

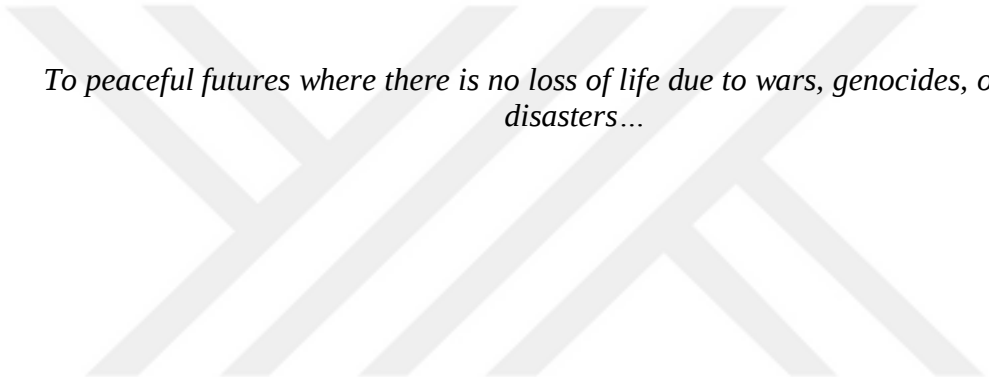
LATİFE KINAY KILIÇ HOW DO TARGET STATES RESPOND TO EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF REBEL GROUPS? Bilkent University 2024

HOW DO TARGET STATES RESPOND TO
EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF REBEL
GROUPS? THE RESPONSE TO
SPONSORSHIP DATASET (RSD) AND
DETERMINANTS OF TARGET
RESPONSES

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
LATİFE KINAY KILIÇ

Department of
International Relations
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University
Ankara
August 2024



To peaceful futures where there is no loss of life due to wars, genocides, or natural disasters...

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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

LATİFE KINAY KILIÇ

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE DEPARTMENT OF
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
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By Latife Kınay Kılıç

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.

.....
Ersel Aydınlı
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.

.....
Efe Tokdemir
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.

.....
Belgin Şan-Akça
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.

.....
Özgür Özdamar
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.

.....
Nihat Ali Özcan
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

.....
Refet S. Gürkaynak
Director

ABSTRACT

HOW DO TARGET STATES RESPOND TO EXTERNAL SUPPORT OF REBEL GROUPS? THE RESPONSE TO SPONSORSHIP DATASET (RSD) AND DETERMINANTS OF TARGET RESPONSES

Kınay Kılıç, Latife

Ph. D., Department of International Relations

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Ersel Aydın

August 2024

This dissertation examines how target states respond to external state support of rebel groups by introducing a new dataset. The Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) covers 58 target states, 102 supporter states, and 150 rebel groups, forming 455 triadic cases and 3719 observations. As the first dataset to account for target state behavior against state supporters, this thesis uses the RSD to conceptualize target responses by providing a typology of responses and response strategies and identifying the determinants of responses by target states including state-level and group-level factors. This research demonstrates that target states use coercive and non-coercive strategies to coerce or persuade

state supporters into abandoning their assistance for rebel groups. Intentional (direct) support types, higher levels of support, interstate strategic rivalry and rebel diplomacy cause the adoption of coercive responses by target states while de facto (indirect) support types, decrease coercive behavior from target states. Interstate formal alliances are found to be decreasing only the adoption of mixed responses by target states. This study contributes to the existing literature on external support of rebel groups, conflict management, and foreign policies of target states towards state sponsors of rebel groups.

Keywords: Target Response, External Support, Response Strategies, Determinants of Coercive Responses, Rebel Diplomacy

ÖZET

HEDEF DEVLETLER İSYANCI GRUPLARA DESTEK SAĞLAYAN DEVLETLERE NASIL YANIT VERİR? DIŞ DESTEĞE TEPKİ VERİ SETİ (RSD) VE HEDEF DEVLET TEPKİLERİNİN BELİRLEYİCİ FAKTÖRLERİ

Kınay Kılıç, Latife

Doktora, Uluslararası İlişkiler

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Ersel Aydın

Ağustos 2024

Bu tez, yeni bir veri seti sunarak hedef devletlerin isyancı gruplara yönelik dış devlet desteğine nasıl tepki verdiğini incelemektedir. Dış Desteğe Tepki Veri Seti (RSD) 58 farklı hedef devleti, 102 farklı destekçi devleti ve 150 farklı isyancı grubu kapsamaktadır ve 455 üçlü vaka ve 3719 gözlem oluşturmaktadır. Devlet destekçilerine karşı hedef devlet davranışını açıklayan ilk veri setini kullanarak bu tez, sponsorluğa yanıtların ve yanıt stratejilerinin bir tipolojisini sağlar. Bu tez ayrıca devlet ve grup düzeyinde faktörler de dahil olmak üzere hedef devletlerin yanıtlarını belirleyen faktörleri belirleyerek hedef yanıtlarını kavramsallaştırmak için RSD'yi kullanmaktadır. Bu araştırma, hedef

devletlerin, devlet destekçilerini isyancı gruplara yaptıkları yardımdan vazgeçmeye zorlamak veya ikna etmek için zorlayıcı ve zorlayıcı olmayan stratejiler kullandıklarını göstermektedir. Kasıtlı (doğrudan) destek türleri, daha yüksek düzeyde destek, devletler arası stratejik rekabet ve isyancı diplomasi, hedef devletler tarafından zorlayıcı tepkilerin benimsenmesine neden olduğu gözlemlenirken, fiili (dolaylı) destek türleri ise hedef devletlerin zorlayıcı davranışlarını azalttığı gözlemlenmiştir. Devletler arası resmi (formal) ittifakların hedef devletler tarafından sadece karışık (zorlayıcı ve zorlayıcı olmayan) tepkilerin kullanımını azalttığı görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, isyancı grupların dış desteği, çatışma yönetimi ve hedef devletlerin isyancı grupların devlet sponsorlarına yönelik dış politikaları hakkındaki mevcut literatüre katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dış Destek, Hedef Devletlerin Dış Politikası, Sponsorluğa Karşı Hedef Devlet Yanıtları, İsyancı Grup Diplomasisi

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my advisor, Ersel Aydınli, for his unwavering support and encouragement during my PhD studies. His wisdom and guidance not only shaped my academic career but also set an example as a role model in my pursuit of higher intellectual goals with a focus on benefitting our society.

I am truly thankful for Efe Tokdemir, who has been a long-time mentor for me both academically and professionally, offering invaluable advice on balancing the demands of a PhD with the responsibilities of parenthood. He has become an inspiration for us as a young and successful scholar and his support for learning and developing new skills has been essential for my studies.

I am also immensely inspired by Belgin Şan-Akça, a distinguished scholar whose work has greatly influenced my research and paved the way for its advancement through her expertise and contribution.

I want to extend my gratitude to Özgür Özdamar and Nihat Ali Özcan for their insightful comments and contributions during my dissertation defense. Their expertise and input have significantly contributed to the final version of my dissertation.

I am grateful to the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) for their generous BİDEB scholarship which provided financial support throughout my PhD studies. I also want to thank the EITM Institute for granting me a scholarship to attend the ICPSR Summer School.

I am deeply appreciative of the support and guidance from our professors in the IR department. In particular, I am indebted to Sekin Kstem, a distinguished and inspiring scholar whose support and valuable advice have been instrumental in defending my dissertation. I would like to express my thanks to Eliza Gheorge for her support, warm demeanor, and for showing us how to be an exemplary scholar.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to our department secretary, Ece Engin, for her professionalism, sincerity, and support especially during my absence from Ankara.

I am fortunate to have the friendship of Emine Nur ztrk and Hatice Mete whose emotional support has been invaluable during challenging times. I also thank my cohort, Aydın Khajei, Orhun Bayraktar, and especially Buse Dingiltepe-Dveroėlu for her collaboration and support.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the unconditional support of my family. My mother and sister have been my pillars of strength and my husband's support has been truly exceptional. Last but not least, I am endlessly grateful to my lovely daughter whose presence has brought immeasurable joy and excitement to my life.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Rebel groups do not usually fight their own wars against target states but receive help from different actors. Target states not only respond to the challenges posed by rebel groups¹ inside and outside their borders but also, must face states sponsoring them. State support of rebel groups is a phenomenon that occurs when a sponsor state provides various types of assistance to rebel groups for distinct reasons. Some states might want to advance their objectives while others could use rebel groups to compensate for their weakness or lack of allied states (San-Akca, 2016). Regardless of the motivations for it, external state support of rebel groups potentially poses a grave threat to international peace and security. The provision of support to rebel groups by states carries detrimental implications for regional stability and economies, leading to increased violence against civilians. Moreover, state sponsorship of rebels may give rise to a spillover of conflict into neighboring states or regions. In light of these repercussions, it is crucial to investigate the ways how target states could respond to state sponsorship of rebel groups.

The previous works have studied the state support of rebel groups by defining state sponsorship (Byman, 2005), the main motivations behind the sponsorship

¹ Rebel groups refer to armed non-state actors such as ethnic, religious, insurgent, revolutionary groups and terrorists that aim for secession, autonomy, regime or leadership change (San-Akca, 2016).

behavior by some states (Byman & Kreps, 2010; Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Bapat, 2012; San-Akca, 2016), the influence of state sponsorship of terrorism on international security (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020) and conflict processes (Sawyer, Cunningham & Reed, 2017), case studies that inform about the support by specific countries for rebel groups and unilateral, multilateral, or international responses towards such countries (Altunışık & Tür, 2006; Waisberg, 2009; Ezrow, 2017), and the effectiveness of responses (mostly sanctions) in terminating the sponsorship behavior (Vines & Cargill, 2010; Payne, 2012). However, the responses of target states have not been explored enough by prior research to understand how they have behaved when confronted with state sponsors and which factors may cause variation in their responses.

In the literature, the definition of state sponsorship of terrorism is contested mainly because the definition of terrorism is controversial. Despite the lack of a *consensus omnium* for the definition of state sponsorship, scholars mostly agree that sponsorship behaviors include financial, logistical, and political support, which could be manifested in various forms such as providing troops, training, training camps, safe haven for leaders and members, weapons, diplomatic cover, allowing offices and headquarters, and sharing intelligence support to name a few (San-Akca, 2016; Berkowitz, 2018). The literature distinguishes between active and passive support or direct and indirect support as the types of support; and intentional and de facto support as the causes of state support of rebel groups (San-Akca, 2016). Active/direct support might contain troops, weapons, or training that directly increases the capacity of rebel groups whereas passive/indirect support could include safe haven, allowing peaceful propaganda and demonstrations, and fundraising activities (San-Akca, 2016; Carter & Pant, 2019; Byman, 2020). As for intentional or de facto support, the former

refers to willingly assisting a rebel group by calculated and planned steps, while the latter indicates unintentional forms of support by ignoring, being neutral, or being weak to terminate the sponsoring behavior (San-Akca, 2016; Carter & Pant, 2019; Byman, 2020). Scholars usually have focused on intentional support behavior by sponsor states when it comes to responses towards state sponsorship. These studies usually adopt a narrow definition of state support of rebel groups mostly because the intentional support is easier to detect and more legitimately could be excused by target states as reasons for their coercive responses, such as imposing sanctions and use of force.

The study of the motivations of state support of rebel groups contains a very prolific literature that dwells on proxy warfare of the Cold War times using principal-agent theory or client-patron framework that often overlooks the agency of rebel groups (Salehyan & Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Salehyan, Siroky & Wood, 2014). Later, the adoption of selection theory empirically has shown that states and rebel groups both engage in a process of selecting the rebel group to help and the state from which to receive help, respectively (San-Akca, 2016). The extant literature has identified ideational and strategic motivations of states as a rationale to support rebel groups despite its risks both domestically and internationally for the sponsor states. According to scholars, a state might want to support a rebel group to destabilize a target state, gain leverage against it, and fight alongside the rebel group because the target state is a rival or enemy state (Byman & Kreps, 2010; Payne, 2012; San-Akca, 2016). Furthermore, domestic political considerations might lead a supporter state to assist a rebel group (San-Akca, 2016; Qiu, 2022). The common point about these studies is that they focus on the supply and demand sides of the foreign support for rebel groups. What is missing is the response of states that are harmed by the

sponsorship of rebels during intrastate conflicts. The literature is limited to empirically showing the consequences of external support of rebel groups even though target states respond to state sponsorship in various ways.

This dissertation firstly, aims to identify the responses of target states toward state supporters of rebel groups and explain the variation in those responses. I contend that both state and group-level explanations should be accounted for when analyzing the reactions of target states against the sponsor states due to the external support provision for rebel groups. The level of perceived threat by target states may increase when external support provision to rebel groups occurs since foreign assistance makes rebels both materially (Florea & Malejacq, 2024) and ideationally (Huang, 2016) stronger, turning the balance of power in favor of the rebel groups and supporter states (Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Qiu, 2022; Karlén & Rauta, 2023), and prolongs and internationalizes the existing conflict between target states and rebel groups (Regan, 2002; Golubev & Antonova, 2020). I argue that with a generic understanding of support type, intentional and de facto support matter when responding to the supporter states. A target state distinguishes between a conscious, willing supporter from an unintentional supporter state and changes the tone of response accordingly. Furthermore, support types in specific terms such as the provision of safe haven or training camps could also explain different responses. The specific types of support might be perceived differently by a target state since each type of support entails different degrees or levels of support (San-Akca, 2016) which changes the threat perception of target states. Secondly, I aim to show that the strategic environment (Lee, 2022) surrounding the target and supporter states, impacts the responses of target states. Whether the target and sponsor states are rivals or allies is crucial to determine the state of affairs prior to the reaction of the target state to the

sponsor. While rival sponsors might face more coercive responses from target states, the existence of formal alliances between states might mediate the tension with cooperative and non-coercive measures provided by the alliance umbrella. Thirdly, I aim to provide a framework of analysis for response strategies of target states. I identify a typology of response strategies adopted by target states as coercion and persuasion where the former refers to utilization of coercive responses while the latter contains non-coercive responses. I analyze a case study to show the application of this response typology in detail in Chapter 4.

