Third Parties and Political Contestation in Domestic Armed Conflicts

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Abstract: Across the past 25 years, about one-third of all intrastate-conflicts enter into mediated negotiations; one-half of these produce comprehensive peace agreements (CPAs); and these CPAs, in turn, are implemented to varying degrees of success. What explains these different sequential trajectories and outcomes? This project examines the interplay of different types of third-party influence at different points along the negotiation pathway. We argue that specific types of third parties, international organizations with institutionalized frameworks, are better suited at pushing actors towards reaching and implementing CPAs. Combining multiple data sources on ongoing conflicts, meditation, and the signing and implementation of CPAs in intrastate armed conflicts between 1989 and 2015, we find that participating in IGOs carries important consequences for explaining outcomes at different points in the negotiation process.

Existing research and real-world experience have amply demonstrated that providing a lasting resolution to an ongoing armed conflict is a difficult task, with many opportunities for failure. The combatants—typically the government and a rebel group—often need third party help in order to settle their dispute. Mediators can help get the process under way, but not all conflicts receive attention from mediators. Very few mediation attempts actually lead to agreements, especially agreements that address the multi-faceted nature of issues the combatants disagree over. The terms of agreements then need to be implemented, and implementation needs to continue into the medium to long run so as to best avoid conflict recurrence.

Across the past 25 years, about one-third of all intrastate armed conflicts entered into mediated negotiations. Of these, roughly one-half went on to produce comprehensive peace agreements (CPAs). These CPAs, in turn, were implemented to varying degrees of success. What explains these different sequential trajectories and outcomes? While many studies emphasize the positive role played by third parties in helping conflict actors overcome challenges such as commitment problems, third-party assistance in overcoming problems takes various forms throughout a negotiation process as the obstacles to be overcome change as the process advances.

In this paper, we examine the ways in which conflict actors overcome domestic resistance (i.e., spoiling) to a peace process with the help of international organizations with institutionalized frameworks along the three key phases of the negotiation pathway toward a successful CPA. Specifically, what is the role and impact of institutionalized third-party frameworks in explaining variation in: (a) which conflicts receive the attention of external third-party mediation, (b) why some mediation processes are more likely to produce a CPA, and (c) once signed, why some CPAs are implemented at higher rates than other CPAs.

Our project addresses these questions sequentially and examines the interplay of different types of third-party influence at different points along the negotiation pathway. We argue that specific types of third parties—international organizations with institutionalized frameworks—are particularly well-suited at pushing actors towards reaching and implementing comprehensive peace agreements. We test our hypotheses by combining multiple data sources on ongoing conflicts, medita-

tion events, and the signing and implementation of CPAs in intrastate armed conflicts between 1989 and 2015. We find that participating in IGOs carries important consequences in explaining outcomes at different points in the negotiation process.

The results have important implications for research and practice on civil war peace processes. First, the study goes further than any other on the topic of identifying the conditions under which conflict actors successfully negotiate and implement CPAs, which recent studies show to be a particularly promising pathway for lifting countries out of the so-called conflict trap. CPAs that are implemented at higher levels are associated with longer periods of peace after conflict (Joshi and Quinn 2015), more peaceful post-conflict elections (Joshi, Melander, and Quinn 2016), and fewer challenges to governments from armed groups (Joshi and Quinn 2016). But despite this research showing the benefits of CPAs, the literature has lacked a generalizable account of how CPAs come about. This is an important gap because CPAs are centrally important compared to other partial peace agreements in creating lasting peace and other positive outcomes. [1]

Second, with respect to the role of third-party engagement in general and international organizations in particular, our approach and theoretical emphasis on the institutional frameworks of IGOs not only introduces a novel indicator influencing negotiation success but also adds nuance

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[1]CPAs stand out as the type of peace agreements that (a) withstand domestic political resistance and procedural obstacles along the negotiation pathways; (b) continuously engage the key conflict actors on critical issues pertinent to the conflict; and finally (c) produce a document with a set of policy reforms that are expected to be implemented in the post-conflict years. Peace accords vary in purpose and substance. If the purpose is to explore the possibility of initiating the negotiated settlement, rival actors could agree on a pre-negotiation agreement which could pave the ways for further negotiations that might or might not deliver a more substantive accord. Along the negotiation pathways, negotiators could reach a deal on one or fewer issues, but such agreements usually do not bring the conflict to an end. Such are partial agreements that deal with one or two of many issues on the negotiation table, and if those issues were still relevant at the end of the negotiations, a final agreement would consolidate those partial accords. For example, the parties in Guatemala reached a first peace accord on 11 September 1987 (*Acuerdo de creación de la Comisión Nacional de Reconciliación*) and since then negotiated 17 more agreements. A Firm and Lasting Peace (via a CPA) that was signed on 29 December 1996 subsumed only 10 of these 18 peace accords, and the implementation of those agreements started afterward. The recently signed *Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro* in the Philippines (27 March 2014) and the signing of the *Final Accord for the End of the Conflict and Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace* in Colombia (12 November 2016) suggest a similarly lengthy negotiation process that produces partial peace accords along the pathways and many of such accords are then bonded together as the final accord. Studying negotiation pathways with a focus on CPAs, therefore, allows us to examine the efficacy of third-party peacemaking from the beginning to the end of the negotiations. Further, the effectiveness of third-party actors could also be evaluated by examining the extent those CPAs were implemented. After all, countries that negotiate and implement CPAs have the lowest rate of conflict recidivism (Joshi and Quinn 2015) and, as some indication of the quality of peace after conflicts that are terminated in CPAs, have the lowest infant mortality rate compared to other types of termination (Joshi 2015).

to the concept of negotiation success itself by following the effects of IGO influence from first entering into negotiations to the implementation of any CPA that is reached for a full decade after signing. This approach is important from both a research and practice standpoint as prior studies have tended to examine success at various points in a peace process despite the fact that almost all attempts at negotiating a successful transitional process out of civil war contain many points of failure that may or may not be followed by a long-term durable peace. Successful processes are not necessarily those in which the conflict actors avoided failure at a particular point in the process, but those where the conflict actors continued to push forward after failure(s). We find that the degree to which conflict actors are embedded in institutionalized IGOs shows a consistent ability to predict success throughout the negotiation pathway, despite the changing nature of "success" of peace processes and the shifting nature of the obstacles to negotiation success over extended time frames.

We organize this study by first outlining the merit of studying the role of IGOs along the negotiation pathway by situating the role of third parties in domestic armed conflict negotiations. Next, we develop arguments about how the role of highly institutionalized international organizations—a third-party actor that has not received sufficient attention in the conflict management literature thus far—can be quite effective in successfully moving an armed conflict along the negotiation pathway toward a lasting compromise and peace. Separate empirical tests of each argument follow and conclude the paper.

Prior Research on Third-Party Influence on Negotiation

The post-Cold War period has seen a significant increase in the involvement of third-party actors (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2001; DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011; Greig and Diehl 2012) with two-thirds of all mediation events between 1945 and 1999 taking place after 1989. Studies consistently find that mediators are useful in getting negotiation processes started (Wall, Stark, and Standifer 2001; Fisher 1983; Fisher and Keashly 1991). But existing work also points to the frequent failures of the negotiation especially early in the process, as mediators attended to be

drawn to difficult cases (Wallensteen and Svensson 2014; Greig and Diehl 2012). Prior research finds that one of the main ways that third-parties can help parties locate settlements in conflict is by serving as credible information providers—a role that is difficult for the belligerents to do themselves (Fey and Ramsay 2010).

Across studies on the role of third-party actors in negotiations, we see many different outcome or indicators of success being used that fall along different points in the negotiation pathway. For Walter (1997; 1999; 2002), the final outcome is the demobilization of rebel combatants and a lack of conflict recurrence for at least five years. For Regan (2002), it is whether intervention ended the fighting. In other studies, it is the acceptance of mediation or the frequency of mediation events (Greig and Regan 2008; Melin and Svensson 2009; DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011). In Savun (2008), Beardsley, Quinn, Biswas, and Wilkenfeld (2006), Bercovitch and Langley (1993), and Clayton and Gleditsch (2014), success is defined as the negotiation of any agreement, not necessarily a final one. Melander, Möller, and Öberg (2009) and Karreth and Tir (2013) examine whether third-party involvement prevented low-level conflicts from escalating into major conflicts. Although different studies operationalize "success" in a mediated negotiation differently, prior research has identified some important areas of factors influencing general mediation success: characteristics of the conflict, the nature of the intervention, characteristics of the mediator, and the type of ties between the mediator and conflict parties.

In terms of reaching agreements, more frequent mediation does not automatically translate into successful mediation outcome in the long term (Beardsley 2008). But mediation can facilitate concession-making and assist actors in settings where asymmetric concession-making is needed, by providing the conflict actors some political cover (Beardsley and Lo 2014). There is evidence that the benefits of mediation can sometimes lead to premature agreements or agreements that end up not satisfying at least one of the parties, resulting in eventual abrogation. Svensson (2009) finds, counter-intuitively, that biased (as opposed to neutral) mediators can produce higher-quality peace agreements because they care about not only being seen as successfully having produced an agreement, but about the long-term prospects of its success as well.

Even when mediation leads to a peace agreement, the odds of a durable peace developing are not guaranteed, as the success of a peace agreement depends on the quality of the agreement itself. Joshi and Quinn (2015) and Badran (2014) show that the most successful agreements are those that contain a greater number of different policy reforms. DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna (2011, 666) find that only 15 percent of 460 mediation episodes between 1945 and 2004 led to an eventual full agreement. Recent research suggests that the overall extent to which a final or comprehensive peace agreement is implemented is a strong predictor of future peace between signatories and non-signatories (Joshi and Quinn 2015; 2016).

