THE PEACE POTENTIAL OF NON-STATE MEDIATORS: FROM THE LACK OF MATERIAL LEVERAGE TO MEDIATION SUCCESS

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1 INTRODUCTION

"Aspirin and mediation have a lot in common: they are well-known and easily recognised; both have been used for centuries; numerous articles have been published about the two. Both work, but we do not know why" (Wall and Dunne, 2012: 218). The historical record indeed shows that when peace mediation works, it truly *works*. For example, the then-US president, Jimmy Carter, famously mediated the Camp David Accords in 1978 that stabilised the turbulent relationship between Egypt and Israel. In a similar manner, in 2005 the former Finnish president, Martti Ahtisaari, mediated a peaceful settlement to nearly 30 years of conflict in the Aceh province in Indonesia. These cases demonstrate that mediated settlements can result in durable peace. However, historically such success is rarely achieved. In fact, majority of mediation attempts quietly fail (Greig and Diehl, 2012: 116). If most cases "fail" but some achieve phenomenal long-term success, what exactly determines peace mediation success?

The existing literature on peace mediation has primarily focused on explaining mediation success through power politics. For rational choice theorists, powerful mediators possess the necessary resources to coerce the conflict parties into settlement and are, thus, more likely to be successful mediators (Faverto, 2009; Vukovic, 2014). However, this logic is problematic for two reasons. First, for these accounts, mediation success is equated with conflict termination, contra conflict resolution. This is problematic because mere conflict termination does not automatically result in durable peace and leaves the conflict susceptible for a relapse. Second, this rational choice approach fails to explain why non-state actors, such as Martti Ahtisaari, who possess little material leverage in their own capacity can, can succeed in peace mediations. With the ever-greater role of non-state actors in peace mediation in the post-Cold War era (see Shea, 2016), the focus on "hard" power as the sole determinant of mediation success is dated. Considering the increasing number of mediators in the field and their record of successful mediation, a revised theoretical approach to peace mediation is needed. This thesis, hence, asks: *how can non-state peace mediators contribute to the likelihood of successful mediation?*

Answering this research question requires consideration of four specific sub-questions. First, what is peace mediation? Second, how and based on what criteria can mediation success be assessed? Third, what is the role of the mediator in peace negotiations? Finally, which factors determine whether the mediator can influence the negotiation process? These questions present a guide for formulating theoretical expectations for this thesis, which will then be tested in a comparative study consisting of two successful peace mediation cases – Kofi Annan in Kenya and Martti Ahtisaari in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict – and two unsuccessful ones – the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) in the

Aceh-Indonesia conflict and Jimmy Carter in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. Building on the constructivist theories of International Relations, this thesis posits that highly credible mediators who use their leverage to intervene in the negotiations are more likely to be successful mediators than mediators who have limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties and/or do not use their leverage to intervene in the process. Credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties permits the mediator to intervene in an effort to produce a positive change in the negotiation process. This logic is expected to hold in cases where the mediator is motivated to resolve the conflict, the conflict is ripe for resolution, and there are no spoilers undermining the peace process.

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: (1) to theorise how non-state mediators can succeed in peace mediation and (2) to identify the conditions under which durable settlements can be achieved. Through discussion on these issues, this research hopes to lead the academic debate and mediation practice into two directions. Firstly, by furthering a constructivist approach to conflict resolution, this thesis encourages further theoretical exploration on the role of peace mediation in the conflict resolution process. Providing an alternative to the dominant rational choice approach, constructivism provides a refreshing take on how non-state mediators, whose success the rational choice theories undermine, may mediate durable settlements. Secondly, by focusing on non-state mediators who possess little "hard" power, this thesis encourages normative discussion on the role of the mediator in the conflict resolution process. Endorsing the view that mediators play a normative role in encouraging cooperation between conflict parties, this research highlights the peace potential of non-state mediators and encourages mediation as a normative practice, contra as a means to promote strategic interests. Normative considerations may lead to fairer and more sustainable mediation practice than behaviour guided by mere self-interest. Therefore, this thesis endorses the normative dimension of peace mediation both in theory and in practice.

Before delving into the theoretical framework, this thesis explores the state of the art. In the following section, the main debates of the relevant peace mediation literature are overviewed. This will be followed by theoretical discussion which formulates and explores the hypothesis forwarded in this thesis. After this, the research design for this study is presented, which will be followed by the empirical test of the hypothesis. Finally, some concluding remarks are made.

2 THE GREAT DEBATES ON PEACE MEDIATION

The existing literature on peace mediation agrees on few things: that peace mediation is a voluntary practice, meaning that both conflict parties must accept the process of mediation (Svensson, 2009: 447), and that it involves a third-party actor who intervenes in the conflict resolution process,

implying that mediation is "the continuation of negotiations by other means" (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009: 34). There are two major debates in the literature that are particularly relevant to this study: the definition of peace mediation, and the role of the mediator. Currently, the literature fails to (1) sufficiently explain long-term mediation successes, and (2) theoretically account for non-state mediators' successful interventions.

2.1 The nature and goal of peace mediation

To evaluate peace mediation outcomes, one needs to look into what peace mediation and its inherent goals are. Each definition put forth in the literature sets implicit expectations for how to evaluate mediation success – a debate that has found itself at the heart of the mediation literature (see Bercovitch et al., 1991; Kleiboer, 1996; Savun, 2008; Wallenstein and Svensson, 2014: 321-323). In the existing literature, there are two dominant ways to conceptualise peace mediation. While some scholars choose to define peace mediation through third-party intervention, others opt for describing the process through its supposed outcome. However, both types of definitions offer limited approaches for evaluating mediation success.

Firstly, those who define peace mediation through the process of third-party intervention downplay the normative dimension of peace mediation. The scholars falling into this camp are generally satisfied with defining mediation as "third-party assistance to two or more interacting parties" (Wall and Lynn, 1993: 161) or as a "form of third-party assistance [that] involves an outsider to the dispute who lacks the power to make decisions for the parties" (Singer, 1990: 20). As the emphasis is on the facilitative role of the mediator, mediation can be considered having succeeded in meeting its goals whenever mediated negotiations simply take place. While in the most intractable conflicts this can indeed be considered a success in itself (Greig and Diehl, 2012: 107), the desired mediation outcomes often stretch beyond this. The mere fact that mediators engage in peace mediation is conditioned by an aspiration to terminate the conflict, and "as normative actors, they influence and are influenced by the normative framework constructed in this [negotiation] context" (Kastner, 2015: 87). Thus, the approach that defines peace mediation through the process of third-party intervention significantly downplays the peace potential of peace mediators.

Secondly, those who define peace mediation through an imagined outcome that all mediation activity should aspire to fail to account for long-term mediation successes. These definitions tend to focus on specific outcomes, such as reduction of fighting or voluntary agreements. For example, Savun (2008) defines mediation as "the involvement of an outside state in an international conflict upon approval of both of the disputing parties, with the aim of reducing the hostilities between the

disputing parties, by facilitating the formulation and/or implementation of a negotiated settlement" (27). With a slightly different focus, Kochan and Jick (1978), writing about mediation in the public sector, also take an outcome-oriented approach to mediation by defining it "as a process in which a neutral party attempts to get the direct participants […] to reach a voluntary agreement" (211). Based on these definitions, mediation outcomes should be evaluated against a specific goal, such as the reduction of fighting or a voluntary agreement. However, this approach seems to only account for conflict termination rather than sustained settlement. As captured well by Saunders (2003), "peace treaties do not make peace; people make peace" (94) – that is, a signed agreement does not necessarily guarantee peace. This requires both willingness to sustain the agreement and behavioural change to implement it.

While the former third party-oriented approach inadequately acknowledges the normative dimension of peace mediation and the latter outcome-oriented approach only acknowledges short-term successes, this thesis advocates a transformation-oriented approach to peace mediation. With its focus on change in perceptions and behaviour, this approach emphasises the potential of sustained dialogue in transforming the relationship between the conflict parties in the long term, accounting for durable peace. This dimension of peace mediation is captured by Bercovitch and Jackson (2009), who define mediation as "a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider […] *to change their perceptions or behaviour, and to do so without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law*" (34; emphasis added). This definition captures the normative dimension of peace mediation through its focus on change, while avoiding prescribing a specific short-term mediation goal. Simultaneously, it allows for long-term evaluation of mediation success with its focus on relationship transformation. Therefore, this definition fills the void left by the third party-oriented and outcome-oriented approaches.

Following the discussion in this section, mediation success must, therefore, be evaluated against the long-term transformation of the conflict relationship. Hence, a mediated peace agreement or a ceasefire that did not hold cannot be regarded a success despite the presence of a negotiated settlement. While based on this definition mediation success does not necessarily imply full conflict resolution, conflict resolution certainly indicates successful mediation due to the apparent change in the conflict relationship. Thus, mediation success must be evaluated against the long-term changes in the conflict relationship regardless of whether the conflict fully ceased to exist.

2.2 The role and type of the peace mediator

The second topic of debate among the scholarship is the role of the mediator in the negotiation process. Scholars specifically disagree on the extent to which mediators can truly influence the likelihood of mediation success. While it is generally agreed that mediators do not control the outcome but only the process – the distinguishing factor between arbitration and mediation (Wall and Dunne, 2012) – the scholars disagree on the indirect role that mediators have on the mediation outcome. However, despite this ongoing debate, the current literature lacks convincing theoretical explanations for how non-state mediators can influence the mediation outcome.

The scholars who emphasise the role of motivational and structural factors over the role of the mediator tend to downplay the potential persuasiveness of mediators. These scholars highlight the motivational factors to stress the voluntary nature of negotiations – that is, that all outcomes are conditioned by the conflict parties' willingness to cooperate (Kochan and Jick, 1978; Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009; Melin and Svensson, 2009) – and structural factors that emphasise the ripeness of the conflict (Zartman, 2001). They see these as necessary conditions for successful mediation (see Zartman, 2001). While the voluntarism and the ripeness of the conflict are indeed necessary for success, as will be argued later, these only present the necessary conditions for successful mediation. That is, they cannot explain why under these circumstances conflict relationships can be transformed. Furthermore, these accounts tend to undermine the potential persuasiveness of mediators. As soon as a mediator is voluntarily invited to facilitate negotiations, they enter the process as intervening actors. Though the conflict must be perceived ripe enough for the conflict parties to resort to mediation, tactful mediators may be able to persuade the conflict parties into believing in a mutually hurting stalemate (Zartman, 2001; Greig and Diehl, 2012; Caspersen, 2017) – a situation in which the conflict is equally damaging for both parties without a foreseeable prospect of victory (Zartman, 2001). Therefore, while multitude of factors influence the mediation success, mediators can shape the negotiation process and alter the likelihood of success.

Those scholars, who, in contrast, believe that mediators can shape the outcome of the negotiation process, fail to provide convincing theoretically oriented explanations for why non-state mediators succeed in peace mediations. On the one hand, the debate on different strategies and mediator qualities in the literature on different fields of mediation has yielded little for theory-building. Based on empirical observations, for example, Wall (1981) has offered 101 different strategies that mediators can use to guide the negotiations toward resolution under different circumstances. Furthermore, Carnevale (1986) has identified four broad categories of mediation strategies, namely integration, pressure, compensation and inaction, based on the assessment of the

likelihood for an organically found acceptable solution. While instructive for refining mediation approaches, the abundance of different strategies "raises the question as to whether it matters what the mediators do as long as they are active, keep disputants at the table, retain a rapport with them, and attempt to smooth the relationship between them" (Wall and Dunne, 2012: 238). Therefore, these approaches provide little theoretical insight for why mediation can succeed.

On the other hand, those scholars who have engaged in theory-building have not provided convincing theories that explain non-state mediators' successful interventions. For the canon of the literature, this success is an anomaly. Applying rational choice theories and building on large-*n* quantitative studies, the literature has tended to conclude that third-party mediators who show bias to one conflict party and have greater material leverage tend to be more successful as peace mediators (Kydd, 2003; Svensson, 2009). This is due to the greater bargaining leverage and coercive power of the mediator, allowing them to influence the conflict parties through threats, coercion, compensation and oversight (Bercovitch and Schneider, 2000; Savun, 2008; Svensson, 2009; Beardsley, 2009; Böhmelt, 2010). Thus, for these authors, the success of non-state mediators with little material leverage in their own capacity is an abnormality that they cannot explain based on their theoretical assumptions. At best, they acknowledge that non-state mediators have to "rely on their reputation as successful mediators whose primary interest is in ending the conflict itself" (Vukovic, 2014: 72-74), acknowledging their occasional success. Nonetheless, this explanation does not sufficiently integrate the success of non-state mediators into their theoretical framework. Furthermore, basing their arguments primarily on the correlation between material leverage and mediation success and a set of prior assumptions, the literature lacks a vigorous theoretical research that explores causality (see Wall and Lynn, 1993: 183; Kleiboer, 1996: 376-377). As a result, in the words of Kleiboer (1996), "mediation research has produced a wealth of correlations and facts, but it has not produced convincing explanations" (377) – the precise gap in the literature that this thesis seeks to fill.