Fourthly, the analysis of target responses to external support of rebels should take the group-level characteristics into consideration as well. In particular, the existence of rebel diplomacy might influence the response of target states in ways that both shape the coerciveness and the type of responses. In international relations, not only states but also rebel groups have been engaging in foreign affairs with other states (hybrid diplomacy). The response of target states to state sponsorship of terrorism takes place within a complex process where diplomacy is contested between the target state and the rebel group for their respective causes. In this vein, I expect that rebel objectives might influence the response of target states, especially in the cases of autonomy or secession or when the rebels have a political organization inside the target states. Rebel groups invest in international affairs to garner support and sympathy for their cause and to receive help. On the other hand, target states try to make their case against the rebels in the eyes of others (such as states, the international community, and international organizations). The duel of diplomacy between states and rebel groups characterizes the changing nature of war, which is non-violent and gives more maneuverability and agency to the rebel group in a realm that is traditionally state-centric. Herein, this dissertation highlights the hybridity of

diplomacy and its significant impact on interstate relations in which sponsor states' assistance that enables rebel diplomatic activities adversely affects the relationship between target and sponsor states.

This dissertation contributes to the literature on state sponsorship of terrorism by adopting a comprehensive meaning of sponsorship that empirically shows the importance of both intentional and de facto support types in the eyes of target states. Hence, this research advocates the adoption of a broader conceptualization of state sponsorship including both intentional and unintentional forms of support types in the empirical studies. In addition, this dissertation provides a detailed analysis of target state responses to the sponsorship of rebel groups through the development of an original Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD), which includes triadic cases in which intentional and/or de facto support of rebels occurred. By doing so, the dataset displays the various response types of target states within a given year with reference to the respective rebel groups and supporter states. The novelty of this research is to point out the patterns of target state responses toward sponsors in a large N setting through the use of a new dataset.

Furthermore, this research indicates that the agency of rebel groups cannot be ignored both in terms of receiving external support and more importantly due to the influence of group-level factors on the response of target states. For instance, some rebel groups like the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had access to weapons, logistics, and funds in the USA even though the US government did not intentionally assist the group. Similarly, although the European states designated the Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan (PKK) as a terrorist organization, the PKK could open offices and training camps in Belgium and the Netherlands (San-Akca, 2016). Rebel groups can bypass the authority of potential supporter states to gain access to resources they need in a de

facto manner without the intentional provision of help from the potential supporters. Thus, this study contributes to the state sponsorship of rebel groups literature by way of pointing out the role rebel groups play. Additionally, the implications of this research could yield meaningful explanations for the foreign policy behavior of target states, the spillover of intrastate conflict into inter-state relations, and inter-state crises. The question of how targeted states have responded against external supporters of rebel groups needs attention by any state that faces such a challenge. This research takes an important step towards prescribing relevant policies for the use of target states to illuminate what kind of responses are more likely to produce desirable consequences, especially in terms of support termination for the rebel groups.

I test the arguments in this study using the Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) dataset and several statistical analyses. The RSD covers triadic cases extracted from the NAGs dataset (ver. 2015) and narrowed by a time frame (1991-2010), the sum of support years for the rebels (minimum 1 year of support) and starting from the years where at least 25 battle-deaths are observed. The RSD codes diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, covert, and no responses of target states in a given year for a given triad. I have used Nexis Uni to code the respective responses but also utilized other scholarly sources to compensate for missing information and cross-check the available data. The RSD combines several datasets to test the relevant explanatory factors for the behavior of target states, which I explain in detail in the next chapter. Moreover, I use the codebook of the RSD as data by reading it retrospectively to create a typology of response strategies of target states; first deciding on the overarching distinction between them as coercive (coercion/compellence) versus non-coercive (persuasion) strategies and then adding further classifications. Furthermore, I use a qualitative case study to apply the

theoretical typology offered for response strategies of target states to a content analysis of news about Turkish responses to Syrian sponsorship of the PKK. For this, I use a sub-dataset within the RSD where extensively detailed newswires and press releases exist as well as information from scholarly articles to analyze the Turkey-PKK-Syria triad.

1.1. *Main Chapters*

There are four main chapters in which the relevant research questions of this dissertation are analyzed. These research questions are as follows: How do target states respond to state sponsors of rebel groups? (Chapter II); What are the response strategies of target states toward the external state supporters of rebel groups? (Chapter III); Why do some target states respond coercively toward state sponsors of rebel groups? (Chapter IV); How does rebel diplomacy affect the responses of target states toward external state supporters of rebel groups? (Chapter V). By making these inquiries, this dissertation provides a roadmap to identify and understand the responses of target states while bearing the state of interstate relations between target and supporter states and the characteristics of rebel groups in mind.

The second chapter is written in a data article format. I introduce here the Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) and the coding procedures I applied when gathering and coding the data. I also present several applications of the dataset, mainly using binary logistic regression models. I discuss the limitations and how I tried to remedy them. The RSD promises new research with reference to rebel group-related factors and response effectiveness.

The third chapter is concerned with response strategies of target states when they deal with external state support of rebel groups. Relying on studies on coercion,

influence and conflict management, I create a useful framework of analysis to show that target states use coercion and/or persuasion strategies to encounter state sponsorship. In creating the typology for response strategies, I made a content analysis of the codebook of the RSD. In order to demonstrate the usefulness and applicability of this framework to a case study, I analyze the Turkey-PKK-Syria triad to discuss Turkish strategies between the years of 1991 and 2010. I explain the strategies of compellence by blackmail, compellence by coercive diplomacy, persuasion by dialogue, persuasion by agreement, persuasion by shame, persuasion by exclusion and persuasion by balancing, with reference to key events. By doing so, this chapter provides the many strategies target states may employ to persuade or coerce state supporters to abandon their support for rebel groups.

The fourth chapter analyzes why some states respond coercively to state sponsors while others do not. I argue that target states are more likely to respond coercively when there is intentional support, and less likely to respond coercively when there is de facto support provided by the sponsor states. Moreover, the level of support provided for rebel groups could have an impact on the target state responses. Higher levels of support such as troop support and provision of training camps might cause more coercive target responses toward sponsor states in comparison to lower levels of support. I also posit that if there is a strategic rivalry between the target and supporter state, the target will be more likely to respond coercively. Lastly, I contend that if the target and supporter states have a formal alliance, the target is less likely to respond coercively. I consider threat perception theory as the driving mechanism behind the target states' behavior against state supporters of rebel groups.

The fifth chapter analyzes the impact of rebel diplomacy, rebel objectives and rebel's political party on a target state's response. The engagement of rebel groups

with diplomacy could be viewed as an attempt to gain legitimacy and conduct public diplomacy in foreign lands (Coggins, 2015; Huang, 2016). They aim to build a reputation and a legitimate outlook in the eyes of the international community. This way, the prospects of external assistance might increase as well as the possibility of attaining their goals. The positive outlook that rebel groups might gain from rebel diplomacy could threaten a target state's position in its international relations. This could be due to the loss of legitimacy vis a vis the rebel group or due to a possibility of material loss such as territory. I posit that the threat perception of target states increases when rebel groups have diplomatic activities; thus, I argue that target states are more likely to respond coercively toward the supporting states in cases where the rebels are engaging in diplomacy. Additionally, I think that rebel objectives of secession and autonomy could be important in increasing the response coerciveness as well as the presence of rebels' political party inside target states. The analyses have shown that rebel diplomacy increases the severity of target responses toward the sponsors and increases *only coercive* responses when the rebel diplomats aim for secession or autonomy. The results demonstrate the need to take rebel groups' diplomacy and objectives into account to explain the target state's behavior toward external supporter states.

CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCING THE RESPONSE TO SPONSORSHIP DATASET (RSD): CODING PROCEDURES AND INITIAL APPLICATIONS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

External support to rebel groups have received a lot of attention lately in terms why states form partnerships with rebel groups and how this might affect the conflict processes. The rationale for supporter states ranges from ideational factors to strategic/material interests. Sometimes the states that are deemed as sponsors do not have enough capacity to terminate rebel activities in their soil, some appear as neutral states that ignore the rebel presence and others might not prevent the rebel activism on the grounds that they are democratic states that enable non-violent mobilization for political causes even though the rebels are designated as terrorist group by other states (and even by themselves). While the study of external support to rebel groups have explored various avenues of research, the literature remains limited to account for target state behavior against the state supporters of rebels. Empirical studies have focused on the sides of supporter states and rebel groups to understand their motivations for partnership². On the other hand, there is a gap in the previous research

²² This affair between sponsor states and rebel groups could have various names such as alliance, cooperation, sponsorship, surrogate warfare, proxy warfare, hybrid warfare and etc. (Rauta, et al., 2019).

in terms of the systematic study of target state responses against state sponsorship. Despite the notoriousness of the problem of state support of rebel groups, the dearth of knowledge about the target state behavior against this affair necessitates to investigate how target states have been reacting to sponsors. While there is data on external state support of rebel groups in terms of which states give which rebel groups various forms of support threatening the target states, extant literature does not have any data on how these target states have reacted against the supporter states. Target states must have been doing something for the termination of external state support for rebels that are threatening them. Their reaction not only would be calibrated against the rebel groups but also against the states that lend assistance for the rebels.

Exploring the target state behavior when dealing with state sponsorship of rebel groups, I created an original dataset to see the tone and kinds of responses of target states towards supporter states through their foreign relations and interactions. The reason why I focus on foreign relations of target and supporter states is that I treat the phenomenon of external support of rebels as a foreign policy strategy by the supporter states. Then, it is logical to assume that target states would react against the external support of rebels viewing it as a conduct of foreign policy behavior and respond in kind by devising its own foreign policy activities according to some guided principles about especially the external security environment of a target state. In addition, domestic political conditions and factors related to state supporters and the rebel groups might also matter when target states respond to external support of rebels. Therefore, the RSD includes factors related to target states, supporter states and rebel groups containing both state-level and group-level variables.

2.2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Responses to external support of rebels have received most attention in the literature especially after the 9/11 attacks when the “war on terror” was declared by the US and its allies (Hoffman, 2004; Boyle, 2008; De Goede, 2008). State sponsors of terrorism were to be internationally condemned, economically and politically isolated and the war on terror even instigated an invasion of a sovereign state in 2003 when the coalition forces bombed Iraq, a country listed as state sponsor of terrorism since 1990 by the US (The White House, 2003). These accounts have focused more on the counterterrorism side of the debate while ignoring the interstate relations between the target and supporter states in general. Furthermore, these studies have been compiled around the states that are designated as sponsors of terrorism. On the other hand, external support for rebels conceptually deserves a broader understanding in terms of the intent of support by the sponsors. This is especially crucial to link the state of affairs between target and supporter states and the type of support provided for the rebels. The main premise behind this line of thinking is that external state support of rebels gives rise to a reaction towards the supporter states as well since not only the rebels but also the supporter states are threatening the existence of target states by their illegal affairs with the enemies (rebel groups). However, unlike the extant literature, I argue that the relationship between a rebel group and a supporter state might not necessarily incite coercive and conflictual response from the targets. Because the support provided for the rebels is sometimes unintentional or passive (Byman, 2007; San-Akca, 2016). Another reason for less coercive measures to be taken against the supporter states could be the lack of rivalry or existence of alliance networks between states.

This comprehensive perspective for state support for rebels with the inclusion of factors conducive to less conflictual outcomes for states, carries vital importance

since it brings about variation in target state responses toward supporters. As earlier research has shown, target states have been using condemnations, economic sanctions and coercive military actions to terminate sponsorship or punish the sponsor states (Rubin, 2010). Nevertheless, embracing unintentional, passive forms of support in conceptualizing the state sponsorship, accounts for a broader range of responses employed by target states especially cooperative measures and non-responsive cases in addition to the coercive and violent reactions which are studied mostly in the previous literature. Similarly allied or non-rival states could work through their problems by already institutionalized conflict management settings provided by alliances or lack of hostility might enable them a more positive atmosphere to resolve the tensions created by state sponsorship of rebels. This premise rests on the assumption that responses to foreign states are not free from the past interactions and the previous experiences of target states in terms of cooperative or conflictual attitudes towards their counterparts. Rivalry and alliance as strategic relationship between the states empirically captures the existing state of affairs between target and supporter states in order to deduce the effects of external security environment on target state responses.

External support is treated by the previous research as if it is always intentional. This is mostly the case in the datasets which are created to determine the cases of external support. There are three notable datasets to focus on external support or internationalized conflict in a broader sense. The first one is the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) (ver. 18.1). External support to both the rebel side and the government side of the conflict is coded in the ESD in addition to the coding of states and non-state actors as external supporters between the years of 1975 and 2017 (Meier et al., 2023). In this vein, the ESD covers various dyads that contain the

external support cases as state support to states, state support to rebels, rebel support to rebels and rebel support to states. A notable difference in the ESD in terms of specific support type is intelligence support. The limitations of this dataset, however, are its time coverage and lack of passive/ indirect support.