While prior research has revealed important insights concerning the importance of third-party mediation in civil wars at key points along the negotiation pathway, several questions remain. First, an increasing share of mediation is being provided by IGOs (Lundgren 2016). Yet, this trend has not resulted in a commensurate increase in studies explicitly focused on IGO mediation in civil wars. In a recent article, for example, Lundgren notes that IGO mediation has increased from targeting 4 percent of civil wars in the 1980s to around 16 percent of all civil wars today. He argues that more research should focus on "the determinants of IO mediation effectiveness ... partly because prior research has not adequately captured the institutional heterogeneity of peace-brokering IOs." Lundgren focuses only on IGOs providing explicit mediation, however, and in doing so overlooks the ability of other IGOs with ties to the conflict state to push for mediation, regardless of who the actual mediator is. While we agree with Lundgren's general argument, we believe that his approach severely underestimates the influence of IGOs in areas of civil war peace process facilitation by focusing only on explicit IGO mediation, that is, mediation provided directly by an IGO — and not accounting for IGO influence more broadly. Such an approach assumes that IGOs have influence in a civil war peace processes only when they are the direct providers of mediation.

In fact, this particular limitation extends to most studies of third-party engagement in civil war peace processes which have focused on direct engagement by third parties. While it is valid to focus on qualities of the third party, the third party's relationship with the conflict actors, or the

efficacy of particular types of enforcement devices provided by third parties such as verification mechanisms, such an approach ignores the influence of other IGOs that can push the conflict parties forward in negotiations toward a lasting agreement without necessarily ever getting directly involved themselves. The fact that conflict parties accepted mediation, entered into negotiations, succeeded in negotiating a final CPA, and then complied by implementing the CPA in the post-settlement phase, may be attributable in large part to IGOs influencing the process indirectly, beyond providing observable direct engagement.

While existing studies tend to focus on particular third-party actors and tools at particular points in a larger negotiation process, we examine the larger *contextual* relationships of the conflict country with other states through highly institutionalized IGOs that we expect plays a constructive role at multiple critical points in the overall trajectory of a peace process. In the section below, we develop our theoretical argument and show how our approach of focusing on the international institutional environment of a conflict country helps to explain mediation outcomes along negotiation pathways.

The Role of International Organizations

While previous work has focused on how to enforce an agreement once it has been reached, our argument focuses on overcoming domestic resistance *throughout* the negotiation process. We argue that the fundamental obstacle to civil war settlement throughout is domestic resistance to reforming the policy status quo by members of the governing coalition, whether inside the government or in positions of influence outside the government. We posit that credible commitment problems and information failures stemming from domestic resistance to negotiating are best overcome with external mediation and countries are more likely to enter into such mediation the greater the degree of embeddedness within international organizations with institutionalized structures, especially highly-structured IGOs (HSIGOs).

The reason we focus on highly institutionalized IGOs is that we see them as having some key advantages when it comes to domestic conflict management compared to other international actors

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(e.g., mediators acting alone, peacekeepers, or militarized interventions). For example, some IGOs are structured in such ways that they do not need consent of every member state for each organizational decision (Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom 2004; Karreth and Tir 2013). This enables them to act against the wishes of the member government on whose territory the conflict is ongoing. And this ability combines well with the fact that such IGOs command notable (usually economic) resources; the provision and denial of these resources can be used as a potent carrots and sticks to incentivize the member government to abide by the IGOs' wishes. The combined ability of IGOs with institutionalized structures to provide and deny resources to the government, independently of the government's wishes, provides a potent counter-balance against the government that may be contemplating reneging on the terms of the peace deal or other commitments made to the rebels. By clearly signaling that the government will face notable material losses should it renege, IGOs can thus help the government commit more credibly to upholding the agreement.

Second, HSIGOs want to end armed conflicts in their member states. Many HSIGOs have economic missions and ongoing conflicts threaten those missions. This means that HSIGOs' interest in managing the conflict is virtually automatic and, importantly, not subject to political-strategic calculations about whether to become involved and on whose side. Third, HSIGOs' interest in post-conflict peace and stability is lasting, because these IGOs are interested in pursuing their missions indefinitely (e.g. promoting growth and trade). This sets them apart from other third parties, whose involvement tends to be shorter due to budgetary, political, strategic, and opportunity cost concerns. HSIGOs are therefore comparatively well positioned to signal the permanence of their involvement. In combination with the first point, this positions them well to help the combatants overcome the credible commitment problems both in the present and future.

Variation in Mediation Attention

Why are some conflicts more likely to receive the attention of external mediators? Much existing work has examined the importance of conflict characteristics or relations between conflict countries or governments and potential mediators. Our argument begins with the cost of external mediation.

Putting pressure on a government to enter into mediation and then committing mediators to a conflict requires substantial material and reputational investments. A third party needs to choose, fund, and send a mediator or mediation team and provide support during mediation. Third parties also stand to gain or lose in reputation from mediation. This suggests that mediators do not choose cases to become involved in randomly, but rather provide mediation where they (a) have an established interest in conflict resolution and (b) can rely on the backing of other third parties to support mediation efforts and help with incentivizing conflict parties to negotiate and find a settlement.

We argue that these two conditions are most likely present in conflict countries that are embedded in international organizations with institutionalized frameworks. These organizations have a strong interest in preventing conflict escalation in member states. Their institutional structure gives these organizations the leverage necessary to push governments and rebels in conflict countries toward receiving mediator assistance and taking it seriously — and, as a consequence, create more favorable conditions for mediators. Lastly, they also have an established infrastructure that can help, via denial and provision of benefits, enforce the terms of a potential settlement.

External pressure by organizations with institutionalized connections to the conflict country and government are important in pushing the government to put forth enough concessions to keep negotiations going and overcome impasses. HSIGO efforts in this respect are likely to be notable precisely because they are self-interested. This implies that IGOs with institutionalized structures will be willing to devote resources to ending the conflict. The cost of mediation, including repeated attempts, pales in comparison to the losses HSIGO missions would suffer should the conflict continue. Conflicts in countries that are members in larger numbers of IGOs with institutionalized structures can thus be expected to receive much mediator attention.

> **H1:** Domestic armed conflicts in countries that are more involved in HSIGOs are likely to receive more mediator attention than conflict occurring in countries with fewer HSIGO memberships.

Variation in Negotiation Success

Beyond the puzzle of external mediation attempts, the issue of negotiation success is an arguably even more difficult problem. As Walter (1997, 335) prominently pointed out two decades ago, "civil wars rarely end in negotiated settlements." In her study of the Cold War era, she identified only eight instances of successful civil war negotiations where a lasting agreement was reached that ended the conflict. However, over the last two decades, this pattern has fundamentally changed as numerous comprehensive peace agreements ending the respective civil wars have been reached.[2] What explains this significant shift? Why have negotiations gotten so much better at yielding successful civil war peace agreements?

Bell (2006) attributes the increased success of civil war agreements to a number of factors: significant increases in the amount of international attention devoted to civil war; a decline in the international norm of noninterference; improvements in mediation and direct negotiation process; increased acceptance of agreement designs; and the emergence of international legal standards and norms dealing with peace agreements. Perhaps the most important aspect, according to Bell (2006, 375), is the "relationship between legalization of peace agreements and compliance" particularly with respect to the "range of common practices relating to their negotiation, design, content, and implementation." These common practices prominently include mediation, highlighted by the fact that mediation has become much more common during the same time period under which civil war agreements have become more frequent (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011). The conventional wisdom, expressed by Bell (2006) and others, therefore suggests a positive correlation between mediation events and the successful negotiation of peace agreements:

> **H2:** Domestic armed conflicts receiving mediation efforts are more likely to end in comprehensive peace agreements than conflicts without mediation.

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[2]Examples include: El Salvador (1992); Congo (2002); Liberia (2003); Papua New Guinea (2001); UK (1998); Nepal (2006); Guatemala (1996); Sierra Leone (1999); Indonesia (2005); Mozambique (1992); Bosnia (1995); Guinea-Bissau (1998); Angola (2002); Macedonia (2001); South Africa (1993); Tajikistan (1997); Croatia (1995). Even agreements that failed in the short-term went on to be successful: Cambodia (1991); Burundi (2000); Angola (1994); Sierra Leone (1999).

While we generally agree with Bell's list of modern developments that have given rise to more successful civil war peace agreements, we argue that HSIGOs are an overlooked factor that is directly or indirectly linked to some of these developments, or has worked in tandem with them. Over the past few decades, the international environment has undergone substantial institutionalization, which is evident in the rise in the number of IGOs, HSIGOs, and the frequency of country memberships in the organizations: there are more organizations than ever and their country membership portfolios are increasingly more extensive (e.g., Karreth and Tir 2013).

Mediators alone have but a limited set of tools for pushing conflict parties toward negotiating and successfully signing comprehensive peace agreements. Mediation is merely a tool for managing complexity and getting conflict actors to talk to one another. But mediators lack leverage in the form of positive and punitive incentives with which they could incentivize settlements. Generally speaking, mediators can only offer their goodwill to keep negotiations going. As one specific third party, HSIGOs have a unique potential to supplant mediation efforts with tangible and credible promises , that is reliable benefits associated with conflict settlement – such as aid resources coming from HSIGOs or access to lucrative international markets. Following arguments from Karreth and Tir (2013), we propose that in countries that are embedded in HSIGOs and that are experiencing internal armed conflicts, the combatants will be particularly incentivized to reach a negotiated settlement to their conflict. HSIGOs typically halt their involvement with conflict-affected countries to a substantial degree. In order to regain status and access to participation within HSIGOs, and having previously relied on these benefits, the readily available access to HSIGO resources is a particularly useful incentive for negotiation.