In sum, the scholarly debate on peace mediation has revolved around two major questions. First, what is peace mediation and how can one assess its success? Second, what is the role of the peace mediator in the process of conflict resolution? In this section, this thesis has argued that the success of peace mediation must be evaluated against relationship transformation. Furthermore, the existing literature on peace mediation has not adequately theorised how non-state mediators can influence mediation outcomes. Building on the transformation-oriented understanding of peace mediation, the following chapters attempt to fill the aforementioned gap in the literature.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As demonstrated earlier, mediation is "a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider […] to change their perceptions or behaviour, and to do so without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law" (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009: 34). Derived from this, a mediator is a third-party actor who facilitates negotiations and helps the conflict parties to overcome their disputes. Peace mediation can increase the sense of security among the conflict parties, as uncertainty the parties have about each other's intentions is reduced, mutual trust is built through open communication, and institutional arrangements are reached with the help of a mediator (Kaufman and Duncan, 1992: 649-695). But how exactly can these benefits be reaped? How can mediators encourage the process of relationship transformation? This section addresses these questions and advocates a constructivist approach to conflict resolution. It argues that when the mediator is perceived highly credible, the mediator can stir the negotiation process towards resolution through the use of leverage.

3.1 Peace mediation in the process of conflict resolution

To understand how mediator credibility and use of leverage can make a difference in the mediation outcome, it is first crucial to understand the process of conflict resolution and the mediator's role in the process. This section advocates a constructivist perspective on conflicts and conflict resolution. In contrast to the rational choice theories promoted by the existing literature, the constructivist perspective can explain long-term changes in conflict relationship and sustained peace.

Rational choice theories are inherently incapable of explaining the long-term changes in conflict relationships achieved through negotiations. According to the rational choice theorists, war is waged between two or more utility maximising, self-interested parties who act under incomplete information of the opponent's capabilities and intentions (Maoz and Terris, 2006). According to this logic, conflicts end when either one of the conflict parties is defeated or a settlement that all parties can agree on is reached (Kleiboer, 1996: 379-380). In this equation, conflict resolution refers to conflict termination, as the focus is on striking a balance between two clashing interests. This view is flawed because, as put forth by Ramsbotham and his colleagues (2011), "ending a violent conflict does not necessarily resolve the issues that were root causes" (171). Especially the conflicts that extend beyond a clash of material interests are susceptible for relapse of armed fighting. While external incentives from the mediator may help sustain the settlement and create pressure for

compliance (see Kastner, 2015: 86), this does not sit well with settlements mediated by non-state mediators with little to no power to enforce an agreement. Furthermore, when the incentives are lifted, the conflict may resume if the root causes have not been adequately addressed. Thus, conflict resolution extends beyond behavioural change to transformation of the conflict parties' perception of the root causes and of each other. Consequently, the rational choice theories provide an inadequate explanation for long-term mediation success.

With its focus on social interaction and its effect on identities and interests, constructivism offers a more suitable framework, as it can explain long-term relationship transformations. Despite Alexander Wendt's (1992) original focus on state actors, his logic of identity and interest formation can also be applied to different types of actors that engage in repeated interaction with one another. In its basic form, constructivism puts emphasis "on the importance of normative as well as material structures, on the role of identity in shaping political action and on the mutually constitutive relationship between agents and structures" (Reus-Smit, 2013: 217). That is, "people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them" (Wendt, 1992: 396). These meanings shape the actors' identities and are formed through repeated interaction with others (Wendt, 1992). Interaction between two parties begins with an act, which the other then responds to, based on the meaning they assign to it. Through multiple interaction cycles similar to this, actors form "relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt, 1992: 397). These expectations then shape the understanding of what is rational behaviour in a given context (Reus-Smit, 2013: 231). According to the constructivist logic, conflicts emerge when two parties greatly distrust one another and one of the parties underestimate the other's capabilities (Kleiboer, 1996: 389). In contrast, conflicts end when the interpretation of the 'other' and their actions assume a more amenable course. Therefore, a change in beliefs and behaviour is essential for conflict resolution. This constructivist logic offers a fruitful ground for studying how non-state mediators can succeed in peace mediation for two specific reasons.

Firstly, with its focus on interaction between actors, constructivism can account for the transformation of conflict relationship through dialogue. Since, according to the constructivist logic, identity change is essential for conflict resolution, this can only occur through a change in the interaction pattern. Negotiations offer a fruitful ground for this process of change to take place. Having the conflict parties communicate with one another allows for argumentation, deliberation and persuasion to lead the relationship transformation. As observed by Risse (2000), argumentation "appears to be crucially linked to the constitutive rather than the regulative role of norms and identities by providing actors with a mode of interaction that enables them to mutually change and explore the validity claims of those norms and identities" (2) – that is, argumentation allows for

identities of the conflict parties to change through deliberation and persuasion. The effect of argumentation in the process of negotiations has been captured by Harold Saunders (2003), who, through his personal experiences, has demonstrated how negotiations tend to incrementally lead to relationship transformation (87). This demonstrates the transformative effect that negotiations can have on the identities that maintain conflicts, ultimately resulting in a change in perceptions and behaviour.

Secondly, constructivism can precisely explain what the rational choice theories cannot: why non-state mediators can succeed in peace mediation. While the rational choice theories focus on material leverage that mediators use to pressure the conflict parties into concessions (Bercovitch and Schneider, 2000; Kydd, 2003; Svensson, 2009), material coercion and pressure have less value in the constructivist approach where conflicts are resolved through communication. However, while the actual transformation of the relationship between the conflict parties cannot be enforced from outside, mediators may prove beneficial or even crucial to the conflict resolution process. Ahtisaari and Rintakoski (2013) have pointed out that mediators are often invited to negotiations when the conflict parties are willing to resolve the underlying issues but are "unable to overcome a deadlock or reach […] a solution" (338). Instead of coercing the parties to agreement, effective mediators aim at creating a setting suitable for relationship transformation – though material incentives may prove beneficial for breaking particularly sticky deadlocks. Thus, following the constructivist logic of conflict resolution, peace mediation should aim at encouraging the conflict parties to compromise at critical moments. With less value given to coercion, non-state mediators can succeed in peace mediation through skilful intervention.

Therefore, constructivism offers an approach that can effectively account for a transformation of the conflict relationship with particular emphasis on identity change. Mediators, including the non-state ones, can assist this process by helping the conflict parties overcome deadlocks. However, mediation is ultimately a voluntary process in which both parties must accept the mediator and their interventions before the mediator can influence the negotiation process. Due to this voluntary nature, this thesis argues that not all mediators can exert the same influence on the negotiation process. In the following section, the ways in which non-state mediator can influence the process are explored.

3.2 Mediator's impact on the mediation outcome

As argued above, negotiations are essential for the transformation of conflict relationships. When a mediator enters negotiations, they become yet another actor that can influence the process. Following the constructivist logic of interaction, the conflict parties' interpretation of the mediator's

behaviour is dependent on their perception of the mediator's qualities. There are two particular mediator qualities that define their ability to influence on the negotiation process: credibility and use of leverage. Here, credibility permits the mediator to use their leverage to intervene in the negotiation process, thus enabling them to positively contribute to the mediation outcome. However, this hypothesised mechanism can only function optimally in the absence of spoilers, and when the mediator and the conflict parties are motivated to resolve the conflict. While some rational choice theorists have also assigned credibility and leverage as some of the determining factors for successful mediation (Kydd, 2003; Svensson, 2009; Crescenzi et al., 2011), the constructivist reasoning for this differs significantly.

Due to the voluntary nature of mediation, the mediator must possess some qualities that enable them to exert influence on the conflict parties – that is, the mediator interventions must be accepted as legitimate. The more credible the mediator's interventions are, the more likely they are to be influential. Here credibility refers to "the extent to which disputants believe the mediator's statements, threats, or promises and her ability to deliver the promised agreement" (Maoz and Terris, 2006: 409). Thus, it has two aspects: credibility as normative authority and credibility as material leverage. While for the rational choice theorists credibility arises solely from the mediator's material capacity (see Svensson, 2009), a mediator can also appear authoritative due to their status, experience and expertise[1]. Legitimising the mediator's interventions, these qualities create a normative belief that the mediator should be obeyed (see Hurd, 2009, on legitimacy). Thus, high credibility not only refers to the conflict parties' belief that the mediator can deliver their words but also fosters the belief that the mediator should be listened to, granting them normative authority over the conflict parties. While non-state mediators have little to no material leverage themselves to appear as capable of delivering material incentives used to encourage the conflict parties to compromise, they must "borrow" this leverage from state actors. Thus, strong international backing is pivotal for creating an impression that the mediator can credibly deliver their promises. Both normative authority and material leverage, thus, foster the belief that the mediator can credibly intervene in the negotiation process.

Nevertheless, the mediator credibility does not in itself imply that the mediator has significant influence on the negotiation process. The mediator must use their leverage arising from their

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[1] Credibility from status arises from the values the mediator represents (see Lanz et al., 2009), their prestige (see Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009: 35) and appropriate mandate (see Ahtisaari and Rintakoski, 2013). Past experience in conflict resolution and managing conflicts may also increase the mediator's normative authority, as it increases the conflict parties' trust in the mediator's skills (see Melin and Svensson, 2009). Finally, topical, regional and process expertise can enhance the perception that the mediator is knowledgeable to mediate in a specific cultural context (see Lanz et al., 2009; Reid, 2017).

credibility to increase the odds of reaching a mutually acceptable settlement. Here, leverage means "the ability to influence the [conflict] parties" (Wallensteen and Svensson, 2014: 320). While the credibility of the mediator conditions their ability to exert influence, the use of leverage is essential for influencing the negotiation process and, thus, for increasing the likelihood of reaching a mutually acceptable political solution. While the rational choice theorists focus on material incentives as the primary means of intervention (Svensson, 2009), there are other potential ways leverage can be used, such as offering strategic information, pressing for agreement and suggesting compromise. This is in contrast to purely facilitative approaches where the mediator remains impartial to the political outcome, and the conflict parties determine the pace and scope of the negotiations (Kartner, 2015). Mediator interventions can be used to raise the stakes of the negotiations and to guide the negotiators towards resolving the root causes of the conflict – something that may not occur organically in an environment of deep mistrust. Thus, while the mediator has no direct control over the mediation outcome (Wall and Dunne, 2012), they can guide the negotiation process towards peaceful settlement through the use of leverage and, thus, contribute to the likelihood of success.

Following this discussion on the permissive and productive conditions in which non-state mediators can influence the mediation outcome, it can be hypothesised that non-state mediators can increase the conflict parties' relationship transformation when (1) they are considered highly credible to intervene in many issue contexts and (2) they use their leverage to influence the negotiation process. In contrast, mediators are expected to have little to no influence on the mediation outcome when they either are not perceived credible for intervening and/or do not use their potential leverage to intervene the negotiation process. However, mediation outcomes are a sum of multiple factors. There are at least three factors that can influence the functioning of the hypothesised mechanism: the conflict parties' willingness to resolve the conflict, the mediator's motivation to mediate, and the presence of spoilers.

Mediator's influence on the negotiation process is directly conditioned by the conflict parties' motivations. It is essential that both conflict parties are willing to manage the conflict. Since, according to the constructivist logic, identities and interaction patterns, such as that of armed fighting, are relatively self-sustaining (see Wendt, 1992), an exogenous factor is needed to break this established interaction pattern. These situations present "ripe moments" that can be perceived as a way out from the conflict – that is, they may create a sense that a negotiated solution is indeed possible (Zartman, 2001). However, as Zartman (2015) has recognised, "ripeness is not self-implementing; it is a necessary but insufficient condition for the opening of negotiations" (480). The challenge is, thus, to "capitalise on the momentum of agreement" (Ramsbotham et al., 2011: 186). While mediators can help identify and sustain this momentum through skilful framing (Zartman, 2001), the conflict parties

must be willing to engage in negotiations with the third party in the first place. Thus, all mediator efforts to help conflict parties manage and settle the conflict are conditioned by the conflict parties' willingness to resolve their disputes.

