Conclusion

To conclude, it is apparent from the preceding analysis that traditional concepts and theories of international mediation and conflict resolution theory have proven inadequate when faced with the difficult task of resolving violent internal conflict. As table 2.1 illustrates, there are a number of key limitations and weaknesses to current diplomatic approaches, and this has created gaps between the current responses and the actual response necessary to effectively meet the challenges of internal conflict. Unfortunately, it would seem that we are currently “much better
equipped to respond to humanitarian emergencies than we are to deal with the dynamic root causes that produce those crises" (Lederach 1997:18). However, the acute problems faced by current mediation processes should not be considered insurmountable. In order to be more effective, conflict resolution proponents need to develop more effective, contemporary approaches to mediation - approaches that take into account the unique nature of internal conflict and the potential of alternative mediation processes. Unfortunately, there have been relatively few attempts to do so thus far (Jackson 2001: 334). In the future, proponents of mediation need to come up with innovative ways of addressing the different demands, interests and belief systems that characterise internal conflict:

With such a large number of elements, it seems unreasonable to expect that a single intervention strategy could deal with all of them. It seems more useful to envision intervention.... as a coordinated series of concurrent and consecutive strategies directed towards the long-term goal of resolving the conflict (Hampson cites Keashly and Fisher 1197:746).

This view increasingly points to a form of mediation that must be based around multiple levels of intervention (see Lederachs model, figure 3.2). Keeping this argument in mind, this study contends that non-state actors – religious leaders, community groups, NGOs, or prominent individuals like Jimmy Carter or the Pope – have a unique and important role to play in the alternative, co-ordinated and multi-track approaches necessary to meet the challenge of resolving internal conflict. What is required, therefore, is a more detailed analysis of how unofficial, non-state actors (in particular) can contribute to an alternative model of international mediation and conflict resolution that is geared specifically towards this challenge. It is to this task that we now turn our attention.
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<th>Response by States/Intergovernmental Organisations</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>What Internal Conflict Requires</th>
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<td>1) Based around traditional and ill-conceived assumptions about the nature and causes of internal conflict;</td>
<td>A sophisticated and well-informed understanding of the nature and causes of internal conflict;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Short-term approaches that focus on the symptoms of conflict;</td>
<td>Long-term approaches that focus on underdevelopment, economic crisis and capacity-building at the core of response;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Emphasis on humanitarian aid and peacekeeping;</td>
<td>Emphasis on preventive diplomacy, reconstruction, capacity building;</td>
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<td>4) Intervention usually occurs at crisis level;</td>
<td>Early intervention before polarisation and the embedding of enemy images;</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Western concepts of democracy/political options are imposed in post-conflict situations;</td>
<td>Participatory debate at all levels of society, enabling the formulation of political solutions uniquely suited to the conflict context;</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Focus on interests and resource-based issues;</td>
<td>Focus on identity-based issues – the relational and psychological aspects of the conflict;</td>
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<tr>
<td>7) Activities focus at the level of the state - settlement comes from top level leadership;</td>
<td>Settlement must come from the people as a whole – requires the inclusion and support of civil society;</td>
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<tr>
<td>8) Practice power politics;</td>
<td>Practice mutually inclusive, transformative problem-solving techniques;</td>
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<tr>
<td>9) Fail to take the role of civil society and alternative sources of power seriously;</td>
<td>Support of civil society in order to create “space” where alternative non-violent and inclusive discourses can occur;</td>
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<td>10) Biased against non-state actors;</td>
<td>The inclusion of non-state actors that characterise internal conflict;</td>
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<td>11) Ill-informed interventions that inadvertently fuel conflict;</td>
<td>Reconfigured approaches that utilise expert analysis and local understanding;</td>
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<tr>
<td>12) Focus on the political objectives of the warring parties;</td>
<td>Understanding of the interaction between the political, economic and social functions of violence;</td>
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<td>13) Create political solutions that are orientated towards reinstating the status quo;</td>
<td>Transform the underlying systems and causes that contribute to conflict;</td>
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<td>14) Lack co-ordination with other peacemaking activities that occur at different levels;</td>
<td>Multiple levels of intervention</td>
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<td>15) A mediation process that is highly public in nature.</td>
<td>A private and unofficial pre-negotiation stage to set the scene for more public attempts at resolution.</td>
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Chapter 3

Non-official Actors as Mediators in Internal Conflict: An Alternative Approach to Peace

Introduction

The end of the Cold War period has brought with it a growing realisation that the world is not structured to cope with the vicious and intractable nature of the internal conflicts observable today. As shown, traditional diplomatic techniques have fallen considerably short of meeting the challenges posed by conflict within states and although an extensive range of strategies have been employed by a wide range of actors, there is clearly still much to be learnt about how to resolve internal conflicts effectively. As Diamond and McDonald point out: “In a vacuum such as this, alternatives arise and people step forward, fuelled by the frustration that citizens feel when governments fail to be effective, innovative and imaginative when dealing with longstanding problems” (1996:3). Accordingly, in the search for viable alternatives to traditional, state-centric approaches, recent years have seen increasing importance placed on the role of non-state actors. It is the potential contribution that non-official, citizens groups such as these can make to the field of mediation and conflict resolution that is the focus of the following chapters. In particular, this chapter will examine the role and approach of non-official actors to the resolution of internal conflict in the post-Cold War era. The emerging role of non-official diplomacy – that is diplomacy carried out by non-official groups like churches or other religious groups, charitable bodies, academic bodies, NGOs, civil associations and the like – will be investigated and the concept of non-official, or “track two” diplomacy further defined. Non-official approaches to mediation and conflict resolution are then outlined in some detail. Essentially, it is argued that the long-term, transformational approaches taken by non-official actors, with activities that tend to focus on addressing the psychological aspects of internal conflict and empowering actors at all levels of the conflict, have the potential to redress the gap
between current (official and state-led) approaches to internal conflict and the actual remedies necessary to meet the challenges of contemporary internal conflict.

The Rise of Global Civil Society

As we have seen, since the 1990s the world has been witness to dramatic change. Particularly important to this discussion are the changes bought about by globalisation and the end of the Cold War - both of which have resulted in the reconfiguration of state sovereignty and an exponential growth in the size and influence of global civil society\(^{23}\). These developments have combined to set the context for the increasingly important role of non-official diplomacy in the current international system. Globalisation, and in particular, the computer and telecommunications revolution, has contributed by making technology widely accessible and affordable, thereby breaking governments' monopoly on the collection and management of large amounts of information and depriving them of the deference they enjoyed because of it:

Instantaneous access to information and the ability to put it to use multiplies the number of players that matter and reduces the number who command great authority. By drastically reducing the importance of proximity, the new technologies also change peoples' perceptions of community - people are connected across borders with growing ease, disrupting hierarchies, diffusing and redistributing power and favouring decentralized networks over any other mode of organization (Mathews 1997: Internet).

The easy reach of citizens groups behind the borders of other states has subsequently offered them unprecedented channels of influence and has forced governments to consider domestic public opinion, even on matters that governments have traditionally handled strictly among themselves. NGOs have since "worked their way into the heart of international organizations and into their day to day organizations, bringing new priorities, demands for procedures that give a voice to groups outside government and new standards of accountability" (Mathews 1997: Internet). In some cases, it would even appear that citizens groups have been able to

\(^{23}\) The phrase civil society is often used in different ways; here, it is defined as encompassing a broad variety of individuals and institutions inhabiting the area between individuals (or families) and the state. In its widest sense, civil society would therefore range from political parties (public side) to business corporations (private side) with a wide range of associations and groupings in between (Blair 1997:23).
“push around” some of the largest and most powerful governments (Mathews 1997a: 53). Although many of the transnational citizens groups and actors referred to here are new to world politics, in some issue areas (like human rights and humanitarian relief) they have acquired significant authority. Today for example, Amnesty International’s staff size and budget “stack up favourably against the proportion of U.N. resources dedicated to human rights concerns” (Clark 1995: 513). Together, non-governmental actors now deliver more official development assistance than the entire UN system (excluding the World Bank and the IMF) and in many countries they are increasingly delivering the services that faltering governments can no longer manage (Mathews 1997: Internet). Today, international NGOs (INGOs) around the world total 16,586 (Union of International Associations reports 1998-99, cited by Aall 1996: 435). The increase in citizens groups has not been limited to the developed world. At the community and local levels the erosion and sometimes collapse of state authority has permitted the emergence of an ever increasing number of indigenous, grassroots NGOs (Aall 1996:435). In a short space of time, 10,000 NGOs have been established in Bangladesh, 21,000 in the Philippines and 27,000 in Chile (Willetts cites Boutros Boutros-Ghali 1996:311-312). Thus, the considerably lower costs of international communication have altered the goals of non-official citizens and groups, influencing and changing international outcomes as they increasingly seek an active role in the political sphere (Conroy 1994: 24). New possibilities for communication and co-operation within governmental decision-making processes have since been created and accordingly, a “novel redistribution of power among states, markets and civil society is currently underway, ending the steady accumulation of power in the hands of states that began with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648” (Mathews 1997: Internet).

...one characteristic of our changing world is the widening influence of private citizens in national policymaking and in the conduct of international relationships. To be sure, that may be a phenomenon of the industrialised than of the developing nations today, but it is not limited to the northern hemisphere. Admittedly, nation states still have institutional lives of their own, but more and more, human beings are demanding that their institutions reflect human needs and values (Saunders 1991:41).

24 A good example of this is trade negotiations between the United States and Mexico in the early 1990s. During the negotiations coalitions of NGOs formed in each country and across both borders. They managed to generate enough support to force the Bush administration to capitulate to their demands over environmental and labour concerns (Mathews 1997:54).

25 In the humanitarian relief sector in particular, “super” NGOs have emerged, like CARE USA, which has an annual budget of $346 million and World Vision, with a budget of over $140 million (Aall 2000: 89).
United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan clearly recognises the increasing importance of non-governmental roles, commenting that: “the United Nations once dealt only with Governments. By now we know that peace and prosperity cannot be achieved without partnerships involving Governments, international organisations, the business community and civil society. In today’s world, we depend on each other” (United Nations Website 2002).

Indeed, non-governmental groups are now a regular feature at the United Nations and their numbers continue to expand, despite persistent attempts by governments to limit the numbers participating. Currently, there are 2143 NGOs in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)26 (United Nations Website 2002). Clearly, in the modern context non-official actors are more and more powerful at the corporate, national and international level. Accordingly, their growing role in the political sphere is recognised by governmental players, who increasingly acknowledge that “their scale in dollars and often, more importantly, in expertise now approximates and sometimes exceeds that of smaller governments and of international organisations” (Mathews 1997:Internet). Certainly, the significance accorded to non-official contributions is reflected in their ability to attract donor funding from governments. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Union (EU), for instance, regularly earmark millions of dollars to be contracted out to various non-government agencies for the provision of humanitarian relief. In recent years, they have also begun to sponsor numerous non-governmental mediation and conflict resolution projects around the world. The Scandinavian, Dutch, Japanese and German governments are also among major contributors to these types of programs (Hara 1999: 148). In the current environment it is recognised that the unofficial actors constituting global society perform a wide range of human, medical, educational and other relief and development functions, regularly supplanting or in worst case scenarios, replacing the role of the state.

They are an institutional expression of civil society important to the political health and well-being of virtually all countries, providing a vast array of human services unmatched by either government or the market, and acting as the self-designated advocates for action on virtually all matters of public concern. Today, non-official actors are involved in activities and programs that address issues of economic and social development, peacemaking and disarmament, the environment, human rights,

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26 There are also a further 400 NGOs accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development, a subsidiary body of ECOSOC (United Nations Website).
education, crime, drug abuse, health, population, youth and families (Mawlawi 1992-3: 393).

In this sense, national governments are not simply losing autonomy in a globalizing economy; they are sharing powers - including political, social and security roles at the core of sovereignty - with businesses, with international organisations, and with a multitude of citizens groups. As a consequence, the ranks of recognised players in modern-day diplomacy have expanded to include non-governmental and non-official actors like businesses, international NGOs, indigenous NGOs, citizens groups and prominent individuals. Most commonly, the diplomatic efforts of these kinds of actors are referred to as non-official, or track two diplomacy.

What is Non-Official, or Track II Diplomacy?

At a conference as far back as 1973, participants declared that the role of non-officials in international peace making had been “far too neglected”, and predicted that in the future the importance of their role would greatly increase27 (Reychler 1997: Internet). This prediction appears to have been on the mark, as concurrent with the rise in global civil society has been the recognition that non-official, civil society actors could possibly contribute to a more pro-active kind of “non-official” diplomacy in a number of ways (Lewer 1999:10). In 1981, the activities and interventions of non-official actors in conflict situations were conceptualised for the first time by Joseph Montville, who coined the term “Track Two Diplomacy” to describe a broad range of unofficial contact and interaction aimed at resolving conflicts, both internationally and within states (Notter and McDonald 1996:1). The basic premise of this kind of “track two” diplomacy was the recognition that the expertise for dealing successfully with conflict and peacemaking does not lie solely with government personnel or procedures (or “track one diplomacy”): “Rather, citizens from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of skills have something to offer and can make a difference” (Diamond and McDonald 1996:2). Today, track two diplomacy (also referred to as “citizens diplomacy”, “supplementary diplomacy” or “non-state diplomacy”) is commonly defined as “methods of diplomacy outside the formal governmental system - the non-governmental, informal, and unofficial contacts and activities

27 The conference was organised by the Communications Institute of the Academy for Educational Development at Bellagio (Reychler 1997: Internet)
between private citizens or groups of individuals aimed at de-escalating conflict by reducing anger, fear and tension and by improving communication and understanding” (McDonald 1991:202). Track two activities are understood as having three broad objectives:

- To reduce or resolve conflict between groups or nations by improving communication, understanding, and relationships;

- To decrease tension, anger, fear, or misunderstanding by humanizing the "face of the enemy" and giving people direct personal experience of one another; and

- To affect the thinking and action of Track One (governmental diplomacy) by addressing root causes, feelings, and needs and by exploring diplomatic options without prejudice, thereby laying the groundwork for more formal negotiations or for re-framing policies.