While our main focus is on how HSIGOs can incentivize member governments to pursue negotiations and settlements, HSIGOs also indirectly impact the rebels. One avenue of influence concerns the issue that the rebels are often at a strategic disadvantage toward the government. Governments usually have access to resources that rebels can hardly procure: police forces, the military, fiscal authority, diplomatic channels, and others. The asymmetry of domestic politics may thus provide the government with some inherent advantages, creating serious hurdles for

rebels in winning a conflict.[3] But, as the disadvantaged actor in the asymmetric domestic bargaining situation, the rebels benefit from HSIGO's government-constraining involvement: it provides a counterweight that constrains the state and increases the state's willingness to settle the conflict. This provides the rebels an incentive to pursue conflict settlement, which presumably would be beneficial to the rebels because it represents a revision of the status quo against which they revolted in the first place. Yet, if the rebels appear interested in taking advantage of this situation — that is, are unwilling to settle the conflict or may renege on their conflict-ending commitments — they signal to highly structured IGOs that they cannot be counted on as a partner in managing the respective armed conflict. The rebels can therefore actually cause damage to their cause by overplaying their hand. As a consequence, HSIGOs would see little value in pushing for an unlikely agreement. They would then cease putting pressure on the government, and release the constraints that are so important for the resolution of the bargaining interaction. This change returns the rebels to the unfavorable asymmetric bargaining situation, where their path to government concessions is a costly and highly uncertain fight.[4] And even if the rebels can eventually force the government into concessions, without HSIGO support the rebels will have few guarantees that the government will comply in the long run. This is the familiar commitment problem that is particularly disadvantageous to the rebel side (Fearon 2007; Walter 1999; 2009). In short, the rebels face HSIGO-related but indirect constraints of their own precisely because the advantages they gain through HSIGO constraints on the government could be suspended.

Another avenue of (indirect) influence of HSIGOs on the rebels lies in the issue of future benefits. HSIGOs may not be able to punish the rebels as easily as they can punish a member government, for example by suspending foreign market access or canceling a grant or loan. But

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[3]According to recent estimates, the odds of a rebel victory are only about one in ten (Sullivan and Karreth 2015, 275, 280); Kreutz (2010) codes rebel victories in about 8-12 percent of internal armed conflicts.

[4]Consider the example of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda over the past decades. LRA leadership has clearly signaled that it has little interest in compromising and pursuing a full settlement with the government (see Maier, Rees Smith, and Shakya (2013); Nashion (2012).) Consequences of this strategy for the LRA include international isolation, broad condemnation of LRA activities, fighters being confined to life in continually impoverished areas, and an inability to score a military victory against the government. Meanwhile, the government of Uganda does not appear to have suffered blame for the LRA overplaying its hand and not pursuing a settlement with the government. Uganda has been a top recipient of international aid efforts and is a member in 17 HSIGOs, a comparatively high number. In this case, the rebel unwillingness to negotiate and settle did not pay off.

by signaling that conflict settlement and peace will bring benefits such as development assistance or infrastructure investments to the rebels and their areas of influence, HSIGOs offer the rebels a tangible reason to pursue conflict settlement. The rebels' failure to do so would mean forgoing such benefits and leaving money on the table. And the rebels have reason to trust the signals from HSIGOs: it is unlikely that HSIGOs will renege down the road because this would endanger the peace and stability necessary for the achievement of HSIGOs' missions.

In sum, a state's participation in HSIGOs implies that the optimal strategy for both the government and the rebels is to settle the conflict. That way, the government can resume accessing HSIGO-related resources while the rebels gain the ability to use the pressures from HSIGOs to push the government toward both settling and keeping its commitments—and to obtain benefits for their areas of influence in the future. This logic suggests a conditional hypothesis: the positive impact of mediation activities on the conflict parties' propensity to sign comprehensive peace agreements depends on whether the conflict country is more or less embedded in HSIGOs. If a country is subject to the influence of HSIGOs, these IGOs can back up mediation activities with incentives. This in turn makes mediation more likely to succeed.

> **H3:** Domestic armed conflicts receiving mediation efforts are more likely to end in comprehensive peace agreements; this positive relationship is more pronounced in countries that are more involved in HSIGOs than in countries that are less involved in highly structured IGOs.

Variation in Peace Agreement Implementation

Once conflict actors engaged in negotiations reach a comprehensive settlement, an implementation process begins. Agreements vary considerably in the extent to which they are successfully implemented (Joshi, Quinn, and Regan 2015). This variation in implementation is largely attributable to the government's inability to overcome domestic resistance to reforming the policy status quo by those who disproportionately benefit from it (Joshi and Quinn 2015). In much of the literature, implementation is defined as "the carrying out of a basic policy decision" (Mazmanian and Sabatier

1981, 5), that is, the emphasis is on compliance with the policy directives as they were given and/or perceived.[5] We likewise define implementation as the degree of compliance with the directives of a statute.

The dominant theoretical approach to implementation in the field of policy studies is principal-agent theory. This approach treats governments not as unitary actors but as divided into many different policy jurisdictions and divisions of power and authority, who almost always resist policy change. Such a view of implementation is consistent with the general diagnosis in the post-accord peacebuilding literature that emphasizes domestic resistance to implementation and variables influencing the ability of governments to overcome spoiler resistance to implementation. Walter (1997), Hampson (1996), and Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens (2002, 665) all see spoiler resistance as a major threat to implementation and they similarly concluded that the level of commitment by international actors was the key variable in overcoming the domestic spoiler challenge in their study. This view is also consistent with a general approach in the policy sciences that sees domestic resistance as one of the largest obstacles to the implementation of policy reforms. In their study of the implementation of anti-corruption reforms in developing countries, Persson, Rothstein, and Teorell (2013) suggest that the foundational problem is one of holding implementation agents accountable. Similarly, the Global Integrity Project, which collects data on anti-corruption reforms, notes that the problem is not a lack of sound legal frameworks, constitutions, and policies, but rather "implementation gaps" between policy and practice.[6]

We expect that post-civil war settings are similarly characterized by a high levels of domestic resistance to the implementation of policy reforms. Because civil wars are fought between groups currently in power and groups currently excluded from power, the winning coalitions of the rebel leadership and the government leadership have little overlap. Each side may thus see comprehensive peace agreements as instruments in which the leaders of excluded groups are attempting to divert political power and control over resources away from the government's coalition and over

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[5]Others emphasize the consequences of implementation on a specific outcome, such as reducing poverty.

[6]See, e.g., http://www.globalintegrity.org/2016/07/politics-matters-time-bigger-bets-learning-adaptive-programming/ (accessed December 6, 2016.)

to the rebel coalition. Therefore, when the time comes for them to be put into practice across the various policy domains, government actors will resist the implementation of these policy reforms . Each reform will fall under the jurisdiction of some group that can band together to oppose it.

In order to reach a comprehensive settlement that has any chance of being implemented at a future date, government leaders have to pre-negotiate with the leaders of the policy jurisdictions most affected because it is them who will be in charge of implementing the reforms being negotiated.[7] If the government proceeds unilaterally with its concession-making without gaining consent from relevant stakeholders, and without offsetting the costs of the reforms for those affected by them, the government sets itself up for failure and the peace agreement will be difficult to implement.

Given the challenges and principal-agent problems associated with achieving high levels of implementation of policy reforms, it becomes crucial to identify the types of third parties that could realistically influence the actual implementation of hundreds of specific statutes — with these statutes falling under several dozens of different policy jurisdictions, where compliance depends on the commitment of potentially hundreds of agents divided into smaller units and offices within the government, each unit with its own hierarchy.

We argue that standard third-party enforcement devices, such as UN operations, principally play a verification role as an information provider but cannot force actors to implement policies within different agencies or bureaucracies. IGOs with institutionalized structures, on the other hand, are in a more effective position. Their relative independence from member governments and command of tangible resources position them well to break through the gridlock caused by pro-status quo stakeholders affiliated with the government. First, reneging on an agreement would be quite costly to the government because current and future HSIGO benefits would be lost. This puts notable pressure on the internal government stakeholders to find a compromise among themselves in order to secure future HSIGO benefits. Few other third-party actors have this kind of influence. Power-grabbing attempts by stakeholders that may stand to lose from a CPA to protect their positions would be counterproductive, despite seeming tempting. If a portion of the CPA were to

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[7]These processes are sometimes referred to as track-two processes.

be blocked, HSIGO sanctions would likely follow. This makes it unlikely that power-grabbing stakeholders would be notably better off. Second, the promise of future HSIGO-related resources can go a long way to assuage the fears of the would-be losers. That is, increased resources can be used to placate or even buy off the would-be losers from trying to sabotage the CPA. And since the IGO-related benefits are supposed to be long-term if not permanent, the expected value of the resources to be gained is quite high. Thus, despite some parties losing some influence with CPA implementation and reforms to the status quo, there are notable opportunities to reach internal agreements by which potential losses to various stakeholders would be attenuated.

In the context of implementation, the features that define and contribute to IGOs' role differ somewhat from those we consider instrumental for attracting and backing up mediation efforts. In those situations, the influence of IGOs derives from their ability to act independently of member states' preferences. For highly structured IGOs, self-interest and their clear, institutionalized rules trigger predictable, automatic responses to political violence in member states. These dynamics are key for creating the conditions that make conflicts "attractive" for mediators and, subsequently, make mediation efforts more likely to result in CPAs. On the other hand, a slightly different aspect of IGOs is crucial for facilitating implementation and pushing stakeholders toward taking the steps necessary to comply with their obligations under CPAs. We argue that there are two main drivers of IGO influence. IGOs must exercise some leverage over stakeholders in the form of resources. In addition, established connections between IGOs and stakeholders facilitate the engagement and credible signaling from IGOs that push stakeholders to implement relevant provisions from CPAs. These requirements highlight the need for IGOs to possess some standing, institutionalized structures— but perhaps at a lower level than the highly structured IGOs we emphasized in our previous hypotheses. Nevertheless, these still need to be at a higher level than informal groups of states, forums, or annual conferences.

In sum, IGOs' constructive pressure on conflict parties extends far beyond just reaching an agreement. IGOs' influence can also help toward implementing CPAs at high levels when governments pre-negotiate acceptable CPA terms with the constituencies that matter inside the bu-

reaucracies that typically implement policy reforms associated with peace agreements. During the implementation process IGOs can exert target pressure upon the group of elites and agents who are mandated to implement particular provisions in the agreement. Similar to our previous arguments, IGOs' structure is key: without standing institutionalized structures, IGOs have no more influence than other third parties.

> **H4:** Comprehensive peace agreements are implemented at higher rates in countries that are more involved in IGOs with institutionalized structures.

Research Design

We examine the implications of our argument using quantitative analyses of a new compilation of data sources covering all armed conflicts since 1989. Our research questions and proposed arguments address variation between conflicts. This makes systematic comparisons between as large a number of conflicts as possible a feasible mode of inquiry.

