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FALSE READİNESS THEORY AND BİLATERAL AND THİRD-PARTY PEACE PROCESSES: MEDİATED AND NON-MEDİATED DYADS İN COMPARATİVE PERSPECTİVE

Master's Thesis

Lorenzo Emilio Rodriguez Vargas

Peace and Conflict Studies

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STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I affirm that all the information included in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with the principles and standards of academic integrity. Moreover, I confirm that I have properly cited and referenced all materials and findings that are not my original work, as required by these principles and standards. This thesis has been written following the guidelines established by the Social Sciences University of Ankara, Institute of Social Sciences.

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To the Türkiye Scholarships (Türkiye Bursları), for giving me the opportunity to study and live in such a wonderful country as Türkiye.

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To my family of expats in Ankara and Istanbul, strangers in a strange land as we are we transcended merely friendship.

DEDICATION

To my beloved mother.

To my cherished father.

To my dearest brother.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of False Readiness in peace processes, particularly focusing on the impact of mediators when at least one party is not genuinely committed to peace. The study employs a mixed-method approach, combining Information Theory for Comparative Case Analysis and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), to examine ten peace processes from five conflicts: Northern Ireland, Basque, Colombian, Sri Lankan, and South Sudanese. The research is grounded in the False Readiness Theory (FRT), which posits that parties may engage in deceptive negotiations to buy time, extract concessions, or avoid appearing weak.

It begins with a comprehensive literature review, covering negotiation, mediation, deception, and rational choice theories. It then delves into the methodological framework, explaining the use of Information Theory metrics and QCA to analyze the selected case studies. The study identifies several confounding and explanatory conditions, such as violence during the peace process, power asymmetry, and the presence of a mediator, to understand their impact on the likelihood of False Readiness.

The findings reveal that the presence of a mediator does not necessarily increase the likelihood of False Readiness, contradicting the initial hypothesis. Instead, the study finds that maximalist preferences and the failure to reach or implement a final agreement are significant indicators of False Readiness. The thesis also highlights the importance of understanding the strategic use of deception in peace processes and the need for mediators to address these dynamics effectively.

Through detailed process tracing of selected cases, the thesis provides a nuanced understanding of how False Readiness manifests in peace negotiations and offers policy recommendations for mediators and policymakers. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for further research on the role of deception in conflict resolution and the development of more precise indicators for False Readiness.

Keywords: negotiation, mediation, deception, bargaining theory, insincere motives

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Barış Süreçlerindeki Sahte Hazırlığın rolünü inceleyerek, özellikle en az bir tarafın gerçekten barışa bağlı olmadığı durumlarda arabulucuların etkisine odaklanır. Bilgi Teorisi, Karşılaştırmalı Durum Analizi ve Niteliksel Karşılaştırmalı Analiz (QCA) birleştiren karma metodolojik bir yaklaşım kullanılarak, Kuzey İrlanda, Bask, Kolombiya, Sri Lanka ve Güney Sudan'daki beş çatışmanın on barış süreci incelenir. Sahte Hazırlık Teorisi (FRT) temel alınarak, tarafların zaman kazanmak, tavizler elde etmek veya zayıflık göstermemek için aldatıcı müzakerelere girebileceği öne sürülür.

Çalışma, müzakere, arabuluculuk, aldatma ve rasyonel seçim teorilerini içeren geniş bir literatür taramasıyla başlar. Ardından, metodolojik çerçeveye geçilerek, seçilen vaka çalışmalarının analizinde Bilgi Teorisi ölçümleri ve QCA'nın nasıl kullanıldığı açıklanır. Barış süreci boyunca şiddet, güç asimetrisi ve arabulucunun varlığı gibi çeşitli faktörlerin Sahte Hazırlık olasılığı üzerindeki etkilerini anlamaya çalışır.

Bulgular, bir arabulucunun varlığının Sahte Hazırlık olasılığını mutlaka artırmadığını ve başlangıçtaki hipotezi çürüttüğünü gösterir. Aksine, çalışma, maksimalist tercihler ve nihai bir anlaşmanın olamaması veya uygulanamaması gibi durumların Sahte Hazırlık için önemli belirteçler olduğunu bulur. Tez ayrıca, barış süreçlerinde aldatmanın stratejik kullanımının önemini ve arabulucuların bu dinamikleri etkili bir şekilde ele alması gerektiğini vurgular.

Seçilen vakaların detaylı süreç izlemesiyle, tez, Sahte Hazırlığın barış müzakerelerinde nasıl belirdiğine dair kapsamlı bir anlayış sunar ve arabulucular ve politika yapıcılar için politika önerileri getirir. Çalışma, çatışma çözümünde aldatmanın rolü üzerine daha fazla araştırma yapılması ve Sahte Hazırlık için daha kesin belirteçlerin geliştirilmesi gerektiğini vurgular.

Anahtar Kelimeler: müzakere, arabuluculuk, aldatma, pazarlık teorisi, samimiyetsiz amaçlar

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DEFINITIONS AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF TERMS

Mutual Hurting Stalemate	This refers to a scenario where conflicting parties reach a stalemate and cannot secure a win while enduring substantial costs due to the conflict.
Pareto optimal equilibrium	A concept that describes an allocation of resources where it is impossible to make any one individual better off without making at least one other individual worse off.
Relative gains	A concept in international relations that values comparative benefits over absolute ones, emphasizing a state's position relative to others rather than its independent gains.
Reservation values	It is the highest price a buyer is ready to pay or the lowest price a seller is willing to accept for a product or service.
Uncertainty	A crucial aspect affecting the strategies and outcomes of bargaining situations. It includes the unpredictability that players face concerning the negotiation's structure, other parties' actions, and their payoffs.
Zero-sum game	A situation where one participant's gains or losses balance the others. The total benefit or loss equals zero, meaning any advantage one gains results in a disadvantage for the other.

ABBREVIATION

ELN	National Liberation Army
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
IRA	Irish Republican Army
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MHS	Mutual Hurting Stalemate
PNV	Basque Nationalist Party
QCA	Qualitative Comparative Analysis
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
ZOPA	Zone of Possible Agreement

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Study

Interdependence inherent in human life leads to numerous social dilemmas. These dilemmas stem from situations that require individual decision-making under conditions of interdependence, generally leading to suboptimal outcomes. Decisions can be parametric, where the context is a given parameter, or strategic, where decisions are interdependent, and our choices depend on the actions of others.

If one has *complete information* about the outcomes of different options, meaning that they know with certainty the consequences of their decisions, they are in a situation of certainty. However, if the *information is incomplete* and the consequences of their actions are unknown, the situation is one of risk or uncertainty.

In this context, peace processes can be seen as a complex social situation in which actors with both cooperative and competitive interests engage in high-stake strategic interactions. These actors often have a history of distrust and hostility, further complicating the decision-making process. As a result, negotiations facilitated by third parties or conducted independently are potential strategies for resolving conflicts and reaching mutually acceptable solutions. This approach involves explicit bargaining (Schelling, 1960), in which parties openly state their demands and offer each other. This type of bargaining is characterized by a clear understanding of the issues at stake, each other's preferences and interests, and the costs and benefits of different outcomes.

In this bargaining problem, both actors must show a disposition to overcome their differences and find a middle point to develop a new relationship conducive to settling the dispute. Conventional wisdom often supports the idea that "the context in which negotiations take place shapes negotiators' reactions to a crisis" (Druckman & Olekalns, 2012, 967p). However, negotiation and crisis bargaining theories have failed to adequately examine how actors frame their negotiation context and, thus, their best alternatives to a negotiated agreement (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

For example, Glozman, Barak-Corren, and Yaniv note that "the role of deception and misrepresentation in negotiations has received much attention" (2014, 675p). However, this has always been studied within agreement-seeking environments, and the exact adherence to negotiation rules has been assumed. This creates a bias among actors who may not intend to fulfill their commitments in the first place (Chigudu, 2021).

What happens when negotiating in good faith does not necessarily achieve peace? The parties involved may have divergent views on cooperation. While one party can consider negotiation as a cooperative game, recognizing the importance of considering each other's interests for a mutually advantageous outcome, the other party can perceive negotiation as a zero-sum game, in which any concession is perceived as an absolute loss rather than a relative loss (Chohan, 2019). This divergence in perspectives resulted in different strategies and varying willingness to cooperate among participants. While one participant saw losses in relative terms and aimed for alternative equilibria, the other sought victory by ultimately defeating their opponent, thus encouraging deceptive tactics.

In straightforward terms, the research question that this master's thesis attempts to delve into is: what is the effect of a mediator on the trajectory and outcome of peace processes when at least one of the parties presents False Readiness, and how can this effect be measured and explained? This thesis aims to investigate the role of False Readiness in bilateral and third-party peace processes using a comparative perspective between mediated and non-mediated dyads. The theoretical framework developed by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021) and used in this thesis highlights instances where a party declares that they are ready to negotiate peace when, in reality, they are not frequently out of a desire to buy time, strengthen their bargaining position, or avoid looking weak. As such, this research contributes to the broader scholarly discussion on conflict resolution, negotiation, and mediation, drawing on elements from the Bargaining Theory and the abovementioned theory to establish the conditions and case population in the study.

The Bargaining Theory provides a systematic framework for understanding strategic interactions and conflict resolution among actors with conflicting interests. It merges rational choice analyses with behavioral insights to realistically portray negotiations (Vanderschraaf, 2023; Powell, 2002). On the other hand, the False Readiness Theory investigates deceptive negotiation tactics, emphasizing actors' strategic behavior when they enter talks not to reach a resolution but to gain advantages and maintain or enhance their strategic position. By focusing on cases in which negotiations do not result in a resolution, this theory offers a framework for understanding why parties may engage in insincere negotiations and how this affects the overall conflict resolution process. These approaches can help identify barriers to conflict resolution and inform policymakers about strategies to address this bargaining problem.

1.2 Contributions of the Study

While deception and misrepresentation in negotiations have received significant attention, particularly in contributions by Glozman, Barak-Corren, and Yaniv (2014) and Kang et al. (2020), the role of these factors in mediation research has been scarce, excluding the work of Danneman and Beardsley (2020). Therefore, this study's central contribution is to investigate the effects of False Readiness on conflict management initiatives undertaken by third parties, bridging the study of deception and misrepresentation within the mediation research topic.

Why is this needed? Theoretically, there could be instances in which false negotiations occur when a party gains more by stalling negotiations until an external change considerably improves its position. Thus, even the mediation process can be used as a tool for deception. Understanding this dilemma is a challenge that mediators must address to keep the process alive and strive for results. A mediator's objective is to reach a formal agreement, ceasing the dispute, and the objective of a false negotiator is to avoid it. Bargaining trajectories, including episodes of assisted and unassisted negotiations, can continue for years without a peace agreement, even with a mediator facilitating the process (Arı, 2022). Studies suggest that mediators can positively impact peace processes by conferring legitimacy (Nathan, 2017), reducing violence (DeRouen & Chowdhury, 2016), and providing resources to mitigate information failure (Svensson & Lindgren, 2013).

However, the commonly held belief that mediation is invariably a positive force that promotes resolution in peace processes can be misleading when one attempts to put theory into practice. This notion might inadvertently create intellectual blindness, a tunnel vision that prevents observers from seeing the full spectrum of possibilities. Specifically, it obscures the potential scenario in which mediators are used as tools and instrumentalized as part of a larger hard bargaining strategy (Danneman & Beardsley, 2022). This perspective limits our understanding and can skew our approaches toward conflict resolution, thereby inhibiting genuinely effective solutions. This thesis partially defies the consensus that mediation is generally effective in achieving peace by making the precision that if one of the parties involved presents a False Readiness behavior, the mediator's presence could jeopardize the peace process.

Addressing this strategic dilemma and its conflict-resolution management implications inspires this proposal and outlines its benefits. It will introduce deception and misrepresentation in the International Mediation research topic, driving attention to cases in which mediators could be hurting the process of reaching an agreement. This academic contribution directly affects field-related professionals undertaking political mediation among disputing parties.

1.3 Brief Overview of the Literature

This thesis covers several perspectives on the peace process. For instance, the Rational Choice approach posits that war is a rational decision made by actors evaluating their options, focusing on the costs and benefits of conflict (Kydd, 2010). Trust is a primary challenge in peace processes. It is a cyclical issue where parties cannot initiate a peace process without trust, yet trust cannot be established without engaging in the process. Bargaining theory, central to this discussion, views conflicts as bargaining problems in which parties negotiate to minimize costs and maximize benefits (Vanderschraaf, 2003). Non-cooperative bargaining models examine how the negotiation environment influences bargaining strategies and outcomes (Powell, 2002). Chapter 2 deepens the subject of commitment problems and asymmetric information as critical factors leading to negotiation inefficiencies (Fearon, 1995; Powell, 2002).

Likewise, negotiations are pivotal in international relations, impacting various aspects such as territorial conflicts, trade disputes, and foreign policy. They form the backbone of diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts through mutual agreement (Fearon, 1995). However, it is crucial to understand that these negotiations transpire within a specific context, considering ongoing conflicts, parties' dynamics, previous trust levels, past negotiation results, public opinion, and negotiators' flexibility. These contextual elements underscore that negotiations are not isolated incidents (Sebenius, 2007).

In this sense, power dynamics significantly influence negotiations, and factors such as proposal power, patience, outside options, and monopolistic power shape bargaining dynamics. A negotiator's reputation and credible commitment are sources of bargaining power (Esteban &

Sákovics, 2007). This power dynamic intertwines with the role of mediators in negotiations, who alter perceptions and behavior without using physical force or legal authority. They ensure that actors have access to the necessary information to gauge mutually preferable outcomes accurately (Beardsley et al., 2006).

Moore (1987) characterizes mediation as an enhanced version of the negotiation process in which a neutral third party assists conflicting parties in achieving a mutually agreeable settlement. Mediation is frequently employed in situations where disputes are drawn-out and complex, the parties' attempts to manage the conflict have stalled, neither side is willing to incur additional costs or escalate the dispute, and the parties are ready to break their deadlock by cooperating and initiating contact and communication (Bercovitch 1984). Rational disputants are likely to accept a mediator's proposal if the anticipated benefit of reaching an agreement is greater than the expected benefit of ongoing conflict and both parties believe the agreement will remain intact (Maoz and Terris, 2006).

Rationalist theories of war suggest that the desire to distort information about a state's military strength and determination, known as its reservation point, is crucial in causing negotiation breakdown (Fearon, 1995). When disputing states are uncertain about each other's reservation points, they might struggle to reach a peaceful agreement, prompting conflict (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2008). Mediators play a vital role in ensuring that actors have access to the necessary information to accurately gauge the range of mutually preferable outcomes (Beardsley et al., 2006).

However, a significant challenge in mediation is the potential for disputants to mislead mediators by providing false information to secure international support and mislead their counterparts (Gaspar et al., 2022; Wiegand et al., 2021). This risk aligns with formal rationalist explanations, where private information and strategic interaction incentivize disputants to misrepresent their resolve (Rauchhaus, 2006). Power parity between conflicting parties is a critical factor in reaching a stalemate where the costs of conflict mount and efforts to manage it are unproductive (Zartman, 2000).

In terms of position and argumentative lines, this thesis aligns with Rationalist Approaches to Conflict Prevention and Resolution (DeRouen & Chowdhury, 2016; Fearon, 1995; Kydd, 2005; Powell, 2002; Reiter, 2003; Smith & Stam, 2004; Svensson & Lindgren, 2013; Terris & Maoz, 2005). As indicated previously, the main theoretical frameworks supporting this work are the

Bargaining and False Readiness Theories. The latter was conceived as an additional theoretical layer to Dean G. Pruitt's Readiness Theory (2007) and William I. Zartman's Ripeness Theory (1985). While False Readiness Theory underpins the causal explanations and conceptual models used in this research, the Bargaining Theory insights contribute to operationalizing the conditions for empirical testing in Chapters 3 and 4. Social interactions are strategic situations that can be derived into bargaining problems when actors face opposing interests, deception expressing itself as a valid means towards an end. Surfing against the tide, this thesis raises the question: What if mediators could hurt the ongoing peace process between belligerents?

Due to the transdisciplinary character of the Peace and Conflict Studies field, it is necessary to incorporate contributions from decision-making studies (Glozman, Barak-Corren, and Yaniv, 2014) along with management and economics (Kang et al., 2020). Kydd (2010) acknowledges the importance of information provision in rationalist approaches to conflict resolution and highlights some critical questions and puzzles that remain to be explored in this area. For example, although significant literature exists on how third-party mediation can facilitate peace, little empirical work has been devoted to its opposite venue: how third-party interventions can hamper peace. However, more research is necessary on this possibility, and this thesis aims to do so. Therefore, because negotiation is an incentive-rich context, characterized by both cooperation and competition (Boothby et al., 2023)–and, by extension, mediation–all of the above theoretical lacunas and research venues contribute to the current state of the literature for the research puzzle presented in this thesis proposal.

According to Schwartz and Gilboa (2021), current conflict resolution theories that explain the success of negotiations present theoretical blindness. They note that these theories overfocus on successful cases and initial stages and on offering criteria and factors to assess if a conflict is suitable for resolution. However, they fall short when accounting for failed negotiations that can be propelled by various alternative explanations, such as those explained below.

In this sense, several concepts related to negotiation theory and deception are worth mentioning. For instance, "Side effects" refer to the unintended consequences of negotiations that can undermine their success. "Hard avoidance bargaining" involves parties refusing to make concessions or engage in substantive negotiations. "False negotiation" occurs when parties engage in negotiations without a genuine intention to reach an agreement. "Insincere negotiations" occur when parties negotiate with a hidden agenda or ulterior motive. "Insincere bargaining" involves parties making offers they know will be rejected or demanding concessions they know will not be accepted. Lastly, "spoilers" are individuals or groups that seek to undermine the negotiation process. Although these concepts help understand why some negotiations fail and can help practitioners develop strategies to address these challenges, they also overlap with the concept of False Readiness, as they all involve parties engaging in negotiations for reasons other than reaching peace. Previous attempts can be considered unsystematic because of this gap in the intersection between conflict resolution and negotiation theories.

Regarding the case studies, a case population with similar scope conditions was selected for qualitative analysis. These cases were explicitly chosen for more detailed process tracing because of sufficient book-length documentation. These include policy scholarly analysis of the processes (Höglund & Svensson, 2002, 2006, 2009; Brosché & Duursma, 2018) and historical documentation, such as books, collections, and journalistic sources (Aiartza, 2010, 2019; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010; Coogan, 2000; English, 2003; Heiberg, 1989; Mallie & McKittrick, 1996).

1.4 Methodology

The methodological framework of the thesis relies on mixed research methods. Ontologically speaking, it fits on a non-rigid objectivist perspective of science due to somewhat unintelligible mixed-motive dynamics in mediation processes studied in it. The selected research design was a structured, focused comparison using process tracing and information-theoretic techniques to systematically analyze comparative case studies (Drozdova & Gaubatz, 2015) for case studies' validity. Critical concepts in the Information Method include Information Entropy, which measures the uncertainty of an outcome without additional data, and Conditional Information Entropy, which measures the uncertainty using known factors. Mutual Information quantifies the information gained from these factors, indicating the more informative factors.

By following the logic of contrast between mediated and non-mediated dyads during the same bargaining trajectories as historical cases, the effects of a negotiator on peace talks presenting False Readiness will be more visible. For the case population, the Northern Ireland Conflict, Basque Conflict, Colombian Conflict, South Sudan Conflict, and Sri Lanka Conflict were selected because of their regional diversity and dyad similarity, namely, an oppositional political force contesting through armed means the authority of the central government and, on the other end, the State.

The mixed-method approach begins with Information Analysis for Comparative Case Studies (Drozdova & Gaubatz, 2015), rooted in Information Theory, specifically Claude Shannon's work on "A Mathematical Theory of Communication." This method involves quantifying the information content of events and measuring the uncertainty and dependence between variables, understood as conditions in this research. The second method used was Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) formulated by Charles Ragin. QCA uses set-theoretical vocabulary and Boolean logic to perform analyses of necessity and sufficiency. The study encompasses ten cases originating from the five conflicts mentioned above, chosen to account for temporal variability between assisted and unassisted negotiation processes. The methodology also identifies several theoretical concepts for cofounding and explanatory conditions, each represented in a binary form, indicating their presence or absence.

The results were subsequently analyzed to determine the significance of each condition to explain the presence of False Readiness. This thesis examines the impact of Mediator Presence and Power Asymmetry within dyads on the likelihood of False Readiness in both mediated and non-mediated peace talks as explanatory conditions according to the QCA set-theoretical vocabulary. False Readiness was the dependent variable, which was considered the outcome condition. The units of analysis were both mediated and non-mediated. The hypotheses of this study were as follows:

- Hypothesis 1 (H1): False Readiness presence will be higher in mediated dyads than in non-mediated dyads.
- Hypothesis 2 (H2): False Readiness presence will be higher in power asymmetric dyads than in symmetric dyads.
- Hypothesis 3 (H3): Mediated dyads, in which the mediator fails to detect False Readiness, are more likely to result in strategic gains for the deceiver.

A set of confounding conditions was considered in the study, which were used as control variables to account for possible indicators of False Readiness. These conditions include violence during the peace process, the realization that the conflict cannot be won by violence, a dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position, instances where a final agreement was not reached or implemented, maximalist preferences, and hard avoidance bargaining. The study also examined explanatory conditions, including Power Asymmetry and Symmetry, and the Presence of a Mediator. They contribute to understanding why false readiness occurs and how it relates to the mediator's involvement.

Finally, process tracing is employed to conduct a detailed analysis of specific positive cases in which the scope, confounding, and outcome conditions are present. This methodology aims to establish a causal link by identifying and analyzing traces of hypothesized causal mechanisms. The causal mechanism designed for the analysis follows the results of the information metrics obtained previously. It identifies the causes, such as the realization that the conflict cannot be won violently and the dramatic decline in the insurgency's strategic position. Later, it details the activities and entities involved in the causal mechanism, such as starting and sustaining negotiations with maximalist preferences, refusing proposals, and agreeing to only partial settlements. The expected outcome is the presence of False Readiness, as indicated by conflict restarting after negotiation failure.

1.5 Structure of the Study

Chapter 1 outlines the main objectives and the significance of the study. It discusses the interdependence in human life leading to social dilemmas and the role of peace processes in complex social situations requiring strategic interactions. Further, it describes the research methods used in the study, including the mixed research methods approach and structured, focused comparison using process tracing, while clearly stating the hypotheses and research questions of the thesis. Chapter 2 examines the theoretical underpinnings and literature review of peace processes, negotiation, mediation, and deception, serving as the study's nucleus. It discusses the rational choice approach to conflict, negotiation theories, third-party mediators' roles, and the role of deception in negotiations. The chapter concludes by introducing the False Readiness Theory, designed to understand failed peace processes.

This sets the stage for Chapter 3, where each section zeroes in a specific conflict. In this section, Jeong's (2009) Conflict Analysis Framework is crucial for analyzing conflicts. This conflict-mapping strategy focuses on the relationships between various elements in a conflict situation.

These elements include Parties representing the individuals or groups involved in the conflict. Needs/Values/Interests signify the parties' motivations, desires, and priorities. Goals/Issues refer to specific objectives or problems at the heart of the conflict. Strategies/Styles indicate how parties engage in conflict. These elements all connect to the central component, Dynamics/Relationships, symbolizing the interactions and relationships between the parties. Lastly, Intervention Strategies refer to the methods used to manage or resolve conflict.

The Northern Ireland conflict is marked by a struggle between the Protestant unionist community, which wants to continue in the United Kingdom, and the Catholic nationalist community, which seeks unification with the Republic of Ireland. The Basque conflict analysis highlights the tension between the Basque nationalist, the separatist group ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna), and the Spanish government. The Colombian conflict, a long-standing battle between the Colombian government and various insurgent groups, mainly the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), is analyzed with a focus on peace processes and international mediation efforts. The Sri Lankan conflict analysis focuses on the civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). The South Sudan Conflict section provides a comprehensive portrayal of the First and Second Sudanese Civil Wars, emphasizing the roles of rebel groups and the Sudanese government and the effects of international interventions and peace agreements.

Chapter 3 continues with Information Theory for Comparative Case Analysis and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to systematically analyze the selected case studies, identify the conditions that influence False Readiness in peace processes, and successfully address H1 and H2. Then, Chapter 4 begins by explaining why process tracing was chosen as the preferred method to continue the research. It reveals that inconsistencies in the relationships among scope conditions, explanatory conditions, and the outcome condition presented in the truth table made Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) impractical to answer H3. Instead, process tracing provides a deeper understanding of the case population and allows for a detailed examination of the causes, the causal mechanism, and the outcome. This chapter focuses on the two Basque negotiation processes (the Algiers and the Zapatero's Peace Processes) and one Sri Lankan peace process (2001-2004). These cases were chosen due to their strong correlation with the scope conditions and considered positive cases.

Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the findings from the research and its limitations. It summarizes the results of the study and its relationships with each of the hypotheses previously mentioned and the research question: What is the effect of a mediator on the trajectory and outcome of peace processes when at least one of the parties presents False Readiness and how can this effect be measured and explained? Moreover, it delves into its policy implications and provides recommendations for future research.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of peace processes and the role of False Readiness, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, this study's reliability could be limited due to the lack of inter-rater reliability on the truth table construct and the observations made on the cases. This limitation could be addressed in future research by involving additional observers to ensure accurate coding. Secondly, the validity of this study could be questioned due to the ambiguity of its outcome condition, False Readiness. Although the study adheres to the starting point provided by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021), a more precise and refined indicator for the construct could be developed to delve into the nuances of bargaining trajectories, particularly at the end of the peace process.

