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Master Thesis

Ripeness on Initiated Peace Processes in Colombia:

A Case Study of M-19 (1989) and FARC-EP (1999)

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Abstract

Why do peace processes initiate? This study is an analysis of the explanatory value of I. William Zartman's ripeness theory in the resolution of the Colombian internal armed conflict. This was done by testing the elements of the theory – mutually hurting stalemate and sense of a way out – in addition to absence of economic resources and mediation presence elements (necessary even if not sufficient) that facilitate and create a favorable condition to initiate a peace process. Data collection was done through document analysis, and the analysis itself through grounded theory. The scope was of two case studies that started a negotiated settlement, the first one between the state and the 19th of April Movement (M-19) in 1989 and the second one between the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army (FARC) in 1999. The contribution of this study was to understand the causes that generated opposite results, the first one ended successfully and the latter did not, even if both started a peace process. The two guerrilla groups were chosen because they were the largest groups with the characteristics described above, but why choosing Colombia? This conflict is the only one in its complex nature with five decades that still remains in the Latin American region. The findings were that a ripe moment happened only in the first case. While in the first case all elements were present except mediation, in the second one only mediation was present. A gap of the theory was that the role of mediation is not clear and under what conditions it plays a role in ripeness theory. This study may then conclude that attempts of escalation by all parties in a conflict may be necessary to set the favorable conditions for a ripe moment to happen in conflict resolution.

Keywords: Colombia, Conflict, Case Study, FARC, M-19, Mutually Hurting Stalemate, peace process, ripeness.

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Abbreviations

- AD-M19 – 19th of April Democratic Alliance
- CGSB – Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board
- DMZ – Demilitarized Zone
- FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People’s Army
- FMLN – Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front
- IRA – Irish Republican Army
- M-19 – 19th of April Movement
- MHS – Mutually Hurting Stalemate
- UN – United Nations
- UP – Patriotic Union
- USA – United States of America

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**Ripeness on Initiated Peace Processes in Colombia:
A Case Study of M-19 (1989) and FARC-EP (1999)**

1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War in 1991 (hereafter post-Cold War era) marked a crucial change in the social science and conflict resolution fields (Bell, 2006; Dudouet, 2009; Fortna, 2004; Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg & Strand, 2002; Licklider, 1995). According to Gleditsch et al. (2002) the number of armed conflicts increased through out the Cold War and internal conflicts became the dominant form of conflict, raising academic attention (p. 620).

Among the different existing internal armed conflicts nowadays, this research aims to focus primarily on the extensive internal armed conflict¹ in Colombia and with it to explore why peace processes initiate. Colombia influenced under the Cuban revolution (1953-1959) while going through *La Violencia* period (1948-1958) resulted not only on the creation of the National Front, but also on the creation of multiple guerrilla groups (cycle: self-defense – mobile guerrillas – self-defense – mobile guerrillas) (Pizarro, 2011, p. 17-18). Later it was transformed into an internal armed conflict between the state and the guerrilla groups while facing at the same time a counter-narcotics fight. History has seen among time successful peace processes ending in agreements and demobilization, but there is still an ongoing situation with the remained guerrilla groups nowadays.

The scope of this thesis has been reduced to only two intents to initiate a peace process following the criteria of one ending successfully while the other did not. Respectively

¹ As used by the COW project, an “Internal armed conflict occurs between the government of a state and internal opposition groups without intervention from other states.” It can also be internationalized with intervention from other states (Gleditsch et al. 2002, p. 619; Sarkees & Wayman, 2010, http://www.correlatesofwar.org/COW2%20Data/WarData_NEW/COW%20Website%20-%20Typology%20of%20war.pdf).

and in chronological order, the first case is between the state and the 19th of April Movement (second generation guerrilla group) in 1989 and the second case between the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (first generation guerrilla group) in 1998.

The reason why the Colombian internal armed conflict was chosen was because in length is the only remained conflict in the Latin American region with more than four decades with the insurgency of multiple guerrillas. The two cases were chosen, first, because a narrow approach allows an in-depth cross-case analysis, second, M-19 was one the largest guerrilla group that reached a peace process successfully and FARC was and still is the most prominent and larger guerrilla group of all with several attempts to initiate a peace process, but they have failed. Third, last but not least, the two cases were chosen to address a gap that have not been analyzed before, which is to compare through ripeness theory the causes that generated opposite results in these two specific cases given that both were able to initiate a negotiated peace process.

What is ripeness theory? Ripeness theory is a conflict resolution approach of William Zartman based on the timing of peace initiatives. It proposes that a conflict enters a favorable moment to initiate a peace process when all parties recognize the high costs of continuing the conflict through the following two elements (required but not sufficient): I) existence and perception of a mutually hurting stalemate, and this leads to the second element, II) existence and perception of a way out. In addition, the absence of economic resources influence on the above elements and on whether the conflict has viability and sustainability or not. Mediation is also a final element that through third-party intervention is an effective tool of conflict management and helps to persuade the parties to change their "perceptions" of the value of current situations (MHS) and future outcomes (a sense of a way out) (Regan and Aydin 2006, p. 741; Zartman 1995, p. 21).

This thesis will then address the following concern: *Why did the 19th of April Movement (M-19) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) initiated a negotiated peace process and yet the first one had a successful result achieving a peace process while the other did not in the timeframe between 1989 and 2002?* In order to answer this, the research was designed as explanatory by testing Ripeness theory. In this sense, theory testing is going to be done through qualitative research with a comparative case-study approach that has temporal and special variation. The data collection will be conducted by using document analysis, a social science methodological technique, given that resources and accessibility to interviews, observations, and focus groups are limited. The analysis will be conducted by using grounded theory.

However, this research has limitations. Ripeness theory is only useful to start a negotiated settlement, and does not guarantee a successful or failed result of the peace process due to constant changing circumstances. Having information about the guerrilla groups could be difficult to access given that is managed in a confidential manner and are recognized by the population and the state as illegal armed groups, which make it difficult to reach any type of information. Regarding the main elements of the theory, the mutually hurting stalemate happens when hurt or pain exists and is perceived, but pain level is also difficult to measure because each actor perceives it differently. In addition, MHS perception can take a long time until all possibilities for escalation have been exhausted. Since the ripe moment takes time, inaction may be a possible position to some actors to wait until it happens. The sense of a way out could also be at some point difficult to validate given that it can be ambiguous some times. Also, subjective perceptions about a sense of a way out vary among researchers. Regarding economic resources is difficult to measure the limit the amount that determines absence or presence of it, and mediation implies that a double face possibility may affect the conflict in either a positive or negative way.

Nonetheless, this thesis contributes on testing specifically ripeness theory in the Colombian internal armed conflict not only with the two main elements of the theory, but also with 2 complementary elements. Also, it contributes on a comparative basis with two different peace processes within Colombia, something that have not been done before. Suggestions for future research would be large-n comparative case studies in Colombia and then expanded to the Latin American region and even worldwide. In addition, it would be interesting to further clarify under what conditions the role of mediation is relevant or not in the initiation of a peace process. This is broadly addressed in the conclusions chapter.

Thus, five chapters compose the structure of the thesis, starting with this one, the introduction, which provides an overview of the content of the research. The following chapters provide a review of the relevant literature on conflict resolution, then ripeness theoretical outline, the research design and methodological technique, a historical background and the findings and results of the cases, ending with the conclusion.

The following chapter presents the relevant literature on conflict resolution to understand how to terminate conflict and/or reach a peaceful settlement. The four types of mechanisms (military victory, capitulation, military cooptation, and negotiation) are explained ending with some remarks.

The third chapter is the theoretical framework that introduces the structures, dynamics, and tactics of internal armed conflicts according to William Zartman followed by an extensive explanation of the author's ripeness theory. In this chapter the general hypothesis with its sub-hypotheses are presented.

In chapter four, the dependent and independent variables are presented along with the implications of ripeness theory. The type of research and the methodological technique (document analysis) is described, ending with the data quality and verification section.

Chapter five is the final one, in which a historical background about the Colombian

internal armed conflict is described. Subsequently, the analysis of case number one (state and M-19 peace process) is presented and connected accordingly to the general and specific hypotheses presented in chapter three, presenting and explaining as well the findings and results of the conducted qualitative analysis. The same procedure will be done with case number two (state and FARC peace process). This chapter will lead to the concluding thoughts about ripeness theory, the findings and results of the analysis of this research, and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review on conflict resolution

In the conflict resolution literature there are several mechanisms that have been used to successfully terminate and/or reach peaceful settlements in a conflict. Among the existing types of conflicts (e.g inter-state and extra-state wars), this research will focus on internal conflicts (civil wars or intra-state wars) specifically in the extensive Colombian conflict.

In this regard, it is important to specify that a civil war has been modeled as a two or more players game between the incumbent state and the rebel insurgency groups, which implies a bargaining process (Driscoll, 2012, p. 121). When the parties to the conflict converge to agree upon their relative strength and credibly commit to a settlement, this bargaining process is reached and it is followed by war termination (Stanley & Sawyer, 2009, p. 652). War termination can be achieved through four types of mechanisms: military victory, capitulation, military cooptation, and negotiation, which will be explained in this section and ending with some remarks about the theory used in this thesis.

2.1 Military Victory. The first type of mechanism to end a war is through military victory². Its main objective is to defeat the opponent, which means that one side directly acknowledges being defeated and surrenders in unconditional terms (having a win-lose game), and making it more difficult for war to resume. Licklider (1995) suggest by citing

² A list of Civil Wars fought after 1945 that ended in military victories can be found in the Appendix of Licklider 1995 article.

Schelling (1966) that, “military victory by definition is the ability to threaten the enemy's civilian population with impunity” (p. 686). This implies that civil wars are under certain conditions that are more likely to end, for instance, in genocide especially over identity issues or in nondemocratic governments or even repression (Licklider, 1995, p. 685-686). This type of mechanism for conflict termination is summarized in table 1.

Military Victory = Winner and Loser

Table 1: Military Victory Summary

Ending a civil war before the Cold War was easier through military victory than through negotiated settlements (Driscoll, 2012; Licklider, 1995, p. 120). Civil wars were more intense and therefore difficult to resolve by negotiation because it could eventually break into renewed violence (Licklider, 1995, p. 684). However, scholars (besides Licklider's findings) have not yet tested the robustness of the Wagner hypothesis³ and have not offered a general explanation that supports a lasting peace through military victory rather than through negotiated settlement (Duffy, 2010, p. 9-10; Licklider, 1995). Driscoll (2012) also explains that, “ending a civil war often requires the losing side to formally lay down its arms. It is difficult for the winners – who then control all the guns – to credibly commit to honor the terms of the ceasefire. This commitment problem complicates the diplomatic resolution of civil wars through many mechanisms, rendering rebel disarmament or stable postwar power sharing extremely difficult” (p. 121).

2.2. Capitulation. A second mechanism is capitulation or surrender. This type of mechanism mainly aborts the civil war and gives to the opposition an automatic victory, reducing at the same time further casualties (Licklider, 1995, p. 684). For instance, the

³ “Negotiated settlements of civil wars are more likely to break down than settlements based on military victories; consequently, the long-term casualties of negotiated settlements are likely to be greater than those of military victory” (Licklider 1995, p. 685).

Netherlands surrendered during the World War II after they knew that other major cities such as Amsterdam would run the same faith as what it happened to Rotterdam. Geography is also an element that affects the duration of the civil war and determines the relative military capability of each party to the conflict (Buhaug, Gates & Lujala, 2009, p. 566). In other words, the relative location and distance can enhance or reduce the relative military capacity and therefore determine which is closer to victory or surrender, a decision shaped by the ability to wage war (Buhaug et al., 2009). This type of mechanism for conflict termination is summarized in table 2.

Capitulation
Surrender
Geography: determinant of relative military capability

Table 2: Capitulation Summary

2.3. Military Cooptation. The post-Cold war era brought up the attention of scholars, who became more concern about an alternative way to end wars and reduce violence. Military cooptation, as the third type of mechanism to terminate a conflict, is described as the use of force to fragment rebel unity and then selectively incorporate the remnants into the regime's governance apparatus (Driscoll, 2012, 121). An example of military cooptation and side-switching phenomenon through the formalization of an institution and without an external guarantor is the Philippines civil war, in which over 5,000 former rebel fighters from the Moro National Liberation Front were trained, armed, and assigned to active units in the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the late 1990s (Driscoll, 2012). Thus, the Philippines Civil War case became a "coalition formation game" (Driscoll, 2012, p. 120). The Tajik civil war is another example of military cooptation. The war consisted of a decentralized set of battles among militias and the state, the militia ended colluding to back up the rise of a civilian

leader, and warlords were incorporated into the state apparatus being conscious that war was more costly (Driscoll, 2012).

However, commitment and coordination problems can arise at times (Driscoll 2012, p. 120). Military cooptation tactic of side-switching to incorporate remnants of war into institutions without getting disarmed creates the controversy about their level of willingness, which is not mentioned by Driscoll and has an important role. Driscoll (2012) also states that, “if deals are broken, warlords can return to the insurgency” (p. 121). What guarantees that this will not happen? What if they create an urban group based in criminality after they reintegrate to society? Even if reincorporation of the opponent rebel group into the incumbent government is an important element of power sharing that provides an “exit option” to demobilize, military cooptation do not guarantee a lasting peace although it reduces the intensity level of the conflict (de-escalation). This type of mechanism for conflict termination is summarized in table 3.

Military Cooptation
Fragmentation of rebel unity
Reincorporation to state apparatus

Table 3: Military Cooptation Summary

2.4. Negotiation. The fourth type of mechanism to terminate a conflict and achieve peace is negotiation, which is nowadays more frequently used. Ending a civil war requires commitment to cease-fire and a stable postwar power sharing to facilitate a peace agreement. Power sharing is an “important institution for peace to prevail and democracy to grow in the aftermath of civil wars” (DeRouen, Ferguson, Norton, Hwan Park, Lea & Streat-Bartlett, 2010, p. 334; Svensson, 2009, p. 449-450). Thus, negotiation from the point of view of the absence of violence and confrontations provides (with the exception of a case without cease-

fire agreement) what Galtung refers as “positive peace”, which “involves cooperation, harmony, ‘building bridges’, and mutuality” (Biton and Salomon, 2006, p. 168). In contrast, military victory and capitulation mechanisms that end militarily a civil war would be regarded as “negative peace” given that they only reach absence of violence, and do not have the window of opportunity to former combatants to have social justice and a structure for power sharing (Biton and Salomon 2006, p. 168).

Negotiation then implies “a set of communicative processes through which individuals or groups try to resolve mutual disagreements. [...] negotiations primarily aim at changing the behaviour of conflicting parties so as to engender a conflict settlement, which in turn can pave the way for conflict resolution” (Podder, 2006, p. 576). Although the negotiation mechanism is of rational choice and generates a collective good, it have proven to also be weak at the negative incentive of doing “harm”. According to Duffy (2010) “while negotiated settlements are good at providing benefits, they are less effective in following through on their threats and are therefore not self-sustaining” (p. 34). The negotiation mechanism can be further explored in the following subsections that incorporate several factors that help to facilitate the initiation of a peaceful settlement: (a) Cooperation, (b) Third-Party Mediation, and (c) Secrecy.

(a) Cooperation. Cooperation is understood as having both sides providing information over the course of war to reduce uncertainty (Fortna, 2004, p. 657). It is an important element to allow credible commitment for peaceful solutions to be more likely to prevail (Regan & Aydyn, 2006, p. 740). In the after match of war, cooperation plays a relevant role as well given the following assumptions in the study of the durability of peace: I) States are rationally led; II) war is costly; III) Parties to the conflict have incentives to take advantage of each other and therefore mistrust and fear each other (Fortna, 2003, P. 340). Therefore, cease-fire agreements can facilitate cooperation in the following ways: I) Make it more costly to attack; II) Reducing uncertainty about the other side’s actions and intentions;

III) Preventing misunderstandings and accidents from spiraling back into war (Fortna, 2003, p. 338). Peace⁴ is then seen by Fortna (2003) as the result of reciprocity and mutual deterrence, and proposes this general assumption: “the more cease-fire agreements raise the cost of aggression, the more they provide credible information about actions and intentions, and the more is done to prevent and control accidents, the longer peace will last” (Fortna 2004, p. 24).

Specific points within cease-fire agreements might affect the durability of peace and the implementation of them can help reduce the risk of another war (Fortna 2003, p. 365). For instance, “measures such as the withdrawal of forces, creation of demilitarized zones, formal cease-fire agreements, peacekeeping, third-party guarantees, and dispute resolution procedures should help foster peace that last” (Fortna, 2003, p. 339). A summary of the cooperation factor under the negotiation mechanism for conflict termination can be found in table 4.

Negotiation
(a) Cooperation - Share information to reduce uncertainty - Cease fire agreement composition and mechanisms implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly to attack • Preventive measures over accidents and miscommunication • Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Withdrawal of forces ➤ Demilitarized zones ➤ Formal agreements ➤ Guarantors ➤ Dispute resolution procedures

Table 4: Negotiation and the cooperation factor Summary

⁴ Peace is the absence of war and under that definition North and South Korea have been in “peace” (Fortna 2003,p. 339).

(b) *Third party intervention.* A different element that influence not only the duration of a civil war, but also the option of a lasting peace under the negotiation mechanism is the intervention of a third party as a mediator in a conflict through either military, economic, or diplomatic means. Third parties interventions range from the United Nations and its agencies related to the field to regional organizations, regional states, and great powers, among others. When a third party uses diplomatic initiatives, in contrast to military and economic means, allows a cooperative position and peaceful solutions that foster credible commitment in the implementation of a peace agreement (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 741). However, some scholars suggest that mediation means only increase the duration and hostility levels of the conflict and are less likely to help end a war (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 736-737). Nonetheless, Regan and Aydin find that “mediation is a critical component in the management of civil conflicts and is instrumental in determining the effect of other forms of intervention”, concluding that it can also reduce the conflict’s expected duration (p. 738).