The second dataset, Internationalization of Armed Conflicts Dataset, has a broader understanding of external support because the universe of cases contains the conflicts that are internal or internationalized-internal according to the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset. External support is coded not only for the rebel groups but also for the target states and the supporter side does not necessarily has to be a state similar to the ESD's supporters. This dataset also has a broader conceptualization of direct and indirect support provided for the parties of the conflict. Direct support refers to active military engagement and indirect support refers to the support types short of military force involvement. In terms of multidimensionality, this dataset provides a better grasp of a complex setting that involves various parties because it looks at the vertical, horizontal and systemic variables separately. However, its conceptualization of external support is too broad to capture the nuances of the different types and distinct tones of external support. The need to cover the external support for both the states and rebel groups as sides of the conflict might have caused this broader conceptualization.

The third dataset, the NAGs (ver. 2015), is an extensive dataset both because of its time coverage (1946-2010) and because of its detailed support types for relevant triadic cases. The unit of analysis makes it clear for the researchers to explore yearly support by specific supporter states to the specific rebel group for the relevant target states. Similar datasets to the NAGs also include Third Party Intervention Dataset and Nonstate Actor Dataset (NSA). The advantages of the NAGs dataset in comparison to

those and above-mentioned datasets include a broader time frame, the distinction between active/direct and passive/indirect support, as well as designations of various and specific identities and aims of rebel groups (San-Akca, 2016). More importantly for this dissertation, the NAGs dataset allows to distinguish between intentional and de facto supporters. This is the main reason why the RSD uses the cases covered by the NAGs dataset.

The inclusion of passive support matters for the compilation of the RSD because it is crucial to determine how states have been responding to not only the intentional but also the passive/indirect state support for rebels and to account for both interstate conflict and interstate cooperation due to state sponsorship of rebels. Previous research has only focused on the instances of intentional state support of rebel groups when addressing the consequences of state-rebel collaboration. In fact, the literature treated the de facto support as invisible in the empirical studies with the exception of San-Akca (2016). Furthermore, taking the de facto support seriously theoretically opens the door for taking the rebel groups seriously with their actorhood since the de facto support indicates the circumstances in which the rebel groups take advantage of a state which then leads to passive external state support.

As another limitation, the external support literature has not engaged with studies of conflict management, or management of interstate crisis as well as how external support impacts the international relations of target states. The response dataset by compiling information about the bilateral relations between target and supporter states aims to find patterns in target state behavior and provide explanations for strategies of target states to terminate the external support. To predict target state responses and strategies is a valuable research pursuit for peaceful coexistence and dispute resolution in interstate relations. The policy implications from this study could help

mitigate crises and resolve the existing ones by forecasting the target state reactions against their counterparts which support rebel groups (you can rephrase and shorten this part and put it below). With the help of the RSD, to exemplify, one could be able to answer the following underexplored questions:

- Why do some target states respond coercively to state sponsorship while others do not?
- How do support type, rivalry, alliance and contiguity affect the target state responses toward the supporter states? (External security environment argument)
- How do domestic instability inside the target state, its aggregate power and regime type influence the responses? (Target-related factors)
- How do domestic instability inside the supporter state, its aggregate power and regime type influence the responses of target states? (Supporter-related factors)
- How do the objectives of rebel groups, their identities and their age affect the target responses? (Group-level factors)

2.3. PREVIOUS WORKS & UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

The Response to Sponsorship Dataset is the first dataset to account for target state behavior against state sponsorship of rebel groups. It shows the foreign relations of target and supporter states with specific reference to the sponsorship behavior of supporter states. It is possible to look at how a target state does not have a static position when it comes to dealing with the sponsorship behavior of a supporter state through the Response dataset that is coded yearly for each triad. States might be

responsive to the sponsorship behavior by a supporter state in the beginning but may not respond to it later because of numerous reasons. For instance, there could be a change in the material capabilities of the target state especially in comparison to the sponsor state which might lead to become less responsive to the threats emanating from the state sponsorship of rebels. The same conclusion could be arrived at if the relations between the target state and the supporter state become cooperative in time, regarding the external support of rebels. Likewise, target states might become responsive over time when they are non-responsive at first. This could happen if a relative increase in power in favor of the target state occurs or if the supporter state switches from passive support to intentional support of the rebels over time. Additionally, there could be domestic factors or group-level variables to alter the behavior target states over time.

Theoretically, through the RSD, target state strategies to minimize and terminate the state sponsorship of rebel groups could be devised by analyzing the triadic cases in which a rebel is supported by a third-party state. This is the first aim of building this dataset. I aim to provide general patterns in target state response to state sponsors by providing a framework of analysis for their strategies to deal with external support of rebel groups. Secondly, I include state-level (both target and supporter-related) variables, with domestic features and group-level variables in the dataset to be used for other studies as well even though my primary concern in this dissertation is to look at the role of external security environment on target state responses. By doing so, I provide a useful dataset as an attempt to be used for response effectiveness in future studies. Next, I show the procedures for data gathering and coding for the RSD, its limitations, some descriptive statistics and initial analyses.

2.4. OVERVIEW OF THE DATA

The RSD codes for target responses to state sponsors between 1991 and 2010. The time period focuses on after the Cold War because aside from the practical reasons for time management, during the Cold War, mostly intentional support of rebel groups took place (Rauta, 2020). That is, principal-agent theory would be applicable during the Cold War to depict the nature of relationship between the rebel groups and supporter states. However, I adopt selection theory and its comprehensive framework to include de facto support provision. After the Cold War, although the amount of intentional support has decreased, de facto support has increased (San-Akca, 2016, 83). This allows to observe both intentional and de facto forms of support using selection theory as novel approach to identify target state reaction against sponsorship. I have chosen the triadic cases from the NAGs dataset using the following three criterion:

- 1) rebel group received intentional and/or de facto support from a state supporter,
- 2) the rebel group received support at least for 1 year, and
- 3) the start year of conflict is when the rebel group caused 25 battle-deaths per year.

Since the NAGs dataset codes potential supporter states, I only included the triadic cases in which the rebels received at least one type of support. I consider target responses as reactive activities and that suggests if target states face the costs associated with rebel sponsorship, they would respond to it. The costs could be higher if the support duration is not temporary and if the rebels started to become more lethal.

In the RSD, the unit of analysis is a triad year. The dataset contains 3719 observations that include 58 different target countries, 150 different rebel groups, and 102 different supporters between 1991 to 2010, focusing on the period after the Cold War. There are 455 different triadic cases. A triad refers to a target state, a rebel group operating against the target state, and a state supporter of the rebel group (e.g., The triad of Turkey-PKK-Syria in 1991; Turkey's responses to Syria with reference to Syria's support of the PKK during 1991).

To code the responses in the RSD, I used publications in Nexis Uni. The best source of publication type was "Newswires and Press Releases" for the target responses even though I used other publications such as press releases, country reports, newspapers, news transcripts, web-based publications, news, and aggregate news sources. When there was not enough data to code in Nexis Uni, I made a web search both for primary and secondary sources on the bilateral relations of states with reference to the state sponsorship of the respective rebel groups. Sometimes, I could find information in scholarly articles to code for kind and tone of the responses. Other times, I could gather data from Wikipedia, provided that the information is cited properly. The websites of the foreign affairs department of states occasionally provided information about especially the diplomatic engagements if they had archived material. The website of the US Department of State is a good example of having archived information. The lack of information was sometimes due to the different names that rebel groups assume. In those instances, I also checked the availability of information by searching with other names of the rebel groups. To exemplify, CPI-Maoist also is referred as Naxalite; Taliban as Taleban; UCK as KLA and etc.

2.4.1. The Dependent Variables: I created target response variable in two different ways that can be used for statistical analyses. Firstly, the responses of target states are coded as *severity of response* as a categorical variable including *coercive*, *non-coercive*, *mixed responses* and *inaction*. Secondly, I coded for *diplomatic*, *economic*, *militarized*, *domestic*, *covert* and *no response* as specific categories of target responses (as shown in Table 1). Each of them is binary variables. Coercive responses refer to threat of use of force, the actual use of force, sanctions and legal proofs of external state support for rebel groups as bargaining chips. Coercion theory usually refers to deterrence and compellence with specific reference to threat (Schelling, 1966). Coercive diplomacy framework developed by George (1971) adds positive inducements and accommodative strategies as part of coercion to induce a desired change in the behavior of adversary to avoid war. George (1971) distinguishes between offensive compellence (blackmail) and defensive compellence (coercive diplomacy). I added the usage of legal proofs of state-rebel collaboration to coercive responses, considering the coercion strategies of punishing the adversary by increasing the costs, increasing risk of future costs and denying the adversary from their future objectives. Especially sanctions are considered to be a part of coercive diplomacy in the literature as well as reflecting an international authority to enforce a desired behavior (in this case, termination of sponsorship) (Lake, 2013). One of the early examples where sanctions are treated as part of coercive diplomacy is oil embargo against Japan just before Pearl Harbor (George, 1991).

Table 1: Categories of responses in the Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD).

<i>Diplomatic</i>	<i>credible threats, warnings</i>	<i>speeches, visits, negotiations, summits</i>
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<i>Militarized</i>	<i>threat to use force, airstrikes, cross-border operations</i>	<i>joint military exercises, task forces to train armies</i>
<i>Economic</i>	<i>sanctions, threat to cut economic aid</i>	<i>boycott of products exported from the supporter state, financial assistance</i>
<i>Domestic</i>	<i>parliament passing legislation to authorize cross-border operations</i>	<i>public protest of the supporter country around its embassy, cooperation by community members</i>
<i>Covert</i>	<i>assassinations, reconnaissance flights to gather evidence of support</i>	<i>intelligence sharing, joint intelligence task forces</i>

Other responses are considered to be non-coercive as they are free of threats. Militarized responses are usually considered as coercive however, there are rare cases where the target and the sponsor cooperate against rebel groups militarily. I coded these cases as non-coercive even though the category of the response is militarized response. Economic responses are coded as non-coercive if they include inducements to persuade sponsors to cease external support. As for covert responses, they are coded as coercive when there are violent incidents, such as targeted killings and assassinations because they signal costly consequences of external support for the sponsor states. Some response categories could be coercive and non-coercive at different times.

Table 2 demonstrates the distribution of coercive, non-coercive, and mixed responses. Also, Table 3 displays that 43% of all responses are diplomatic, making it the most widely used response, followed by militarized responses (10%), domestic responses (9%), covert responses (8%), and economic responses (4%). The reason why total of response types does not add up to one is because there could be multiple responses in a single observation.

Table 2: Summary Statistics of the Severity of Response

Response Severity	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Inaction	1,898	51.04	51.04
Non-coercive	1,477	39.71	90.75
Coercive	48	1.29	92.04
Mixed	296	7.96	100.00
Total	3,719	100.00	

Table 3: Summary Statistics of Response Categories

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Diplomatic	3,719	0.432	0.495	0	1
Economic	3,719	0.042	0.202	0	1
Militarized	3,719	0.098	0.298	0	1
Domestic	3,719	0.091	0.287	0	1
Covert	3,719	0.079	0.271	0	1
No response	3,719	0.510	0.500	0	1

2.5. CHALLENGES

The RSD is coded by one person, and because of the extensive amount of work to code the responses, the coverage of the dataset remains limited to the years between 1991 and 2010. Before 1990, the Cold War setting dictated the terms of proxy warfare and the external assistance to the rebel groups by supporter states remained mostly because of ideological reasons and was revolved around the two states as the US and the USSR as supporters. Therefore, to look at the period after 1990 could be better in terms of variation among the cases other than the ideological motives of support, the competition between the US and USSR and to go beyond from the assumptions about principal-agent relationship between states and rebels (proxy warfare). To end the time coverage in the Response dataset with the year of 2010 is a choice because of

limited time. Hopefully, in future, with more coders, identifying recent responses could be accomplished.

Omitted information bias could be a limitation of this research since due to human coding some of the relevant information might be missing. Also, focusing on “news” as a source of responses from target states might reduce coverage of engagements between some states because the affairs of some states might be deemed as more important than the others by news agencies and may not have been given enough attention by the publishers especially before internet access has become widespread. In order to mitigate omitted information bias, I double checked the information about the cases with different names that a rebel group assumes from the Nexis Uni database. I also looked at scholarly articles about the cases. Some websites such as Minorities at Risk proved to be very useful to find interactions of states due to state sponsorship of rebels. Similarly, I looked at CIA Factbook, Wikipedia, the websites of foreign affairs ministry of states, country reports of US Department of State, NATO archives website, and USAID’s website to name a few of many sources.

Another challenge was to determine if foreign interactions were primarily because of or were addressing the problem of state sponsorship of rebel groups. I mitigated the impact of this problem by looking at the specific mention of rebel group (sometimes the name of ethnic group or the leader of ethnic group and sometimes implying the sponsor-rebel group collaboration) in the document as a sign of inclusion to the Response dataset to be coded as a response. By specific reference to the external support for the rebels, I could be able to isolate the interactions of target and supporter states to determine the responses against the very behavior of sponsorship. This treatment is also useful to look at the effects of responses on sponsorship termination in future studies.

Lastly, the responses I gather concerns about a specific act towards the sponsoring states and hence could be seen as short-term responses to sponsorship. However, a target state may have a long-term counterterrorism strategy that can include the goals of solving the external support for rebels by totally eradicating the root causes of the problem more domestically. These can be “development and governance approaches” for a peaceful conflict resolution, a viable democracy and human rights promotion that promises economic and social development (Schmid, 1998, 41). Therefore, the RSD may not account for the long-term strategic responses as the RSD is interested in the years when the sponsorship takes place to investigate how target states respond to a state supporter in the same years of sponsorship. Since sponsorship is presumed to impose serious costs for target states, these costs are assumed to constitute the rationale behind their various responses to end the sponsorship. Thus, the RSD does not include more general counterterrorism strategies of target states.