Thirdly, the external validity of this study is compromised due to the relatively small initial population of ten cases, further refined to three positive cases. This limits the generalizability of the findings to other settings, populations, and times. Future research could involve a more profound process tracing analysis of deviant cases to achieve more generalizable conclusions. In addition, due to time and resource constraints, it was not possible to ensure construct validity using multiple sources of evidence like interviews, observations, and document analysis. This limitation means the findings could not be cross-verified to ensure secondary sources did not bias them. Finally, inconsistent relationships among scope conditions, explanatory conditions, and the outcome condition made conducting a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) impractical. This suggests a need for a more precise indicator for False Readiness and refinement of conditions like Final Agreement Not Reached Or Implemented. It also points to a potential expansion of the set of cases tested with the Information Method and QCA in future research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 of the thesis explores existing literature on negotiation, mediation, deception, rational choice, bargaining, and the relationships between its concepts, setting the stage for understanding the research topic. It serves as a critical foundation for the empirical investigation by presenting a general literature framework and positioning the thesis within the broader scholarly discourse on conflict resolution and negotiation processes, particularly aligned with the Rationalist Approaches to Conflict Prevention and Resolution. By synthesizing and analyzing diverse theoretical perspectives, Chapter 2 aims to clarify the complexities of negotiations in the context of deception and mediators' role in shaping peace negotiations' outcomes. Through a review of relevant literature, this chapter provides insights, conceptual discussions, and theoretical frameworks that inform the subsequent empirical analysis in Chapter 3, offering a nuanced perspective on the dynamics of conflict resolution and the strategic interactions among conflicting parties in negotiation settings.

2.1 Peace Processes as a Bargaining Problem

From the communication-based negotiation perspective, common in the peacemaking community, effective communication is essential to bolster relationships, handle conflicts, and achieve mutual benefits. Active listening, combined with empathy and respect, aids in understanding the interests and needs of the other party, thereby cultivating trust. Encouraging dialogue, clearing misunderstandings, and promoting position sharing are facilitated by asking open-ended questions (Galtung & Fischer, 2013). Conflict management in communication is achieved through reframing perspectives and brainstorming, while respect and empathy lay the foundation for enduring collaboration (Webel & Galtung, 2009).

On the other hand, the risk management approach entails identifying potential threats that could influence the negotiation process, originating from various sources like conflicting interests, hidden agendas, information scarcity, and unstable external conditions (Butler, 2019). Following this, the identified risks are thoroughly assessed. Negotiators formulate strategies to manage these risks effectively. This could involve improving communication, trust-building, setting transparent objectives, conducting research, and formulating contingency plans (Webel & Galtung, 2009). The final step is monitoring and adapting, which requires continuous vigilance and adaptation (Ghosn, 2010).

The practical risk management approach intersects with Rational Choice's theoretical perspective, which posits that war emerges rationally from instrumental actors in a strategic context. According to this viewpoint, conflict is an action that incurs expenses for participants compared with a different, peaceful way of conducting themselves (Mitchell et al., 2012; Kydd, 2010; Filson & Werner, 2002). In addition to this perspective, which focuses on costs and benefits, the focus is often on the causes of war rather than on understanding why peace efforts fail once a conflict has begun. Peace processes face a dilemma: parties cannot enter a peace process without mutual trust. However, they cannot build trust without entering into the peace process. This situation is often the biggest challenge to initiating and sustaining peace (Greig & Regan, 2008). Without mutual trust, parties are reluctant to engage in talks or negotiations and fear betrayal or manipulation (Höglund & Svensson, 2006).

On the other hand, there are limited opportunities to establish the trust necessary for effective dialogue and compromise without entering into a peace process. This cycle of suspicion and hesitancy often hinders progress and perpetuates conflicts (Höglund & Svensson, 2006). Understanding the complexities of building trust and navigating this precarious balance is essential for a successful, peaceful process (Richmond, 2006). Often, despite the shared desire for settlements to avoid war costs, certain conditions hinder reaching such agreements and lead to conflicts (Özdoğan & Yavçan, 2016; Melin & Svensson, 2009). Scholars in international relations concentrate on these logical justifications, as they form a basis for comprehending irrationality and principal-agent problems (Chohan, 2019; Cunningham, 2011; Bercovitch, 1984). The emphasis on rational explanations is based on the understanding that leaders and states act in their self-interests by making strategic calculations based on their objectives (Mitchell et al., 2012; Kydd, 2010).

Examining conflicts within a single state and efforts to establish peace processes are complex tasks that involve various factors. The contemporary view of civil conflict underscores the importance of peacebuilding. Sisk (2009) describes the peace process as a complicated interaction among conflicting parties directed by third-party mediators to shift from war to peace (DeRouen & Chowdhury, 2016; Johnson, 2015). International intervention is an equalizing influence, rendering negotiations more attractive while making military victory pursuit costly and less probable (Kirschner & Von Stein, 2009; Melin & Svensson, 2009; Greig & Regan, 2008). As Vanderschraaf (2023) described, the bargaining problem entails a set of possible outcomes and a point representing non-consensus in the utility realm. This interpretation prioritizes outcome vectors over specific actions, emphasizing negotiated results (Fey & Ramsay, 2010). Understanding how negotiators navigate established practices requires consideration of learning and focal points (Schelling, 1960). In the academic literature, the feasible set S is known by various other terms, such as the negotiation set and bargaining region (Butler, 2019). Similarly, other scholarly works (Downie, 1991) label the point of nonagreement as a status quo or conflict. Although agents share some common interests, there are also distinct differences (Vanderschraaf, 2023).

Bargaining models give players various choices to determine their share of the bargaining surplus. Scholars (Spaniel, 2023; Kydd, 2010; Sisk, 2009; Filson & Werner, 2002; Schelling, 1960) point out that conflict and its peace processes exhibit similarities to bargaining problems, where parties can minimize costs and maximize benefits. Achieving an agreement necessitates mutual interaction, offering numerous opportunities for mutually beneficial outcomes based on negotiation styles and tactics (Irmer & Druckman, 2009; Barston, 1983). In this context, peace processes involve ongoing negotiations and underscore the progress of discussions in various stages marked by significant turning points (Arı, 2022; Druckman, 2019). Peace agreements embody the complex power dynamics among various actors in a conflict. They reflect the struggles, compromises, and collective will for resolution. The main goal of negotiations during peace processes is to subtly and strategically shift the balance of power to one’s advantage (Bell & Wise, 2022). The aim is to maneuver the situation to maximize the benefits of peace, ideally outweighing the costs of continued conflict. Otherwise, the incentives to alter the political balance remain in the shadow of war (Kirschner & Von Stein, 2009).

At each stage of the peace process, parties involved in the conflict are confronted with significant decisions. For instance, turning points are critical in peace processes, indicating movement between phases (Druckman, 2019). Usually expressed as crises, these can be functional or inhibiting (Druckman & Olekalns, 2012; Höglund, 2004). Notably, intensified violence during crises is viewed as a tacit bargaining tool that influences adversaries at the negotiating table and on the streets (Höglund & Nilsson, 2022; Mac Ginty, 2022; Sisk, 2009). Arı (2023) distinguished between explicit and implicit bargaining, with explicit negotiation involving verbal communication and implicit negotiation occurring through actions and counteractions such as escalated violence. Hence, they are compelled to choose to end the negotiation process, permit an extended deadlock to ensue, or make necessary concessions and actions that facilitate progression to the subsequent phase of resolution. According to Höglund and Nilsson (2022), Druckman (2019), Sisk (2009), and Quinn et al. (2006), crises play a crucial role in the negotiation process, as they compel parties to choose whether to escalate the conflict, enhance cooperation, or maintain negotiation amidst upheaval. Arı (2023), Höglund and Nilsson (2022), and Sisk (2009) noted that violence may cease or escalate precisely because of ongoing peace talks, challenging conventional perspectives on the relationship between negotiations and conflict resolution.

As seen, the dynamics of the peace process are complex and encompass various factors that influence bargaining strategies and outcomes. Bargaining models offer negotiators a significant range of options when determining how to distribute the bargaining surplus (Spaniel, 2023; Vanderschraaf, 2023). However, a critical observation from Powell (2002) is that bargaining tends to result in costly delays and inefficient outcomes. This phenomenon, challenging to explain, has been partially accounted for through the lens of asymmetric information (Rauchhaus, 2006). Bargaining models typically assume states seek to maximize their absolute gains, but Powell (2002) warns of the relevance of relative gains[1] concerns, which may impact negotiation strategies. Fearon's (1995) rationalist explanations suggest that asymmetrical information leads to conflict, as the demand-maximizing one expected payoff may be rejected positively, resulting in war. A second explanation, Fearon (1995) notes, lies in the inability of states to credibly commit to following agreements, introducing a crucial dimension for understanding negotiation breakdowns, the commitment problem (Powell, 2002).

Although asymmetric information is related to bargaining inefficiencies, it has limitations in explaining delays. Powell (2002) explores cases of two-sided incomplete information, where

[1] Relative gains in bargaining theory, as explained by Powell (2002), focus on the idea that states are concerned not just with their own absolute gains but also with how their gains compare to those of other states. Relative gains can hinder cooperation, as states may avoid agreements that benefit others more., where the distribution of power and resources can influence future interactions and potential conflicts.

neither state knows the other's cost of fighting. The analysis suggests that satisfaction arises when the distribution of benefits mirrors that of power. However, the probability of war is linked not solely to power distribution but also to the relationship between power and benefits distributions. For example, wars often arise because of the uncertainty over power distribution (Langlois & Langlois, 2011). However, most formal models focus primarily on uncertainty over state costs or preferences. Due to incomplete information, disparities in states' beliefs about expected payoffs to fight become seeds for future conflicts (Wolford et al., 2011; Powell, 2002). A growing focus on commitment problems, especially dynamic ones, adds another layer to understanding negotiation inefficiencies (Powell, 2002). These dynamic commitment issues, which do not rely on asymmetric information, elucidate inefficiency and failure due to negotiators' inability to adhere to Pareto-optimal divisions (Vanderschraaf, 2023). Shifts in power distribution create commitment problems (Joshi & Quinn, 2015; Powell, 2002). The prospect of changing power distributions intensifies commitment problems, leading to a bargainer's preference for fighting today over making concessions, which may weaken its position tomorrow (Spaniel, 2023; Powell, 2006; Powell, 2002).

Sisk (2009) emphasized that negotiations in civil conflicts often commence with a perception of relative parity in power. For this research, an organized non-state armed group is described as a cohesive body that functions independently of a state's authority and contests the state's exclusive right to use force for political purposes (Arı, 2023; Nygård & Weintraub, 2014; Arreguín-Toft, 2012). There is minimal motivation for governments to negotiate with less powerful rebel groups (Arı, 2023; Höglund & Svensson, 2009), and non-state actors are frequently at a higher risk than the government during the peace process, mainly when there is no third-party involvement (Greig & Regan, 2008). Still, if engaged in a peace process, the resulting settlement reflects the new constellation of forces institutionalizing the relative bargaining power of the disputants (Bell & Wise, 2022). Arı (2023) further underscores the asymmetrical nature of civil conflicts, in which the state contends against a non-state armed group challenging its monopoly on the legitimate use of force, introducing complexities in negotiation dynamics. Parties involved in internal conflicts may possess relatively balanced and varying spheres of power (Arreguín-Toft, 2012). Negotiations are most effective when there is a balance between parties, allowing each party to have veto power over the other's ultimate goals (I. W. Zartman, 2022). Bargaining power includes both objective and subjective components. Achieving a balance of power depends on the tactics and ability of parties to manipulate resources such as information about the costs and preferences of the counterpart (Ramsay, 2011; Esteban & Sákovics, 2007).

Conditions for conflict may arise from incomplete information, first-strike advantage, indivisible stakes, shifting bargaining power, enduring deterrence costs, political bias, and malevolence. Importantly, Chohan (2019) notes that the focus should not solely be on the outbreak of war but also the failure of peace, aligning with Powell's (2006) emphasis on negotiation breakdowns. Some authors consider that (Butler, 2019; Mason et al., 2018; Irmer & Druckman, 2009; Sisk, 2009; Webel & Galtung, 2009) parties in a conflict can shift their perspective from viewing the conflict as a zero-sum game, where one side's gain is seen as the other's loss, to perceiving it as a positive-sum game where mutual gains are attainable. They advance through turning points that connect the different phases of the negotiation process (Druckman, 2019). Arı (2022) and Sisk (2009) suggest that viewing a peace process as a sequence of phases connected by turning points enables a productive analysis of the strategic decisions made by parties involved in the conflict. These decisions include determining when to engage in armed conflict, initiate negotiations, employ threats and deception, what arguments to present to justify their actions when to make concessions, and, ultimately, when to settle.

In this sense, a mutually damaging deadlock arises when governments cannot overcome, and challengers cannot overthrow them decisively. According to Zartman (2022), this type of stalemate occurs when the opposing power of each side, while insufficient to cause the other side to lose, prevents it from winning. Sisk (2009) argues that the costs of a stalemate are perceived as fixed investments, with no expected benefits from accommodation, because of the belief that the adversary is unwilling to compromise. The incentive structure for each party leads to the management and potential manipulation of the stalemate rather than achieving its resolution. It is a ripe moment when all parties believe that negotiation, compromise, and reaching a mutually beneficial agreement will be more advantageous than ongoing conflict (I. W. Zartman, 2022). It is typically characterized by converging expectations from all parties. Deadlocks occur when parties perceive a rough balance of power and cannot achieve their goals unilaterally or resolve problems independently. A deadline is the perception of an impending worsening situation if steps are not taken to alter the current situation (I. W. Zartman, 2022; Mac Ginty, 2022).

When a conflict escalates and poses significant risks, parties are more likely to seek agreement. Implementing a cease-fire can alleviate suffering and reduce risks, creating a tolerable state of deadlock in which the involved parties may prefer to make necessary concessions for a mutually agreeable resolution (Kirschner & Von Stein, 2009). Civil conflicts entail disagreements concerning the political system, and resolving these conflicts necessitates creating favorable circumstances for an effective and collaborative political framework (Bell & Wise, 2022; Joshi & Quinn, 2015). As indicated before, a negotiated agreement should represent the mutually advantageous meeting point, or Pareto-optimal equilibrium[2], of the parties' stances (Sisk, 2009), or the outside option of violence will remain an alternative.

2.2 On Negotiation

International relations rely heavily on negotiations covering many areas, such as territorial conflicts, trade deals, and disputes. The significance of negotiations cannot be underestimated, as they impact every aspect of foreign policy and diplomacy. Peace talks are examples of diplomatic efforts in which conflicting parties aim to find mutual agreements to resolve their differences. Negotiations occur within a highly significant context. This context encompasses ongoing conflicts, dynamics between the parties involved, previous levels of trust or distrust, past negotiation results, public opinions, and the flexibility of negotiators. Recognizing these elements is crucial because negotiations are never isolated.

Negotiations involve various procedural factors, such as the contrast between withholding and disclosing information, the decision between making threats, offering advice, or asking questions, the utilization of vague or precise language, and the differentiation among different types of conflict behaviors, such as competing, avoiding, accommodating, cooperating, and collaborating (Irmer and Druckman, 2009). These occur when two or more parties involved in an apparent conflict rely on one another. They try to exert influence to achieve more favorable outcomes rather than voluntarily accept what the other side offers. The parties anticipate that there will be adjustments or alterations in their tactics of influence through a process of making concessions and

[2] As explained by Sisk (2009). the Pareto-optimal equilibrium is a key principle in economics and game theory that refers to an optimal state of resource allocation where no individual can benefit without causing detriment to another.

engaging in give-and-take interactions as they work towards reaching an agreement that resolves their conflict (Lewicki and Stark, 1996).

The initial proposals, referred to as first offers, are essential in negotiations. They serve as reference points for subsequent discussions and substantially impact the negotiation outcomes (Spaniel, 2023; Ghosn, 2010). The timing and content of these first offers are crucial determinants of how the negotiations unfold (Boothby et al., 2023). The level of detail in crafting the first offers also plays an essential role. Research (Fisher et al., 1999) indicates that well-defined offers often lead to more favorable counteroffers (Cotter & Henley, 2008); nevertheless, their effectiveness can vary depending on the specific context and negotiator skills involved (Thorsteinson & Clark, 2022). Furthermore, there are advantages associated with providing clear justifications for the first offer. However, it is crucial to be mindful that such justifications could backfire if countered by opposing solid arguments from the other party.

Another critical aspect of bargaining power is patience. For instance, parties not in haste to finalize a deal are often better positioned to negotiate favorable terms. Conversely, those under pressure to swiftly secure an agreement may be disadvantaged (Barston, 1983). Outside options play an important role in shaping bargaining dynamics. For instance, if negotiators have other potential avenues or third-party alternatives to explore, the current negotiations break down, and they can compel their counterparts to offer more favorable terms (Villavicencio, 2017). In the traditional negotiation theory, these outside options are the best alternatives to negotiated agreements (Fisher et al., 1999). The strength of a negotiator's BATNA is advantageous because it reduces their reliance on reaching an agreement with the other party involved (Boothby et al., 2023).

In a bargaining context, monopoly power does not pertain to being the sole vendor in an economic relationship. Instead, it refers to possessing a unique capability or characteristic that cannot be duplicated by others, yielding superior deals (Brady et al., 2021). A negotiator's reputation can also be a source of bargaining power. Those known for their resilience or securing advantageous deals will likely receive better terms in a negotiation (Ghosn, 2010). Credible commitment is crucial. Adhering to an agreement and seeing it in its conclusion can result in more favorable deals. In this regard, contracts are beneficial because they legally enforce agreements (Esteban & Sákovics, 2007).

Finally, knowledge, particularly of the other side's minimum acceptable terms, can be a game-changer in negotiations. With this understanding, negotiators can push deals closer to the adversary's threshold (Lewicki et al., 2014). They may be compelled to settle for less favorable terms without this insight. In this sense, information problems present various challenges. The issue is not about committing to an agreement but rather a lack of knowledge about mutually beneficial deals (Eisen, 2019). For example, a nation may lack accurate information about an adversary's military strength, making it difficult to negotiate effectively (Spaniel, 2023). However, to grasp peace processes and negotiations effectively, it is imperative to incorporate Clausewitz's perspective on war as a continuation of politics by other means, as Fearon had done when formulating The Bargaining Theory of War in his seminal work, *Rationalist explanations for war* (1995). Viewing war as an alternative method of settling political conflicts suggests that resorting to force is a precarious and inefficient approach. Therefore, the failure of the negotiations must be clarified to understand the occurrence of war (Reiter, 2003). The intricacy of crisis negotiation, which occurs under unequal power dynamics, is compounded by the constant possibility of abandoning negotiations and engaging in warfare (Sebenius, 2007; Downie, 1991).

Under these circumstances, actors may disclose private information by bearing costs, regardless of the result, known as sunk costs, or if they fail to carry out their threats. (Powell, 2004). The latter case is acknowledged as a commitment problem, which occurs when countries find more attractive mutual solutions than engaging in conflict but cannot commit to them over the long term, often leading to war (Powell, 2006). It is important to emphasize that a signal can only effectively convey information if it comes with a cost, which should stem from the heightened risk of war. War is a vital method for demonstrating the strength and determination of opposing groups (Spaniel, 2023; Langlois & Langlois, 2011; Slantchev, 2003). Conflict often arises when one side underestimates another 's strength or determination. However, as the conflict unfolds, information is communicated through combat and refusal of peace overtures. This sequence gradually aligns with conflicting parties' expectations regarding the war's eventual outcomes (Slantchev, 2003).

Throughout history, war has been seen as a moment, signifying the failure of negotiations. It is widely believed that when negotiations collapse, war becomes unavoidable. Nevertheless, contemporary conflict has challenged this perspective. In these situations, it is typical for opposing parties to engage in negotiation efforts during the war, frequently with international intervention, to achieve a peaceful settlement (Filson & Werner, 2002). This observation has stimulated research

(Nygård & Weintraub, 2014; Fey & Ramsay, 2010; Smith & Stam, 2004; Powell, 2004) on the potential impact of allowing negotiations to persist during the war. The main focus is on comprehending the reasons and timing behind the conclusion of the wars (Wittman, 2009). In line with prior research, it has been established that conflicts frequently originate from incomplete information. Consequently, it can be inferred that warfare should cease once partial knowledge is fully disclosed.

However, disclosing information is frequently hindered by the natural motivation to portray one's capabilities inaccurately. In situations where "cheap talk" is widespread and there is no consequence for a party to assert its weakness or strength, it becomes incredibly challenging to provide trustworthy information (Ramsay, 2011; Tingley & Walter, 2011). Nevertheless, warfare incurs substantial costs and can function as a reliable communication method. Opting against peace demonstrates a readiness to endure such costs, while the results of the battlefield can expose a party's actual power (Wolford et al., 2011). This leads us to the principle of convergence. Turning down peace proposals and engaging in successive conflicts gradually discloses information, bringing the expectations of both sides into accord regarding the eventual results of the war (Spaniel, 2023; Sisk, 2009). As this mutual understanding grows, the need for continued fighting diminishes, creating an opportunity to pursue a settlement and avoid additional costs associated with warfare (Slantchev, 2003).

The war and subsequent bargaining process function as screening mechanisms; only parties with strong resolve can overcome the obstacles created by peace offering-making (Langlois & Langlois, 2011). On the other hand, weaker parties tend to settle for lower costs. In contrast, stronger ones demonstrate their strength and resolve by rejecting peace offers and opting to fight (Wittman, 2009). An interesting phenomenon that goes against common expectations can be observed in conflict and warfare. This phenomenon involves a less powerful party, with little to no chance of winning military terms, choosing to engage in war against a much stronger opponent (Quinn et al., 2006). Such situations are evident across conflicts of various sizes, from small insurgencies against moderately sized governments to large-scale wars. In these cases, the weaker side is willing to participate in the conflict despite facing overwhelming odds of not achieving a military triumph but aiming for improved negotiation leverage (Arı, 2022; Sisk, 2009).

In this context, war is not primarily aimed at achieving a traditional notion of victory but functions as a means of negotiating a more advantageous agreement. Participation in conflict can place one party in a more favorable position during negotiations, prompting the opponent to make more significant concessions (Sisk, 2009). If uncertainty or incomplete information about one side's strength is the cause, a weaker party might enter a conflict, demonstrating that it is not as feeble as perceived by its opponent (Langlois & Langlois, 2011). Even if it has less power, proving its strength can influence the opponent to revise its beliefs, leading to a more generous offer at negotiations (Spaniel, 2023). Consequently, an agreement that prevents further conflict can be reached. However, what leads to wars instead of peace being a natural result? While disputes vary from war to war, negotiating challenges typically arise through commitments or information problems. If we can effectively tackle these challenges, conflict resolution methods to deter war should become achievable, even amidst differing views. In particular, mediation has gained a notable position as one of the preferred scholarly and policy options for addressing these problems during a peace process, which is why it is covered up-next.

2.3 On Mediation

Mediation refers to a conflict management process distinct from parties' negotiations. It involves seeking assistance or accepting help from an outside party, such as an individual, organization, group, or state, altering their perceptions of behavior without using physical force or invoking legal authority (Bercovitch, 2011). According to Moore (1987), mediation is an expanded version of the negotiation process. It entails involving a neutral third party, who lacks authoritative decision-making power and is accepted by all involved parties, to voluntarily aid them in reaching a mutually acceptable settlement (Duursma, 2020).

Conflicts often arise because of incomplete and asymmetric information (Kydd, 2019; Kydd, 2005), resulting in a trade-off between risk and return. When an adversary appears weak, the uncertainty surrounding its strength may prompt aggressive demand. On the other hand, if the opponent is indeed strong, these aggressive demands could escalate into war, as fewer offers are rejected. Likewise, as mentioned before, commitment issues can drive conflict. When a party cannot promise future compromises credibly, it may engage in conflict to capitalize on a temporary advantage (Spaniel, 2023; Wolford et al., 2011; Powell, 2006). Private information about its resolve or relative power remains a catalyst (Kydd, 2006). To address incomplete information, mediation is often utilized in various scenarios, such as when disputes are protracted and intricate, when the involved parties' attempts to manage the conflict have stalled, when neither side is willing to incur additional costs or escalate the dispute further, and when the disputing parties are ready to overcome their deadlock by cooperating and initiating some form of contact and communication (Bercovitch, 2011; Bercovitch, 1984). Rational disputants would be willing to accept a mediator's proposal if the anticipated benefit of reaching an agreement is greater than the expected benefit of the ongoing conflict, and both parties believe that the agreement will remain intact, with no motivation for either party to violate it (Maoz and Terris, 2006).

Further, rationalist theories of war propose that the desire to distort information about a state's military strength and determination, known as its reservation point, is critical in causing negotiation breakdown between countries (Fearon, 1995). When the reservation points of disputing states are unknown and ambiguous, they may struggle to reach a peaceful agreement, ultimately initiating a conflict (Savun 2008). However, it is crucial to recognize that hidden information alone does not solely drive war. A fundamental inquiry in this context pertains to why a rebel faction possessing knowledge about their chances of victory, unbeknownst to the government, would opt not to reveal this. Reliably disclosing one’s strengths is challenging (Sisk, 2009). If all parties, regardless of their strengths, opted to honestly disclose their capabilities to address the problem of incomplete information, the government would take appropriate action (Kydd, 2005). This could involve making a more advantageous offer to the party with greater strength and a less favorable one to the party with lesser strength to avoid conflict.

However, when information is incomplete, actors may overrate their abilities and the probability of winning a conflict and propose an offer below the opponent’s minimum acceptable outcome. Therefore, mediators are crucial in ensuring that actors can access all the necessary information to accurately gauge the range of mutually preferable outcomes (Beardsley et al., 2006; Kydd, 2003). In this incomplete information context about the utility preferences of the counterpart, parties are incentivized to deceive, creating a dilemma (Kydd, 2019; Kydd, 2006; Kydd, 2005). If a less powerful party pretends to be stronger than it is, the government may offer them more in good faith, leading to motivation for misrepresentation. This dynamic results in weaker parties distorting their strength because stronger parties obtain better deals (Sisk, 2009). Because of these incentives, straightforward communication or 'cheap talk' is ineffective in resolving issues caused by incomplete information. Moreover, mistrust can emerge when individuals are uncertain whether the other party is inclined to respond with cooperation or take advantage of it (Kydd, 2006).