The conflict parties' motivations are, nevertheless, not the only factor that influence the mediation process. The mediator's ability to successfully mediate a negotiated settlement is conditioned by the mediator's motivations for their use of leverage. Since, conflict resolution requires a transformation in the conflict relationship, self-interested use of leverage to strategically further one conflict side's interests is unlikely to support this process. In fact, since biased mediators that seek to further their self-interest tend to pressure the conflict parties to their preferred solutions (see Svensson, 2009), relatively less attention is given to the importance of argumentation in resolving the underlying issues of the conflict. In contrast, a mediator that is first and foremost driven by the will to resolve the conflict, even if showing some bias in the process, is more likely to mediate durable settlements. This is true for most non-state mediators whose interest lies in establishing their reputation as successful mediators (Vukovic, 2014: 73-74). In this case, mediation strategies are chosen based on their likelihood for bringing the negotiations forward, not based on calculations of the net-advantage that they can bring to their favoured side. Hence, the mediator's influence on the likelihood of successful mediation is also conditioned by their motivations for the use of leverage. The interventions that are motivated by strategic interests are less likely to result in durable settlements than the ones motivated by genuine will to resolve the conflict.

The presence of spoilers can also undermine the mediation process. In these instances, actors "who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, world view, and interests […] use violence to try and undermine the [peace] process" (Ahtisaari and Rintakoski, 2013, 346). Mediators can try to minimise the post-agreement presence of spoilers through the use of multi-track diplomacy to include potential external spoilers (Ahtisaari and Rintakoski, 2013) or 'departing train strategy' to persuade the internal spoilers to supporting the peace process during the negotiations (Caspersen, 2017: 150). However, sometimes spoilers cannot be negotiated with due to their resistance or extreme positions on the issue, which may result in the presence of spoilers in the implementation phase of an agreement. During this phase, spoilers aim at the collapse of the newly found agreement. As put forth by Greig and Diehl (2012), "because parties in conflict fear exploitation, spoiler can be seen as a signal of cheating on agreement by the other side, causing the collapse of an agreement that is otherwise supported by moderates on both sides" (134-5). Thus, even if the mediator has had a positive impact on the negotiation process, the peace process may collapse due to the presence of spoilers.

Mediators can, therefore, influence the likelihood of durable peace under certain conditions. Building on the constructivist theory of conflict resolution, mediators themselves must possess qualities that function as permissive and productive conditions for their influence: their credibility as mediators and use of leverage respectively. Thus, non-state mediators can positively influence the mediation process when (1) they are considered highly credible to intervene in many issue contexts, and (2) they use their leverage to influence the negotiation process. However, this mechanism can only function in the absence of spoilers when the mediator and the conflict parties are motivated to resolve the underlying issues.

4 METHODOLOGY

This thesis asks the question of how non-state mediators can contribute to the likelihood of mediation success. In the previous chapter, the mechanism through which non-state mediators can influence the negotiation process and indirectly shape the negotiation outcome were identified. To answer the research question and to test the hypothesised mechanism in practice, this thesis utilises the pattern matching method in combination with causal-process tracing. To do this, four cases are examined: two successful one – Kofi Annan in the post-election crisis in Kenya and Martti Ahtisaari in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict – and two unsuccessful ones – the HDC in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict and Jimmy Carter in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. This section explores the method chosen for this study, justifies the case selection, and explains the method of data collection and analysis.

This thesis utilises the small-*n* comparative case study design. This method allows for detailed examination of the causal effects and mechanisms within each case, while enabling observing (shared) patterns in multiple cases (Rohling, 2012). Thus, it enables close examination of the impact that mediator credibility and use of leverage may have on the likelihood of mediation success. To reap the benefits of the comparative case study design, cross-case pattern matching is utilised in combination with causal-process tracing. Cross-case pattern matching specifically allows for testing the hypothesis through linking theoretical patterns with observed patterns in small-*n* case studies (Trochim, 1989). In contrast, causal-process tracing is used to enhance the internal validity of the study through determining how (and if) mediator credibility and use of leverage exactly matter (see Blatter and Haverland, 2012). This combination of cross-case and within-case analysis is particularly beneficial in two ways. First, cross-case analysis enhances the possible generalisability of the findings to other similar cases (Blatter and Haverland, 2012). Second, within-case analysis enables evaluating the extent to which mediator credibility and use of leverage are necessary or sufficient factors for explaining the mediation outcomes (see Goertz and Mahoney, 2012). Thus, through cross-case

pattern matching and within-case process tracing it is possible to, first, determine whether the observations in the mediator credibility and the use of leverage across cases follow the hypothesised pattern and, second, to determine the extent to which these factors can truly explain the observed pattern in each case.

To ensure comparability, the cases were selected from the population of non-state mediators who have mediated negotiations between two or more conflict parties. Pattern matching and process-tracing analysis will be carried out in four cases: two successful ones – Kofi Annan in Kenya and Martti Ahtisaari in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict – and two unsuccessful ones – the HDC in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict and Jimmy Carter in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. Following the understanding of mediation success as a transformation of conflict parties' relationship in the long term, the absence of relapse of systematic armed fighting between the signatories from the moment of settlement until the time of writing this thesis is used as an indicator for success. In contrast, peace mediation is considered to have been unsuccessful when either no settlement was reached, or armed fighting resumed within five years after the settlement between the signatories. Despite only clearly revealing a change in behaviour, the persistence of settlement over time indicates a belief that the settlement should be respected. Thus, this gives some indication for the changed relationship between the conflict parties. Therefore, selecting cases based on these criteria should enable testing the hypothesised logic in both successful and unsuccessful mediation cases.

Furthermore, since, as theorised in this thesis, the mediator's motivations as well as the presence of spoilers and conflict ripeness can impact the mediation outcome, these factors are controlled for as well as possible. The mediator's motivation and the external spoilers are taken into consideration in the case selection. Since all the cases are mediated by non-state mediators whose interest in reputational terms lies in successful conflict resolution (see Vukovic, 2014: 73-74), the mediators are regarded as being motivated to help the conflict parties resolve their disputes. Moreover, to avoid the impact of external spoilers on the mediation outcome, only cases where the peace process was ended by one of the conflict parties were selected for unsuccessful cases. However, since conflict ripeness is a more complex concept, the conflict parties' willingness to resolve the conflict is discussed under each case study. Through controlling these three aforementioned variables, this research seeks to isolate as best as possible the impact of mediator credibility and use of leverage on the mediation outcome.

To observe the effect of mediator credibility and use of leverage on the mediation outcome, it is crucial to determine some indicators for observing variance in the variables. Here, credibility is

	Positive	**Negative**
Mediator credibility	*High:* Driven by values and norms. Acclaimed mediator – international prestige. Mutual acceptance of the mediator. Appropriate (international) mandate. The backing of international community – willingness to act. Past experience in conflict resolution and management. Past record in conflict resolution and management. Expertise on the conflict, actors, stakeholders and key issues. Cultural sensitivity.	*Low:* Driven by strategic self-interest. Less acclaimed actor – limited prestige. Unclear or inappropriate mandate. Limited backing of international community – no material interest to act. Lack of previous experience in conflict resolution and management. A past of unsuccessful mediations. Lack of clear indication for conflict expertise. Insensitivity to the fundamental interests of actors and stakeholders. Cultural insensitivity.
Use of leverage	*Interventionist:* Use of sticks and carrots. Use of persuasion. Providing strategic information. Integrating proposals. Pressing for agreement. Suggesting and offering compensation.	*Facilitative:* Impartiality to the outcome. Focus on procedural issues. No advice on substantive matters. No influence on agenda-setting. Strictly equal treatment of the conflict parties.

Table 1: Indicators for mediator credibility and use of leverage.

given nominal values of "high" and "low" and is based on the mediator's status, experience and expertise as well as the international support received for the mediation process. In contrast, the mediator's use of leverage is identified as either "interventionist" or "facilitative". Here, interventionist strategies indicate the use of leverage to guide the negotiation process, whereas facilitative methods indicate a more passive role of the mediator, where the mediator makes no recommendations or gives their opinion (Ahtisaari and Rintakoski, 2013: 341). Indicators for the mediator credibility and use of leverage are presented in Table 1.

To evaluate the mediator's credibility and use of leverage in each case, a range of sources from the mediator's internal reports, communiques, interview scripts and the negotiators' personal writings to secondary literature on the cases are consulted. This variance is due to the limited availability of similar sources. For example, while for the cases mediated by the HDC and Jimmy Carter internal reports were drafted, this has not been the case for other cases. However, for Kenya and both Aceh processes detailed descriptions of the peace processes have been written either by people involved in the process themselves or by academics. Since many unsuccessful mediation attempts are not widely

reported, less sources are available for use for the unsuccessful cases. This is particularly the case with the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, where majority of the literature is written by individuals involved in the mediation process themselves. This may have consequences for the internal validity of findings, since triangulation of evidence is not always possible. However, to increase the validity, all the findings are checked against at least one other source whenever possible. The findings are then used to evaluate mediator credibility and use of leverage in each case.

Once nominal values for the independent variables are identified, the findings are then matched with the theoretical expectations. Since it is hypothesised that the mediator needs to be highly credible *and* to use their leverage to exert positive influence on the negotiation process, each case of successful mediation is expected to have positive values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage. In contrast, unsuccessful cases are expected to have negative values for either credibility or use of leverage or both, since the mediator is expected to have little to no influence on the mediation outcome. With respect to mediation outcomes, these expected patterns are visualised in Table 2. After assigning nominal values for each case, the thesis evaluates the findings in light of other potential factors that may have caused the outcome. This enables evaluating the confidence in the hypothesis and, thus, increases the potential generalisability of the findings to other similar cases.

In sum, pattern matching in combination with causal-process tracing is used to evaluate the impact of mediator credibility and use of leverage on the mediation outcome. Pattern matching enables matching the cross-case findings to the theorised patterns, while causal-process tracing allows for assessing the confidence in the hypothesis against other explanatory factors. Using the indicators provided in Table 1, this thesis now turns to evaluate the role of mediator credibility and use of leverage on the mediation outcome in the selected cases.

	High credibility	**Low credibility**
Interventionist	Successful outcome	Unsuccessful outcome
Facilitative	Unsuccessful outcome	Unsuccessful outcome

Table 2: The expected outcomes matched with the different combinations of values for credibility and use of leverage.

5 SUCCESSFUL MEDIATIONS

The mechanism theorised in this thesis expects that in successful mediation cases the conflict parties perceive the mediator credible for using their leverage to influence the negotiation process. Thus, credibility permits the mediator to use their leverage to produce a positive change in the negotiation process. The findings of the two successful mediation cases – that is, Kofi Annan's mediation in Kenya and Martti Ahtisaari's mediation in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict – adhere to the hypothesised expectations with positive values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage. However, the cases also highlight the importance of continued willingness of the conflict parties to compromise, the mediation skills of the mediator and the varying degree of mediator credibility in different contexts, indicating a complex nature of peace mediation.

This chapter analyses each case in turn. It first introduces the cases and justifies their scores for mediator credibility and use of leverage. Then, it examines the findings in light of other explanatory factors. Finally, the chapter offers some concluding remarks.

5.1 Kofi Annan mediating the Kenyan post-election conflict

In 2008, the African Union (AU) invited the Panel of Eminent African Personalities (henceforth, the Panel) comprising of Kofi Annan as the mediator and Graça Machel of Mozambique and President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania as facilitators to mediate the post-2007 presidential election dispute that sparked nation-wide violence in Kenya. The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) claimed that the elections were fraudulent and that President Kibaki of the Party of National Unity (PNU) was incorrectly declared the winner of the elections (the Panel, 2014). This resulted in mass protests with "over one thousand deaths, hundreds of thousands of individuals being forced to flee and tens of thousands of homes, shops and businesses being destroyed and looted" (OHCHR, 2008: 3). After 41 days of negotiations mediated by Annan, the National Accord and Reconciliation Act 2008 was born, which not only detailed the terms of a ceasefire but also stipulated power-sharing provisions between the two belligerents (the Panel, 2014).