In addition, third party intermediaries can help to reduce the asymmetry of information and disclose capabilities, expectations, and payoffs from the negotiated settlement (Regan & Aydyn, 2006, p. 739). In this regard, The effectiveness of third party intermediaries rely not only on their capability to influence that information, structure, and facilitate the communication between the parties to the conflict, but also on their capability to transfer information that helps to reduce uncertainty over the distribution of power. Thus, third party mediation creates turning points, guarantees and/or incentives with the actors involved in the conflict (Regan & Aydyn, 2006, p. 740-741).

Moreover, Svensson (2009) explains that “mediation is a third party intervention that is voluntary, which implies that acceptance by the parties is needed for international mediation to be pursued” (p. 447). The author also makes a distinction between neutral and biased mediation. On one hand, some scholars see that biased mediation have more leverage

and credibility over the parties to the conflict. As a result, parties to the conflict make concessions and play a bargaining position. On the other hand, neutral mediation does not have a particular preference over the outcome of the conflict and suffer costs if war continues. As a result, it is on their interest to reach a peace agreement even though it does not contain certain conditions (Svensson, 2009, p. 448-449). Thus, government and belligerents will prefer for their own interest a biased mediator rather than a neutral one if they decide to accept third party mediation (Svensson, 2009, p. 449). It is also important to highlight that third party mediation fosters three roles: peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peacekeeping to guarantee the implementation maintenance of peace agreements in the post-conflict. The United Nations (UN), for instance, was a third party mediator in the following cases: Cyprus, Southern Africa (Namibia and Angola), El Salvador, and Cambodia.

In the long-term effects, third party interventions are important on maintaining a strategy, building confidence during the process, and assisting from peacekeeping to cease-fire monitoring. These interventions also help with the establishment of participatory political institutions in order to guarantee the non-return to the *status quo ante* (Hampson, 1996, p.12-13). However, third party’s participation in the bargaining process and implementation stage is limited, and their credibility is low given that they do not engage easily in military confrontations. A summary of the third party mediation factor under the negotiation mechanism for conflict termination can be found in table 5.

Negotiation
(b) Third party mediation → I) biased; II) neutral - Intervention through either military, economic, or diplomatic means - Reduce asymmetry of information - Guarantor → peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peacekeeping

Table 5: Negotiation and the third party mediation factor Summary

(c) Secrecy. The secrecy or “back-channel” factor lies under the negotiation mechanism as a discrete type of communication excluding a variety of audiences in order to avoid external and internal possible spoilers⁵ to the negotiation settlement (Dochartaigh, 2011, p. 768). Spoilers on peace settlements can complicate civil war negotiations and undermine a peace process under the following circumstances: I) Absence of international community involvement; II) Absence of third party guarantees; III) Shift in domestic political incentives (tactical political sense); and IV) Changes in the internal distribution of power (p. 12-13). Therefore, it is of great significance to highlight once again the role of cooperation and compliance in the negotiation to achieve a peace agreement and commitment to avoid possible spoilers (Greenhill & Major, 2007, p. 38-39).

Secrecy usually takes place in the pre-negotiation stage to maintain each side’s legitimacy, which would later permit the transition to the front-channel talks. This “back-channel” factor helps to build trust and allows the parties to the conflict to manage four types of uncertainties: I) Uncertainty about spoilers; II) Uncertainty about the cost of entry to talks; III) Uncertainty about outcomes by allowing decision makers to explore the possibilities for agreement without publicly associating themselves with these efforts; IV) Uncertainty to explore the underlying interests and whether parties are willing to be more flexible than they can indicate publicly (Dochartaigh, 2011, p. 768-769). As an additional element, intermediary presence can help reach a negotiated settlement such as what happened between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the British Government. A summary of the secrecy factor under the negotiation mechanism for conflict termination can be found in table 6.

⁵ Civil War “Spoilers” is defined as “leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldwide, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it” (Greenhill and Major 2006, p. 7).

Negotiation
(c) Secrecy or “back-channel” negotiation - Avoids internal and external spoilers - Trust building - Mediation presence

Table 6: Negotiation and the secrecy factor Summary

2.5. Remarks. Out of the four mechanisms for the termination of war above-mentioned only negotiation provides the space to intentions of starting a peace process between the parties to the conflict. There are two main reasons that explain why a negotiated settlement is a good way to end civil violence: “(1) it will result in *fewer casualties* than the alternative of military victory for one side, and (2) because it involves some sort of *power sharing* among the two parties, it is likely to make future violence among the parties less likely” (Licklider 1995, p. 684). On one hand, reducing casualties helps to avoid atrocious consequences such as genocide, which would otherwise potentially happen in a military victory. On the other hand, power sharing implies that the two parties to the conflict will live in the same state working together without resorting to violence.

Among the factors that facilitate the initiation of a peace process: (a) cooperation, (b) third party intervention, and (c) secrecy, this thesis will test and analyze ripeness, a different factor that also creates favorable conditions to initiate a peace process. Thus, this thesis will test ripeness in the Colombian conflict with a scope of two peace processes that initiated (comparative case studies), one between the state and the 19th of April Movement (M-19) in 1989 and the second one also between the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 1999.

3. Theoretical Framework

Explaining why peace processes initiate given certain favorable conditions is going to be addressed in this thesis by testing William Zartman's Ripeness Theory. In order to do so, it is necessary to understand on what consist the theory. This will be done, first, by understanding the structure, dynamic, and tactic dimensions of an internal armed conflict through Zartman's perspective. Second, the concept of ripeness and the elements that compose it will be explained, while presenting Nazih Richani's approach using the same theory in the Colombian context as well as alternative perspectives that questions ripeness theory. Third, the general and specific hypotheses will be also presented through a deductive reasoning. Finally, the economic variable that creates the opportunity for rebellion will also be explored through Collier and Hoeffler's economy of war approach, ending with a conceptual model that illustrates the theoretical framework.

Among the theories that have been used to explain the initiation of peace processes, William Zartman offers a different approach using timing initiatives for conflict resolution. In comparison to other factors where the trade-off of both parties is done without committing any further harm, Zartman's mechanism proposes that neither of the parties to the conflict can win without incurring loss with mutual suffering from the continuation of fighting.

William Zartman (1995) agrees like several authors that "internal conflicts -civil wars- are the most difficult of conflicts to negotiate" (p. 3). The author also agrees with the negotiation mechanism by stating "negotiation is the best policy for both parties in an internal conflict. It is the government's job to be responsive to the grievances of its people; it is the insurgents' purpose to draw attention to their grievances and gain redress. Negotiation is the natural meeting point of these needs" (p. 3). However, internal conflicts are resistant to negotiations and that is why the author introduces the concept of ripeness and the mutually

hurting stalemate (MHS) to understand a different way to reach the initiation of a negotiated settlement.

Zartman's studies are based under the assumption that negotiations are between a government and an opposition that contest the government's legitimacy by the use of violent means to press its demands and contest the government's authority (Zartman, 1995, p. 5). He also categorize the aggravated grievances of internal conflicts in negligence or discrimination with the identity element and explains that in Colombia, the context that will be used in this research, the rebels find their identity in ideology and is a conflict over central authority (p. 6). To better understand Zartman's perspective, the structure, dynamic, and tactic dimensions to pursue his analysis of internal armed conflicts and negotiations will be explained.

3.1. Structure of an internal armed conflict. In a conflict, asymmetry in military power and legitimacy is the most remarkable characteristic (Idem, p. 7). Even though both parties to the conflict⁶ have military capacity and access to resources in general, legitimacy is still a strong element that the government has. The government then determines the rules of the game for the struggle of the rebellion and the rebels are only the petitioners and contesters (Idem, p. 8). Even if the rebels gain strength through supporters and recognition, they are only looking (in rare cases) for equality, and asymmetry turns to be a paradox given that negotiations can start when there is equality (veto players over an outcome) (Idem, p. 8). In this sense, asymmetry then rarely creates the stalemate for negotiations; instead, the rebels redress it by opposing the government and developing a strong commitment over the conflict⁷ (Idem, p. 9). However, commitment as the main motivator of rebels becomes an end in itself and a negotiated settlement becomes difficult to achieve.

⁶ The parties to a conflict are understood by Zartman as Government vs. rebels.

⁷ Zartman (1995) cites Henry A. Kissinger to explain that the rebels preserve their existence (win) by developing a strong commitment (not losing). If the government has low performance on the maintenance of security, it loses even if it does not threaten its existence. Strong commitment changes the conflict's calculation (p. 9).

In an internal armed conflict, negotiation also becomes difficult when: I) rebels do not compromise because they seek recognition; II) absence of trade-offs to start a bargaining process; III) absence of a valid spokesperson to access the rebel's principal demands; IV) stalemate (unrecognized partition of the country) (Idem, p. 10). Thus, these obstacles need to be faced to successfully reach a negotiated settlement.

3.2. Dynamics of an internal armed conflict. The dynamics of internal armed conflicts change over time by passing through different stages (Idem, p. 12). In particular, the protest and conflict resolution dynamics evolve in separate directions. On one hand, the protest component seeks to develop attention, legitimacy, power, consolidation of followers, and keep commitment among time. On the other hand, the conflict resolution component seeks to join the rebel and government's actions to bring the cause to their own agenda, and apply the elimination criteria for possible solutions until an outcome is reached (Idem, p.12-13). These dynamics are affected by three main elements: I) needs and phases of rebellion; II) the government's agenda; III) the structural relations between the two sides.

3.2.1. Needs and phases of rebellion. Internal conflicts have four phases: a) articulation; b) mobilization; c) insurgency; and d) warfare⁸. These phases have different organizational imperatives and are sequential, but can change directions (back or forward). Zartman (1995) explains that the mobilization and insurgency phases are not ready for resolution. In contrast, in the warfare phase the focus is on new needs such as secession,

⁸ Zartman defines the four phases as follow: "The first phase is one of cultural protest led by groups of educational elites petitioning the government for political reform with political means. Such groups express many different and specific grievances and expect redress. The second phase –where his study begins- involves the formation of a single movement led by charismatic organizers who seek to unite the disparate groups and force the attention of the government to the grievances by means of coercive civil action. The third or insurgent phase turns from political to violent means of pressure through a mass movement with a more ideological and action-oriented leadership that contests the ability and legitimacy of the government to meet its demands. In the fourth phase direct military confrontation is used to overthrow the government or to secede from the state, with a leadership drawn from the field" (p. 13-14).

autonomy, or a new political system, in which legitimacy and equality plays a role as new conditions in order to have a settlement (p. 15). At this point, the mutually hurting stalemate (MHS) defines the ripe moment.

Moreover, each of these four phases also has four types of leaders: (a) Solidarity makers, (b) mobilizers, (c) hard-liners, and (d) confrontation specialists (Idem, p. 15). within each phase (Zartman 1995, p. 15). The concern of the incumbent leaders of the parties to a conflict is that the escalation of the war can involve a change in leadership with younger generations (succession) or a group even more radical in their ideology (a group that has grown in a culture of violence). This could result in a less attractive solution for the counterpart and could imply renewed violence. Therefore, Zartman (1995) suggests that “this realization on both sides, which creates a common interest in agreement between the two leaderships, is a matter of perception and therefore needs to be encouraged by the side that arrives at the conclusion first, as well as by mediators” (p. 16).

3.2.2. Government's agendas. In the government's agenda, nevertheless, the changes in leadership can affect negotiations by not being propitious (Idem, p. 16). A new government coming to power through succession is unlikely to be more or any less willing to negotiate than its predecessor. Two possibilities are derived from this point: a) the government is in favor of negotiations and its successor will continue with it, or b) the government is hostile to negotiations and the successor will continue with the same perspective without a reason to expect a different attitude. Therefore, Zartman (1995) suggest that the overthrow of a government with weakness towards the rebellion (he call it “unsuccessful inflexibility”) brings a new government open towards negotiation (p. 16). For instance, in Colombia the successive governments from President Julio Cesar Turbay until Virgilio Barco were pro negotiations although they criticized and alter their predecessor's tactics (Idem, p. 17). It is

important to remember that the window of opportunity for a successful negotiated settlement is usually narrow (Idem, p. 17).

3.2.3. Relations between the two sides. Ripe moments are composed by a mutually hurting stalemate and a sense of a way out. However, the asymmetry characteristic of internal conflicts makes ripeness difficult to obtain and raises the importance of the parties to the conflict agendas as a key component (Idem, p. 18).

According to Zartman (1995), “negotiations take place when both parties lose faith in their chances of winning and see an opportunity for cutting losses and achieving satisfaction through accommodation” (p. 18). In the absence of power equality, a softer notion of a stalemate is reached realizing the no-win situation by both parties to the conflict. This eventually should switch to one of willingness to trade-off by also incurring loss in goals. A turning point⁹ is then needed to switch from a soft stalemate to an alternative option; in other words, a newly perceived stick and a newly perceived carrot must be incorporated to reach a turning point. As Zartman (1995) explains: “a perception of unpromising ambiguity is traded for a perception of promising ambiguity” (p. 18). Even if the current situation becomes worst, there is still an alternative bright future. However, a turning point with coordinated perception between the two parties to the conflict needs a third party mediator (Idem, p. 19).

It is important to understand that the stalemate situation is produced when the parties to the conflict see an escalation, which could lead to negotiations more effectively if it is pursued early. However, this “elusive stalemate” can change once the conflict start to escalate, in which negotiations become more difficult until a new stalemate situation arrives (Idem, p. 19). Therefore, the relations between the two sides depend on their own agenda’s

⁹ The sources of turning points, according to Zartman (1995) are: “an inclusive victory, an inconclusive defeat, a bloody standoff that suddenly brings costs home, a loss of foreign support or an increase in foreign pressure, a shift of fortunes that weakens the stronger side or strengthens the weaker, all accompanied by a new perception of the possibility of a negotiated solution” (p. 18).

dynamics that could be related to the perception of a turning point to successfully reach a ripe moment, accompanied by a leader to execute the most convenient decision for their own side that can eventually lead to negotiations.

3.3. Tactics of an internal armed conflict. Internal armed conflicts are most of the times unable to reach a turning point of perception given the intensity and commitment that blinds either of the parties to change from having a zero-sum conflict to a positive-sum solution. In a situation of asymmetry, the role of a mediator is difficult given the three limited functions they perform: I) Manipulation; II) Communication; and III) formulation (Idem, p. 20). A key element for the mediator to be welcomed to the internal conflict is to gain leverage¹⁰ to successfully pursue both parties to see the stalemate and reach a turning point.

A mediator can be a third party host that promotes negotiations (although it is the first one to step out) in order to find a solution (Idem, p. 20). The outcome, then, should incorporate insurgency into a new political system in which they feel they have a stake. However, some members from each party to the conflict may not be interested. In order to deal with this, Zartman (1995) proposes that “a coalition of parties interested in negotiations must be big enough to settle the substantive issues and carry the remaining members of the spectrum. Parties on the extremes will try to delegitimize this activity and upset the negotiations, both by trying to discredit or eliminate the negotiating middle. Opponents of negotiation try to restore commitment and return the conflict to its dyadic state; proponents of negotiation try to carve out a problem-solving coalition in the middle” (p. 22). If the coalition is small, then negotiations will fail. Thus, legitimacy is an important element in the structure

¹⁰ According to Zartman (1995), leverage can be found in three forms: “It is achieved either by the provision of side payments that turn the zero-sum game positive, or by the delivery of each side’s agreement to an outcome that the other side can find attractive, or by a threat to end the mediation process through withdrawal (‘a pox on both your houses’) or taking sides (‘a pox on one of your houses’). Beyond such leverage the mediator has no power (p. 21).

of asymmetry, and the role of a leader should follow a patron-client structure and vertical divisions (Idem, p. 24).

3.4. Ripeness and the Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS). Besides the importance of the content of proposals for resolution, the timing of efforts in conflict resolution is a key element that introduces the concept of ripeness¹¹. A ripe moment usually happens when unilateral means to achieve victory are blocked and the parties to the conflict are in an uncomfortable and costly predicament that leads them to explore new outcomes that now appear attractive (Zartman 2001, p. 8). Ripeness centers then on the parties' to the conflict perception of a MHS¹² (Idem, p. 8). An example of a ripe moment is reflected in El Salvador peace process. Zartman (2001) referred to Alvaro de Soto¹³, who pointed the significance of the *Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front's* November 1989 offensive as the largest of the war, and cites de Soto's following statement that clearly describes a ripe moment: "The silver lining was that it was, almost literally, a defining moment - the point at which it became possible to seriously envisage a negotiation. The offensive showed the FMLN that they could not spark a popular uprising, [...] The offensive also showed the rightist elements in government, and elites in general, that the armed forces could not defend them, let alone crush the insurgents, [...] However inchoate at first, the elements of a military deadlock began to appear. Neither side could defeat the other. As the dust settled, the notion that the conflict could not be solved by military means, and that its persistence was causing pain that could no longer be endured, began to take shape. The offensive codified the existence of a mutually hurting stalemate. The conflict was ripe for a negotiated resolution" (Zartman, 2001, p. 11).

¹¹ "Ripeness is only a condition, necessary but not sufficient, for the initiation of negotiations. It is not self-fulfilling or self-implementing. It must be seized, either directly by the parties or, if not, through the persuasion of a mediator" (Zartman, 2000, p. 227; Zartman, 2001, p. 9).

¹² The Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) is when parties to a conflict are in a deadlock that is painful for them and the costs of continuing the war is higher than an alternative way out.

¹³ Alvaro de Soto was the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs at the United Nations. He was in the mission to mediate peace in El Salvador conflict (Zartman, 2001, p. 11).