Numerous potential results preferable to conflict may exist within the Zone of Possible Agreement[3] (Eisen, 2019), and the parties involved must agree on one result. As negotiators often view negotiations in violent international conflicts as zero-sum games, they are likely to take firm bargaining positions (Beardsley et al., 2006). Similarly, establishing and upholding commitments through direct bargaining is challenging in civil conflict settings. Consequently, mediated negotiations are significantly more critical in achieving mutually acceptable outcomes (Greig & Regan, 2008). In Bargaining Theory, incentive compatibility is crucial regarding how incentives are structured within a mechanism design (Spaniel, 2023). This design aims to motivate players to disclose information truthfully, assuming all other players are truthful (Spaniel, 2023; Kydd, 2010). In addition, the revelation principle (Dutta, 1999) suggests that if the outcome of a game is the result of optimal play, a direct mechanism exists that is incentive-compatible and can achieve the same outcome.

This principle can be applied to peace negotiations as an alternative process where instead of actively participating in negotiations, parties provide their private information—such as their reservation point—to a mediator acting as a "game master." Armed with this information, the mediator can simulate the negotiation process and determine outcomes based on what would have occurred if direct negotiations had occurred (Spaniel, 2023; Dutta, 1999). However, this method relies heavily on parties' honesty due to potential deception or bluffing because mistrust is "a form of uncertainty that can cause conflict but is susceptible to mediation" (Kydd, 2006). Using this information provided by the parties, the mediator can assess strategic gameplay during negotiations and predict outcomes based on it (Kydd, 2006). It highlights how crucial mediators can be in a peace process because they use the parties' input to steer negotiations and achieve results comparable to those attained through direct dialogue (Terris & Maoz, 2005).

However, when developing any mechanism, the individuals involved must be willing to participate. In an international anarchy, there is no governing body to enforce arbitration processes on rebels or governments. Each state, actor, and rebel group is free to act as they wish; the only

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[3] It refers to the range within which an agreement is satisfactory to both parties involved in a negotiation. Essentially, it is the overlap between the reservation values of the negotiating parties. It intersects with the Pareto-optimal equilibrium concept.

way to deter them from acting independently is through force. For the peace process to be considered equally advantageous to all parties participating in a war, the mechanism must adhere to a condition known as individual rationality (Spaniel, 2023; Aliprantis & Chakrabarti, 1999). If we seek to bring together a rebel group and a government for peace talks, the proposed mechanism must offer benefits comparable to the ongoing conflict. For instance, "rebels have incentives to invite mediation in order to gain recognition” (Melin and Svensson, 2009, p. 250). Hence, a mechanism that guarantees peace must satisfy two crucial conditions: individual rationality and incentive compatibility.

Individual rationality implies that all types of players must receive a minimum payoff equivalent to their expected gains from the war (Aliprantis & Chakrabarti, 1999; Fearon, 1995). Otherwise, they could reject the mechanism and choose to fight a war. Incentive compatibility requires combatants to be willing to disclose their type to the mechanism designer truthfully, ignoring private information and strategic incentives to bluff during the process (Rauchhaus, 2006). Despite these requirements, when considering both individual rationality and incentive compatibility, achieving a peaceful direct mechanism is unachievable in situations with uncertainty about power and low war costs (Spaniel, 2023). Peace can be sporadically achieved, but war cannot be guaranteed to be avoided.

However, when the costs of war are high, peaceful direct mechanisms become feasible, and war can be avoided (Wiegand et al., 2020). If a third party is willing to subsidize peace by paying a sum if the parties agree to a settlement, it effectively raises the cost of war (Mattes & Savun, 2009). Third parties often practice this when they perceive that a war between a government and a rebel group will negatively impact them and are willing to pay to promote peace. Conflict resolution often has negative repercussions, leading to prolonged fighting rather than negotiated settlements. The principle of convergence provides insight into this phenomenon by suggesting that war transmits information. Uncertainty about one's strength or determination may prompt conflict initiation while refusing to accept offers during conflict resolution attempts (Sisk, 2009; Powell, 2004).

Over time, as uncertainty wanes and the informational relevance of the war diminishes, the parties involved typically move towards a settlement due to the costs associated with continued warfare. Knowing the likely outcomes allows cost-saving settlements. Hence, an important question arises: why do parties in civil wars not utilize the principle of convergence for negotiating settlements? This issue is connected to enforceability; civil war settlements often lack a credible enforcer for combatants to disarm after reaching an agreement (Kydd, 2006). Once weapons are relinquished without effective enforcement mechanisms, parties continue fighting until there is an apparent military defeat on one side. This stems from a commitment problem (Joshi & Quinn, 2015). Even if a rebel group is inclined to pursue peace, they may recognize that the government might not uphold the end of the agreement once they disarm (DeRouen & Chowdhury, 2016; Cunningham, 2011). The government could withdraw from the agreement and put itself in a more favorable position. As a result, in situations where "an asymmetric relationship exists between disputants, stronger parties prefer to act unilaterally" (Quinn et al., 2006, p. 446).

However, mediators may also propose to oversee the situation after the crisis, leading to higher costs for reinitiating conflict by ensuring that noncompliance does not go unnoticed (Beardsley et al., 2006). In this manner, mediators can act as third-party enforcers and contribute to resolving commitment issues between parties involved in a crisis. For this approach to work effectively, the mediator must show that they are dedicated to both conflicting parties and will not withdraw from the first sign of violence. One way to demonstrate this dedication is through costly signaling (Bercovitch, 2011). Costly signaling relies on two key factors: differing interest levels among the involved parties and one party being willing to make more significant sacrifices than the other. This allowed them to genuinely signal their commitment to maintaining peace. Notably, mediators with a strong incentive to resolve a conflict are highly committed and dependable by the parties involved. These mediators are viewed as willing to invest resources (Maoz and Terris, 2006).

2.4 On Deception

2.4.1 Bargaining Dynamics Based on Uncertainty

Bargaining and war dynamics become notably complex when uncertainty and incomplete information emerge. This differs from complete knowledge scenarios, in which each player knows specifics, such as the likelihood of victory and war costs. Uncertainty regarding the other player's costs or power distribution can cause conflicts. Comprehending these factors is essential as they can trigger rational conflicts without understanding the possible costs and outcomes. This understanding has significant implications for conflict resolution and negotiation.

'Cheap talk,' a pre-emptive communication in crisis bargaining, can potentially prevent undesirable warfare. However, its effectiveness is limited because of its unverifiable nature and the propensity for parties to misrepresent their costs (Tingley & Walter, 2011). For 'cheap talk' to be effective, there must be penalties for misrepresentation to ensure credible revelation (Thyne, 2006). In addition, the dynamics of crisis bargaining are further complicated by power asymmetries and information imbalances (Ramsay, 2011). For example, stronger parties may prefer to act unilaterally, whereas weaker parties may recognize the need to make concessions (Kydd, 2019). Information plays a pivotal role in negotiations, with controlling and managing information significantly enhancing a negotiator's power (Esteban & Sákovics, 2007). However, the incentive to misrepresent tactical gains can undermine the negotiation process (Fey & Ramsay, 2010). The potential for misrepresentation of information by the disputants to the mediators necessitates the mediators seeking other avenues of information or knowledge better to assess the bargaining feasibility (Kydd, 2005).

The discussion of bargaining in war brings to light a fundamental question: Does uncertainty cause war? The answer is more intricate than a simple yes or no. It is rooted in understanding war as a costly and inefficient resolution, often driving states toward negotiation. States would navigate towards peaceful negotiations without commitment issues and incomplete information. When addressing uncertainty over power, uncertainty revolves around a lack of assurance about potential gains from conflict. The exploration of this uncertainty reveals a rather regrettable reality: while peace can be guaranteed if war costs are high, the assurance of peace becomes impossible when war costs are low (Fey & Ramsay, 2010). Under these conditions, war could emerge as a result of this uncertainty. This may lead to the hasty conclusion that uncertainty is the primary cause of war. However, the relationship between these two variables is far more complex. For example, power distribution influences the probability of war and is not neutral (Spaniel, 2023).

Moreover, bargaining with indivisible issues presents a challenge owing to commitment problems, which can lead to inefficient results. When goods cannot be divided, negotiations are often limited to all-or-nothing deals, creating the potential for conflict if one party receives everything and the other party favors war (Powell, 2006). The losing party's refusal to accept the outcome demonstrates the inability to commit credibly. Another commitment problem is the concept of 'stalling' in war negotiations, where a nation may engage in war to obtain a favorable portion of a disputed resource, even if it anticipates defeat (Wolford et al., 2011; Sisk, 2009). This challenges the assumption that wars always conclude promptly with a definite allocation of contested resources (Spaniel, 2023). According to this, achieving peace is possible in an instant or enduring war, but an intermediate duration can result in warfare. The stalling scenario represents a commitment issue, as nations may seek to renegotiate over time to avoid the costs associated with war (Downie, 1991).

2.4.2 Deception within and beyond Bargaining Theory

Deception is considered non-cooperative in game theory[4] (Watson, 2013). However, deceivers often try to mimic cooperative behavior (Sarkadi et al., 2021). Conversely, a deceiver provides false information when engaged in knowledge-sharing. Boles et al. (2000) identified greed and competition as essential factors leading to deception. According to Levine and Schweitzer (2015), deception can be defined as intentional communication of misleading information. Both bluffing and lying are considered forms of deception, although they have distinct conceptual differences (Kaufmann et al., 2017). Bluffing in negotiations involves attempting to misrepresent one's intentions or exaggerate the strength of one's position through conscious misstatements, concealment of relevant facts, or overemphasis (Perillo, 2018). It relies on an opposing party with incomplete information to gain an advantage or avoid loss. Bluffing differs from lying in that it does not necessarily convey false information but presents information misleadingly (Perillo, 2018). Although lying is used for self-benefit in various contexts, bluffing is a strategic negotiating maneuver. In short, bluffing is used strategically to balance potential risks with rewards and to either attain a gain or avoid a loss (Meibauer, 2019).

Notably, Sarkadi et al. (2021) found that individuals tend to assume a truth-default state in environments where trust and cooperation are the norm. Conversely, Mason et al. (2018) indicated that expectancies significantly influence conflict and negotiation behavior, shaping cooperative

[4] Non-cooperative behavior in game theory refers to situations where agents make decisions independently, aiming to maximize their own payoff without collaborating or forming alliances with other players. This type of behavior is contrasted with cooperative game theory, where players can negotiate and form coalitions to achieve better outcomes collectively.

versus competitive behavior, strategy choice, information sharing, and willingness to use unethical tactics. Perceptions of the prevalence of deceptive negotiation tactics also affect negotiators' behavior. It has been suggested that negotiators' assumptions about others often reflect their attitudes, a phenomenon referred to as projection. Trust within the context of negotiation is defined as having confident, positive expectations about another person's actions and a willingness to make oneself vulnerable to that person. Moreover, trust is strengthened when people are confident that another party will meet their expectations and help them achieve their objectives. (Druckman & Olekalns, 2013). Parties frequently lack complete information about each other's preferences and alternatives, which allows for potential deception. Sharing information on preferences and priorities between negotiating parties can significantly influence the bargaining process and its outcomes (Koning et al., 2010).

However, the mixed-motive nature of bargaining creates an information dilemma, as explained previously. For instance, the paranoid pessimist (Mason et al., 2018) is another example of a deceitful negotiator apart from the strategic calculator discussed in the literature. This individual engages in deception not primarily due to their desires but instead based on their interpretation — or potential misinterpretation — of others' intentions.

2.4.3 Deception & Mediation

Mediators play a crucial role in international disputes. Past literature agrees that the success of mediators is mainly due to their ability to credibly transfer information during negotiations (Wiegand et al., 2021). This information pertains to the disputants' resolve and military capability. Mediators can play a crucial role by providing information to the disputing parties that they may not have access to. Specifically, they can inform the parties about each other's costs of fighting and the probability of winning, which can help the parties identify their mutual reservation points (Savun, 2008). By doing so, mediators can assist the parties in determining the bargaining set, thereby increasing the likelihood that any proposed settlement will fall within their preferences and lead to a peaceful resolution. According to Fearon (1995), uncertainty arises in negotiations between states, which can prevent them from achieving a Pareto-superior solution where one party's improvement does not detract from the other's situation. This uncertainty is caused by incentives for parties to conceal private information about their intentions or capabilities.

At the same time, a significant amount of prior research on negotiation and the dynamics of civil war acknowledges that parties in conflict are often motivated to distort information to strengthen their position during disputes (Wiegand et al., 2021). For example, they may exaggerate their military capabilities, availability of outside options, or level of commitment to their goals to gain negotiation leverage (Savun, 2008) because all players have "incentives to make similar claims whether they are true or not” (Tingley & Walter, 2011, p. 4). In international conflicts, two types of uncertainty are often considered: uncertainty about the relative costs of war and uncertainty over power, such as war-fighting capabilities, attitudes towards risk, issue salience, patience, and willingness to incur costs (Rauchhaus, 2006). Consequently, the possibility of achieving peace is contingent upon these uncertainties. Nonetheless, given the potential for both rebels and the government to deliberately mislead each other, it is logical to consider that belligerents may also provide false information to mediators to secure international support and employ it during the mediation process to mislead a counterpart (Gaspar et al., 2022; Wiegand et al., 2021). This risk correlates strongly with formal rationalist explanations, where the problem is that private information and strategic interaction create incentives for disputants to misrepresent their resolve (Rauchhaus, 2006). Importantly, governments often avoid mediation with rebels because of reputational costs, preferring battlefield victories. However, stronger rebel groups can force negotiations. Advances by rebel groups can reduce information asymmetries, increase their chances of favorable outcomes, and push governments to seek third-party negotiation assistance (Wiegand et al., 2021). Then, the best time to initiate third-party assistance in a conflict is when a 'hurting stalemate' occurs, where the costs of the conflict begin to mount, and efforts to manage it are unproductive (Zartman, 2000). Power parity between conflicting parties is a critical factor in reaching such a stalemate, as parties become increasingly aware of their inability to achieve their goals through violence, thus opening opportunities for dialogue (Bercovitch, 2011; Quinn et al., 2006; Aggestam, 2002)).

A state's capabilities and influence depend on its relative power and information asymmetry. Mediation is often preferred in international disputes with extreme power disparities because equal power among disputants may yield more fruitful bargaining, potentially enhancing a weaker party's bargaining position (Quinn et al., 2006). The shape of preferences and the extremities of ambitions also play a role. However, stronger parties tend to act unilaterally in asymmetric disputes, while weaker parties recognize the need for concessions (Bercovitch et al., 1991). However, symmetrical negotiations are often contentious and unsatisfactory, with each party seeking relative advantage. Stronger rebel groups can push states towards negotiations rather than conflict (Sisk, 2009).

Thus, information control is a power source that affects decisions on openness regarding settlement preferences, access to privileged communication, and future actions. Lewicki and Stark (1996) argued that lying in negotiation primarily increases the liar's power by manipulating information, misinforming the opponent, and manipulating the perceived costs and benefits of choice options. As a result, "there may be key areas of compromise of which disputants are aware but are unwilling to discuss openly during mediation as it risks undermining their bargaining position" (Wiegand et al., 2021, p. 6).

2.4.4 Deception & Negotiation

Traditionally, it has been assumed that individuals negotiate to reach an agreement. Anand et al. (2009) argued that some negotiators have ulterior motives, utilizing the negotiation process for the purpose of achieving outcomes other than reaching an agreement. These individuals are referred to as "duplicitous negotiators." Likewise, Gaspar et al. (2022) point out a self-interested misrepresentation of information during a negotiation process without any attempt to comply with the results of the settlement. In negotiations, parties with interdependent and potentially conflicting goals aim to achieve better outcomes than those on the other side would voluntarily offer. In such contexts, bluffing can be viewed as a justifiable self-defensive move, especially when there is a belief that the other party will bluff (Fulmer et al., 2009). Negotiators are driven by maximizing profits through strategic loss calculations (Butler. 2019; Druckman and Olekalns, 2013).

As Kang (2022) signals, negotiations are back-and-forth communications between two or more people with the professed objective of reaching an agreement, including insincere negotiations. These deceptive negotiation tactics can significantly affect peace processes and conflict-resolution efforts. Individuals may negotiate with ulterior motives such as stalling for time, creating a false cooperative impression, gathering information, or improving their bargaining position (Anand et al., 2009). Duplicitous negotiations are characterized by intentional misdirection, with negotiators seeking to increase their payoffs by misleading their counterparts about their sincere intention to reach an agreement. Significantly, unethical negotiation behaviors, motivated by opportunism and desperation, are driven by the desire for gain and fear of loss, respectively (Fulmer et al., 2009).

Similarly, insincere negotiations occur when one party has ulterior motives or intends to dishonor the agreement (Kang, 2022). To understand the reasoning behind deception, scholars have referred to rational choice theory as "negotiators weigh the risk of being detected against the expected benefits from successfully fostering a false belief in their counterpart (Lempp & Testa, 2022)", clearly in maximation their expected utility and following the individual rationality assumption.

In this sense, relative power is a crucial element of deception (Koning et al., 2010; Lempp & Testa, 2022). In scenarios where a negotiator holds a more powerful position, they are more able to employ deception. This is primarily because they face lower risks and less severe sanctions than their less powerful counterparts (Lempp & Testa, 2022). However, Koning et al. (2010) found that negotiators in weaker or less powerful positions tended to resort to deception more frequently. This is primarily driven by fear of the consequences of their more powerful opponents' decisions. Thus, negotiation power dynamics in deception remain untested. To avoid rational self-interest calculations incentivizing deception for tactical reasons, trust is crucial in peace negotiations owing to inherent risks (Kydd, 2005). Parties' expectations of trust and fair play are influenced by their perceptions of others' behavior (Mason et al., 2018). If parties suspect opportunistic tactics, they may resort to similar tactics to prevent an undue advantage. Literature (Höglund & Svensson, 2006; Lewicki & Stark, 1996) reveals that a critical reason for negotiation deception is to avoid exploitation by the counterpart. Hence, in a bargaining situation, we can identify the problems of opportunism, desperation, power imbalance, and fair play expectations in uncertainty.

2.5 Why False Readiness Theory?

As observed in the previous sections, Peace and Conflict scholars and International Relations scholars from the Rational Theory tradition have long focused on why wars start and why peace succeeds. However, a significant gap exists in understanding why peace processes fail or stall. This gap in understanding is particularly relevant to the use of deception and false readiness in peace negotiations. Still, due to the focus on the tactical element of deception, "our understanding of other forms of deception, such as the use of the negotiation process itself to mislead a counterpart, are very limited" (Gaspar et al., 2022, p. 4). This creates a need for a theoretical framework that specifically addresses the role of deception at a more strategic level.

The antecedents of the False Readiness Theory (FRT), Ripeness Theory, and Readiness Theory overemphasize successful cases. FRT attempts to provide a plausible explanation for failed cases of peace processes. The Ripeness Theory (Zartman, 2022) suggests that disputing parties are more likely to initiate negotiations and reach an agreement when they perceive themselves as in a mutually hurting state (MHS). The MHS is a situation in which neither side can secure a victory, and maintaining the conflict inflicts substantial harm on both parties, albeit not necessarily to the same degree or for the same reason. In addition to perceiving themselves to be in an MHS, parties must also believe that a possible solution exists, one that negotiation can offer as a preferable pathway out of the MHS. This "way out" could take different forms -- a new proposal, a change in leadership, or even external intervention. The MHS catalyzes negotiations in two distinct ways. On the one hand, it pushes parties towards negotiation as the ongoing pain of the conflict becomes unbearable. On the other hand, the perception of a potential solution pulls parties into negotiations by offering hope and encouraging engagement.

Differing from the Ripeness Theory, which concentrates on the external conditions of stalemate, the Readiness Theory (Pruitt, 2014) investigates the internal changes of the conflicting parties. The theory identifies three critical elements: motivation to end the conflict, optimism regarding the outcome, and intrapersonal and interpersonal processes. The motivation to end a conflict refers to the intensity of a party's desire to avoid the negative consequences of conflict, such as violence, economic hardship, or social unrest. The more motivated a party is, the more ready it is to negotiate. Optimism regarding the outcome involves a party's belief that negotiations can lead to a successful resolution. Higher optimism fosters a greater willingness to engage. Finally, the theory highlights internal factors, such as cognitive appraisals and emotional states, and external factors, such as communication channels and informal pre-negotiation contacts, that can influence motivation and optimism.

Pruitt (2005) presented negotiations in two stages: entry into negotiation and reaching an agreement. Entry into negotiation depends on both parties reaching a threshold level of readiness, influenced by factors such as increasing costs of conflict, external pressure, or internal shifts in leadership. Once negotiations begin, the readiness level continues to determine the process. However, it acknowledges that uncertainty about the future can influence motivation and optimism. If the prospect of further conflict becomes perilous, then the motivation to negotiate increases. Similarly, positive developments outside conflict can boost the optimism of negotiated settlements.

The False Readiness Theory (FRT), developed by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021), addresses the shortcomings of conflict-resolution theories by highlighting deceptive potential within negotiations. The FRT identifies strategic deception, long-term strategic goals, and multiple layers of deception as core principles. The theory suggests three motivations for false readiness: buying time, extracting concessions, and shielding the domestic audience. The consequences of false readiness include protracted conflict, erosion of trust, and undermining conflict-resolution processes. First, strategic deception entails at least one party, the 'falsely ready' actor, entering negotiations with concealed motives. Instead of seeking a genuine solution, this actor aimed to manipulate the process in their favor. Second, it emphasizes long-term strategic goals. According to FRT, the intentions of the falsely ready actor extend beyond simple tactical maneuvering as deception is "not a tactical posture but part of the disputant's core identity" (Schwartz and Gilboa, 2021, p. 1341), often aiming for strategic objectives over extended periods that could span multiple negotiation rounds. Third, there are multiple layers of deception. False readiness can manifest in various forms, from feigning flexibility and making superficial concessions to manipulating information and exploiting procedural rules.

Conflict resolution theories suggest that a significant decline in strategic position or an impending catastrophe may stimulate the decision to seek negotiations. Furthermore, actors may begin negotiations when they perceive themselves too weak to achieve their goals through hard power, thus necessitating an alternative strategy. Nevertheless, because FRT is an identity issue (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021), a falsely ready actor can be identified as a bargainer with maximalist preferences (Kydd, 2006). In practical application, these maximalist preferences often manifest as conflicts arising from ideological differences that prevent one party from accepting the existence or identity of the other. These conflicts are irreconcilable as they pertain to existence and national identity (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021). A party may shift from hard power to negotiations because of a decline in strategic position, with the principal motivation to continue the conflict from a position of strength. This deceptive strategy can yield better results when overpowering an enemy is either less desirable or impossible. The party may not exhibit a sincere attempt to resolve the conflict but rather seek strategic benefits to continue the battle. Losing allies or dramatically re-aligning forces can push a party towards negotiation. The party remains optimistic about extracting strategic gains through deceptive negotiations, aiming to improve its position without abandoning the final goal.

Based on Lewicki and Robinson (1998), Fulmer et al. (2009) suggested five informational deceptive tactics: making false promises, misrepresenting, attacking an opponent's network, gathering inappropriate information, and traditional competitive bargaining. Previous tactics facilitate the classification of actions, such as a refusal to compromise, constant rejection of peace proposals, and making unacceptable demands. FR actors may use deceptive tactics, such as expressing interest in peace while rejecting offers, stalling negotiations, failing to offer counterproposals, and signing vague interim agreements. Precisely because diplomatic deception, as Schwartz and Gilboa (2021) have noted, is an intricate strategy that unfolds over a significant period, its true nature is often only detected at later stages, even after it has revealed a stubborn consistency over many years or even decades. Diplomatic deception's enduring, steadfast character makes its detection challenging and complex. It requires meticulous and long-term observation that validates the need to understand peace processes as bargaining problems that evolve over the years on a bargaining trajectory alternating negotiation, mediation, and renowned fighting to settle the conflict (Arı, 2022; Sisk, 2009).

CHAPTER 3: CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents detailed mappings of five significant conflicts: Northern Ireland, Basque, Colombian, Sri Lankan, and South Sudan. It also explains the methodological framework used in the study, including the use of Information Theory and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) for Comparative Case Analysis to address two of the three hypotheses of the research. Before delving into the methods and case population employed to investigate the research question of this study, it is crucial to conduct a concise analysis of the conflicts. This will aid in establishing a context for examining and formulating theories about the chosen peace negotiations. Jeong's (2009) Conflict Analysis Framework will be a crucial reference. Initially, this study will outline each case within a brief chronological background. To systematically analyze conflict dynamics, attention will be given to intervention strategies, parties involved, tactics employed, relationships among stakeholders, needs, values, interests, and objectives. Once the Conflict Analysis is completed, the focus will shift to the case population, including ten peace process cases from the five conflicts covered at the beginning to account for temporal variability between assisted and unassisted negotiation processes.

Lastly, the results of the case population are analyzed to determine the significance of each condition in explaining the presence of False Readiness. To achieve this, The Information Metrics are calculated using the ABCD method (Drozdova & Gaubatz, 2017), which involves assembling a data matrix with cases and factors/outcomes, populating the table with binary values, creating a truth table to evaluate combinations of values, counting occurrences, calculating joint probabilities and computing information metrics such as total uncertainty (information entropy), conditional uncertainty (conditional entropy), and uncertainty reduction (mutual information).