As armed conflicts, we identify all incidents of domestic armed conflicts in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2015 (Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg, and Strand 2002; Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). We consider each conflict as "eligible" for mediation if the conflict was eligible to be coded in one of the two data sources for mediation events we use, the Civil War Mediation (CWM) dataset (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011) and the data on Managing Intrastate Low-Intensity Armed Conflict from Melander, Möller, and Öberg (2009). This produces a sample of up to 178 domestic armed conflicts across the world between 1989 and 2011 for which we have information on relevant covariates as well.

Outcome variables

This study examines variation in outcomes along the negotiation pathway in domestic armed conflicts. Figure 1 illustrates this pathway and shows how these outcomes relate to each other.
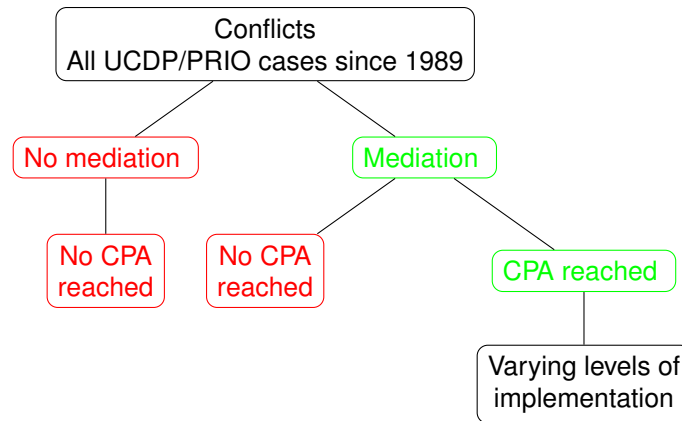
Figure 1 Distribution of outcomes of interest.

H1: Variation in mediation trajectories. Our first analysis examines why some conflicts receive more attention from mediators than others. The relevant empirical outcomes for this analysis are the occurrences of mediation events in a given conflict-year or the overall count of years with mediation events throughout the life span of the conflict. Of 923 conflict-years covered by existing data sources on mediation, our data sources (DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna 2011; Melander, Möller, and Öberg 2009) record mediation events for about one-third of years (317). Collapsed to the conflict level, half of the conflicts received no mediation during any conflict-year, 24 conflicts experienced mediation at one conflict-year, and the remaining 65 conflicts experienced 2 or more conflict-years with mediation events. The data sources for mediation make the years 1989–2011 the period of interest for these analyses.

H2 and H3: Variation in success of peace agreement negotiations By our definition, mediation and related negotiations reach a meaningful outcome when conflict parties sign a comprehensive peace agreement. We code a binary indicator for this outcome, based on the Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset (Joshi, Quinn, and Regan 2015). From this source, we identify 32 comprehensive peace agreements that were concluded between conflict parties in our sample of conflicts. Figure 1 shows that all cases that eventually ended in comprehensive peace agreements previously received mediation. Of all conflicts receiving mediation, two-thirds do *not* lead to CPAs. Only about 20 percent of all conflicts (and one-third of conflicts receiving mediation)

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do end in CPAs. Because mediation events are a key covariate, these samples cover the years 1989–2011.

H4: Variation in peace agreement implementation Not all peace agreements are implemented at the same level and at the same time. New, detailed data from Joshi, Quinn, and Regan (2015) show substantive variation in implementation especially during the first few years after CPAs are signed. We use the aggregate implementation score from this project to assess implementation rates. This score is equivalent to a "a normalized annual percentage that ranges from 0 to 100%" (cf. the Peace Accords Matrix codebook). Higher rates indicate that at a given point in time, the stakeholders in a post-conflict country had implemented more of the provisions in the CPA. Because implementation varies across conflicts and across years (see Figure 2), we use yearly implementation scores as the outcome for our analyses of variation in implementation. For 32 peace agreements and up to 10 post-conflict years per agreement, this yields up to 302 post-conflict agreement-years with information on covariates, providing the sample for our analyses on this point. Conflicts where peace agreements fail and fighting resumes exit the sample. We use up-to-date measures of implementation, extending the period of analysis from 1989 to 2015.

Empirical strategy

We use regressions to test each part of our argument. For hypothesis 1 on mediation occurrences, we fit logistic regression models to conflict-year data, where the occurrence of mediation is the outcome of interest. In these analyses, all explanatory variables (see below) are lagged by one year.

Because mediation occurrences in given years can be subject to temporal dynamics, and the main variation of our interest is between conflicts, we conduct a second set of analyses at the level of the conflict, where the cumulative count of conflict years with mediation is the outcome of interest. We use negative binomial regression models to model this outcome because the cumulative counts of mediation years are overdispersed (mean $= 2.2$, standard deviation $= 3.4$).
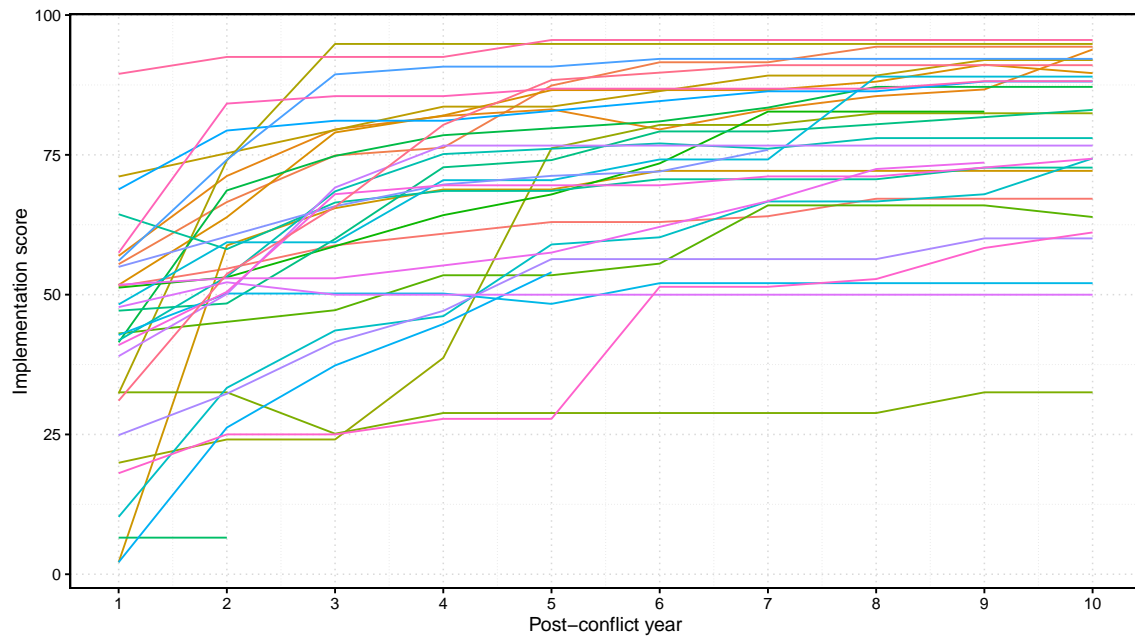
Figure 2 Implementation scores for 32 conflicts, 1989–2015. Each line indicates the yearly implementation rate for one post-conflict period. Conflicts where peace agreements fail and fighting resumes exit the sample. Implementation scores range from 0 to 100 and indicate a weighted ratio of implemented agreement provisions and overall provisions. Lines are slightly jittered to avoid overplotting. Source: Peace Accords Matrix (Joshi, Quinn, and Regan 2015).

Hypotheses 2 and 3 address variation in peace agreement negotiations across conflicts. Because we are again interested in comparing conflicts that do end in CPAs to conflicts that do not, we conduct analyses at the level of the conflict and use logistic regression to estimate determinants of successful CPA negotiation.

Peace agreement implementation measures the rate of provisions in a CPA that are implemented at the end of a given year (Joshi and Quinn 2015). This measure varies by year and across conflict. We examine this variation using yearly data on implementation across conflicts and estimate linear multilevel models that allow for varying intercepts for both years and conflict countries. These varying intercepts allow different baselines for different countries in which peace agreements were concluded, as well as for different years. Figure 2 illustrates that different CPAs start at different baselines and that implementation also changes over time, making this flexible specification the most desirable approach to these data.

Key explanatory variables

International organizations. Our argument highlights the role of international organizations with institutionalized structures. These structures give IGOs influence over conflict parties and increases the prospects of mediation success, which in turn attracts mediators. Institutional structures imply that IGOs have clear conditions and decision-making rules for engaging in member countries. These features can supplant the efforts of mediators by promising IGO support if conflict parties engage in negotiation and settle a conflict. The more embedded a country is in IGOs with relevant centralized structures, the clearer are the costs and benefits from settling a conflict for all involved parties. We measure this embeddedness of conflict countries by counting a conflict country's number of memberships in IGOs, foremost IGOs with highly structured institutional components. Such highly structured IGOs are formal intergovernmental organizations with centralized administrative infrastructures that can act without the immediate need for consent of all member states. This definition leans on work by Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom (2004) and Ingram, Robinson, and Busch (2005). We then follow Karreth and Tir (2013) in coding conflict

countries' memberships in these IGOs.[8]

Our argument on implementation (H4) focuses in particular on the likely interaction between IGOs and stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of IGOs for improving the buy-in of domestic bureaucracies and state agencies into implementing the terms of comprehensive peace agreements. For this task, IGOs of varying levels of institutionalization are potentially relevant. Our argument specifically refers to the crucial role of IGOs possessing some standing, institutionalized structures—at a lower level than the highly structured IGOs we emphasized in our previous hypotheses, but still at a higher level than informal groups of states, forums, or annual conferences. We expand our IGO measure here to separately account for IGOs with medium structure (MSIGOs; with administrative structures, but little independent decision-making power). Our argument suggests that HSIGOs and MSIGOs together exercise an influence on relevant stakeholders. We therefore combine the count of HSIGOs and MSIGOs for our test of H4. In the same test, we also include the count of states' memberships in all other IGOs that are less formal and possess no standing structures or significant independence from member states. These remaining IGOs are referred to as low structure (LSIGOs). Including this measure allows us to probe whether our argument about the relevance of some IGO structure for implementation has merit, or whether all IGOs are equally relevant.