Generally, track two diplomatic efforts are not conceptualised as a replacement for official efforts, but rather as an indispensable preparation for and adjunct to them; “it is only through a collaborative effort among all societal sectors and power structures that real change is possible” (Notter and McDonald 1996:1)28. Ideally therefore, track two diplomatic efforts should pave the way for track one negotiations and agreements by encouraging official, intergovernmental diplomats to recognise and utilize crucial information and insights obtained by non-official actors (see McDonald 1991). An excellent example of this type of activity occurred in Tanzania in 1996. The U.S. Information Service developed a program in preventive diplomacy featuring a one-week training session in conflict resolution skills for 23 leaders from track one and track two. The participants were so stimulated by the learning experience that they decided to organise their own Conflict Resolution Centre together so that they could begin to spread these peacebuilding skills across the nation (Notter and McDonald 1996:Internet). In recent years, the non-official “track two” movement toward peacemaking and peacebuilding has grown exponentially. The Carter Centre’s International Guide to NGO Activities in Conflict

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28 Not all academics and practitioners are happy with the view that track two is essentially a complement to formal intergovernmental diplomacy designed to assist official leaders. Authors like Kavaloski (1990) argue instead that much of track two does, in fact, constitute non-violence resistance and is carried out not to assist official leaders, but in opposition to them and their policies – policies that may appear to citizens activists as “bellicose, short-sighted and dangerous” (cited by Lewer 1999:12).
Prevention and Resolution reflects the diverse list of non-official actors involved in peacemaking and includes NGOs involved in everything from third-party mediation, construction of conflict resolution centres, conflict monitoring, and conflict resolution training workshops – to arms control projects, human rights advocacy, and fact-finding missions (Conradi 1998:2). As a result of this kind of growth, it has been proposed that the designation of official and unofficial diplomacy into merely two categories (track one and track two) no longer covers the variety, scope, and depth of citizen involvement. In order to reflect these developments, Diamond and McDonald (1996) created a concept of “Multi-Track Diplomacy” for understanding the complex system of peacemaking activities, consisting of nine tracks in a practical and conceptual framework (see figure 3.1).

Ideally, each track should take full advantage of the expertise, experience and resources of the tracks below and above it, and all nine tracks should work together in order to build up a strong enough power base to have a significant influence on track one (Kruegar 1998:2). Official efforts to deescalate conflict can therefore be facilitated by multi-track diplomacy. As Diamond and McDonald point out “while each of the tracks in the multi-track framework for peace represents a world unto itself, at the same time each of these worlds exists in the context of the others” (1996:5). By working together, proponents of the various groups or tracks would gradually develop large power bases and exert influence on track one bureaucrats to change their way of thinking into a more positive, problem-solving mode (McDonald 1989). The emphasis is stressed, therefore, on the complementary role of non-official interveners in bridging the gap between official diplomats and the wider grass-roots constituencies (Lewer 1999: 11). Diamond and McDonald’s concept of multi-track diplomacy is particularly useful to this discussion because it looks at the inter-relatedness between the different tracks and actors involved in conflict resolution. It examines the whole system and provides a useful framework within which to understand the diversity and range of the roles that non-official players like NGOs, citizens groups, and private individuals can play in conflict scenarios. It is therefore

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29 The authors use the term “peacemaking” generically rather than specifically, and it includes all activities of what might otherwise be categorized as peacekeeping, peacebuilding, peace research, peace studies, peace education, or conflict resolution (Diamond and McDonald 1996:13).
within this comprehensive, multi-level approach to conflict resolution that the mediation activities of non-official actors are best conceptualised and examined.

Multi-Track Diplomacy is a conceptual way to view the process of international peacemaking... It looks at that web of interconnected parts (activities, individuals, institutions, communities) that operate together, whether awkwardly or gracefully, for a common goal: the world at peace. The value of such a view is that it gives us a tool for self-examination and reflection. It enables us to see who we are, what we're doing, how we're doing it, where we're headed, and why (Diamond and McDonald 1996:1).

The Rise of Non-Official Diplomacy

Historically, only a small number of non-official actors have attempted to identify and embrace roles that encompass “track two” efforts to resolve violent conflict. Of those that have attempted to take on a diplomatic function, religious and spiritually orientated NGOs have been particularly active and are among the earliest and most prominent actors in conflict mediation and resolution.30 Indeed, the assumptions that lie behind conceptions of track two diplomacy have long been held by religious groups, “which have historically had a strong local presence in areas of potential or actual conflict and have found an ever-increasing need and opportunity to use their established credibility and good offices to help mediate conflicts informally” (Diamond and McDonald 1996:2). The Quakers Peace and Service (QPS) for example, has been actively involved in conflict mediation since the Second World War.

For many years, Quaker representatives and mediators have demonstrated exceptional patience and perseverance in dealing with complex disputes. Their ability to gain the trust of the disputants during conflicts in the Middle East in 1955 and after the 1967 war, between the two Germanys from 1962-1972, during the 1965 India-Pakistan war, as well as the Nigeria-Biafra civil war in 1968 to 1969, attests to the Quakers’ skills and credibility (Mawlawi 1992-3: 395-396).

30 Lee (1997: 2) notes that religion is nowadays regarded by many as the most controversial vehicle in which to place any trust. Some religious institutions such as the Christian churches do not enjoy widespread popular confidence in their ability and aptitude for peace-keeping. To some, religion is seen to entail not mutual understanding but conversion and assimilation.
Other examples of non-official mediation or "citizens diplomacy" during the Cold War period include the Vatican, which played a key role in mediating an end to the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile, and the International Committee of the Red Cross which was involved, along with the Quakers, in humanitarian mediation in Africa's civil wars of the 1960s and 1970s (Crocker et al., 1999:6). The processes of mediation and conflict resolution are, therefore, not completely new to non-official actors. In general, however, most citizens groups or International NGOs, despite being active in areas of violent conflict for many years, have chosen to limit their activities to the delivery of relief and humanitarian aid and working for rehabilitation and sustainable development (Lewer 1999: 4). Traditionally, these actors have not considered their activities as contributing to the amelioration (or aggravation) of conflict - rather than responding to the occurrence of conflict itself, they have instead chosen to maintain a policy of strict neutrality, attempting to define their role as providers of aid to those in need without regard to political, ethnic, or religious affiliation (Aall 1996:435).

More recently, however, developments in international politics have changed both the context and the nature of internal conflict, in turn changing the nature of non-official involvement. The inadequacies of UN and government intervention attempts, the high number of continuing internal conflicts and the growing complexity of the international environment has led to "diplomatic overload" and subsequently, the increasing involvement of "outsiders" in relations within and between countries (Reychler 1997: Internet). Improvements in travel and communications have also meant that more and more citizens around the world are choosing to get involved in the affairs of other states:

... in the 1980s and 1990s, citizens from all walks of life – housewives, medical professionals, educators, scientists and others – have come to understand the power of building relationships across "enemy" lines and out of this has come the burgeoning citizens diplomacy movement. Private citizens have taken themselves in record numbers, individually and in groups, to the former Soviet Union, Central America, Israel and the Occupied Territories, Ireland, South Africa and other places to "see for themselves" and to establish bonds of friendship and networks of mutual support and ongoing relationships (Diamond and McDonald 1996:2).
Table 3.1  A Multi-Track Framework for Peace

Track 1.  Government, or Peacemaking through Diplomacy.
This is the world of official diplomacy, policymaking, and peacebuilding as expressed through formal aspects of the governmental process: the executive branch, the State Department, Congress, the United Nations, and others.

Track 2.  Nongovernmental/Professional, or Peacemaking through Conflict Resolution.
This is the realm of professional non-governmental action attempting to analyse, prevent, resolve and manage international conflicts by non-state actors.

Track 3.  Business, or Peacemaking through Commerce.
This is the field of business and its actual and potential effects on peacebuilding through the provision of economic opportunities, international friendship and understanding, informal channels of communication, and support for other peacemaking activities.

Track 4.  Private Citizen, or Peacemaking through Personal Involvement.
This includes the various ways that individual citizens become involved in peace and development activities through citizen diplomacy, exchange programs, private voluntary organizations, non-governmental organisations, and special interest groups.

Track 5.  Research, Training, and Education, or Peacemaking through Learning.
This track includes three related worlds: research, as it is connected to university programs, think tanks, and special interest research centres; training programs that seek to provide training in practitioner skills such as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution, and third-party facilitation; and education, including kindergarten through to Ph.D. programs that cover various aspects of global or cross-cultural studies, peace and world order studies, and conflict analysis, management, and resolution.

Track 6.  Activism, or Peacemaking through Advocacy.
This covers the field of peace and environmental activism on such issues as disarmament, human rights, social and economic justice, and advocacy of special-interest groups regarding specific governmental policies.

Track 7.  Religion, or Peacemaking through Faith in Action
This examines the beliefs and peace-orientated actions of spiritual and religious communities and such morality-based movements as pacifism, sanctuary, and non-violence.

Track 8.  Funding, or Peacemaking through Providing Resources.
This refers to the funding community - those foundations and individual philanthropists that provide the financial support for many of the activities undertaken by the other tracks.

Track 9.  Communications and the Media, or Peacemaking through Information.
This is the realm of the voice of the people: how public opinion gets shaped and expressed by the media - print, film, video, radio, electronic systems, and the arts.
Many of these citizens, particularly those engaged in humanitarian activity, have found themselves increasingly confronted by the effects of violent internal conflict\textsuperscript{31}. This has forced them, and the organisations that they represent, to realize that the ways in which they provide aid and other services can profoundly affect the dynamics of conflict (Aall 1996:434). In particular, it has been acknowledged that outside intervention, however well-intentioned, has the potential to inadvertently fuel violent conflict. As a result, there have been initiatives by non-governmental actors to integrate the relief and development elements of their work with peacebuilding initiatives in a more coherent and integrated way (Lewer 1999: 4). Accordingly, an expanding array of non-governmental actors, including groups active in the fields of humanitarian relief, human rights and democracy, have partly modified their mandates to better integrate the dynamics of conflict within their approach. In Sri Lanka for instance, CARE International works with trainers from the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy\textsuperscript{32} to develop a greater capacity for conflict resolution within CARE staff, and to integrate social peacebuilding skills into its relief and development work (IMTD Website 2002). Today therefore, “a traditional relief focus is increasingly rare as NGOs have been encouraged to think beyond relief and to re-conceptualise their programmes in terms of long-term development and peacebuilding” (Hulme and Goodhand 2000: Internet).

The realisation that humanitarian intervention can adversely affect conflict dynamics, when coupled with the end of the Cold War and bipolarity, has ultimately freed up non-official actors to take up new roles in mediation and conflict management. Because many agencies now insist not only on relieving the effects of armed conflicts, but also on responding to the conflict itself, they have become increasingly involved in conflict resolution activities. Non-official actors have thus become more active as mediators, facilitators and conflict managers, creating a “third tier” of actors beyond states and international organisations: “Quakers, church leaders, heads of

\textsuperscript{31} Duffield notes that in this new environment the delivery of humanitarian relief tends to occur within the context of ongoing conflict, within a framework of “negotiated access” that involves gaining the consent of both parties (previously only the consent of one party, the legitimate government has been needed). This process has enlarged the sphere of NGO and United Nations activity even further, and these organisations are now working in situations that were unthinkable less than a decade ago - due to the nature of contemporary internal conflicts, in many places non-official actors can for the first time work openly on all sides of an unresolved conflict (1996:84-85).

\textsuperscript{32} This not-for-profit organisation specialises in conflict resolution activities and is based in Virginia in the United States.
peace research institutions, professors, members of parliaments and journalists have all attempted to solve or alleviate conflicts which have eluded the efforts of officially accredited emissaries" (Volkan et al. cite Eban 1990:10). Indeed, the world has been witness to a near exponential growth of peace activities rendered by all kinds of non-official actors – businesses, private citizens, neighbourhood associations research and training institutions, students, schools, activists, the religious community, the media - and ranging from enhancing communication, improving mutual understanding, disapproving violence, mediation, reconciliation, through to interpositionary peacekeeping\(^{33}\). In the case of Africa, religious organisations, traditional and business leaders, some women’s organisations, non-governmental organisations involved in mediation and capacity building in support of conflict management, and scholars and intellectuals have all been identified as civil society actors that have proven effective in managing conflicts (International Peace Academy 1996: Internet).

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<th>Table 3.2</th>
<th>The Peacemaking Activities of Non-Official Actors</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Mediation training; fostering mediation and dialogue programs in the field to include all sectors of the population;</td>
<td>• Promoting understanding through sports, the arts and professional activities (community level activities that positively affect inter-identity relationships);</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The use of television to teach non-violent conflict resolution;</td>
<td>• Mobilising local leaders and community members for crisis management and prevention;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Radio broadcasts on interethnic harmony and reconciliation;</td>
<td>• Developing cooperative projects between identity groups;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The provision of public education on ethnic co-operation and conflict resolution;</td>
<td>• Intervening in an early warning and preventive role;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Research and analysing the causes of internal conflict;</td>
<td>• Physically intervening to protect possible victims of violence who are important to the peace process;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The construction of conflict resolution centres;</td>
<td>• Human rights monitoring and advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arms control and disarmament projects.</td>
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Certainly, non-governmental actors have developed a whole series of practical tools for peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace building (see figure 3.2). All over the world, new, specialised organisations that focus their resources primarily on conflict resolution and prevention (Conflict Resolution NGOs, or CRNGOs) have also emerged: Search for Common

\(^{33}\) Interpositioning is the physical placement of peacekeepers between groups engaged in violent conflict in an impartial stance toward all parties. A good example of this occurred in 1983, when Witness for Peace was founded by Christian activists in the U.S. to send teams of volunteers to Nicaragua to deter attacks on the Nicaraguan people by U.S.-sponsored Contras. In the event of an invasion, they committed themselves to "assemble as many North American Christians as we can to join us and go immediately to Nicaragua to stand unarmed as a loving barrier in the path of any attempted invasion, sharing the danger posed to the Nicaraguan people" (Nonviolent Peaceforce Website 2002).
Ground in the United States; the African Dialogue Centre for Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts in Tanzania; the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in South Africa; International Alert in London, to name but a few. These organisations offer innovative skills and creative projects that are geared specifically towards the pursuit of peace, including the promotion of the philosophy and techniques of mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, conflict resolution and non-violence (Anderson 1996: 344). In Britain alone, the Mediation UK Directory (1994) lists 255 organisations whose titles roughly denote their activities in this field (Voutira and Brown 1995:9). In today’s world, therefore, non-official actors increasingly see themselves as having the capacity, expertise, and knowledge to initiate a process of dialogue between warring parties and factions (Crocker et al., 1999:6-7).

However, while some non-official actors and organisations are experienced in the field of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, others, like many of the large relief and development NGOs that are now undertaking significant policy work in this area, are new actors in the field. It is crucial, therefore, to recognise that the distinct new functions many non-official actors are being asked to perform require different sets of disciplines and skills, some of which already exist in the non-governmental community and some of which do not (Aall 1996:436). Undoubtedly, non-official involvement in mediation and conflict resolution is in a state of rapid expansion and on a steep learning curve and accordingly, there is still much to be learnt about non-official approaches to the resolution of contemporary internal conflict.