3.1 Northern Ireland Conflict

Starting with the Ulster Plantation, which took place from 1609-1690, this period was distinctly marked by British settlers' colonization of the province. This significant event established the foundation for the persistent discord between indigenous Irish Catholics and Protestant incomers (Mac Ginty, 2019; Ruane, 2021). Following this, the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin was a catalyst that galvanized support for Irish independence (Bowden, 1973). After the 1921 partition of Ireland, Northern Ireland was subsequently constituted as a separate entity within the United Kingdom, predominantly Protestant. The Troubles in Northern Ireland originated in 1968 when a civil rights march in Derry was abruptly halted by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, thereby igniting the Bogside battle. This incident significantly escalated the prevailing violence, which led to the assignment of British troops to Northern Ireland in August 1969 (Barcat, 2019; Prince, 2012). Subsequently, in August 1971, an internment without trial was enforced on suspected Irish nationalists and republicans.

On 30 January 1972, an event known as Bloody Sunday transpired, in which 13 unarmed civilians were shot dead by British soldiers during a protest march in Derry. This unfortunate event led to the imposition of direct rule from London in March 1972, resulting in the suspension of the Northern Ireland Parliament (Kenny & Dochartaigh, 2021). Later, the Sunningdale Agreement, which aimed to establish a power-sharing executive and cross-border Council of Ireland, was signed in December 1973. However, it was suspended in May 1974 due to an Ulster Workers' Council strike. Subsequently, in May 1981, Republican prisoners-initiated hunger strikes demanding political status, which resulted in the death of the Bobby Sands, among others. The Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed on 15 November 1985, providing the Republic of Ireland with an advisory role in Northern Irish affairs. In August 1994, the IRA declared a ceasefire, followed by a loyalist ceasefire. Fast forward to 10 April 1998, the Good Friday Agreement was signed, instrumental in ceasing violence and reinstating self-governance in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, the peace agreement was disrupted by the Omagh bombing in August, which was orchestrated by a dissident group, resulting in 29 fatalities.

3.1.1 Conflict Mapping

Various strategic responses were utilized during The Troubles to mitigate conflicts in Northern Ireland. These included political dialogues such as the Sunningdale Agreement (1973) and the Good Friday Agreement (1998), which sought to create cooperative governance mechanisms and shared political structures. As mentioned before, the British Government imposed direct rule in 1972, thereby taking over the administration of Northern Ireland from the local parliament. Furthermore, the responses also involved security and military actions, which included the deployment of the British Army and the implementation of detention without trial. During The Troubles, various entities played a pivotal role. The Republican and Nationalist Groups consisted of Catholic factions that championed the unification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. Notable among these groups was the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). In contrast, Unionist or Loyalist Groups were Protestant organizations such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defence Association (UDA) that fiercely defended Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom.

Simultaneously, the British Government became directly and indirectly involved in managing security and orchestrating political responses as the Troubles have been "disrupting the wider British political agenda to a problematic degree" (O'Kane, 2021, p. 6). The Irish Government also played a significant role, especially in cross-border aspects, and has been an integral part of peace negotiations since the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed in 1985. The parties involved displayed various needs, values, and interests during the conflict. Notably, a common goal of both sides was to ensure safety against violence and secure significant involvement in political decision-making processes that would impact their future. Addressing unemployment and economic inequalities has become paramount, particularly considering the clear employment bias faced by the Catholic community (Mac Ginty, 2019).

Furthermore, values were deeply rooted in unique national identities and the respective rights to practice religion and culture. However, Mac Ginty signals that the Northern Ireland Conflict "is essentially a modern political contest between exclusive nationalist projects" (2006, p. 154). On the other hand, interests revolved around asserting territorial dominance and political influence linked to land and resources (Mac Ginty, 2019), rectifying historical injustices, and acknowledging the suffering endured by all parties in the conflict.

The relationships between the parties were marked by distrust and hostility, fuelled by historical grievances, and underpinned by geographical and social segregation. Strategies for engaging in conflict vary from violent confrontations to negotiations and dialogues, with critical instances involving multi-party discussions and public demonstrations. Mac Ginty (2019) notably points out the in-group nature of politics in Northern Ireland. The primary dynamic that shaped much of the peace process and the overall conflict involved Catholic-nationalist and Protestant-unionist parties claiming to be the legitimate defenders of their group and accusing their in-group rivals of being weak or mischievous. The primary goals and issues at stake include the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, civil rights, peace, and stability. They encompassed the debate over whether Northern Ireland should remain part of the UK or unite with the Republic of Ireland, addressing systemic inequalities and discrimination against the Catholic minority.

3.2 Basque Conflict

In 1894, the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) was established, marking a seminal moment for the Basque Conflict, whose roots can be traced to the subsequent Spanish Civil War and Franco dictatorship (Aiartza and Zabalo, 2010; Arbona et al., 2010). Severe restrictions on Basque self-governance and cultural identity characterized this period. In this sense, Conversi (2006) suggests that the lack of cultural freedom and collective rights under the Francoist dictatorship could have been the catalyst for the conflict. Subsequently, ETA was founded in 1959. Initially, the group was a promoter of Basque culture but soon transitioned to armed militancy (Arbona et al., 2010). The conflict escalated when the first recorded fatality linked to ETA occurred in 1968 when the police chief in San Sebastián Meliton Manzanas was targeted. Parallel to these developments, the Burgos Trial, which took place in 1969, was a significant event in the struggle against Franco's regime. This high-profile trial aimed to prosecute and execute 16 ETA members arrested following an attack on the police chief (Pecharromán 2008). However, the trial had unintended consequences, sparking widespread demonstrations and protests domestically and internationally. Franco was compelled to commute the death sentence because of the mounting international pressure. During the trial, the defendants brought attention to the national, ethnic, and linguistic oppression experienced by the Basque people (Aiartza & Zabalo, 2010). Gaining international prominence, the conflict peaked following the assassination of Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco in 1973.

During the 1980s, which represented the most lethal phase of ETA activity, close to 100 fatalities were recorded (Tusell, 1997). In response, in 1983, the Spanish Government countered with a ‘dirty war’ against ETA, which included kidnappings and assassinations of ETA members. In July 1997, the group kidnapped and killed Miguel Angel Blanco, a Popular Party member and Ermua town councilor. This act of violence triggered widespread public outcry. However, in September 1998, the ETA announced a temporary truce until December 1999, raising hope for a peaceful resolution (Juliá, 1999). In a significant development, the ETA declared a permanent ceasefire on 22 March 2006, signaling a potential end to violence. Unfortunately, a car bomb exploded at Madrid airport on 30 December 2006, resulting in the deaths of two Ecuadorians. Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who had been actively engaged in peace negotiations, promptly terminated the peace process in response to the attack (De Cortázar & Vesga, 2012). The conflict finally reached a turning point on 20 October 2011 when the ETA announced a permanent end to the violence. This declaration marked a significant milestone in this long-standing conflict. Although the ETA dissolved, contentious issues related to victims’ rights and reconciliation remained unresolved.

3.2.1 Conflict Mapping

For example, the Spanish Government combined counterterrorism efforts with attempts at political resolution, involving law enforcement actions and legislative measures against ETA. The Basque conflict saw various negotiation attempts, such as the Algiers Process 1989 and the Lizarra-Garazi Agreement 1998. The Algiers Process was an early negotiation attempt between the ETA and the Spanish Government, which eventually failed because of disagreements on critical issues, such as ETA’s disarmament and the political status of the Basque Country (Urrutikoetxea et al., 2022). Later, the Lizarra-Garazi Agreement, signed by Basque political parties, labor unions, and social organizations, led to a temporary ceasefire by the ETA. The roles of civil society and international support were also significant in this conflict. Basque civil society, including organizations such as Gesto Por la Paz and Elkarri, advocated for peace and dialogue (Calvo, 2018). International mediation was also crucial, as seen in the 2011 International Peace Conference held in San Sebastián, which aimed to encourage the ETA to end its armed activity (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

The Basque conflict involved several vital parties. Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), the leading armed Basque nationalist group advocated for Basque independence through violent means, including bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings. The Spanish Government took a dual approach to conflict by combining law enforcement with political engagement. The Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) played a significant role in advocating Basque rights and autonomy. Unlike the ETA, the PNV pursued its goals through political channels, participating in Spanish electoral politics and leading the regional government (Stubbs, 2012). Civil society in the Basque Country shaped the trajectory of the conflict, especially in advocating for peace and reconciliation. As mentioned, organizations like Gesto por la Paz and Elkarri were important in mobilizing public opinion against violence and facilitating community dialogues (Conversi & Espiau, 2019). International actors played roles in the Basque conflict as facilitators of peace processes or as observers. Figures like Kofi Annan and organizations like the European Union endorsed peace initiatives such as the Aiete Declaration (Azurtza, 2019). Still, from 1980 to 2015, the Basque Conflict was shaped by violence and political instability.

Essential needs included ending violence between Basque civilians and the Spanish Government, recognizing Basque identity and political goals, and addressing economic disruptions caused by the conflict (Roller, 2014). The values of conflict reflect beliefs regarding identity, governance, and rights. The Basque nationalist movement prioritized promoting Basque culture, language, and traditions and strengthening Basque education and media. The Spanish state and moderate Basque nationalists valued democracy but differed in their self-governance levels (Mees, 2015). Parties like the PNV aimed for greater autonomy within Spain through dialogue and cooperation, balancing separatist demands and constitutional limits. After years of violence, civil society groups and international mediators have highlighted the strong emphasis on peace, justice, and addressing past abuses by all parties. Civil society organizations have focused on peacebuilding, human rights, and democratic participation, aiming for dialogue and reconciliation.

The Basque conflict saw changing dynamics due to political shifts, violence, and changes in public opinion. The adversarial relationship between the ETA, the Basque separatist group, and the Spanish Government was marked by violence and sporadic negotiations. The 1980s were highly violent, prompting a strong government response. Peace attempts such as the 1989 Algiers talks and the 2006-2007 process provided relief, but deep mistrust and ongoing violence resumed conflict. Internally, the ETA was riddled with divisions, particularly concerning whether to persist in armed struggle or engage more in political processes. These divisions sometimes led to public splits within the organization, affecting the ETA's operational effectiveness and strategic decisions (Aiartza et al., 2010). The relationship between ETA and Basque society also evolved significantly during this period. While there was initial support or tolerance for ETA's goals, public opinion shifted as conflict and human costs increased (Conversi & Espiau, 2019).

The relationship between the Spanish Government and Basque parties, especially the PNV, blended cooperation and conflict. Despite criticizing Spanish policies in the Basque Country and seeking more autonomy, these parties also participated in Spanish politics and condemned the ETA's violence. International actors sometimes acted as mediators in formal peace processes, a move welcomed by Basque nationalists but viewed cautiously by the Spanish Government. The ETA advocated the independence of the Basque Country from Spain. In addition to seeking independence, ETA wanted political recognition for the Basque nation and insisted on discussing self-determination during the negotiation processes (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The Spanish Government aimed to maintain national unity and territorial integrity, preventing Basque secession from discouraging other separatist movements. They targeted ETA violence through law enforcement, counterterrorism, and disarmament negotiations. The Government also sought to integrate the Basque Country within the Spanish Constitution's framework to address Basque nationalism.

3.3 Colombian Conflict

The origins of the Colombian conflict can be traced back to agrarian disputes in the 1920s, particularly within the Sumapaz and Tequendama regions (Henderson, 2001). However, the assassination of the presidential candidate, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, in 1948 initiated widespread violence, notably "El Bogotazo" (Pinzón, 2010). Consequently, this signaled the commencement of a civil war era known as "La Violencia," responsible for approximately 200,000 deaths (Nasi, 2006). To end the civil war, the establishment of the National Front government in 1957 aimed to distribute power between the Liberal and Conservative parties, but this approach excluded other political factions (Sanders, 2002; Zámosc, 2013).

Furthermore, the formation of guerrilla groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 1964 —originally the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party— and the National Liberation Army (ELN) during the same period, along with the M-19 guerrilla group in 1970, exacerbated the conflict (Eventon, 2016; Nasi, 2006). Conflict intensity fluctuated under different presidential administrations. Notable events include President Julio Turbay's campaign against drug traffickers between 1978 and 1982, failed peace negotiations and amnesty initiatives under President Belisario Betancur from 1982 to 1986, the M-19 guerrillas' attack on the Palace of Justice in 1985, and the campaign of assassinations initiated by paramilitary groups and drug cartels during President Virgilio Barco's term from 1986 to 1990.

Interestingly, M-19 became a legal, political entity in 1989 after reaching a peace agreement, marking a significant shift in the conflict dynamics (Nasi, 2006). Nonetheless, the conflict persisted under successive governments, with notable developments including failed peace negotiations with the FARC under President Andrés Pastrana's administration (Villavicencio, 2017) from 1998 to 2002, the launch of the US-supported Plan Colombia initiative in 2000 aimed at drug trafficking and rebel groups, and substantial military aid from the US under President Álvaro Uribe's administration from 2002 to 2010, which aimed to weaken the FARC, albeit with significant human costs (Delacour, 2003; E. Dominguez, 2016).

Eventually, the approach to the conflict underwent a significant shift under the administration of President Juan Manuel Santos from 2010 to 2018, resulting in peace talks with the FARC and a peace agreement signed in 2016. FARC began disarming and transitioning into a legal political party in 2017 (Rodríguez-Raga, 2017). However, challenges remain in implementing peace accords (Amaya-Panche, 2021), integrating former combatants, and addressing the ongoing violence attributed to other armed groups like the ELN and dissident FARC factions.

3.3.1 Conflict Mapping (1990-2020)

During the Colombian conflict, the parties involved adopted a range of strategies. Guerrillas utilized methods such as low-intensity warfare, abductions, and consolidation of control over rural territories (Correa, 2009). Conversely, paramilitaries employed fear-inducing tactics, perpetrated mass killings, and established partnerships with political and economic power holders (Bustos & Manrique-Hernández, 2024). The Government juxtaposed military operations with strategic dialogue and peace agreements. Civilians trapped in conflict frequently resorted to displacement for survival, while community leaders assumed roles in advocating for and defending human rights. During this era, the Colombian Government, supported by the United States through Plan Colombia, implemented a dual approach. This approach combined military action and peace negotiations to reduce the power of guerrilla factions, notably FARC and ELN (Felipe, 2016). These peace talks were crucial to the 2016 peace treaty with the FARC. Consequently, these strategies were oriented toward combatants' demobilization, disarmament, and social reintegration (Valenzuela, 2018). Additionally, they focused on rural development schemes to address socioeconomic imbalances.

The Colombian conflict involved a multitude of actors. Among these were the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the ELN (National Liberation Army) both guerrilla organizations espousing Marxist-Leninist principles. Notwithstanding, the Colombian Government's primary aim was to uphold civil order and safeguard its citizens' rights, even though it is important to mention that local communities and civilians frequently found themselves subjected to violence and displacement (Long, 2019). Furthermore, the international arena also played a significant role, with the United States offering military and financial assistance via Plan Colombia. At the same time, other nations, such as Cuba and Norway, took on the role of mediators in the Havana peace talks. Each entity participating in the Colombian conflict had its critical requirements. First, the FARC and ELN endeavored to find valid avenues for political engagement and socioeconomic improvements for agrarian communities (Nasi, 2006). Furthermore, the Colombian Government had to re-establish order, maintain its sovereignty, and bolster national security. At the same time, the civilian population necessitated safety, security, and socioeconomic prospects devoid of conflict.

Significant value divergence among the key actors was at the heart of the Colombian conflict. Principally, left-wing guerrillas, namely the FARC and ELN, ardently championed social justice, egalitarianism, and the redistribution of land and wealth (Pearce, 2019). The Government's primary focus was to ensure national stability, promote democratic governance, and foster economic growth. Within the context of the Colombian conflict, the entities involved had diverse and often opposing interests. For instance, Marxist guerrilla factions, specifically the FARC and ELN, fervently pursued the reform of agrarian policies and the acknowledgment of farmers' rights (Nasi, 2006). Similarly, the Colombian Government had its objectives, which were to curtail the drug trade, assert territorial control, and incorporate guerrilla organizations into political frameworks.

Interestingly, Colombian conflict dynamics were marked by a continuous cycle of violence and retaliation, characterized by ongoing attacks and counterattacks among guerrillas, paramilitaries, and government forces (Nasi, 2006). Despite this hostile environment, there had been frequent peace talks attempts. Regrettably, these discussions often reached a deadlock, leading to a resurgence (Pearce, 2019). Moreover, as a direct consequence of the conflict, deep social divides and a profound mistrust among communities surfaced (Laengle et al., 2020), heavily swayed by their respective political and social affiliations (Liendo & Braithwaite, 2018). Initially, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) primary objective was to overthrow the government and establish Marxist regimes (Pearce, 2019). However, as time progressed, their ambitions evolved towards seeking avenues for political engagement and social reform. In turn, the Colombian Government sought to terminate armed conflict via military pressure or peace accords, aiming to incorporate guerrillas into the political landscape (Laengle et al., 2020).

3.4 Sri Lankan Conflict

The civil war in Sri Lanka, which extended for over 26 years, began with the formation of the Tamil New Tigers (TNT), a militant group led by Velupillai Prabhakaran in 1972 (Peebles, 2006). By 1976, the group had been renamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The commencement of the "First Eelam War" was marked by an LTTE attack on an army patrol in Jaffna in 1983, leading to anti-Tamil riots across the country (Joshi, 1996). The first peace negotiations between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE were held in Thimpu and Bhutan in 1985, but they failed to reach an agreement (Shastri, 2009). Two years later, the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord was signed, leading to the deployment of an Indian peacekeeping force (IPKF) in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

In 1990, India withdrew its troops because of clashes with the LTTE, resulting in the death of over 1,200 Indian soldiers (Keerawella & Samarajiva, 1994), marking the onset of the "Second

Eelam War." The following year, a tragic event occurred when an LTTE suicide bomber allegedly assassinated former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Later, in 1993, Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa was killed in an LTTE bomb attack (Singer, 1996). Chandrika Kumaratunga, who pledged to end the war, assumed the presidency in 1994 and initiated peace talks with the LTTE. However, these talks collapsed the following year when the LTTE blew up two navy vessels, marking the start of the "Third Eelam War" (Peebles, 2006). In 1996, a devastating suicide bomb attack on the Central Bank building in Colombo carried out by the LTTE resulted in over 100 deaths and 1,400 injuries (I. Keethaponcalan, 2001).

A ceasefire agreement between the Government and LTTE was signed in 2002 and brokered by Norway. However, peace was short-lived as the LTTE retired of the peace talks in 2003, citing insufficient progress in rebuilding war-affected areas (G. Lewis, 2019). The conflict escalated in 2006 with a fatal claymore mine attack allegedly by the LTTE on a civilian bus in Kebithigollewa, killing more than 60 civilians. The civil war concluded in 2009 (G. Lewis, 2019) with the announcement by the Sri Lankan government of a military assault on LTTE positions.

3.4.1 Conflict Mapping (1990-2010)

Many internal and external intervention strategies characterized the Sri Lankan Civil War. Transitioning from an initial approach aimed at containment, the government's strategy evolved to seek a decisive military victory over the LTTE (Fernando, 2014). Simultaneously, the LTTE adopted the tactics of guerrilla warfare, suicide bombings, and political assassinations as integral elements of their strategic operations (Sisk, 2009). Notwithstanding their adversarial approaches, both parties have engaged in peace negotiations. Nevertheless, these discussions were often perceived as mere tactical maneuvers rather than sincere attempts at conflict resolution (G. Lewis, 2019). On the international front, the conflict saw peacekeeping interventions by India materialized through the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). Concurrently, Norway has stepped in to facilitate diplomatic peace negotiations. While these actions led to the temporary cessation of violence with the ceasefire agreements in 2002, these truces fell short of achieving sustained peace (Höglund & Svensson, 2009). Ultimately 2009, the government concluded a conflict with a decisive military offensive. The conflict's primary actors were the Sri Lankan government, which predominantly represented the Sinhalese majority, and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who allegedly voiced the aspirations of the Tamil minority in their quest for independence (G. Lewis, 2019; Peebles, 2006). Moreover, India emerged as a consequential stakeholder because of its geopolitical interests and the significant Tamil population in Tamil Nadu (Fernando, 2014).

Simultaneously, various international actors, like Norway, endeavored to bring peace, thereby playing a pivotal role in the mediation process. This conflict is fundamentally entrenched in ethnic nationalism. On one hand, the Sinhalese community valued preserving a Sinhala-Buddhist identity and unified state. Conversely, the Tamil community sought recognition of its unique ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities (G. Lewis, 2019; Sisk, 2009). These deeply held values significantly contributed to the unyielding nature of the conflict, as both parties deemed it non-negotiable. Throughout the conflict, the Government of Sri Lanka vested interests that primarily encompassed preserving territorial integrity and maintaining a unitary state (Fernando, 2014). Simultaneously, it also focused on ensuring security and gaining international legitimacy. Conversely, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were driven by the pursuit of self-determination in the Tamil community. This included the goal of establishing an independent Tamil Eelam and safeguarding Tamil civilians from perceived instances of discrimination and violence (Fernando, 2014; Sisk, 2009).

The relationship dynamics between warring factions were primarily defined by profound mistrust, antagonism, and a historical backdrop of violence (Höglund & Svensson, 2006; 2009). During intermittent periods, the dynamics shifted towards negotiation, marked by ceasefires and peace talks (Sisk, 2009). However, the collapse of these talks and the resumption of violence reinforced adversarial relationships between the parties. Power asymmetry also shaped the conflict dynamics, with the state eventually capitalizing on its superior military strength to address the conflict (G. Lewis, 2019). The central issue of the conflict revolved around the Tamil community's demand for self-determination and the Sinhalese-dominated state's response. The separatist group, the LTTE, aimed to establish an independent Tamil Eelam. Conversely, the Government sought to uphold a unitary state structure and suppress LTTE militarily. Additionally, secondary issues emerged throughout the conflict, including human rights violations, displacement of civilians, and economic degradation resulting from the protracted conflict (G. Lewis, 2019).

3.5 South Sudan Conflict

The Sudanese Civil War encompassed multiple conflicts within Sudan, primarily involving the central government and various groups. These conflicts are notably recognized as the First and Second Sudanese Civil Wars. The First Sudanese Civil War commenced in 1955, originating in the southern part of Sudan due to political and ethnic tensions between the north and south. When Sudan gained independence from joint British-Egyptian rule in 1956, the conflict persisted as southern entities felt marginalized (Collins, 2007). This war concluded in 1972 with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement, which granted the South self-governance. The Second Sudanese Civil War began in 1983 under the leadership of President Gaafar Nimeiry. The spark that reignited tensions was the abolition of the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region and the imposition of the Sharia Law by the Sudanese Government (Collins, 2007; Jendia, 2002). 1985, President Nimeiry was overthrown, and the new government attempted reconciliation with the South, but to no avail. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Democratic Unionist Party agreed upon a peace plan in 1988, but it was never implemented (Kaballo, 1988). The situation was further complicated in 1989 when the military seized power in Sudan.

In 2002, the Machakos Protocol was signed, providing a framework for peace and granting the South the right to a self-determination referendum after six years. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in January 2005 and officially ended the Second Sudanese Civil War. The agreement included provisions for a permanent ceasefire, power sharing, and autonomy for the south. A key Southern leader, John Garang, was sworn in by Sudan's vice-president in July 2005 but tragically died in a helicopter crash weeks later (Young, 2005). Salva Kiir succeeded him. A referendum was held in January 2011, and the people of South Sudan voted in favor of independence (De Waal, 2019). On 9 July 2011, South Sudan declared its independence and became the newest country in the world. The Second Sudanese Civil War was marked by extensive human rights violations and a significant loss of life, with estimates ranging from one to 2.5 million deaths, primarily civilians affected by starvation and disease. Moreover, the war led to the displacement of over four million people (Cunningham, 2011; Walter, 2009).

3.5.1 Conflict Mapping Sudanese Civil War and the Second Sudanese Civil War

The intervention strategies deployed during the Sudanese Civil War and the Second Sudanese Civil War were complex, encompassing military, political, and diplomatic endeavors. These strategies were executed both within the country and from external sources. A crucial diplomatic intervention was the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 (De Waal, 2019), which aimed to address the root causes of conflict and establish a roadmap for peace and autonomy. Similarly, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement 2005 was another significant diplomatic intervention with the same objectives (Theron, 2022). The conflict strategies ranged from armed rebellion and guerrilla warfare to political negotiations and peace agreements. For instance, the SPLA engaged in military resistance against the central government and participated in peace talks that led to the CPA. However, the central government alternated between military suppression and negotiations. The conflicts notably involved several primary actors: the central Sudanese Government, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and various ethnic and political groups within Sudan (De Waal, 2019).

Furthermore, these conflicts were not limited to internal dynamics. On the contrary, they engaged various external actors, encompassing neighboring countries, the African Union, and numerous international organizations. Although diverse, the needs and values behind the "identity politics is better seen as competing political–ideological projects: Arabisation, Islamisation, Africanisation, and secularisation" (De Waal, 2019, p. 307). Specifically, the inhabitants of Southern Sudan yearned for autonomy, acknowledgment of their cultural and religious customs, and fair access to resources, notably oil. However, according to Theron (2022), the South Sudan conflict was influenced by a narrow view of Sudanese identity, with the North's Arabization and Islamization efforts causing tensions. The civil war was rooted in disagreements over governance but was framed as an identity conflict. The Anya-Nya rebellion capitalized on the fears of an Arab regime, further framing the conflict as identity-based. Shared conflict experiences laid the foundation for the Southern identity and political goals, reinforcing the perception of the South as a separate entity. The interests of the conflicting parties were primarily centered on the control of resources, political authority, and territorial dominance. The emergence of oil in the border region between northern and southern Sudan exacerbated the conflict, with both factions vying for control over these crucial assets.

Deep-seated mistrust, historical grievances, and recurring violence and retaliation cycles fundamentally characterized the parties' dynamics (De Waal, 2019; Theron, 2022). Profound ethnic and religious divisions have exacerbated these dynamics. The principal objective of the Southern Sudanese and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was to attain recognition of their political, cultural, and economic rights. This led to the pursuit of increased autonomy within federal Sudan or complete independence, a goal actualized with the establishment of South Sudan in 2011. By contrast, the central government was determined to preserve national unity and exercise control over Sudan's entire territory, including its resources.