Across analyses, conflict countries' memberships in HSIGOs center at a mean and median of 15, MSIGOs at 8, and LSIGOs at 22, with standard deviations of 3, 3, and 10, respectively.

Mediation history. We consider prior mediation history a key predictor for current mediation occurrences, peace agreements, and CPA implementation. Prior mediation indicates interest from mediators, as a potential accumulation of good relations between mediators and conflict parties, and probably at least some interest between the conflict parties to find a solution. To measure the past mediation of a conflict, we count the number of mediation events compiled from DeRouen, Bercovitch, and Pospieszna (2011) and Melander, Möller, and Öberg (2009). For the conflict-year

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[8]We use the Correlates of War data on states' membership in intergovernmental organizations, version 2.3 (Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004) to calculate membership counts. These data end in 2005. Because IGO memberships change only very slowly, we impute values from the year 2005 for all subsequent country-years in our data.

analyses on H1, this is the running count of mediation events up to the year prior to the current observation year. For the conflict-level analyses on H2 and H3, this is the count of mediation events until the year in which a peace agreement was formed. For the peace-agreement-year unit of analysis on H4, this is also the count of mediation events until the year in which a peace agreement was formed.[9]

Control variables

In each set of analyses, we use a core set of control variables to capture other known influences on mediation, negotiation outcomes, and CPA implementation.[10]

Conflict characteristics. In line with prior work, we expect that conflict characteristics are related to all our outcomes of interest. We control for conflict severity using the logged count of battle deaths (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005) and the duration of the conflict in years (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015).

Demographic and institutional factors. The configuration of demographic and political factors can facilitate or complicate mediation, negotiation, and implementation. Our analyses account for the share of the population excluded from the political process (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009), the overall population size (Gleditsch 2002; World Bank 2010), and for the presence or absence of democratic political institutions in a country (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2013).

Economic factors. Economic development may facilitate the use of incentives to get conflict parties to negotiate, settle, and implement agreements. At the same time, economic resources, if fungible, can increase the ability of either conflict party to continue fighting, and also make the distribution of resources more difficult. We account for either possible dynamic by including

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[9]Because mediation is key for all our analyses, we drop all country-years that are not covered in either the CWM or MILC data because we do not wish to assume that these years experienced no mediation.

[10]To facilitate estimation and interpretation, we standardize some control variables by dividing values by the variable's standard deviation (excluded population share, aid commitments) and transform others using the natural logarithm (battle deaths, population, GDP per capita).

a control for logged GDP per capita (Gleditsch 2002; World Bank 2010). Similarly, economic integration and openness can provide possible benefits to conflict parties; we control for trade openness with the ratio of exports and imports to GDP (Gleditsch 2002; World Bank 2010).

Other third-party involvement. While our analyses focus on the role of IGOs for the negotiation pathway, we also consider other types of third-party involvement to play an important role for the negotiation steps we analyze. UN peacekeeping operations can facilitate mediation, agreement negotiation, and implementation by providing physical security and enforcing terms of intermediate or final agreements. We control for the presence of UN peacekeepers using a measure compiled from International Peace Institute (2016) and, alternatively, using data from Kathman (2013). In each case, we use a binary indicator for the presence or absence of UN peacekeepers in a conflict. Third parties also have potential leverage over conflict parties at each stage by providing foreign aid. We consider aid alone substantially different from the role of IGOs and account for this different factor by measuring the absolute commitment of foreign aid, using data from Tierney, Nielson, Hawkins, Roberts, Findley, Powers, Parks, Wilson, and Hicks (2011) and AidData (2016).

Findings and Discussion

Mediators are more active in countries with more HSIGO memberships

The results are consistent our first hypothesis. Countries that are more embedded in highly-structured IGOs receive more attention from mediators. This finding is consistent across both the conflict-year and conflict level of analysis. At a typical conflict year, the data suggest that a conflict country with no HSIGO memberships at all only has a 9% [4%; 20%] chance of any mediator getting involved (Figure 3). A country with 15 HSIGO memberships (the average across conflict countries during our time period of interest) has a 25% [21%; 29%] chance, and this probability increases to 33% [25%; 42%] for a country with 20 HSIGO memberships (the 95th percentile of that variable).

As expected, mediation is path-dependent: mediators are more likely to start new mediation

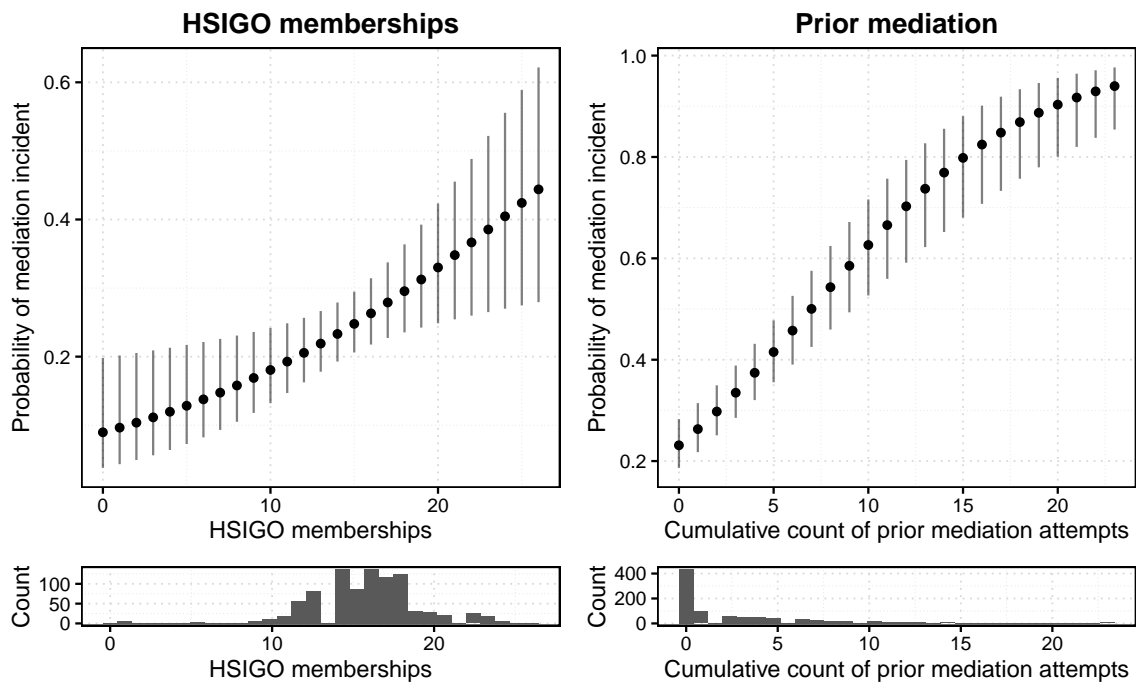**Figure 3** HSIGOs, prior mediation, and the estimated probability of mediation events across country-years. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on Model 1 in Table 1. Histograms below indicate the observed distribution of the respective explanatory variable in the estimation sample. All other covariates are set to median values.

Table 1 Evidence on H1: Logit estimates of mediation incidents, 1989–2011. Unit of analysis: conflict-year.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
HSIGO memberships	0.08*	0.10*	0.08*	0.08*	0.11*
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Battle deaths (logged)	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Prior mediation attempts	0.17*	0.16*	0.17*	0.17*	0.20*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Conflict years	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Excluded population share (std.)	0.16*	0.23*	0.14	0.14	0.19*
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Population (logged)	−0.59*	−0.56*	−0.58*	−0.59*	−0.67*
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.11)
Democracy	−0.30	−0.23	−0.29	−0.24	−0.33
	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.28)
GDP per capita (logged)	−0.40*	−0.49*	−0.42*	−0.40*	−0.43*
	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Trade / GDP		0.31			
		(0.32)			
UNPKO			0.32		
			(0.22)		
UNPKO (Kathman et al.)				0.62*	
				(0.27)	
Aid commitments (std.)					0.08
					(0.22)
Constant	12.16*	11.93*	11.99*	11.98*	13.53*
	(1.48)	(1.58)	(1.48)	(1.49)	(2.17)
AIC	910.40	793.12	910.26	906.45	857.46
BIC	953.85	840.25	958.54	954.62	905.49
Log Likelihood	−446.20	−386.56	−445.13	−443.23	−418.73
Deviance	892.40	773.12	890.26	886.45	837.46
Conflict-years	923	823	923	913	900

* $p < 0.05$. All explanatory variables are lagged by one year.

attempts in countries that have previously experienced mediation. The right panel of Figure 3 shows that the probability of mediation increases substantially in conflict-years when a country has experienced mediation in prior years. However, the strong relationship between prior mediation and current mediation does not crowd out the higher propensity of mediators to become active in countries with more HSIGO memberships.

At the level of the conflict, we find accordingly that countries embedded in more HSIGOs also receive a higher number of mediation events across the life span of the conflict. Our model predicts an otherwise typical conflict country with no HSIGO memberships at all to receive 0 mediation events (Figure 4). A country with 15 HSIGO memberships is estimated to receive at least one mediation event, and a country with 20 HSIGO memberships is estimated to receive 3 mediation

Table 2 Evidence on H1: Negative binomial estimates of mediation incidents, 1989–2011. Unit of analysis: conflict.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
HSIGO memberships	0.13*	0.19*	0.12*	0.12*	0.16*
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Battle deaths (logged)	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Conflict years	0.06*	0.06*	0.06*	0.06*	0.07*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Excluded population share (std.)	0.06	0.12	0.03	0.01	0.13
	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Population (logged)	−0.48*	−0.31*	−0.47*	−0.46*	−0.82*
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Democracy	−0.22	−0.21	−0.19	−0.13	−0.38
	(0.36)	(0.34)	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.37)
GDP per capita (logged)	−0.24	−0.51*	−0.23	−0.20	−0.26*
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.13)
Trade / GDP		1.98*			
		(0.32)			
UNPKO			0.28		
			(0.31)		
UNPKO (Kathman et al.)				0.60	
				(0.36)	
Aid commitments (std.)					0.65*
					(0.26)
Constant	9.83*	7.49*	9.40*	9.06*	15.80*
	(1.79)	(1.83)	(1.82)	(1.81)	(2.54)
AIC	640.92	557.44	642.05	638.65	620.67
BIC	669.56	588.44	673.87	670.36	652.15
Log Likelihood	−311.46	−268.72	−311.03	−309.33	−300.34
Deviance	167.69	152.77	167.65	166.92	158.79
Conflicts	178	164	178	176	172

$^* p < 0.05.$

events. Considering the large number of conflicts in the data with *no* observed mediation at all and the right skew of that variable, the difference between 0, 1 or 3 mediation events are substantively meaningful.