2.6. NEW DATASET APPLICATIONS

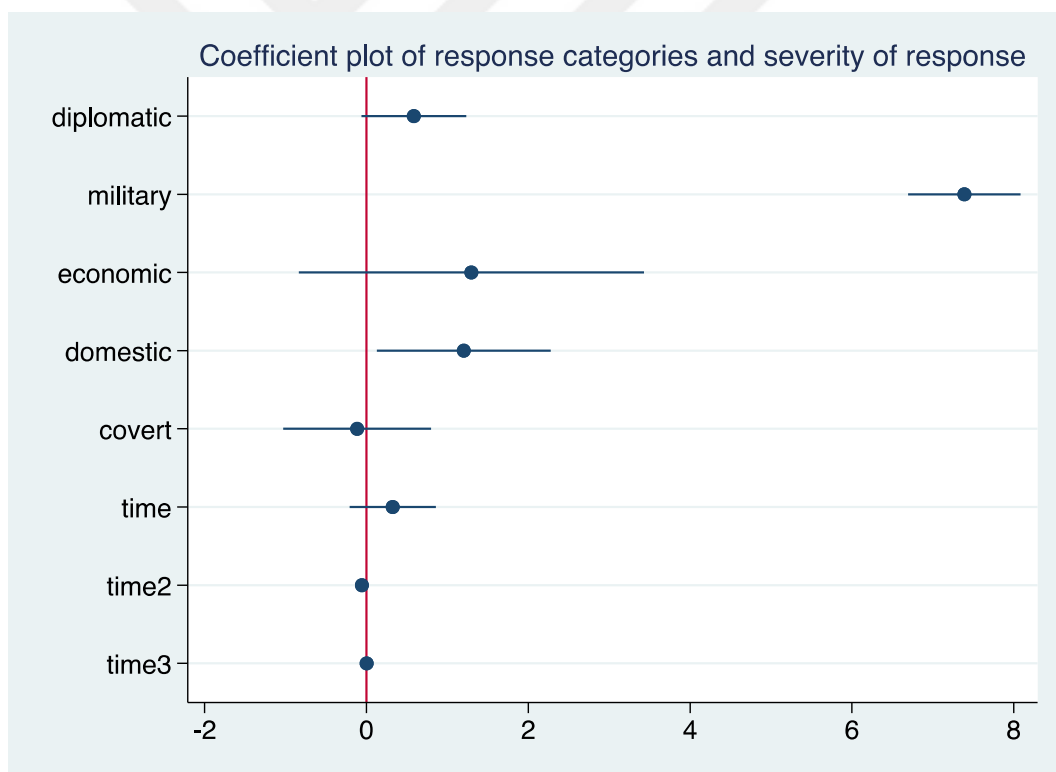
2.6.1. Response type and severity of response

I used a logistical regression model to estimate coercive responses by target states through aggregating the *only coercive* and *mixed responses* into one variable.³ The model shows that militarized and domestic responses are more likely to be coercive and significant as shown in Figure 1. While it is no surprise that militarized responses tend to be coercive, it may sound strange to see that domestic responses are also more likely to be coercive. However, when coding the domestic responses, there

³ I controlled the time dependence using cubic polynomials and used triad clustered robust standard errors.

were societal demands or legal arrangements for execution of coercive behavior by target states. Also, even though economic responses have a positive correlation with coercive responses, the association is not significant. The RSD reveals that economic responses are not necessarily coercive such as economic sanctions. Considering the many cooperative ways an economic response could be formulated by target states with incentives, agreements and deals with the sponsoring states, the RSD provides that economic responses may vary in terms of severity contrary to the existing literature that mostly focuses on economic sanctions as target responses.

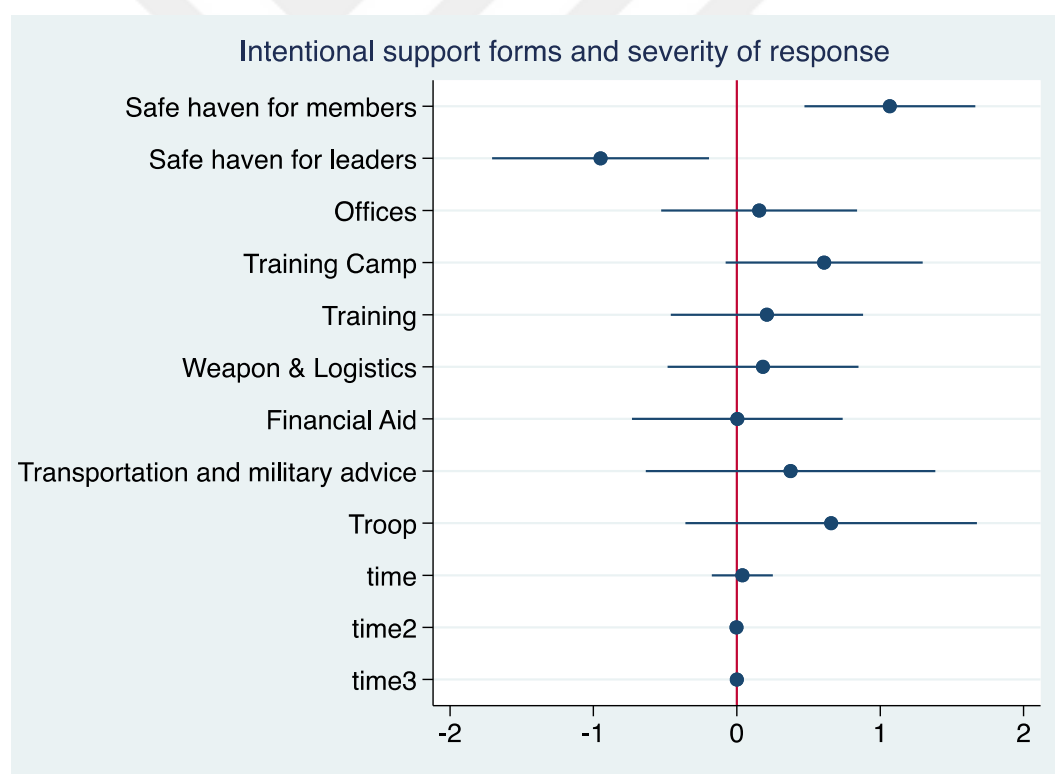
Figure 1: The Relationship Between Response Categories and the Severity of Response



2.6.2. Specific support types and severity of response

Among intentional and de facto support types, the NAGs dataset codes specific forms of support. I used a logistic regression model to test which forms of intentional support are best estimates of coercive responses (aggregation of *only coercive and mixed responses*).⁴ It seems that safe haven for members is positively and significantly affects the likelihood of observing coercive responses while safe haven for leaders negatively and significantly influences the likelihood of observing coercive responses (Figure 2). Except for financial aid, all other forms of intentional support positively impact the likelihood of coercive target responses but these associations are not significant.

Figure 2: The Impact of Intentional Forms of Support on the Severity of Responses

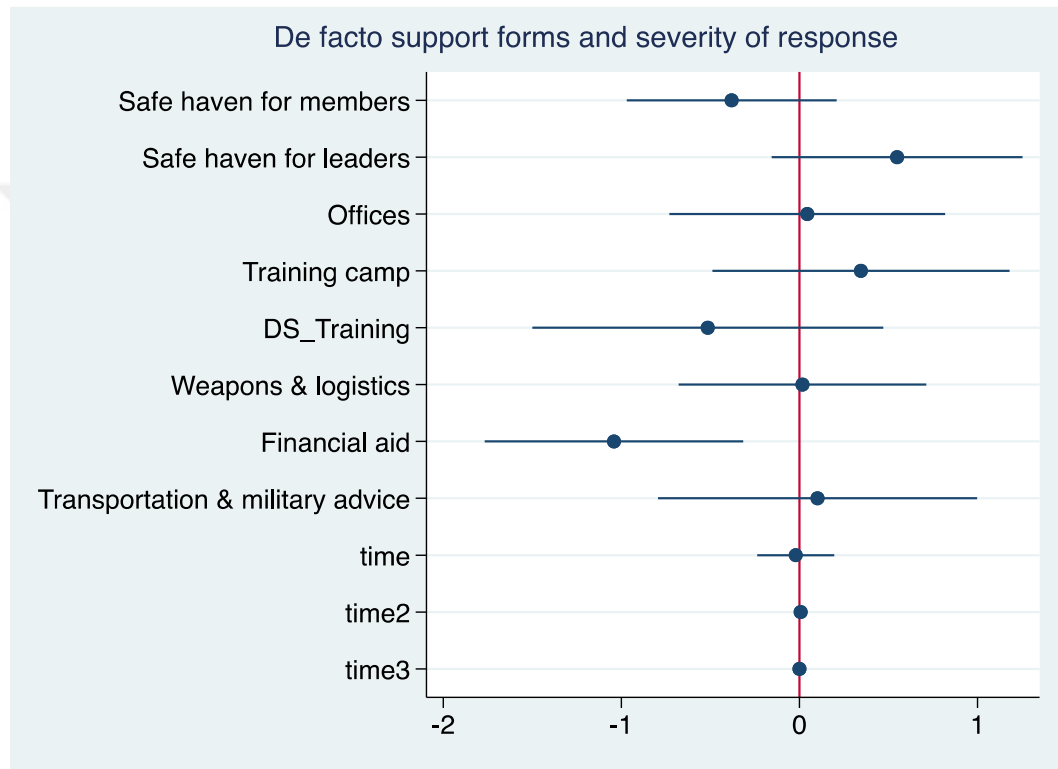


As for de facto forms of support, only financial aid negatively and significantly impacts coercive responses by target states (Figure 3). Despite being not

⁴ I controlled the time dependence using cubic polynomials and used triad clustered robust standard errors.

significant, safe haven for members and training as de facto support types are negatively associated with coercive responses while safe haven for leaders offices, training camps, transportation and military advice are positively associated with coercive responses.

Figure 3: The Impact of De Facto Forms of Support on the Severity of Response



2.6.3. Support level and coerciveness

By looking at the specific support types, San-Akca (2016, 83) argues that support level could be determined for intentional support types. She distinguishes between very high, high, moderate and low levels of support by supporter states to rebel groups. I argue that depending on the level of support, target states' response to supporter states will vary in severity. Below, Table 5 shows a Likert scale measurement of threat perception with its respective support type. The magnitude of

support level goes down from troop and training camp to transportation and offices and so as the level of threat. Additionally, I add other the de facto support forms (minus the troop support since there is not a de facto troop support coded in the NAGs dataset) to the analysis to measure support level. Because I argue that the same categories of support for intentional and de facto forms could be considered to cause similar outcomes in terms of increasing the level of perceived threat by target states. I think, for a target state, a de facto support of safe haven for members and offices could belong to the same hierarchy offered in Table 5. That is, a de facto provision of safe haven for members is still more threatening for a target state in comparison to a de facto provision of offices for rebel groups.

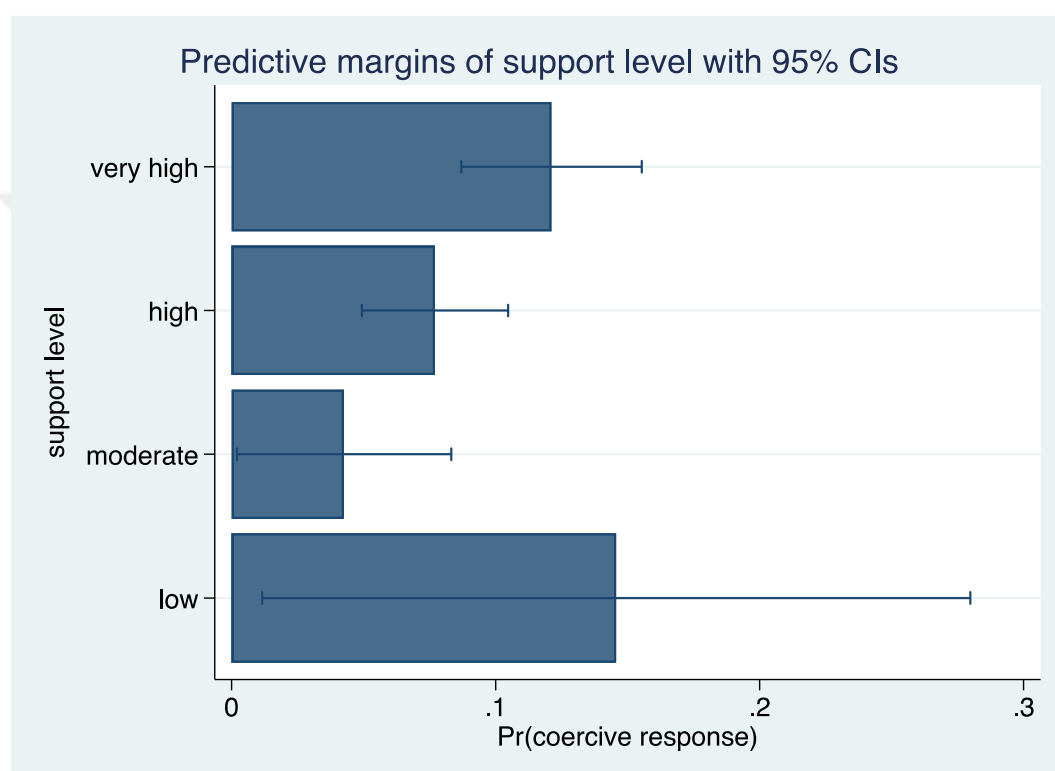
Table 4: The Level of Perceived Threat by Target States (support level/type (San-Akca, 2016))

Threat perception of target	Support level/type by the sponsor
<i>Very high</i>	<i>Very high</i> (Troop or training camp and/or other support types)
<i>High</i>	<i>High</i> (Safe haven to members or weapons and/or other types of support other than troop and training camp)
<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Moderate</i> (Financial support or providing safe haven to leaders or training or other types (other than troops, training camp, weapons))
<i>Low</i>	<i>Low</i> (Transportation and offices)

In Figure 4, I show that very high levels of intentional and de facto support are more likely to incite coercive responses from target states because they are associated with the level of perceived threat. Interestingly, high and low levels of support almost cause same predicted probability of observing coercive responses while the least

likely level of support to observe the coercive responses are moderate levels of support. Consequently, this study argues that with a move from moderate to very high levels of state support for rebel groups, the likelihood of observing coercive responses from target states to state supporters increases.