3.6 Methodology

Given the complexity of social science research, this research combined two mixed-method research approaches to address the three hypotheses related to False Readiness in the case population.

- Hypothesis 1 (H1) proposes that False Readiness presence will be higher in mediated dyads than in non-mediated dyads.
- Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposes that False Readiness presence will be higher in power asymmetric dyads than in symmetric dyads.
- Hypothesis 3 (H3) suggests that mediated dyads in which the mediator fails to detect False Readiness are more likely to result in strategic gain for the deceiver.

These methods are the complementary Information Analysis for Comparative Case Studies proposed by Drozdova and Gaubatz (2017) and the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) developed by Charles Ragin (2014). The first is based on advances in Information Theory attributed to Claude Shannon's 1948 work, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication." He proposed a metric for measuring information content as the logarithm of the reciprocal of an event's probability. This measure aligns with the critical criteria for social research: deterministic outcomes convey no information, less probable events convey more information, and the information content of independent variables increases appropriately (Drozdova and Gaubatz, 2017).

This research uses Drozdova and Gaubatz's (2017) Information Uncertainty Measures to characterize the uncertainty of a random variable's outcomes and delve into the dependence between variables by comparing their joint distribution with the product of their marginals. Information entropy assesses the uncertainty of an outcome without additional data. Conditional information entropy measures this uncertainty using known factors. Mutual information quantifies what we learn from these factors, indicating which factors are more informative. In probability, it is how much one variable informs about another. Similarly, this work will henceforth use the set-theoretical vocabulary and Boolean logic-based analytical approach of the QCA method to perform analyses of necessity and sufficiency in Chapter 4 (Ragin, 2014) to the truth tables, and its possible configurations between the conditions as for the Information Analysis method are indistinct from the use of a distinctive theoretical language besides the Information Metrics.

QCA differs significantly from traditional correlational methods regarding terminology and conceptual frameworks. In this sense, a truth table is a tool used to evaluate logical arguments (Drozdova and Gaubatz, 2017), logging True or False values for elements represented as "1" or "0". This binary language is central to the information theory. The table presents the states of each condition for all cases, forming the base dataset for analysis and interpretation of results (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). In QCA, the result of the truth table minimization process is called a "solution." Unlike the outcome of statistical analysis, known as a "model," a solution may contain multiple configurations, each with various conditions linked by logical ANDs. Within each solution, configurations are connected by logical ORs (Mello, 2021; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). This indicates that the QCA solutions are configurational, equifinal, and asymmetrical, unlike the additive, unifinal, and symmetrical models produced by statistical analyses.

It uses "conditions" to describe case-level constructs that account for different aspects of a case. These conditions include outcome and explanatory conditions. In contrast, traditional statistical methods rely on "variables" to abstract cases and describe population-level characteristics. In addition, it works with a "case population," consisting of purposely selected cases that are homogenous under critical scope conditions. This approach allows for qualitative comparison of cases based on specific criteria. Traditional statistical methods often use a "sample" from a population to capture heterogeneity. This study's case population comprises differentiated cases in which two belong to the same conflict. These five conflicts are the Northern Ireland, Basque, Colombian, Sri Lankan, and South Sudanese. As indicated in Chapter 2, a peace process is not static and changes during its conflict’s lifetime. Therefore, the ten cases include two snapshots of the same five conflicts to account for temporal variability between the assisted and unassisted negotiation processes. These are:

1. Good Friday Agreement (1998)
2. Sunningdale Agreement (1973)
3. Zapatero's Peace Process (2006-2007)
4. Algiers Process (1989)
5. Havana Peace Process (2012-2016)
6. Pastrana's Peace Process (1998-2002)
7. Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004)
8. Sri Lankan Peace Process (1994-1995)
9. Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)
10. Addis Ababa Agreement (1971-1972)

The scope conditions in QCA are causally relevant but not explanatory. They ensure that all cases in the study were qualitatively similar under these conditions to enable meaningful comparisons. These cases were selected because they share a series of relevant scope conditions, such as a long-standing internal conflict with an organized insurgency motivated by material and ideological reasons that, although contesting the state authority, participated several times in peace talks to solve the conflict. Due to their similarity to these scope conditions and geographical variability to avoid biases, these well-documented and notably protracted conflicts and their peace processes were selected as the case population. Finally, a control variable, known in QCA as a “confounding condition,” characterizes both the outcome and configurations. When a confounding condition is logically redundant in a configuration, it indicates that the cases covered by the configuration do not uniquely contribute to the outcome.

3.6.1 Confounding Conditions

Before delving into the results of the Information Metrics and the QCA, this study will briefly explain each condition (variable) to be observed in the table. While conducting this research, the research identified several conditions to be used as control variables, known as confounding conditions. These conditions were not randomly selected; instead, they were chosen based on insights and valuable guidance derived from specialized literature to account for possible indicators of False Readiness—this set of analytical constructs, consisting of the theoretical background presented in Chapter 2.

3.6.1.1 Violence during the peace process

The bargaining model of war mentioned in Chapter 2 views conflicts stemming from informational asymmetries and commitment issues. Violence during peace processes can be a strategic tactic to improve negotiation positions by altering perceptions of capabilities. Scholars like Timothy Sisk (2009), Håvard Mokleiv Nygård, and Michael Weintraub (2014) have highlighted this, showing how violence can strategically leverage negotiations. Non-state actors often use violence to assert their influence on negotiations. Ceasefire effectiveness varies based on design and commitment, and continued violence can lead to negotiation crises (Hoeglund 2004). International actors and third-party diplomacy play a significant role in managing violence, with their effectiveness depending on whether mediation discusses the conflict's main incompatibility and the conflict parties' core issues (Ruhe, 2020).

3.6.1.2 Realisation that the conflict cannot be won by violent means

In the context of False Readiness theory, this cofounding condition and possible indicator of FR emphasize a vital component of the strategic thinking and behavior of groups involved in ongoing conflicts. When an actor shows False Readiness, they enter negotiations with misleading intentions. A critical element of this strategy is understanding the falsely ready actor that violence alone cannot resolve conflicts. They realized that a purely military approach might not yield a sustainable or desirable result. Even if not genuine, engaging in diplomatic efforts can offer opportunities to further nuanced strategic interests. Although Pruitt's (2014) theory of genuine readiness also suggests an internal change in actors' preferences, this change is only apparent from Schwartz and Gilboa's (2021) theoretical standpoint. It is a grand strategy to continue the conflict in a better future position. This implies acknowledging the need for alternative strategies and tactics to achieve non-changing objectives.

Because of these calculations, "In the FR scenario, the principal motivation is to gain a better strategic position for a more effective battle against the adversary' (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021, p. 1339). This condition aligns with the concept of False Motivation.

3.6.1.3 Dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position

This confounding condition, also aligned with the False Motivation concept, alludes to a scenario in which an insurgent faction confronts setbacks or challenges, weakening its military, political, or economic power in the conflict. Consequently, the faction may recognize that persisting in conflict through violence alone is no longer feasible or likely to yield a favorable outcome. Insurgency aims to counter this decline by projecting an image of eagerness for negotiations and peaceful settlements (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021). This strategy is used to buy time, regroup, or secure strategic advantages through diplomatic channels. False readiness enables insurgency to maintain the appearance of legitimacy, interact with external entities, and potentially acquire concessions or resources via diplomatic channels. The insurgent faction might employ diplomatic maneuvers, public statements, and engagement in negotiation processes to project an image of sincerity and interest in peace while exploiting the negotiation process to enhance its position and fortify its leverage in the conflict.

3.6.1.4 Final Agreement was not reached or implemented

The effectiveness of negotiated peace settlements in ending violent conflicts and establishing peace has been extensively debated and analyzed in the academic literature (Pillar, 1983). Research indicates that the success of such settlements can vary considerably depending on contextual factors, with some enduring for just a few years, whereas others have lasted for decades (Johnson, 2015). Negotiated peace settlements can be viewed as a bargaining process in which states simultaneously wage wars and negotiate peace settlements (Sisk, 2009). The effectiveness of these settlements is influenced by force variables and the costs of war rather than the formality of an agreement itself. According to Kirschner and Von Stein (2009), the successful implementation of peace agreements hinges on achieving a balance of power between government forces and rebels alongside international assistance.

Implementation of peace agreements often faces several common challenges that can hinder the success of negotiated settlements. These challenges include the commitment problem, in which parties to a conflict may harbor mistrust or strategic concerns that prevent a total commitment to a peace agreement (Joshi & Quinn, 2015). Additionally, some parties may seek to retain leverage during negotiations by not strictly adhering to the accord, thereby reducing its effectiveness and jeopardizing its long-term stability. In this sense, a non-reached or implemented agreement holds the explanatory power to account for False Readiness during a peace process.

3.6.1.5 Maximalist preferences

Maximalist preferences, commonly used in Rational Choice Theory and Game Theory, refer to pursuing ambitious and often uncompromising goals (Chohan, 2019; Powell, 2002; Vanderschraaf, 2023). These preferences significantly influence negotiation processes, conflict resolution strategies, and mediation outcomes in political and conflict scenarios (Irmer & Druckman, 2009). These preferences are particularly impactful in deeply divided societies or situations involving significant power asymmetries, in which understanding their role and impact is crucial for effectively addressing and resolving conflicts (Maoz & Powell, 2014). In negotiation and conflict resolution, maximalist preferences often set high initial demands, which can be considered unrealistic or unacceptable by other parties (Reiter, 2003). This can lead to prolonged conflicts as parties hold out for more favorable terms or refuse to make concessions (Kydd, 2010). Extensive studies have explored these dynamics by examining how these preferences can affect the willingness of parties to enter and sustain negotiations (Boothby et al., 2022; Spaniel, 2023).

3.6.1.6 Hard avoidance bargaining

Hard-avoidance bargaining is a strategy characterized by reluctance to negotiate or compromise. It is often employed in high-stakes international negotiations, where parties may refuse to engage in talks, make concessions to preserve their interests, or compel the other side into unilateral concessions (Lewicki & Robinson, 1996; 1998; Mason et al., 2018). Several reasons might lead actors to engage in hard avoidance bargaining. For instance, parties might resist negotiation if they perceive their military or political position as vital and fear that they might lose this advantage through concessions (S. Anand et al., 2009). Domestic pressures, such as a robust nationalist constituency, might force leaders to avoid compromise and adopt a maximalist approach (Bercovitch, 1984).

Deep-seated mistrust or historical grievances can make actors skeptical of the other side's intentions, making them unwilling to engage in a good-faith negotiation process (Höglund & Svensson, 2006). Furthermore, refusing to negotiate can signal a resolve to the other party and the international community, potentially pressuring them to make concessions (Arı, 2022; Bercovitch, 1984). There are a few potential benefits of hard avoidance bargaining. In some situations, avoiding negotiation can buy time for one or both parties to strengthen their positions or wait for external circumstances to change (Boothby et al., 2022; Höglund & Svensson, 2006). However, this is a risky strategy with potentially adverse consequences.

3.6.2 Explanatory Conditions

Similar to how the confounding conditions equal control variables in correlational vocabulary, the explanatory conditions mirror the analytical purposes of the variables of interest. As in previous studies, these were selected based on theoretical considerations to understand how they contribute to the presence or absence of False Readiness as an outcome condition, called dependent variables in correlational studies. The following conditions were used to directly account for the relationships presented in H1 and H2: power asymmetry and mediation presence.

3.6.2.1 Power Asymmetry and Power Symmetry

Asymmetric conflicts involve parties of unequal strength, with the weaker party challenging the stronger, often using unconventional methods (McAuley et al., 2008). This type of conflict is prevalent in guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and other revolutionary struggles. Strategic interactions in asymmetric conflicts are complex because weaker parties must leverage their limited resources against a conventionally stronger opponent (Arreguín-Toft, 2012). In contrast, symmetric conflicts involve parties with comparable power and resources. These conflicts often involve conventional warfare or negotiations among states with similar capabilities. The dynamics of symmetric conflicts are different because the balance of power dictates the strategies employed by each side (Quinn et al., 2006).

Negotiation and rational bargaining play critical roles in both asymmetric and symmetric conflicts. The process involves each party assessing the strengths and weaknesses of others to formulate strategies that maximize their outcomes (Kydd, 2010). Mediation also plays a crucial role in managing conflicts, with mediators helping to manage and resolve conflicts by facilitating communication, offering proposals, and sometimes leveraging international pressure (Beardsley et al., 2006; Quinn et al., 2006). Imbalances can significantly influence the processes and outcomes of international mediation. In asymmetric conflicts, mediators often face the challenge of ensuring fairness in negotiation processes despite unequal power dynamics (Aggestam, 2002; Kydd, 2003). On the other hand, a balanced power dynamic paves the way for more straightforward negotiation processes, as no party holds a dominant position that could force the other into unilateral concessions.

3.6.2.2 Presence of a Mediator

Third-party mediators play a crucial role in successful peace negotiations by facilitating dialogue, assisting the negotiation process, and creating a sustainable peace process (Nylander et al., 2018). They can act as neutral facilitators, providing a platform for conflict parties to communicate and negotiate within a politically and legally set framework (Daase, 2012). Although direct communication between conflicting parties can sometimes be more effective than third-party mediation, mediators can still play a role when talks reach a standstill or when all other options are exhausted.

It is important to note that the effectiveness of mediation can be influenced by various factors, such as the mediator’s characteristics (Beardsley et al., 2006), the nature of the conflict, and the parties’ willingness to engage in negotiations (Daase, 2012). In some cases, mediators may need to impose costly strategies such as sanctions or incentives to encourage cooperation between conflicting parties (Özdoğan & Yavçan, 2016). For this research, the presence of a mediator during the peace process is intertwined with the concept of false optimism. Optimism within FR refers to “an actor’s conviction that gains can be made and that the adversary and mediators would not detect the disputant’s real intentions and goals” (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021, p. 1340). I suggest that the Presence of a Mediator will increase the likelihood of False Readiness presence by reducing distrust between the parties and opening a window of opportunity for an FR actor to exploit by rejecting peace proposals and avoiding significant concessions; the actor seeks to preserve their strategic position, extract maximum benefits, and advance towards their desired victory in the conflict while covering the legitimacy of a mediation process.

3.6.3 Information Theory for Comparative Case Analysis

According to Drozdova and Gaubatz's (2017) method, the first step in the Information Method Analysis requires quantifying the comparative case study's explanatory conditions (variables of interest). This step includes assigning binary values to the conditions (independent variables) and outcome conditions (dependent variable) to facilitate the calculation of information metrics. This is achieved by setting up a truth table. Calculating probabilities and uncertainty measures such as information entropy or mutual information using the frequency counts of the binary values requires the following steps:

- Assemble a data matrix with cases in one dimension and factors/outcomes in the other.
- Populate the table with 1s and 0s to indicate the presence or absence of each factor and the outcome for each case.
- Create a truth table that looks at every combination of values for independent and dependent variables.

- Count the occurrences of each permutation of independent and dependent variable values in the truth table.
- Analyze the truth table to identify patterns of factor-outcome variation, missing data, and potential sources of uncertainty for further exploration.

Only binary values are used because they reflect the approach of measuring information in bits, which is fundamental for information theory applications in qualitative research (Drozdova & Gaubatz, 2017). The next step involves counting the occurrences of different combinations of conditions and outcome condition values in the case population. The joint probabilities necessary for calculating the total uncertainty (information entropy), conditional uncertainty, and uncertainty reduction (mutual information) can be determined by tallying these occurrences. Joint probability refers to the likelihood of two or more events co-occurring.

When dealing with two random variables, X and Y, the joint probability P (X, Y) represents the probability that both X and Y take specific values simultaneously. This is denoted as P (X = X and Y = y), where x and y are the specific values of X and Y, respectively. In comparative case analysis, joint probabilities quantify the relationships between the conditions (independent variables) and the outcome condition (dependent variable) in each case. To facilitate this, Drozdova and Gaubatz (2017) developed the ABCD method as a shortcut for calculating information metrics directly from joint probabilities. This is part of the information-theoretical approach to examine the relationships between variables in qualitative research. Each symbol (A, B, C, and D) represents a count of specific types of occurrences in the data:

A. is the number of times both the independent and dependent variables are coded 1 divided by n (the total number of cases).

B. is the number of times the independent variable is coded 0 when the dependent variable is coded 1 divided by n.

C. is the number of times the independent variable is coded as 1 when the dependent variable is coded as 0 divided by n.

D. is the number of times both the independent and dependent variables are coded as 0, divided by n.

When applied to a truth table, it allows the calculation of joint probabilities for each variable presence and absence combination. If and wherever the joint probability equals 0, the authors suggest approximating zero by .00001. Once the joint probabilities (a, b, c, and d) have been calculated, computing the information theory metrics is the next step. These quantify the uncertainty and information gain associated with the relationships between the conditions (independent variables) and outcome conditions (dependent variable). Total uncertainty, or information entropy, measures the overall uncertainty associated with a variable or an outcome. In the context of information theory and comparative case analysis, total uncertainty quantifies the level of unpredictability or disorder in the outcome condition before considering any additional information provided by the explanatory conditions (independent variables). The formula for calculating the information entropy **H(Y)** for a binary outcome variable Y with probabilities p (y = 1) and p (y = 0) is:

$$H(Y)= - (a+b) \log 2 (a+b) - (c+d) \log 2(c+d)$$

This formula represents the uncertainty or entropy associated with the outcome variable Y. Logarithm base 2 is commonly used in information theory calculations. This is done to establish a baseline measure of uncertainty that can be compared with conditional uncertainty (conditional entropy) and uncertainty reduction (mutual information) to assess the impact of conditions on reducing uncertainty and gaining information about the outcome condition.

Conditional uncertainty, also known as conditional entropy or conditional information entropy, measures the uncertainty associated with an outcome condition, given the knowledge of another variable or set of variables. In this study, conditional uncertainty quantifies the remaining unpredictability in the outcome condition after considering the information provided by the explanatory and confounding conditions (independent variables). The formula to calculate the conditional entropy **H(Y|X)** for an outcome variable Y given an independent variable X with conditional probabilities p(y|x) is:

$$H(Y|X) = - [d (\log 2 (d) - \log 2 (b+d)) + b (\log 2(b)-\log 2(b+d))] - [c(\log 2 (c)-\log 2(a+c)) + a (\log 2 (a) - \log 2 (a+c))]$$

This metric captures the remaining uncertainty in outcome condition Y after accounting for the information provided by explanatory condition (independent variable) X. It helps to assess how much additional information is gained about the outcome when the values of the explanatory conditions are known. Thus, it is easier to evaluate the impact of each factor on reducing uncertainty about the outcome and identify the conditions that provide the most information gain in explaining outcome variability. Finally, uncertainty reduction, also known as mutual information, measures the amount of uncertainty reduction in an outcome condition (Y) due to the knowledge of an explanatory condition (independent variable) (X) or a set of them. The formula to calculate mutual information **I (Y; X)** between outcome condition Y and explanatory condition X is:

$I(Y; X) = H(Y) - H(Y|X)$

Where:

H(Y) is the total uncertainty or information entropy of the outcome condition Y.

H(Y|X) is the conditional uncertainty or conditional entropy of outcome condition Y, given the explanatory condition (independent variable) X.

It indicates the amount of information the independent variable provides to explain or predict the outcome variable. Higher mutual information values indicate that the explanatory condition (independent variable) is more informative about the outcome, leading to a more significant uncertainty reduction.

3.6.3.1 Implementing the Information Method to the False Readiness Theory

The following section details how the Information Method is used to answer H1 and H2.

3.6.3.1.a Quantify

The organized and coded explanatory and cofounding conditions and outcome conditions of this study are as follows:

- X1. Power Asymmetry - Insurgency Weaker Party
- X2. Power Symmetry
- X3. Violence During Peace Process
- X4. Realization Conflict Cannot Be Won By Violent Means (False Motivation)

- X5. Dramatic Decline Insurgency Strategic Position (False Motivation)
- X6. Presence Of Mediator (False Optimism)
- X7. Final Agreement Not Reached Or Implemented
- X8. Maximalist Preferences-State
- X9. Maximalist Preferences-Insurgency
- X10. Hard Avoidance Bargaining
- Y. Presence of False Readiness (Conflict restarted after the negotiation failure)

As explained previously, all data must be binary (1,0), expressing either the presence or absence of the condition. The data were entered with the case population in the rows and the conditions in the columns. The outcome condition is presented in the final column. Table 1 illustrates this:

	X1	**X2**	**X3**	**X4**	**X5**	**X6**	**X7**	**X8**	**X9**	**X10**	**Y**
Good Friday Agreement (1998)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	**0**
Sunningdale Agreement (1973)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	**1**
Zapatero's Peace Process (2006-2007)	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Algiers Process (1989)	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Havana Peace Process (2012-2016)	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	**0**
Pastrana's Peace Process (1998-2002)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	**1**
Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004)	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Sri Lankan Peace Process (1994-1995)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	**1**
Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	**0**

Addis Ababa Agreement (1971-1972)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	**1**

Table 1. Quantify Table - Information Metrics

3.6.3.1.b Count

Later, the explanatory and cofounding condition and outcome condition co-occurrence for each X and Y value combination were counted as suggested by Drozdova and Gaubatz' (2017) ABCD Method. Once this was completed, the joint probabilities for each X and Y combination were calculated by dividing the co-occurrence counts by the total number of cases. Table 2 lists the following:

	X1	**X2**	**X3**	**X4**	**X5**	**X6**	**X7**	**X8**	**X9**	**X10**	**Y**
Good Friday Agreement (1998)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	**0**
Sunningdale Agreement (1973)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	**1**
Zapatero's Peace Process (2006-2007)	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Algiers Process (1989)	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Havana Peace Process (2012-2016)	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	**0**
Pastrana's Peace Process (1998-2002)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	**1**
Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004)	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**

Sri Lankan Peace Process (1994-1995)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	**1**
Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	**0**
Addis Ababa Agreement (1971-1972)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	**1**

a	0,400	0,300	0,500	0,600	0,500	0,400	0,600	0,600	0,700	0,600
b	0,300	0,400	0,200	0,100	0,200	0,300	0,100	0,100	0,000	0,100
c	0,100	0,200	0,200	0,300	0,100	0,300	0,000	0,100	0,200	0,200
d	0,200	0,100	0,100	0,000	0,200	0,000	0,300	0,200	0,100	0,100

Table 2. Count Table - Information Metrics

3.6.3.1.c Compute

Finally, the information metrics for each condition are calculated using the ACBD Method. In addition to these three information measures, it also included a simple measure of direction, as Drozdova and Gaubatz (2017) suggested. The relationship is positive if the presence of X increases the likelihood of Y, and it is negative if the presence of X decreases the likelihood of Y. Table 3 lists the calculations.

	X1	**X2**	**X3**	**X4**	**X5**	**X6**	**X7**	**X8**	**X9**	**X10**	**Y**
Good Friday Agreement (1998)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
Sunningdal e Agreement (1973)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Zapatero's Peace Process (2006-2007)	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Algiers Process (1989)	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Havana Peace Process (2012-2016)	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pastrana's Peace Process (1998-2002)	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004)	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sri Lankan Peace Process (1994-1995)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0
Addis Ababa Agreement (1971-1972)	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1

a	0,400	0,300	0,500	0,600	0,500	0,400	0,600	0,600	0,700	0,600
b	0,300	0,400	0,200	0,100	0,200	0,300	0,100	0,100	0,000	0,100
c	0,100	0,200	0,200	0,300	0,100	0,300	0,000	0,100	0,200	0,200
d	0,200	0,100	0,100	0,000	0,200	0,000	0,300	0,200	0,100	0,100
$H(Y)$	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881	0,881
$H(Y\|X)$	0,846	0,846	0,880	0,827	0,790	0,690	0,325	0,690	0,688	0,849
$I(Y; X)$	0,035	0,035	0,002	0,055	0,091	**0,191**	**0,557**	**0,192**	**0,193**	0,032
Direction	Positive	Negative	Positive	Positive	Positive	**Negative**	**Positive**	**Positive**	**Positive**	Positive

Table 3. Compute Table - Information Metrics

3.6.3.1.d Compare

By examining the results of mutual information gain after all the information metrics procedures have been performed, it is observed that only four conditions are informative enough to account for the outcome condition. In addition, these results allow us to answer the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1 (H1) proposes that False Readiness presence will be higher in mediated dyads than in non-mediated dyads.
- Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposes that False Readiness presence will be higher in power asymmetric dyads than in symmetric dyads.

Moreover, the results also validate some of the general postulates in Schwartz and Gilboa's (2021) False Readiness Theory up to a certain point. First, it covers the conditions that are informative regarding the hypotheses of this research. Second, this work will examine the remaining significant conditions and their meaning for the False Readiness Theory. Regarding H1, the condition X6 Presence of a Mediator presents a 0,19/1 informational gain with an opposing direction about the outcome condition, which, in simpler terms, indicates that there is a 19% probability that the presence of X6 makes the presence of Y less likely. In other words, in almost 20% of the occurrences in which a peace process is mediated, False Readiness is operationalized to be observed as a restart of the conflict after the negotiation failure will be less likely to be present. This result opposes H1 because False Readiness presence is not only higher in mediated dyads than in non-mediated dyads, but the direction of the relationship between the conditions goes the opposite of what was hypothesized, indicating instead that the general scholarly vision of mediation as an instrument for trust-building and peacemaking (Ruhe, 2020; Bercovitch, 2011; Bercovitch & Gartner, 2008) could hold primacy over the idea of this research that a mediation process can act as a motivator for an FR actor, promoting a sense of False Optimism (Danneman & Beardsley, 2022). Thus, H1 is not supported by the evidence obtained from the Information Method.