Representing a successful mediation case, the protagonists managed to resolve their disputes through dialogue. Despite both parties initially strongly opposing power-sharing, they managed to arrive at a jointly acceptable power-sharing settlement that ended the armed fighting. Hence, the case represents relationship transformation through dialogue. Overall, the case adheres to the theoretical expectations and scores positive values for mediator credibility and use of leverage. However, it is apparent that, while Annan's ability to credibly use his leverage to intervene in the negotiations seems

to have contributed to the overall success of the negotiations, the successful outcome also depended on the continued willingness of the conflict parties to settle the conflict and Annan's mediation skills that enabled clever interventions.

5.1.2 Credibility

The conflict parties seem to have perceived Kofi Annan as an authoritative mediator, thus meeting the theoretical expectation for mediator credibility. While his prestige and status as a former United Nations (UN) Secretary-General seem to have enhanced his normative authority in the eyes of the conflict parties, the exceptionally strong international support that Annan enjoyed seems to have equipped him with "borrowed" material leverage, creating a sense that he can credibly deliver his words.

Annan's normative authority arising from his status and prestige coupled with the value-driven African Union (AU) mandate seem to have made Annan appear authoritative in the eyes of the conflict parties. Having embraced the Responsibility to Protect principle under the Article 4(h) of the AU's Constitutive Act (the Panel, 2014: 21), the AU mandate seems to have emphasised the value-driven and sufficiently impartial nature of the mediation process. In contrast to the previous mediation attempts which either were presented at unripe moments, such as the one by Desmond Tutu, or were regarded unacceptable by one of the parties, such as the one by the United States, the AU-mandated mediation effort was both timely and acceptable in the eyes of both conflict parties (Lindenmayer and Kaye, 2009: 5-6). With the value-driven approach to mediation in combination with Annan's prestige and experiences as a former UN Secretary-General, Annan seems to have carried high normative authority over the conflict parties. This is evident in the conflict parties' willingness to cooperate with the mediator from early on. Within the first two days, Annan had convinced the conflict parties to meet face-to-face, thus formally recognising each other, and to shake hands publicly, thereby agreeing to engage in dialogue – something that no other prospective mediator had managed to accomplish before him (Lindenmayer and Kaye, 2009: 9). This demonstrates the high degree of legitimacy that the mediation process enjoyed – there indeed appears to have been a moral belief that Annan as a mediator should be listened to, implying that the conflict parties regarded the process legitimate and Annan credible for brokering peace.

Furthermore, Annan seems to have appeared capable of mobilising international actors in support of the peace process, indicating a high degree of borrowed material leverage from state actors. Two particular factors fostered this belief. Firstly, the presence of a single mediation effort cultivated the perception that the international community was firmly supporting Annan's mediation effort and

would only act on Annan's request (Annan, 2008: 4-5). This equipped Annan with the power to mobilise international actors in support of the peace process if needed. Secondly, the material demonstration of support from state actors enhanced the belief that the international community would also be willing to act if needed. For example, in an effort to motivate the conflict parties to negotiate a settlement, the European Union (EU) froze its budgetary support to Kenya "until a political resolution to the present crisis had been achieved" (European Parliament, 2008: 18), and the UN Security Council vocally emphasised their readiness to "further support the mediation efforts in Kenya" if necessary (UN Security Council, 2008: para 5). This seems to have created a belief that, in the words of the then-UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon (2008), "international community is watching, the future is on your shoulders" (para 22). This demonstration of willingness to act in support of Annan's mediation effort seems to have strengthened the belief that any material incentives used during the negotiations could be credibly delivered.

The international backing for the mediation process in combination with his normative authority seem to have made Annan appear credible for intervening in the eyes of the conflict parties. His status and prestige as a former UN Secretary-General in combination with an appropriate mandate seem to have granted him normative authority over the conflict parties, creating a sense that the mediator should be obeyed. In contrast, the frequent demonstration of international support seems to have created a belief that any material incentive used during the negotiations could be credibly delivered. Thus, the case meets the criterion of credibility.

5.1.3 Use of leverage

It appears that Annan not only had authority over the conflict parties but also utilised his leverage to actively guide the negotiations towards settlement. This seems to have been pivotal for the progress of the talks at critical moments. In particular, Annan used strategic information, persuasion and pressure to advocate a change in the course of the negotiations.

On multiple occasions, Annan opted for providing strategic information to help the conflict parties to overcome their differences. Through this strategy, Annan increased the chances of agreement and furthered mutual deliberation. To do this, he invited numerous experts from the field to join the negotiations at critical moments. In each case, an expert was invited to provide information that guided the conflict parties towards a specific solution, while letting the negotiators deductively arrive at this conclusion themselves. For example, on the question of how to resolve the dispute regarding the conduct of the 2007 presidential elections, Annan invited Craig Jenness, Director of the

Electoral Assistance Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs, to talk through the costs, risks and benefits of each potential solution with the conflict parties (the Panel, 2014: 36). This seems to have influenced the negotiators' decision to opt for a political solution based on power-sharing – the option that Annan regarded as "the only way to go" (Annan, 2008: 10). Coming from a source that had the necessary expertise to offer credible information, this strategy seems to have been central for persuading the conflict parties to alter their positions on the issues under debate.

Annan also utilised media to indirectly pressure the negotiating parties to compromise. By first discouraging the conflict parties from addressing the press, Annan ensured that no harsh statements were made that could discourage the public and spark further violence (the Panel, 2014: 29). Then Annan would personally downplay any obstacles and publicly reassure the Kenyans with his optimism in media (Lindenmayer and Kaye, 2009: 9). While this was used to bring hope to the torn country, it also increased pressure to meet the public expectation for progress (Lindenmayer and Kaye, 2009: 14). For example, Annan used the well-publicised opportunity to address the Kenyan Parliament to publicly advocate the formation of a Grand Coalition Government, which furthered the public expectation for a political solution based on power-sharing (the Panel, 2014: 37-38). In combination with the strategic information provided by Craig Jenness, this seems to have created indirect pressure for the negotiators to cooperate and agree on a power-sharing solution, which was neither of the parties' initially preferred option (the Panel, 2014: 36-37). Here, Annan's normative authority seems to have shaped the impact of this strategy. Specifically highlighting that the proposal for Grand Coalition Government was "his perspective" (the Panel, 2014: 38), this statement would have unlikely had such a powerful impact, if the conflict parties and the public did not highly respect Annan and consider him credible for making such a proposal. Thus, with the power of his normative authority, Annan managed to create specific expectations for the negotiations that the conflict parties were pressed to comply with.

Finally, towards the end of the negotiations, Annan opted for directly pressuring the conflict parties to compromise. He did this both in his capacity as a mediator by suspending the talks and through orchestrating a material threat of sanctions from the United States to raise the risks of non-agreement (the Panel, 2014: 41-42). These threats seem to have been taken seriously by the conflict parties, since, upon entering the last day of negotiation, both parties were "aware of the meeting's importance and the impact that failure would have, nationally and internationally" (the Panel, 2014: 42). This meeting was followed by the signing of the Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government, indicating that the parties indeed believed that the threats could be carried out and, hence, removed non-agreement as an option. While Annan's status and prestige ensured that he could end the talks with little personal costs, thus fostering a belief that he could credibly deliver

his threat, the fact that the material threat came directly from the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice increased its legitimacy. Therefore, it seems that the use of threat as a mediation strategy created the desired effect precisely because the conflict parties believed that the threats could be credibly delivered.

The case, therefore, adheres to the theoretical expectations and scores a positive value for the use of leverage. Annan seems to have indeed used the leverage arising from his normative authority and borrowed material leverage to encourage a change in the interaction pattern between the conflict parties and to alter the conflict parties' issue positions. With the use of strategic information and threatening in combination with creating pressure through the utilisation of media, he managed to guide the conflict parties to a mutually acceptable settlement.

5.1.4 Discussion

With Annan's high credibility and the use of interventionist strategies, the case seems to meet the theoretical expectations of the thesis. However, the case also reveals that, while Annan's ability to credibly intervene in the process indeed seems to have contributed to the success of the mediation process, the changes in conflict ripeness coupled with the skilful use of material threats to reinstate the sense of urgency equally influenced the mediation outcome. Furthermore, it is evident that Annan's skilful interventions at critical moments, rather than mere interventions, ultimately ensured the effectiveness of his mediation strategies.

Annan's ability to exert influence on the conflict parties seems to have indeed stemmed from his normative authority over the conflict parties. It appears that, due to Annan's normative authority, his interventions resonated both among the Kenyan public and the conflict parties, persuading them to alter their behaviour and perceptions. This indicates that Annan indeed had the authority to influence the negotiation process. The fact that his preferred solutions to the electoral dispute and the power sharing dispute were adopted demonstrates the level of respect the conflict parties had for him and trust they had on his expertise. Nevertheless, it also appears that the success of Annan's interventions was directly conditioned by conflict ripeness. As the negotiations lost their urgency over time, Annan's interventions resonated less in the conflict parties. Rather than making concessions, the PNU negotiators started insisting on consulting President Kibaki on every turn, while the ODM was simultaneously threatening with mass action if their interests were not met (Lindemayer and Kaye, 2009: 19). Only when the sense of urgency was returned through the suspension of the talks and the material threat from the US, Annan managed to press the parties to compromise. This indicates that despite Annan's normative authority, his ability to persuade the

conflict parties to compromise through the strategic use of information and the utilisation of media seems to have depended on the willingness of the negotiators to resolve the conflict in the first place.

Furthermore, the case reveals not only the conditioning effect of the conflict ripeness for the mediator's ability to use their normative authority to direct the negotiations but also the mediator's ability to stimulate a sense of ripeness with the "borrowed" material leverage. When the urgency of the negotiations seemed to have been lost, the sense of ripeness could be reinstated through raising the risks of non-agreement. During these times, the timely mobilisation of the international community, orchestrated by Annan, seems to have been critical for pressing the conflict parties to compromise. For example, when the PNU suddenly rejected the power-sharing solution to the election dispute, they were met with the US, the UN Security Council, and the EU threats of intervention (the Panel, 2014: 36, 31). Similarly, when the PNU failed to compromise on the future role of the Prime Minister in the Grand Coalition Government, the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stepped in to threaten Kenya with sanctions, as described in the previous section. These international threats seem to have been crucial for raising the risks of a failed peace process, thus ripening the conflict and motivating the conflict parties to compromise. This demonstrates that, through borrowed material leverage from state actors who are willing to act in behalf of the mediator, non-state mediators can increase the stakes involved in the peace process and stimulate the sense of ripeness at critical moments.

While the case brings support to the mechanism linking the mediator credibility with their ability to use their leverage to influence the conflict parties, it is evident that Annan's skilful interventions at critical moments, rather than mere interventions, ultimately shaped the mediation outcome. Annan's interventions were carefully crafted: they occurred at critical moments, in the right form and in the most efficient combinations to nudge the negotiations forward. As an experienced mediator, he knew exactly when to intervene and when to let the negotiations move forward at their own pace. Despite numerous offers from international actors to intervene, Annan was selective of the occasions to involve international actors, believing that "sometimes the best thing to do is just sit" (Annan, 2008: 11). However, when he did intervene, it was to encourage the conflict parties to alter their issue positions through deliberation and reason. He would lay all the options to the table, go through them with the help of the experts from the field, and let the negotiators discover the best option – at least in Annan's opinion – themselves (Annan, 2008: 10). Furthermore, whenever the talks were facing a deadlock, Annan managed to combine multiple mediation strategies to create overwhelming pressure on the conflict parties to make concessions. An example of such a smart combination of strategies is the use of strategic information in combination with direct pressure to finalise the agreement. Here, Annan provided strategic information on the principals of power-sharing

with the help of the Tanzanian President Kikwete, announced the occasion as the last opportunity to reach an agreement, and orchestrated the US pressure to motivate the conflict parties to make concessions, which did indeed result in a final settlement (the Panel, 2014: 41-43). It, therefore, seems that rather than merely intervening in the negotiation process, Annan did so skilfully at critical moments and in a manner that encouraged the conflict parties to alter their issue positions, and, if needed, combined multiple strategies to create overwhelming pressure for agreement.