Control variables at each level of analysis suggest the following. Renewed mediation is slightly less likely as conflicts last longer, possibly reflecting (a) mediation fatigue in longer conflicts and (b) the fact that mediation often results in peace agreements, which we address in our second hypothesis. Countries with larger populations and with wealthier economies are less likely to receive mediation. From the demand side, this might indicate a propensity of larger and wealthier countries to decline outside interference in domestic conflicts.
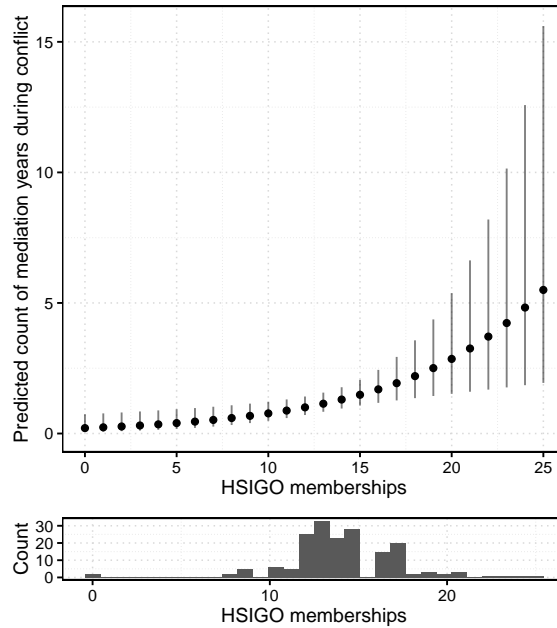
Figure 4 HSIGOs and estimated count of mediation events throughout the duration of a typical conflict. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on Model 1 in Table 2. Histograms below indicate the observed distribution of HSIGOs in the estimation sample. All other covariates are set to median values.

Mediation, HSIGOs, and peace agreements

Our second hypothesis suggests that mediation is a key factor leading to the signing of peace agreements. Indeed, the data already show that every one of the 32 comprehensive peace agreements (CPAs) signed since 1989 followed at least one mediation event. Taking into account *all* conflicts and incorporating cases of mediation *not* resulting in CPAs, we still find evidence for a systematic relationship between mediation and CPAs. Figure 5 shows that the odds of conflict parties signing a peace agreement increase substantially if mediators have engaged in a country even just once or twice.

This finding and the fact that all countries receiving mediation sign peace agreements together raise the question of why mediation only sometimes leads to the signing of CPAs. Our third hypothesis proposes an answer: mediation is more effective in countries where HSIGOs can back up mediation efforts with promises of future assistance—and with credible threats to withhold benefits

Table 3 Evidence on H2: Logit estimates of successful peace agreement negotiations, 1989–2011. Unit of analysis: conflict.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
HSIGO memberships	0.12	0.16	0.12	0.12	0.11
	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Prior mediation attempts	0.24*	0.22*	0.24*	0.23*	0.24*
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Battle deaths (logged)	0.14	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.15
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Conflict years	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	−0.00
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Excluded population share (std.)	−0.22	−0.24	−0.22	−0.23	−0.15
	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Population (logged)	−0.78*	−0.75*	−0.78*	−0.78*	−1.24*
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.33)
Democracy	0.36	0.46	0.35	0.38	0.34
	(0.69)	(0.71)	(0.70)	(0.70)	(0.68)
GDP per capita (logged)	−0.23	−0.45	−0.22	−0.23	−0.23
	(0.24)	(0.28)	(0.24)	(0.24)	(0.26)
Trade / GDP		0.27			
		(0.74)			
UNPKO			−0.05		
			(0.58)		
UNPKO (Kathman et al.)				0.15	
				(0.68)	
Aid commitments (std.)					1.13
					(0.58)
Constant	12.03*	12.94*	12.07*	11.97*	19.97*
	(4.10)	(4.29)	(4.13)	(4.13)	(6.22)
AIC	143.25	133.42	145.24	145.15	139.73
BIC	171.88	164.42	177.06	176.86	171.20
Log Likelihood	−62.62	−56.71	−62.62	−62.58	−59.86
Deviance	125.25	113.42	125.24	125.15	119.73
Conflicts	178	164	178	176	172

$^{*} p < 0.05$.

should there be a failure to follow through on negotiated obligations. The latter issue is important to helping overcome the credible commitment problem, which results in many negotiations failing (Fearon 1995). The data are consistent with this idea. Using an interaction term between HSIGO memberships and prior mediation attempts, we find that the positive effect of prior mediation on the odds of peace agreement signing depends on the level of HSIGO memberships of the respective country. In a country with no or few HSIGO memberships, we find no relationship between mediation efforts and comprehensive peace agreements. In a country with average involvement in HSIGOs, mediation attempts are indeed associated with substantially higher probabilities of CPAs. And the highest levels of HSIGO memberships strengthen the positive association between mediation events and successful negotiation of CPAs even further. Figure 6 illustrates this conditional
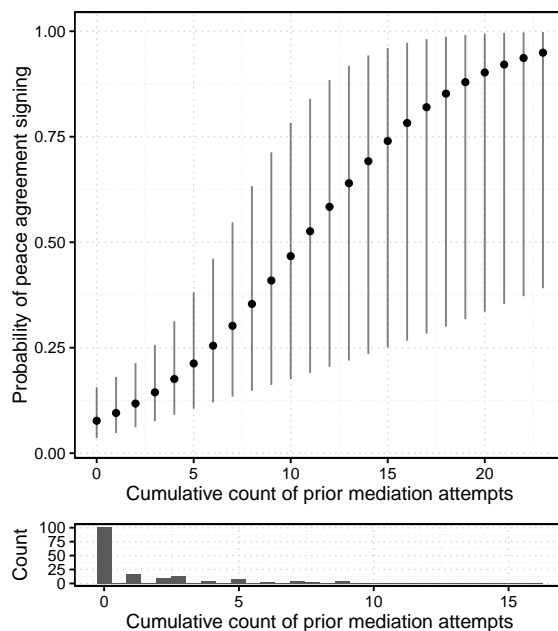
Figure 5 Prior mediation events and estimated probability of peace agreement signing in a typical conflict. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on Model 1 in Table 3. Histograms below indicate the observed distribution of prior mediation events in the estimation sample. All other covariates are set to median values.

relationship in more detail.

For control variables, we find some evidence that comprehensive peace agreements are less likely in more populous and wealthier countries. Aid commitments prior to the end of the conflict are positively associated with the signing of CPAs, potentially indicating an incentivizing impact of aid or donors increasing assistance in anticipation of an impending peace agreement. Such an endogenous relationship is possible for a volatile external type of involvement such as foreign aid, but much less so for the role of IGOs which rarely exclude member states completely.

Testing for bias in analyses of mediation and CPA signing

We also explore whether the processes behind mediation and CPA signing are systematically related. Such relations would include the possibility that mediators are particularly likely to become involved in cases that are likely easy to be resolved on their own, and therefore more likely ex ante to end with comprehensive peace agreements. To this end, we report results from an empirical

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Table 4 Evidence on H3: Logit estimates of successful peace agreement negotiations, 1989–2011. Unit of analysis: conflict.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
HSIGO memberships	0.00	0.03	0.00	−0.00	−0.11
	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Prior mediation attempts	0.30*	0.28*	0.30*	0.30*	0.34*
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
HSIGO memberships × Prior mediation attempts	0.05*	0.06*	0.05*	0.06*	0.08*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Battle deaths (logged)	0.17	0.20*	0.17	0.17	0.18
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Conflict years	−0.03	−0.03	−0.03	−0.03	−0.03
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Excluded population share (std.)	−0.25	−0.22	−0.25	−0.27	−0.16
	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.27)
Population (logged)	−0.78*	−0.72*	−0.78*	−0.78*	−1.35*
	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.35)
Democracy	0.21	0.32	0.21	0.25	0.13
	(0.74)	(0.76)	(0.74)	(0.75)	(0.75)
GDP per capita (logged)	−0.33	−0.62*	−0.33	−0.33	−0.34
	(0.24)	(0.29)	(0.25)	(0.24)	(0.26)
Trade / GDP		0.37			
		(0.74)			
UNPKO			−0.01		
			(0.59)		
UNPKO (Kathman et al.)				0.25	
				(0.70)	
Aid commitments (std.)					1.51*
					(0.61)
Constant	12.53*	13.39*	12.54*	12.50*	22.51*
	(4.20)	(4.42)	(4.23)	(4.24)	(6.39)
AIC	140.38	130.18	142.38	142.23	133.95
BIC	172.20	164.27	177.38	177.11	168.57
Log Likelihood	−60.19	−54.09	−60.19	−60.12	−55.98
Deviance	120.38	108.18	120.38	120.23	111.95
Conflicts	178	164	178	176	172

$^*p < 0.05.$

model that jointly estimates the outcomes of interest in our first set of hypotheses: whether a conflict receives mediation and whether the conflict parties subsequently sign a comprehensive peace agreement. This empirical model uses a Heckman probit estimator that accounts for selection. The two outcomes of interest are estimated jointly.