Concerning H2, the analysis is more straightforward because both conditions X1 Power Asymmetry - Insurgency Weaker Party and X2 Power Symmetry hold no significance from an informational gain point of view; both conditions have a value of 0,035, which by principle invalidates H2. Interestingly, the difference between their directions, X1 being positive towards Y and X2 being negative towards Y, reaffirms from a theoretical point of view that the balance of power can influence the presence or absence of False Readiness (Quinn et al., 2006; Rauchhaus, 2006). Ceteris paribus, and attending to only the direction measure, the presence of Power

Asymmetry makes the presence of False Readiness more likely, and Power Symmetry makes it less likely. However, owing to its insignificance in informational gain, H2 is not supported by the evidence obtained from the Information Method.

However, there is one highly significant condition: the X7 Final Agreement was not reached or implemented has a 0,57 from 1 informational value with a positive direction, which accounts for almost 60% of the likelihood that when X7 is present, False Readiness as a restart of the conflict after the negotiation failure will also make an appearance. Although it might seem obvious and elementary due to their indicator's similarity, there are still open venues for further study. For instance, X7 did not account for ceasefires, partial agreements, or troubled implementation due to spoilers of the peace process (Bell & Wise, 2022; Joshi & Quinn, 2015; Richmond, 2006). Peace agreement design is a broad area that, owing to the informational gain knowledge obtained through the Information Method, requires further attention to prepare more specific conditions to guide observation on False Readiness.

Lastly, conditions X8 Maximalist preferences – State and X9 Maximalist preferences – Insurgency present an information gain of 0,19 of 1 and are positive. Schwartz and Gilboa point out that FR revolves around the question of identity. Hypothetically, a conflict emerges when one party rejects another 's existence or identity due to ideological disparities (Schwartz & Gilboa, 2021). This pertains to the essence of existence and national identity, rendering them impossible to reconcile. Hence, the moderate information gain obtained from X8 and X9 indicates a positive correlation between both conditions and the presence of False Readiness, which not only appears to validate part of the argument made by the FR theory authors but also suggests pathways for further research.

The cases in which Insurgency and the State exhibit maximalist preferences, if not disaggregated, carry a significant probability of relapsing into conflict following negotiation failure, amounting to almost 40%. This aligns with the findings of Negotiation Research and Rational Choice Theory, which emphasize the detrimental impact of maximalist preferences on the attainment of a Zone of Possible Agreement (Boothby et al., 2022; Chohan, 2019; Laengle et al., 2020; Kydd, 2010). Additionally, Peace and Conflict Studies stress the necessity for mediators to address conflict to transform the maximalist preferences of the parties involved through either a conflict management approach that employs incentives and penalties (I. W. Zartman, 2022; Melin

& Svensson, 2009; Beardsley et al., 2006; Maoz & Terris, 2006) or a more transformative approach that leverages linkages and influences the overall terms of the conflict (Galtung & Fischer, 2013; Bercovitch, 2011; Webel & Galtung, 2009; Bercovitch & Gartner, 2008). This result underscores the importance of studying maximalist preferences and their role in deception during peace processes, with increased attention paid to detail.

CHAPTER 4: TRACING THE PROCESSES OF CONFLICT CASES

Chapter 4 utilizes process tracing to delve into a selection of specific cases. This approach became necessary due to the inconsistent relationships among scope conditions, explanatory conditions, and outcome conditions in the truth table. These inconsistencies posed a significant challenge to effectively carrying out a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), making performing any necessity and sufficiency analysis impractical and infeasible. In response to this, process tracing emerged as a viable alternative. This method enabled a more profound comprehension of the case population and facilitated a detailed examination of events and the outcome condition. Importantly, process tracing was deliberately selected to examine cases that manifested scope and outcome conditions. The analysis focused primarily on the two Basque negotiation processes and one of the Sri Lankan peace processes among the conflict case studies analyzed in the dissertation.

These cases were specifically chosen due to factors that strongly correlated with the condition of interest, such as the role of a mediator, the non-execution of agreements, and maximalist preferences on the part of both the insurgency and the state. In this respect, these case studies reflect on key arguments of the research. However, the results of the process tracing for the three abovementioned cases contravened the hypothesis addressed on this chapter. Yet, a more nuanced understanding on how a change of perspective for the observed dyad can change the results on H3 is offered in Chapter 5.

The inconsistencies in the truth table precluded a reliable Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). However, upon meticulous review of the truth table, it was apparent that the abovementioned cases shared enough scope and explanatory conditions to warrant further investigation. The ultimate goal of process tracing is to establish a causal link by identifying and analyzing the traces of hypothesized causal mechanisms (Cotton & Liu, 2011). Overall, the methodology of process tracing (Beach, 2017) encompasses several critical components:

1) Theoretical Framework: Grounded in causal inference, process tracing focuses on uncovering the causal mechanisms that link causes to outcomes. It extends beyond mere descriptive narratives, aiming to identify and understand the mechanisms driving the observed events. 2) Empirical Analysis: Researchers analyze the empirical manifestations of theorized mechanisms within the selected case. This involves examining evidence to trace how these mechanisms unfold and lead to the outcome of interest. 3) Comparative Methods: Process tracing often incorporates comparative methods to facilitate generalizations beyond a single case. By comparing findings across causally similar cases, researchers can assess the broader applicability of the identified mechanisms.

The theoretical framework is based on the False Readiness Theory, thoroughly covered in this dissertation. The hypothesis (H3) proposes that a mediator's inability to recognize a party's false readiness for agreement in mediated negotiations can give a strategic advantage to the deceitful party. This often occurs in negotiation or conflict resolution scenarios, where one party feigns readiness to reach an agreement, gaining an advantage. A two-dimensional matrix is included to illustrate this. It categorizes peace processes based on the presence or absence of specific conditions (X) and their outcomes (Y). The matrix is divided into four quadrants, as shown below.

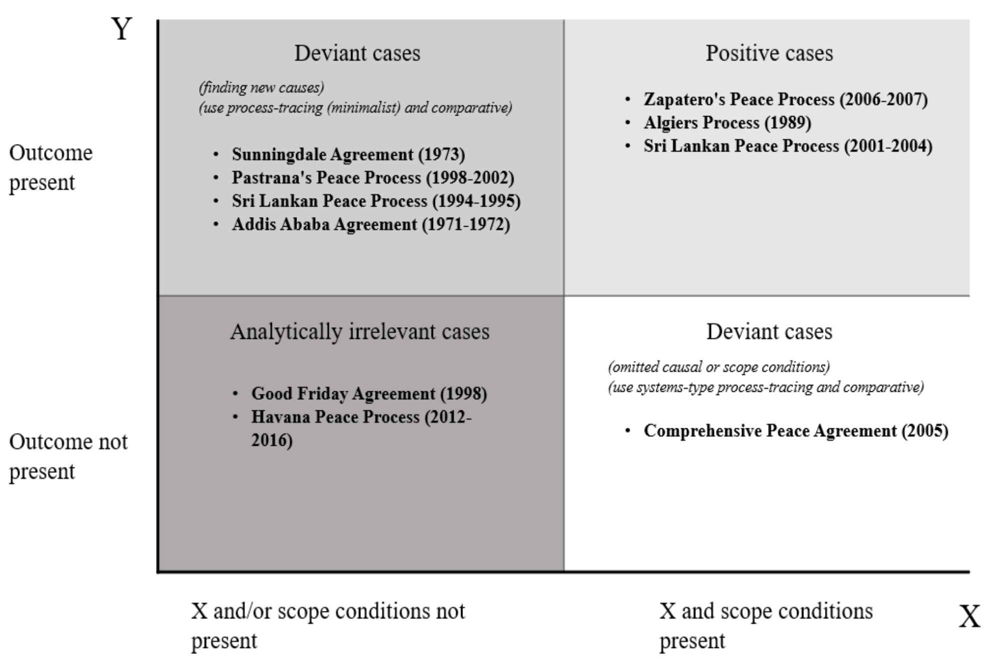

Figure 1. Deviant and Positive Cases Axis and Mapping

The matrix aims to clearly show why specific peace processes are not included in the further process tracing analysis. Deviant cases with successful and unsuccessful outcomes and analytically irrelevant ones will be excluded from the in-depth analysis of the causal mechanisms designed for Hypothesis 3. For this research, theory-testing process tracing is employed (Beach, 2017), which tests the existence of a hypothesized causal mechanism in one or more positive cases to establish a link between cause (X) and effect (Y). Chapter 4 intends to depict a scenario of failed peace processes. False motivation arises when parties understand that violent conflict will not ensure victory and that their strategic position is compromised. The presence of a mediator fosters false optimism, tempting the insurgency group to enter into negotiations insincerely. Once in the process, their maximalist preferences obstruct negotiation progress, preventing a final agreement. Despite negotiations, the lack of true commitment results in conflict resumption, reflecting a lack of sincere readiness for peace.

Cause	**Causal Mechanism**		**Outcome**
• Realization that the conflict cannot be won by violent means • Dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position (False Motivation) • Presence of a Mediator (False Optimism)	Maximalist preferences	Final Agreement was not reached or implemented	Presence of False Readiness (Conflict restarted after the negotiation failure)

Figure 2. Casual Mechanism - Minimalist version

The process is detailed in Figure 3, which illustrates the involved activities and entities, as a process tracing systems-understating (Beach, 2017) requires. The entity consistently refers to the insurgency. The first part of the activity involves initiating and maintaining negotiations, where maximalist preferences are apparent. This often results in proposal rejections and agreement to partial settlements, eventually resurging the conflict.

Part 1	**Part 2**	**Part 3**

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Cause</td><td>Activities</td><td>Starts and sustains negotiations with maximalist preferences that they refuse to modify</td><td>Refuses proposals on a systematic basis</td><td>Agrees only to partial agreements and not comprehensive solutions</td><td rowspan="2">Outcome</td></tr>
<tr><td>Entities</td><td>Insurgency</td><td>Insurgency</td><td>Insurgency</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 3. Casual Mechanism - Systemic version

In the following sections, the hypothesized causal mechanism mentioned earlier is established, along with its observable implications, evidence is gathered, the presence of the mechanism is assessed, and conclusions regarding H3 are drawn.

4.1 Algiers Process (1989)

The Algiers Process refers to several dialogues that occurred in the latter part of the 1980s. These dialogues involved the Spanish government, then under the helm of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the Basque separatist organization, ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna). To create a favorable environment for discussions, ETA unilaterally declared a 15-day ceasefire in January 1989. After an agreement with the Spanish government, this ceasefire was extended bilaterally for two more months. Between January and March 1989, ETA and the Spanish government representatives met on five separate occasions in Algiers. The Algerian government officially mediated these meetings. The goal was to transition these encounters from conversations to formal negotiations. However, despite sincere efforts, the Algiers Process did not result in a durable peace agreement. The negotiations eventually broke down, giving way to a resurgence of violence that further prolonged the conflict for several more years.

Regardless of its unsuccessful outcome, the Algiers Process is still considered a significant event in the history of the Basque conflict. The cessation of the negotiations in Algiers led to ETA's increasing isolation on the international stage. Its inability to engage productively in the peace process and its continued resort to violence marginalized its position and shrank its support base. In the aftermath of the failed negotiations, ETA recommenced its armed struggle in April 1989. This marked the end of the ceasefire and a resurgence of violence. The Spanish government's response was an intensification of its counterterrorism efforts, which included the contentious policy of scattering Basque political prisoners across Spain (Sordo Estella, 2015). On the political front, the Ajuria Enea Agreement, signed by most Spanish and Basque political parties (excluding HB, ETA's political wing), aimed to isolate ETA politically (Whitfield, 2014).

4.1.1 Causes

4.1.1.1 Realization that the conflict cannot be won by violent means

Felipe González, during the winter of 1984, had already initiated attempts to engage with ETA to gauge their willingness to participate in dialogue. Enrique Rodríguez Galindo, the commander of the Civil Guard at that time, was entrusted with establishing these preliminary contacts. In February of the same year, he met Domingo Iturbe Abasolo, known as "Txomin," who led ETA in Andorra (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). These initial meetings hinted at a potential path towards ceasing armed conflict. By August 1984, José Barrionuevo, the Minister of Interior, publicly extended an invitation for dialogue with ETA. This invitation included a promise of social reintegration for those members who would lay down their arms and accept the Constitution (Sordo Estella, 2015). In response, ETA promptly indicated their readiness to negotiate. However, it would take a few more years before the formal commencement of what would be known as the Algiers talks.

Several internal changes within ETA, driven by strategic, political, pragmatic, and operational factors, eventually led the organization to initiate negotiations with the Spanish government. These changes catalyzed ETA's decision to seek a peaceful resolution to the Basque conflict and to pursue their political objectives non-violently. ETA's leadership began to acknowledge the declining support for armed struggle and the increasing isolation of the organization within Basque society (Sordo Estella, 2015). Consequently, there was an internal reassessment of ETA's strategic position, leading to a reevaluation of the effectiveness of violence as a means to achieve political ends. Internal dissent within ETA, including disagreements over strategic direction, the use of violence, and the organization's political objectives, led to divisions and debates about the efficacy of armed struggle. A faction within ETA began advocating for a shift towards political engagement and dialogue, viewing it as a more sustainable and practical approach to advancing Basque nationalist aspirations. Josu Muguruza Guarrotxena, a member of ETA's Political Bureau, was a crucial figure in this internal debate. Muguruza was pivotal in articulating the need for negotiations and promoting a new strategic approach (Sordo Estella, 2015). His document, Alternativa y Negociación, encapsulated ETA's internal discussions about the feasibility of a negotiated settlement with the Spanish government.

4.1.1.2 Dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position

As Spain underwent a democratic transition in the 1980s, ETA's propensity for violence escalated alarmingly, leading to an unfortunate surge in fatalities. Notably, the year 1980 was marked as the most violent period, with ETA being held accountable for almost 100 deaths, notwithstanding Spain's restoration to democratic governance. Consequently, the Spanish security forces felt compelled to establish the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups (GAL) in 1983, primarily aiming to engage in a covert war against ETA (Sordo Estella, 2015). However, the actions of GAL sadly resulted in the death toll rising by 28 individuals from 1983 to 1987. This group, which had connections with the NATO stay-behind network Gladio, operated outside of the legal framework, engaging in a spectrum of violence that included kidnappings, assassinations, and bombings. The actions perpetrated by GAL, characterized by state-sanctioned violence and human rights breaches, had a profound effect on Spanish society, eroding public trust, undermining the rule of law, and targeting ETA through paramilitary means (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

Moreover, the international scenario was also significant. The Spanish-French Agreement against terrorism, signed in 1984, substantially influenced the negotiation process between the Spanish government and ETA during the Algiers Process (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014). This bilateral agreement, which was forged between Spain and France, was intended to strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism, specifically targeting ETA operatives who sought refuge or support in France. Essentially, the agreement could shape the conflict dynamics and potentially create conditions influencing the negotiation environment. This was achieved by implementing tighter security measures, facilitating extraditions, demonstrating diplomatic solidarity, and prompting a strategic shift in ETA's approach.

The agreement resulted in the extradition of ETA members, encompassing key leaders and operatives, from France to third countries such as Gabon, Cuba, and Algeria. This action disrupted ETA's organizational structure and capabilities, affecting its capacity to sustain its campaign of violence (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The arrests and deportations of ETA members served to weaken the group and could have influenced its strategic calculations regarding the negotiation process. Lastly, France's policy shift vis-à-vis ETA, which commenced in 1984, coincided with a period of internal stagnation within the terrorist organization. This resulted in a dwindling number of sympathizers willing to align with ETA (Sordo Estella, 2015). The intensification of French police persecution, the loss of commandos due to police actions, and the success of Spain's political reforms collectively served to debilitate ETA's leadership further.

4.1.1.3 Presence of a Mediator

In 1986, a Spanish government delegation, including officials such as Elgorriaga and Argote, expressed their concerns to the Algerian authorities regarding the presence of ETA members in Algeria (Whitfield, 2014). This diplomatic maneuver marked Spain's proactive attempt to confront the issue of ETA members seeking sanctuary in Algeria, thereby establishing a foundation for future discussions with Algerian officials concerning ETA's activities within their borders. The following year, in 1987, the ETA leader, Domingo Iturbe Abasolo, colloquially known as "Txomin," who was residing in Algeria, vocalized his willingness to negotiate with the Spanish government. This pivotal moment indicated a potential avenue for dialogue between ETA and the Spanish authorities, thus paving the way for prospective negotiations.

Historically, Algeria has provided support and a haven to ETA members and sympathizers. During the Franco era in Spain, a period characterized by ETA's active engagement in armed conflict against the Spanish state, Algeria extended refuge to Basque militants fleeing persecution and repression in Spain (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Allegations have been made implicating Algeria in providing comprehensive training and logistical support to ETA members, encompassing the provision of military training camps and assistance in weapons procurement (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014). The Algerian government's backing of ETA's armed struggle against the Spanish state has been a consistent source of friction in the bilateral relations between Algeria and Spain. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Algeria fulfilled a dual role in these negotiations. While offering to mediate, it simultaneously provided military training and refuge to ETA activists (Sordo Estella, 2015).

4.1.2 Causal Mechanism

4.1.2.1 Maximalist preferences

The Algiers Process was significantly shaped by an entrenched state of distrust, a byproduct of years of violence and failed attempts at peace between ETA and the Spanish government (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). This deep-seated mistrust was a barrier for both parties, inhibiting them from making necessary concessions and taking risks to pursue peace. As per ETA, the Spanish government's acceptance of the KAS Alternative was a prerequisite for prospective negotiations (Sordo Estella, 2015). This was a political framework program of the Koordinadora Abertzale Sozialista presented in 1976. It advocated the self-determination and independence of Euskadi. However, it must be noted that a distinct lack of maturity marked the strategies employed by both sides during the negotiations. For instance, officials representing the Spanish government, such as Home Minister José Luis Corcuera, later conceded their hesitance to discuss political matters with ETA, predominantly focusing instead on technical issues concerning prisoners, refugees, and hidden militants (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014).

In essence, the objectives of both parties were starkly different. While ETA sought a political solution to acknowledge Basque sovereignty and self-determination, the Spanish government was prepared to discuss only a definitive solution that precluded political concessions (Sordo Estella, 2015). ETA perceived the government's transition in language from a negotiated political solution to an agreed and definitive solution as an attempt to strip the process of its political character (Whitfield, 2014). This led to ultimatums from ETA, which were ignored and subsequently led to the breakdown of the talks.

The Spanish government maintained a firm stance that negotiations with ETA would only proceed if the group fully disarmed and renounced violence. The government viewed any concession as a potential legitimization of ETA's violent methods (Sordo Estella, 2015). Conversely, ETA regarded its armed struggle as a legitimate means to achieve its political goals. ETA's leadership in the northern Basque Country was against any agreement that merely addressed technical issues. There was a strong emphasis on the involvement of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and Herri Batasuna (HB) in any formal agreement with ETA.

Moreover, any decisions made by ETA were expected to receive the endorsement of their incarcerated members (Sordo Estella, 2015). Reflecting on the negotiations, Spanish government officials admitted that they did not enter the talks expecting to reach an agreement (Whitfield, 2014). Their objective was rather strategic: to demonstrate to the international community, particularly France and the European Union, the Spanish government's willingness to negotiate while portraying ETA as unyielding.

4.1.2.2 Final Agreement was not reached or implemented

During the Algiers Process, ETA consistently asserted that negotiations with the Spanish government should be contingent upon the KAS Alternative and repeatedly attempted to establish this as the basis for discussions. ETA also expressed dissatisfaction with the Spanish government's steadfast positions, accusing them of maintaining an inflexible stance that upheld the legitimacy of the Reform and existing institutions and the Guernica Statute as the definitive platform for political dialogue (Sordo Estella, 2015). The KAS Alternative delineated a series of demands and conditions perceived by ETA as fundamental to progressing the peace process.

These demands encompassed recognizing the Basque people's right to self-determination, granting amnesty to political prisoners, withdrawing Spanish security forces from the Basque Country, enhancing working-class conditions, and legalizing all Basque nationalist parties. However, the Spanish government persistently dismissed these requests, particularly the demand for self-determination, as it directly contradicted the Spanish Constitution of 1978, which Madrid proposed as the baseline framework (Sordo Estella, 2015). Concurrent with the ongoing negotiations, violence was exacerbated during the Algiers Process. ETA's sustained perpetration of violent activities, encompassing assassinations and bombings, significantly undermined the potential for a peaceful resolution. The continuous prevalence of violence made it increasingly difficult to maintain the momentum of the negotiations. Although ETA declared a 15-day unilateral ceasefire, later extending it for two additional months, the underlying motives of this truce remained unclear. Some analysts speculated that it could be a strategy for ETA to regroup in the face of recent setbacks. The Spanish security forces' absence of a corresponding ceasefire further eroded trust and impeded progress (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014).

The political environment in Spain introduced considerable obstacles to the negotiation process. Changes in the government, alterations in public opinion, and resistance from specific political factions complicated the Spanish government's capacity to make concessions and commit to a comprehensive agreement with ETA (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

4.1.3 Hypothesis-testing

An evaluation of the Algiers Process prompts a question about the advantages accrued by ETA as a result of their participation. Although the group abandoned the negotiations and obstructed significant progress, they did achieve a noteworthy outcome: they were recognized as an official political interlocutor by a democratic government. This unexpected development bestowed legitimacy upon ETA, enhancing its standing in future negotiations with successive Spanish governments and solidifying its role as a critical player in the Basque peace process (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014).

According to Sordo Estella (2015), this recognition from the Spanish Government was the primary objective for the leadership of ETA at that time. However, it became evident that the leadership was neither genuinely committed nor adequately prepared to embark on a sincere negotiation process. The failure of the negotiations led to a significant disillusionment within Basque society, a disappointment that ETA had to bear the brunt of. The hopes sparked during the truce culminated in disrepute and seclusion for the organization, a situation further exacerbated by the disenchantment of specific sectors of the Abertzale left, international seclusion, and loss of support from Algeria, which significantly altered the organization's environment (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

Furthermore, the Algiers Process catalyzed the formation of a united political front from the principal democratic parties. This collective front rejected violence and advocated peace, countering the more radical factions. The collapse of the negotiations subsequently led to the implementation of a policy, backed by all democratic parties, of dispersing ETA prisoners to facilities away from the Basque Country (Sordo Estella, 2015). Additionally, a policy aimed at reintegrating prisoners who renounced violence was put into effect. This policy caused internal dissent within ETA and resulted in the exile of dissident militants to Latin American countries. The Algiers Process also played a pivotal role in transforming international perceptions. As an illustration, Algeria expelled ETA members, no longer recognizing them as political refugees (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

Consequently, the hypothesis posited in this case is refuted. ETA and the Spanish government entered the negotiations with covert agendas. Although the Algerian government did not immediately discern these ulterior motives, it was weakened once the conflict resumed, thus invalidating H3 for this peace process. For instance, the increased police pressure on ETA in 1990 led to Spanish security forces capturing ETA's Argala commando, a significant operational unit responsible for executing attacks. The apprehension of key ETA operatives underscored the ongoing efforts by Spanish authorities to dismantle ETA's infrastructure and disrupt its activities in the aftermath of the Algiers Process (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

4.2 Zapatero's Peace Process (2006-2007)

The negotiation process began in earnest after Zapatero took office in April 2004. Key actors involved in the negotiations included Zapatero's close collaborator Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba and other prominent figures such as Jesús Eguiguren, the president of the Basque Socialist Party (PSE-EE), who played a crucial role in facilitating dialogue between the Spanish government and ETA (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). One of the significant milestones in the negotiation process was the announcement of a ceasefire by ETA in March 2006, following secret talks between the group and the Spanish government. This ceasefire marked a potential turning point in the conflict and raised hopes for a peaceful resolution. However, the process faced challenges and setbacks, including internal divisions within ETA and opposition from various sectors of Spanish society.

In November 2006, ETA declared a permanent ceasefire, signaling its willingness to dialogue with the Spanish government. This led to meetings and negotiations between the two parties and the involvement of international mediators and facilitators, such as the anthropologist William Douglass and the Swiss-based Henry Dunant Centre. The negotiation process involved discussions on critical issues such as the cessation of violence, disarmament, the future political status of the Basque Country, and the situation of ETA prisoners. These talks took place in different locations, including Geneva and Oslo, to reach a comprehensive agreement to end the conflict. Despite some progress in the negotiations, the process faced significant challenges, including the lack of trust between the parties, opposition from hardline factions within ETA, and criticism from political parties and victims of ETA violence (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The process ultimately faltered, leading to the breakdown of the ceasefire in June 2007 and the resumption of violence by ETA.

4.2.1 Causes

4.2.1.1 Realization that the conflict cannot be won by violent means

Throughout ETA, internal debates and dissension emerged regarding the viability of armed struggle and violence to achieve political objectives. A division between factions advocating for peace negotiations and those supporting the continuation of armed struggle became increasingly evident. In fact, on December 6, 2005, ETA publicly announced the expulsion of six dissenting members, who had previously called for an end to the armed struggle, reflecting the internal strife within the organization (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Notably, these divergent views were also embodied among ETA's key leaders. Figures like "Josu Ternera" championed peaceful resolution, while hardliners such as "Thierry" and "Txeroki" advocated for sustained violence (Sordo Estella, 2015). This disparity further highlighted the organization's internal divisions. Concurrently, international pressure on ETA to abandon its armed struggle grew, with governments and organizations urging the cessation of terrorist activities and fostering political solutions (Arbona et al., 2010).

Over time, ETA's popularity within the Basque Country and globally dwindled due to its violent tactics and attacks on civilians. These actions eroded public sympathy and undermined the organization's political legitimacy, triggering a reassessment of its strategies (Conversi & Espiau, 2019). Additionally, the arrests of crucial ETA leaders, disruptions in operational capabilities, and legal actions against the organization significantly weakened its capacity to maintain an armed struggle. In response to these challenges, ETA was compelled to reevaluate its tactics and explore non-violent avenues to achieve its goals. The changing political landscape in Spain and the Basque Country, characterized by new leadership, government initiatives, and evolving public sentiments, created dialogue and conflict resolution opportunities (Conversi & Espiau, 2019). With these shifting dynamics, ETA recognized the necessity to adapt and pursue peaceful avenues.