In this regard, William Zartman's approach of ripeness is widely applicable in the conflict resolution literature (O'kane 2006, p. 269). The concept has been used and tested to explain the successful initiation of negotiations or their failure in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Angola, Eritrea, South Africa, Philippines, Cyprus, Iran-Iraq, Israel, Mozambique, among others (Zartman 2001, p. 10). In Colombia, Nazih Richani has also referred to ripeness theory using only one of the two cases that will be presented in this research. The difference between Richani's work and this thesis is that this research tests ripeness in order to explain why the two peace processes – one between the state and the 19th of April Movement (hereafter M-19) in 1989 and the other between the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (hereafter FARC) in 1999 – initiated a negotiated settlement, while Richani wants to examine why the 1998-2002 Colombian peace process failed. Another difference is that this research will conduct small-n comparative case studies, while Richani conducted only one case study. Richani's work emphasizes on the role of third-parties intervention in the failed Colombian peace process between 1998 and 2002, particularly in the biased intervention that "failed to dismantle the war system" (Richani, 2005).

Ripeness has also been questioned by testing it in the Northern Ireland conflict by O'kane (2006). The author inquires about which date should be taken into consideration to start the analysis and suggests the difficulty in identifying when a ripe moment begins (p. 270-271). The idea of ripeness also leads to have an excuse for inaction or failure to resolve a conflict, which Zartman accepts in the implication of his approach by stating that "unripeness should not constitute an excuse for second or third parties' inaction, even if one or both of the conflicting parties are mired in their hopes of escalation and victory" (O'kane 2006, p. 271; Zartman 2001, p. 14). In general, O'kane (2006) claims that the useful, predictive, and analytical tools of ripeness are unsustainable (p. 271).

The predictive capacity of ripeness lies in “identifying the necessary elements (even if not sufficient) for the productive inauguration of negotiations”¹⁴ (Zartman 2001, p. 9). It is important to understand that when the necessary elements are present, they facilitate and create the favorable conditions towards the initiation of a negotiated settlement. However, those elements do not determine the outcome of a peace process given the circumstantial variables (unexpected) that can spoil a peace process. In order to understand better ripeness theory, the elements are illustrated in figure 1.

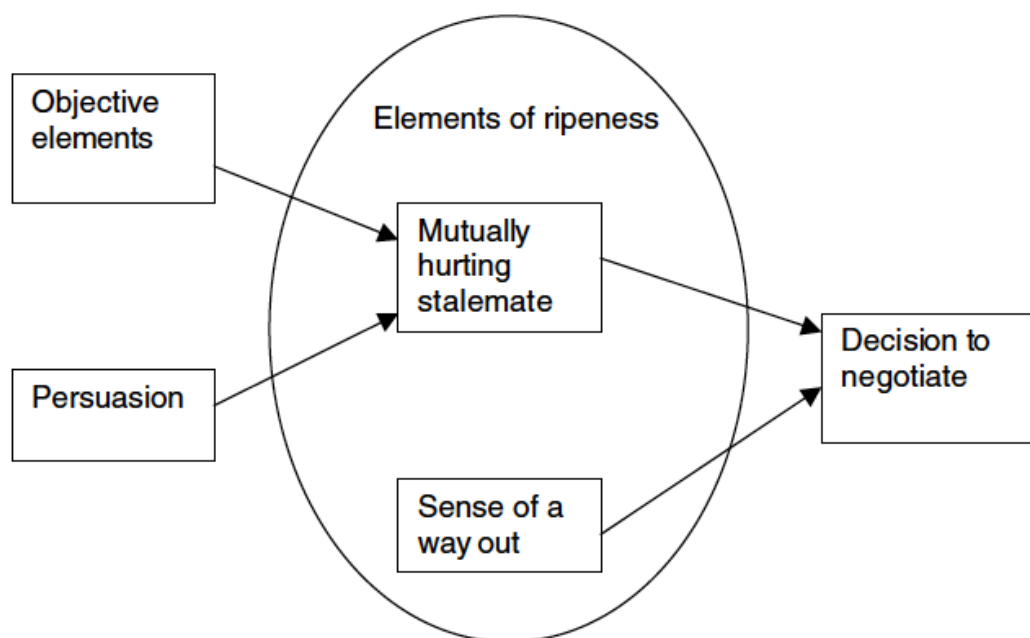


Figure 1: Factors affecting ripeness, elements of ripeness, and the decision to negotiate¹⁵

¹⁴ The success or failure of the beginning of negotiations is controversial and difficult to define. The initiation of a negotiated settlement can start successfully and fail or vice versa. Conflict resolution authors have different approaches to provide an analytical framework with facts that create a favorable condition to start a peace process. This research will use Zartman’s approach of a ripe moment given specific elements that create this favorable condition to initiate a peace process between the parties to the conflict.

¹⁵ Source: Zartman, 2000, p. 230

In this sense, a deductive reasoning will be used in the analysis by presenting, first, the general hypothesis of this research to later arrive at a logically conclusion that will correlate the necessary elements to initiate a peace process in a ripe moment:

GH: If the parties to the conflict identify that the following elements are present:

- 1) Existence of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS)
- 2) Perception of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS)
- 3) Absence of economic resources (cost-benefit analysis)
- 4) A sense of a way out
- 5) Mediated persuasion

Then a ripe moment exists and creates favorable conditions for the parties to the conflict to converge and reach the initiation of a negotiated settlement with an uncertain result.

An important aspect of ripeness is the existence and perception by the parties to the conflict of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS). This perception has to endure while in the initiation of negotiations and through out the entire process, otherwise the parties will reevaluate their position and step back (Zartman 2001, p. 14). A Mutually Hurting Stalemate exists “when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy or Way Out” (Zartman 2001, p. 8). This leads to the first hypothesis:

H1: If a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) exist and the parties to the conflict perceive it, then a ripe moment exists and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated.

Although H1 can be questioned by suggesting that a MHS can be perceived, but not necessarily exists or vice versa, there are subjective perceptions and objective references to seize both elements. When the parties to the conflict recognize (if they cannot do it by themselves the mediator would persuade them to do so) the objective reference with “clear evidence” that they are in a deadlock, the MHS has occurred (Zartman 2001, p. 9). The objective evidence of stalemates is, for instance, “data numbers and nature of casualties and material costs, and/or other such indicators of MHS” (Zartman 2001, p. 10). The subjective perception is “pain, impass, and inability to bear the cost of further escalation” (Zartman 2001, p. 9). MHS is mainly characterized by an extended period of violence. Moreover, O’kane (2006) questions Zartman’s vague approach over the meaning of “hurting” and the limit of it, which is linked with the perception of high costs to later explore a way out (p. 273). In remarkable cases evidence suggest that conflicts can be treated earlier, but when they are not, they require a high level of intensity to perceive a MHS that can create favorable conditions for the beginning of a negotiated solution (Zartman 2001, p. 13).

This high level intensity to perceive the MHS can be reflected in the “conflict wave” model in figure 2, portraying the progression of intra-state conflicts as it escalates and de-escalates in intensity over time (Dudouet 2006, p. 6). In the phases specified in the model, the hurting stalemate is at the peak, determining the ripe moment to initiate a peace process that permits a de-escalation followed by dispute settlement and later a postconflict peacebuilding. According to Dudouet (2006), the conflict wave help “participants and interveners to design and apply appropriate strategies and tactics for each stage of the conflict”, but does not include social change and new perceptions over time (p. 7).

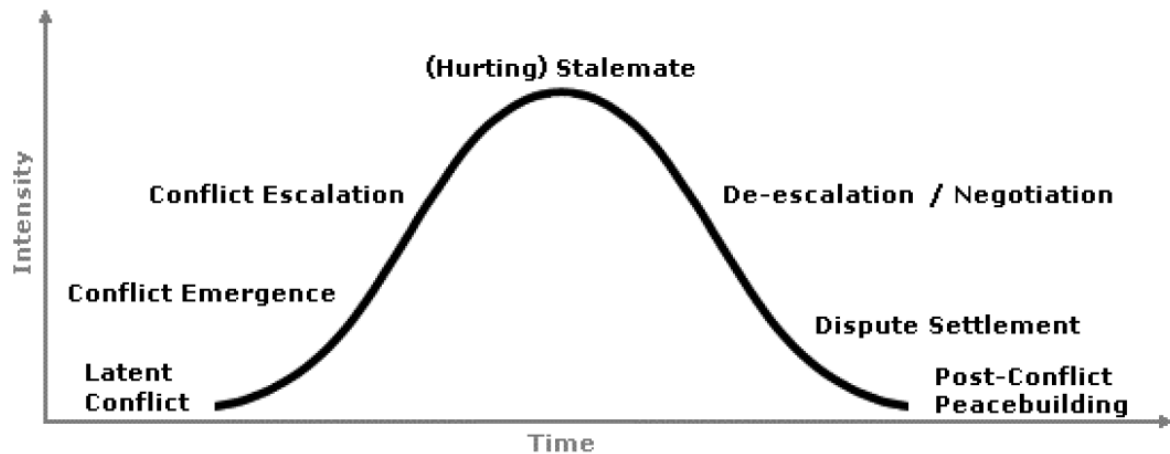


Figure 2: The conflict “wave” (Brahm 2003)¹⁶

Furthermore, the MHS also implies a costly predicament that is grounded in a rational cost-benefit analysis (Zartman 2001, p. 8). The cost-benefit calculations of the parties to the conflict come from a greater fear of continuing the war than the fear of compromise and peace (Ohlson, 2008, p. 146). Thus, ripeness perception often comes from “power politics, force, coercion and fear” and the behavior changes are not voluntary, but enforced, which constitute a problem because the underlying conflict attitudes most likely remain the same (Idem, p. 146). Once the parties to the conflict perceive the MHS, they realize it is expensive to continue the conflict through military means. How does each party to the conflict finance its military capacity? This question is of high concern given that it influence in a significant manner decision-makers and leaders within each of the parties to the conflict. As it was previously specified in the literature review, this research will embrace a civil war modeled as a two or more player’s game between the incumbent state and the rebel insurgency groups.

On one hand, it is clear how the incumbent state gets legal financial support for its military capacity. On the other hand, the rebel group has a strategically illegal economic

¹⁶ (Dudouet 2006, p. 6)

resource to finance the armed conflict. Therefore, it is important to explore further in the economic variables that create the opportunity for rebellion.

Ohlson (2008) proposes that ripeness and war termination is caused by resource constraints and reduced opportunities to successfully continue the war (p. 146). In this regard, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) suggest that the incident of rebellion is explained by “the atypical circumstances that generate profitable opportunities” (p.564). The authors also specify: “opportunity and viability describe the common conditions sufficient for profit-seeking, or not-for-profit, rebel organizations to exist” (p. 565). Furthermore, there are three common sources to finance rebellion that are considered as quantitative indicators of opportunity: “extortion of natural resources, donations from diasporas, and subventions from hostile governments” (Collier & Hoeffler 2004, p. 565). Examples of natural resource extortion are diamonds in West Africa, timber in Cambodia, and cocaine in Colombia. An example of donations from diasporas is the Tamils in North America financing the Tamil Tigers, and an example of subvention is “the government of Southern Rhodesia pump-primed the Renamo rebellion in Mozambique” (Idem, p. 568).

Given the econometric models that Collier and Hoeffler (2004) use in their research on the initiation of rebellion, they find several factors that influence the opportunity for rebellion (p. 587-588). First, the availability of finance shows that primary commodities exports increase conflict risk. Commodities provide for extortion or they can complicate governance and generate stronger grievances, making rebellion viable. Diasporas also increase the risk of conflict renewal. Second, the cost of rebellion reflects that low earning facilitate conflict since it is a source of grievance and makes rebellion cheap. Third, the military advantage demonstrates that “dispersed population increases the risk of war” (p. 588). Finally, the authors suggest that opportunities for rebellion and grievances increase proportional to the population of a country (p. 588).

Having observed the factors that influence the opportunity for rebellion and the common sources to finance it, the rebel group makes a rational choice when they perceive the MHS and understand that it is expensive to continue the war in the absence of such factors and resources that stimulate their commitment to war. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: If absence of a strategic economic resource exists, then a ripe moment exists and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated.

Another important element of ripeness is the perception of a Way Out (Zartman 2001, p. 9-10). Parties need to identify a sense that a negotiated solution is possible and both need to have that willingness. Zartman (2001) also states, “without a sense of a Way Out, the push associated with the MHS would leave the parties nowhere to go” (p. 9). In addition, Zartman cites Stedman, who supports the idea that the Way Out is as important as the stalemate since parties to the conflict can see victory in the alternative solution provided by the negotiated settlement (Zartman 2001, p.10). The sense of a way out is then perceived by the leader of each party, which reiterates the importance of a valid spokesman for each side to seek this alternative solution to the conflict. However, leaders express different things in different times depending on the “political and military climate, the constituency they are talking to, the stage they are speaking from and the intended impact of their words” (O’kane 2006, p. 274). Even though this is a problem towards a sense of a Way Out, the presence of a strong leadership from each of the parties to the conflict is still necessary (while alone not sufficient) element that delivers compliance over that sense of a way out (Zartman 2001, p. 11). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: If a sense of a “Way Out” exists, then a ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated.

Once the spokesman of each side acknowledges the existence of a MHS, perceive it, and have a sense of a way out in absence of strategic economic resources to renew violence, the role of a mediator is a key element. Parties to the conflict in general are likely to accept a mediator after they have exhausted themselves and reach a costly deadlock without exit (Dudouet, 2006, p. 60). However, controversy has been raised about this point due to its invalidity since some conflicts remain even though they reached a “Mutually Hurting Stalemate”. In addition, mediators should not passively wait until the MHS occurs for them to intervene, instead, they should be proactive in creating, enhancing, and sustaining ripeness (Idem, p. 60).

Mediators can also help to size objective evidence and subjective perceptions (Zartman, 2001, p. 9-10). Although the mediator is more active in the subjective persuasion by moving from the role of communication and formulation to one of manipulation to increase the size of the stakes, to make both sides to share in the same pot, or limit the actions of the parties while providing objective evidence (Idem, p. 15). Mediators in the role of manipulation to generate a stalemate can also be dangerous, but some times it is necessary (Idem, p. 11). Nevertheless, O’kane (2006) suggest that “the ripe moment is seized by a new departure” when mediators help in this regard (p.277). Therefore, the hard effort of mediation can also fail if the parties to the conflict are not able to see that seize of ripeness and still have the military victory as an open option (Zartman 2001, p. 9). An example of mediation in a Latin American Peace Process is the presence of Alvaro de Soto, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs at the United Nations, in El Salvador. According to Zartman (2001) Alvaro de Soto “endorsed the necessity of ripeness in his mission to mediate a peace in El Salvador” (p. 11). Thus,

mediation is considered an element that also helps to create the favorable conditions to initiate a negotiated settlement. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H4: If mediation presence exists, then a ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated.

Once the four above-mentioned hypotheses have been proposed under the general hypothesis through a deductive reasoning, William Zartman's approach of ripeness and the importance of the timing of efforts in conflict resolution will be tested. The two cases selected for this research that started a negotiated settlement with the state in the Colombian internal armed conflict are: (a) the 19th of April Movement (M-19) in 1989 that ended with demobilization, and (b) the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC) in 1999 that recurred back to fight. The main purpose is to test in those two cases whether the general hypothesis (composed by four sub-hypotheses) is met or not to facilitate and create the conditions to initiate a peace process in a ripe moment. Finally, a conceptual model of the theoretical framework is presented in figure 3.

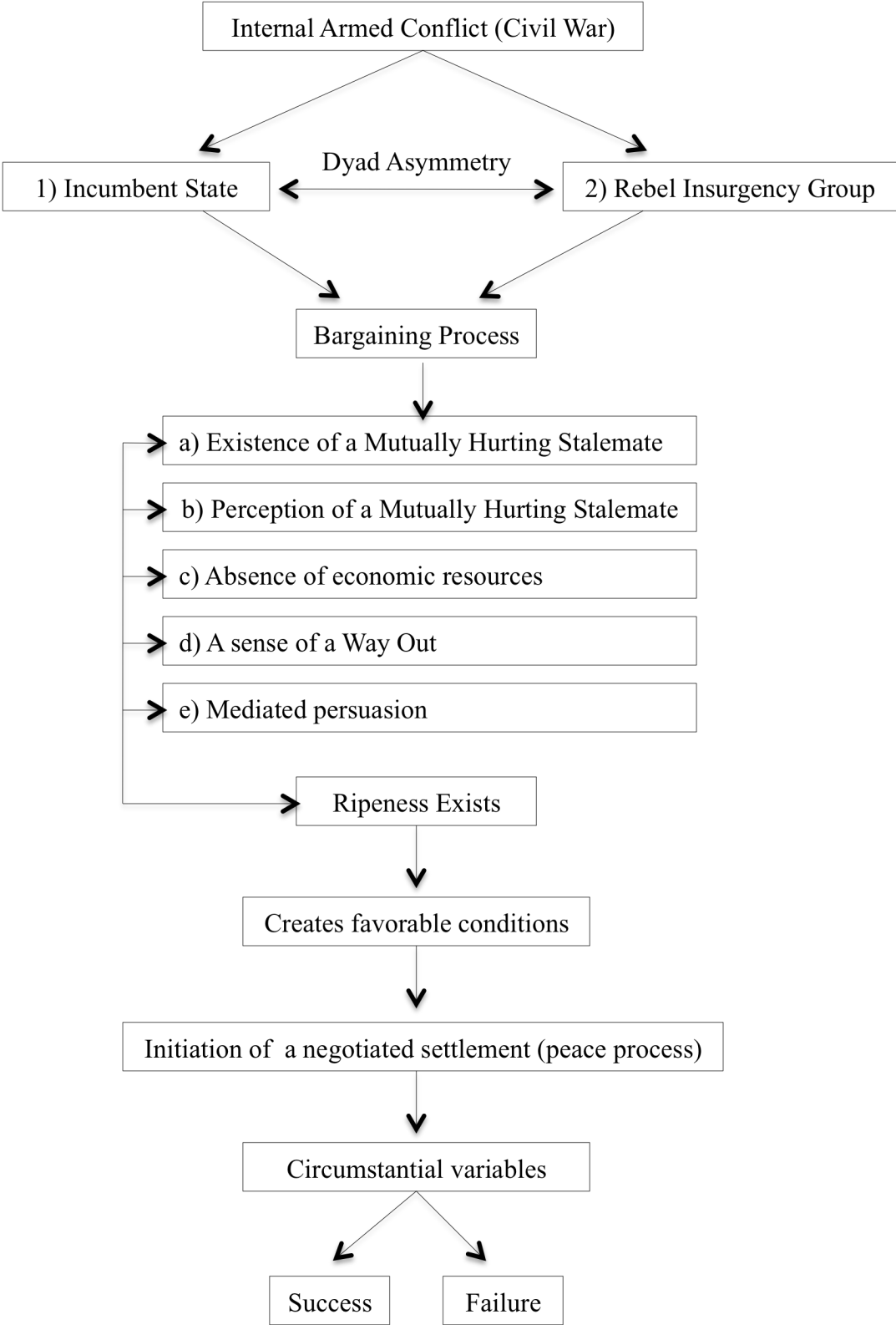


Figure 3: Conceptual model of the theoretical framework

4. Methodology

In the methodology chapter a research design is established to test the hypotheses proposed in the previous chapter in order to confirm or refute their validity. Therefore, data will be collected to demonstrate in the Colombian internal armed conflict (Civil War) whether the necessary elements that have to be present to reach a ripe moment that allow initiation of a negotiated settlement exist or not on specific cases within this country in a timeframe as from 1989 to 1999. Thus, this thesis could be categorized, as an explanatory type of research to understand why in the Colombian internal armed conflict some negotiations that started ended with a successful result while another did not. A successful result of a peace process will be approached in this research in a minimalistic way as “the ending of civil violence and armed confrontation” followed by institutional change in its structure in order to consolidate peace (Hampson 1996, p. 9-10). Failure will be its opposite.