Non-Official Mediation: Part of an Alternative Conflict Resolution Paradigm?

As we have seen, state-centric, power based approaches to mediation and conflict resolution have been the traditional tools of diplomats, state representatives and the UN in situations of internal conflict. Non-official diplomats, in comparison, tend to take a more contemporary, holistic approach to the practice of mediation and conflict resolution. Arguably, this enables them to address the shortcomings of traditional power-based approaches, while also developing new techniques that are more suited to meeting the challenges posed by contemporary internal conflict: “contemporary conflicts necessitate peacebuilding approaches that respond to the real
nature of those conflicts” (Lederach 1997:25). Hence, non-official diplomacy distinguishes itself from traditional diplomacy “not only by the way civilian diplomats intervene in conflicts or the tools they use, but also by its conceptual and normative approach to conflicts” (Reychler 1997: 4). The thinking of traditional diplomats and non-official diplomats clearly differs in several ways. Non-official or “track two” approaches “pay much more attention to the civilian space in international relations. They search for common ground and look for the development of win-win relations” (Reychler 1997: 5). This kind of work is based around a premise of positive peace34 where:

... people strive to transform society and communities into fairer and more just places to live. Not only is the “direct” experience of violence tackled, but also the “structural” elements in society which perpetuate potential sources of conflict. Working for positive peace means empowering people to become involved in non-violent change processes themselves, to help build sustainable conditions for peace and justice (Lewer 1999:5).

Non-official diplomats therefore assume that conflicts cannot be resolved, nor peace made, unless the root causes of conflicts are identified and dealt with. This implies that for conflicts to be resolved, the actors involved must look beyond the surface issues and address the substantive and emotional issues as well as the parties’ needs and interests that are at the root of the conflicts (Reychler cites Assefa 1997: 4). Consequently, non-official actors have attempted to expand the field of diplomacy to include a wide variety of activities specifically geared towards conflict resolution. They have attempted to reintroduce the elements of time and psychology back into the mediation process, thereby addressing the psychological aspects of internal conflict. In the words of Mennonite conflict resolution scholar, John Paul Lederach:

....the nature of contemporary settings of armed conflict – where neighbour fears neighbour and sometimes family member fears family member, and where each sheds blood – makes the emotive, perceptual, social-psychological, and spiritual dimensions core, not peripheral, concerns. The immediacy of hatred and prejudice, of racism and xenophobia, as primary factors and motivators of the conflict means that its transformation must be rooted in social-psychological and spiritual dimensions that traditionally have been seen as either irrelevant or outside the competency of international diplomacy (Lederach 1997:29).

34 This is in opposition to the concept of “negative peace”, where peace merely means the absence of violence and an acceptance of unbalanced power relationships, inequalities and lack of access to resources which may be associated with such a condition. In the case of negative peace, the idea of “peace as order” prevails (Lewer 1999:5).
Consequently, building peace requires not only attention to the hard layers of conflict (the political-diplomatic, military, legal, economic, ecological), but also the softer layers of the "deep conflict": "Peace also requires reconciliation at the psychological and emotional levels. Also very important is the spiritual level. At this level peacebuilding means transforming despair into hope, hate into love, nihilism into meaningfulness, condemnation into forgiveness, and alienation into relationship" (Curle 1990:14). Crucial to non-official approaches, therefore, are the twin notions of transformation and reconciliation. "Transformational" approaches seek to replace power politics with mutual empowerment, where basic human needs, not strategic interests, set the agenda. The term empowerment relates to our own understanding and analysis of what power is. Here, it means power "to" people rather than "over" people – in one sense it means people being able to take more control of their lives and to be less dependent on others. It is the area of soft power, associated with bargaining, compromise, persuasion and transformative long-term problem solving, that non-official mediators utilise to promote and create trustful relationships35 (Lewer 1999: 6). Ultimately, conflict transformation focuses on the dynamic processes through which conflict becomes violent, rather than focussing narrowly on how to bring a violent conflict to a cease-fire or settlement.

Collaboration and inclusivity replace competition and exclusivity; international relations are seen as ongoing relationships between all the people, not crisis or situational relationships between governments; and the international community is called to address human and environmental issues, not just the political side of world affairs (Diamond and McDonald 1996:37).

The transformation process does not involve the elimination or control of conflict, but instead impacts relationships to interrupt vicious cycles of violence. This occurs by transforming perceptions and expressions of conflict and by reaching a common definition of the conflict situation. As an approach, conflict transformation aims to transform a conflict from violence and destruction into a constructive force that produces social change, progressively removing, or at least reducing, the conditions from which the conflict and violence have arisen. The peace that develops will then be deeply rooted and sustainable. Transformational interventions such as these promote non-violent mechanisms that reduce and ultimately eliminate violence, foster

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35 Boulding (1989) talks of hard (coercive or threat) power and soft (exchange or integrative) power.
structures that meet basic human needs and maximize participation of people in decisions that affect them (Centre for Conflict Resolution 1999: Internet).

Reconciliation is viewed as an integral part of the transformation process and is crucial to its effectiveness. Efforts at reconciliation intend to create a new moral-political climate in which people are committed to the restoration of ruptured relationships and to the construction of a new future. This implies not only reconciliation with the present (for example, in the form of a peace agreement) but also reconciliation with the past (the healing of psycho-historical wounds can take a great deal of time) and reconciliation with the future (Reychler 1997: Internet).

"Reconciliation … involves the creation of the social space where both truth and forgiveness are validated and joined together, rather than being forced into an encounter in which one must win over the other or envision as fragmented and separated parts…reconciliation is a locus, a place where people and things come together" (Lederach 1997:29). Its primary goal and key contribution is to seek innovative ways to create a time and a place, within various levels of the affected population, to address, integrate, and embrace the painful past and the necessary shared future as a means of dealing with the present (Lederach 1997:35). It is at the crossroad of Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace that reconciliation takes place (see figure 3.1) and all four of these elements are deemed necessary in order to attain sustainable peace. As a perspective, reconciliation is therefore built on and orientated toward the relational aspects of a conflict (Lederach 1997:27-28).

This kind of approach to conflict resolution calls for its actors to be deeply embedded in the context of conflict situations, and requires long-term and holistic involvement in a society
That is, it requires "actors who have ongoing regional connectedness and a desire to support creative, but primarily regional-based solutions, who demonstrate the ability to listen to all sides and create safe space, are willing to act together as a community, and who represent a transnational body rather than particular or national interest" (Lederach 1989: 15). It also requires a comprehensive, multi-level approach to peace that stresses the importance of building peace at all levels of the conflict. In this view, for a sustainable and legitimate peace not only the highest, but also the middle and grass-roots levels of the conflicting groups need to be involved in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding (see Lederach’s model, figure 3.2). This methodology clearly recognises that within conflict situations (even those which seem the most violent and barbaric to outsiders), there are organisations and individuals who are potential sources for peacemaking and peacebuilding processes – what Kaldor (1999:120) terms “islands of civility”, or people and places which refuse to accept the politics of war.

Accordingly, “it should be an absolute requirement that elicitive approaches, drawing on local resources and involving local people from the very beginning, are used when designing peacebuilding initiatives and programmes” (Lederach 1997). Non-officials involved in situations of internal conflict must therefore be culturally aware if they are to be effective, and they must place particular importance on identifying and empowering indigenous “field diplomats36”, community mediators, and local peace initiatives. Clements emphasises this point:

... this means endeavouring to gather the wisdom of many peoples and traditions since without this our understanding of the way the world works will always be partial and our normative prescriptions always biased. What is missing in most of the social sciences and in much of our work in conflict analysis and resolution are opportunities to hear what the voiceless, marginalized, the excluded and the victims have to say...what is also missing are dialogues across the huge social fissures – those of class, those that exist between persons locked into cultures of violence and those working to build cultures of peace, as well as those that flow from gender and ethnicity. We need to develop some deep dialogues between the so-called learned and unlearn and between ancient and modern wisdom (1997:Internet).

36 The term "field diplomacy" is a recent term, coined in the mid - 1990s by R. Moreels, past president of Medicins Sans Frontieres. While working as a surgeon in conflict zones, he became aware of the near absence of official and unofficial peacemakers in the field, where peace services were also urgently needed (Reychler 1997:Internet). His concept of field diplomacy shares many characteristics with the processes of Track II diplomacy.
For the purposes of this study, non-official mediation and the conflict resolution process of which it is a part, is therefore understood as a comprehensive, “multi-track” approach to conflict based on mutual problem sharing between the conflict parties. As Lewer (1999:25) points out: “because of the eclectic nature of peacebuilding in situations of internal conflict, in order to be most effective mediation by non-official actors should occur within multi-disciplinary, co-ordinated teams which incorporate expertise from the relief, development, and peace and conflict studies fields” (Lewer 1999:25). Such a comprehensive peacebuilding framework must also incorporate and link the different interests and levels identified at the stage of conflict analysis. This approach utilises a broader concept of mediation largely because more conventional conflict management methods have proved to be only partially effective in resolving internal conflict (Centre for Conflict Resolution, 1999:Internet).

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter argues that the “multi-track” activities of non-official mediators are crucial to resolving contemporary internal conflict. This is because “actors emerging from civil or ethnic war need many different opportunities, or tracks (arenas of interaction) to discover confidence and to build co-operation” (Sisk 2001: Internet). The emphasis here is on the transformative potential of mediation - the multiple and intangible benefits the process reaps,
not just the quantifiable mediation effectiveness in terms of settlement rates (which represents only one indicator of effectiveness). Mediation is therefore understood to include a broad array of actions that are intended to build a constituency for peace, making many organisations (including non-official actors) important to the mediation effort at every phase of the conflict cycle. As Zartman points out, “internal conflict brings unique difficulties to the mediation process, so the usual definitions of mediation must be expanded in order to meet the challenge of containing internal conflict” (2000:255). Certainly, the mediation process described here is “more than a set of techniques with respect to communication, mediation and conciliation; it is a new philosophy” (Reychler 1997:Internet). Past experience has clearly shown that top-level, elite attempts at mediation and conflict resolution are not enough on their own to tackle the unique problems that internal conflict presents. Thus, it is proposed here that non-official mediators have the potential to redress the gaps between current (official and state-led) approaches to internal conflict and the actual remedies necessary to meet the challenges of contemporary internal conflict. This is because the unique nature of non-official approaches to mediation and conflict resolution address certain crucial aspects lacking in official approaches (see table 3.3 for a comparison of the two approaches). These differences make non-official actors ideally suited to conceptualise and implement a more contemporary notion of mediation and conflict resolution – one that focuses on the psychological aspects of conflict (usually ignored by official approaches) and that aims to empower a wide range of actors at all levels of the conflict. To investigate this proposition further, the next chapter will describe the characteristics of non-official actors, and in turn, how they influence mediation effectiveness. In particular, it will analyse the strengths and challenges that those characteristics bring to the mediation process, using the role of the Community of Sant’Egidio in the Mozambican peace process as an illustrative case study.
Table 3.3 A Comparison of Official and Non-Official Mediation in Internal Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Official</th>
<th>Non-Official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors</strong></td>
<td>Diplomats, states, intergovernmental organisations.</td>
<td>Religious organisations, community groups, representatives of political parties, academics/intellectuals, former diplomats, leaders of ethnic/religious groups, humanitarian organisations, leaders of indigenous NGOs, conflict resolution NGOs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approaches to International Mediation</strong></td>
<td>• Formal&lt;br&gt;• Aim to eliminate/control conflict&lt;br&gt;• Traditional state-centric, power-based approaches&lt;br&gt;• Occurs at the level of the state&lt;br&gt;• International relations viewed as crisis or situational relations&lt;br&gt;• between governments&lt;br&gt;• Orientated toward reinforcing the status quo&lt;br&gt;• Focus on how to obtain ceasefire or settlement&lt;br&gt;• Address interest-based aspects of conflict&lt;br&gt;• Public, high-profile efforts&lt;br&gt;• Top-down approach to conflict resolution&lt;br&gt;• Mediator represents the national interest of their governing institution or authority</td>
<td>• Informal and semi-formal&lt;br&gt;• Aim to transform conflict into a constructive force that produces social change&lt;br&gt;• Contemporary, holistic approaches&lt;br&gt;• Address actors at all levels of the conflict&lt;br&gt;• International relations viewed as ongoing relationships between all people&lt;br&gt;• Orientated towards transforming the underlying system&lt;br&gt;• Focus on achieving deep-rooted and sustainable peace&lt;br&gt;• Address interests and identity-based psychosocial aspects&lt;br&gt;• Private, low-profile efforts&lt;br&gt;• Mid-Level approach to conflict resolution&lt;br&gt;• Mediator represents the search for a just solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of Leverage and Legitimacy</strong></td>
<td>• Hard and soft sources of power&lt;br&gt;• Power based mediation&lt;br&gt;• Threat of political, economic or military sanctions&lt;br&gt;• Diplomatic experience and skill&lt;br&gt;• Considerable physical and administrative resources</td>
<td>• Soft sources of power - bargaining, compromise, persuasion, transformative long-term problem solving&lt;br&gt;• Neutral and impartial status&lt;br&gt;• Lack of coercive power&lt;br&gt;• Mutual recognition and respect&lt;br&gt;• May &quot;borrow&quot; leverage from governmental and intergovernmental players&lt;br&gt;• Reputational authority&lt;br&gt;• Commitment to a just peace and long-term engagement&lt;br&gt;• Knowledge and expertise in certain issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Frame</strong></td>
<td>• Short-term focus</td>
<td>• Mid – long term focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constraints</strong></td>
<td>• United Nations is prohibited by its Charter from intervention in conflicts within national boundaries&lt;br&gt;• Representatives of states constrained by sovereignty considerations&lt;br&gt;• Must observe the norms of international law and society</td>
<td>• Not constrained by formal protocols or sovereignty considerations</td>
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Chapter 4

The Strengths and Challenges of Non–Official Mediation: Sant’Egidio in the Mozambique Peace Process

Introduction

Chapter three presented a conceptual framework within which the role of non-official diplomacy in the post-Cold War era can be understood. It has become clear that non-official actors have emerged as important players in the response to internal conflict. Indeed, their “track two” or “multi-track” activities and transformational approach to conflict resolution, when combined with official track one efforts, may be particularly suited to meet the challenges presented by contemporary conflict. Certainly in the post-Cold War era, it is often claimed that the characteristics of non-official actors make them particularly suited to mediation and conflict resolution activities, and to a more enduring peace. To substantiate such a claim, it is necessary to examine not only the role and approach of non-official actors to conflict resolution, but also their unique nature. What is it about non-official actors that make them more effective mediators? What are their defining characteristics and what are their strengths and weaknesses? This chapter will examine these questions in some detail. It will outline the characteristics of the non-official diplomat and in turn, how this affects their role as a mediator. As Fisher points out:

The defining characteristics of the third-party are of course central to the exercise of influence and intertwine with the functions in the determination of [mediation] outcomes. The identity of the intermediary must therefore be duly considered, especially in terms of his or her relationship with the conflicting parties, as this will have a bearing on status and impartiality. It is essential to know if the third-party is to serve in an official or formal role, with all the requirements and limitations that this entails, or whether he or she is instead operating in an unofficial or informal
capacity, with greater freedom of movement but also with higher ambiguity. Identity is also closely linked to the motives and interests which lead an outsider to become involved in the domain of the conflict, as well as to the qualities and competencies that the third-party brings to the process (Fisher 2001: Internet).