The 2004 election of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero as the Spanish Prime Minister signaled a significant shift in the political landscape and Spain's approach to the Basque conflict. Zapatero's commitment to dialogue, peace, and democratic principles gave ETA an unprecedented opportunity to explore a negotiated settlement, further emphasizing the need for ETA to reconsider its approach.

4.2.1.2 Dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position

Several factors significantly influenced ETA's strategic position in the lead-up to the negotiations. The organization grappled with internal divisions that undermined its unity and effectiveness. Concurrently, the broader challenges of maintaining public support were becoming increasingly apparent. There was a discernible decline in the endorsement of violence, and effective counterterrorism measures implemented by the government further weakened ETA's position (Conversi & Espiau, 2019). The increasing autonomy of the Basque region also played a role in diminishing ETA's influence. These internal and external dynamics complicated ETA's negotiation ability, ultimately catalyzing its eventual dissolution.

In tandem with these internal struggles, ETA's military capabilities had been substantially weakened by rigorous counterterrorism operations executed by Spanish and French security forces. The arrests of key leaders, the dismantling of logistical networks, and disruptions of operational cells significantly curtailed ETA's capacity for large-scale attacks ((Sordo Estella, 2015; Stubbs, 2012). The effectiveness of these law enforcement efforts, including intelligence operations, surveillance, and international cooperation, forced ETA into a defensive position, limiting its ability to sustain a prolonged armed struggle. Consequently, the organization encountered challenges in replenishing its ranks and maintaining operational secrecy (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Furthermore, ETA could not achieve its enduring goal of Basque independence or self-determination through armed struggle. This failure resulted in a political stalemate in the Basque Country, leaving ETA without a clear strategy to advance its political objectives. The unsuccessful peace initiatives of the past, such as the Lizarra-Garazi Agreement in 1998-1999, only underscored this impasse (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

Adding to the complexity, the Basque nationalist movement was characterized by multiple actors, including political parties like Batasuna (ETA's political wing) and civil society organizations. This created a multifaceted landscape of competing interests and strategies (Stubbs, 2012). ETA's relationship with these actors and its ability to mobilize popular support were crucial factors in its strategic considerations. As Estella (2015) points out, ETA's phases of violence corresponded with periods of mobilization by radical Basque nationalism. Thus, armed struggle and mass protest were intrinsically linked. However, despite periods of dominance, the radical nationalist movement eventually lost its hegemony, prompting ETA to assume it could not defeat the state with its existing structure.

Lastly, the impact of public opinion on ETA's strategic calculations is worth noting. Public demonstrations, peace campaigns, and calls for dialogue from various sectors of Basque society exerted considerable pressure on ETA to reassess its tactics and engage in constructive dialogue with the Spanish Government (Conversi & Espiau, 2019, Sordo Estella, 2015). This shift in public sentiment influenced ETA's strategic decisions and challenged its perception of popular legitimacy (Conversi & Espiau, 2019).

4.2.1.3 Presence of a Mediator

The Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, established in 1999 near Lake Geneva, was pivotal in fostering negotiations between ETA and the Spanish government. Under Martin Griffiths's leadership, the Center, a British director with extensive connections to Tony Blair and various elements of Spanish diplomacy, facilitated productive dialogues between parties involved in violent disputes (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The Centre is notable for its professionalism and discretion, utilizing its broad resources and global networks to facilitate undetected cross-border movement for even armed terrorists.

During the negotiation, the mediators incrementally gained insight into ETA's strategy. Despite their voiced disappointment regarding ETA's obstinate stance, members of ETA countered by asserting they were subject to intense pressure (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The international mediators, influenced by their experiences with situations such as the South African apartheid and the Irish peace process, viewed the "Basque political problem" through comparable frameworks. However, such frameworks failed to accurately reflect the unique circumstances in the Basque Country, where the Spanish state, once the talks collapsed in 2007, had later on effectively subdued the terrorist group, necessitating that ETA members serve their sentences and provide reparations to their victims.

After the collapse of the 2007 talks, the predominant objective of the mediators was to assist Batasuna, the political faction affiliated with ETA, in distancing itself from the terrorist organization and assuming a leadership role in the conflict resolution process. This strategy was formulated to prevent ETA from suffering a resounding defeat at the hands of the state (Sordo Estella, 2015).

4.2.2 Causal Mechanism

4.2.2.1 Maximalist preferences

The Spanish government's refusal to acknowledge a terrorist organization as a relevant entity within a political framework is a central issue in this conflict (Stubbs, 2012). The government's approach to securitizing the Basque dispute and ETA's refusal to transition into a solely political entity and relinquish its arms perpetuated the conflict until the organization's military capabilities were significantly weakened (Arbona et al., 2010). Both parties approached the conflict in non-conciliatory terms rooted in identity, complicating the negotiation process. During the negotiations, a two-table structure was proposed to resolve the Basque conflict peacefully. One table intended to address political matters, such as the future of the Basque Country and its relationship with Spain. The second table focused on practical issues like ETA's disarmament and the release of ETA prisoners. In this sense, the Spanish government was adamant in rejecting ETA’s tutelage in the political track, arguing that it would legitimize ETA and its violent tactics (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010).

Simultaneously, during the final negotiation session, ETA insisted on the juridical-political integration of the Basque Country and Navarra, a concept referred to as "autonomy for four." This proposal, initially made by Batasuna to the PSE and the PNV in 2006, resulted in the breakdown of the Loyola Meetings (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The government claimed the proposal was legally unfeasible but offered alternatives, which the insurgent group rejected. By doing so, ETA justified its argument to its members that the government's inflexibility was the cause of the negotiation failure. Upon reflecting on the entire process, Arnaldo Otegui, the Abertzale leader, inferred that the government had not genuinely sought an agreement. Although strides were made during the Loyola Process, with a vision of a single community encompassing Navarra and the right to self-determination, Eguiguren disputed this perspective. He highlighted how the original negotiation roadmap was disrupted, leading to the Loyola Agreement's collapse. Representing the socialists, Eguiguren and Ares proposed reforms to the statutes of the Basque Autonomous Community and the Foral Community of Navarra. This proposition included the potential for a future common intergovernmental body, signifying the connection between the two regions as the maximum achievable goal (Sordo Estella, 2015).

4.2.2.2 Final Agreement was not reached or implemented

Considerable efforts were made to establish dual negotiation tracks during the peace process: one between the Spanish government and ETA, explicitly focusing on the "peace for prisoners" concept, and another among Basque political parties aiming to decide Euskadi's political future (Sordo Estella, 2015; Stubbs, 2012; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). The "Zapatero Process" sought to negotiate the release and treatment of ETA prisoners as a component of a peace agreement. This "Paz por Presos" track is considered potential amnesty or leniency in return for ETA's pledge to halt violence. Discussions included the conditions and timeline for releasing prisoners, their societal reintegration, and the broader implications for the peace process (Sordo Estella, 2015; Arbona et al., 2010).

Parallel to this, the political negotiation track addressed vital issues such as Basque self-determination, regional autonomy, constitutional reforms, and the future political status of the Basque Country. By engaging Basque political parties separately from the ETA-Government negotiations, the objective was to promote democratic decision-making and foster consensus on the governance of the Basque Country (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Internal documents revealed insights into ETA's internal dynamics, demonstrating the organization's divisions as it approached the peace process. Following a series of internal meetings over the summer, ETA decided to alter the roadmap initially set in Geneva and Oslo, a significant shift in strategy crucial to comprehending the complexities of the negotiation process (Sordo Estella, 2015).

Interestingly, the internal debates within ETA showcased contrasting viewpoints. While leaders like "Josu Ternera" advocated for a peace process with the Spanish government, others like "Thierry" and "Txeroki" championed continued violence. This division within ETA resulted in acts of sabotage, including demands for the annexation of Navarra to Euskadi and the December 30th, 2006 attack on Madrid's Airport (Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). In the event of a negotiated agreement, ETA stood to lose its leadership in the armed struggle and radical nationalism, aspects that had previously reaped benefits from the government's often voluntary and occasionally naive offers. Hence, it is arguable that ETA preferred defeat to voluntarily renouncing armed struggle (Sordo Estella, 2015).

The bombing at Madrid's T-4 airport signified a turning point in the resolution of the so-called "Basque political conflict." The attempts failed despite the Spanish government's extensive involvement and commitment to securing a lasting peace in Euskadi (Conversi & Espiau, 2019). Consequently, ETA lost all domestic and international credibility. According to Eguiguren, despite the earnest efforts of President Zapatero, Interior Minister Rubalcaba, and the PSE to end ETA through dialogue, the failure could be attributed solely to ETA. The terrorist attack symbolized ETA's loss in the battle for reason and public opinion (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Finally, ETA posited that the government intended to restrict negotiations to a "peace for prisoners" framework, which ETA argued was only valid if a political agreement was reached beforehand. ETA asserted that the process's failure was due to the government's relentless pursuit of the "peace for prisoners" negotiation despite the central role of the political agreement between parties in the process. ETA aimed to enforce a preliminary political agreement and interrupt the technical negotiations between the government and ETA regarding "peace for prisoners" through the Loyola talks.

4.2.3 Hypothesis-testing

Significantly, during its internal debates, ETA chose a path that would prove to be its eventual undoing--insisting on continuing its terrorist activities. This decision, coupled with internal divisions and a fractured relationship with the left-wing nationalist movement (izquierda abertzale), left ETA significantly weakened and under the stringent control of the Spanish police (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010), which directly antagonizes H3 for this case study. Its weakened position after the negotiations was evident when Spanish security forces dismantled five of ETA's operating units between June 2007 and July 2008. In January 2008, an internal Spanish security forces report portrayed ETA as extremely weak, forcing the terrorist group to restructure and change its operational methods to regain initiative. The organization's new and inexperienced members frequently made security lapses, leading to the dismantling of these units and exposing the organization's infrastructure to the authorities. Moreover, ETA regretted not launching more attacks to manipulate the government during negotiations or preparing its base for the post-ceasefire breakdown, which again goes against the proposed direction of H3. Although ETA did not negotiate in good faith and had devious objectives, as demonstrated, the organization did not prepare accordingly for the breakup of the negotiations.

The success of the prison policy and dispersion strategy, exacerbated by penal code reforms, the "Parot Doctrine," and the government's implementation of the Law of Political Parties, was a challenge that ETA struggled to acknowledge (Sordo Estella, 2015). The pressure on ETA amplified in 2009 with the discovery of significant arms and explosives caches in Spain and France. In tandem with police successes, a judicial strategy targeted the abertzale environment, planning to illegalize all electoral formulas that Batasuna might use. The government's strategy was influenced by a letter from two ETA prisoners, José Luis Alvarez Santacristina "Txelis" and Kepa Picabea, sent to the ETA leadership in November 2007. They criticized the marginalization of ETA prisoners in the failed peace process, the futility of armed struggle, and its obstruction of left-wing nationalist progress (Sordo Estella, 2015; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). Faced with the police campaign that dismantled its central cells, ETA decided on a technical halt to reorganize. This military weakness also impacted its political apparatus, undermining its ability to impose decisions on Batasuna and the abertzale ecosystem. The internal debate concluded with the left-wing nationalist proposal prevailing over ETAs by 80 to 20 in February 2010 (Sordo Estella, 2015; Stubbs, 2012).

A pivotal moment for the left-wing nationalist movement and its new political project was November 14, 2009, when Batasuna, representing the entire movement, presented a manifesto in Alsasua (Navarra) advocating for a peaceful political process and endorsing the Mitchell Principles used in Northern Ireland (Sordo Estella, 2015). Despite this, ETA continued using attacks to pressure negotiations and obtain desired outcomes without notable success. The left-wing nationalist movement, supporting the Alsasua Declaration, sought to distance itself from ETA's power politics and requested non-interference in negotiations with the government. After the Alsasua Declaration, the movement opened an internal debate to approve the strategic line of total non-violence. Otegui, Etxeberría, and Díez Usabiaga supported this line, which won by a large majority of over 80% (Sordo Estella, 2015). Upon receiving confirmation from ETA to proceed towards the desired end, the terrorist group subordinated itself to the left-wing nationalist movement. It announced the cessation of all armed activities, culminating in the final declaration at the Aiete Palace in San Sebastián. For all the above evidenced and accordingly, the Zapatero Peace Process does not support H3. ETA started the negotiation process in 2006 without knowing that by the end of it, the outcome would be its disappearance through security measures and political isolation.

4.3 Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004)

The Sri Lankan Peace Process from 2001 to 2004 represents a significant endeavor to resolve the prolonged civil conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This period was characterized by negotiations and ceasefire agreements facilitated by international actors, with Norway playing a pivotal role. The peace process sought to address the entrenched ethnic tensions and grievances of the Tamil minority while preserving Sri Lanka's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In December 2001, the United National Front (UNF), directed by the United National Party (UNP), emerged victorious in the general elections, forming a new government under Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. Emphasizing a pro-peace platform, the new government invited Norway to mediate the peace talks, leading to the appointment of Erik Solheim as a special peace advisor (Swamy, 2010).

On February 22, 2002, a significant milestone occurred when the GoSL and the LTTE signed a Norwegian-mediated ceasefire agreement (CFA). This agreement marked the commencement of a formal peace process, incorporating provisions for international monitoring by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), composed of representatives from Nordic countries. The CFA facilitated the reopening of the A-9 road, linking the Jaffna peninsula with the rest of Sri Lanka and resuming passenger flights to Jaffna (Goodhand et al., 2013). Despite initial advancements, the peace process encountered substantial challenges, including persistent ceasefire violations, political instability, and internal divisions within both the GoSL and the LTTE. In April 2003, the

LTTE withdrew from the peace talks, expressing dissatisfaction with their exclusion from reconstruction talks in Washington, D.C., and perceived inequities in the distribution of peace dividends. The political rivalry between President Chandrika Kumaratunga and Prime Minister Wickremesinghe further complicated the peace process. In November 2003, President Kumaratunga assumed control of key ministries, including defense, and criticized the CFA, precipitating a political crisis (Goodhand et al., 2013).

The international community, including the Asian Development Bank and various donor countries, played a crucial role in supporting the peace process through economic aid and reconstruction efforts (Bouffard & Carment, 2006). However, the government's attempt to balance peace negotiations with market reforms led to political destabilization, ultimately contributing to the collapse of both agendas. In March 2004, the LTTE began to experience internal fragmentation when a senior commander, Colonel Karuna, seceded with 5,000 fighters due to insufficient resources for Tamils in the East. The general elections on April 2 resulted in a hung parliament, with President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party failing to secure a majority, leading to Mahinda Rajapaksa's appointment as Prime Minister (Duque, 2019). Later that year, on December 26, the Indian Ocean Tsunami struck Sri Lanka, causing over 30,000 deaths and displacing tens of thousands. This disaster led to disputes over the distribution of international aid between Tamil and Sinhalese areas (Swamy, 2010).

4.3.1 Causes

4.3.1.1 Realization that the conflict cannot be won by violent means

Before the initiation of peace talks, the LTTE had established control over significant territories in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, including Jaffna, Kilinochchi, and parts of the Eastern Province. At its zenith, the LTTE's de facto state, Tamil Eelam, encompassed approximately one-third of Sri Lanka's landmass. The LTTE's disciplined fighting force, estimated at 15,000 to 20,000 combatants, was renowned for its guerrilla tactics, suicide bombings, and asymmetric warfare strategies, posing a formidable challenge to the Sri Lankan armed forces (Duque, 2019; Swamy, 2010). Moreover, the LTTE's military strength was underscored by its arsenal, which included artillery, mortars, and naval capabilities, such as suicide boats. Financially, the LTTE was one of the wealthiest militant organizations globally, supported by the Tamil diaspora and involved in illicit activities like arms smuggling and drug trafficking (Duque, 2019). This robust financial backing enabled sustained military operations and strategic initiatives.

The LTTE also leveraged a global network of sympathizers among the Tamil diaspora in countries such as Canada, the UK, and Australia. This network provided essential funding, weapons, and diplomatic support, significantly bolstering the LTTE's military and political activities. Additionally, with its substantial Tamil population, the Tamil Nadu state in India influenced India's stance on the Sri Lankan conflict, further complicating the geopolitical landscape (Swamy, 2010). Despite these strengths, the LTTE faced significant international isolation due to their violent tactics, including suicide bombings and human rights abuses. These actions led to the LTTE being designated as a terrorist organization by multiple countries, thus impeding their ability to garner broader support (Fernando, 2014). Consequently, the LTTE's decision to engage in peace talks was influenced by a complex interplay of internal and external factors, key events, and significant actors.

Internationally, the designation of the LTTE as a terrorist organization by countries such as the USA, India, and the EU severely restricted their operational capabilities and legitimacy (Fernando, 2014). Furthermore, the LTTE sustained significant military setbacks due to Sri Lankan military offensives in the early 2000s, resulting in the loss of territory, key leaders, and resources. These military defeats made negotiations a more viable option compared to continuing armed conflict. Additionally, international sanctions and disruptions in funding further strained the LTTE's financial resources, prompting them to consider negotiations as a means to alleviate economic pressures and secure resources peacefully (Duque, 2019).

The evolving political climate in Sri Lanka, marked by the election of President Chandrika Kumaratunga in 1994 and later President Mahinda Rajapaksa, opened avenues for dialogue and negotiations. The LTTE recognized the potential benefits of engaging with the government to advance their political objectives and advocate for Tamil rights (Duque, 2019). Under Velupillai Prabhakaran's leadership, the LTTE acknowledged the limitations of achieving their goal of an independent Tamil Eelam solely through military means. Sustaining a prolonged armed struggle against the Sri Lankan government and mounting international pressure led Prabhakaran and other senior leaders to explore political avenues to address the Tamil community's grievances (Fernando, 2014).

The LTTE's involvement in terrorist activities, such as assassinations and suicide bombings, resulted in widespread international condemnation and isolation. Pressure from crucial international actors, including India and Western countries, to renounce violence and engage in peaceful negotiations pushed the LTTE towards seeking a political solution (Duque, 2019). The LTTE aimed to gain international legitimacy and recognition as a legitimate stakeholder in the conflict by engaging in negotiations and demonstrating a commitment to peaceful means (Bouffard & Carment, 2006).

Internal dissent and challenges also influenced the LTTE's decision-making. Factions within the LTTE advocating for a more moderate approach and political engagement questioned the sustainability of prolonged conflict and pushed for negotiations (Swamy, 2010). These internal debates and differing perspectives shaped the organization's strategic direction (Fernando, 2014). Ultimately, the LTTE viewed negotiations as an opportunity to obtain concessions from the Sri Lankan government that were unattainable through military means alone, such as autonomy for Tamil-majority areas or acknowledgment of Tamil rights. By showing a willingness to seek peaceful solutions, the LTTE hoped to improve its reputation within the international community and further its political goals (Duque, 2019).

4.3.1.2 Dramatic decline in insurgency strategic position

Several countries, including the United States, the European Union, and Canada, designated the LTTE as a terrorist organization, thereby creating significant obstacles for the group. These designations hindered the LTTE's ability to garner international support and complicated the negotiation dynamics (Duque, 2019). The Tamil diaspora, while providing crucial financial support to the LTTE, also pressured the organization to maintain a hardline stance, often conflicting with the objectives of the peace process (Duque, 2019; Swamy, 2010). The LTTE perceived the internationalization of the peace process as biased in favor of the Sri Lankan government. They believed that international efforts, particularly anti-terrorism legislation and diplomatic actions, created an artificial power imbalance that disadvantaged them (Fernando, 2014). The designation of the LTTE as a terrorist organization by several countries, including the United States and the

European Union, severely limited its ability to participate fully in international forums and negotiations.

This terrorist designation influenced the peace process dynamics by creating an imbalance in the perceived legitimacy of the conflicting parties. The international community, particularly critical players like the United States, viewed the LTTE as inherently violent and belligerent. This perception resulted in significant international support for the Sri Lankan state, including military aid and efforts to curtail LTTE resupply operations. This international bias further tipped the strategic balance in favor of the government, diminishing the LTTE's leverage in negotiations.

Moreover, the geopolitical rivalry between India and China also influenced the peace process. Both nations had strategic interests in Sri Lanka, adding another layer of complexity to the negotiations. India's historical involvement in Sri Lanka and its support for the Tamil cause contrasted sharply with China's growing economic and military ties with the Sri Lankan government (Duque, 2019; Bouffard & Carment, 2006). Additionally, the global context of the War on Terror post-9/11 significantly impacted the peace process. The international community's focus on counter-terrorism influenced the perception and treatment of the LTTE, further complicating peace negotiations (Swamy, 2010). The United States provided substantial military assistance to Sri Lanka with the aim of aiding the government in weakening the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This aid included efforts to prevent the LTTE from obtaining supplies and supporting the Sri Lanka Navy in sinking LTTE ships that may have been carrying weapons. These actions rendered the LTTE's military and negotiating positions weaker, ultimately contributing to their downfall.

4.3.1.3 Presence of a Mediator

Norway was crucial in mediating the peace talks between the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka. In 2002, Norway facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlined the modalities of the peace talks and the ceasefire agreement (Bouffard & Carment, 2006). A significant milestone of Norwegian mediation was facilitating the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) on February 22, 2002. Since the civil war began, this agreement marked the first formal cessation of hostilities between the GoSL and the LTTE. Norwegian mediation brought international attention to the conflict, which had previously been a predominantly regional issue (Höglund &

Svensson, 2009). This internationalization garnered global support and aid for the peace process, exemplified by the Tokyo Donor Conference in June 2003, where international donors pledged $4.5 billion for Sri Lanka's reconstruction, contingent on progress in the peace process. Norway also facilitated direct peace talks between the GoSL and the LTTE in various locations, including Thailand, Norway, Germany, and Japan. These discussions addressed vital issues such as implementing the CFA, addressing humanitarian challenges, promoting economic development, and establishing an interim administration for the North and East.

Norway's mediation approach was characterized by its use of soft power and a commitment to neutrality. Norway's reputation as a peaceful nation with no colonial history in the region helped it gain acceptance as a mediator. However, this approach had its limitations, as Norway's "weak mediator" status sometimes disadvantaged it in dealing with the entrenched positions of the conflicting parties (Höglund & Svensson, 2009). Despite Norway's efforts, envoy Erik Solheim faced accusations of bias towards the LTTE. This perception of partiality undermined Norway's credibility as a neutral mediator and led to criticism from Sri Lankan nationalists (Swamy, 2010). Norway's passive, ownership-based model allowed the GoSL and the LTTE to use Norway's involvement to their tactical advantage without making significant concessions (Bouffard & Carment, 2006).

Moreover, Norway's role as a solitary mediator without consistent international backing left it exposed and isolated. This lack of multilateral support diminished Norway's ability to effectively influence the peace process (Höglund & Svensson, 2009). Unlike more conditional engagement strategies used in other conflicts, Norway placed minimal conditions on its involvement (Duque, 2019). This lack of firm parameters allowed the parties to manipulate the process.

4.3.2 Causal Mechanism

4.3.2.1 Maximalist preferences

Despite the signing of the CFA in February 2002, both the GoSL and the LTTE repeatedly violated the ceasefire. These breaches included targeted assassinations, recruitment of child soldiers, and other acts of violence that eroded trust and hindered meaningful negotiations (Swamy, 2010). The fundamental obstacles to peace were deep-rooted ethnic divisions and competing nationalisms between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority (Höglund & Svensson, 2006). The reluctance of the Sinhalese political elite to grant significant autonomy to Tamil regions and the LTTE's insistence on self-determination created an impasse that proved challenging to bridge (Bouffard & Carment, 2006).

Under the leadership of President Chandrika Kumaratunga and later Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, the GoSL maintained a firm stance on preserving the unitary state structure and was resistant to granting significant autonomy to Tamil regions. This inflexibility complicated efforts to compromise on critical issues such as federalism and power-sharing. Conversely, under Velupillai Prabhakaran, the LTTE remained equally uncompromising in its demand for Tamil Eelam, an independent Tamil state (Duque, 2019; Swamy, 2010). Although the LTTE showed some willingness to explore federal solutions during peace talks, their ultimate goal of secession remained a significant barrier to reaching a negotiated settlement.

The Tamil population, represented by the LTTE, sought substantial autonomy and self-governance for the Northern and Eastern provinces. The failure to offer a meaningful devolution of power that met these aspirations led to dissatisfaction and mistrust in the peace process (Goodhand et al., 2013). Over time, Tamil demands escalated to recognize and protect the Tamil language and culture, autonomy in specific provinces, and citizenship rights for Tamils of Indian origin (Bouffard & Carment, 2006). These escalating demands posed challenges in finding common ground for a sustainable peace agreement. The LTTE sought recognition of the Tamil people as a distinct nationality within Sri Lanka and pushed for the acknowledgment of Tamil identity and the right to self-determination, including the establishment of a Tamil homeland with territorial integrity (Bouffard & Carment, 2006).

The GoSL, influenced by Sinhalese nationalist sentiments, was reluctant to grant significant autonomy to Tamil regions due to fears of secession and the desire to maintain a unitary state structure (Fernando, 2014). The government's lack of a clear and committed proposal for devolution undermined the peace talks (G. Lewis, 2019). The LTTE advocated for a power-sharing arrangement that would grant them a dominant role in governing the Tamil-majority regions. They aimed to control these areas' critical administrative and security functions (Swamy, 2010). While the government was open to devolving power to the regions, it preferred a model of power-sharing that did not compromise the unitary nature of the state. The government sought to address Tamil grievances through decentralization rather than secession.