Overall, the case seems to support the hypothesis. Annan's normative authority and material leverage indeed seem to have permitted him to use his leverage to guide the negotiators toward settlement. However, the case also reveals a number of nuances about the hypothesised mechanism. Firstly, the conflict ripeness may fluctuate and, thus, needs to be cultivated throughout the negotiations. Secondly, the mediator may stimulate this sense of ripeness through raising the risks of non-agreement. To orchestrate this, international support for the mediation process is of crucial importance in granting the mediator the capacity to deliver material incentives. Finally, instead of merely intervening in the negotiation process, the mediator should do so skilfully to guide the negotiators to settlement, while allowing deliberation and argumentation to transform the conflict relationship. This is pivotal for ensuring sustainable conflict settlement.

5.2 Martti Ahtisaari mediating the Aceh-Indonesia conflict

Just two days before the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, Martti Ahtisaari mailed his invitations to the representatives of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) to negotiate an end to nearly 30 years of armed conflict over the independence of the Aceh province. The invitation followed nearly two years of intense military fighting in Aceh that had left GAM close to a military defeat with its supply lines and communications severely disrupted, a large number of its guerrillas killed or captured and urban bases lost (International Crisis Group, 2005: 4-5) – simultaneously, the past attempts to annihilate GAM had only demonstrated that a political victory was unlikely (Large and Aguswandi, 2008: 26). After five rounds of negotiations, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed, which presented a "permanent peaceful settlement" to the conflict that tackled the underlying political issues (Kemper, 2011: 218). Despite entering the negotiations with fundamentally clashing interests – GAM demanding independence and being "allergic" to special autonomy, and the GoI regarding independence of Aceh a "taboo" (Djuli and Rahman, 2008: 29) – the parties found a mutually acceptable solution in the framework of autonomy through deliberation and argumentation.

With the conflict having virtually ceased to exist (Kivimäki and Gorman, 2008: 6), the case represents a successful mediation attempt. Like the mediation process in Kenya, the Aceh peace process mediated by Martti Ahtisaari scores positive values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage. This section argues that, in line with the findings observed in the case of Kenya, while Ahtisaari's ability to credibly use his leverage seems to have conditioned the success of his interventions, the mediation outcome also depended on the conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict once and for all, and Ahtisaari's mediation skills which ensured optimal interventions.

5.2.2 Credibility

The case meets the criterion of credibility. While Ahtisaari's normative authority seems to have made him able to influence the conflict parties' behaviour and preferences, the international support that he received particularly from the EU seems to have granted him material leverage over the conflict parties. Despite the fact that GAM occasionally questioned Ahtisaari's cultural expertise, this seems to have had little impact on their overall perception of Ahtisaari's credibility.

Ahtisaari's personality in combination with his international prestige and expertise in conflict resolution seems to have made Ahtisaari appear authoritative in the eyes of the conflict parties. While Ahtisaari's status and experiences in conflict resolution were highly valued by the conflict parties and made him appear knowledgeable in the eyes of the negotiators (Merikallio, 2006: 52), his personality seems to have earned him the trust and respect of the negotiators. Despite his authoritarian and sometimes even angry approach to mediation, his behaviour was perceived to arise from a sincere place, giving an impression that, in the words of one of the negotiators, "he in no way attempted to coax us to the table" (cited in Merikallio, 2006: 147). This aura of sincerity in combination with his authoritarian grip of the mediation process seems to have earned the negotiators' respect, as is captured by the nickname 'Ayatollah Ahtisaari' that he received early in the process (Merikallio, 2006: 62). This nickname demonstrates Ahtisaari's decisiveness as a mediator and the negotiators' belief that the mediator should be listened to. Therefore, Ahtisaari seems to have possessed a significant degree of normative authority over the conflict parties thanks to his personality and international status as a renowned mediator.

Ahtisaari seems to have possessed some material leverage over the conflict parties arising from the international backing for his mandate. Particularly important for fostering the belief that Ahtisaari could credibly deliver his words seems to have been the EU involvement in the process as a potential implementer of any agreement signed during the negotiations. This seems to have granted Ahtisaari a degree of material leverage that he could use despite his non-state status, as the conflict parties

perceived that he had the ability to credibly persuade the EU to alter their stance on the conflict (Kemper, 2011: 222). This presence of potential material repercussions in case non-agreement seems to have significantly raised the stakes of the negotiations. As the EU's post-tsunami aid was conditioned by the progress of the negotiations, the conflict parties had to demonstrate that they were seriously committed to the peace process to reap the "carrots" of the EU aid in the region (Merikallio, 2006: 86). Having an international actor like the EU involved in the process also signalled international interest in the peace process and demonstrated the international community's willingness to intervene if needed. This active international support seems to have acted as a symbol that Ahtisaari could credibly deliver any material incentives used during the negotiations with the aid of this international backing.

On the other hand, Ahtisaari's limited expertise in the conflict and occasional insensitivity to cultural issues seems to have rocked GAM's perception of Ahtisaari as a credible mediator. At times, the GAM negotiators, in the words of two of their negotiators, "perceived that President Ahtisaari knew little about Aceh or the Acehnese character and that the premise of the talks was that [they] were rebels who had to return to the fold" (Djuli and Rahman, 2008: 28). Particularly Ahtisaari's insistence on special autonomy as a premise for the talks gave GAM an impression that the Acehnese interests were inadequately consulted, which prompted them to briefly consider alternative mediators (Kingsbury, 2006: 30; Djuli and Rahman, 2008: 29). However, despite the fact this perception of partiality to the government side rocked GAM's confidence in Ahtisaari momentarily, the GAM negotiators seem to have continued viewing him as "a wise and experienced man" who can openly admit his mistakes and listens to those who have greater understanding of their culture – specifically referring to Ahtisaari's advisor Juha Christensen, who possessed extensive knowledge of the Indonesian culture (Merikallio, 2006: 52). Thus, Ahtisaari's other qualities in combination with Christensen's influence on the mediator seem to have outweighed Ahtisaari's limitations.

Overall, despite Ahtisaari's limited topical expertise and occasional insensitivity to the Acehnese culture, the negotiators seem to have regarded Ahtisaari as a credible mediator. His experiences in conflict resolution, personality and international status as a former head of state seem to have granted him normative authority over the negotiators. The international support he received, on the other hand, increased Ahtisaari's material leverage over the conflict parties.

5.2.3 Use of leverage

In line with the theoretical expectations, Ahtisaari used his leverage to guide the negotiating parties towards agreement. Through the use of the "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed"

principle, Ahtisaari created indirect pressure for the conflict parties to compromise. Furthermore, he occasionally resorted to direct pressure to break deadlocks at critical moments – however, the success of these strategies seems to have been conditioned by the extent to which Ahtisaari could credibly use them.

Through the adoption of the "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" principle, Ahtisaari used his leverage to persuade the conflict parties to commit to the negotiations. With this policy, Ahtisaari sought to ensure that the parties "[worked] towards a whole picture and a full agreement before claiming progress" (Ahtisaari, 2008a, 23) – that is, the principle encouraged the negotiators to continue their dialogue without commitment to any concessions. This seems to have been particularly important for GAM, who found the strategy advantageous "when [they] explored difficult issues like self-government, because it meant that if any one agenda item did not reach an agreement, all points were unacceptable" (Djuli and Rahman, 2008: 29). Thus, this strategy allowed the negotiators to build trust and explore different political options through deliberation, enabling gradual relationship transformation. Furthermore, the strategy indirectly pressured the conflict parties to compromise. It committed the parties to reaching a full agreement before any decision could be implemented, which raised the stakes of the negotiations (Aspinall, 2005: 22). This seems to have been a defining factor for the GoI decision to make concessions on the issue of local political parties despite political and legal obstacles (Merikallio, 2006: 112). Thus, the "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" principle pressed the conflict parties to soften their issue positions to find a mutually acceptable solution. This strategy, therefore, influenced the interaction between the conflict parties, as it nudged them to discuss difficult issues and to make concessions.

Ahtisaari also occasionally adopted more pressing strategies to shame and push the negotiating parties to compromise. However, it appears that the success of these strategies was conditioned by the extent to which Ahtisaari could credibly use them. On the one hand, when the adopted approach highlighted Ahtisaari's limited topical and cultural expertise, the negotiating parties were uncooperative. This was the case, for example, when Ahtisaari sought to pressure GAM to accept the term 'special autonomy' over their preferred term 'self-government', which showed insensitivity to the cultural importance of semantics in Aceh. This prompted GAM's refusal to cooperate, which forced Ahtisaari to adjust his demands (Merikallio, 2006: 51). On the other hand, when the pressure was arising from a credible source, the conflict parties were persuaded to comply. For example, Ahtisaari managed to pressure the GoI into reducing the Indonesian military's assaults in Aceh by personally presenting a report of the latest human rights abuses to the Indonesian leadership with a note that he had also "given the report to representatives of other governments" (Merikallio, 2006: 91). This seems to have created suitable pressure to alter the government behaviour, as the visit was

followed by reduced number of military operations (Merikallio, 2006: 92), indicating successful use of pressure. In this case, Ahtisaari's status as a former president with extensive international contacts seems to have made the threat appear credible in the eyes of the GoI, since Ahtisaari had the ability to influence international actors. This demonstrates the importance of credibility in Ahtisaari's ability to exert influence on the conflict parties. Whenever Ahtisaari could credibly intervene, the negotiating parties were more likely to comply. In contrast, whenever Ahtisaari lacked the ability to credibly intervene, the conflict parties were uncooperative.

Overall, Ahtisaari seems to have adopted interventionist mediation strategies, contra purely facilitative ones, to guide the negotiators towards a mutually acceptable settlement. Through the "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" principle, Ahtisaari managed to persuade the conflict parties to negotiate and compromise throughout the negotiations. In contrast, when this principle failed to nudge the conflict parties to compromise, Ahtisaari resorted to direct pressure. Nevertheless, the success of these interventions seems to have been directly conditioned by the extent to which the conflict parties regarded Ahtisaari credible for using them in each context.

5.2.4 Discussion

Following the discussion in this section, it is apparent that the conflict parties overall considered Ahtisaari a credible mediator and that Athisaari indeed used his leverage to influence the negotiation process. Thus, the case supports the hypothesis that non-state mediators can contribute to the likelihood of successful mediation when (1) they are perceived highly credible by the conflict parties, and (2) the mediator uses their leverage to influence the negotiation process – though it is apparent that the conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict in the first place in combination with Ahtisaari's skilful interventions were also critical for the mediation success.

The case supports the claim that when a mediator is perceived credible, they can use their leverage to influence the conflict parties and, thus, contribute to the likelihood of mediation success. The fact that not all Ahtisaari's interventions were successful demonstrates the importance of the mediator credibility in their ability to influence the conflict parties' behaviour. The success of Ahtisaari's interventions seems to have been conditioned by the extent to which the conflict parties perceived them credible. This explains why some of Ahtisaari's interventions were less successful than others. Whenever Ahtisaari was perceived credible for intervening in a specific context, the conflict parties seem to have been compliant. In contrast, when the conflict parties did not perceive Ahtisaari credible for intervening, they were uncooperative. This seems to have been the case whenever Ahtisaari's behaviour was considered insensitive to the Acehnese culture. This finding

provides support for the hypothesised mechanism linking the mediator credibility and use of leverage with their ability to successfully influence the conflict parties. Nevertheless, despite his occasional cultural insensitivity, Ahtisaari seems to have had the necessary normative authority and material leverage to overall appear highly credible in the eyes of the conflict parties and to significantly contribute to the mediation success. However, it is evident that Ahtisaari's interventions are not the sole factor for mediation success. As will be shown in the following, Ahtisaari's mediation skills and, even more importantly, the conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict seem to have significantly influenced the mediation outcome.

It appears that Ahtisaari's influence on the mediation success depended more on Ahtisaari's skilful interventions than the mere use of his leverage. Ahtisaari's interventions, similarly to Kofi Annan's in the case of Kenya, were skilfully crafted. Ahtisaari not only used his leverage to influence the conflict parties but he also knew exactly what would be needed to enhance the likelihood of mediation success. For this reason, he knew which ground rules to set for the negotiation process and pressed the conflict parties to accept them. For example, learning from past mediation attempts and knowing that independence was not an option, Ahtisaari made it clear to GAM from the start that "a possible solution was to be found without touching the integrity of the Indonesian borders" (Merikallio, 2006: 21), thus effectively removing the question of independence from the agenda. Simultaneously, he knew when to step back to allow deliberation to pave the way for agreement under the umbrella of "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" principle. Therefore, he had a clear view of what could be expected from the negotiations, and when and how to intervene as a mediator to ensure the progress of the talks. Rather than simply intervening in the process – even when doing so credibly – Ahtisaari knew which strategies to use at each occasion to maximise the chances of success. Thus, with skilful interventions, Ahtisaari "managed to break deadlocks and forge consensus at critical points" (International Crisis Group, 2005: 6).