This phenomena is analyzed with a deductive reasoning to test William Zartman’s approach in Colombia, arriving in this sense at a logical conclusion that will correlate the necessary elements to initiate a peace process in a ripe moment. Thus, it will use qualitative research methods with a small-n comparative case-study approach.

The research designed to test the hypotheses implies that the elements in the theoretical framework (dependent and independent variables) should be conceptualized and operationalized by indicating the measurement procedure. After the data collection process, a report will specify how the information was acquired and coded as well as the implications that the research may bring. The case selection will also be discussed and the data will be described as well as the methodological style, ending with observations to the possible threats to the validity of the intended research to ensure the least bias implications in the findings.

4.1. Variables

The elements specified in the theory will be conceptualized and operationalized with the necessary data for theory-testing purposes. Then, the measurement process of the variables will be explained in a way that reduces possible biased information. The variables are the following in order of precedence: existence of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS), perception of a MHS, absence of economic resources, a sense of a way out, and mediated persuasion that altogether create favorable conditions for the parties to the conflict to reach a ripe moment followed by the initiation of a negotiated settlement with an uncertain result.

4.1.1. Dependent variable: Initiation of a negotiated settlement

The general hypothesis assumes that when the favorable conditions for the parties to the conflict to converge exist, then a ripe moment exists and the initiation of a negotiated settlement is reached with an uncertain result. The initiation of a negotiated settlement is a qualitative variable that it is difficult to conceptualize. However, it will be defined under Zartman's view. Negotiation in the context of conflict resolution is understood as a joint decision making under conditions of conflict and uncertainty that combines divergent positions to result into a single outcome (Zartman 1997; Zartman 2008, p.14). More precisely, "negotiations take place when both parties lose faith in their chances of winning and see an opportunity for cutting losses and achieving satisfaction through accommodation" (Zartman 1995, p. 18). Negotiation is a collective decision-making process in which a choice is made and defined among the alternative positions until a unique combination is reached and is acceptable to all parties to the conflict (Zartman 2008, p. 17). According to Zartman (2008) there are four ways to limit alternative positions in a collective decision-making process: I) To make one alternative appear more attractive than others, "either by promising additional side effects or by predicting benefits inherent in the favored alternative" (p.17); II) To make one alternative appear less attractive than others, "either by threatening sanctions if it is chosen or

by warning of inherent or associated deprivations” (p. 17); III) To make one alternative appear to be already chosen through the use of commitments and obligations; IV) To make some alternatives appear to be already eliminated either by fait accompli or by simple incapacity. In general, the initiation of a negotiated settlement is a binary variable, which implies two possibilities, either to initiate a negotiated settlement (positive-sum outcome) or not to initiate a negotiated settlement (zero-sum outcome).

The existence of the dependent variable of initiating or not a negotiated settlement will be recognized when the four sub-hypothesis that were mentioned in the theoretical framework chapter is met, which turns to be the general hypothesis. The source to recognize this will come from the data acquired from specific testimonies in the prologue of the books “Biblioteca para la Paz” (Library for Peace) Volume II¹⁷ and V¹⁸, which collected all official statements related to peace processes from 1986 to 1990 and from 1998 to 2002 respectively. Other important sources were the research publication “The M-19’s Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics”¹⁹ with a non-state perspective, and the research publication “The FARC files: Venezuela, Ecuador, and the Secret Archive of ‘Raul Reyes’”²⁰ with an independent academic perspective after INTERPOL forensic analysis ratified the authenticity and integrity of the FARC’s archive seized by the Colombian Armed Forces. Thus, the above-mentioned sources also apply for the independent variables that will continue in the following section.

¹⁷ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1986-1990: Se inician acuerdos parciales. Pacto político con el M-19*. Bogota, Colombia.

¹⁸ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1998-2002: Dialogo, negociacion y ruptura – FARC-EP y ELN*. Bogota, Colombia.

¹⁹ Garcia Duran, Mauricio; Grabe Loewenherz, Vera; Patino Hormaza, Otty (2008). *The M-19’s Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

²⁰ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)(2011). *The FARC files: Venezuela, Ecuador, and the Secret Archive of ‘Raul Reyes’*. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

4.1.2. Independent variables:

Existence and perception of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS): Hypothesis number one assumes that when the Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) exist and is perceived by the parties to the conflict, then the ripe moment exists and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated. This is a binary variable (existence vs. non-existence and perception vs. non-perception) that it is going to be conceptualized according to Zartman's view again.

(a) In order to define the existence of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate, it is important to understand first what MHS means to later assume that the definition is the one that either exist or not (to be present or not). A "Stalemate means parties are caught in a conflict that they cannot win at an acceptable cost: They cannot escalate their way to victory" (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 11). "Hurt means that the parties are suffering some costs or losses — physical, financial, or less tangible — as a result of the stalemate" (causing pain) and "mutual" because both parties feel damaged by the stalemate (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 13). Thus, both parties must feel hurt or pain (mutually hurting, not necessarily in the same degree) from the stalemate for it to exist. In addition, a hurting stalemate is produced when there is failure to escalate the conflict further by falling back, which can also be considered as an "escalation to call", its functionality is that one of the parties to the conflict escalate and then retires to make the other party to the conflict understand that they are indirectly calling for the option of negotiation (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 12). Another condition that determines the existence of a MHS is when the parties to the conflict perceive themselves to be at an impasse, but what is perception of MHS?

(b) Perception of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) is the state of being aware of such situation (publicly or internally) and in which parties to the conflict cannot win with further escalation and the *status quo* is creating pain to them. The MHS perception metaphorically is "associated with an impending, past, or recently avoided catastrophe"

(Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 5). A catastrophe is an indicator of pain, like a precipice, which would be the point where situations suddenly and predictably get worse.

There are several ways that either of the parties can have this perception with objective and subjective indicators of hurt with different levels of impact. In this research, a MHS will be recognized on the data extracted from the sources presented in the Independent variable section above by observing the following indicators: On one hand, objective indicators with first level impact are the costs that produce pain, recognition of losses as a sign of pain (number of casualties, external events, official statements, etc), changes in leadership, and changes in allies (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 13-18). From these first level impacts, second level impacts arise. Reliable data about losses can generate loss of public confidence and support (publicly felt pain) and changes in leadership by changing a hard-liner for a soft-liner leader (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 15-16). On the other hand, subjective indicators are in the meaning behind official statements and unofficial statements in public media (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 18-21).

Absence of strategic economic resource: Hypothesis number two assumes that when there is absence of a strategic economic resource, then the ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated. This is a variable that would be conceptualize under Collier and Hoeffler's view by understanding first what they mean with economic resource in the context of civil wars. Economic resources in a civil war are primary commodities and natural resources that create the window of opportunity and viability for rebellion and at the same time sustain a conflict financially (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, p. 264). Thus, the absence of what is referring as of "economic resources" defines this variable. Collier and Hoeffler also explain that "rebellions will occur where and only where they are profitable (although they need not be motivated by profit). They will be profitable where revenues during conflict are atypically high and costs atypically low" (2004, p. 256). In general, the absence of strategic

economic resource happens when the component for revenue such as primary commodities or natural resources are exhausted. This is followed by a cost/benefit analysis based on the assumption that parties to the conflict are in an impasse that produces pain or hurts, at this point, they start to consider a more advantageous alternative. This is measure through the military relative strength and other signals such as the “escalation to call” that was previously explained. The sources where this concept will be observed is found in the next chapter, and the main economic funds are observed in the Colombian context with the kidnapping and cocaine indicators.

A way out: Hypothesis number three assumes that when there is a sense of a “Way Out”, then the ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated. This is a binary variable that suggest two possible scenarios: a sense of a way out or a non-way out. However, a sense of a way out (or non-way out) is a latent variable because it cannot be directly observed. Therefore, it needs measurable indicators or manifest variables that can be observed. The conceptualization of a way out is “that both parties have perceived that they and the other party are willing to look for a joint solution” (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 23).

This variable can be assess with objective and subjective indicators as well, the first being more difficult to obtain than the second one since a way out depends primarily on the perception of one party of the other party’s intensions. On one hand, assessing objective indicators of a way out will be by identifying the willingness of each actor, this can be done through official statements (what is not said can be as crucial as what is said) or preliminary signs of cooperation (e.g. cease fire, exchange of prisoners, unofficial statements, or declarations of non-hostile intentions, among others) (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 24-25). On the other hand, assessing subjective indicators will be difficult given that parties to the conflict will avoid explicit statements and requires to read between the lines. Subjective indicators can be perceive if one side referred to past moments of cohabitation or cooperation

with the other side, made positive comments, recognized the other side's needs and aims, or have dropped or reduced obstacles to negotiation or unacceptable conditions to an agreement (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 26). Another way to perceive subjective indicators of a way out could be with direct contact between parties to the conflict in order to sense a change of heart, for instance, but this is not done in this research. (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 26-27). Nevertheless, it may happen that parties to the conflict cannot see the stalemate or are not receptive to consider options of a way out to initiate an eventual negotiated settlement. In this regard, mediators play a key role.

Mediation: Hypothesis number four assumes that when there is mediation presence, then the ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated. This qualitative variable is one of the most common and effective tools of conflict management and is understood in a conflict context as to “persuading the parties to change their perceptions of the value of current situations and future outcomes (Regan and Aydin 2006, p. 741; Zartman 1995, p. 21). Mediation presence in a conflict is usually done by a third-party intervention that can help parties to “perceive their stalemate and the pain associated with it and the possibility of negotiating a way out” (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 29). Recognition of this can be pursued by the mediator in highlighting the importance to end the conflict earlier by looking at the benefits they will accrue from the initiation of a negotiated settlement rather than prolonging it because it involves the continuation and rise of costs towards an uncertain victory (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 29).

A mediator can encourage the perception of a stalemate directly or indirectly. The first one is done by drawing attention to facts and press for signs of recognition of hurt that can be developed to perceive a correlation with a way out. Thus, the mediator encourages the evaluation of possibilities to escalate and to have a cost/benefit analysis for each party to the conflict as well as to evaluate their efforts to counter the opponent's escalation (Zartman and

de Soto 2010, p. 30). In this sense, mediation attempts to “transform a conflict from one of hostility to one of cooperation” (Regan and Aydin 2006, p. 741). Indirectly, the mediator can encourage awareness of stalemate and its hurt, cost, and losses through: the parties’ allies willing to help, articles in the media, op-eds, support of NGOs to raise awareness, and among decision makers, friends, and opinion leaders (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 31).

Furthermore, the perception of a way out can be induced by the mediator by helping parties to the conflict to identify “a salient solution” until they can meet a midpoint. In case this cannot be reached, then the mediator can help to construct a new set of terms for a possible joint agreement. Outside parties can also help in this process as it was explained previously with the indirect way of perception for the stalemate. In general, mediation initiatives and its effectiveness “depends in large part on his or her skill in shaping and influencing those perceptions and in introducing innovative ways of looking at the conflict that capture the attention of the parties” (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 33).

Given the above initiatives of a mediator as a communicator by carrying messages and as a formulator creating ideas, it may also be needed that the mediator change to a role of manipulator (changing conditions) if parties to the conflict are not able to perceive the stalemate and a way out through the previous explained scenarios. A manipulator approach is usually done by powerful mediators (in comparison to small states or NGOs) in order to bring the parties to the conflict to an objective condition of a MHS for the ripening purpose (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 35). A way to know when mediation exists with a ripening purpose is by observing diplomatic measures (e.g. threats and warnings), economic measures (economic aid, trade agreements, and debt forgiveness can strengthen one of the parties’ capabilities and create a stalemate), and military measures (extension or withholding of military support) that the third-party may use in the peace process (Zartman and de Soto

2010, p. 35-40). The sources used to observe this variable were previously mentioned in the dependent variable section.

4.1.3. Implications of the MHS

A variety of implications arrive from the Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) theory of William Zartma. First, this notion is completely dependent on conflict, and it is not based on current casualties, but instead on the perception of those current casualties that both parties cannot longer sustain and create pain (the level of pain is measured differently by each actor given their circumstantial conditions). Thus, pain is perceived when possibilities of escalation have been exhausted, which means that a conflict is not treated at an earlier stage and takes a long period for the MHS to exist and be perceived.

Moreover, the MHS only applies for the effective initiation of a negotiated settlement between the parties to the conflict and do not guarantees a successful (or failed) conclusion. However, the MHS continuity during negotiations is necessary in order to prevent that the parties drop out. The attractiveness of this notion lies in the fact that it would be cheaper for both parties to win in this way rather than continuing the conflict and that they would share power that did not exist before.

Another implication of this theory is that the absence of ripeness does not mean inaction until a ripe moment occurs. In contrast, unripeness should encourage mediators to take advantage of the necessary but insufficient conditions to push and use diplomatic skills by moving from a communicator to a formulator or even to a manipulator, if necessary, to persuade parties to the conflict until ripeness is finally reached (Zartman 1995, p. 13-15).

4.2. Type of research

This thesis is solely based on qualitative research to address the following concern: *Why did the 19th of April Movement (M-19) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) initiated a negotiated peace process and yet the first one had a successful result*

achieving a peace process while the other did not in the timeframe between 1989 and 2002?

In order to answer this, the research was designed as explanatory (explore causation to find underlying principles) by testing Ripeness theory. In this sense, theory testing is going to be done through a case-study approach to data collection, analysis, and report writing given that it involves the study of events.

This research will use two comparative case studies (small-n) within Colombia in the timeframe as from 1989 to 2002: I) the 19th of April Movement (M-19) and the state peace process and II) the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the state peace process. The fact that both peace processes occurred in the same country will allow this research to have a narrow scope and an in-depth cross-case analysis with a temporal and spatial variation. In addition, this research will address a gap that have not been analyzed before, in a more than four decades conflict, to compare the causes that generated opposite results in these two specific cases given that both were able to initiate a negotiated peace process. Furthermore, the theoretical framework with the generated hypothesis demonstrates that the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is of causal mechanism. The intended domain of generalization is the set of peace processes between the state and guerrilla groups in Colombia since it is the only internal armed conflict with a length of more than four decades that still remains in the Latin American region with the insurgency of multiple guerrillas.

4.3. Data Collection and Methodological Techniques

In the research design of this thesis, data collection to pursue the qualitative analysis of the hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework will be conducted by using document analysis as a social science methodological technique given the limited resources and accessibility to interviews, observations, and focus groups.

4.3.1. Document analysis

In the research design of this thesis, the primary data collection method will be document analysis. This will be done by searching data that has previously been collected by other sources - secondary sources. Document analysis is a suitable and effective mean when data collection is infeasible, some of the publicly available sources are books, news from the media, research publications, articles, official statements, official web pages, etc. The main reasons why data collection through other means is infeasible is because FARC is one of the still ongoing guerrilla groups in Colombia and thus accessibility to reach the group is difficult, in addition to limited resources and limited possibilities to have a one-to-one interview with the relevant individuals to this research.

Thus, document analysis will be used to find in-depth information through *judgment sampling* to select specific individuals who have knowledge of the topic to deeply understand the cases in order to prove or refute the hypotheses. The first case is the peace process between the Colombian state and the guerrilla group 19th of April Movement (M-19). For this case, the testimonies of Rafael Pardo (former High Commissioner for Peace under Virgilio Barco's administration), Carlos Pizarro and Antonio Navarro-Wolff (former High Commanders for M-19) were selected from the prologue of the book "Biblioteca para la Paz" (Library for Peace) Volume II²¹, which collected all official statements related to peace processes from 1986 to 1990, time frame in which this case happened. However, these testimonies are going to be complemented with a research publication²² with a non-state perspective.

²¹ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1986-1990: Se inician acuerdos parciales. Pacto político con el M-19*. Bogota, Colombia.