Figure 4: The Impact of Support Level on the Severity of Response

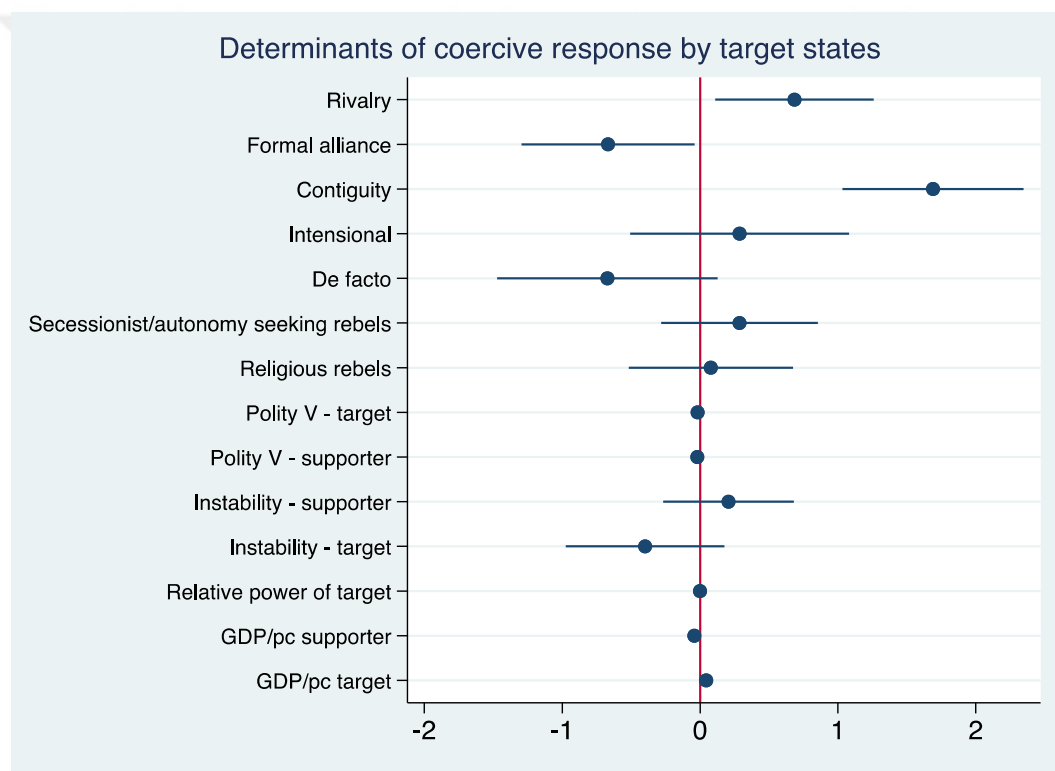


2.6.4. Coefficient plot of all independent and control variables, and severity of response

As seen in Figure 5, apart from the abovementioned independent variables, rivalry and contiguity between target and supporter states, and GDP/pc of target states significantly and positively affects the likelihood of observing coercive target responses against foreign state supporters. Conversely, formal alliances between target and supporter states and GDP/pc of supporter states negatively and significantly

reduces the likelihood of observing coercive target responses.⁵ Among other variables, domestic instability inside target states and de facto support stand out as negatively associated with coercive behavior in spite of being not significant. Also, intentional support, the presence of secessionist/autonomy seeking and religious-oriented rebel groups and domestic instability inside supporter states are positively (but not significantly) associated with the likelihood of observing coercive behavior.

Figure 5: Coefficient Plot of Possible Explanatory Variables for Coercive Response



2.6.5. Possible Retaliatory Responses

Some target and supporter states as dyads could be seen reversed in terms of sponsorship. This could be the result of a sponsorship behavior initiated by a supporter state and in reaction to the sponsorship, a target state might support a rebel

⁵ I controlled the time dependence using cubic polynomials and used triad clustered robust standard errors.

group that threatens the supporter state. This kind of responses could be called as retaliatory responses to sponsorship of rebels. This could also be understood as ‘responding in kind’ covertly even though this concept is usually used to explain overt behavior of states using reciprocity in escalation of conflict and arms races, and provocation in foreign policy response (Leng & Wheeler, 1979; Sayrs, 1992; Crescenzi, Best & Kwon, 2018). In order to identify the retaliatory response, I looked at the NAGs dataset to see which country was the first supporter state within the dyads that alternate as target and supporter states by turn. If both states were seen as supporting the rebel groups that harm the other respectively in the same year, I decided that the first intentional support should be counted as the first supporter (since those same support years were differentiated by intentional and de facto support). Below in Table 6, I report the retaliatory response years of target states within the time period of 1991-2010 after identifying the first supporter state and the retaliating target state from the NAGs dataset.

Table 5: Retaliatory Responses by Target States between 1991-2010

Retaliating Target State	Supporter State	Retaliatory Response Years (intentional)	Retaliatory Response Years (de facto)
Afghanistan	Pakistan	2008-2009	2007-2010
Tajikistan	Afghanistan	1998	-
Afghanistan	USA	2001-2002	2002-2010
Angola	DRC	1996-1997	1996-1997
Bangladesh	India	1995-2010	1993-2010
Myanmar	Bangladesh	-	1991-1994
Burundi	Rwanda	-	1996-2000
Chad	Nigeria	-	2009-2010
Chad	Sudan	2008	2007-2009

DRC	Rwanda	-	1996-2000
DRC	Uganda	-	1996
Djibouti	Ethiopia	-	1993-1999
Sudan	Egypt	1993-1998	-
Eritrea	Sudan	2003-2005	2009
Ethiopia	Somalia	2001-2002	-
Sudan	Ethiopia	1993-1999	1993-1999
Liberia	Guinea	-	2000-2001
Myanmar	India	-	1991-2010
Nepal	India	2001-2010	-
India	Pakistan	2008-2010	-
Iran	Iraq	1991-1996	1991-2010
Iran	Israel	2005-2007	-
Iran	Turkey	1992-2004	-
Iran	USA	2001-2010	-
Turkey	Iraq	-	1995
Israel	Sudan	1991-2004, 2008-2009	-
Liberia	Ivory Coast	2002	2002-2003
Liberia	Sierra Leone	1991-2001	1991-1996
Niger	Nigeria	-	2009-2010
Pakistan	USA	-	2002-2010
UK	USA	-	2001-2010

As seen in Table 5, there are 31 target states that could be identified as giving covert help to rebel groups as a retaliation toward the supporter states. This kind of a response (retaliation) could be the extension of a proxy warfare between states, or it could be understood as part of a reciprocity approach in foreign relations. For instance, Angola has fought with The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) for nearly two decades and had to deal with the DRC's sponsorship due to their close alliance with the UNITA. Angola assisted the Alliance of

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL) to help overthrow Zairian leader, Mobutu Sese Seko whose help to UNITA was essential for these rebels to fight against Angola. By helping the ADFL, Angola wanted to ensure the elimination of the UNITA bases inside the DRC (Reliefweb, 1997). On the other hand, some of the cases above might not be counted as retaliatory responses especially the cases where there is only de facto support is present. For instance, even though the USA provided de facto support in the forms of money, arms, safe haven and political support to the IRA despite the criticisms of the UK government (Byman, 2005), I do not think that the UK retaliated through its de facto support to al-Qaeda. The reason why there is de facto support is the choosing of al-Qaeda to operate inside the UK rather than the retaliation of the UK government by allowing the rebel presence since the UK also was threatened by al-Qaeda activities.

2.7. CONCLUSION

At this point, the Response to Sponsorship Dataset provides that non-coercive responses are much more seen as reactions from target states compared to the coercive responses. Introducing the severity of response variable provides an exhaustive categorization of target responses while specific responses of target states as diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, covert responses and inaction provides a comprehensive picture as painting the varieties of target state behavior when facing external state support of rebel groups.

For the management of interstate crises and conflicts that could stem from state sponsorship of rebel groups, policymakers and analysts should beware of the determinants of coercive responses outlined in this research. It is more likely that

coercive behavior will be used against rival states. Even though rival sponsors arguably support rebel groups to avoid large scale war with their adversaries, this foreign policy strategy of sponsorship might backfire due to the existing hostility between them as I have shown with analyses made from the RSD. This is probably because of the enmity and distrust due to the strategies rivalry and the target responses cannot decrease the negative effects coming from the existing rivalrous relationship between target and supporter states. This idea is also supported by an earlier work which argues that conflict management strategies usually do not end the hostility between states even though they might delay the onset of new future conflicts (Diehl, Greig & Owsiak, 2019).

The RSD could be used with data about the termination of state sponsorship (Karlén, 2017) to identify the effectiveness of different types and severity of responses by target states. By doing so, researchers and policy makers could be able draw conclusions about the effective and efficient use of responses. This is especially important for the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts among states that arise from state sponsorship of rebel groups. Utilizing effective responses will reduce the likelihood of conflict escalation in interstate relations and foreign policy crises.

CHAPTER 3. A TYPOLOGY OF RESPONSE STRATEGIES OF TARGET STATES TOWARD STATE SPONSORSHIP OF REBEL GROUPS: THE CASE OF TURKISH COERCIVE AND PERSUASION STRATEGIES AGAINST SYRIAN SPONSORSHIP OF THE PKK

3.1. INTRODUCTION

“In a system of states, the use of force generally discriminates between peace and war. Yet, international politics often takes place in a gray region involving no-peace and no-war, wherein the threat of violence – more than its mere application – is the critical variable for and understanding of interstate relations and crises”
(Sperandei, 2006, 253).

Target states have been dealing with third-party state support for rebel groups in various ways from engagement to military force and from political pressure to economic sanctions (Byman, 2005). The responses of target states follow some paths that share similar features. Some paths are more cooperative, while some courses of action demonstrate a more militarized posture with an emphasis on coercion. What kind of strategies do target states adopt when confronting external support of rebel groups? Previous studies have not analyzed the likely response strategies target states employ when studying the responses to state sponsorship. The existing works only refer to coercion while using a narrow conceptualization of state sponsorship that emphasizes intentional support. In the previous chapter, I have shown that there are

non-coercive, only coercive, mixed responses and inaction of target states towards supporter states as their foreign policy interactions. The Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) provides these responses for each triadic case within a year, and each different kind of response is saved in the codebook of the RSD. In this chapter, by looking at the various responses, I develop a framework of analysis to identify response strategies of target states against state sponsors of rebel groups.

Developing a framework of analysis for response strategies is necessary for several reasons. Firstly, previous works about strategies concerning interstate relations do not deal with reactions against state sponsorship of rebel groups. These works identify the behavior of states in the case of foreign policy crises as violent or non-violent, verbal, economic, or political (Andersen-Rodgers, 2015). Secondly, the existing works regard the behavior of states within the framework of coercion solely, ignoring non-coercive responses (Collins, 2004; Bellon, 1999; Bapat et al., 2015). Nevertheless, there is a need to show the general patterns that share some features to cover the non-coercive behavior of target states as well when they try to terminate external support for rebel groups. Thirdly, a framework of analysis about response strategies could serve as a prescriptive tool to inform target states about their options. Not only target states but also supporter states could be informed about relevant policy prescriptions as the results of this research provides information on the likely responses of target states.

In order to create a typology of response strategies, I use the codebook for the RSD that records every different response observation. Through this codebook, I identified the categories of coercion (compellence) and persuasion as the overarching distinction between strategies employed by target states. Coercion includes strategies of blackmail and coercive diplomacy, as they both include direct threats, while

persuasion contains dialogue, agreement, shame, exclusion, and balancing as distinct strategies, all of which are non-coercive and free of direct threats. To further my analysis, I analyze the Turkey-PKK-Syria triad between 1991 and 2010, in which the target state is Turkey, the rebel group is the PKK, and the sponsoring state is Syria. I show that Turkey mostly used persuasion by dialogue and coercive diplomacy to compel and persuade Syria to abandon its support for the PKK. This case also shows a pattern of response escalation from a milder tone to an aggressive one, with Turkey initially beginning with softer strategies such as dialogue, agreement, naming and shaming, progressing to balancing and exclusion, and later to coercive diplomacy coupled with deployment of the Turkish army to threaten Syria as part of an offensive blackmail strategy. This chapter also provides that Turkey used persuasion strategy to maintain the good state of affairs after Syria's termination of sponsorship.

Next, I first look at the previous works on coercion and persuasion and provide a typology of response strategies employed by target states to end sponsorship as a theoretical framework. Then, I discuss the data and methods used for the creation of a typology for response strategies as well as the case study to analyze each strategy. After, I analyze the Turkish response strategies in three different periods. Lastly, I conclude with the findings of this study in addition to recommendations about future work.

3.2. THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN TARGET STATE RESPONSES TO EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND THE LITERATURE OF COERCION AND INFLUENCE STRATEGIES

Studies of coercion and influence⁶ relate to military coercion (Slantchev, 2005), grand strategy (French, 2022), and conflict management between states (Hensel & Diehl, 1994; Brecher & Wilkenfeld, 2000) in addition to more non-coercive ways of influencing other states such as the research on soft power (Nye, 2017). Coercion includes compellence, deterrence, and brute force (Schelling, 1966). Responses to state sponsorship of terrorism could be studied in light of literature on compellence since state sponsorship of rebel groups could be defined as a deterrence failure for target states. Compellence covers both blackmail and coercive diplomacy (George, 1991). While blackmail refers to more offensive uses of militarized threats, coercive diplomacy is understood as more defensive and as a diplomatic strategy of coercion to influence the incentive structure of another state while avoiding war (Levy, 2008).