Despite the fact that Ahtisaari played an important role in shaping the negotiation process, it is apparent that the most important factor explaining the success of the negotiations is the conflict parties' sustained willingness to settle the conflict. As Ahtisaari (2008) himself has recognised, "with all the skills in the world, I cannot make a mediation process 'pregnant' in the sense of bearing the fruit of peace. The parties themselves must do it. If the parties genuinely are ready for the birth of a peace process, then a mediator can be the midwife" (24). A significant motivating factor for seeking a negotiated settlement seems to have been the destruction caused by the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami in Aceh which buried the conflict parties' "will to fight" (Awaluddin, 2008: 26). Furthermore, the

Indonesian leadership's personal advocacy for peace[2] seems to have been a major factor for the success of the talks. On numerous occasions, the new Vice President Kalla went to publicly defend the peace process (Aspinall, 2005: 25) and agreed to significant concessions, for example, on the question of local political parties (see Merikallio, 2006: 112-113), to save the peace process from collapsing. The success of the negotiations would have been unlikely without such commitment from the protagonists, who were motivated to find a negotiated settlement to the conflict. As noted by Ahtisaari (2008b) himself, "from the beginning of the talks I had a feeling that I was surrounded by people who realised that they had in their hands the power to stop further suffering of Acehnese people" (10), indicating the serious but optimistic way the negotiators approached the talks. Therefore, while Ahtisaari certainly helped the conflict parties to find mutually acceptable solutions to their disagreements, most credit for the success of the negotiations goes to the conflict parties' commitment to the peace process.

Overall, the case provides support for the hypothesis. The conflict parties' perception of Ahtisaari's credibility seems to have enabled Ahtisaari to influence the negotiators' behaviour and preferences. Despite showing that mediator credibility is essential for the mediator's ability shape the negotiations, the case also highlights that this mechanism only tells a part of the success story. In the end, the negotiations would not have achieved such success without the conflict parties' sustained willingness to settle the conflict and Ahtisaari's mediation skills.

5.3 Concluding remarks

As has been shown in this chapter, both of the successful mediation cases score positive values for mediator credibility and use of leverage. Thus, the cases meet the theoretical expectations of this thesis. They also demonstrate that, while the mediator can have significant influence on the negotiation process, overcoming differences through dialogue is pivotal for successful mediation, demonstrating the transformative potential of negotiations. The mediator can, nevertheless, intervene in the negotiations to help the parties overcome deadlocks and encourage compromise, but their influence depends on how the conflict parties interpret the mediator's credibility to intervene in each context. Indeed, in line with the theoretical expectations, the more credible the conflict parties perceive the mediator to be, the more opportunities the mediator has for credibly intervening in the negotiations. While both of the successful mediation cases support the claim that a mediator can

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[2] The newly elected President Yudhoyono and his Vice President Kalla were known for their advocacy of peaceful resolution to the Acehnese conflict. They fundamentally believed that negotiations were essential for a permanent resolution of the conflict (Awaluddin, 2008: 26).

influence the conflict parties' behaviour and preferences by credibly intervening in the negotiation process, they reveal at least three nuances about the hypothesised mechanism.

Firstly, both cases demonstrate that mediation success is conditioned by the conflict parties' willingness to resolve the conflict in the first place. While in the case of Aceh the conflict parties demonstrated their willingness to settle the conflict throughout the negotiations by compromising on key issues, indicating a high level of conflict ripeness, the Kenyan conflict parties at times seem to have failed to understand the urgency of the negotiations. In these occasions, the conflict parties were resistant to Annan's attempts to persuade them to compromise. Only when the urgency was restored with a clever use of material threats from the United States and Annan himself did the conflict parties become motivated to settle their disputes again. This demonstrates that, while mediators can use their material leverage to raise the stakes of non-agreement and, thus, ripen the conflict, the success of the talks ultimately depends on the willingness of the conflict parties to resolve the conflict in the first place.

Secondly, the cases reveal that skilful interventions at critical moments, rather than mere interventions, are the primary factor that shapes the mediator's contribution to the increased likelihood of success. Both Kofi Annan and Martti Ahtisaari not only intervened in the negotiation processes but did so at the right time and in the right manner. Both mediators knew when to step back to let the negotiators arrive at a mutually acceptable solution through deliberation. On the other hand, they also knew when to directly intervene to break deadlocks. These interventions seem to have been used to *encourage* the conflict parties to compromise, rather than to promote self-interested ends. This implies that the mere use of leverage does not necessarily suffice to ensure mediation success – this leverage should be used skilfully to encourage deliberation and compromise at critical moments.

Thirdly, the Aceh peace process reveals that, while a mediator can credibly intervene in some instances, the same mediator may not be able to do so in others depending on whether the mediator is perceived credible for intervening in each context. While Ahtisaari generally possessed normative authority and material leverage to exert influence on the conflict parties, he was unable to intervene whenever his behaviour was considered insensitive to the Acehnese culture. This indicates that mediators, even if generally perceived highly credible like Ahtisaari, might not always be able to intervene successfully even when their interventions are timely and skilfully crafted. This would indicate that what matters more than mere interventions is the sum of individual interventions that helped prevent the collapse the talks. Thus, it seems to matter when and how the mediator can credibly intervene in the negotiation process.

Therefore, it appears that, despite bringing support to the hypothesis, some adjustments and further considerations are in order. Firstly, it is evident that mere mediator interventions are not

enough to ensure mediation success – they need to be skilfully crafted to maximise the likelihood of success. Secondly, the conflict parties' willingness to resolve the conflict seems to be pivotal for mediation success regardless of whether the mediator credibly intervenes in the negotiation process. The mediator can nonetheless help reinstate urgency through the use of material incentives and threats. Finally, it also seems to matter when and how the mediator can credibly intervene in the negotiations – not all interventions are of equal value. Thus, while the hypothesised pattern and mechanism are present, these observations suggest that some further refinement is in order. Having made these reflections, this thesis now turns to examine the two unsuccessful mediation cases to determine whether these cases meet the theoretical expectations.

6 UNSUCCESSFUL MEDIATIONS

The theory forwarded in this thesis expects that in unsuccessful mediation cases – that is, in those cases where the negotiations did not transform the conflict relationship – the mediator did not manage to exert influence on the negotiation process to help the conflict parties overcome their disagreements. The hypothesis, in contrast, would expect that these cases would score negative values for either mediator credibility or use of leverage (or both). While the HDC's mediation case in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict meets the theoretical expectations with negative scores for both variables, the findings of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict mediated by Jimmy Carter contradict with the theorised expectations with positive values for both variables. Nevertheless, the latter case does not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis. As is also evident to a lesser extent in the HDC's mediation case, the unsuccessful mediation outcomes seem to have been less due to insufficient mediation efforts than to the conflict parties' reluctance to settle the conflict through peaceful means. To arrive at this conclusion, this section examines each case in turn, analysing the mediator credibility and the use of leverage and discussing the findings, before offering concluding remarks.

6.1 The HDC in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict

Martti Ahtisaari's successful mediation attempt in 2005 was not the first time that a mediated settlement had been sought for in Aceh. In late-1999 the Swiss-based nongovernmental organisation, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (also known as the Henri Dunant Centre or the HDC), approached the GoI with an offer to help the conflict parties to manage the armed fighting. The 3-year-long negotiation process yielded two agreements: The Joint Understanding on Humanitarian Pause in Aceh in 2000 and the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) in 2002. Despite

managing to produce these agreements, the process failed to transform the relationship between the conflict parties. Only a few months after the signing of the COHA the GoI imposed martial law in Aceh with the aim of "destroying GAM forces down to their roots" (Aspinall and Crouch, 2003: 1), marking the end of the peace process and continuation of armed fighting.

With a high level of distrust between the conflict parties that ultimately caused the breakdown of the peace process, the case represents a failed mediation attempt. As a "weak" mediator who primarily employed facilitative mediation strategies, the case scores negative values for mediator credibility and use of leverage. The case also brings support to the mechanism envisioned in this thesis: due to the HDC's limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties, it struggled to exert influence on the negotiation process and, thus, opted for primarily facilitative mediation strategies.

6.1.2 Credibility

It appears that, while the HDC had some moral leverage in the humanitarian field, it lacked authority over the conflict parties. This seems to be at least partly due to the HDC's limited credibility, as it lacked the normative authority and the material leverage to appear decisive in the eyes of the conflict parties.

As a newly established humanitarian non-governmental organisation with no prior mediation experience and internationally recognised status, the HDC seems to have struggled to establish normative authority over the conflict parties. This is evident in the fact that it had to constantly prove its worth as a mediator particularly to the fragmented and highly suspicious government (Barakat et al., 2002: 21). Resultingly, rather than being able to exert influence on the conflict parties, the "HDC was consistently – and perhaps uncritically – responsive to any signs of openness that the government side showed towards the process" (Huber, 2004: 59). The HDC's struggle to establish authority over the conflict parties is apparent in the mediator's constant effort to endorse its normative authority with external help, particularly from the Wise Men. Comprising of the retired US Marine General, Zinni, the former Thai Foreign Minister, Pitsuani, the former Yugoslav ambassador to Indonesia, Loncar, and the former Swedish diplomat, Soderberg, the political clout brought by these eminent personalities seems to have been pivotal for sustaining the negotiations beyond the failure of the Humanitarian Pause. As recognised by the HDC in its internal report on the peace process, "without this leverage, the dialogue process would not have progressed as far as it did" (HDC, 2003: 34). This indicates that the organisation had to seek for external aid to enhance their otherwise limited normative authority over the conflict parties to ensure the progress of the talks.

While the HDC struggled to establish normative authority over the conflict parties, it nevertheless had some moral leverage, which seems to have legitimised its role as a mediator. As an independent non-governmental organisation with its primary interest in alleviating the suffering of the Acehnese people, as is demonstrated by the adoption of the principles of *New Prevention*[3], the conflict parties never questioned the HDC's interests or impartiality. As noted in the HDC's internal report, "this eased tension during the negotiations and increased the trust of both sides in HDC" (HDC, 2003: 30). The humanitarianism of the organisation seems to have also legitimised the humanitarian approach to conflict resolution that the negotiations adopted, as indicated by the conflict parties' willingness to engage in humanitarian dialogue under the HDC leadership. Thus, despite lacking authority, the HDC enjoyed some moral leverage over the conflict parties.

The HDC seems to have lacked the necessary international support to grant it material leverage to employ more pressing mediation strategies. Despite receiving financial support from the EU, the US, Japan and the World Bank, this assistance seems to have not extended beyond "post-conflict construction […], short-term humanitarian aid, community reconstruction, governance and public planning, and restoration of the social and physical infrastructure" (International Crisis Group, 2003: 7-8). Therefore, the international community had little interest in intervening (Kemper, 2011: 222), thus failing to raise the risks of a failed peace process. Unlike in the case of Kenya and the 2005 Aceh peace process where firm international backing was critical for creating a sense that Annan and Ahtisaari respectively could credibly deliver their threats and promises, the HDC lacked this capacity to credibly use pressure to motivate the conflict parties to compromise at critical moments. This indicates that the HDC had limited material leverage over the conflict parties, as it had few sticks and carrots to employ to raise the stakes of the negotiations.

It, therefore, seems that the HDC had limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties. Its lack of previous mediation experience and expertise coupled with its status as a newly established nongovernmental organisation seems to have reduced its normative authority as a mediator. Moreover, the HDC seems to have lacked the necessary material leverage to be able to raise the stakes of the negotiations.

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[3] *New Prevention* is a principle that "recognises that humanitarian organisations have an obligation to act during periods of apparent peace as well as those of conflict to prevent the horrors of war" – thus, putting emphasis on fostering positive conditions for peace (HDC, 2003: 4).

6.1.3 Use of leverage

Considering the HDC's limited credibility, it can be expected that the HDC unsuccessfully intervened in the negotiation process and/or opted for primarily facilitative approaches to mediation. The HDC did indeed primarily employ facilitative mediation strategies without much substantive input – however, it did manage to credibly influence the conflict parties through providing strategic information with the assistance of the Wise Men.