As samples for this estimator, we take all conflicts from 1989-2011 for which we have data on all covariates. In a first stage, we estimate whether mediators got involved in each conflict or not. This is similar to the test of H1 at the conflict level in Table 2 and Figure 4. Here, we modify the measure of the outcome variable and create a binary indicator for whether a conflict received any mediation effort at all or none during its life cycle. The second outcome of interest
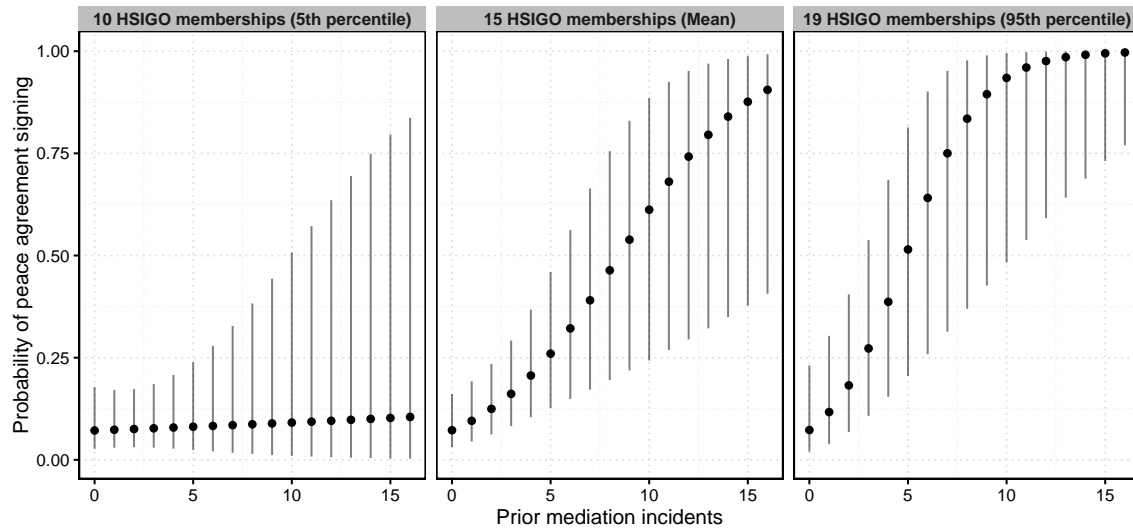
Figure 6 HSIGOs, prior mediation, and estimated probability of peace agreement signing in a typical conflict. Reflecting H3 (suggesting that the effect of HSIGOs on agreement signing is higher when a country is embedded in more HSIGOs), each panel shows the relationship between mediation and the probability of agreement signing at a different level of HSIGO memberships. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on Model 1 in Table 4. All other covariates are set to median values.

is whether conflict parties signed a comprehensive peace agreement or not. Here, we use the same binary indicator as we did in our tests of H3 (in Table 4 and Figure 6). This leaves a sample of 158 conflicts (with information on all covariates). Mediators were involved in 78 of these conflicts. These 78 conflicts comprise the sample for the second stage of our analysis.

To identify the first equation (estimating selection into mediation), we use two factors that we argued and found to be associated with mediation. The first is a conflict country's trade dependence, indicating the likely interest of third parties in achieving peace in the country, and also proxying for how receptive the conflict country might be to signals from third parties. The second factor is the amount of official development assistance received by a country, indicating the overall interest and stakes that the international community has in that country.

The purpose of this model is to probe the robustness of our findings so far to a specification that measures and corrects for potential bias. With this in mind, the Heckman probit estimates suggest no remaining correlation between the processes behind mediation and CPA signing, once

Table 5 Evidence on H3: Probit and Heckman probit estimates of successful peace agreement negotiations, 1989–2011. Unit of analysis: conflict. Identical samples in both models.

|	Probit	Heckman probit
Selection into mediation		
HSIGO memberships		0.309*
		(0.0612)
Battle deaths (logged)		0.0573
		(0.0729)
Conflict years		0.0476*
		(0.0163)
Excluded population share (std.)		0.210*
		(0.233)
Population (logged)		−0.555*
		(0.214)
Democracy		−1.060*
		(0.415)
GDP per capita (logged)		−0.711**
		(0.208)
Trade / GDP		1.941**
		(0.605)
Aid commitments (std.)		0.553
		(0.345)
Constant		13.39*
		(3.919)
Outcome: Peace agreement signed		
HSIGO memberships	−0.103	−0.110
	(0.125)	(0.149)
Prior mediation attempts	0.188*	0.186
	(0.089)	(0.113)
HSIGO memberships × Prior mediation attempts	0.057*	0.0568
	(0.028)	(0.0353)
Battle deaths (logged)	0.151*	0.149
	(0.064)	(0.0767)
Conflict years	−0.048	−0.0481
	(0.035)	(0.0464)
Excluded population share (std.)	−0.145	−0.155
	(0.172)	(0.212)
Population (logged)	−0.416*	−0.400*
	(0.165)	(0.195)
Democracy	0.589	0.631
	(0.574)	(0.575)
GDP per capita (logged)	−0.174	−0.159
	(0.206)	(0.262)
Constant	6.745*	6.443
	(3.243)	(3.838)
ρ		−0.125
		(0.806)
AIC	95.080	244.476
BIC	118.647	308.791
Log-likelihood	−37.540	−101.238
Conflicts		158
Conflicts with mediation	78	78

*$p < 0.05$.
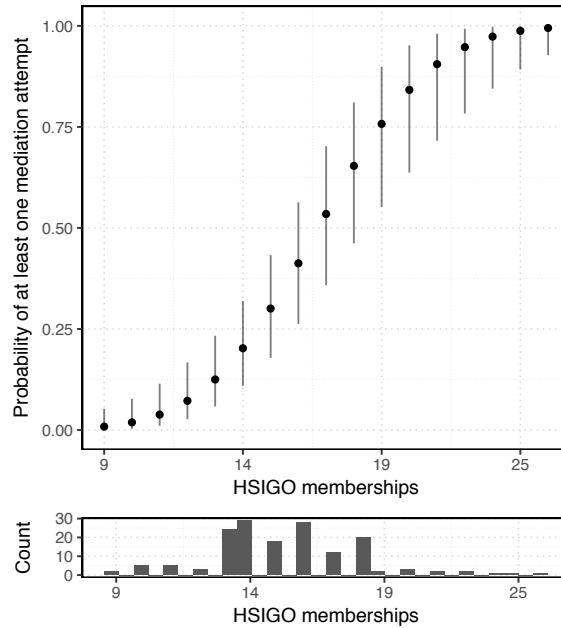
Figure 7 HSIGOs and the odds of mediators getting involved in a typical conflict. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on the first stage equation in Table 5. The histogram below shows the observed distribution of HSIGOs in the estimation sample. All other covariates are set to median values.

we account for the determinants of each process as we did in our previous analyses. The estimated correlation parameter ρ indicates that there is no statistically significant evidence for such bias. In addition, the estimates for all other parameters are similar to what we found for H1 and H3. Conflict countries involved in larger numbers of HSIGOs are considerably more likely to experience the involvement of outside mediators, as H1 proposed. While the coefficient on the interaction term falls just short of the 0.05 threshold at $p \approx 0.054$, it is not possible to assess the size and significance of an interaction term in generalized linear model from a coefficient alone (Ai and Norton 2003). Therefore, we estimate the probability of signing a peace agreement for conflict countries with different levels of involvement in HSIGOs and across the range of mediation activity. Figure 7 visualizes this. Here, the substantive relationship is strong; moving across the interquartile range of HSIGO memberships (from 13 to 17 memberships) more than triples the probability of a mediator getting involved.

Mediation efforts are far more likely to lead to the signing of comprehensive peace agreements
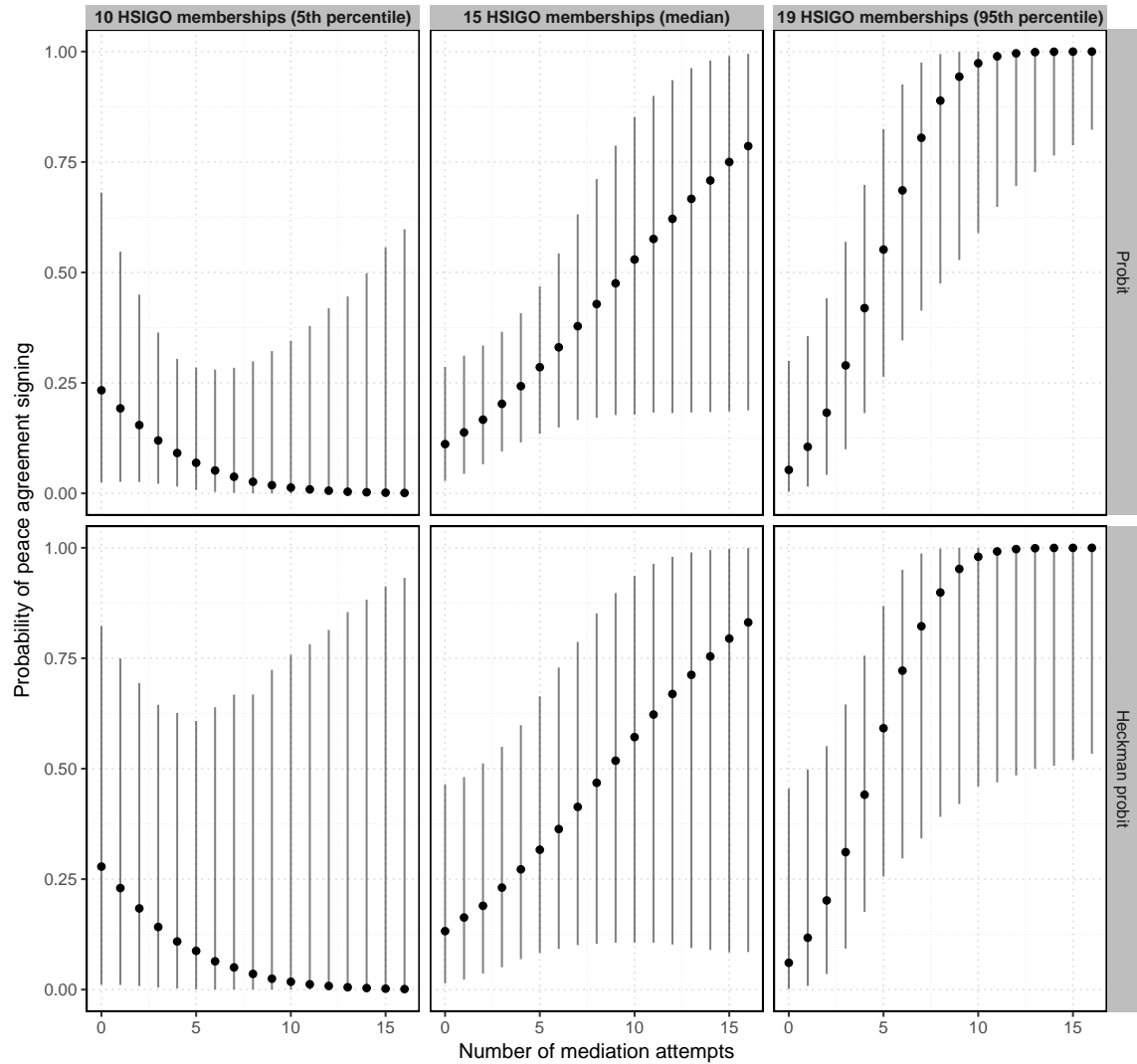
33