These hard-line attitudes fostered deep mutual distrust between the parties. Both sides were skeptical of each other's commitment to the peace process, leading to frequent ceasefire violations (Swamy, 2010). The LTTE used the ceasefire period to rearm and regroup while the government continued to strengthen its military capabilities with international support (G. Lewis, 2019). Many international actors saw the LTTE's strategic goal of securing an interim administration as a step towards eventual secession, which led to skepticism and reluctance to support their demands.

4.3.2.2 Final Agreement was not reached or implemented

The initial peace talks in Thailand, as reported by Goodhand et al. (2013), concentrated on implementing the CFA, addressing humanitarian challenges, and fostering economic development, with the LTTE expressing openness to a political solution within a united Sri Lanka. The subsequent session led to the formation of subcommittees dedicated to humanitarian needs, de-escalation, and political matters; the year culminated in Oslo, where the parties agreed to explore a federal solution within a united Sri Lanka. This marked a significant shift as the LTTE abandoned its demand for a separate state. The fourth round of peace talks, held in Thailand from January 6-9, focused on human rights and humanitarian issues. The fifth session took place in Berlin, Germany, from February 7-8, addressing the return of internally displaced persons and de-escalating military activities. The final session for the year was held in Hakone, Japan, from March 18-21, focusing on establishing an interim administration for the North and East.

However, significant challenges beset the peace process. In April, the LTTE suspended its participation in the talks, citing dissatisfaction with its exclusion from a donor conference in Washington D.C. and perceived unequal distribution of peace dividends (Swamy, 2010). The LTTE interpreted this exclusion as a substantial slight and a shift towards a unilateral strategy by the Sri Lankan government, viewing it as a deliberate attempt to marginalize them in the peace process.

Moreover, the LTTE expressed dissatisfaction with the distribution of international aid and development funds, which they felt were monopolized by the Sri Lankan government (Duque, 2019). This perceived inequity in the distribution of peace dividends significantly contributed to their decision to withdraw from the talks. The linkage of international aid distribution to the peace process, with donors imposing conditions to ensure funds supported peacebuilding efforts, further complicated the situation (G. Lewis, 2019).

The peace process adopted a phased approach, initially focusing on security and socio-economic issues before addressing core political issues such as devolution. This approach failed to generate momentum and urgency, leading to a paralysis in negotiations. The delay in addressing fundamental political issues, including devolution, contributed to the breakdown of the peace process (Goodhand et al., 2013). The government's "war for peace" strategy, which entailed continuing military campaigns against the LTTE while engaging in peace talks, created a contradictory approach that undermined the credibility of the negotiations (Fernando, 2014). Despite the CFA's initial success, both parties committed numerous ceasefire violations. The LTTE used the ceasefire period to regroup, rearm, and strengthen its political and administrative structures in areas under its control, consolidating its power and preparing for future negotiations or conflicts (Swamy, 2010). Frustration over the lack of implementation of agreements reached during the peace talks further aggravated the LTTE, who accused the Sri Lankan government of failing to honor commitments, undermining trust and progress in the peace process (Bouffard & Carment, 2006).

Simultaneously, the GoSL bolstered its military capabilities with significant international support, particularly from the United States (Duque, 2019). This included re-arming and reorganizing its war-weary armed forces, which eroded trust and confidence in the peace process. Under President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the GoSL adopted a more aggressive military strategy against the LTTE, launching several military offensives to regain control of LTTE-held territories, which escalated the conflict and undermined the ceasefire (Swamy, 2010).

Political instability in Sri Lanka further complicated the peace process. The rivalry between President Chandrika Kumaratunga and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe led to a political crisis in November 2003, when President Kumaratunga took over key ministries, including defense, and criticized the CFA (Duque, 2019). The peace process was also often criticized for being elitist and disconnected from the broader population's needs and aspirations. The hyper-competitive nature of Sri Lankan party politics also meant political leaders focused more on short-term electoral gains than long-term peacebuilding (G. Lewis, 2019; Fernando, 2014).

4.3.3 Hypothesis-testing

The military strategies pursued by the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the objectives and tactics of the LTTE significantly impeded the peace process from 2002 to 2004. The government's continued military operations, bolstered by international support and influenced by hardliners, eroded trust and created a strategic imbalance (Fernando, 2014). Concurrently, the LTTE's inflexible goals, ongoing use of violence, and adverse international perception further complicated the negotiations (Swamy, 2010). The 'war for peace' campaign initially led to some military successes for the GoSL, including the recapture of key territories from the LTTE. However, these gains were often temporary and came at a high cost regarding human lives and resources (Goodhand et al., 2013).

The international community's negative interpretation of the LTTE's actions, coupled with a general leniency towards the state, resulted in missed opportunities for transitioning from war to peace. This skepticism undermined crucial transformative dynamics within the LTTE (Fernando, 2014). Additionally, the 'war for peace' campaign further polarized the Sinhalese and Tamil communities, as the government's military actions were often perceived as targeting the Tamil population, leading to increased resentment and support for the LTTE among Tamils. The election of Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2005, known for his hardline stance against the LTTE, marked a significant shift in the government's approach to the conflict. His administration prioritized a military solution over negotiations, which contributed to the collapse of the ceasefire (Fernando, 2014; Goodhand et al., 2013). Under President Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan government launched a major military offensive in 2006 aimed at defeating the LTTE and reclaiming control over rebel-held territories (Duque, 2019).

Following the resurgence of conflict, the LTTE suffered significant military setbacks as the Sri Lankan armed forces launched comprehensive offensives against its territories (G. Lewis, 2019). The Sri Lankan military's recapture of key LTTE strongholds significantly weakened the LTTE's military prowess (Swamy, 2010). The government's military campaign intensified in 2008-2009, leading to the LTTE's eventual defeat. The death of LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran in May 2009 marked the end of the LTTE's prominent role in Sri Lankan politics and conflict, with the organization's leadership devastated and its effective dissolution (G. Lewis, 2019; Fernando, 2014).

As with the Zapatero Peace Process, the Sri Lankan case also ended with the disappearance of the insurgent actor. In this conflict, the LTTE -and the government- approached the negotiation from a non-cooperative game (Sebenius, 2007), also known as positional bargaining (Butler, 2019). Despite its attempt to use the ceasefire and peace talks to rearm and consolidate its primacy in the regions under its control, later restarting the conflict in a better military position, the GoSL, supported by the United States, could obtain the military victory. Hence, this case does not support H3 because the LTTE could not take advantage of the ceasefire as expected by the hypothesis.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION: DISCUSSION AND FINAL REMARKS

The last chapter of this research examines the study's findings and limitations, along with a summary and analysis of the research results. The discussion commences with the outcomes of the three hypotheses, focusing on False Readiness within the context of mediated, non-mediated, and power asymmetric dyads. This exercise evaluates the degree to which False Readiness is present in these cases. After presenting the results and observations of the hypotheses, the study's validity and reliability are assessed. This involves evaluating the research methods and findings, ensuring that the data support the conclusions and can be confidently applied to broader contexts and future studies.

Following the analysis of the research's validity and reliability, the focus shifts to the policy implications derived from the findings. This section aims to translate the research outcomes into practical recommendations, considering how the results could influence future strategies and decisions in conflict resolution and peace processes. It seeks to provide meaningful insights for policy-makers, mediators, and other stakeholders involved in conflict resolution, emphasizing the potential impact of the findings on real-world contexts. Finally, the findings, analytical observations, and policy implications are synthesized in the conclusions subsection. These recommendations are intended to guide future research directions. Furthermore, a reflection on the study is provided, considering its contributions to the academic discourse on peace processes and the role of False Readiness in conflict resolution.

5.1 Findings of the Study

This study aimed to answer the question: What is the effect of a mediator on the trajectory and outcome of peace processes when one of the parties exhibits False Readiness, and how can this effect be measured and explained? Breaking down the first part of the question, the findings support the following claims: The impact of a mediator on the trajectory and outcome is negatively correlated with the Presence of False Readiness, as indicated in section Compare 3.6.6.1.d of Chapter 3. According to the Information Method (Drozdova & Gaubatz, 2017), there is approximately a 20% chance that a mediator will reduce the Presence of False Readiness. Therefore, the effect on the trajectory and outcome can be positive. Specifically, the same results suggest a 60% chance that when a final agreement was not reached or implemented, False Readiness was present - though not the sole cause of the bargaining failure. The primary goal of mediation as a conflict management and resolution process is to facilitate establishing and implementing a peace agreement, thereby transitioning from peacemaking to peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

The second part of the question asks how this effect can be measured and explained. Information Analysis for Comparative Case Studies was employed to measure this effect. This method quantifies the information content of events, variables, or conditions and measures the uncertainty and dependence between them. Using the information gain measurement, it was determined that there is a negative relationship (0.19 out of 1) between the Presence of a Mediator (explanatory condition) and the presence of False Readiness (outcome condition). Once the mutual information metric identified which conditions were relevant and salient, these factors were refined into a process tracing causal mechanism. This helped in understanding which conditions were more informative and could provide more explanatory value for the final section of the research question.

How can this effect be explained? The Presence of a Mediator, as per the results in Chapter 3, appears to be a dissuasive factor in the Presence of False Readiness. The explanation of this effect lies not in the proposed causal mechanism in Chapter 4 but in the theoretical arguments that, from the literature, suggest using third-party interventions to address protracted conflict. Thus, skilled mediators may aid in narrowing gaps among factions by identifying mutual interests or goals, reducing the salience of maximalist preferences, and influencing the utility function of negotiating parties (Clayton & Dorussen, 2021). Third-party mediators play a crucial role in successful peace negotiations by facilitating dialogue, assisting in the negotiation process, and helping to create a sustainable peace process. They can act as neutral facilitators, providing a platform for parties in conflict to communicate and negotiate within a politically and legally set framework (Daase, 2012).

Mediators can assist in various ways. Mediators can help conflicting parties identify shared interests and goals, which can serve as a foundation for negotiations (Nylander et al., 2018). They can guide the negotiation process by setting rules, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring continuity in the talks (Armengol, 2013). In some cases, mediators can offer support and facilitation through guarantors and accompanying countries and involve international organizations like the United Nations (Nylander et al., 2018). Although direct communication between conflicting parties can sometimes be more effective than third-party mediation, mediators can still play a role when talks reach a standstill or when all other options have been exhausted. In summary, according to the literature, mediators play a vital role in successful peace negotiations, and the results of the information metrics analysis and the process tracing findings seem to validate this generalized claim.

5.1.1 Hypotheses Results and Observations

Hypothesis 1 (H1) *False Readiness presence will be higher in mediated dyads than in non-mediated dyads* was not supported by the evidence of this research. The results obtained in Chapter 3 and the preliminary comments offered in the section Compare 3.6.6.1.d indicate that the relationship between the explanatory condition X6 Presence of a Mediator and the outcome condition Y Presence of False Readiness is negative, with a 20% significance over one hundred. Due to the negative relationship direction between the conditions, the initial correlational statement of the hypothesis, establishing it as positive and incremental, is refuted. False Readiness is lower in mediated dyads precisely because the Presence of a Mediator reduces the occurrence of the outcome condition Y.

Nevertheless, some observations are in place to nuance the relationship between both conditions. It is important to note that the effectiveness of mediation can be influenced by various factors, such as the mediator's characteristics, the nature of the conflict, and the willingness of the parties to engage in negotiations (Daase, 2012). In some cases, mediators may need to impose costly strategies, such as sanctions or incentives, to encourage cooperation between conflicting parties (Özdoğan & Yavçan, 2016). In this sense, X6 Presence of a Mediator did not account for mediation style, such as facilitation, formulation, and manipulation (Beardsley et al., 2006; Quinn et al., 2006), nor for mediator type, such as strong or weak (Beardsley, 2009). Future research could address this absence by refining a more precise instrument and indicator of the influence of mediation regarding False Readiness. For instance, according to Beardsley (2009), weak mediators tend to prevail over stronger ones due to insincere motives and devious objectives between the disputants requesting third-party intervention. This research did not include those factors or the possibility of multi-party mediation groups. In this sense, the results could differ if these distinctions are involved.

Likewise, hypothesis 2 (H2) - *False Readiness presence will be higher in power asymmetric dyads than in symmetric dyads* was not supported by the results of the Information Method. In this case, the results and its analysis are slightly more straightforward. Both conditions, X1 Power Asymmetry - Insurgency Weaker Party and X2 Power Symmetry, do not have significant informational gain as both display a value of 0.035. Still, the difference in their directions, with X1 being positive towards Y and X2 being hostile towards Y, theoretically confirms that relative power can impact the presence or absence of False Readiness (Quinn et al., 2006; Rauchhaus, 2006). Still, the evidence does not support H2 due to its insignificant informational gain.

Some notes are essential to consider. Focusing only on the directional measure, the presence of Power Asymmetry tends to increase the likelihood of False Readiness, while Power Symmetry reduces it. This suggests that in a Mutual Hurting Stalemate (Zartman, 2022), the probability of False Readiness is low, but in a situation with significant power disparity, it is high. Non-state armed actors often prefer the intervention of a third party to gain legitimacy as a valid political interlocutor and to equalize the balance of power. On the other hand, stronger parties, particularly a stronger state, tend to act unilaterally (Quinn et al., 2006) to advance their agenda, even at the expense of a mediator's attempts. This could suggest a potential direction for future research. It is not relative weakness that incentivizes False Readiness but relative power advantage.

Lastly, hypothesis 3 (H3) - *Mediated dyads in which the mediator fails to detect False Readiness are more likely to result in strategic gain for the deceiver*, did not receive empirical backing. On the contrary, the causal mechanism in Chapter 4 was devised to account for failed peace processes, and the positive cases selected for that end proved the opposite of what was theorized by H3. False motivation arises when parties understand that violent conflict will not ensure victory (X4) and that their strategic position is compromised (X5. The presence of a mediator (X6) fosters false optimism, tempting the insurgency group to enter into negotiations insincerely. Once in the process, their maximalist preferences (X8 and X9) obstruct negotiation progress, preventing a final agreement (X7).

The results of the three positive cases under scrutiny were dramatically opposed to the expectations of the third hypothesis. In the Algiers Process, ETA obtained a positive outcome, as it was recognized as an official political interlocutor by the Spanish democratic government. This development granted them legitimacy, enhancing its political credit against the Spanish authorities at the price of a weakened military position and a severely affected negative public opinion due to the expectations created with the peace process (Sordo Estella, 2015; Whitfield, 2014; Campuzano & Gijón, 2010). In turn, the results of Zapatero's Peace Process and the Sri Lankan Peace Process (2001-2004) both concluded with the demise of the insurgency non-state armed actors. In particular, it was a military victory from the Spanish and Sri Lankan governments after the failure of the peace processes and a shift of political priorities that hardened the counterterrorist policy and reduced the margins of ETA and the LTTE to continue the conflict.

However, some final comments are necessary to prevent misinterpretation of these results. This research primarily examined Power Asymmetry from the viewpoint of the insurgency or non-state armed actor. In particular, it focused on the strategic calculation that the weaker actor might feign and express False Readiness to gain political and military leverage over the State. Nevertheless, the findings from Chapter 4 showed that while the insurgencies of the LTTE and ETA failed to achieve their underhanded goals, the Spanish and Sri Lankan states did not seem to negotiate in good faith either, or at best, with no real expectations of achieving peace. In addition, these States also demonstrated maximalist preferences and hard avoidance bargaining behavior, suggesting they might also be displaying False Readiness, pretending to negotiate to broker a settlement. If viewed from the alternative perspective, with the State as the false readiness actor, it could be argued that H3 was supported by the evidence presented in the three positive cases.

Future research could explore the opposing perspective, in which the state is the manipulative actor in a power asymmetry situation. The state's cost structure might motivate it to engage in deceptive readiness to instigate political change in a military stalemate, thereby facilitating a military victory. As the most powerful actor in the dyad, the state might be able to withstand the costs of a deceptive peace process as long as it also inflicts costs on the non-state armed actor.

5.2 Reliability, Validity, and Limitations of the Study

Reliability and validity are foundational concepts in social science research that ensure research findings' quality, trustworthiness, and credibility (Bryman, 2012). Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of research results. When replicated under the same conditions, a reliable study will produce similar outcomes (Powner, 2014; Bryman, 2012). Reliability can be divided into several types. For this research, the most relevant type is inter-rater reliability, which measures the level of agreement between different raters or observers (O'Leary, 2004). Due to using a truth table to determine the presence or absence of conditions like violence during the peace process (X3) or a significant decline in the insurgency strategic position (X5), these conditions were coded as 0 or 1 based on the author's observations. These observations were theoretically driven and informed by a thorough review of expert literature on the ten peace processes that comprise the case population.

Nonetheless, this research has a limitation due to the lack of inter-rater reliability on the construct of the truth table and the observations made on the cases. Constraints on time and resources somewhat justify this limitation. A potential solution could involve seeking help from additional observers to ensure accurate coding. Then, the next step would be to calculate the degree of agreement between their coding of the conditions in the truth table and mitigate potential biases. Validity pertains to the accuracy of a study in measuring its objectives. A valid study yields meaningful and accurate conclusions, providing valuable insights from the research. Like reliability, validity has several types, many of which are relevant to this research. Content validity evaluates whether a measure fully covers the concept under study, ensuring that all aspects of the construct are represented in an instrument (O'Leary, 2004). The overall content validity of this research could be questioned due to the ambiguity of its outcome condition, False Readiness. However, this work adheres to the starting point provided by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021). It incorporates information metrics through the truth table and process tracing casual mechanism into its instruments to address the research question and hypotheses.

The research includes theoretically driven cofounding conditions such as Realization that Conflict Cannot Be Won By Violent Means (an expression of False Motivation X4), Dramatic Decline in Insurgency's Strategic Position (another expression of False Motivation X5), Presence of a Mediator (representing the construct of False Optimism), and Maximalist Preferences (X8 and X9, which later become core factors of the casual mechanism developed in Chapter 4). From a theoretical perspective, the elements of the False Readiness Theory were respected to control the incidence of confounding conditions better. Construct validity verifies if a measure accurately assesses the theoretical construct it is intended to evaluate (Bryman, 2012). This involves ensuring that the operationalization of a concept aligns with existing theories and expectations. This research successfully examined construct validity by focusing on the desired outcome of the False Readiness strategy, which is the restart of conflict. This outcome is repeatedly identified by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021) as the endgame of a False Readiness actor.

However, a more precise and refined indicator for the construct could be developed. This indicator could delve into the nuances of bargaining trajectories, particularly at the peace process's endgame. This is demonstrated by the significant result of the condition 'Final Agreement Not Reached Or Implemented' (X7). Moreover, a detailed review of events following the two items - 1) systematic refusal of proposals and 2) agreement only to partial solutions, not comprehensive ones - could provide insights for a more accurate indicator to evaluate the construct of False Readiness. Still, congruency-wise, the author believes this research presents positive face validity rather than a strict and rigorous construct validity, which refers to the superficial appearance or face value of a measure (O'Leary, 2004). While it does not provide strong evidence of validity, it assesses whether a measure appears to measure the intended construct, as it is in this case. Internal Validity, the accuracy of conclusions about the causal relationship between variables in a study's design, conduct, and analysis (Powner, 2014), was addressed by incorporating a set of scope and confounding conditions in the truth table measurement. The causal mechanism was then designed using only the theoretically driven conditions by Schwartz and Gilboa (2021) and the conditions that demonstrated saliency, such as the Presence Of a Mediator (False Optimism), Final Agreement Not Reached or Implemented, State's Maximalist Preferences, and Insurgency's Maximalist Preferences. The conditions that were proven insignificant by the Information Method were discarded.

Lastly, the limitations of this study are threefold. First, the overall external validity of this study is compromised due to the relatively small initial population of ten cases, further refined to three positive cases. This limits the generalizability of these findings to other settings, populations, and times. A possible solution could involve a more profound process tracing analysis of deviant cases, such as the Sunningdale Agreement (1973), Pastrana's Peace Process (1998-2002), the Sri Lankan Peace Process (1994-1995), and the Addis Ababa Agreement (1971-1972). This could lead to more generalizable conclusions regarding the causal mechanism and the relationship between maximalist preferences, non-reaching final agreements, and False Readiness. Second, due to time and resource constraints, it was not easy to ensure construct validity using multiple sources of evidence like interviews, observations, and document analysis. This limitation means the findings could not be cross-verified to ensure secondary sources did not bias them. Third, inconsistent relationships among scope conditions, explanatory conditions, and the outcome condition, as presented in Chapter 3's truth table, made conducting a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) impractical. The software tools were unable to yield any results. This points to a need for a more precise indicator for False Readiness. There is also a need to refine conditions like 'Final Agreement Not Reached Or Implemented' and to expand the set of cases tested with the Information Method and QCA, perhaps to 30 cases in future research.

5.3 Policy Implications

Assessing the sincerity of parties' intentions is a significant challenge in mediation. This difficulty arises because hard avoidance bargaining and false readiness behavior are nearly indistinguishable in the short term. The research tentatively indicates a negative relationship between false readiness and the presence of a mediator, suggesting that the latter may deter such behavior.

The findings from Chapters 3 and 4 and the observations in Chapter 5 hold significance for policy advising. For instance, according to Hypothesis 2, addressing power asymmetries is essential. Creating negotiation frameworks that consider power imbalances and developing incentives that encourage stronger parties to negotiate in good faith may help reduce unilateralism, as observed in the positive cases in Chapter 4. However, promoting support from international organizations and states for mediation, including technical assistance, funding, and political backing, can also be risky. It may externally alter the utility function of the negotiating parties, creating incentives to prolong a peace process without reaching an agreement to obtain international aid, as seen in the Sri Lankan case.

One potential solution could be to suggest peace agreements with conditional clauses. These would require parties to demonstrate actions before advancing to the next negotiation stage, although this could slow the peace process. The Norwegian case in Sri Lanka involved third-party monitoring, regular reports, and independent assessments. However, the combination of the facilitation style and the perception of being a weak mediator with more influence than leverage significantly impacted its effectiveness. Recently, a trend has been promoting multi-party mediation to foster collaboration between international, regional, and local actors and create a cohesive and coordinated approach to peacebuilding. However, the challenges remain unless the coalition of mediators includes a strong mediator with a manipulative style, as proposed by Quinn et al. (2006).

Therefore, the author believes that the policy implications derived from this research suggest mediation should continue as usual, with specific attention on signing interim or partial agreements. The parties' behavior and disposition during this process should be considered. Each mediator should consider the expression of the parties' preferences, goals, and interests and how these evolve from the initial maximalist preferences. These preferences should progressively change starting from these, which the counterpart will not accept. This reflects a change in the parties' objectives in the negotiation unless they do not intend to reach an agreement. During the negotiation process, mediators should pay special attention to the signing of these partial agreements and the end game of the peace process. This is to assess better how these maximalist preferences evolve during the mediation process and determine if they effectively reshape the parties' utility functions. Mediators must be critical of their capacity to modify the parties' preferences, transitioning from positional bargaining to a more cooperative one. It is still early in the study of False Readiness to suggest detection methods or a structured set of devious tactics used by False Readiness actors, although an alternative to address False Readiness could be to declare the mediator’s intention to leave the mediation process after determining that the motives of a party are insincere. This could force them to alter their utility function by considering the reputational cost of being signaled by the third party as a distrustful actor.

5.4 Concluding remarks

This thesis has explored the dynamics of peace processes, focusing on the role of deception and False Readiness within mediated and non-mediated negotiations. By examining various theoretical frameworks and research fields, including Bargaining Theory and False Readiness Theory, and applying mixed-method research approaches, this study has attempted to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the failure of peace negotiations. As indicated throughout the entire research, the concept of False Readiness, where parties feign willingness to negotiate peace while harboring ulterior motives, is an under-researched factor in the failure of peace processes. This deceptive strategy is often employed to buy time, strengthen bargaining positions, or avoid appearing weak, to name a few usual reasons, as observed in the cases under scrutiny, such as Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, Colombia, Sri Lanka, and South Sudan.

The initial reasoning of this research was that mediators are pivotal in peace processes, but their presence can be a double-edged sword. While mediation can build trust and facilitate dialogue, it can also be exploited by parties engaging in False Readiness. The study found that the presence of a mediator does not necessarily increase the likelihood of False Readiness, challenging the hypothesis that mediation could inadvertently promote deceptive tactics—instead, the results aligned with the broader scholarly consensus on mediation's positive impact on conflict resolution. Additionally, the analysis did not support the second hypothesis, which suggested higher false readiness in power asymmetric dyads. Although power dynamics can influence negotiation strategies, false readiness was not significantly correlated with either power asymmetry or symmetry. Instead, maximalist preferences, where parties maintain inflexible positions, significantly correlated with the likelihood of false readiness. Both state and insurgent actors with these preferences are more likely to engage in deceptive negotiations, emphasizing the need for mediators to address and modify these rigid stances.

Furthermore, failing to reach or implement final agreements strongly indicates false readiness. This emphasizes the importance of comprehensive and enforceable peace agreements. For all of the reasons mentioned above, this study opens several avenues for future research:

- Detailed Case Studies: Further in-depth case studies could provide more granular insights into the specific conditions and causal mechanisms that lead to false readiness. This could involve examining additional conflicts and peace processes to validate and refine the findings.

- Peace Agreement Design: Research on the specific elements of peace agreement design that contribute to their success or failure would be valuable. This could include exploring the role of ceasefires, partial agreements, and the impact of spoilers.

- Maximalist Preferences and Deception: Further investigation into the relationship between maximalist preferences and deceptive negotiation tactics could enhance the understanding of mitigating these challenges in peace processes.

In conclusion, this thesis has contributed to the broader scholarly discussion on conflict resolution by highlighting False Readiness's complexities and mediators' role in peace processes. By integrating theoretical insights with empirical analysis, this study provided a tentative framework for understanding and addressing the strategic dilemmas inherent in conflict resolution. The findings underscore the importance of nuanced, context-specific approaches to mediation and negotiation, ultimately aiming to foster more effective and sustainable peace processes.

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