As a mediator, the HDC mostly employed facilitative mediation strategies to avoid jeopardising the mediation process with signs of partiality. This is evident in the HDC's choice to allow the conflict parties to set the pace and agenda for the negotiations (Huber, 2004: 46). Unlike Annan and Ahtisaari who insisted on political dialogue and even abandoned their formal impartiality as mediators to move the negotiations forward, the HDC seems to have been unable to assume such a political role in the process due to its limited leverage over the conflict parties. This is echoed in a statement released by the GAM leadership who demanded "HDC to be given more power" if there was to be an end to the conflict (cited in Schulze, 2004: 52). As a result of its limited credibility that depended on the organisation's impartial humanitarian aspirations, the HDC seems to have been "keen to remain neutral and avoid being tainted in Aceh as promoting one particular political solution over another" (HDC, 2003: 7). Resultingly, the HDC's room for manoeuvre seems to have been limited. This is evident in its unsuccessful attempt to consult the Acehnese civil society, which ended up jeopardising the future of the entire peace process, as the GoI interpreted the move as a sign of partiality (HDC, 2003: 29-30). This indicates that the HDC was "trapped" in its non-political, impartial role as a mediator due to its struggle to appear authoritative in the eyes of the conflict parties.

Nevertheless, with the "borrowed" normative authority from the Wise Men, the HDC was able to exert some influence on the negotiation process from mid-2001 onwards. This use of leverage primarily took the form of strategic information aimed at encouraging compromise (International Crisis Group, 2003: 5). With their international prestige and experience in conflict resolution, the Wise Men seem to have possessed the necessary authority that the HDC lacked to positively influence the conflict parties' behaviour. Albeit acting in their private capacity, the involvement of the Wise Men came with an understanding that they enjoyed the support of their home countries' governments, creating pressure for the GoI and GAM to "adhere to their agreements" (HDC, 2003: 34). This indirect pressure that the Wise Men's advice created seems to have, for example, persuaded GAM to discuss "political solutions within the territorial integrity of the Republic of Indonesia" (HDC, 2003: 11-12), thus causing a temporary relaxation in GAM's hard-line position on the question of

independence. Therefore, with the "borrowed" normative authority from the Wise Men, the HDC managed to shape the negotiation process towards the end of the peace process.

Despite mobilising the Wise Men to bring the negotiations forward, the HDC seems to have primarily employed facilitative mediation strategies. In line with the theoretical expectations, this seems to have been due to its lack of normative authority and capacity to credibly persuade or pressure the conflict parties to compromise. The moral leverage that the HDC had created an expectation of impartiality that could be jeopardised by any seemingly biased activity. Thus, the HDC was largely unable to substantially intervene in the negotiation process – only the presence of the Wise Men seems to have increased the mediator's leverage over the conflict parties.

6.1.4 Discussion

Following the preceding discussion on the HDC's credibility and use of leverage, it appears that the case adheres to the theoretical expectations. The HDC seems to have been a "weak" mediator struggling to credibly influence the conflict parties in substantive matters, thus scoring negative values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage. Nevertheless, considering the waning sense of urgency for the negotiations that occurred over time, it is unclear to what extent it was the HDC's limited ability to influence the conflict parties that caused the breakdown of the peace process. As will be argued in this section, while the negotiations could have benefitted from more decisive mediation, it is doubtful whether even the most skilful mediator could have been "a midwife to a breakthrough agreement" (Huber, 2004: 76) in this context.

The case supports the claim that mediators who have limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties struggle to exert influence on the negotiation process. Struggling to establish authority, the HDC seems to have been "trapped" in the impartial position, being almost forced to employ primarily facilitative strategies to avoid jeopardising the peace process. Whenever the HDC in its own capacity sought to influence political issues, this attempt was received negatively. This demonstrates that limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties can significantly reduce the mediator's ability to exert influence on the negotiation process. Nevertheless, in line with the observation made in the 2005 Aceh peace process mediated by Ahtisaari, it appears that a mediator may be able to credibly influence the negotiators in some instances but not in others depending on the conflict parties' perception of the mediator's credibility in each context. For example, the HDC's ability to credibly mediate humanitarian dialogue due to their moral leverage and to exert some influence on substantive issues with the "borrowed" leverage from the Wise Men seems to have sprung from the conflict parties' belief that the mediator could credibly intervene in these contexts.

This indicates that, while highly credible mediators are overall more likely to be able to intervene in many different contexts, even a mediator with limited normative authority and material leverage may be able to influence the conflict parties in some contexts where they are considered credible for intervening.

While the HDC was able to borrow some leverage from the Wise Men towards the end of the negotiations, it is evident that the negotiations had lost their momentum and the conflict parties their willingness to compromise by the time the Wise Men actively got involved in the process. Despite the fact that the conflict seems to have been somewhat ripe in 1999, the conflict parties' readiness to settle the conflict seems to have passed by the time the COHA was signed (Kemper, 2011: 129-220). The conflict parties' increasingly extremist positions on the political questions demonstrates this change: GAM directly backtracked from its agreement to commence political dialogue with autonomy as a "starting point", while the GoI assumed stricter position on Aceh's special autonomy, placing an ultimatum on GAM to accept the existing special autonomy law or risk military assault (Aspinall and Crouch, 2003). Simultaneously, the HDC seems to have lacked the capacity to reinstate the sense of urgency among the conflict parties through material threats. While the "carrots" offered by some interested countries, such as the United States, the EU and Japan, seem to have helped to ensure the signing of the agreement, these countries were ultimately reluctant to intervene in case of a failed peace process, thus, failing to bring "sticks" to the table (Huber, 2004). Given the low stakes of a failed peace process, it seems that the final stumbling box for the peace process was the lack of the conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict. This supports the claim that conflict ripeness is essential for mediation success.

While the breakdown of the peace process was caused by a variety of different factors, ranging from the spoiling activities on both sides of the dyad to the loss of conflict ripeness (Aspinall and Crouch, 2003), it appears that the mediation process itself had some significant shortcomings that seem to have at minimum contributed to the unsuccessful outcome. As has been shown in this chapter, the HDC seems to have lacked the normative authority and material leverage to take charge of the negotiation process. The mere fact that the negotiations focused on the cessation of hostilities instead of the underlying political issues seems to have been one of the main reasons why the COHA broke down, as the central question of independence remained unresolved (Aspinall and Crouch, 2003; Huber, 2004). Consequently, by the time the parties were supposed to enter the phase of "all-inclusive dialogue", the peace process had lost its momentum and the conflict parties their interest in the negotiations. While it can only be speculated whether the HDC could have been "a midwife to a breakthrough agreement" instead of being "an unwitting handmaiden to disappointment" (Huber, 2004: 76) had they been able to reverse the sequencing of the negotiations, the negotiations could

have at least benefitted from the momentum for peace had they focused predominantly on political issues. Thus, while the breakdown of the COHA cannot be attributed to the HDC, their inability to decisively intervene in the negotiations seem to have contributed to the peace process's failure.

The case, therefore, adheres to the expectations of the hypothesised pattern and brings support for the theorised mechanism linking mediator credibility and use of leverage with the likelihood of mediation success. While it remains unclear whether the peace process could have turned out successful had the HDC been able to credibly intervene in the negotiations at critical moments to influence the conflict parties' behaviour and preferences, it seems that the HDC's inability to influence the course of the negotiations contributed to the overall breakdown of the peace process. This demonstrates that, while the mediator cannot guarantee the success of the negotiations even if considered credible and able to use their leverage, skilful interventions at critical moments may increase the likelihood of success.

6.2 Jimmy Carter in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict

In 1989, the International Negotiations Network under the leadership of former US President Jimmy Carter took on the challenge to mediate an end to "the longest running civil war in Africa's history" between the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) over the independence of Eritrea (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 11). After three decades of armed conflict, the representatives of the PDRE and the EPLF came together in Atlanta in September 1989 to commence peace talks which were subsequently continued in Nairobi in November. However, despite the promises made to continue the negotiations with substantial dialogue on political issues in early-1990, this promise was never fulfilled. In June, the EPLF withdrew from the negotiations and "decided to pursue a military option instead of working towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict" (The Carter Centre, 1990: 76), thus indicating an end to the peace process. The negotiations, therefore, never progressed past procedural issues and promises of future political dialogue.

With no transformation of the conflict relationship, as demonstrated by the resumption of armed fighting, the case represents an unsuccessful mediation attempt. Contra theoretical expectations that would assume a negative score for either the mediator credibility or the use of leverage (or both), the case scores positive values for both variables. However, as is argued in the last part of this section, the case does not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis, as the failed peace process can be explained by the lack of the conflict parties' willingness to resolve the conflict through

peaceful means. On the contrary, the case reveals the necessity of conflict ripeness for successful negotiations.

6.2.1 Credibility

Scoring a positive value for mediator credibility, it appears that Jimmy Carter had both the normative authority and material leverage to appear credible in the eyes of the conflict parties. While Carter's status as a former US president with demonstrable experience and expertise in peace mediation seems to have made him appear as an authoritative mediator, his possible access to world leaders in combination with their active support for the peace process seems to have enhanced the image that Carter was capable of mobilising the international community to assist the peace process.

With the status of a former US president and the impressive record in peace mediation from the Camp David talks, Jimmy Carter seems to have possessed high normative authority over the conflict parties. This is evident in the fact that the conflict parties voluntarily invited Carter to mediate, despite not having previously considered negotiations, following Carter's one-on-one consultations with the PDRE and the EPLF leadership (Spencer et al., 1992: 92). As an eminent person Carter possessed "the ability, trust, credibility and charismatic authority to persuade conflict parties to the negotiating table and keep them engaged in a process once it [began]" (Spencer and Yang, 1992: 1500). Furthermore, the personal relationship that Carter formed with the leaders of each protagonist demonstrates the high degree of normative authority that he possessed. Viewing Carter as an "elder advisor" who gives fatherly advice (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 50), the EPLF leadership seems to have looked up to Carter, legitimising his interventions as a third party. In contrast, the PDRE seems to have particularly valued Carter's status as a former president, who can not only give peer-level advice but also sympathise with the sensitivities involved in leading a country (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 49). This seems to have granted Carter a right to offer his personal advice, which he also used for advocating democratic elections (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 49). This indicates a high level of normative authority in the eyes of the conflict parties, which enabled Carter to influence the negotiation process.

Furthermore, Carter possessed borrowed material leverage, which seems to have made him appear capable of mobilising international community in support of the peace process. As a former US president with the necessary contacts and status to access world leaders, the conflict parties seem to have believed that "Carter had the ability and inclination to go directly to the leadership of the United States and the Soviet Union and suggest specific moves that would affect them" (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 47), thus fostering a belief that Carter had the capacity to mobilise the international

community. Furthermore, the reinforcement that the peace process received from the Soviet Union and the United States endorsed the belief that they would intervene if needed. For example, in 1990 upon the potential collapse of the talks following the increased violence in Ethiopia, Herman Cohen, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, emphasised the government's support for Carter and vocalised that the US had "offered to be of assistance as needed" in preserving the peace process (US House, Committee on Foreign Affairs and Select Committee on Hunger, 1990: 20). In combination with Carter's strategic use of media to stress the support of the great powers (see Apple, 1989), this public display of international support fostered a belief that Carter not only had the access to the world leaders but could also mobilise the international community in support of the peace process.

Carter, therefore, seems to have appeared as a credible mediator in the eyes of the conflict parties. His status as a former US president with significant experience in peace mediation made him appear authoritative, enhancing the belief that the mediator should be listened to. Furthermore, the conflict parties seem to have genuinely believed that Carter had the access to the world leaders and was capable of mobilising the international community to materially support the peace process.

6.2.2 Use of leverage

Despite remaining formally impartial and employing primarily problem-solving strategies during the negotiations (Spencer et al., 1992: 95; Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 6), Carter used his leverage to advocate specific solutions to deadlocks and to create pressure for progress. He specifically utilised the publicity of the negotiations and his extensive international contacts to press the parties into agreement.