Conflict management studies that investigate the non-coercive approaches to end hostilities and the conflict between states identify negotiations, mediations, and adjudications, as non-violent but binding approaches, and also peace operations (Owsiak, 2021). However, there is a lack of research to classify the strategies employed by especially the target states against their adversaries (third-party state supporters of rebel groups) to influence and change the latter's behavior. This lacuna is present, especially in the study of responses to state sponsorship, as target responses

⁶ For detailed discussions on coercion and influence, see, Pfaff, 2022; Art & Greenhill, 2018, and Leng & Wheeler, 1979.

are usually studied in terms of counterterrorism rather than countering external state supporters.

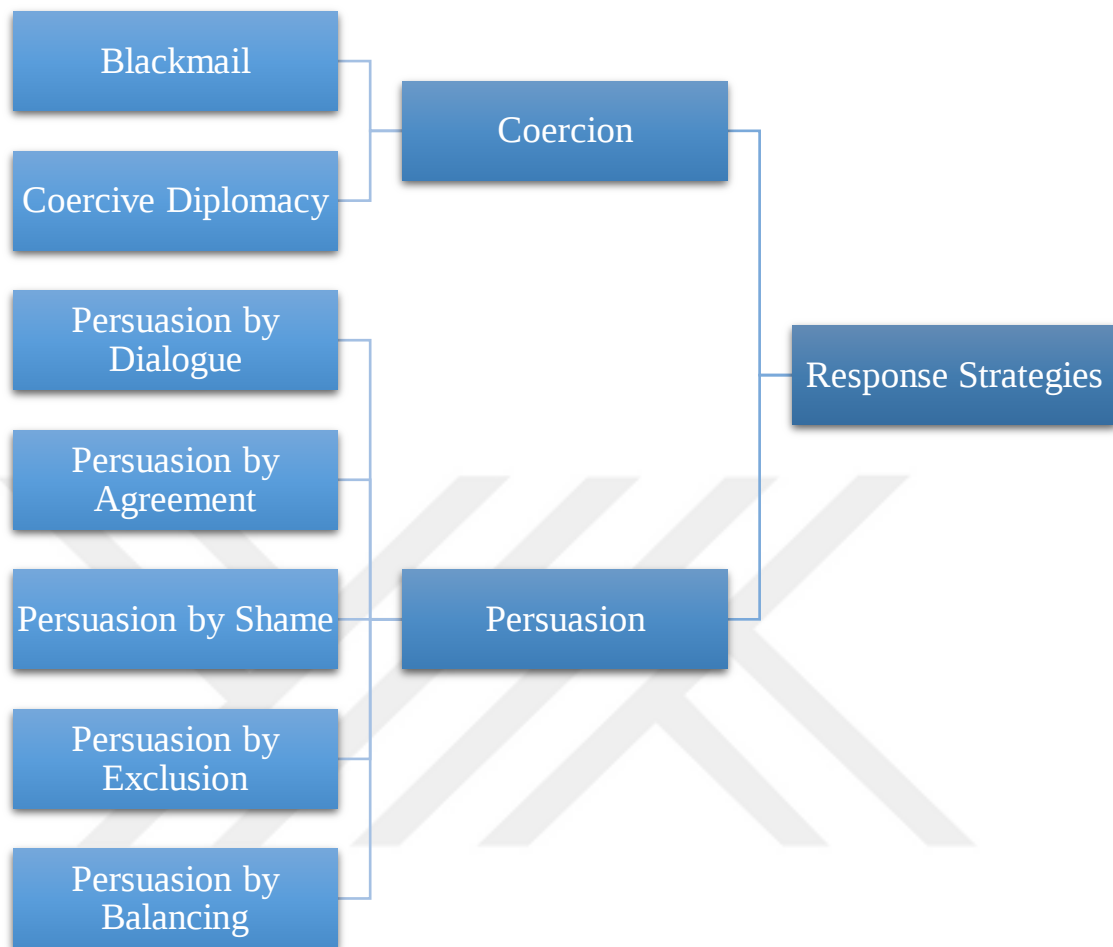
When target states use threats, I adopt the coercion framework (Viggo Jakobsen, 2020) to classify target state behavior as a compellence strategy. On the other hand, target states also have an approach to state sponsorship that is consisted of non-coercive measures. I adopt persuasion framework to account for the behavior of target states when they do not employ threats to convince state sponsors to terminate support for rebels. Persuasion has been used previously to refer to a general convincing process to alter an opponent's behavior, and includes communicating of one's ideas, logic, and reasoning (Alkhawaldeh, 2021). Persuasion studies have focused on political persuasion during elections, and political campaigns as part of speech act theory (Ghazani, 2016; Ponton, 2017). These strategies are studied by making linguistic analyses (Alkhawaldeh, 2021), in which persuasion is sometimes used synonymously with propaganda (Graham, 2014; Oddo, 2023). I employ 'persuasion strategy' in this study to mean the same as *conflict warning* in foreign policy (Meyer, De Franco & Otto, 2019). Persuasion is a way of communicating one party's demands in an effort to de-escalate the existing tension without resorting to direct threats. Even though Meyer, De Franco and Otto (2019) regard persuasion as a preventive, hence, deterrent strategy, I adopt the same strategy for a context in which changing the status quo is the aim of target states with reference to a future risk of escalation. That is, target states use persuasion strategies both to communicate their demands for abandonment of the sponsorship and to warn against possible future costs if the sponsoring states do not comply. Depending on the difference between threats and lack of threats, the strategies of target states could be associated with the responses in the RSD. Coercive responses could be associated with compellence

strategy in general, blackmail and coercive diplomacy in particular. On the other hand, persuasion as a non-coercive strategy covers the non-coercive responses in the RSD. In the next section, I develop a classification of persuasion strategies of target states against state supporters of rebel groups for the first time as part of the broader typology for response strategies.

3.3. A TYPOLOGY OF RESPONSE STRATEGIES BY TARGET STATES TO END STATE SPONSORSHIP

When target states decide to compel supporter states to cease their assistance for the rebel groups, they have a variety of options as observed in the RSD, from diplomatic, economic, militarized and domestic, to covert responses, along a range from non-coercive responses to coercive ones. They also have the option of inaction and simply may not respond at all as seen in 51% of the triads in the RSD. By looking at the responses of target states, I devised a typology of target responses against external support of rebel groups as shown in Figure 6. Target states seeking to terminate the state sponsorship of rebel groups, sometimes only employ one or two response strategies while other times may adopt various and even all of the strategies identified in the framework comprehensively.

Figure 6: The Typology of Response Strategies by Target States Against State Sponsors of Rebel Groups



As target states try to end the sponsorship, they either coerce or persuade the supporter states to change their behavior vis-à-vis the rebel groups. They usually employ these strategies of coercion or persuasion when conducting their foreign policy toward the supporter states. I define coercion as a strategy adopted by target states to compel the sponsors to end support for the rebels by using threats either in the form of blackmail or in the form of coercive diplomacy. Coercion strategy refers to the response strategies of target states when target states employ coercive responses. Coercion usually is understood either in the form of deterrence or compellence (in addition to brute force) (Schelling, 1966). I only refer to compellence

when I use coercion as a response strategy of target states to end sponsorship because target states want to change the status quo rather than avoid an undesired situation before it happens. State sponsorship of rebel groups is the status quo that the target states would like to alter. Therefore, strategies of target states against the sponsoring states are in the realm of compellence.

In this study, I identify coercion (compellence) with threat. If the target state threatens the supporter state in order to terminate the sponsorship, the response strategy is coercion. As an offensive strategy, blackmail is “the proactive use of threats ... by threatening to take military action unless the adversary gives up something...” (Viggo Jakobsen, 2020, 4). In this study, blackmail strategy refers to target responses of *threat to use force*, *show of force* and *actual use of force* to end the sponsorship behavior of a third-party supporter state. Blackmail differs from coercive diplomacy since with the response strategy of blackmail target states risk going to war with the sponsor states while with the strategy of coercive diplomacy, they would like to avoid war and still remain in the realm of diplomacy even if there are still compellent threats (political or economic) (Viggo Jakobsen, 2020).

Coercive diplomacy adopts threats at a milder level and in a reactive manner using mostly diplomacy rather than the use of militarized threats (Viggo Jakobsen, 2020). In this study, coercive diplomacy includes economic threats, serious warnings by leaders short of threatening to use force, leveraging something needed by the sponsors, and political pressures with carrot and stick as examples. It includes punitive threats mostly also offering positive inducements (George, 1991). In this study, I view proofs of illegal engagement between supporter states and rebel groups and the use of these proofs as bargaining chips by target states as coercive. Because one of the basic goals intended by target states when they respond is to hold the

supporter states accountable (Payne, 2012). By proving the responsibility of the supporter states for the heinous acts of rebel groups (through sponsoring states' partnership with rebels), target states can demand an end to support of rebels and credibly threaten them with punishment. These kinds of proofs are usually obtained through covert measures and links the rebel groups to the relevant sponsors without a question. Normally, the state-rebel group collaboration itself is covert and conducted in secrecy but obtaining proofs of this partnership forces the hand of supporter states, leaving no choice but to comply with the target's demands even if for a short period of time.⁷

The types of coercive diplomacy (George, 1991) are usually reflected in the responses of target states clearly especially when one analyzes responses over time. For instance, as part of coercive diplomacy, *the gradual turning of the screw* (meaning an escalation of reactions from mild to stronger ones when demanding a change in the status quo) (Levy, 2008, 540) could be seen in the responses of the Turkish state against its Syrian counterpart to make them stop supporting the PKK. Turkey adopted warnings via leader speeches, leveraging water resources as a threat of water supply shortage, and made military exercises with Syria's enemy, Israel, all as part of coercive diplomacy with an escalatory trend (Makovsky, 1999). In the end, Turkey deployed its army on the border with Syria as a blackmail strategy (Altunışık & Tür, 2006). Therefore, I think the blackmail strategy is the last resort to end sponsorship if target states fail to change the status quo through coercive diplomacy. Target states might carry a compellence dilemma as put forward by Carter (2015) or

⁷ For instance, Turkish Foreign Minister İsmet Sezgin, during his visit to Syria in 1992 showed video evidence of Öcalan entering and leaving official Syrian buildings. After the meeting, Syria ceased its support for the PKK temporarily. In addition, the Second Gulf War already provided a momentum for cooperation between Turkey and Syria which terminated its support for the PKK temporarily (Özcan, 1999, 249; Selvi, 2003, 97).

they might want to avoid a militarized conflict with the sponsor and use coercive diplomacy before they consider a threat to send or send boots on the ground.

On the other hand, target states might adopt strategies that lack threat and instead, they might use non-coercive responses even more than the coercive ones as empirically founded by the RSD. I develop classifications of persuasion as a response strategy of target states by showing five variants in Figure 6. Persuasion in this research includes not only positive engagements and soft power tools but also negative interactions between states such as condemnations, exclusionary behavior and balancing⁸ against the sponsoring states because my focus here is on the lack of threat rather than exclusive emphasis on cooperation or positive interactions between states. This way, persuasion could cover more grounds in explaining the response strategies of target states. Persuasion strategies differ from coercion (compellence) strategies (e.g., ultimata, sanctions, limited uses of force) in terms of involving less risk of deteriorating interstate relations when responding to the sponsorship of rebels.

Persuasion by dialogue refers to an engagement with the supporter states in diplomatic terms to communicate the uneasiness with the sponsorship such as through speeches by leaders, formal meetings and attendance at international events.

Persuasion by dialogue is a soft power approach to foreign policy aiming for cooperation with the supporter states and for convincing the supporters to end the

⁸ Some could argue that balancing behavior of target states might be perceived as a threat by a sponsor state, however, I argue that balancing as a target response not always regarded as a threat by sponsoring states for contextual reasons. One of the reasons could be relative power. Balancing might not be regarded as a threat by a sponsor if the sponsor state is relatively much powerful, if the sponsor state is geographically far away, and etc. Due to the contextual differences every case might contain, I consider balancing as a persuasion strategy rather than the strategy of coercion. More importantly, the RSD codes coerciveness based on the existence of direct threats. That's why, in this study balancing is considered as a persuasion strategy even though balancing may include indirect threats to the sponsor states.

assistance for rebels. In the RSD, dialogue strategy is usually visible in diplomatic responses.

Persuasion by agreement is also cooperative in nature and shows the willingness of states to solve the problem of external support via protocols, negotiations, memoranda of understanding, etc. The difference of agreement strategy from dialogue strategy is its formal nature that binds the actions of supporter states. Through agreements, target states aim to end the sponsorship of foreign states and they may do so by also promising something in favor of the supporter state to ensure their cooperation.

The strategy of persuasion by shame aims to hurt the reputation of the sponsor by, for instance, inciting international pressure. The designation of supporter states as “sponsors of terrorism” by the US State Department hurts the reputation of the designated states in the eyes of the international community. This strategy shares the same logic of naming and shaming in enforcement literature (Hafner-Burton, 2008; Tingley & Tomz, 2022). Through public humiliation and imposition of reputational costs on the sponsors, with the strategy of shame, target states aim to discredit the sponsor states as well as to enhance their position in the eyes of both domestic and international audiences. Shame strategy might also be needed when the sponsoring states do not act according to the formal agreements, they already had with the target states.