²² Garcia Duran, Mauricio; Grabe Loewenherz, Vera; Patino Hormaza, Otty (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

The second case is the peace process between the Colombian state, again (a different leader), and the guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). For this case, the testimonies of Victor G. Ricardo (former High Commissioner for Peace under Andres Pastrana's administration), Camilo Gomez (preceded by Victor G. Ricardo), and Carlos A. Lozano Guillen²³ were selected from the prologue of the book "Biblioteca para la Paz" (Library for Peace) Volume V²⁴, which collected all official statements related to peace processes from 1998 to 2002, time frame in which this case happened. However, these testimonies are going to be complemented with a research publication²⁵ with an independent academic perspective after INTERPOL forensic analysis ratified the authenticity and integrity of the FARC's archive seized by the Colombian Armed Forces.

In the analysis and interpretation of the testimonies, the focus will be by case to get the overall picture of it. From the information extracted by each case, this research will use grounded theory²⁶. Initially, themes or patterns such as ideas, concepts, phrases used, or terminology will be identified. Themes and patterns found will then be coded and organized into different coherent categories. A combination of *preset* and *emergent* categories will be used by identifying the themes before categorization and then use new ones as they emerge from the data, cross-index will also be taken in consideration given that some themes may fit more than one category (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p. 3).

²³ Carlos A. Lozano Guillen is Director of "Semanario VOZ", member of the Colombian Communist Party central executive board, recognized facilitator in peace processes and on humanitarian agreements. He also participated in the peace talks with FARC in 1998.

²⁴ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1998-2002: Dialogo, negociacion y ruptura – FARC-EP y ELN*. Bogota, Colombia.

²⁵ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)(2011). *The FARC files: Venezuela, Ecuador, and the Secret Archive of 'Raul Reyes'*. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

²⁶ "Grounded theory is a type of inductive thematic analysis. Developed by Glaser and Staruss (1967), grounded theory is a set of iterative techniques designed to identify categories and concepts within text that are then linked into formal theoretical models" (http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/48453_ch_1.pdf, retrieved on 2 July 2014, p. 13).

Thus, document analysis with the testimonies of specific individuals will help determine through cross-case analysis whether the necessary elements to initiate a peace process in a ripe moment were present or absent in the two cases to be study.

4.4. Data quality and verification

Possible threats to the validity of the intended research proposal is that the information about the guerrilla groups is difficult to access, given the fact that they were and/or still are an illegal armed group and it is managed in a confidential manner. As a consequence, the research may turn at some point biased because public available sources will be the easier data type of collection, but in order to avoid this, it is necessary to maintain a critical perspective with an open mind to the different and particular perspectives of each actor as well as to use available documents from different sources and seek new ones in a manner that is possible to be done. Also, the information available to the public tends to be propagandistic in nature. Furthermore, the majority of the media in Colombia is biased, tending to adopt a pro-governmental stance. Therefore, it is important to collect the available information from independent sources to corroborate reports from the government and the media. Moreover, the historical dynamics that affect the peace processes (the end of the cold war, illegal drug trade, illegal mining exploitation, kidnapping and ransom) have different intensity and causal implications in the peace processes along the time range considered (1989-2002). Therefore, the analysis of these externalities needs to pay special attention to the timing and latency in which these external factors happen and interact with the peace processes.

Finally, the variable of a sense of a way out to reach an alternative solution (negotiate) can be ambiguous and at some point difficult to validate. It is finally of great importance to have in consideration that from August 2012 until now peace talks between the Government of Colombia and FARC have taken place and this could affect either in a positive or negative

way to demonstrate the predicament of the MHS theory as well as to compliment the conclusions of this intended research in the future.

5. Case Studies

The Republic of Colombia is a country located in South America that have faced a five decade internal armed conflict (Civil War) against multiple guerrilla groups while facing at the same time a counter-narcotics fight. The complexity and long-lasting conflict of this country raise the attention of conflict resolution and peace building experts to study this case. This research has narrow the scope selecting only two intents to initiate a peace process (one ended successfully while the other did not) among the several attempts. Given that the internal armed conflict is between the state and multiple guerrilla groups, the criteria to select the guerrilla groups was to choose the two most prominent that could fit the criteria of one ending successfully (19th of April Movement) while the other did not (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army). Thus, this chapter will start with a historical background to better understand the context of the conflict followed by the analysis of the data collected with the implementation of the Ripeness Theory from William Zartman in the findings and results.

5.1. Historical background

Colombia after the Thousand Days War²⁷ flared in 1948 to a violent period of political unrest between the Liberal and Conservative parties that was call *La Violencia*. It started with the assassination of populist leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan²⁸, which led to the *Bogotazo*²⁹, and

²⁷ The Thousand Days War (1899-1902) was a Civil War in Colombia between the Liberal and Conservative parties.

²⁸ Jorge Eliecer Gaitan “proclaimed the need to unite the people against the oligarchic elites that governed the country. He belonged to the Liberal Party and was their candidate (a potential winner) of the 1950-1954 presidential elections. His murder unleashed a violent confrontation between the Liberal and Conservative parties that lasted more than five years” (Duran, Grabe, and Patino 2008, p. 9).

ended with an agreement of both political parties on the creation of the National Front³⁰ in 1958 (BBC Website; Isacson 2000, p. 2). Nevertheless, the high impact of the ongoing Cuban Revolution at that time (1953-1959) influenced Latin America in general (Pizarro, 2011, p. 19). As a result, people found a new form of solution to political exclusion given that political exclusion was happening in Colombia with the creation of the National Front. In addition, *La Violencia* period forced numerous peasants to flee out of rural areas forming the poverty belts surrounding big cities in precarious conditions, which caused confrontations between pro-liberal peasants and pro-conservative peasants over agricultural lands. Thus, agricultural land and social issues evolved in Colombia (Duran, Grabe, and Patino 2008, p. 9). As a result, in 1954 communist peasant guerilla groups formed self-defense alliances that after the Marquetalia Operation³¹ rejoined into mobile guerrillas, which were later transform into the South Bloc group, a prelude to what became in 1966 the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army (FARC), a marxist-leninist guerrilla group (BBC Website; Duran et al. 2008, p. 9; Isacson 2000, p. 3; Pizarro, 2011; Voorhoeve 2007, p. 74).

In the 1970s a second generation of guerrilla groups were created. One of them was the 19th of April Movement (M-19) with a nationalistic approach (BBC Website; Duran et al. 2008, p. 8; Voorhoeve 2007, p. 74). The origin of this guerrilla group comes since 19 April 1970 when the elections were rigged to defeat the Anapo³² candidate, retired General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (Duran et al. 2008, p. 10). Since this episode, this group called itself as the "19th

²⁹ The *Bogotazo* was a massive riot after the assassination of populist leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan that left thousands of deaths in Colombia.

³⁰ The National Front was a power-sharing pact established in 1958, in which both parties (Liberal and Conservative) agree to alternate in government. This also caused the exclusion of other political groups such as the Communist Party (until 1970) (Duran et al., 2008, p.9).

³¹ The Marquetalia Operation was "a repressed revolt of Communist peasants in the Marquetalia region of Tolima department in central Colombia" (Isacson 2000, p. 3) that was attacked by the Government on 1964.

³² Anapo (*Alianza Nacional Popular* in English National Popular Alliance) was a political party led by former presidential candidate Gustavo Rojas Pinillas that opposed the National Front in Colombia. It differs from the Colombian Communist Party on the rights of private property issues.

of April Movement (M-19)” that publicly appeared as an armed protest movement in 1974 when they removed the Simon Bolivar’s sword in Bogota. M-19 began as an urban group that “advocated nationalist, Bolivarian, anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic model, and argued for ‘Social Colombian-style’” (in contrast to rural guerrilla groups with international models e.g. Soviet, Chinese, and Cuban) (Duran et al. 2008, p. 10). It was also an armed protest group that changed to a rural military apparatus through time.

Furthermore, in the 1980s the boom of the drug cartels affected Colombia in several ways. Human rights abuses and drug trafficking increased with the high consumption of cocaine and its illegal trade (Banks and Sokolowski 2008, p. 147-148). As a result, a new concept was introduced, “War on Drugs”, which caused the druglords to include guerrilla groups to protect illicit cultivations from the Government in exchange of financial support. Thus, this became a way of guerilla’s sustainability, especially for FARC, in addition to extortion and kidnapping.

The first attempt of peace building, among others, started in 1982 under the administration of former President Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) by negotiating a cease-fire agreement with FARC and M-19 (BBC Website; Isacson 2000, p. 4; Voorhoeve 2007, p. 75). It lasted until 1985 when M-19 seized the Palace of Justice, where the Supreme Court of Colombia was located, and in which several people lost their lives including 12 judges (Boudon 1996, p. 282). In the same year, FARC decided to create their political party *Patriotic Union* (UP), but most of its members were killed including 2 presidential candidates. This made the cease-fire negotiation to collapse and to make their decision to go back to guerrilla warfare (Boudon 1996, p. 282; Isacson 2000, p. 4; Voorhoeve 2007, p. 75). Paradoxically, under the administration of former President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990), the M-19 demobilized by signing the “Political Pact for Peace and Democracy” peace plan in

1990 and created the political party 19th of April Democratic Alliance (AD-M19), which participated in the creation of the 1991 Colombian Constitution (Boudon 1996, p. 282).

The initiation of this peace process (**Case 1**) in 1989 will be analyzed through out this chapter by testing the Ripeness theory and will identify whether the necessary elements to start a peace process were present or not. The same analysis will be conducted in the initiation of the peace process between FARC and the state of Colombia under former President Andres Pastrana (**Case 2**) in 1998 at a demilitarized zone (safe heaven) located in San Vicente del Caguan (Isacson 2000, p. 8). The history until this point in time in Colombia develops in the launch of *Plan Colombia* by the Government as a counter-narcotics and anti-insurgency plan (Banks and Sokolowski 2008, p. 148). However, this peace process ended in 2002 due to several factors that will be later explained (Isacson 2000).

5.2. Case 1: Analysis of the 19th of April Movement (M-19) and the state's peace process in 1989

In the case of the peace process between M-19 and the State, secondary data that was previously collected from other sources was analyzed to prove or refute the hypotheses. The main source, as stated before, was from the book “Biblioteca para la Paz” (Library for Peace) Volume II³³, which collected all official statements related to peace processes from 1986 to 1990, time frame in which this case happened. Among the testimonies of different individuals in the prologue of this book relevant to this peace process, only three were used and selected in a balanced way. In order of precedence, the three testimonies were from Rafael Pardo (former High Commissioner for Peace under Virgilio Barco's administration), Carlos Pizarro and Antonio Navarro-Wolff (former High Commanders for M-19).

³³ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1986-1990: Se inician acuerdos parciales. Pacto politico con el M-19*. Bogota, Colombia.

In the data analysis process, the focus will be by case analyzing it then as a whole. For this purpose, Grounded Theory was the main analysis technique because it is a flexible way to analyze text in a coherent systematic way with constant comparison that afterwards is linked into formal theoretical models. Therefore, preset categories and subcategories were chosen in accordance to the subjects from the hypotheses. The information from each of these testimonies were then systematically reviewed in units of paragraphs (unit of text), coded into themes³⁴ and gathered into preset subcategories. These subcategories in the analysis process were named as “Symptoms”. While doing so, emergent symptoms (subcategories) were also assigned (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.3).

These Symptoms were then coded and organized through different types of relationships into coherent preset categories that in the analysis process were named as “Factors”. Emergent factors (categories) were assigned, and cross-index coding was used given that some symptoms fitted more than one category and vice versa (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.3).

Another important source used in this research to complement the testimonies analysis was the research publication “The M-19’s Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics”³⁵ with a non-state perspective. This research publication combines first-hand experience from two former top commanders of M-19, Otty Patino and Vera Grabe, as well as academic knowledge of this peace process.

This chapter will explain first the findings of the research by sections that are correlated to the hypotheses in the following order: Stalemate existence and perception, a

³⁴ Themes can be a set of ideas, concepts, behaviors, interactions, incidents, terminology, or phrases used (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p. 2).

³⁵ Garcia Duran, Mauricio; Grabe Loewenherz, Vera; Patino Hormaza, Otty (2008). *The M-19’s Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

sense of a way out, economic resources, and mediation. This will end with a summary of four major points of the results.

5.2.1. Findings

Since 1980, M-19 experienced a “perestroika”³⁶ period by redefining their armed struggle (Duran et al. 2008, p. 16). M-19 changed their strategy from creating political strength through military means to peace as a revolutionary tool to reconnect with the country by using mainly two concepts: peace and democracy (Duran et al. 2008, p. 16 and 20). In 1985, after M-19 laid siege to the Palace of Justice and went through a period of political isolation, the guerrilla group realized that people no longer supported their war, specially ‘dirty war’ unleashed in 1985, and that they were “crossing a desert” as Carlos Pizarro at that time expressed, which made them culminate the military action emphasis to reach their goals (Duran et al. 2008, p. 16). At this point, the idea of initiating a peace process started to emerge and people supported it (Duran et al. 2008, p. 16).

Stalemate existence and perception:

Stalemate existence and perception are assessed through the costs of the conflict that are divided into tangible and non-tangible indicators (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 11).

Tangible indicators

The tangible costs of the conflict (the symptoms) that were found in the testimonies vary among time. In 1985, the guerrilla violence represented the 7,51% of the total violent deaths (Chernick 2012, pag.118). In that year the siege to the Palace of Justice seized by M-19 also happened, killing more than 95 people including 11 judges from the Supreme Court of Colombia. Nevertheless, the loss was not only for the state, but also for M-19 when they were counter-attacked by the military forces of the state in setting fire to the Palace (Duran et al.

³⁶ The etymology of perestroika was literally in Russia during the 20th century a “reconstruction” period. (Consulted on 11 May 2014 at <http://www.wordreference.com/definition/perestroika>)

2008, p. 16). According to the High Commissioner for Peace of the state, Rafael Pardo, between 1986 and 1990 approximately 1536 protests existed, and the conjunction between paramilitaries and drug trafficking, as an external event, was making the country's institutions and stability to suffer (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 38 and 44).

Also the M-19 proclaimed their struggle for democracy as its main strategy at its Seventh Conference in 1979, the guerrilla group was also facing the risk of authoritarianism after the Tacueyó (Cauca)³⁷ incident “as M-19 was carrying out joint actions with this FARC splinter group, the events in Tacueyó generated internal questions about the relationship between war and authoritarianism, and about the dangerous consequences that this could have on efforts to build a more democratic and fair country” (Duran et al. 2008, p. 16).

Non-tangible indicators

In the non-tangible costs of the conflict (the symptoms), the state was going through political instability and absence of progress with the guerrilla groups, according to Rafael Pardo, “the scene in general was of high political instability [...] the state seem impotent to contain it” (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 38). Moreover, a change with an external agency of the state happened: the crisis with the United States of America (hereafter referred as USA) due the drug lord Jorge Luis Ochoa's freedom that questioned the Colombian state capacity, efficiency towards public disorder, and governance (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 38).

On the other hand, internally M-19 was going through a crisis (Duran et al. 2008, p. 17). The group was weak and had a lack of influence on the democratic project and national political life (Duran et al. 2008, p. 18). Also after M-19 laid siege to the Palace of Justice, they realized that people no longer supported their war, specially ‘dirty war’ unleashed in 1985. Given their *raison d'être* as a political-military group, M-19 then changed their strategy

³⁷ “In Tacueyó (Cauca), the corpses of 163 guerrillas from the Ricardo Franco Group were found buried in communal graves. They had been murdered by their own leaders as a result of an internal disagreement” (Duran et al. 2008, pag 40).

from military action (which was causing pain) to “Life for the nation, peace for the armed forces and war against the oligarchy!” slogan (Duran et al. 2008, p. 17-18). Furthermore, M-19 was highly affected by the changes in leadership within its group:

- I. The death of the undisputed leader of M-19 Jaime Bateman that left the group “with an uncertain future and a problem of continuity” (Duran et al. 2008, p. 17).
- II. A power struggle came up “causing fractures between the leading figures: Iván Marino Ospina, Álvaro Fayad, Carlos Pizarro and Gustavo Arias.” (Duran et al. 2008, p. 17).
- III. Lost of important leaders from M-19:

"M-19 suffered important leadership losses at the hands of the state armed forces. The most notable were Ospina (August 1985), Andres Almarales and Luis Otero (November 1985), Alvaro Fayad (March 1986), Israel Santamaria (March 1986), and Gustavo Arias (July 1986). ‘This long sequence of deaths in the ranks of M-19 [...] was undermining its structure and its political and military capacity. A high amount of human losses showed the clear intention of the state to annihilate M-19 and the weaknesses and mistakes of the movement’” (Duran et al. 2008, p. 17).

- IV. Carlos Pizarro assumed the leadership.

Thus, in the stalemate existence and perception section, evidence suggests that both parties to the conflict were in a situation that created pain. The number of casualties and external events caused tangible costs in the conflict that produced pain to both parties. Changes with external agencies (allies or non-allies), pain within each of the parties, and changes in leadership also caused non-tangible costs in the conflict that hurt both parties. In this regard, a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) existed and the parties to the conflict perceived it, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is met and could eventually lead to a ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis one is met.

A sense of a way out:

The existence and perception of a way out of the stalemate can be assessed through objective and subjective indicators (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 23). In this sense, willingness (objective and subjective) or unwillingness for a joint solution can be initial indicators of a sense of a way out as well as ambiguous willingness and trust or mistrust. However, subjective indicators are more distinguishable than objective ones given that “the existence of a way out is itself primarily subjective and depends on each party’s perception of the other party’s intentions” (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 23).