Here, we will investigate the strengths of the non-official diplomat, as well as the considerable challenges that their non-official status can present. Using the activities of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique as an illustrative example, this chapter will argue that the varied challenges of non-official mediation may be overcome when non-official diplomats work in conjunction with the other tracks, as part of an alternative conflict resolution paradigm geared specifically towards the challenges of internal conflict.

The Community of Sant'Egidio and the Mozambican Peace Process

The Community of Sant'Egidio is a voluntary charitable Catholic organisation based in Rome. It was founded in 1968 with an emphasis on dialogue with followers of other religions and a vocation to help the poor. Today, the Community of Sant'Egidio has 15-20 000 members in Italy, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Eastern Europe, Central America, Africa and Argentina and promotes “an array of solidarity initiatives with the poor” (Romano 1998:4). As the Sant'Egidio community has grown, it has become increasingly involved in seeking negotiated solutions to armed conflicts (Vines 1998: Internet). With an “explicit commitment to peace and tolerance”, the community has combined its charitable works with political activities in many zones of conflict around the world (Jackson 2001:336). Of particular interest here is the unique role that Sant'Egidio played in mediating an end to war in Mozambique.

Conflict first began in Mozambique in 1962, the year that the Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique (FRELIMO) was founded to free Mozambique from Portuguese colonial rule, resulting in a long and costly anti-colonial war. Although independence was achieved in 1975, it did not bring the peace and stability that was hoped for. Instead, it created a power vacuum that was filled by an “increasingly radical” Marxist-Leninist FRELIMO leadership37, with support from the Soviet Bloc (Johnston 1994:327). Within six months, the Resistencia de

37 FRELIMO proceeded to form alliances with the Soviet Union, several East European governments and Cuba (Johnston 1994:327).
Nacional Mocambicana (RENAMO) had launched a guerrilla insurgency with the support of neighbouring Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and later, South African military intelligence, and a bloody internal war began (Johnston 1994:327). During the course of the next fifteen years, this conflict was to take nearly a million lives, displace or destroy the homes of 4.5 million people, create 8,000 amputees, and destroy much of Mozambique's economic and social infrastructure (Willet 1995:34).

Towards the end of the 1980s, however, the conflict environment changed and a “favourable confluence” of external and internal factors forced the warring parties to reconsider a negotiated settlement (see Hume 1994; Schutz 1995; Saul 1999). Both sides began to realise that they may have more to gain from peace than war (Lundin 2000: Internet) and by the end of 1988, “both sides were rethinking their options and exploring how to promote their interests by dialogue, not war” (Hume 1994:26). Several governments (including South Africa, the United States and Kenya) attempted to intervene in a mediatory role, but their efforts were largely ineffective and official track one diplomatic efforts to end the conflict were stalled. Consequently, in early 1989 Mozambican Church leaders launched a second track for exploring possible contacts (Jackson 2001:336). From that time onwards, the church was to play a crucial role in the peace process. In Rome, the Community of Sant'Egidio took a lead role in trying to mediate a resolution to the conflict,
in what has been deemed a unique instance of mediation: "one of the only cases where Track II or non-official diplomacy supplanted official Track I diplomatic efforts as the primary site for negotiations" (Jackson 2001:336). For most of the active mediation phase at Sant'Egidio headquarters in Rome, the mediation "team" was made up of a Mozambican archbishop, an Italian socialist parliamentarian and former diplomat, and two key leaders of Sant'Egidio, Andrea Riccardi and Matteo Zuppi \(^{40}\) (Crocker in Hume 1994: x). Their combined efforts eventually culminated in the signing of the internationally recognised peace agreement in October 1992 (the Rome Agreement \(^{41}\)). The activities of the Sant'Egidio community in Rome and their contribution to the Mozambican peace process provide a useful means through which to analyse the strengths and challenges faced by the non-official mediator, as well as an illustrative example of how some of those challenges might be overcome.

The Strengths of Non-Official Mediation

The Benefits of "Non-Official" Status

The non-official status of the private mediator brings some significant advantages to the mediation process. Most significantly, non-official mediators do not operate under the restraints of the formal protocols that governmental and intergovernmental organizations do (Arthur 1999: 495-496). This is particularly important in the context of internal conflict, the nature of which may preclude official intervention and its formal approach to conflict resolution (see chapter two). Freedom from sensitivity to the diplomatic implications of every development in the mediation process gives non-official mediators legitimacy and operational access that does not raise concerns over sovereignty, as intervention by a government might (Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict 1997:113). In the case of Mozambique, the question of who should mediate the talks was a contentious one, as no state was considered acceptable to both sides. This problem was overcome by promoting the Sant'Egidio team of "observers" to a lead mediating

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\(^{40}\) Riccardi had been Sant'Egidio's leader since its founding. In 1980 (age 30) he became the youngest full professor in Italy and he has since taught ecclesiastical history at Rome's Sapienza University. Zuppi joined Sant'Egidio in 1971 and later became a priest. He developed special ties with those in need, particularly the poor, and led Sant'Egidio's activities in a diverse range of countries (Hume 1994:16).

\(^{41}\) The Rome Agreement is also commonly referred to as General Peace Agreement, or GPA.
role. Because the “observers” lacked any government affiliations, had a background of strong credentials, and were in relationships with both sides, they were less threatening than other potential mediators and over time, this made them acceptable to the conflicting parties as trustworthy mediators (Jackson 2001:337; Malawi 1992-3:398).

Another common obstacle that can be overcome by non-official status is the lack of official status of one or more of the parties in conflict. In situations of internal conflict a government may not want to imply recognition of a particular identity group, warlord or rebel force by engaging in official talks with them. In such a scenario: “to dialogue, to discuss, to accept different points of view, is not a simple thing especially when one [party] is cut out – and it was the case of RENAMO – from any political circle. The more isolation grows, the more it is difficult to accept alternatives to the armed struggle” (Romano 1998:6). To circumvent this kind of “entry” problem, the Community of Sant’Egidio initially offered only their “good offices”, thereby allowing the disputants to come together face-to-face in an unofficial setting, regardless of their refusal to recognise each other officially. This discreet, non-threatening offer provided a valuable alternative in a situation where official channels of communication were closed (Mawlawi 1992-3:396,400). For the first time, RENAMO was included in the start of an ongoing dialogue process with the FRELIMO government - unlike a state, the Sant’Egidio mediators had been able to facilitate a dialogue without the status of the two parties becoming the threshold issue. Eventually, the two sides even went as far as to recognise each other as “compatriots and members of the same Mozambican family” (Bartoli 1999:250), a far cry from the extremist and demonising language that had characterised their earlier relationship.

Non-official mediators can also provide “cover” for the state and a means for it to avoid acknowledging involvement in sensitive matters unless, and until, the official institutions are ready to claim an overt role in the mediation (Crocker et al. 1999:30, 50). The ability to act in secret, the absence of the media, the often removed physical locations of the meetings and the neutral back-up support associated with non-official efforts are important to facilitating talks and means that non-official mediators are more easily dismissed from the mediation process.

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42 In 1984, President Machel publicly stated that “Mozambique will not negotiate with kidnappers, bandits and criminals. Instead Mozambique will wipe them out, and that day is not far off”. On the other side, REMAMO demanded the country’s presidency for itself (School of International Relations Website 2002: Internet).
without causing embarrassment to either party (Malawi 1992-3:398). These kinds of factors are crucial because they enable non-official mediators to establish informal channels of communication and conciliation without compromising the interests of the parties or formally committing them to a politically risky course of action (Mawlawi 1992-3: 400). During the Rome negotiations, the need for confidentiality was great, especially for FRELIMO leader Joaquim Chissano, who had to placate hard-liners within his party openly opposed to compromise with RENAMO. Consequently, many of the meetings between the two sides were kept secret, and many details of the negotiation were never publicly acknowledged. The mediators followed this strategy in order to minimize a disruptive and possibly inflammatory diffusion of information (Bartoli 1999:263). In comparison, the publicity surrounding most official mediation attempts often hinders progress, precludes face-saving and behind the scenes deals, as well as exposing every move by the conflicting parties to the scrutiny of their people and the international community (Arthur 1999:495-496).

Non-official attempts at facilitating dialogue and improving communication between the parties also creates “space” for the parties in the conflict, be it physical or psychological, thereby allowing the parties to conceive and accept alternatives to their hardened positions (Crocker et al. 1999:50; Diamond 1996:37). “Sant’Egidio helped to solve a difficult problem by introducing, and when necessary, recruiting other players into the process in order to create synergies – and as a consequence, political latitude – that were previously absent” (Bartoli 1999:248). This “synergy” allowed the Sant’Egidio team to create the conditions for an enlargement of the political space, making possible a dialogue that had stalled. Organisationally, Sant’Egidio also provided physical and psychological space – its headquarters in the heart of Rome were the site of negotiations, and a support team of volunteers was formed to carry out all necessary duties, from logistics to translation, accommodation and communication (Bartoli 1999:258). When combined with the face-to-face character of unofficial contacts, this “space” allowed individuals to build trust and overcome isolation by addressing the psychological aspects of the conflict. Certainly, during the Rome negotiations it became well-understood by the mediating team that psychological factors would greatly contribute to the success or failure of the mediation process. As a result, they tried to create an environment conducive to those psychological factors:
Interpersonal relationships are central to the Sant'Egidio strategy of conflict resolution. Interaction with all the actors illustrated that the mediators were committed to the peace process, rather than their own agendas. That none of the four mediators was ever paid for his time and effort was perceived as a sign of serious commitment. By the same token, the countless hours volunteered by the many members of Sant'Egidio were an essential part of the process. The warm respect and caring attitudes expressed on the personal level helped to absorb some of the inevitable political tensions. The setting of Rome itself, with its friendly atmosphere, contributed in the same way (Bartoli 1999:263).

In addition, each member of each delegation had a person from Sant'Egidio caring for them. This person provided continuous feedback and dealt with any request that the delegate might have. This kind of attention to personal relationships meant that the tensions that often occurred between the delegates and their leadership were more easily offset by the excellent quality of the other relationships (Bartoli 1999:263-264). According to Sant'Egidio mediator Andrea Riccardi, these efforts resulted in a reawakening of the delegates' human values and subsequently, “the peace talks worked because of the very climate of trust that was built up” (Johnston 1994:329). In contrast, during many of the official diplomatic initiatives throughout the Mozambique peace process, that human element had been lacking. “The position of the non-official mediator, therefore, is not based on political or military power, nor are such leaders necessarily seeking to capture power of that sort. Their status and influence in the setting derives from ongoing relationships – some professional, some institutional, some formal, others matters of friendship and acquaintance” (Lederach 1997:42). Non-official status may also bring greater flexibility to the mediation process, as well as a capacity for innovation and experimentation that is often difficult for official agencies to achieve. The structures, commitments, experiences, comparative lack of bureaucracy and relatively small sizes that tend to characterize non-official mediation permit them to act quickly, resourcefully and creatively in the course of their activities (Mawlawi 1992-3:408). In the case of the Sant'Egidio mediation:

[the mediators] directly nourished the negotiations with ideas, suggestions and critical observations... also important was Sant'Egidios willingness to explore and experiment with innovative solutions. The process itself was innovative and though it is not advisable to seek change for the sake of it, the flexibility to adapt to the particular conditions of a particular peace process is a determinant of success (Bartoli 1999:260).

In conjunction with the mediation efforts in Rome, church leaders in Mozambique and in Italy also pursued novel strategies to speed up the talks, launching petition campaigns with signatures
gathered in Mozambique, Italy and Portugal, as well as public prayers for peace. This proved to be a great way of drawing attention to Mozambique’s plight and reminding the delegations in Rome that the peoples’ suffering continued (Sengulane and Gonclaves 1998: Internet). Due to their non-official status, these actors were able to explore suggestions, policies and other alternatives that government leaders could or would not risk. This unique advantage enables non-official mediators to “generate new ideas for settlement” that can eventually be fed back into the political debate. Certainly, they are more likely to:

suggest unconventional remedies or procedures, to propose partial solutions or package deals, to press the case for constructive initiatives or magnanimous gestures, and to isolate those humanitarian issues where obligations assumed by the parties are unconditional and do not depend on reciprocity. A non-official intermediary can be less inhibited than a professional diplomat in raising hypothetical questions...

(Bailey 1985:211).

In comparison, governments and intergovernmental organizations are constrained by sovereignty considerations and often have to wait for legislative authority. Their formal accountability procedures also tend to discourage innovation and speed of response, and promote politicisation and patronage. The self-regulatory nature of non-official mediation avoids this problem (Mawlawi 1992-3:408; Edwards and Hulme 1996:13).

Neutral and Impartial Intermediaries

Non-official status is often cited as an enabling characteristic because it allows the mediator to act in a neutral and impartial way. According to Diamond (1996:37), non-official mediators are able to influence, protect, or extend the interests of each party in a conflict more successfully if they hold an impartial position - it makes them acceptable to the parties as mediators and gives them the legitimacy and leverage they need in the mediation process. Without this, they

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43 Many non-official actors involved in mediation strive to be impartial (the provision of services solely on the basis of need) and neutral (the refusal to take sides in the conflict). Many also claim to be apolitical in nature. Humanitarian NGOs in particular have attempted to maintain a policy of strict neutrality (Aall 1996:435).