Persuasion by exclusion signals non-interaction with the sponsors unless they cease their assistance to rebels. Not attending international gatherings just because of the presence of sponsor states in these meetings and refusing to talk to sponsor states when other states mediate the conflict between them could be exemplified as exclusionary persuasion. In this way, target states may signal that they are determined

to solve the dispute with the supporter states and unless the supporter states do not cooperate, target states would resort to cutting the diplomatic ties. Exclusion also signals a willingness for escalation by target states. If target states close the diplomatic channels to persuade the sponsor states, the implication is that target states would be willing to risk a confrontation with the sponsor states that includes less cooperative or less peaceful encounters.

Lastly, persuasion by balancing refers to alliance formations and demanding or receiving external help to end sponsorship. Military alliances, joint exercises and asking or declaration of support from allied states, increasing the security measures on the border with supporter states through new purchases or applications exemplify persuasion via balancing. This type of strategy includes externalizing or outsourcing the necessary capabilities to respond to the challenge of state sponsorship of rebel groups.

3.4. DATA AND METHOD

I define ‘responses’ of target states as foreign policy instruments used to compel or persuade the sponsoring states to end their external support for rebels who are threatening the target states.⁹ In order to create a typology for response strategies, I used the codebook of the Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) where I entered a

⁹ State sponsorship of rebel groups can cause foreign policy crises between target and supporter states. Sometimes, depending on the region, the parties involved, and the issues at stake, state sponsorship may cause international crises such as the “war on terror” policies of coalition states after the 9/11 attacks. Some rebel groups receive support from multiple states, some civil wars could be more internationalized than others and grab international attention rather than just the target state’s notice. Following San-Akca (2016), I include both intentional and de facto supporters of rebel groups when identifying target responses. This improves the coverage of various responses against sponsoring states. This study dwells on both the foreign policy crisis approach and international crisis literature to explain target state behavior. For the definition of crisis and crisis management see, Avenell & Dunn (2016).

new type of event each time when a target state responded to sponsorship behavior. Then, with a retrospective reading of those events, I identify two overarching response strategies as compellence and persuasion with subcategories as shown in Figure 6. While the categories of compellence is outlined in the previous literature, the typology offered for persuasion strategies are novel and they are created by analyzing the codebook of the RSD to establish a mutually exclusive and exhaustive list of categories. I identified the shared themes of *dialogue*, *agreement*, *shame*, *exclusion*, and *balancing* as part of persuasion strategies.

After the creation of a typology for the response strategies of target states, I used a subset of the RSD that codes the Turkish responses to Syrian sponsorship of the PKK during the period between 1991 and 2010. I use the Turkey-PKK-Syria triad as a case study to make an in depth-analysis by applying the typology of response strategies. The sub-dataset for Turkey-PKK-Syria triad includes the specific newswires and press releases that refer to the triad of Turkey-PKK-Syria. In this events dataset, there are 132 observations which mention this triad with relevant news publication on Turkish responses to Syria. I made a content analysis of 132 news items looking for evidence of the response strategies and hand-coded the relevant strategies with the corresponding event. I present the summary statistics for each strategy employed by the Turkish state in Table 7. Later, I analyze the case study of Turkish responses in three distinct periods that can be distinguished by their specific approaches to responding to Syria.

3.5. THE CONTEXT: TURKISH-SYRIAN RELATIONS

Initially, Turkey's policies towards the Syrian government were considered to be a policy of appeasement. The major issues that bilaterally caused tension between

the two states were Syrian territorial claims about Hatay province, the distribution of water flowing from Turkey and the problem of PKK sponsorship by Syria (Özcan, 1999). The rationale behind the Syrian policies against Turkey could be grounded on the rivalry coupled with power asymmetry between Turkey and Syria. That is, as stated earlier in the external support literature, rival states might resort to supporting the rebel groups which are enemies of their adversaries if the rival states are weaker in terms of material power (Maoz & San-Akca, 2012). In this case, the weaker Syrian government vis a vis Turkey, adopted a policy of proxy warfare against Turkey to compensate for this inferiority. This is not only done for compensation for weakness but also to compel Turkey to share water resources according to Syrian wishes, especially after 1995 (Oktav-Alantar, 2001). Syria also acted together with Iran when organizing its policies concerning the PKK (Özcan, 1999). The ungoverned spaces in Lebanon also provided Syria an excuse to deny the presence of PKK camps inside its territories while assisting the PKK through the provision of training camps (e.g., Helve camp), propaganda activities, and spaces to solve any kind of problem and direct any kind of organizational activity all around the world from Syria (Özcan, 1999).

Turkish appeasement policies also transformed to a tougher stance after 1995 with political isolation of Syria by suspending regular meetings, with a memorandum of demanding the extradition of Öcalan (January 23, 1996), and later with counterbalancing the Syrian rapprochement with Greece by an agreement with Israel for military training and cooperation (February 1996) (Oktav-Alantar, 2001; Gunn, 2015; Oztig, 2019). Coupled with warnings made by Turkish leaders of the time, Turkey adopted coercive and non-coercive responses to address the sponsorship of PKK by its Syrian counterparts. Turkey had to make a calculated risk-taking move for

conflict management by way of pressuring the Syrians and also assuring the other Arab states about the intentions of Turkey in addition to convincing the international community (UN Security Council) by informing about the possibility of a military attack. Turkey's perception was that Syria was conducting a covert war against Turkey and that Turkey had to defend its interest following Article 51 of the United Nations Charter of self-defense. On the other hand, Turkey never closed the doors of dialogue by allowing the mediation efforts by President Mubarak of Egypt and Foreign Minister Harrazi of Iran. Demirel's shuttle diplomacy with Arab leaders also signaled that Turkey wanted a peaceful solution. However, the diplomatic pursuits of Turkey were not reciprocated by the Syrian government before the escalation of the dispute into a militarized one through the deployment of troops along the Syrian border.

The importance of the Turkish military alliance with Israel could not be overlooked when analyzing the dynamics that culminated in the October crisis of 1998. Syrian rivalry with the Israelis, Arab solidarity of the time that favored the Syrians over Turkey and Israel, Turkey's desire to find international support for its case against a Kurdish state in the region, and Syria's alignment with Greece made Israeli alliance a necessity for Turkey (Oktav-Alantar, 2001). Especially, Turkey found it useful to ally with Israel against Syrian alignment with Greece and other Arab countries in the region because, in 1995, Greece and Syria signed a defense cooperation agreement that made Turkey anxious given that Greece was also supporting the PKK (Oktav-Alantar, 2001; Roth & Sever, 2007; Varouhakis, 2009). Furthermore, from a perspective of counterbalancing, Turkish military alliance with Israel could be understood from a public diplomacy approach, too that Turkey adopted to influence the Israeli lobby in the US in order to gain support from the

Congress that has been traditionally pro-Greek, pro-Armenian and pro-Kurdish at the expense of the Turkish side (Oktav-Alantar, 2001). I think, through the alliance with the Israelis, Turkey wanted to secure the US support for its agenda through the Jewish lobby in the US (Bölükbaşı, 1999; Nachmani, 2008), seeing that the PKK was gaining momentum in Europe especially in Germany which caused “an undeclared arms embargo” against Turkey (Oktav-Alantar, 2001). Turkey needed US support not only because it was losing it in Europe but also because the Washington Agreement signed between the US and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP - Barzani) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK - Talabani) in Northern Iraq alarmed the Turkish side due to the fears of an independent Kurdish state that this agreement might enable (Oktav-Alantar, 2001).

3.6. ANALYSIS OF TURKISH RESPONSE STRATEGIES AGAINST SYRIA

Turkey adopted various strategies to compel and persuade the Syrian government during especially the 1990s. Table 7 shows that Turkey mostly used the strategy of persuasion by dialogue (37%). Following the strategy of dialogue, Turkey adopted harsher coercive diplomacy to threaten Syria (20%). In an attempt to make its case loud and legitimate, Turkey also condemned Syria publicly to gain international approval for its actions against Syria through the strategy of persuasion by shame (15%). After persuasion by shame, persuasion by balancing comes next, comprising 14% of all strategies. Then, compellence by blackmail forms the 10% and persuasion by agreement the 11% of strategies. Lastly, persuasion by exclusion only comes as the 4% of all strategies. Overall, persuasion strategies outnumber compellence strategies

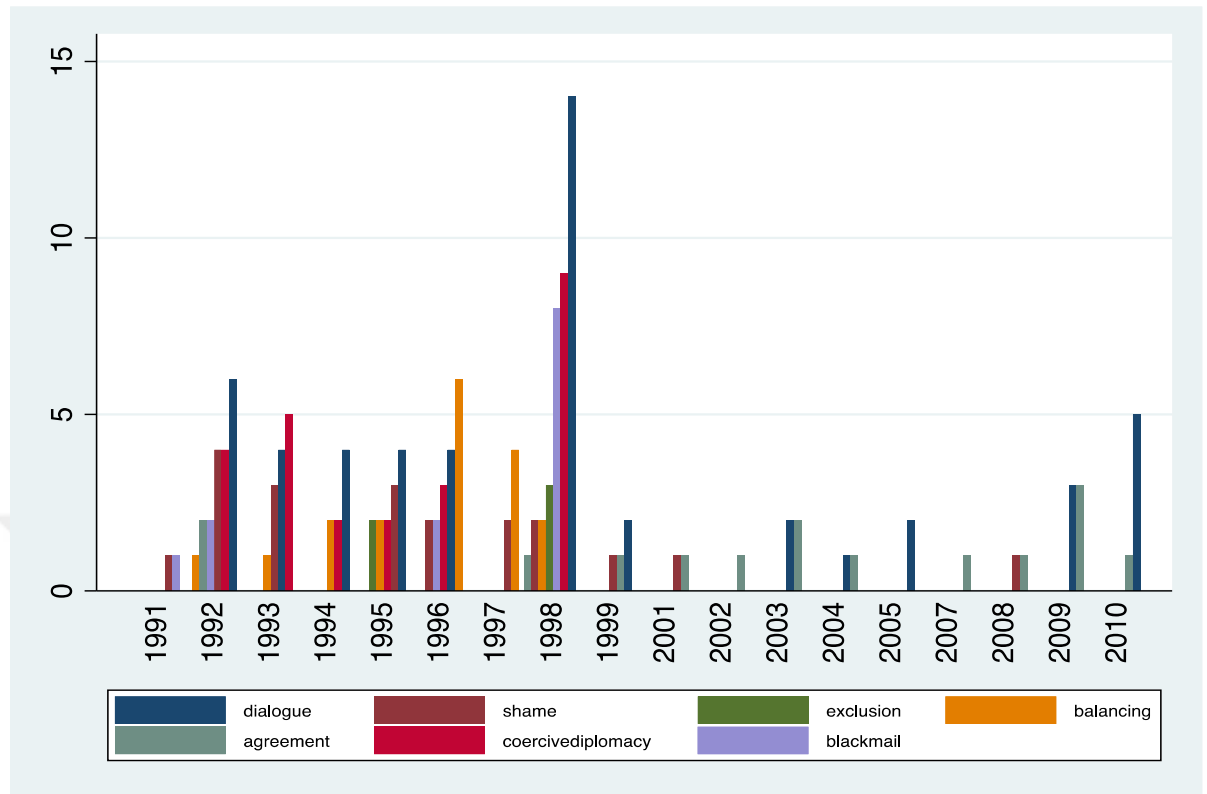
(81.06% versus 30.3%).¹⁰ Figure 7 demonstrates the trajectory of the Turkish response strategies over time.

Table 6: Response Strategies by Turkey against Syria for the Sponsorship of the PKK (1991-2010) based on the RSD.

Response Strategy	Frequency	Percent
Persuasion by Dialogue	49	37.12
Persuasion by Agreement	15	11.36
Persuasion by Shame	20	15.15
Persuasion by Exclusion	5	3.79
Persuasion by Balancing	18	13.64
Compellence as Blackmail	13	9.85
Compellence as Coercive Diplomacy	27	20.45

¹⁰ In the events dataset for a given observation, Turkish responses to the Syrian sponsorship may include more than one strategy at once. Therefore, the total percentage of coercive and non-coercive strategies do not amount to 100%.

Figure 7: The Trajectory of Turkish Response Strategies Over Time Between 1991 and 2010



3.6.1. A Combination of Persuasion and Coercion Strategies (1991-1995)

Turkish response strategies contains a mixture of coercive and non-coercive measures between 1991 and 1995. In this period, Turkey's approach reflects a milder attitude towards Syria by using all of the response strategies in a more appealing manner. The least used strategies were exclusion, agreement and blackmail strategies compared to the others. In 1991, Turkey used persuasion by shame strategy to accuse the Syrian side of the sponsorship and legitimate Turkish concerns in the eyes of both domestic and international audiences. For instance, Turgut Özal held Syria, Lebanon and Iraq responsible for harboring the PKK militants during his speech in

Diyarbakır.¹¹ He also said that “PKK positions outside will come under attack...” as a threat to Syria in addition to blaming the country for its support for the PKK, which constitutes a rare usage of blackmail strategy albeit vaguely. Persuasion by shame is used again in 1992, in the high-level talks involving İsmet Sezgin where both sides accused each other of supporting rebel groups (the PKK versus the Muslim Brotherhood). In this meeting, Turkey provided photographic evidence for its accusations proving the presence of the PKK, Dev-Sol, Revolutionary Workers and Peasants’ Party (TIRKO) and an Armenian group in the Beqaa Valley. Furthermore, Turkish intelligence provided that every year 350 young militants enter Turkey for guerilla warfare and are trained in Beqaa Valley to blame Syria.¹²

As for the agreement strategy, before the 1990s, the 1987 Security and Cooperation Agreement provided a framework for water sharing and for cooperation against the PKK (Bölükbaşı, 1993). Nevertheless, Syria’s continued assistance in the forms of intentional and de facto support for the PKK (San-Akca, 2016) invalidated the 1987 agreement in the eyes of Turkey. Later, Turkey used its right not to be bound by the agreement unless Syria terminated its support for the PKK (Bölükbaşı, 1993). A new security protocol signed after Sezgin’s visit in 1992 and this raised Turkish hopes for cooperation, as the agreement stated that Syria officially recognized the PKK as a terrorist group and promised to collaborate to end logistical support for the PKK.¹³ Besides the agreement strategy, Turkey employed dialogue strategy by the end of 1992. Bilateral and multilateral meetings between Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran took place to discuss the fate of the PKK inside Syrian territories and Northern Iraq.¹⁴

¹¹ United Press International (6 August 1991).