Objective indicators

Since Carlos Pizarro assumed M-19’s leadership, decided to change common policy and the political project of the group aimed at peace given that he had enough authority in the guerrilla group. According to Duran et al. (2008), Pizarro not only followed his political intuition, but was also supported by the whole M-19 especially with those involved in the military action. Thus, Duran et al. (2008) proposed that “the ‘religiosity’ of hierarchic structures ruled: the commander is never wrong. Therefore, the movement fell into step towards peace behind the commander.” (p. 27). According to Navarro-Wolf’s testimony, even though M-19 was still participating in the *Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board*³⁸ (in Spanish: Coordinadora Guerrillera Simon Bolivar - CGSB), Pizarro decided to make the decision alone to negotiate with the government (Villaraga 2009:II, p. 55). This symptom (leader) made possible and helped to perceive not only the factor of a valid spokesman, but also a sense of a way out to even reach the point of recognizing the factor of ripeness by “taking the decision to look for a way out through peace negotiations”, according to

³⁸ The Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinated Board (CGSB) was an umbrella group of guerrilla organizations in Colombia. There were six members of the CGSB: The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the 19th of April Movement, the National Liberation Army, the Popular Liberation Army, the Workers Revolutionary Party, and the Quintin Lame Armed Movement.

Navarro'Wolf's testimony (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 55). In this sense, the perception of the opposite party to the conflict regarding the leader is also an important element to the factor of a valid spokesman. For instance, Carlos Pizarro was recognized in Rafael Pardo's testimony as a "courageous man" that with his "vital attitude" and "political position were determinate to generate new spaces for political change nationwide".

Moreover, in the 1988 plebiscite³⁹ initiative of the state, a preliminary sign of cooperation and willingness was demonstrated by the High Commissioner for Peace who stated that "our major bet was a positive attitude that would allow approaches with M-19", finding then a new plebiscite-peace relationship under the new peace policy (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 39 and 42). Although this initiative encountered obstacles and was declared later as unconstitutional, it seems that one part of M-19 perceived this intention and directly expressed, unofficially, their interest towards the plebiscite initiative (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 40).

Given that the plebiscite did not worked out, in the same year, M-19 kidnapped Álvaro Gómez Hurtado⁴⁰ as a declaration of the group's fight on "War to Oligarchy", which generated a political process of high intensity (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 40). Clearly, this act was an attempt for "escalation to call" because then M-19 retired by liberating Álvaro Gómez Hurtado and calling, among other requests, for a national debate for peace (reduction of obstacles for negotiation and a sense of a way out) by compromising the divergent political forces to do a National Summit for Peace in Usaquen on 29 July (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 40). However, the state did not attend because, according to Rafael Pardo, the state was weak and perceived it as an act of force (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 40). This event also generated a new approach and proximity between the state and the public sector with M-19, which could be

³⁹ A plebiscite is a call to change the constitution.

⁴⁰ Álvaro Gómez Hurtado was a former presidential candidate and active member of the Conservative Party who was kidnapped in 1988 by M-19.

interpreted as a preliminary sign of willingness to reach peace. Moreover, Duran et al. (2008) refer to this event with the following analysis:

“The starting point of the transition to political negotiation was the kidnap of Álvaro Gómez, a former presidential candidate and renowned representative of the national oligarchy. What began as an act of war ended as a process of agreement: the leadership of M-19 recognised an opportunity for compromise as they noted the strong reactions to the kidnapping. At what was known as the Usaqué Summit (*Cumbre de Usaqué*) on 29 July 1988, despite the absence of the government, the door to a peace process was re-opened when M-19 made public a proposal that became a starting point for subsequent negotiations.” (p. 23).

Other indicators

Another indicator that influenced in the sense of a way out (the factor) was ambiguous willingness (symptom). This is reflected in Carlos Pizarro’s statement announcing on March 1988 that M-19 would maintain unilateral ceasefire against the Armed Forces of Colombia, but not with those who institutionalized the violence in the country. Why M-19 did a partial ceasefire? It leaves a gap to think that it was an ambiguous sign of willingness. According to Zartman and de Soto (2010), “unilateral cease-fires can be ambiguous indicators, because cease-fires may serve only as an opportunity to reproviseion or rearm military forces, but they may also constitute a trial balloon leading to talks” (p. 24). In this case, on December 1988 Carlos Pizarro expressed: "the decision of unilateral cease-fire by FARC and M-19, make an impeccable structure of facts, words and gestures, and clearly express our spirit and will" (p. 224), which do facilitates for the state the perception of a sense of a way out (the factor). As Antonio Navarro-Wolf expressed, the ceasefire agreement helped M-19 to gain public trust with the forgiveness of society as an essential element (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 58).

Subjective indicators

It seems that in the peace policy there was recognition of M-19's needs and aims that opened up a space for discussion and agreements about the armed groups political initiatives, which made them to rebel, in return of ceasefire agreement and demobilization (Villarraga

2009:II, pag. 39). Reduction of obstacles to negotiations was clearly expressed by Pizarro on 14 December 1988 in a letter to the President of Colombia: "Mr. President, indicate where and when starts the date with history and we will go immediately to it" (Villarraga 2009:II, p. 224).

Thus, in the sense of a way out section evidence suggest that both parties to the conflict were willing to search for a joint solution. Decision-making towards initiating peace, a valid spokesman, preliminary sign of cooperation, an attempt for escalation to call, and reduction of obstacles for negotiation caused objective indicators of a sense of a way out. The unilateral cease-fire decision was and ambiguous indicator and recognition of the other's needs and aims generated subjected indicators for a sense of a way out. In this regard, a sense of a way out existed and the parties to the conflict perceived it, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is met and could eventually lead to a ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis three is met.

Economic resources:

The M-19 was not well funded (economic resources) as specified by Duran et al. (2008): "M-19 were never well-funded. Their main source of funds was ransom money from kidnappings. When they robbed banks or laid siege to towns, they got only 'pocket money' to complement the ransom income. They had international logistical support (from Panama, Cuba and Venezuela) and political support (from Mexico and Costa Rica). But only rarely did they receive 'a dollar here and there' from international sources" (p. 15). Paradoxically, the M-19 was the pioneer of kidnapping, first, as a practice for political pressure purposes and then it started to be developed into an economic funding mechanism through extortion that later benefitted financially other guerrilla groups and narcotraffickers who took advantage of this as an opportunity for continuity, sustainability and viability (Pinto, Altamar, Lahuerta,

Cepeda & Mera, 2004, p. 6). In contrast, the Colombian Military Expenditure (% of GDP)⁴¹ was increasing year by year. In 1989, the military expenditure was 1,7% of the GDP and increased 0,5 % in 1990 and maintained the same through out 1991. An illustration of this can be found in figure 4.

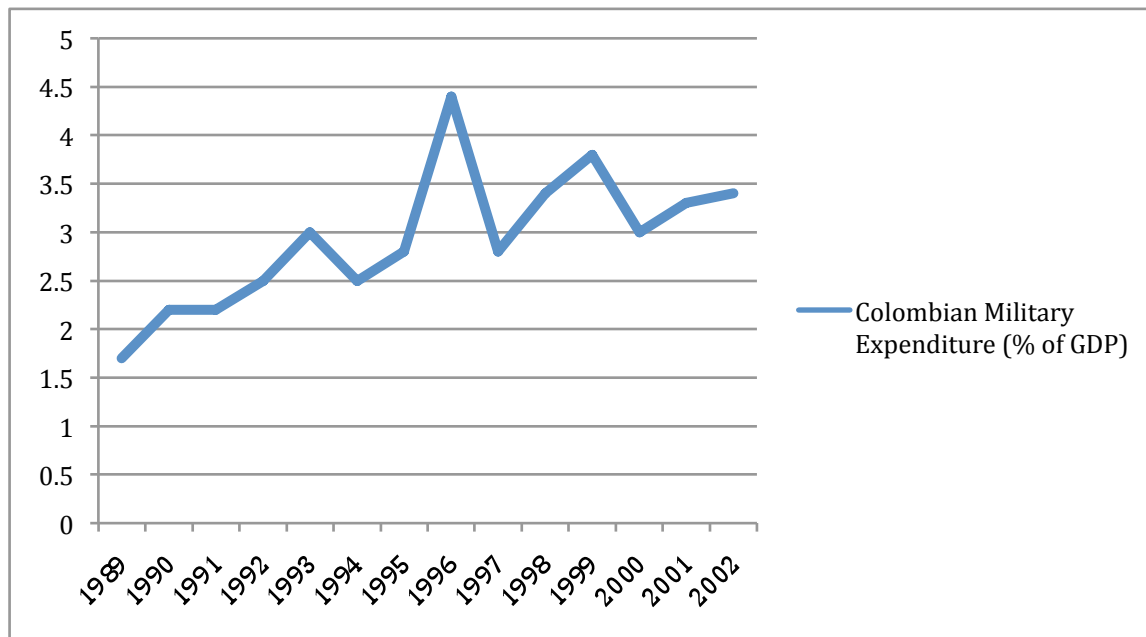


Figure 4: Colombian Military Expenditure (% GDP)⁴²

Thus, in the economic resources section, evidence suggests that M-19 was not well funded, while the state did have economic resources as it usually does. In this regard, the

⁴¹ “Includes all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defense ministries and other government agencies engaged in defense projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country).” Information from the World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?page=4>

⁴² Source: Information from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database/milex_database, extracted on 8 May 2014).

absence of economic resources from M-19 helped on the existence and perception of a sense of a way out on their side, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is met and could eventually lead to a ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis two is met.

Mediation:

There was no mediation (direct or indirect) through third-party interventions that brought agreement between the parties in this conflict. This element was absent in this case. In this regard, one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is not met and obstructs an eventual ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis four is not met.

A summary of the findings in relation to the hypotheses in the first Case between the Colombian state and M-19 will be presented in table 7:

	H1	H3	H2	H4
	Stalemate existence and perception	A sense of a way out	Absence of Economic resources	Mediation
State vs. M-19	X	X	X	

Table 7: Findings summary (State vs. M-19)

5.2.2. Results

The peace process between M-19 and the State in 1990 fulfills the required, although not sufficient, elements that create favorable conditions to initiate a negotiated settlement as proposed by William Zartman with his Ripeness Theory. However, it seems that the general hypothesis was not met, and only hypothesis one, two, and three seems to be met.

- I) Both parties to the conflict were in an impasse that produced pain or hurt (see stalemate existence and perception findings), which is understood as Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS).
- II) Costs to continue the conflict until military victory were higher than reaching a negotiated settlement.
- III) M-19 did not have economic resources to finance and sustain the group.
Therefore, M-19 did not have a window of opportunity nor viability for rebellion.
- IV) Both parties started to consider a more advantageous alternative and perceived that were willing to look for a joint solution

5.3. Case 2: Analysis of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) and the state’s peace process in 1998

In the case of the peace process between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC) and the state, secondary data that was previously collected from other sources was analyzed to prove or refute the hypotheses. The main source, as stated before, was from the book “Biblioteca para la Paz” (Library for Peace) Volume V⁴³, which collected all official statements related to peace processes from 1998 to 2002, time frame in which this case happened. Among the testimonies of different individuals in the prologue of this book relevant to this peace process, only three were used and selected in a balanced way. In order of precedence, the three testimonies were from Victor G. Ricardo (former High Commissioner for Peace under Andres Pastrana’s administration), Camilo Gomez (preceded by Victor G. Ricardo), and Carlos A. Lozano Guillen⁴⁴.

⁴³ Villarraga, Alvaro (2009). *Biblioteca para la paz 1998-2002: Dialogo, negociacion y ruptura – FARC-EP y ELN*. Bogota, Colombia.

⁴⁴ Carlos A. Lozano Guillen is Director of “Semana VOZ”, member of the Colombian Communist Party central executive board, recognized facilitator in peace processes and on humanitarian agreements. He also participated in the peace talks with FARC in 1998.

In the data analysis process, the focus will also be by case analyzing it then as a whole. For this purpose, Grounded Theory was the main analysis technique as well because it is a flexible way to analyze text in a coherent systematic way with constant comparison that afterwards is linked into formal theoretical models. Therefore, preset categories and subcategories were chosen in accordance to the subjects from the hypotheses. The information from each of these testimonies were then systematically reviewed in units of paragraphs (unit of text), coded into themes⁴⁵ and gathered into preset subcategories. These subcategories in the analysis process were named as “Symptoms”. While doing so, emergent symptoms (subcategories) were also assigned (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.3).

These Symptoms were then coded and organized through different types of relationships into coherent preset categories that in the analysis process were named as “Factors”. Emergent factors (categories) were assigned, and cross-index coding was used given that some symptoms fitted more than one category and vice versa (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.3).

Another important source used in this research to complement the testimonies analysis was the research publication “The FARC files: Venezuela, Ecuador, and the Secret Archive of ‘Raul Reyes’”⁴⁶ with an independent academic perspective after INTERPOL forensic analysis ratified the authenticity and integrity of the FARC’s archive seized by the Colombian Armed Forces. This research publication combines first-hand files from Luis Devia better known by his *nom de guerre* as “Raul Reyes”, who was a member of FARC Secretariat and head of its International Committee (COMINTER).

⁴⁵ Themes can be a set of ideas, concepts, behaviors, interactions, incidents, terminology, or phrases used (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p. 2).

⁴⁶ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)(2011). *The FARC files: Venezuela, Ecuador, and the Secret Archive of ‘Raul Reyes’*. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

This chapter will explain first the findings of the research by sections that are correlated to the hypotheses in the following order: Stalemate existence and perception, a sense of a way out, economic resources, and mediation. This will end with a summary of five major points of the results.

5.3.1. Findings

Despite the military impasse with the increased intensity of warfare between the actors (state and FARC) from 1994 to 1998, FARC was able to consolidate power by shifting “its military strategy from a ‘mobile war’ to a ‘war of positions’ under which it could hold fixed territories for an expanded period of time” (Richani, 2013, p. 170). While on the other hand, the state under Ernesto Samper’s administration was highly weakened due to the “narcodollars” that presumably supported his Presidential campaign. This affected the state’s legitimacy and therefore the state was unable to mobilize the necessary political support for engaging the guerrilla in peace talks (Richani, 2013, p. 170).

The idea of initiating a peace process with the guerrilla groups originated from a neutral intervention (third-party intervention for mediation purposes) by a group of academics supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1997 with the idea of “jump-start peace talks” (Richani, 2013, p. 171). The presidential candidates of that time were also invited to the meeting held in Quirama, Antioquia, where they signed the Quirama declaration and committing to support the initiation of peace talks with the guerrilla groups despite of who won the elections (Richani 2013, p. 171). Andres Pastrana was one of the two non-signatories, who later reconsidered this group’s proposal more serious after being defeated, leaving him in second place, by his competitor Horacio Serpa from the Liberal Party (Richani 2013, p. 172). Only then, Pastrana decided to launch a peace proposal that included FARC’s key demand on withdrawing the state military forces from five contested municipalities in the Meta department (La Uribe, Mesetas, La Macarenay Vista Hermosa) and

one in the Caqueta department (San Vicente del Caguan) in Colombia as one of his strategies to win the elections (Richani 2013, pag. 172). Pizarro (2011) stated that this concession, four days before the second electoral round (16 June 1988), was “the beginning of a series of errors in the peace policy design during Pastrana’s government that would end being, as it will be seen, an unfortunate failure” (p. 258). The other strategy for Pastrana’s campaign consisted on the publication of a photo of Pastrana’s emissary meeting with Manuel Marulanda⁴⁷, the latter was wearing a wristwatch from the candidate’s campaign. Thus, the initiation of peace talks between the state and FARC was not driven by either of the principal actors to the armed conflict (Richani 2013, pag. 173).

In fact, Richani (2013) states that “observers of the early peace dialogues certainly understood that neither FARC nor the government were committed to peace talks for their own sake, but were drawn into the process by numerous other factors, including public relations, domestic public opinion, regional and international pressure, and a desire to improve their political-military position vis-à-vis one another (p. 173). Perhaps the best description of the inauspicious beginning of the peace process was that of a prominent journalist, Hernando Gomez Buendia, who wrote” ““that peace process was born dead because of a birth defect; in reality there was no negotiation [...]” (Richani 2013, pag. 173). In words of Richani, the focus on immediate gains caused this “birth defect” that “doomed” the peace process.

Stalemate existence and perception:

Stalemate existence and perception (the factors) can be assessed through the costs of the conflict that are divided into tangible and non-tangible indicators (the symptoms) (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 11).

Tangible indicators

⁴⁷ Manuel Marulanda Velez was the *nom de guerre* of Pedro Antonio Marin, the main leader of FARC-EP.

First, an external event that created pain to both parties to the conflict was the presence of three paramilitaries⁴⁸ in the demilitarized zone (DMZ)⁴⁹ of San Vicente del Caguan, a map of the place can be seen in figure 5.



Figure 5: Demilitarized zone map in the peace process between the state and FARC⁵⁰

A zone that, according to Pizarro (2011), “ended being for the FARC its ‘strategic rearguard’ to advanced in its war against the state, to hide kidnapped people, to train its combatants in military schools for all levels, and to hidden its new war techniques as well as to use explosives” (p. 264).

While in the DMZ, the three paramilitaries were going to presumably kill Victor G. Ricardo, the High Commissioner for Peace of the state, which affected the peace process in

⁴⁸ The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* = AUC) was a Colombian paramilitary group that was an active belligerent in the Colombian internal armed conflict from 1997 to 2006. It was “an umbrella group to coordinate illegal right-wing paramilitary groups fighting the country’s left-wing guerrillas” (Richani 2013, pag. 221). A paramilitary “denotes a force with military structure conducting armed operations against a ruling or occupying power” (Consulted on 5 May 2014 at <http://www.wordreference.com/definition/paramilitary>).

⁴⁹ The demilitarized zone (DMZ) or safe haven was located in the southern departments of Meta and Caquetá in Colombia, straddling five municipalities, and measuring approximately 42,000km² (roughly the size of the Netherlands) (IISS 2011, pag. 31 and 221). This area was held by FARC long before it became a demilitarized zone during the peace talk, which was also known as “Farclandia”.