44 It is important to note that the content and closeness of non-official actors active in the political sphere today and their relationship with national authorities, and with international institutions, varies widely. Some NGOs (like the International Committee of the Red Cross) receive extensive public funding and work in close cooperation with governments in the course of their work. Others fiercely guard their independent and non-governmental status, refusing to accept any funding or “instructions” from government and regarding this as essential to their neutrality, credibility and freedom of action. Amnesty International or Greenpeace are good examples of this, often having
are more likely to be perceived as biased or partial to one or other of the parties, adversely affecting their acceptability. There is no doubt that the parties to an internal conflict must have confidence in the fairness of the intervening third party, as this is key to overcoming the commitment problem that arises when two groups find themselves without a third party that can credibly guarantee any agreement between them\(^45\) (Jentleson 1996:Internet). In the Mozambique example, there was some criticism from different quarters that Sant'Egidio was too close to one party or the other. This occurred despite reassurances from the mediators that they were not partial to either side (Vines 1998: Internet) and clearly demonstrates a difficulty that non-official mediators regularly face in internal conflict – they must not only act in a neutral and impartial manner, but the parties must also perceive them as neutral and impartial (sometimes an entirely different matter). This is particularly tricky in situations of internal conflict because it is characterised by assymetrical power relations between the parties. In such a scenario, if conditions overwhelmingly favour certain parties, non-official intermediaries may feel compelled to advocate an activist, more partial approach to the mediation process, perhaps risking their position as a mediator. It quickly became clear to the mediators at Sant’Egidio, for instance, that the RENAMO delegation lacked the political savvy of the government representatives and would need help at several levels if negotiations were to proceed (Jackson 2001: 338):

The mediators worried about whether RENAMO’s delegation was ready and able to perform in a complex negotiation ... RENAMO, while it espoused a commitment to democratic principles, had no experience negotiating for the kind of practical arrangements and compromises needed to give these policies concrete meaning (Hume 1994: 48, 55-56).

Consequently, the mediators strongly encouraged RENAMO to prepare a number of documents that defined its position on various issues, even suspending the talks in January 1991 for this confrontational relationships with national authorities and being characteristically blunt about pinpointing or shaming particular governments (Albin 1999:376-377). Non-official mediators with little public sector funding have few official ties to governments, and may be particularly useful as mediators in conflicts where distance or independence from Western governments is a useful attribute. Conversely, non-official actors that do receive some form of government support or funding also bring their own particular strengths to the mediation table. For instance, they tend to be more comfortable and familiar with the protocols and sensitivities of official diplomacy, making them particularly well equipped to complement the diplomacy of Western governments engaged in conflict resolution (Natsios 1997:346).

\(^{45}\) Jentleson notes that fairness is not necessarily equated with impartiality (1996:Internet).
purpose (Jackson 2001:338). During this time, RENAMO looked to outside legal experts (from the United States and South Africa) for help in conceptualizing, developing and publicizing their political programme. In addition, the mediators in Rome arranged for donors to provide RENAMO with the kind of material support it needed for both the negotiation process, and its transformation into a political force. This process was crucial to the success of the final agreement, ensuring that both sides felt clear about their objective and goals and would not feel taken advantage of in the later stages of the peace process (Jackson 2001: 338). The government, accustomed to legal and diplomatic language, had less need of such assistance (Hume 1994:59, 73). Fortunately, in this case, the mediators at Sant'Egidio were able to overcome doubts about their bias towards either side through their actions – actions that consistently indicated “fairness” and a commitment to peace. With time, this enabled them to build the trust necessary for the mediation process to proceed effectively.

Non-official mediators also inspire the trust of the parties because they are less inclined or able to use information obtained in the peace process to impose solutions: “their lack of coercive power frees them from being perceived as ‘arm twisters’, and their military or political weakness paradoxically translates into mediatory strength, laying the groundwork for their acceptance as impartial ambassadors of goodwill and enabling them to inspire faith and confidence among the parties to the conflict” (Mawlawi 1992-3:401). This frees them from the imperatives of pursuing national interests (such as the exploitation of resources and political point scoring), thereby making them more acceptable as mediators.

Characteristic of the mediation in Mozambique was the paradox that the weaknesses of the negotiating team reduced the possibility of imposing outside solutions... which forced the parties to negotiate for themselves. Because the mediation team lacked an authoritative stance, the two parties had to engage themselves in an effective, prolonged process that transformed not only positions but also the actors themselves. The paradox is that, positioned weakly, the mediation team established a strong and effective direct negotiation almost by default (Bartoli 1999:249).

This perceived “weakness” may also enable non-official mediators to advance proposals that the parties find acceptable, but which they could neither initiate themselves nor accept if proposed by the opposition or by a third, less-disinterested party (Mawlawi, 1992-3:399). In comparison, the inherent bias of government representatives to their own government’s interests or point of view and the tendency of official mediators, especially with political clout, to attempt to impose
a solution on conflicting parties can be a huge obstacle to the mediation process (Mawlawi, 1992-3: 397-398). In Burundi for example, “amid the various popularity contests between the nations of the region and the superpowers, the struggle for influence between France and the United States, and the geopolitical and economic interests of the countries in the region, all official mediators have been suspected of partiality” (Hara 1999:143-144). Certainly, the mandate of official state envoys or diplomats is, by definition, to represent the interests of the institutions or governments giving them authority. Hence they are frequently perceived as being at the mediation table to satisfy the interests of the state concerned.

It is also arguable that a neutral mediator is better able to understand conflicting viewpoints and to isolate open-mindedly the concrete issues from those caused by misperceptions and misunderstanding. This is particularly relevant to the context of internal conflict, where “re-conceptualisation” or “de-demonisation” of the “enemy” is often the first essential step in helping the parties come to an understanding: “the elimination of such misperceptions and misunderstandings is a primary task for the non-official intermediary, and this is often needed before more official mediation can begin” (Bailey 1985: 211). Perceived neutrality is crucial to the “shuttle diplomacy” carried out by the mediator because it gives each side greater confidence in the reliability of the intentions voiced in the message, as well as in the accuracy of the message ultimately conveyed. In Rome, a particularly crucial task for the mediators was to find ways to express RENAMO’s ideas in terms consistent with the overall goal of reconciliation, as it tended to present its initial positions in a threatening or uncompromising way (Hume 1994:73). Certainly, “by explaining the other side’s point of view”, rewording documents in neutral terms, and re-humanising the enemy through personal relationships, the mediators at Sant’Egidio “helped each side to listen, which at times was the key to unlocking an agreement” (Hume 1994:73).

**Linkages Upwards to Political Leadership and Downwards to Communities**

NGOs and other non-official actors often serve as a bridge between the official world and the grassroots level (Aall 2001:368), operating as mid-level actors with linkages upwards to political leadership and downwards to communities (see Lederach 1997). In internal conflicts that are characterised by extreme horizontal inequalities, this gives them the potential to play
bridging roles between identity groups, as well as the ability to work across lines and gain access to communities living on the “wrong side” of a conflict (Hulme and Goodhand 1999: Internet; Ter Gabrialian 1999: Internet). The grassroots nature of their activities commonly gives them access to leaders of ethnic or other identity based groups who are usually marginalized or excluded from the international community and they can include, rather than exclude, them from international relations (Mawlawi 1992-3: 401). Sant’Egidio members developed ties to missionaries in Mozambique, for example, who often served in the no-man’s-land or in the war zones controlled by RENAMO. In 1982, Sant’Egidio representatives also negotiated the release of priests and nuns being held by RENAMO. This was the start of a relationship of credibility and trust with the insurgents that ultimately resulted in the rebel group’s inclusion in the peace process (Hume 1994: 18). Where government has partially or totally collapsed (as in the RENAMO held areas of Mozambique), it may even be arguable that NGOs and religious institutions may be the only sources of authority left that have any real influence (Natsios 1997: 338-339).

Non-official agencies tend to develop their work alongside a series of actors – popular organizations (like peasant or neighborhood organizations), churches, traditional or customary society, trade unions, fragmented political parties, social movements (for example women’s’ groups and ethnic groups), or “alternative” issues like ecology, and they engage in either integrated or informal working relationships with these groups (Drabek 1987: 32). While time consuming and laborious, this highly participatory and grassroots work tends to engage the energy and commitment of the communities they work with, creating trust and loyalty and giving them a clear ability to affect the positions and attitudes of people at the grassroots level. This is particularly important when mediating in internal conflict because it is a type of conflict driven by “followers”, rather than “leaders”, and is civilian in nature. The comparative disadvantage of traditional state-led mediation is that it presupposes that factional leaders sitting at the negotiation table possess the requisite authority to ensure settlement terms are carried out. The reality is that factional leaders and warlords frequently negotiate with little or any real authority, and are commonly unable to enforce what they agree to. Non-official mediators therefore derive a large part of their strength and influence from their access to and relationships with the very “followers” that drive the conflict.
Grassroots activities also give non-official actors familiarity with a country and its decision makers, providing them with a keen understanding of the realities on the ground and a historical perspective and developed understanding of the critical issues. As an extension of local society, non-official mediators can better evaluate the cultural factor in a conflict situation and they are in a better position to judge the motives and the political objectives of the various factions involved in a conflict (Mawlawi, 1992-3:402). In particular, they can draw on their experience with development programs, established prior to the onset of conflict, which gives them familiarity with the culture and the ethnic groups involved, as well as allowing them to enter the mediation process with a historical perspective and a developed understanding of the critical issues (Natsios, 1997:345; Mawlawi, 1992-3:400). Experience with development programmes may also give some non-official groups a better understanding of the operational problems that may occur during implementation of agreements, thereby enabling them to create accords that are more likely to be successful at the crucial implementation stage. In this regard, non-official mediators have the potential to be more effective than state representatives. The presence of a branch office or an affiliation with local actors (like the Church) can also enhance the non-official mediator’s credibility with, and access to, local authorities as well as serving as a barometer of domestic attitudes toward the conflict (Mawlawi, 1992-3:400). Non-official mediators can therefore bring local experience to bear on international decision-making, making a very important contribution to the resolution process (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996:19).

“The Community of Sant’Egidio, which for decades had worked to reduce the suffering that this conflict had inflicted on ordinary Mozambicans, had access and credibility with both sides... in concentrating on the conflict among Mozambicans, the mediators developed a profound understanding of how to resolve the conflict, and they applied this understanding faithfully” (Hume 1994: 144, 145).

The participatory nature of non-official activities can also provide the people involved in the conflict with a sense of ownership of the peace process. Bartoli makes an interesting comment on the attitude of the Mozambican people to the peace agreement signed in Rome:

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46 In comparison, the expertise of the diplomat lies in their knowledge of political agreements, power-sharing, elections and coalition governments. The logistics of demobilisation and other operational aspects are not part of their repertoire (Natsios 1997:343). Consequently, what may appear to a diplomat or negotiator to be an easily executed agreement in a mediated settlement may instead create insurmountable obstacles to peace at the implementation stage. As Crocker and Hampson (1996:55) point out, the failure of many negotiated settlements to result in a lasting peace is commonly a result of breakdown at the implementation stage.
“Significantly, Mozambicans did not perceive the agreement in Rome as an imposed document, but as a result of an original experiment in which they were able to have a national dialogue and to reach genuine political agreement” (Bartoli 1999:266). Certainly, grassroots participation in the international network of religious organizations (such as Sant’Egidio) was very important in maintaining awareness and focusing support on the situation in Rome47 (Bartoli 1999:270). Another advantage of non-official actors, therefore, is their ability to build support for dialogue and reconciliation outside the mediation process and prepare local communities for accepting and sustaining mediated solutions.

Many non-official groups also have influence or contact with top levels of leadership. The international reach of religious organisations, academic institutions, leaders of ethnic groups or humanitarian organisations, for example, can act as an important source of influence and leverage to be utilised in the mediation process. Many of these actors are part of what Lederach (1997: 41) terms the “middle range leadership”, that is, they are positioned so that they are likely to know and be known by the top-level leadership, yet they have significant connections to the broader context and the constituency that the top leaders claim to represent:

In other words, they are connected to both the top and the grassroots levels. They have contact with top-level leaders but are not bound by the political calculations that govern every move and decision made at that level. Similarly, they vicariously know the context and experience of people living at the grassroots level, yet they are not encumbered by the survival demands facing many at this level (Lederach 1997:41-42).

There is no doubt that the extensive contacts of Sant’Egidio at top levels of leadership contributed to their mediation success in Rome. Over the years, the Sant’Egidio community had developed close relations with the Holy See48 and with Pope John Paul II, and with the FRELIMO government. Sant’Egidio facilitated contacts between the government and the Holy See at several times during the 1980s and on several occasions the Vatican’s Foreign Minister had visited Sant’Egidio for discreet talks with FRELIMO officials. In 1985, Sant’Egidio arranged for then-President Samora Machel to meet the Pope, further strengthening diplomatic

47 Labor unions and other interest groups also played a role, though a somewhat lesser one (Bartoli 1999:270).
48 Although the Holy See recognizes the Community of Sant’Egidio as an organisation of lay people, Sant’Egidio does not represent the position of the Catholic Church (Bartoli 1999:257).
relations between the government and the Catholic Church\(^{49}\) (Sengulane and Goncalves 1998: Internet). These activities led to a very positive relationship with the Mozambican government, which was fostered further by Sant’Egidio’s promotion of Mozambican culture and knowledge of it within Italy (Bartoli 1999:257). Sant’Egidio’s leaders also had extensive contacts with Italian politicians and officials (Hume 1994:17) and consequently, Italy agreed to play a substantial role in the peace process – paying for most of RENAMO’s expenses in Rome while also providing hospitality and logistical support to both delegations (Jackson 2001:340). Non-official mediators like Sant’Egidio may also draw on the diplomatic capital, media attention and public opinion of their home countries, thereby bringing strong international pressure to bear on the warring parties through broadly based public appeals (Korten 1990:195). The petitions and public prayers for peace arranged by the Churches in Italy and Mozambique would certainly fall into this category. The international scope of non-official activities can also enable them to appeal to donor governments that the parties to the conflict either respect or fear (in the case of Mozambique, the United States was drawn in several times to “cajole” the parties when the mediators were faced with deadlock), or to use threats to expose the contestants to the international media or to terminate relief programs (Natsios 1997:354). Certainly in the Mozambique case, the need for humanitarian relief supplies put increasing pressure on both sides and “the problem was a constant and important part of the dealings both had with the international community” (Hume 1994: 42).

Reputational Authority and Commitment to a Just Peace

Although they are low in reward and coercive power capabilities\(^{50}\), some analysts argue that the strong expert and referent power capabilities of non-official mediators offset this weakness. This means that the leverage and legitimacy of the non-official mediator is based on their greater knowledge and expertise with certain issues, and on the desire of the parties to the conflict to maintain a valued relationship with them. This high level of reputational authority in turn creates its own form of legitimacy (Crocker et al., 1999:28). In the case of the Mozambique mediation, the choice of mediators was fortunate: “These individuals, having no

\(^{49}\) Relations between the two were strained in the post-colonial period (see Hume 1994).