As a means to guarantee the progress of the talks, Carter utilised the media to create pressure on the negotiators to compromise in two different ways. Firstly, with the regularly scheduled press briefings, Carter used the obligation to address the media as a means to press the negotiators to agreement. With neither side wanting to appear insincere, this obligation to produce a communique after each round of negotiations seems to have pressured the negotiators to ensure progress (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 64). Secondly, Carter utilised the opportunities to talk to the press to further his proposed solutions to deadlocks. For example, he used his communique following the closure of the Atlanta talks to publicise his proposals for overcoming some of the controversies that had arisen during the talks, such as the presence of external observers and the role of the secretariat, and to stress that his role as a mediator depended on the conflict parties' agreement on the procedural issues (Carter, 1989: 70-71). This strategy seems to have had positive results, considering that his proposals

were readily adopted during the Nairobi talks (see Spencer and Spencer, 1992). This indicates that the conflict parties believed that Carter had the political clout to prompt significant press coverage and that negative publicity would seriously tamper their reputation in the eyes of the international community. Thus, Carter seems to have been credibly able to utilise the media to pressure the conflict parties into agreement.

Furthermore, Carter utilised multi-level strategies to orchestrate external pressure for compromise. In essence, this meant that, in addition to facilitating one-on-one negotiations carried out by the representatives of the PDRE and the EPLF, Carter actively involved the leaders of each party and the international community in the mediation process to create pressure for progress (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 48). In particular, the support of the international community was frequently used as a strategy to keep the parties involved in the negotiations (Spencer et al., 1992: 95). For example, during the negotiations in Nairobi, Carter engaged with the Soviet, Italian and Swedish ambassadors to ask for their assistance in persuading the conflict parties to compromise (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 52). Furthermore, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Cohen, himself invited representatives of the conflict parties to Washington, D.C., in an effort to reignite stagnant negotiations after the Nairobi talks (Keller, 1991: 11). While the pressure to negotiate and comprise came directly from the foreign governments and appeared, thus, credible in the eyes of the conflict parties, this was evidently not enough to save the peace process.

Despite the negotiations having been short-lived and having only addressed the procedural issues, Carter used his leverage to keep the parties engaged in the talks for a significant amount of time. Through utilising the media and his international connections, Carter managed to credibly push for agreement when it was unlikely to be organically found. Unfortunately, this was not enough to ensure successful negotiations that would bring peace to the war-torn country.

6.2.3 Discussion

With positive scores for both mediator credibility and use of leverage, the case does not adhere to the pattern theorised in this thesis. Considering that Carter appeared credible to mediate in the eyes of the conflict parties and that he indeed used his leverage to successfully influence the negotiators, why did the peace process fail? It seems that the unsuccessful mediation outcome was less caused by Carter's insufficient mediation strategies than by the lack of conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict through peaceful means.

Despite not adhering to the theorised expectations for the findings, the case does not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis. Instead, the case highlights the necessity of conflict

ripeness for successful mediation. Despite agreeing to engage in negotiations under Carter's leadership, the EPLF seems to have lacked willingness to settle the conflict through peaceful means. On the contrary, the EPLF seems to have been "playing the talks" to gain international recognition for their cause (Spencer and Yang, 1992: 1507). These insincere motifs are apparent in the EPLF's insistence on the UN presence as a precondition for continued peace talks. Despite Carter having ruled this option out on the grounds of the UN principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of its member states, the EPLF used this as an excuse to continue armed struggle at a moment when the Ethiopian army was significantly weakened (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 39-40; Spencer and Yang, 1992: 1504). This indicates that the EPLF was ultimately not committed to dialogue and was primarily using the negotiations to enhance their military position vis-à-vis the government troops. Considering this lack of readiness to compromise in the belief that a military victory was feasible, it is unlikely that even the most experienced mediator like Carter could have been able to successfully mediate an end to the armed conflict. Since the case evidently does not meet the condition of conflict ripeness, it does not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis. Rather, it demonstrates that conflict ripeness is a necessary condition for successful mediation.

Notwithstanding the mediation effort's unsuccessful outcome, the case brings support to the claim that a credible mediator can indeed influence the negotiation process. As argued by the Carter Centre's advisors who were involved in the negotiations, despite the low probability of success given the intractable nature of the conflict, Carter's influence seems to have been a major determinant for why the talks progressed as far as they did (Spencer et al., 1992: 95). His intervention in the conflict not only reduced the armed fighting between the belligerents for a duration of ten months but also made the conflict parties consider non-military means of conflict resolution (Spencer and Spencer, 1992: 61-62). Furthermore, Carter's ability to credibly use his leverage to exert influence on the conflict parties seems to have been a major factor influencing not only the onset but also the progress of the negotiations. In essence, Carter was able to utilise his authoritative role to create pressure for agreement. For example, he used his leverage to not only threaten suspending the talks in case of non-agreement but also to push for concrete ways to overcome deadlocks. To increase the impact, he used his highly publicised communiques to vocalise his opinions, creating indirect pressure for the negotiators to compromise to avoid publicly appearing insincere. Thus, by utilising his leverage through the use of different means to generate multilevel pressure for compromise, Carter managed to create the necessary momentum to avoid the premature collapse of the talks.

While the negotiations never commenced in full swing, Carter's normative authority and material leverage in combination with the use of this leverage seem to have been major factors for the progress that was achieved during the short-lived talks. However, it is evident that Carter's

authority over the conflict parties had its limit. Even Carter with his high normative authority and material leverage to influence the parties was unable to bear the seed of peace to the conflict that was not ripe for negotiated resolution. This demonstrates that negotiations simply cannot lead to a successful outcome if the conflict parties are not willing to resolve the conflict in the first place.

6.3 Concluding remarks

Following the discussion in this chapter, it appears that only the HDC's mediation attempt in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict meets the theoretical expectations with negative values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage. With limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties, the HDC seems to have struggled to establish the necessary leverage for influencing the conflict parties. Carter's attempt to mediate an end to the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, on the other hand, does not adhere to the theorised pattern with positive scores for both variables. Rather than providing sufficient proof for rejecting the hypothesis, which expects highly credible mediators who use their leverage to influence the negotiation process to be successful mediators, the cases reveal two nuances about the hypothesised mechanism.

Firstly, it appears that mediation outcomes, whether successful or unsuccessful, are a sum of multiple factors – that is, under certain conditions even mediators who are considered credible and who can credibly intervene in the negotiation process, like Carter, cannot ensure the success of the peace process. In both cases, the main factor that led to the breakdown of the peace process seems to have had less to do with insufficient mediation than with the lack of conflict parties' willingness to settle the conflict through peaceful means. In the case of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, Carter's leverage seems to have weighed little in a context where the EPLF's prospects for a military victory had significantly increased. Similarly, while the utilisation of the Wise Men in combination with material incentives may have secured the signing of the COHA, the conflict parties lacked the will to implement the agreement, causing the breakdown of the peace process. This, thus, endorses the theoretical expectation that the mediation success is directly conditioned by conflict ripeness – thus, in the absence of the conflict parties' willingness to negotiate an end to the conflict, even highly credible mediators who use their leverage to influence the conflict parties cannot sustain the peace process.

Secondly, while mediators cannot force conflict parties to peace when there is no space for peace in their minds, the cases reveal that credible mediators who use their leverage to influence the negotiation process can nonetheless at minimum increase the already slim likelihood of success through skilful interventions. In both cases, the negotiations seem to have gone "over time" in the

sense that without mediator interventions the negotiations would have collapsed significantly earlier. With the introduction of the Wise Men who brought the mediation process some normative authority, the HDC seems to have been able to extend the lifespan of the negotiations by creating incentives for the conflict parties to return to the talks. Moreover, considering the low probability of success, Carter was able to move the conflict parties past multiple potential deadlock with his skilful use of leverage. It, thus, appears that, while the mediators could not guarantee the success of the talks, they nonetheless managed to extend the lifespan of the negotiations through credible interventions.

Therefore, despite not bringing support to the theorised pattern with the Ethiopia-Eritrea case scoring positive values for both mediator credibility and use of leverage, the cases do not bring sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis. Instead, they stress the importance of conflict ripeness for the mediation success, since both cases seem to have primarily failed due to the lack of conflict parties' willingness to negotiate a peaceful settlement. Nevertheless, the cases demonstrate that, in the conflicts where the probability of success is low like in the case of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, credible mediator interventions may in fact extend the lifespan of the negotiations. This demonstrates that credible mediators who use their leverage to influence the negotiation process may indeed increase the likelihood of mediation success – even if this likelihood was very slim to begin with.

7 CONCLUSION

The existing literature on peace mediation has often tended to side-line the question of why non-state mediators succeed in mediating lasting settlements to conflicts. With the focus solely on material leverage and state actors, the literature has tended to employ rational choice theories, largely dismissing other theoretical approaches, such as constructivism, that may provide a fruitful lens through which to study non-state actors as peace mediators. This thesis has sought to fill this gap in the literature and has asked the question: *how can non-state mediators contribute to the likelihood of successful mediation?* Building on the constructivist theories of International Relations, the thesis has argued that highly credible mediators who use their leverage to intervene in the negotiations are more likely to be successful mediators than those who have limited credibility in the eyes of the conflict parties and/or do not use their leverage to intervene in the process.

The four case studies used in this thesis – namely Annan in the post-election conflict in Kenya, the HDC and Ahtisaari in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict, and Carter in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict – reveal that, while highly credible mediators are more likely to be successful mediators, this is not always the case. Despite being highly credible and using his leverage to intervene in the negotiation

process, Carter was unable to secure a negotiated settlement between the conflict parties. Thus, the four case studies do not adhere to the theorised pattern. However, the unsuccessful outcome in the case of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict can better be explained by the EPLF's lack of willingness to settle the conflict through peaceful means than Carter's insufficient mediation. Thus, while the observed pattern does not meet the theoretical expectations, this does not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the hypothesis. Instead, the Ethiopia-Eritrea case reveals that conflict ripeness indeed is a necessary condition for mediation success, as was also expected in this thesis.

In all the cases, it is evident that when the mediator was perceived credible for intervening, they could use their leverage to influence the negotiation process. This brings support to the theorised mechanism, which assumes that non-state mediators can use their leverage to exert influence on the conflict parties when they are considered credible for intervening. It also appears that because Kofi Annan and Martti Ahtisaari were considered highly credible, they could more readily intervene in the negotiation process with successful results than the HDC who struggled to establish normative authority and material leverage over the conflict parties. Despite the unsuccessful mediation outcome, as a highly credible mediator, Jimmy Carter seems to have been able to exert influence on the conflict parties on multiple occasions and, thus, managed to extend the lifespan of the negotiations beyond the initial breaking point. Therefore, the four cases seem to bring support to the claim that when non-state mediators are perceived highly credible, they can use their leverage to influence the negotiation process and, thus, increase the likelihood of mediation success – even if this likelihood is very slim to begin with like in the Ethiopia-Eritrea case.

While the cases seem to overall bring some support to the hypothesis, they also reveal at least two nuances about the hypothesised mechanism – however, there most likely are more that this research has not discovered. Firstly, as revealed by the two mediation attempts in the Aceh-Indonesia conflict, it seems to matter when and how the mediator can credibly intervene in the negotiation process. While a mediator can be regarded credible for intervening in certain contexts, such as the HDC in humanitarian questions, this may not be so in other contexts. Whilst highly credible mediators are more likely able to intervene in a wide range of contexts, this finding nonetheless raises the question of how to discern between critical interventions and uncritical ones. Secondly, as demonstrated by the two successful mediation cases, a mediator's skilful interventions seem to be of critical importance for increasing the likelihood of successful mediation. Both Annan and Ahtisaari seem to have been able to strike a balance between stepping back as mediators and intervening to break deadlocks at critical moments. The skilful balancing between intervention and non-intervention seems to have been essential for letting deliberation and argumentation guide the way to relationship transformation, while ensuring the progress of the talks. This implies that the mere use of leverage

does not necessarily suffice to ensure mediation success – this leverage should be used skilfully to encourage compromise at critical moments. Overall, the theory forwarded in this thesis would benefit from further reflection on these issues and the establishment of additional conditions for the functioning of the hypothesised mechanism.

The four cases, thus, seem to bring modest support for the hypothesised mechanism linking the mediator's credible use of leverage to the increased likelihood of successful mediation. Nevertheless, as has been shown in this thesis, this mechanism does not seem to occur automatically but under well-defined conditions. This research has only touched upon the functioning of this mechanism and primarily serves as a starting point for further research on non-state mediators. To refine the theoretical framework and to draw stronger conclusions, further research on the question of how non-state mediator can contribute to the likelihood of mediation success is needed.

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