⁵⁰ (Consulted on 5 May 2014 at <http://www.economist.com/node/930425>)

the following manners: I) these three paramilitaries spoiled the installation of the peace talks; and II) if they were not able to kill the high commissioner for peace, then they would try to kill FARC's commander, Manuel Marulanda. As a consequence, in the installation of the peace talks the latter did not show up and his seat was empty. Since Manuel Marulanda was the "symbol of the guerrilla", his presence was required given the presence of the President of the Republic on the installation of the peace talks. In addition, the Colombian people were expecting him to be present on that day, but he did not show up. In this sense, the absence of a leader as it happened with Manuel Marulanda at the beginning of peace negotiations with the state was interpreted as absence of a valid spokesman, which in turn lowers the degree of trust among the parties to the conflict, especially to the counterpart. Similarly, Victor G. Ricardo interpreted the "empty seat" situation by stating: "it did harmed the process because it took away credibility. And that lack of credibility was interpreted by the guerrilla as opposition to the process, which did not suit the initiated dynamic" (Villarraga 2009:V, p.28).

Furthermore, Pizarro (2011) states that the memorandum that Jose Arbezu⁵¹ sent to Fidel Castro⁵², "leaves the feeling that the real reason for the absence was to send a clear message: peace was not just around the corner. Do not get false illusions. In fact, FARC, as it would be seen along this tempestuous period, was not preparing to do the transit from war to politics" (p. 260).

Moreover, the state was suffering some material cost: "At that time, the State did not have how to pay boots for its armed forces, two months ahead when President Andres Pastrana took possession. The State was absent in 200 municipalities of Colombia, including public force. The State had lost many battles with the guerrillas, the Patascoy and other municipalities just happened, in which more than 600 soldiers had been in the hands of the

⁵¹ Jose Arbezu was a delegate of the Cuban Communist Party (Pizarro, 2011, p. 260).

⁵² Fidel Castro is a Cuban Communist politician who was President of Cuba between 1961 and 2011.

guerrillas" (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 33). Then, Victor G. Ricardo proceeds to conclude in his testimony that "who needed oxygen was not the guerrilla, it was the state" (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 33).

Camilo Gomez, also expressed that tangible hurt of the state was a fact between 1994 and 1998 with the social and financial sectors affected in the following manner: I) Unemployment index were double, changing from 7% to 16%; II) The inflation increased; III) Interest rates were above 50%; IV) Several citizens were about to lose their housing; V) The financial sector entered into one of the most serious crisis; VI) For the first time in over 70 years, it seemed that a stage in which the GDP would not grow was about to come (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36). Undeniably, the situation of Colombia was not the best in 1998. According to Camilo Gomez, "the crisis was evident and the country was at the edge of a cliff, as it has seldom been". In politics, Colombia was still polarized due to the entry of narcotrafic into Samper's presidential campaign, an external event that also generated loss in credibility and legitimacy to the state (Villarraga 2009, p. 35).

Furthermore, the guerrilla gave the hardest *military coup* to the army (Las Delicias and Puerres, 1996; San Juanito and Patascoy, 1997; Miraflores, El Billar, and Mutata, 1998) (Richani 2013, pag. 176). According to Camilo Gomez, "the confrontation had never been stronger and we had never gone wrong, even the Commander of the Armed Forces, starting Pastrana's government, told the President that our democracy was in danger, for the first time" (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36). This is a strong statement that reflects how weak the state was at that point in time. Given that the guerrilla was militarily strong while the state was not, there was not equality in power and there was not a Mutually Hurting Stalemate.

On one hand, FARC reached a highest conception of advanced military evolution. Camilo Gomez stated that in addition to the more than 400 soldiers and policemen kidnapped by FARC, "in terms of guerrilla group, they were reaching the last stage of a irregular war

strategy, the territorial war. Certainly, we were facing the greatest advance of the guerrilla in its history" (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36). On the other hand, the state's mobility was restricted and therefore the reaction capacity was lower: four helicopters for all the country, 34.000 soldiers with high school and without training, 60.000 regular soldiers, and 22.000 professional soldiers (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36). In addition, the state had a legitimacy crisis for the public force due to human rights violations, which also cause to the state international isolation (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36).

Thus, the guerrilla had militarily more advantage, which biased their view towards a military victory (knowing that the state was weak) rather than to a negotiated settlement. Nevertheless, Carlos A. Lozano stated that "Pastrana conceded towards the doctrine that the guerrilla had to be taken defeated to the peace talks or, in this case, backing down. FARC reacted with mistrust against Pastrana and also wanted to prove strength, based on the accumulated victories at the end of Samper's government. This struggle from both sides transformed the peace talks in a 'military pulse' factor, to determine who was stronger during the course of the negotiation and the agreements" (Villamizar 2009:V, p.g 52). This is clearly a power fight on leading peace negotiations that also developed mistrust between both parties.

Carlos A. Lozano also explained that the fact that "both parties felt it was the right time for negotiation. Pastrana, based on the state's weakness; and FARC guerrilla convinced that they were at 'the end of the end' and that all advantages were operating to its favor" was a negative factor (Villamizar 2009:V, p.g 52). The reason is that paradoxically having FARC fostering the initiation of peace talks, placed the state in a weak position and them in a relative advantage, which to Lozano was a false equation because in reality the state was weak, not only in the peace talk but also militarily and politically since it was not able to reach the political solution, one of many points of the agenda (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 52). Thus, this was only a hurting stalemate and not a mutually hurting stalemate because while the state was

still weak in different aspects (militarily, politically, financially, etc), FARC was not and instead were having a biased perception that they would reach victory given that all advantages were operating in their favor.

Non-tangible indicators

In the non-tangible costs of the conflict (the symptoms), another symptom that generated pain for the actors in the conflict was changes of external agencies. On one hand, the state's relation with the United States of America (USA) was in the worst momentum, according to Camilo Gomez, which had serious consequences in the political and commercial areas for Colombia (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36). However, Carlos A. Lozano saw the USA as the major obstacle to the dialogues in Caguan. Also Colombian-European Union (EU) relations were not as good as they used to be due to the "human rights accusations". On the other hand, the guerrilla took advantage of this situation to gain recognition from the EU and was able to undermine the credibility of the state within the country (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36).

However, credibility was not the only non-tangible indicator of pain, loss in credibility and legitimacy that arouse the entry of narcotraphic into Samper's presidential campaign affected the state (Villarraga 2009, p. 35). In fact, the state had a legitimacy crisis (Villarraga 2009:V, p. 36).

Thus, in the stalemate existence and perception section, evidence suggests that only the state was in a situation that created pain and it was not mutual. The number of casualties, material costs suffer, external events (presence of paramilitaries in the DMZ, absence of Marulanda in the inauguration of the peace talks, and consequences from samper's episode with narcotrafick), FARC hardest *military coup* against the state and its military evolution in comparison to the state's restricted mobility with lower capacity reaction, caused tangible costs in the conflict that produced pain to the state. Changes with external agencies (allies or non-allies), credibility and legitimacy loss of the state, and mistrust from both parties to the

conflict also caused non-tangible costs in the conflict that hurt mostly the state. In this regard, a Hurting Stalemate existed, but not a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) and the parties to the conflict perceived it, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis was not met and obstruct an eventual ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis one is not met.

A sense of a way out:

The existence and perception of a way out of the stalemate can be assessed through objective and subjective indicators (Zartman and de Soto 2010, p. 23). This research uses other indicators to put in perspective all gathered arguments.

Objective indicators

In the first dialogue between Victor G. Ricardo and Manuel Marulanda, the High Commissioner for Peace seems to demonstrate compromise from the state to the peace process and that FARC could trust on them by expressing to Manuel Marulanda the following statement: "to all those who are outside the rule of law, the state, by obligation, must fight them, even the guerrillas, unless a peace agreement or a previous agreement is agreed, for example, a ceasefire in an area and mechanisms of this function that, obviously, if it is in search of peace, should be respected" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 25).

Also when Camilo Gomez assumed his role as High Commissioner for Peace, the "Political Negotiation" point was included in the reformulation of the new peace and security strategy of the state with the purpose of having a negotiated settlement to turn from violence to politics, which could be interpreted as a sign of willingness to reach a settlement while in the peace negotiations (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 33). Finally, another objective indicator was a humanitarian exchange of war prisoners helped FARC to decide to unilaterally free 350 soldiers and police from the state. (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 55).

In general, the sense of a way out does not have a wide evidence of objective indicators that can demonstrate the existence and perception of it.

Other indicators

Evidence from the three testimonies also included new symptoms such as ambiguous willingness and unwillingness. For instance, in the peace proposals during Pastrana's presidential campaign FARC did not expressed a complete agreement on the viability to start working on the peace process, and the group also did not expressed that the peace process could successfully end the conflict or reach ceasefire actions. (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 24). Besides Manuel Marulanda's absence during the first round of peace talks can also be interpreted as a preliminary sign of ambiguous willingness or even unwillingness because the absence of FARC's leader demonstrated lack of commitment/compromise towards the peace process since the beginning. According to Victor G. Ricardo's testimony, Marulanda's main arguments were to avoid that something may happen to make the peace process to be over and that he would not go to the peace talks because it was not him who was going to take over the peace talks, but instead the organization and they were going to be present through their negotiators (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 28). In addition, the constant unilateral frozen dialogues only two weeks after the peace talks initiated also demonstrate lack of commitment. This episode is explained by Pizarro (2011) as an "arrogant attitude" of FARC that affected the credibility of the peace process (p. 262-263).

Moreover, Victor G. Ricardo's statement expressing that the state was the one who needed oxygen from FARC because they were weak becomes also an ambiguous willingness on whether they were really having an initiative to reach a peace process or if they were just using it as an excuse to recover in different sectors. (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 33). Another sign of ambiguous willingness was Camilo Gomez's statement when expressing that the military weakness of the state was evident and that in their new politics, the state was going to

strengthen the armed forces of the state "for peace or for war" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 38). Camilo Gomez also made other statements that questions whether the state had a sense of a way out or not by expressing that "even though all progress, willingness from FARC was not set to reach agreements to remove the effects of the conflict on the population" and then he proceeds, "[...] the terrorist behavior of FARC determined the end of a process that was missing, precisely, their willingness to take it to good terms" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 40).

Furthermore, Carlos A. Lozano adds that "the dialogue process of Andres Pastrana's government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP) between 1998 and 2002 was not fruitful because there was not political will of change in the Colombian ruling class" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 51). In fact, Marc Chernick reiterates this point by stating that both parties accused each other of not having enough political will and desire to finish the war (Chernick 2012, pag. 130).

Also the fact that President Pastrana launched Plan Colombia while initiating the peace process with FARC generated mistrust to the guerrilla. (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 41). Carlos A. Lozano expressed that the state was incoherent in the peace negotiations because of the approval of Plan Colombia and strengthening their military force in the so-called "reengineering to win the war". (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 52). Carlos A. Lozano's testimony ends by concluding that the main obstacle to peace was that the oligarchy did not want to "give up a piece of its political and economic power" and reluctance from the state to discuss the fundamental problems (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 53-54). Another obstacle, according to him was that "Pastrana did not make a decision to risk the social and democratic turn that would have open the door to peace" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 54). However, he states that, on the other hand, "FARC did not accept the generous hand extended by the government of Pastrana", which clearly specifies that FARC did not perceived this opportunity to reach a durable peace (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 55). Marc Chernick adds as well that both parties to

the conflict lost this opportunity for peace and that, mistakenly, each party thought that increasing military action would increase their chances in the peace talks (Chernick 2012, pag. 130-131).

Finally, taking aside Carlos A. Lozano's interpretation and taking in consideration that he was an individual who was present at the peace talks, but not member of the parties to the conflict, the following statement becomes ambiguous because it is difficult to know where and how he got that information: "both parties felt it was the right time of the negotiation. Pastrana, based on the state's weakness; and FARC were convinced that they were at 'the end of the end' and that all advantages were to their favor" (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 33).

Thus, in the sense of a way out section, evidence suggests that neither of the parties to the conflict were willing to search for a joint solution. Objective indicators of a sense of a way out were few, humanitarian exchange of prisoners was probably the only preliminary sign of cooperation, and the political negotiation point added to the peace and security strategy of the state reduced an obstacle for negotiation. A gap that leaves space for ambiguous willingness is whether the state was compromised in the peace negotiations or was recovering is not clear, the lack of commitment from FARC with the absence of Marulanda in the inauguration of the peace talks as well as the frozen dialogues are ambiguous indicators of a sense of way out. In addition, the Plan Colombia generated mistrust to FARC. In this regard, a sense of a way out barely existed and the parties to the conflict did not perceived it, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is not met and obstruct an eventual ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis three is not met.

Economic resources:

Economic resources generate to both parties sustainability and viability to continue in the armed conflict and its absence can makes them consider an alternative way out.

The state

The Colombian Military Expenditure (% of GDP)⁵³ in 1998 was 3.4% of the GDP and increased 0,4 % in 1999, but while in the peace talks reduced 0.8% in 2000 by going back to 3.0% of military expenditure. In 2001, it increased 0.3% and in 2002 0.1%.

According to Victor G. Ricardo, the Investment Fund for Peace was going to manage the budget that was designed by the Government for the “Plan Colombia”, which was incorporated to the peace proposal, of about four thousand millions COP from the national budget and three thousand millions COP that were donated by the international community (mostly by the USA, an allie of the Government who initiated with the Plan Marshall) (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 30). Similarly, this budget helped in the new peace and security strategy to improve the results from the state, according to Camilo Gomez, as follow: (a) militarily, there was more mobility and reaction capacity, more professionalization, and an offensive state (helicopters were doubled, brigades were created, soldiers with high school and without training were reduced, there was an increased from 22.000 professional soldiers to 55.000 implying a 150% increase, and combatant soldiers increased from 82.000 in august 1998 to more than 132.000 in august 2002 implying a 60% increase in military force). (b) Credibility of the military forces and respect over human rights returned legitimacy to the state. (c) International space was recovered by the state. (d) In the social sector 7.5000 million dollars were invested in Plan Colombia that generating subsidies. (e) The financial sector

⁵³ See graphic X in page 57. “Includes all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defense ministries and other government agencies engaged in defense projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country).”

Information from the World Bank,

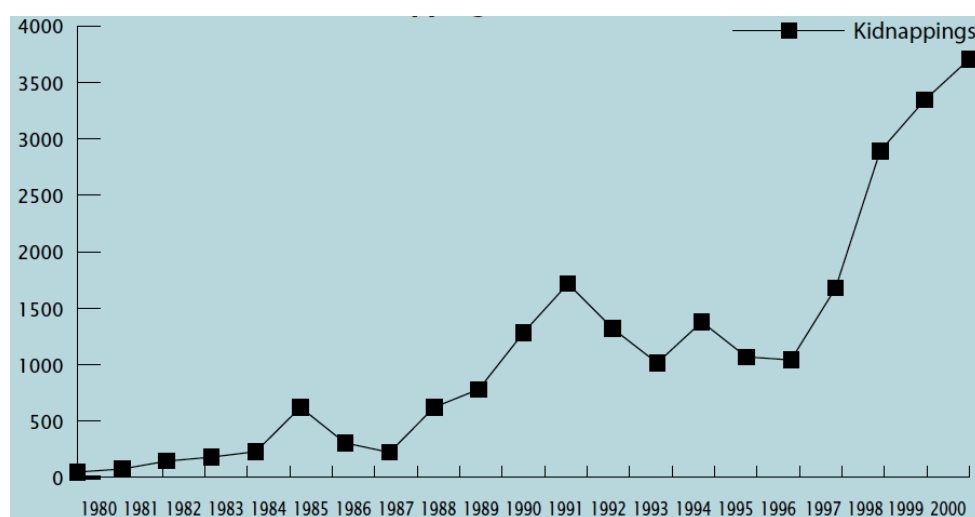
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?page=4>

became stable and started to increase: I) Unemployment index was reduced; II) The inflation was reduced to less than 9%; III) Interest rates were also reduced; IV) The financial system for housing was modified, allowing several citizens to save their housing (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 39).

FARC-EP

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia generated their economic resources essentially through extortion, kidnapping, and cocaine. First, extortion is one of FARC's practices to finance the group. In 2000, FARC issued "Law 002" that entitled the guerrilla group to impose a 10% tax to every person in Colombia with assets of more than one million US dollars (Pinto et al. 2004, pag. 25). According to Pinto et al. (2004), between 1991 and 1998 DAS⁵⁴ estimated approximately 1.8 US billion dollars from extortion and theft (pag 26).

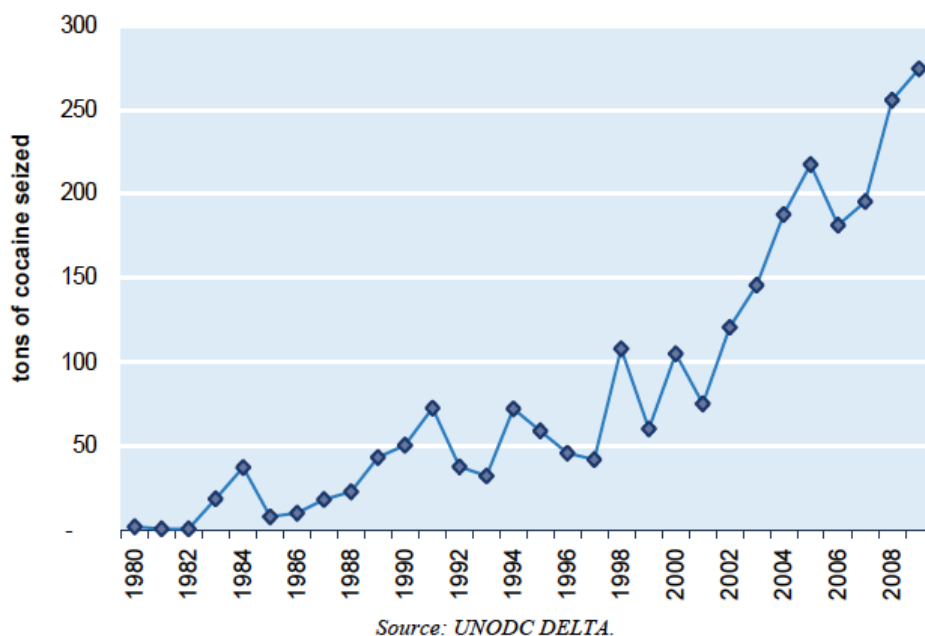
Second, kidnapping for extortive motives and for ransom was another practice by FARC and other guerrilla groups to finance the conflict (Pinto et al. 2004, pag. 26). According to Camilo Gomez, more than 400 soldiers and policemen were kidnapped by FARC, among other kidnapping activities (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 36). The growth of kidnappings in Colombia between 1980 and 2000 can be seen in figure 6.