\(^{50}\) Where the mediator has something to offer the parties, or relies on threats and sanctions.
leverage to apply, relied on the skills and qualities of any good mediators: competence, a positive relationship with both parties, creativity, patience, and determination. They persuaded the parties simply by encouraging dialogue, reducing their fears, and making reconciliation seem possible” (Hume 1994:145). Bartoli also testifies to the “emotional intelligence” of the mediation team and the important, if not fundamental, role that this played in the peace process. In particular, “they carefully used all problems and issues as challenges and opportunities to establish new connections” (Bartoli 1999:263). As the Mozambique case illustrates, the success of a non-official mediator can also stem from their spiritual or ideological commitment to peacemaking (Mawlawi 1992-3:396). At Rome, the mediators continually expressed and emphasised their spiritual and moral commitment to peace. It was stressed that reconciliation was the goal and that “peace could not be built on the basis of victory of one party over the other” (Hume 1994:144). Instead, the purpose of the negotiations was to help the two parties live together in one community. The mediators ensured that the focus remained on what united the parties, as opposed to what divided them, sharing not only a vision and a commitment to peace but also a realistic evaluation of their own strength (Bartoli 1999:258).

The method of the negotiations was simple: both parties were taken seriously in their identities and were confronted with each other through some shuttle work which ran from one room to another – for days, and often entire months. Instruments of pressure did not exist. The strength of the dialogue was to represent the sole alternative, the sole way out of the conflict. Paradoxically, our strength was exactly not having to defend any vested interest in the country, but the one of solid peace. This interest was supported by the overall Mozambican quest for peace, which represented a moral pressure on the two parties (Romano 1998:7).

Other NGOs also cite their commitment to a long-term solution that is equitable to all of the conflicting parties (a “just” peace), as opposed to settlement at all costs, as a primary reason for their success in informal mediation (Mawlawi 1992-3:401). Non-official mediators tend to represent integrated long-term perspectives on global problems and possible solutions and strategies, investing the time in establishing relationships with the communities in which they operate (Albin 1999:384). This gives them credibility with the parties and familiarity with the issues and psychological factors behind the conflict, in turn increasing their insight into the nature of the conflict and the subsequent chances of negotiating a permanent solution. Often, the commitment of a non-governmental actor to the conflict may span many years and may continue despite the apparent frustration of all attempts to reach peace. In comparison:
Professional diplomats and statesmen rarely have sufficient time to develop the close relationships with disputants that are needed to understand causal factors. They tend to lack long-term commitment to the peace process, viewing their involvement as a mediator as only a short-term assignment. High diplomatic turnover also inhibits the development of a close rapport based on mutual confidence and respect between the mediator and the parties in dispute (Mawlawi 1992-3:400).

The Community of Sant’Egidio certainly demonstrated a long-term commitment to involvement in the Mozambique peace process, continuing in their attempts to mediate through two and a half years of meetings despite the regular breakdown of dialogue between the government and RENAMO (Romano 1998: 5; Vines 1998: Internet). Indeed, their involvement in the peace process was the culmination of many years of involvement and interest in the plight of the Mozambique people. The Archbishop of Beira first became a friend of the community in 1977 while studying in Rome, later on retaining and strengthening the connection by working with Sant’Egidio (and through them, the head of the Italian Communist party, Enrico Berlinguer), to increase religious freedom in Mozambique. These contacts were later instrumental in opening dialogue between the government and the members of Sant’Egidio (Vines 1997: Internet). Sant’Egidio also played a humanitarian role inside Mozambique, developing ties with missionaries working in war zones and sending shipments of food and medicine. This kind of consistency endows non-official mediators with the stability and reliability that government mediator’s often lack (Mawlawi 1992-3:400). Certainly in the case of Mozambique “long standing personal friendships and ethnicity significantly contributed to Sant’Egidios ability to host the [Rome] talks” (Saul 1999:138). The access of the non-official mediators to multiple sources of non-traditional power such as this allows them to bring resources to peacemaking efforts that official organisations do not employ (Aall 2001:380).

51 The shipments referred to here occurred in 1985 and 1987 (Vines 1997: Internet).
The Challenges Faced by Non-Official Mediators

Lack of Leverage and Resources

Despite the many advantages of non-official status, in practice the absence of governmental identity and support can also be a considerable disadvantage. Mawlawi (1992-3: 404) describes three challenges in particular, pointing out that non-official mediators may lack:

- The influence to exact a firm commitment from one side in exchange for a concession from the opposing party, particularly as they are unable to use the threat of economic, military or political sanctions to ensure that a commitment is honored;

- The diplomatic experience and skill possessed by their official counterparts. Many non-official actors may also find their mediating efforts undermined by inadequate physical resources, including the necessary administrative infrastructure, at their disposal. This is rarely a concern to governments or intergovernmental bodies;

- The diplomatic immunity and privileges granted to the representatives of governments or intergovernmental institutions. This means that they may subject themselves to considerable personal risk and aggravation as they increase their mediation roles. They may also face pressure and resistance from their home governments to their involvement in the mediation process.

These factors commonly mean that non-official mediators are forced to borrow political leverage where they can, in turn necessitating heavy dependence and reliance on their relationships with the governmental and intergovernmental players whose political and financial support may be essential to keeping negotiations on track and moving (Crocker et al. 1999: 55). The necessity of working and engaging with these organizations can cause considerable problems for the non-official mediator, perhaps compromising their autonomy and independence. In the case of Mozambique, the mediators dealt with this problem by concentrated on developing mutual recognition and respect, rather than relying on outside leverage to push the parties together (Hume 1994: 146). However, in the later stages of the mediation process this was never going to be enough to ensure that the parties committed and
adhered to the provisions of a settlement. Consequently, when more credibility was necessary than Sant'Egidio could provide, the mediation team chose to facilitate a greater role for official actors.

Indeed, the case of Mozambique appears to be a unique instance of synergy between non-official and official attempts at intervention in a situation of internal conflict. Despite some doubts about the ability of Sant'Egidio to support, rather than hinder, the parallel efforts underway to resolve the conflict (Vines 1998: Internet), the mediators were impressive in their ability to secure legitimacy for the overall peace agreement by co-operating and “borrowing” leverage and legitimacy from the United Nations and states like Italy and the United States. In the final stages, African leaders were also bought into the process to help the mediators with the problem of closure. The role of these new actors was “to reinforce dialogue by providing expert advice on military questions, by lending their credibility to agreements reached, and by making the best of the flawed arrangements demanded by the parties” (Hume 1994:146). President Mugabe of Zimbabwe was particularly instrumental in securing a commitment from the parties to complete negotiations with some sense of urgency (Hume 1994: 147). Along with the United Nations, these states also provided critical physical, logistical and operational resources to the peace process. Such a sustained and focused mediation by a wide range of actors has rarely been seen in any recent internal conflicts – certainly, it is more common that the activities of the various actors have conflicted, and even competed, with each other.

**Fragmented and Disparate Efforts at Peacemaking**

Unfortunately, the type of collaboration between official and non-official tracks observable in Mozambique is the exception rather than the norm. In the present intervention environment, it would appear that generally the co-operation and co-ordination of non-official peacemaking efforts is occasional and sporadic, rather than systematic and purposeful (Natsios 1997:344). In Burundi for example, “private agents have certainly been eager to compensate for official diplomatic mistakes, but their initiatives... not only have failed to solve the problems of

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52 However, Lindenburg and Dobel (1999:20) do point to several examples of successful NGO cooperation and coordination.
communication gridlock but also have contributed to the harmful cacophony of competing, incompatible messages” (Hara 1999: 149). In the race to secure funding, competing NGOs are also increasingly drawn towards “high profile” activities that attract the media and give them exposure or “visibility”, creating a short-term focus that is not conducive to enduring conflict solutions (Weiss and Gordenker 1996: 28). Although a number of mediation initiatives and conflict resolution projects were sponsored in Burundi, they “tended to address only one aspect of Burundi’s situation and betrayed a lack of vision in the search for a comprehensive solution” (Hara 1999: 149). At times, the activities of official and non-official actors also clearly contradicted each other: “while the official effort was geared towards saving the government…various parallel mediations were calling for the inclusion in the negotiations of [rebel leader] Nyangoma” (Hara 1999: 150). The role of Synergies Africa (an NGO based in Geneva) was particularly questionable and its activities were viewed by some as competitive with, rather than complementary to, official efforts (Hara 1999: 150). In stark contrast, in the Mozambique case it was agreed early on in the process (August 1990) that the Sant’Egidio representatives would be the sole mediators, while the other actors interested in the peace process (Italy, the United States, the United Nations, Kenya and Zimbabwe), would take on other important non-mediating roles. In an unprecedented show of support for the non-official mediation effort, Kenya’s attempts to insert themselves into the mediation process in 1991 were strongly resisted by the United States, who stated that they wanted to “support the negotiations in Rome and had no intention of doing anything to replace the Italian mediation” (Jackson cites Hume 2001: 340). Instead, meetings were held with the mediators and the interested parties to try and coordinate the gradual involvement of additional governments into the process with the least disruption (Hume 1994: 75).

Clearly, therefore, one of the most important challenges faced by the field of non-official diplomacy is to follow the example of the actors in the Mozambique peace process by coordinating their peacemaking activities more effectively, not only amongst themselves, but also with states and regional or intergovernmental organizations. Unfortunately, in many cases, non-official actors do not want to abandon their institutional autonomy in favour of a centralised and coherent strategy. Some guard their independence so closely that they miss opportunities to expand the impact of their activities by combining forces with like-minded institutions (Mawlawi 1992-3: 407):
The major dilemma seems to be sorting out on whose terms the many NGOs and international organisations involved in areas of conflict collaborate, coordinate and cooperate their efforts, the difficulty being that non-official groups tend to have different leadership styles, different values, and different operating styles that may preclude the harmonization of their efforts (Weiss and Gordenker 1996: 28).

Currently, there is no coordinating or supervisory body to organize which non-official individual or group has the skills and expertise to do what particular activity. A highly deregulated aid sector compounds the problem as, providing resources can be mobilized, it is an almost ‘anything goes’ situation. Practically anyone can set up an NGO and work in a conflict situation, whether they have the necessary expertise or not. Other than each groups’ own internal decision-making process, no authority exists to determine which players should intervene, how competent they are to do so, where and among whom they will undertake their conflict resolution activities and most importantly, what exact program of activities they should undertake. This can result in contradictory approaches and creates a lack of transparency that makes it extremely difficult to find out exactly what has been achieved in the conflict situation (Duffield 1996:94). Weiss adds that due to the fierce drive for autonomy and independence of virtually all NGOs “they all agree for the need for co-ordination but don’t like to ‘be’ coordinated when it requires anything more than merely information sharing” (1996:42).

Also, the energy with which non-official actors take on tasks (due to the desire to get on to the next crisis) can lead to a lack of reflectiveness and inattention to institutional learning, which can profoundly affect their ability to analyze a conflict situation and contribute effectively to its resolution. Insisting on the non-political nature of aid, for example, has contributed to some profound failures by relief and development agencies to understand conflict dynamics, the nature of human rights abuses or other social inequities53. If these actors are called upon by the parties to mediate, this could badly influence their effectiveness. As Carl points out, “it is in a climate of ignorance that mistakes are made” (1999: Internet). In contrast, the Sant’Egidio Community has recognized the political implications of its work for many years. It feels strongly that religion can be a force for peace and as such, has been combining its social work

53 This point was well illustrated by an International NGO Field Director working in Sri Lanka who said “I don’t even speak to human rights organizations - when Amnesty International are in town, I stay away – its far too politically sensitive. We’re mandated to deliver our programmes and nothing more” (cited by Goodhand and Hulme 1997:Internet).
with inter-religious dialogue and diplomacy in the hope that it can affect the lives of the poor and needy, particularly those living in conflict zones:

For St. Egidio, mediating peace meant leaving the field of simple solidarity and development work and entering the conflictual world of politics and war. This was the challenge that had to be taken up by civil society and its organized expressions: the responsibility of walking this strife-ridden terrain in order to build the conditions for peace (Giro 1998: Internet).

Sant’Egidio’s diplomatic role has been encouraged and facilitated by the fact that it is based in Rome, “a crossroads for international relations linked to the foreign policies and development activities of both the Italian government and the Vatican”, and a venue for ecumenical encounters and inter-religious dialogue (Giro 1998: Internet). There are, however, some important questions to be raised about the appropriateness of private actors taking on political roles. It is argued, for example, that their actions may merely act as a excuse for political inaction by states and international organisations. By selling off or subcontracting the diplomatic function to non-official actors, states avoid the domestic political risks associated with other interventions, such as peacekeeping (Hara 1999:151). For states, therefore, the recent upsurge in private conflict prevention and resolution activities (no matter how uncoordinated or inappropriate) is welcomed because it reduces the costs of intervention that they would otherwise have to undertake. Thus, by actively seeking and promoting themselves as conflict resolvers and mediators, it is possible that non-official actors are merely “stepping in to the shoes of states”, who are arguably more appropriate and able to settle these disputes, but instead choose to use NGOs as a convenient and cost-effective way to opt out of involvement in deep and protracted conflicts. In addition, the increased financing of international and local NGOs may also mean that money is subtracted from funds originally intended for governments. This may contribute to a further weakening of an already feeble, and sometimes non-existent, state authority in situations of complex emergencies and reduce the home government’s capacity to contribute to the conflict resolution process (Weiss and Gordenker 1996b:220).

Clearly, the issues of multi-track co-ordination, non-official effectiveness and accountability discussed here are complicated ones. It can be difficult to define the multiple roles of non-official actors, let alone agree on criteria for assessing the effectiveness or appropriateness of their interventions. There is no doubt, however, that the self-regulation practiced by many non-
official actors, though beneficial in certain respects, is not sufficient to secure accountability\textsuperscript{54} (Weiss 1996:48). Until an appropriate system of assessing non-official activity, performance and accountability in situations of conflict is achieved, the ability to understand completely their abilities and appropriateness as mediators will be limited.