Figure 8 HSIGOs, mediation attempts, and estimated probability of peace agreement signing in a typical conflict; estimates correcting for potential selection bias. Reflecting H3 (suggesting that the effect of HSIGOs on agreement signing is higher when a country is embedded in more HSIGOs), each panel shows the relationship between mediation and the probability of agreement signing at a different level of HSIGO memberships. Dots and whiskers represent point estimates and 95% confidence intervals, respectively; estimates are based on the second stage equation in Model 2 in Table 5. All other covariates are set to median values.

in countries where more HSIGOs can exercise their influence and back up mediators' efforts, as Figure 8 shows. This mirrors our initial finding. Due to the smaller sample in the selection model, the uncertainty around these estimates is larger. However, we still see that the positive impact of mediation on the odds of signing a peace agreement only materializes in conflict countries that participate in higher numbers of HSIGOs. These results make for further evidence in favor of our argument and H1 and H3.

Variation in peace agreement implementation

Our argument suggests that IGOs are also a relevant actor in determining the degree to which CPAs are implemented after they are signed. Evidence from 32 agreements in 28 countries, summarized in Table 6 is consistent with this argument. Our argument notes the importance of domestic actors for implementation. Especially as far as assistance with implementation and interaction with bureaucrats is concerned, the exact degree of structure of IGOs is less relevant than the mere fact that some degree of administrative structure is present. That is, incentives in the form of promises and threats for failing to implement CPA terms are most effective when coming from IGOs with structures guaranteeing that IGOs act on their terms (Karreth and Tir 2013).

We begin the analyses on H4 by distinguishing between all three types of IGOs: those with high, medium, and low levels of institutional structure. As discussed above, IGO structure is important for implementation, but we focus in particular on the likely interaction between IGOs and stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of IGOs for improving the buy-in of domestic bureaucracies and state agencies into implementing the terms of comprehensive peace agreements. For this task, IGOs of different levels of institutionalization are potentially relevant; our argument implies that at least medium structures (standing institutional features) are required for IGOs to engage with stakeholders to push for implementation. In Model 1 in Table 6, we find that countries with higher levels of memberships in IGOs with both high and medium levels of institutionalization experience higher rates of CPA implementation. This finding supports our argument and H4. All else constant, we observe a smaller, negative relationship between memberships in IGOs with

low or no institutionalization and CPA implementation.

Consistent with this finding and our argument, we then estimate full models where we combine membership counts in IGOs with high and medium levels of institutionalization and control for memberships in IGOs with low or no institutionalization separately. The combined medium-to-high structure IGO measure ranges from 14 to 47 IGOs, with a mean of 23 and a standard deviation of 6. In Models 2 through 6, we find a consistent positive relationship between memberships in medium-to-high structure IGOs and the implementation rate of CPAs. One additional medium-to-high structure IGO membership on average increases implementation scores by 6 points. Comparing two otherwise typical cases, this means that changing a country's medium-to-high structure IGO membership count by one standard deviation is associated with an increase in the implementation score of 36 points—a substantial increase given the range of the implementation score from 0 to 100.

This finding holds while accounting for country characteristics and time trends in implementation (see Figure 2) by estimating varying intercepts for each, as well as a core set of control variables. Consistent with our earlier analyses, we find again that prior occurrences of mediation are associated with beneficial outcomes further on. We also find strong evidence that other types of external involvement are associated with implementation. The presence of UN peacekeepers before implementation increases implementation substantially (Models 4 and 5). Similarly, foreign aid commitments before the first year of implementation exhibit strong and sizable correlation with implementation (Model 6).

Conclusion

This study asks why domestic armed conflicts take different trajectories from receiving mediation, signing peace agreements, and implementing such agreements once they are signed. We propose that external actors are key at each step of this process and highlight the role of international organizations, particularly those with substantial institutionalized structures. Evidence from domestic armed conflicts since 1989 lends support to the components of our argument. We find

Table 6 Evidence on H4: estimates of peace agreement implementation, 1989–2015, with random effects for implementation year and countries. Unit of analysis: peace agreement–year.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
HSIGO and MSIGO memberships combined		5.72*	6.34*	5.92*	5.85*	6.64*
		(1.52)	(1.90)	(1.59)	(1.65)	(1.35)
HSIGO memberships	5.76*					
	(1.70)					
MSIGO memberships	11.38*					
	(1.33)					
LSIGO memberships	−5.97*	−3.77*	−4.11*	−3.79*	−3.89*	−4.23*
	(0.77)	(0.81)	(1.23)	(0.84)	(0.87)	(0.72)
Prior mediation attempts		5.82*	6.95*	3.43	3.68*	5.09*
		(1.55)	(2.36)	(1.81)	(1.85)	(1.33)
Battle deaths (logged)		3.18	3.82	−0.22	0.69	3.00
		(1.91)	(2.28)	(2.32)	(2.30)	(1.64)
Conflict years		−1.26	−1.63	−0.96	−0.74	−0.69
		(0.93)	(1.32)	(0.98)	(1.02)	(0.80)
Excluded population share (std.)		2.45	2.64	9.47	7.28	1.06
		(4.81)	(5.93)	(5.53)	(5.49)	(4.16)
Population (logged)		−0.11	−0.33	0.34	−0.47	−14.07*
		(5.97)	(7.43)	(6.27)	(6.48)	(6.90)
Democracy		−6.23	−10.99	6.49	4.86	−1.33
		(12.49)	(15.89)	(13.72)	(14.10)	(10.71)
GDP per capita (logged)		−9.41	−8.95	−12.18	−10.94	−10.10
		(6.77)	(11.04)	(7.14)	(7.35)	(5.72)
Trade / GDP			−9.75			
			(16.88)			
UNPKO				22.89*		
				(7.32)		
UNPKO (Kathman et al.)					20.58*	
					(7.19)	
Aid commitments (std.)						39.63*
						(12.86)
Constant	50.92*	34.23*	35.93*	36.86*	37.02*	57.83*
	(8.61)	(10.09)	(12.71)	(10.52)	(10.83)	(11.42)
AIC	2333.56	2280.35	2116.52	2266.98	2268.70	2266.83
BIC	2359.53	2328.58	2167.51	2318.93	2320.65	2318.77
Log Likelihood	−1159.78	−1127.17	−1044.26	−1119.49	−1120.35	−1119.41
Peace agreement-years	302	302	282	302	302	302
Countries	28	28	26	28	28	28
Year count (from 1 to 10)	10	10	10	10	10	10
Variance: Countries	1398.13	791.91	1118.24	876.19	938.54	552.80
Variance: Years	122.63	117.80	111.43	115.01	115.13	117.71
Variance: Peace agreement-years	72.62	66.58	63.50	63.98	64.04	66.55

$^*p < 0.05$. All explanatory variables are measured at the time when the peace agreement was signed.

that especially IGOs with highly structured institutional components are robustly associated with mediation events. Mediation is a crucial component behind recent trends toward a higher rate of conflicts ending in peace agreements. But our findings uncover that mediation is only effective, and increasingly so, in countries that are also subject to the influence of IGOs with institutionalized structures. Once peace agreements are signed, countries face substantial hurdles to implementing

the terms of these agreements. Again, we find that some of these hurdles are less damaging for implementation when IGOs provide incentives and guarantees, and otherwise facilitate the buy-in of relevant stakeholders for implementation.

These findings have substantial implications for practical aspects of peacebuilding and for preventing that countries experiencing domestic armed conflicts fall into recurrent conflict traps. The evidence suggests that mediators are more likely to be successful in the long run in countries where the influence of IGOs can supplant mediation efforts. Given that resources for mediation, and also resources and opportunities for domestic negotiations of peace agreements, are limited, this is an important indication for where such resources can be used most effectively.

For scholarly work on conflict resolution, our study illustrates the benefits of studying mediation, negotiation, and peace agreements as parts of one pathway rather than isolation. Considering the multiple opportunities for peacebuilding failure, we identify factors that keep countries and negotiating parties on the path toward peace. IGOs are a key third party with qualities distinct from other third parties. This finding comports well with a recent literature on the role of external actors for conflict termination and prevention (e.g., Karreth and Tir 2013; Beardsley, Cunningham, and White 2015; Sawyer, Cunningham, and Reed 2015). Our study also adds to growing evidence that IGOs have impacts well beyond their initial mandates, initially framed as a "pathology" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999), and more recently documented in a variety of contexts (Johnson 2014). However, as suggested in Karreth and Tir (2013), this influence of IGOs beyond their core mandate need not always be negative. Lastly, we emphasize in particular the importance of institutional structures and of distinguishing between different types of IGOs. This supplants other recent work on the role of IGOs for domestic political contention (von Borzyskowski and Vabulas 2015), but also provides further opportunities for examining how institutional structures can be linked to concrete negotiation behavior and post-conflict outcomes.

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