⁵⁴ DAS (Departamento Administrativo e Seguridad) is the Administrative Department of Security in Colombia.

Figure 6: Growth of kidnappings in Colombia⁵⁵ (1980-2000)

Third, a new way FARC financed its existence was with cocaine, a “hard drug” derived from the coca leaf, a natural resource that is the raw material for cocaine production. However, the use of coca leaf was prohibited in the 1961 *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs*⁵⁶ by the United Nations, except for medical and scientific purposes. Yet coca leaf continues to be illegally cultivated and used as primary commodity in Colombia. Coca growing was a way of life not only to FARC, but also to different people (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 55). Moreover, the IISS (2011) expressed in its strategic dossier: “Apart from military effectiveness, the most important factors contributing to FARC’s success were organizational and economic. [...] Economically, the rapid transformation of Colombia from a processing and trans-shipment point in the illegal cocaine trade into a centre of production allowed FARC to provide rudimentary security in return for taxation both of local coca growers and cocaine traffickers” (pag 27-28). An illustration of Colombian seizure of cocaine between 1980 and 2008, which have increased among time, can be seen in figure 7.



⁵⁵ Source: Pax Christi, 2001, pag. 27.

⁵⁶ (Consulted on 18 May 2014 at http://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1961_en.pdf)

Figure 7: Cocaine seizures in Colombia, 1980-2009⁵⁷

In perspective, kidnapping and drug trafficking became the main fuels for the guerrilla group in the internal armed conflict (Pizarro, 2011, p. 287). After the Cold War only internal armed conflicts that have been able to sustain are those in which enough internal resources existed to sustain the military dynamic, such as the case of FARC (Pizarro, 2011, p. 287).

Thus, in the economic resources section, evidence suggests that the state and FARC were well funded. In this regard, the presence of economic resources from FARC did not help on the existence and perception of a sense of a way out, which in turn means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis is not met and obstruct an eventual ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means that hypothesis two is not met.

Mediation:

Mediation helps to bring an agreement between the parties in a dispute. This can be direct or indirect, usually through third-party interventions. Direct mediation draws attention to facts and press for signs of recognition of hurt as well as to encourage a cost/benefit analysis (to evaluate further escalation), while indirect mediation encourages awareness of stalemate through the parties' external agencies, articles in media, op-eds (columnist), and the support for awareness from NGO's, decision-makers, friends, and opinion leaders. Mediation can also be done through different measures such as the diplomatic (e.g. threats and warnings), economic (e.g. aid, trade agreements, debt forgiveness), and military measures (e.g. extension or withholding of military support).

In this case, the United States of America applied, on one hand, an economic measure as it was the economic aid to the state for "Plan Colombia" and, on the other hand, military support for the state with 48 million dollars destined to the National Police of Colombia (Villamizar 2009:V, pag 30). Economic and military measures from an external actor, which

⁵⁷ This figure was extracted from the Transatlantic Cocaine Market Research Paper (UNODC, 2011, p. 18).

in turn is a third-party intervention, do facilitate a biased perception and this can have a double effect. In this case, the state got benefit from this mediated measures for state capacity purposes, but it also made them perceive to have more power than FARC and it did not help to reach the “equality point” in which both have the same power to decide either to escalate or negotiate (whether the sense of way out exist or not) depending on the amount of hurt that influenced. In other words, economic and military measures to support one side of the conflict can influence to further escalate the conflict to the point of military victory or as in this case to undermine a negotiated solution to the conflict.

Thus, in the mediation section, evidence suggests that the state was biased due to a third-party intervention (USA) and deviated the state’s perception of a sense of a way out, although FARC did not have a direct third-party intervention in the peace process. In this regard, third party intervention existed for one of the parties to the conflict, including the neutral academic intervention at the beginning as explained earlier, and the peace process started but without the initiative of each actor to do so, which did not helped on the existence and perception of a way out for both parties to the conflict.

This means that one of the elements of the General Hypothesis was met, but obstructed an eventual ripe moment that could initiate a negotiated settlement. This also means then that hypothesis four (if mediation presence exists, then a ripe moment exists, and thus negotiated settlements will be initiated) is not met, and yet mediation existed in this case. This gap will be further explained in the conclusions.

A summary of the findings in relation to the hypotheses in the second Case between the Colombian state and FARC will be presented in table 8:

	H1	H3	H2	H4
	Stalemate existence and perception	A sense of a way out	Absence of Economic resources	Mediation
State vs. FARC				X

Table 8: Findings summary (State vs. FARC)**5.2.2. Results**

The peace process between FARC and the State in 1998 do not fulfill the required, although not sufficient, elements that create favorable conditions to initiate a negotiated settlement as proposed by William Zartman with his Ripeness Theory. Nevertheless, this peace process initiated, but not exactly by initiative of either party as it was explained earlier. Thus, the general hypothesis seems not to be met, neither hypothesis one, two, and three. Only hypothesis four seems to be met.

- I) Only one (the state) of the two parties to the conflict was in an impasse that produced pain or hurt (see stalemate existence and perception findings) and the other was not, which is not a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS).
- II) Costs to continue the conflict until military victory were lower, at least to one of the parties to the conflict (FARC), than reaching a negotiated settlement.
- III) FARC had economic resources to finance and sustain the group (see economic resources findings). Therefore, FARC had a window of opportunity and viability for rebellion.
- IV) Neither of the two parties to the conflict perceived willingness to look for a joint solution.
- V) Mediation biased one (the state) of the two parties to the conflict regarding willingness to reach a joint solution.

Conclusions

This thesis aimed to explain why peace processes initiate by testing William Zartman's ripeness theory in Colombia with a scope of only two case studies that started a negotiated settlement with the state, first in 1989 with the 19th of April Movement (M-19) that ended with demobilization, and second in 1999 with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP) that recurred back to fight.

Ripeness theory proposes that a conflict enters a favorable moment to initiate a peace process when all parties recognize the high costs of continuing the conflict through the following two elements (required but not sufficient): I) existence and perception of a mutually hurting stalemate, and this leads to the second element, II) existence and perception of a way out. In addition, the absence of economic resources influence on the above elements and on whether the conflict has viability and sustainability or not. Mediation is also a final element that through third-party intervention is an effective tool of conflict management and helps to persuade the parties to change their "perceptions" of the value of current situations (MHS) and future outcomes (a sense of a way out) (Regan and Aydin 2006, p. 741; Zartman 1995, p. 21).

This thesis found that a ripe moment, as suggested by William Zartman happened in the M-19 and the state's peace process, but not in the peace process between FARC and the state. In the first case, the MHS, a sense of a way out, and absence of economic resources to sustain the conflict seems to be met, but mediation seems to not be met. Thus, my general hypothesis was not met.

MHS:

- Violent acts and protests were high.
- The country's institutions and stability was suffering.
- The state was politically unstable and M-19 lacked political influence.

- M-19 was internally weak due to several changes in leadership and was affected by the Tacueyo (Cauca) incident.
- The state's capacity, efficiency to control public disorders, and governance was questioned, and generated a crisis with the USA.

A sense of a way out:

- M-19 changed its strategy from military action to one aimed at peace.
- M-19's decision-making to enter into a negotiated settlement
- Both parties to the conflict had a valid spokesman.
- The state's plebiscite initiative and M-19's reciprocity with interest.
- Alvaro Gomez kidnap by M-19 as an "escalation to call" for peace initiatives, followed by the M-19's National Summit for Peace in Usaquen.
- The state's change in the peace policy to add political inclusion of M-19 as a point in the peace process agenda.

Absence of economic resources:

- "M-19 were never well-funded" (Duran et al., 2008, p.15). This means that M-19 did not have economic resources for the continuity of rebellion and the conflict itself.
- Colombian military expenditure (% of GDP) was in a range of 1.7% to 2.2%.

The outcome happened on January 1989 with the initiation of the peace process, which ended in a successful manner given M-19's demobilization.

In the second case, it seems that neither of the elements was met except for mediation, FARC had economic resources to sustain the conflict, and there was a third-party intervention that presumably biased one of the main parties. Thus, my general hypothesis was not met.

MHS:

- The presence of three paramilitaries spoiled the inauguration of the peace-talks.
- FARC's High Commander, Manuel Marulanda, absence in the inauguration of the peace-talks and had several consequences:
 - Absence of a valid spokesman from FARC lowered the degree of trust among the parties to the conflict.
 - It harmed the peace process by lowering its credibility.
- The state was weak and was suffering several material costs.
- The guerrilla was militarily stronger than the state. The state lost many battles with the guerrillas because had restricted mobility and lower reaction capacity, it was the hardest *military coup* to the army: Las Delicias and Puerres, 1996; San Juanito and Patascoy, 1997; Miraflores, El Billar, and Mutata, 1998.
- The state's social and financial sectors were affected.
- The remains of Samper's presidential campaign linkage with the narcotraphic left Colombia politically polarized, and the state with loss in credibility and legitimacy.
- The state was internationally isolated.
- The state's launch of "Plan Colombia" generated mistrust to FARC.

A sense of a way out:

- The state included the political negotiation point in its new peace and security strategy.
- Humanitarian exchange of prisoners between both parties to the conflict.

Absence of economic resources:

- The state military expenditure (% of GDP) in 1998 was of 3.4% in addition to the “Plan Colombia” budget.
- FARC gained from the “Law 002” approximately 1.8 US billion dollars on extortion, in 1998 kidnappings for extortive motives raised, and cocaine taxation to both local coca growers and traffickers in return of rudimentary security was high.

Mediation:

- Economic and military measures from the USA biased the state’s sense of a way out perception.
- Neutral intervention by a group of academics supported by the UNDP in 1997 with the idea of a “Jump-start peace talks” originated the idea of initiating a peace process. Thus, neither FARC nor the state seems to be committed to peace talks for their own sake.

On January 1999, nonetheless, the peace process started, but ended on February 2002 with the break up of the peace-talks and FARC recurring back to war, which could demonstrate that the moment may not have been ripe for resolution.

Thus, the testing of the hypotheses based on the testimonies of each party’s representative and academic sources confirms the above-mentioned results and supports the assessment of this research in a theoretical and empirical perspective. This thesis may then conclude that:

- 1) The General hypothesis was not met in both cases.
- 2) A ripe moment as suggested by Zartman happened in case 1 (state vs. M-19) and not in case 2 (state vs. FARC).

- 3) Zartman ripeness theory does not explain the initiation of all peace processes, but based on this study it seems that when a ripe moment happens as suggested by Zartman, it indicates a possibility of a successful result (state vs. M-19).
- 4) The FARC peace process started because of a third-party intervention and not because a ripe moment, as suggested by Zartman, happened.
- 5) Attempts of escalation by all parties in a conflict may be necessary to set the favorable conditions for a ripe moment to happen in conflict resolution.
- 6) Zartman e a third element - absence of economic resources – in his theory and to enhance it.
- 7) The role of mediation could be further clarify by Zartman in his theory.

Moreover, the role of public administration is of great importance because is the “key arena within which the political settlement is negotiated” (UNDP 2013)⁵⁸. Public administration enhances governance and the state’s capacity to anticipate and respond to conflicts by formulating policies (e.g. peace policy) and strategies (e.g. security strategy) to face conflicts, in this case the Colombian internal armed conflict. In the bargaining process between all parties to a conflict when they start a negotiated settlement, public administration issues is also one of the subjects discussed as well as governance, public policies, and more.

However, this research has limitations. Ripeness theory is only useful to start a negotiated settlement, and does not guarantee a successful or failed result of the peace process due to constant changing circumstances. Having information about the guerrilla groups could be difficult to access given that is managed in a confidential manner and are recognized by the population and the state as illegal armed groups, which make it difficult to reach any type of information. Regarding the main elements of the theory, the mutually hurting stalemate

⁵⁸ (Consulted on 1 June 2014 at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/crisisgovernanceexecutive/summary2013final.PDF>)

happens when hurt or pain exists and is perceived, but pain level is also difficult to measure because each actor perceives it differently. In addition, MHS perception can take a long time until all possibilities for escalation have been exhausted. Since the ripe moment takes time, inaction may be a possible position to some actors to wait until it happens. The sense of a way out could also be at some point difficult to validate given that it can be ambiguous some times. Also, subjective perceptions about a sense of a way out vary among researchers. Regarding economic resources is difficult to measure the limit the amount that determines absence or presence of it, and mediation implies that a double face possibility may affect the conflict in either a positive or negative way.

Nonetheless, this thesis contributes to the research of ripeness theory in the Colombian experience besides Nazih Richani. A difference in scope between Richani's work and this thesis is that this research tested ripeness in order to explain why the two peace processes – one between the state and M-19 in 1989 and the other between the state FARC in 1999 – initiated a negotiated settlement and yet the one ended successfully and the other did not, while Richani wanted to examine why the 1998-2002 Colombian peace process failed. Another difference is that this research conducted small-n comparative case studies, while Richani conducted only one case study, emphasizing on the role of third-parties intervention in particular the biased intervention of the USA (Richani, 2005). Finally, Richani's findings are addressed in this thesis, but this thesis got also other findings and results as presented above.

Ripeness theory is also reiterated in the Colombian context by Eduardo Pizarro⁵⁹ (2011), who stated “as we argued in a previous work, Colombia is experiencing what experts in conflict resolution call a ‘mutually hurting stalemate’ [...] This is what happened in both El Salvador and Guatemala in very dissimilar circumstances. [...] The same is happening in

⁵⁹ Eduardo Pizarro is one of the most well known experts of peace and conflict resolution in the Colombian conflict.

Colombia. War is no longer sustainable for the guerrilla; but neither is for the state. Sooner or later, the final outcome should be a negotiating table and the transit of the guerrilla from arms to politics” (pag. 304-305). The difference between Pizarro’s thorough analyzes of FARC who also addressed previous peace processes with this and other guerrilla groups, and this research is that this thesis explicitly tested ripeness theory not only with the two main elements of the theory, but also with 2 complementary elements. Even though the scopes were different, the prediction of this thesis coincides with one of many predictions Pizarro addressed in his book with the remaining guerrilla groups in Colombia.

Suggestions for future research

Ripeness theory has demonstrated to be a useful theoretical tool in conflict resolution and peace fields (e.g. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, Eritrea, South Africa, Philippines, Cyprus, Iran-Iraq, Israel, Mozambique, among others) (Zartman 2001, p. 10). However, this thesis would suggest further research testing ripeness theory in large-n comparative case studies in the Colombian context and to explore to what extend the failed peace processes with the FARC have affected the numerous peace processes that the intend to initiate failed, and those that did initiated. The value of doing this large-n analysis of ripeness theory in Colombia is that it will provide a bigger horizontal perspective of what is on the table and try to use it to the countries favor, first, to not repeat past mistakes and second, to use a valid theory that provides a different perspective than those traditionally used, something that have not been done before. It could also be expanded to other countries, starting with Latin America, and later could be expanded worldwide using previous research by other authors on each country. Another interesting research would be to test Ripeness theory in comparative case studies with the peace processes of a same group such as with FARC in Colombia. Even with the ongoing peace process between the Colombian state and FARC, once enough literature is available to analyze it, could be interesting to test ripeness theory.

Similarly, this thesis found that the role of mediation in the initiation of a peace process is not very clear. In the M-19 peace process the role of mediation was irrelevant and yet it started a peace process and ended successfully with demobilization under absence of mediation. In contrast, the role of mediation was relevant in the FARC peace process since the beginning because the initiation of the peace talks happened due to the intervention of a neutral mediation that affected, in the first place, the sense of a way out of both parties to the conflict. While in the process biased mediation affected the balance of power and the peace process ended. The role of mediation in both cases is illustrated in table 9.

	Relevant Mediation	Irrelevant Mediation	Initiation of Peace process
State vs. M-19		X	X
State vs. FARC	X		X

Table 9: The role of mediation in the two cases.

Thus, the role of mediation and its importance or not to reach a ripe moment to initiate a peace process is not included in Zartman’s theory, but this research showed that it did have an impact in the case of FARC and could be further addressed in theoretical enhancements to Zartman’s theory as well as future research to understand under what conditions the role of mediation is relevant or not in the initiation of a peace process.

In addition, the Colombian internal armed conflict has generated high social, economic, educational, and developmental impacts affecting society. Besides victims affected by the conflict, including but not exclusively human rights violations and sexual violence, other implications also exists. Among them, low education levels in rural areas is a source of grievance and facilitates the risk of recruitment for conflict, and slow economic development of the country do not help to fosters conflict prevention and peace promotion. Similarly, the MHS implicates a high number of casualties in society, economic issues, and even violations to international humanitarian law and international criminal law with crimes against humanity.

Although some of those implications are difficult to address, others can be improved in different ways. This thesis proposes, for instance, that the Colombian military expenditure (%GDP) could spend a certain percent of it in social investment to confront the root causes of the conflict. Among the countries with the highest military expenditure (%GDP) in 2012, Colombia with 3.3% is number 18 in the list and the only South American country in the top 20. Spending in social investment could improve different sectors such as with education, health, housing, and agricultural reforms in rural areas, where the state have been absent to provide this. In this sense, the state could be able to gain legitimacy, a higher participatory role, and minimize the presence of the remaining illegal armed groups.

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