The Difficulties of Remaining Neutral and Impartial

Though it is deemed crucial that a non-official mediator remain neutral and impartial, in the context of contemporary internal conflict, it is increasingly difficult for them to do so. Though the Community of Sant'Egidio managed to overcome some (relatively minor) questions regarding their neutrality and impartiality, other non-official mediators cannot always make either claim convincingly. While there is great potential for multi-mandated organizations to exploit synergies between overlapping relief, development and peace-building opportunities, and between their service delivery and advocacy roles, the reality is that the challenge of simultaneously pursuing multiple objectives often leads to tensions and trade-offs (Hulme and Goodhand 2000:Internet). Sometimes, the operational activities and priorities of non-official actors (like humanitarian NGOs, for example) have severely jeopardised their neutral and impartial status, making their position as suitable mediators questionable (Natsios 1997:348). Indeed, outside intervention usually always carries political implications of some sort. During the relief effort in Rwanda, for example, aid agencies inadvertently strengthened the power and control of the same Hutu militia leaders who had led the genocide by using existing leadership structures to distribute food in refugee camps (Carl cites Anderson 1999: Internet). Thus, by securing "negotiated access" with warring parties (some of whom may have committed atrocities and war crimes) and cooperating with them humanitarian agencies also risk legitimising them. In this case questions of ethics and political judgement may come second to operational matters (that is, gaining access). This can work against justice in situations of human rights violations as humanitarian agencies become torn between making political

\textsuperscript{54} Accountability requires: a statement of goals; transparency of decision making and relationships; honest reporting of resources or achievements; an appraisal process for overseeing authorities to judge results and mechanisms for holding those responsible for performance accountable (Edwards and Hulme 1996:8).
compromises to get relief through and these other factors (Anderson 1996:347). Arguably, in order for non-official actors to be effective as mediators, their ethics and commitment to justice must be unquestionable.

Although these types of criticisms are primarily aimed at the relief efforts of humanitarian NGOs, the same principles can be applied to the activities of other non-official actors because they all share a common factor; they attempt to introduce resources into a resource scarce environment. In situations of internal conflict, those resources become an important source of power, and they consequently develop into a source of further struggle and contention. As Natsios points out (1997: 349-350), “during the course of their activities non-official interveners must choose to employ some people (and not others), purchase goods from some (and not others) and target their help towards some people (and not others)”. For example, the hiring of indigenous staff and the geographic locations of NGO programs can affect the parties’ perceptions of neutrality. If NGOs hire from one tribal, ethnic, or religious group, or locate their programs in one tribal or ethnic area but not another, the neglected or aggrieved groups may read into these decisions of geography and staffing prejudicial sentiments that compromise the neutrality of the NGO (Natsios 1997:349-350). These types of decisions can fuel separate group identities, inequalities and jealousies (Anderson 1996:348): “Even when humanitarian [or other types of] interventions are effective in their own mandated terms, they can nonetheless reinforce and exacerbate conflict through the transfer of resources and ethical messages” (Zukowski cited by Goodhand and Hulme 2000: Internet).

The role that many non-official actors play as gatherers and distributors of information can also compromise their neutrality. If a field report on impending conflict or advocacy efforts in Western capitals become known in the country in which an organisation is operating, it can endanger staff and its own presence there. Under such circumstances, it is difficult for that organisation to play a neutral role (Natsios 1997:350). When an NGO (like Amnesty International, for example) takes a strong stance on the actions of a warring party they risk reprisals and the lives of field staff, and they jeopardise their reputation as being non-partisan.

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55 NGOs are increasingly recognizing the naivete of this earlier stance in the context of internal conflict, though there is a lingering reluctance to acknowledge fully the political entanglements and implications of their work (Anderson 1996:347).
This in turn affects their other activities in the conflict zone, including any conflict resolution or mediatory role they may attempt to undertake (Lindenberg and Dobel 1999:19). The grassroots and community nature of non-official relationships, while a considerable strength, may also create biased viewpoints. For example, a close relationship between an NGO and the local community with whom they work “can actually distort an NGOs’ understanding of what is happening in the country concerned as a whole, given the human tendency to generalise based on one’s own immediate conditions and circumstances, however unrepresentative they may be” (Natsios 1997:344). Because local conditions are sometimes not representative of those in the region or country as a whole, non-official mediators with a biased local view of the conflict will lack a full understanding of the dynamics of the conflict situation. Non-official actors working within or near crisis areas also risk developing their own agendas, agendas that often do not conform with those of governments, the parties to the dispute, or outsiders: “Thus, what may appear to one group as an unambiguous opportunity for action may be seen as the opposite for another” (Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict 1997:46). Consequently, humanitarian operations or non-official attempts at diplomacy can be seen by governments or powerful factions, many of whom have an interest in continuing conflict, as running counter to their political objectives. If the parties do perceive that the activities of a non-official actor are contradicting their best interests, that actor’s acceptability as a mediator is compromised.

Other non-official actors may have political, religious and ideological agendas that limit the type of conflict resolution work they can undertake (Natsios 1997:348). In the modern context, high donor dependency (on official funds) creates the danger that some NGOs may include projects tailored to the needs of their donors, instead of to the needs of those they are supposed to serve (their beneficiaries). In a situation where NGOs are perceived as merely the implementers of donor policies (a form of co-option leading to donor definitions of “achievement” and an emphasis on donor friendly activities), the disputants may not see them as fair, unbiased and trustworthy mediators and an important source of non-official leverage and legitimacy can be lost. If the institutional constituency of a board of directors for a particular NGO, for example, has an ideological (ethnic or religious) predisposition against one or another of the parties to a conflict, that organisations’ usefulness as a neutral mediator is compromised.
Questionable Influence at the Grassroots and Top Levels of Leadership

The intimate connection between non-official actors and the communities that they serve is commonly espoused as one of their major strengths. However, despite the positive and inclusive relationship observable between the Sant' Egidio Community and Mozambican civil society, other cases raise doubt as to the strength of this “grassroots” relationship. In the case of international NGOs in particular, some will operate on an equal footing with local and indigenous networks, but in many cases they have been known to come in and take over, choosing not to fully utilize local expertise (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse 1997:151). Lederach points out (cited by Aall 1996:349) that in most crisis situations, relief agencies rely on outside resources and view the people in the midst of such conflict simply as recipients of goodwill. Some NGOs have also been widely criticized for excluding popular organizations from the arena of policy dialogue and from positions of power (Bebbington 1997:1758). Far from being an instrument of grass-roots independence, they have sometimes functioned as vehicles for extending the influence of national political leaders, making it arguable that they may perform an essentially “system maintenance” function (Salamon 1994:Internet). These factors suggest that the nature of some non-official activities is not as “transformational”, participatory and grassroots as is commonly argued. If non-official actors are not rightly representing the “grassroots” elements that they claim to empower, they risk being viewed by the protagonists as people with the same social origins as those that have always dominated the poor, or those in conflict prone areas (Bebbington 1997:1758). This will clearly create resentment of non-official involvement and jeopardize the acceptability and legitimacy of the non-official actor as a mediator and participant in the conflict resolution process.

Non-official relationships with top-level leadership in countries torn by war are also not necessarily conducive to successful attempts at mediation. When a government has a positive social agenda there is the potential for a strong collaborative relationship, as occurred in Mozambique, but this is rare in situations of internal conflict. Instead, non-official efforts are usually overtly or covertly resisted (or manipulated as in Burundi) by the governments concerned, who see their activities as an intrusion into the sovereignty of the nation state. Repressive governments in particular, are very wary of non-official activities. There is often a deep-rooted mutual distrust and jealousy between states and NGOs because the government
fears that NGOs erode their political power or threaten national security (Clark 1997: 47). In
the 1970s for example, the Catholic Church in Mozambique (which was later to play an integral
role in steps towards peace), was considered a handmaiden of the old regime and many of its
leaders were seen as a threat to state (FRELIMO) power. It was not until the 1980s that its
relationship with the government improved enough to allow it to play a constructive role in
promoting peace (Sengulane and Goncalves 1998: Internet). Equally, non-official actors
operating in conflict zones often mistrust the motivation of government and its officials.
Sometimes NGOs may use selective reportage or distortion to heighten criticism of the
government, or alternatively, the government is just not receptive to outside advice. This can
mean that a relationship of confrontation exists, instead of consultation. NGOs are also often in
the “opposition camp”, while the state may see itself as the sole legitimate voice of the people.
This does not create sufficient trust for the two to work together (Clark 1997:47-49). Another
source of tension between non-official groups and governments is envy. Government
departments are often envious of the bigger and better resources and conditions in NGOs.
Government officials may regard the NGOs as competitors at first, then in the later stages of
conflict when the state starts to collapse, as a threat to their very survival. These government
officials, who are often crucial to the mediation process, may not therefore regard NGOs as
neutral or impartial mediators (Natsios 1997:351). Worse, non-official actors can be under
constant threat of being accused of espionage because their activities develop in times of war or
emergency. Consequently, they are sometimes reluctant to provide information that can be used
to undermine the parties (thereby generating allegations of spying). This severely limits their
ability to have a decisive influence over the process of conflict resolution because they are
constantly having to watch their own backs. The necessity of finding a compromise with the
government, or with the various factions, can corrupt the purity of an NGO’s purpose and
compromise their potential role as a mediator (Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict

Conclusion

To conclude, in spite of claims that non-official actors are innovators and experimenters, it can
be argued that in reality, they have proved to be less proficient than the “conflict entrepreneurs”
that continue to manipulate their aid and conflict resolution efforts. Indeed, many non-official actors persist in ignoring the impact their interventions may be having on conflict and are reluctant to face the challenge of redefining the type of assistance they offer in the post-Cold War context. At the very least, non-official actors face considerable challenges as a result of their unofficial status. At worst, their attempts at mediation and conflict resolution are “based on ideological inclination or wishful thinking rather than actual evidence that they can have a positive impact on the dynamics of violent conflict” (Goodhand and Hulme 1997 2000:Internet).

On the other hand, a closer look at the role of the Community of Sant’Egidio in the Mozambican peace process offers hope that there is a significant part to be played by non-official diplomats in situations of internal conflict. Clearly, there are many benefits to non-official mediation and non-state actors like the Community of Sant’Egidio have the potential to redress the gaps currently observable in diplomatic responses to internal conflict (see table 4.1). If they can effectively overcome the challenges and limitations that remain, non-official mediators may have the ability to make a significant impact on peacemaking in the post-Cold War era. Certainly, the case of Mozambique suggests that effective mediation by non-official actors is possible, particularly when those actors recognize that their efforts must occur as part of a comprehensive and multi-faceted strategy that incorporates both official and non-official aspects of internal conflict.
Table 4.1 Redressing the Gaps in Current Responses to Internal Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Official Mediation</th>
<th>The Gaps Filled</th>
<th>The Challenges that Remain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Official Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free from restraints of formal governmental/intergovernmental protocol</td>
<td>Access to non-state leaders</td>
<td>No co-ordinating or supervisory body to monitor non-official efforts or analyse their effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to circumvent the “entry” problem – can facilitate dialogue without status being the threshold issue</td>
<td>Focus on identity-based issues</td>
<td>Self-regulation is not sufficient to secure accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create physical and psychological “space” for the parties to investigate alternatives</td>
<td>Create “space” for alternative, non-violent and inclusive discourses</td>
<td>Unable to use the threat of economic/military/political sanctions as leverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address the psychological aspects of conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td>Forced to “borrow” leverage from governmental/intergovernmental actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of the media, secrecy is possible</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack the diplomatic skill/expertise of their official counterparts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal face-to-face procedures that allow for “face saving”</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mediation efforts undermined by inadequate physical resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of bureaucracy and formal accountability procedures allows for increased flexibility and innovation</td>
<td></td>
<td>No diplomatic immunity or privileges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not face the same sovereignty considerations as states</td>
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<tr>
<th>Neutral and Impartial</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free to pursue the interests of the parties, as opposed to national interests</td>
<td>Practice mutually inclusive, transformational, problem-solving techniques</td>
<td>Donor dependency may compromise independence - risk of NGO “co-option”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less threatening to conflict parties, perceived as unbiased and therefore more acceptable as a mediator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Some non-official actors may have religious/political/ideological agendas that compromise their neutrality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better able to obtain an unbiased understanding of conflicting viewpoints</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-official activities can conflict with the war aims of the parties and cause them to appear partisan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates trust and faith in the mediator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Operational activities (relief and development, advocacy, information gathering) may compromise the neutral/impartial status of some non-official actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to advance proposals that would be unacceptable from other, more partisan, actors</td>
<td></td>
<td>The distribution of scarce resources by non-official actors can become a further source of struggle and contention, creating the perception that they are biased towards one side or the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate portrayal of messages</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fierce drive for independence/autonomy by many non-official groups (in order to retain neutrality/impartiality) compromises their ability to join forces with like-minded institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better able to rephrase inflammatory language in neutral terms more conducive to resolution</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reputational Authority/Commitment to Just and Sustainable Solutions
- Spiritual or moral commitment to “just” peace inspires trust and credibility
- Integrated, long-term perspectives on conflict resolution
- Committed to a long-term relationships – have the time to establish credibility with the parties
- Strong expert and referent power capabilities
- Perceived as stable and reliable
- More likely to create sustainable and equitable solutions
- Perceived as fair and just by the disputants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim to transform underlying systems and causes of the conflict</th>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term approaches are a central premise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mid-Level Actors
- Act as a bridge between the official world and the grassroots
- Have access to leaders of ethnic or other identity-based groups that are usually excluded from the international community
- Inspire the trust and loyalty of the communities they work with
- Are able to effect the positions and attitudes of people at the grassroots level
- Bring local experience to bear on international decision making
- Provide the community with a sense of “ownership” of the peace process
- Are able to build support for dialogue and reconciliation outside the mediation process
- Understand the realities on the ground - better able to judge the motives and political objectives of the parties
- Have access to a web of indigenous officials and resources
- Retain influence in areas where government may have partially or totally collapsed
- Can bring strong international pressure to bear on the parties – able to mobilise support through the public opinion of home/donor countries, diplomatic capital, and media attention
- Often have contacts with political leaderships – important source of leverage and legitimacy
- Have the ability to factor operational difficulties into mediated agreements- higher chance of successful implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local presence and early warning capabilities allow early intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A “multi-track” approach to peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring local understanding and expertise to the mediation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and include civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement comes from society as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use local knowledge and initiatives to come up with innovative political solutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Media influence and funding pressures can create a short-term focus
- Non-official actors risk legitimising warring parties by co-operating with them - a compromise that works against justice
- The insistence on neutrality may be a false principle – situations of internal conflict may require partiality to obtain a just solution
- Funds diverted to non-official activities undermine the capacity of home governments to contribute to the conflict resolution process and a more empowering/sustainable solution
- Non-official attempts at peacemaking merely act as a substitute, providing a convenient and cost-effective way for states and international organisations to opt out of appropriate political action

- International NGOs (in particular) may disregard indigenous resources and expertise
- Grassroots/community-based nature of non-official work can create a biased view of a conflict
- NGOs lack accountability to their grassroots beneficiaries
- Mutual distrust and jealousy often exists between non-official actors and the repressive governments that characterise internal conflict
- Government officials may regard NGOs as competitors for resources creating a relationship of confrontation instead of cooperation
- Close relationships with top-level leadership draws criticism that non-official mediators perform a “system maintenance” function, acting as vehicle to extend the influence of national political leaders.
- Ad hoc, uncoordinated nature of unofficial efforts at peacemaking that often contradict each other
- Highly deregulated aid sector creates “anything goes” situation
- Diverse range of non-official mandates, leadership styles, values and operating styles makes it difficult to harmonize their efforts
- Conflict analysis is outside the mandate of some non-official actors that are taking on mediation roles – many lack understanding of conflict dynamics and the conflict resolution process
Conclusion: Lessons Learned

From the preceding analysis, a number of conclusions can be drawn about the nature and role of non-official diplomacy in situations of internal conflict. First, it has become clear that the nature of war has changed significantly in recent years. These changes have created new complexities and new challenges for non-official interventions in these settings and created a potential role for non-official actors in mediation and conflict resolution. Thus, diplomacy by non-state actors has presented itself as a subject for serious consideration by academics, analysts, practitioners and policy makers. Second, at a theoretical level, it would appear that non-official diplomacy has certain advantages over official diplomacy in situations of internal conflict. Because non-official actors tend to be mid-level actors with linkages upwards to political leadership and downwards to grassroots communities, they have access to non-state actors and leaders that are usually marginalised from international relations, and those actors commonly perceive them as more trustworthy and acceptable than official representatives. As mid-level actors, non-official mediators also have the potential to bring local understanding and expertise to the mediation process, and they are more inclined to support and include civil society. Non-official mediators practice a more contemporary, holistic approach to mediation, preferring to make a long-term commitment to the conciliation process that aims to transform the underlying causes of the conflict. They utilise face-to-face procedures and practice mutually inclusive, problem-solving techniques, thereby creating “space” for the alternative, non-violent and inclusive discourses necessary to resolve the identity-based issues that characterise internal warfare. In addition, their non-official status allows them to pursue the interests of the parties, as opposed to national interests, and gives them the freedom and ability to come up with new and innovative political solutions.

At the same time, however, non-official diplomacy is not a magical panacea and there are some important challenges/weaknesses to overcome if non-state actors are to achieve their potential as effective mediators. Currently, non-official actors exhibit an inability to effectively co-ordinate their mediation activities with the efforts of states and intergovernmental organisations, as well as with other non-official actors, which can seriously compromise their peacemaking efforts. There are also important questions regarding the lack of accountability of non-official actors...
operating in conflict zones. Currently, there is no code of ethics for governing their activities, despite the fact that in several cases ill-informed interventions by non-official actors have exacerbated tensions, inadvertently aiding the warring parties or being subject to political manipulation by the protagonists. The fact remains that many non-official actors taking on mediation roles may lack understanding of the conflict dynamics and conflict resolution processes that are necessary for effective intervention, yet no kind of supervisory body has been established to monitor the effectiveness of their activities in conflict situations. The neutral and impartial status of non-official actors, a characteristic that is deemed crucial to their effectiveness, may be compromised by issues like donor dependency, the political, ideological or religious agendas of the individual or group concerned, or operational activities in conflict zones. Where non-official actors are perceived as bias, their relationship with the grassroots or top-levels of leadership are not always conducive to effective mediation and their role as a mediator is put at risk. Their non-official status also means that non-official diplomats may suffer from a lack of resources that can seriously undermine their mediation efforts, or at least necessitate an over-reliance or dependence on states and international organisations. Finally, there is also the risk that non-official attempts at peacemaking merely act as a substitute for more appropriate action by states and international organisations.

Despite these challenges, the case of the Sant'Egidio mediation effort in Rome does provide some lessons, and also hope, for the potential role that non-state actors can play in resolving internal conflict. The innovation, restraint and long-sightedness displayed by the all the actors in the Mozambique peace process, be it the warring parties, the states, international organisations, non-official actors, or the citizens of Mozambique itself, is certainly inspiring and suggests that the best model for mediating internal wars may be the “track one and a half” effort observable in that case. In Rome, the strengths of both non-official and official actors were combined, the dangers of solo efforts were avoided, and the mediators recognised the importance of an inclusive process that involved all the parties with influence on the conflict. The ability to co-ordinate the activities of the different types of third party mediators according to their capabilities and strengths was certainly insightful and is particularly relevant in the context of complex and intractable internal conflict, where it is hard to envisage one mediator having all the necessary resources, abilities or relationship with the parties to play all the roles necessary for resolution (Jackson 2001: 338). Unfortunately, the case of Mozambique is a
unique instance of the "synergy" between tracks required to meet the challenges of internal conflict – this kind of synergy is by no means the norm, nor does it look as if it will become so anytime in the near future. Indeed, it is unlikely that the alternative approach to mediation observable in Rome will be incorporated successfully until the United Nations, states, and international organisations undertake a fundamental reconfiguration of their current responses to internal conflict.

The final point to make is that in the case of Sant'Egidio, the efforts of the mediators were facilitated by a conflict context that was "ripe" for attempts at resolution (due to a favourable confluence of internal and external conditions that created pressure for peace). This lends support to the notion that effective mediation by non-official mediators is only possible in a scenario where the protagonists, and the people in the country concerned, have expressed a genuine commitment and desire for a peaceful solution to the conflict. Without this, it is likely that non-official attempts at peacemaking will fail because there is little incentive for the parties to come to the table. This is particularly true in the context of internal conflict, which is often characterised by a lack of respect for humanitarian and peacemaking efforts. As Bartoli points out, "non-official actors can only offer new possibilities for peace when the warring parties are prepared to respect order and protocol when the selection of a third party mediator has been made" (1999: 256). Accordingly, it is crucial that both official and non-official mediators work together to become more proficient at both identifying and acting upon such instances.

Policy Recommendations

For Non-Official Actors Interested in Conflict Resolution and Mediation Roles

There are several factors that non-official actors should take into consideration before attempting to mediate in situations of internal conflict. First, it is crucial to recognise that conflict resolution takes particular skills and expertise, not all of which are possessed by every non-official player. As such, some non-official actors are better equipped than others to take on mediation and conflict resolution roles. In particular, it is likely that the following factors are a prerequisite for effective non-official diplomacy in internal conflict:
- Knowledge of the country concerned and the regional institutions involved in the conflict resolution effort;
- Indigenous partners;
- Staff that have a good knowledge of conflict resolution and mediation skills;
- The ability to commit to long-term involvement;
- Ideally, a prior good relationship with the protagonists;
- No interest in the conflict outcome, except for a clear moral or spiritual desire for peace.

In situations of conflict, the individuals and organisations that possess these qualities need to make themselves available to the states and intergovernmental organisations interested in initiating moves towards peace. In addition, non-official actors interested in taking on a conflict resolution role should actively recruit staff with language capabilities and long-term involvement in the region concerned, as well as ensuring that all staff receive adequate training in conflict analysis, mediation and conflict resolution. Non-official mediators should also ensure that they have a working knowledge of the rules of traditional diplomacy. While track two efforts bring their own special advantages, it was clear in the case of the Rome mediation that the ability of the Sant'Egidio mediators to “to play according to the rules traditionally assigned to track-one diplomacy” (Bartoli 1999: 270), significantly aided the mediation process. In particular, it contributed to their ability to facilitate cooperation between official and non-official tracks in a “multi-track” approach to peace.

Non-official mediators must continue to develop innovative ways of providing the space within which the emotional and psychological aspects of internal conflict can be addressed. Thus, the focus of non-official mediation efforts must be on restoring relationships. Most importantly, non-official actors should never “underestimate the power of interpersonal connection” (Bartoli 1999: 269), because their leverage and authority is based upon the relationship and trust they can build up with and between the parties. Hence, potential mediators should be well-versed in communication and facilitation, as helping the parties to communicate more effectively and in a less hostile manner is a crucial part of their job. They should also have a comprehensive understanding of mediation and negotiation processes, as they may have to educate the parties about how mediation works and how to employ effective negotiating techniques. If non-official
actors are to continue in their bids to become peacemakers, conflict analysis and training in
conflict resolution techniques should be more widely implemented throughout the non-
governmental sector (even in organisations where conflict resolution is not the stated aim).

Non-official actors must become more effective at co-ordinating their actions, both with other
non-official actors and with governmental or intergovernmental efforts, and they must find the
means for establishing improved working relationships with them. Non-official actors need to
recognise that they cannot end violent internal conflict on their own and that by attempting to do
so, they may undermine the entire peace process. Instead, they must recognise that peace cannot
be achieved without the ongoing support and commitment of states and intergovernmental
organisations, because these are the actors that have the power and resources necessary to
guarantee and implement agreements. Non-official mediators must also adhere to standards of
strict impartiality. This does not mean that they can not denounce war. On the contrary, in the
new context of internal conflict, where there is no clear “right” side and war is characterised by
widespread human rights abuses against civilians, non-official actors are presented with the
opportunity to denounce war itself as the greatest wrong. Indeed, there is a strong argument that
they should do so, even though this is a politically charged action. It would appear from the
case of Mozambique that an explicit moral message against war and a commitment to non-
violet solutions did in fact reaffirm the parties’ faith in the mediator as trustworthy and
unbiased. Hence, perceptions of bias may be overcome on the basis of the mediator’s
relationship with the parties.

Non-official actors are challenged to find ways to structure their efforts so that they include and
empower local initiatives and local people. Inclusion is an integral part of conflict resolution in
internal conflict so they must explore, develop, and implement programs that support local
people that seek alternatives to conflict. They must actively listen to those in conflict zones
through focus groups or other participatory methods, and they should not follow a preconceived
set of rules and procedures. Instead, they should be prepared to invent new and creative ways of
encouraging and structuring dialogue. Finally, the non-governmental sector needs to address
issues of accountability. Priority should be given to the establishment of a code of behaviour
and ethical standards for non-official actors that are operating in conflict zones. Outside
interveners (as opposed to indigenous NGOs) should also put into place some kind of system of accountability to host governments (Voutira and Brown 1995: 29).

For Official Diplomats and Policy Makers

The current approaches taken by official diplomats and policy makers need to be reconfigured. They must adopt models of mediation that are more suited to the unique nature of internal conflict if they are to meet the challenges that it presents. This will involve ongoing re-definitions of the relationship between conflict and diplomacy, and of an international relations paradigm that increasingly recognises the enhanced role of smaller actors. The role of non-official actors as valued partners should continue to grow and to be encouraged - governments and government institutions should recognise non-official actors as significant and effective actors and facilitate their input into systems of prevention, early-warning, mediation and peacebuilding. The progression towards multilateral approaches to conflict resolution should be given greater priority – despite its effectiveness, the co-operative, multi-level model of mediation observable in the Mozambique peace process has not been replicated since. Official representatives of states and international organisations must aim to better co-ordinate and incorporate their efforts with non-official actors. Most importantly, they must be prepared to take a back seat in the mediation process to non-official actors if this is deemed to be the most appropriate response to the conflict situation. In certain cases (like Mozambique) they may be better-suited to take on a supportive, behind-the-scenes role that involves the provision of resources, logistics and other expertise that is necessary to reach an agreement.

International organisations and states need to have systems in place for identifying potential non-official mediators from among the local and international NGO community (Jackson 2001: 343). It has also been suggested (see Aall 1996: 441) that a “single emergency coordinator” should be set up, perhaps under the auspices of the United Nations, that would coordinate conflict management efforts and foster ties between organisations and agencies from the international level down to the local level. This would make an essential contribution to the goal of establishing a global framework for conflict management and peacebuilding by coordinating efforts while simultaneously decentralising them – creating, in essence, a synergy between the regional and international levels. Because the United Nations and
intergovernmental organisations do not always have the necessary resources to conduct effective conflict research and analysis, official diplomats should also better utilise the tools and frameworks developed by NGOs, universities and institutes for resolving conflicts (Mawlawi 1992-3: 441).

Suggestions for Further Research

It is likely that certain kinds of non-official actors are better suited to mediation and conflict resolution roles. Consequently, there is a clear need for further research to establish why and how certain non-official actors can contribute to peacemaking. The goal of the research would be to shed light on which non-official actors have the expertise necessary to practice mediation and conflict resolution. It would be very useful for researchers to better clarify the myriad of non-official roles and activities in situations of conflict. If the divisions between the different types of actors – individuals or groups, international, national and local NGOs, relief and development NGOs, human rights organisations, religious groups and secular groups, or NGOs that specialise in mediation and conflict resolution – could be more clearly identified, it would certainly be easier to analyse the comparative advantages of each kind of actor. It would also be helpful if researchers could pinpoint the areas where non-official actors need to develop their capacity – some of these have been alluded to here (issues of co-operation, coordination and accountability, for example), but this deserves a more detailed and comprehensive analysis. It is clear that ill-informed and inappropriate interventions by non-official actors have the potential to exacerbate internal conflict. Accordingly, more attention and exploration should be paid to this area. Similarly, more research is necessary into how non-official actors can contribute to reconstructing the hostile and demonizing conflict discourses that characterise internal conflict. Researchers should be mindful of the potential for programmes that encourage cross-cultural communication and contribute to peacebuilding efforts, and they should research and distribute new and innovative ways for non-official actors to create the ‘space’ for the inclusive and participatory dialogue processes. There is also a clear need for more field research at the community, or grassroots, level of non-official activities. In particular, there is a need to investigate how non-official peacemakers can better support, encourage and incorporate local initiatives. Finally, researchers should investigate and explore further the idea of “track one and
a half” diplomacy and whether it should be more widely incorporated into current approaches. A more systematic evaluation of co-operation between the official and non-official tracks, covering a greater number of cases, might generate some useful conclusions about the pitfalls and advantages that arise from cooperation between the two tracks.

A Final Word

If one thing is clear, it is that despite concerted efforts, internal warfare today remains a particularly barbaric, devastating and intractable form of conflict. In the post-Cold War era of conflict, therefore, peacemakers (both official and non-official) are faced with a number of critical challenges. In order to more effectively meet those challenges, they will have to adapt to the realities and dilemmas posed by the nature of contemporary internal conflict and work together to reconfigure current responses. In addition, the international community needs to become more effective at creating the political will necessary to ensure early and sustained intervention in areas that may be prone to internal violence, so that we can more effectively prevent these conflicts from reaching crisis level. In the words of John Paul Lederach:

[...] building peace requires a comprehensive approach to contemporary conflict. We need a conceptual framework that helps us envision the overall picture and moves us toward specific action and activity. Our challenge is to find strategic and practical approaches that help establish an infrastructure for sustainable transformation and that take seriously the immediate and deep-rooted needs of divided societies. We are not impaired by a lack of resources, if we choose to invest wisely and practically in peace. We are limited only by how far we are willing to cast our vision. We must not despair at the depth and breadth of the challenge, but rather rise to meet it. Reconciliation is possible. The house of peace can be built (1997: 152).
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