¹² IPS-Inter Press Service (16 April 1992). These kinds of accusations, using proofs of involvement through intelligence sources, could also be a part of coercive diplomacy strategy to signal that Turkey is watching Syria and knows how complicit the Syrian side is in developing links with the rebels.

¹³ United Press International (17 April 1992).

¹⁴ IPS-Inter Press Service (13 November 1992).

An example of coercive diplomacy can also be seen in 1992 through covert measures. Turkish President Süleyman Demirel referring to the attacks on the security officers in Bursa and İstanbul said that the attacks could be linked to Beqaa Valley and the intelligence reports also suggested that the weapons used in the attacks came from Syria.¹⁵ By providing evidence for links between the PKK and Syria, Turkey tried to delegitimize the Syrian denials of any involvement as a way to put pressure (coercive diplomacy) in addition to naming and shaming strategy. That said, the most evident form of coercive diplomacy employed in the early stages of conflict management with Syria was about leveraging water resources. The developments surrounding the Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP) made Syrians and Iraqis worried to whom Demirel responded that the water belonged to Turkey and Turkey could do whatever it wanted. Later Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin visited Syria to assure them about the water share and in return, Syrian Minister of Domestic Affairs Mohammed Herba said, “The PKK has no training camps and activities within Syria and other territories under Syrian control.”¹⁶ Lastly, Turkey started using balancing strategy through border fortification against the infiltrations from the Syrian side.¹⁷

Turkey used dialogue, shame, agreement, balancing as persuasion strategies and coercive diplomacy in 1993. Demirel visited Damascus after a positive and promising speech at the Esenboğa airport about the rapprochement between Turkey and Syria in the fight against the PKK.¹⁸ Later, the foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria and Iran met in Tehran to discuss anti-terrorist activities and the threats coming from the Kurds in Northern Iraq.¹⁹ The dialogue strategy was maintained by Turkish Prime

¹⁵ IPS-Inter Press Service (20 February 1992).

¹⁶ IPS-Inter Press Service (3 August 1992).

¹⁷ IPS-Inter Press Service (16 April 1992).

¹⁸ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (19 January 1993).

¹⁹ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (20 October 1993).

Minister Tansu Çiller's calls for closer cooperation from Syria, Iran, Iraq and Armenia to deal with the PKK during a cabinet meeting.²⁰ However, shame strategy took over again. According to *Hürriyet* newspaper in 1993, Turkey accused Syria of "airlifting the PKK militants to Armenia to enable them to infiltrate into Turkey through Iranian territory."²¹ Also, the Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin in the parliamentary meeting complained about Syria's sponsorship of the PKK and stated that the previous security protocols of 1987 and 1992 did not prevent the Syrian assistance to the rebel groups.²² Following these accusations, on November 20, 1993, and against the backdrop of developments in northern Iraq where the possibility of an independent Kurdish state alarmed both countries, Turkey and Syria signed another security protocol underlining their mutual understanding against the PKK.²³ This agreement strategy only worked temporarily as Syria undermined it with its support for the PKK.

Turkey also started using balancing strategy in 1993 in terms of alliance building rather than increasing its own security through earlier measures about border protection. Turkey had been hesitant in its interactions with Israel since they were usually regarded as suspicious by the Arab states, Syria and Iran (Bengio & Özcan, 2000). However, the oscillation between Israel and Syria gave Turkey an opportunity to balance against Syria through using Israel as viable security partner in the region. In 1993, the first official visit at the foreign ministry level was made by the Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin, to Israel (Selvi, 2003). According to the British Foreign Ministry, Çetin's visit in 1993 paved the way for intelligence cooperation between Mossad and MİT. Mossad had two branches in Turkey, and offered help

²⁰ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (30 October 1993).

²¹ United Press International (10 November 1993).

²² The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (17 November 1993).

²³ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (3 May 1993).

against the infiltrations of militants across borders and provided surveillance information about Öcalan (Oktav-Alantar, 2001).

By the end of 1993, Çiller, using water as a bargaining chip against Syria, said that Turkey would soon have an effective weapon to counterbalance Syria's hostile activities, referring to the irrigation project on the Euphrates.²⁴ Realizing the water card played by Turkey, Syria demanded a new water-use pact, but this proposal was rejected by Turkey.²⁵ Water resources provided Turkey with a "carrot and stick" approach as part of coercive diplomacy. Additionally, verbal warnings by Turkish leaders constituted another form of coercive diplomacy. Çiller on TV warned Syria and other countries that assisted the PKK and that they should think twice about whether they risked being the enemies of Turkey.²⁶ Çiller made a similar warning a few months later towards countries that harbor the PKK.²⁷ She also sent a special emissary to Damascus to stop the PKK militants coming across Syria to Turkey and warned that if Syria fails to do so, the relations between the two states could be in danger.²⁸

As part of dialogue strategy, in 1993, diplomatic talks began ramping up again to discuss the extradition of the leader of the PKK,²⁹ and a month later, the foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Syria met for a 2-day security summit to discuss the regional problems.³⁰ Later, Çiller visited Israel and referred to the strategic relations between the two states as evolving as this visit resulted in several agreements including combatting terrorism. Among these agreements, Çiller emphasized

²⁴ IPS-Inter Press Service (19 November 1993).

²⁵ Associated Press Worldstream (5 February 1994).

²⁶ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (21 July 1993).

²⁷ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (4 November 1993).

²⁸ United Press International (2 November 1993).

²⁹ The Associated Press (9 January 1994).

³⁰ Associated Press Worldstream (4 February 1994).

cooperation on water-related projects such as investments in Southern Anatolia Project (GAP) which received a lot of criticism from Syria since its initiation (Selvi, 2003). Along with the security agreements, the water-related projects and plans that allow Israeli participation as well constitute evidence for the response strategy of balancing against Syria by Turkey because of its particular touch on the nerve of water for Syria. In addition, in 1994 two developments took place that exemplify the adoption of balancing strategy. First, the agreement on security and secrecy with Israel for intelligence sharing in May and second, the memorandum of mutual understanding and cooperation to fight against terrorism in November provided advantages for Turkey against Syria (Bengio & Özcan, 2000).

Dialogue strategy was maintained in 1995. Diplomatic attempts at discussing security cooperation between the two states were discussed firstly in a meeting between a Turkish delegation headed by General Director of Police, Mehmet Ağar and Syrian Interior Minister Mohammed Harba,³¹ and secondly during Ağar's visit to Syria following the Syrian arrest of several PKK militants who had connections with drug trafficking. This development was welcomed by the Turkish government and regarded as a show of goodwill by Syria.³² By early September 1995, the foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria, and Iran met in Tehran for the seventh time since the end of the Gulf War; giving Turkey yet another opportunity to communicate its security concerns about the PKK.³³

In the National Press Club in Washington in 1995, when Mesut Yılmaz said that the PKK is supported by the Syrian government despite the 1987 agreement, which is a continuation of shame strategy. Mesut Yılmaz stated that the agreement

³¹ Associated Press Worldstream (3 January 1995).

³² The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (3 February 1995).

³³ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (7 September 1995).

suggested that in exchange for fresh water to Syria, Syria was to pledge to eliminate guerillas acting against Turkey. He said “The agreement didn’t work. We gave water, but the Syrians didn’t carry out their obligations.”³⁴ Moreover, one of rare instances of exclusion strategy was seen in 1995 against Syria. Turkey used exclusion strategy to prevent linking the water and terrorism issues. Since Syria used the PKK as leverage for its demands of increasing the water share coming from rivers originating from Turkey, Turkey wanted to separate these issues from the sponsorship problem. Turkish Foreign Ministry said, “We make no connection between the two issues, nor would we allow others to make such a connection... accepting such a link would be bowing to blackmail.” as a rejection of the Syrian foreign minister’s proposal to make an agreement on water and terrorism simultaneously.³⁵

As part of the strategy of coercive diplomacy, cross-border military operations by Turkey are rare against Syria compared to for instance, in Northern Iraq. Cross-border attacks usually make the sponsoring states anxious and feel indirectly threatened by the security forces of the target states even if the sponsors give permission for these operations. In 1994, a military offensive against the PKK militants necessitated strikes inside the Syrian territories. Turkey informed Syria about this operation.³⁶ Furthermore, in 1995, Western intelligence analysts provided that during the search-and-destroy mission by Turkish security forces inside Northern Iraq against the PKK, Syria allowed the militants (possibly Öcalan, too) to cross the border from Iraq to Syria despite the warnings from the US not to do so.³⁷ Turkey wanted to put pressure on Syria by intelligence sharing with allied states while also using alliance politics as a balancing strategy to persuade Syria. Earlier, in May 1994,

³⁴ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (22 March 1995).

³⁵ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (16 January 1995).

³⁶ Associated Press Worldstream (8 January 1994).

³⁷ United Press International (7 April 1995).

Turkey signed an agreement with Israel to share intelligence and in November 1994, a memorandum of understanding to combat terrorism, which further exemplify the balancing strategy of Turkey (Altunışık, 2000; Bengio-Özcan, 2000).

By and large, the first phase of conflict management through Turkish response strategies reflects a softer approach towards Syria (compared to the second phase). The most frequently used strategies were dialogue, shame and coercive diplomacy. Balancing strategy during this period was used in a less pronounced way. That is, balancing strategy was mentioned as more of an implication rather than an outspoken strategic calculation by Turkey to persuade Syria for ending its support for the PKK. The statements from both Turkish and the Israeli sides also emphasize the peaceful nature of their alignment instead of threatening Syria.

3.6.2. Gradual Turning of the Screw and A Happy Ending (1996-1998)

Together with persuasion strategies, Turkey started giving harsher responses to Syria as the previous responses did not work to persuade or coerce Syrian to abandon its support for the PKK. The most frequently used strategies in this phase are dialogue, coercive diplomacy and blackmail for conflict management. Dialogue was necessary to deescalate the October crisis took place in 1998 which brought the two states to the brink of war. In the beginning, dialogue strategy included mediation of Iran and Egypt to restore peace between Turkey and Syria. Coercive diplomacy included in this phase examples of tacit ultimatum, ultimatum and the overall process of coercive diplomacy could be called as a gradual turning of the screw to increase the pressure on Syria. Finally, blackmail strategy during the last stage of escalation of conflict between Turkey and Syria gave an upper hand to Turkey to compel Syria by

signaling the willingness to go to war if Syria did not comply. Consequently, Adana Agreement brought an end to the hostilities stemming from the PKK sponsorship.

Firstly, in this phase, a huge accusation against Syria as part of naming and shaming was made when Turkey seized a truck full of arms and ammunition going from Tehran through Syria to Lebanon, supplying the PKK in 1996.³⁸ Later, Turkey also accused Syria of diverting attention from its sponsorship activities by exploiting the water issue and trying to raise the topic as an international issue.³⁹ During 1996, Turkey and Israel signed agreements for military training cooperation, defense industry cooperation, and modernization of Turkish jets that both increases the capabilities of Turkey and provides an ally against Syria. I consider these agreements as extensions of balancing strategy adopted by Turkey to respond to Syrian sponsorship of the PKK. 1996 was the year when the most frequent application of balancing strategy occurred. After 1996, there is a downward trajectory in its adoption against Syria up until 1998. Also, balancing strategy took a more strategic turn in this phase with a harsher rhetoric against Syria. Additionally, balancing strategy might have taken the form of covertly assisting a rebel group that targeted Syria. Syria accused Turkey of harboring the Muslim Brotherhood inside Turkish territories. In the 1980s, Turkey turned a blind eye to the activities of Muslim Brotherhood inside its territories (Özkan, 2019). According to some accounts, Assad warned Turkey about his concerns in relation to Muslim Brotherhood since at the time, the CIA and Mossad were also supporting the group against Syria. Moreover, allegedly, the Muslim Brotherhood might had been used by MIT to bomb some areas where Öcalan stayed in Syria in 1996 as a warning to the Syrian government (Özkan, 2019).

³⁸ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (24 January 1996).

³⁹ United Press International (15 February 1996).

Coercive diplomacy during 1996 could be exemplified by Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz's ultimatum to Syria to end its sponsorship of the PKK. Witnessing the highest moments of the Turkish-Israeli military partnership, Syria mobilized its troops along its border with Turkey. Turkey responded with a blackmail strategy to the Syrian deployment and warned Syria that Turkey would use force if Damascus did not back down (Ghariani, 2024). In retaliation, on 20 June 1996 Turkish blackmail strategy included show of force on the border with a wartime state of alert.⁴⁰

In 1997, the news media projected Turkish-Israeli cooperation as counterbalancing by Turkey against Syria and depicted the state of affairs as "...unprecedented and open display of Turkish-Israeli military cooperation"⁴¹ as part of Turkish balancing strategy against Syria.⁴² In addition, the statements of Israeli defense minister Mordechai in 1997 in an interview reflects the nature of Turkish response strategy of balancing against Syria. He stated that if countries like Syria uses violence against Turkey, they would face a united front implying Israeli support for Turkey (Gresh, 1998). A simultaneous use of shame strategy is reflected when the Turkish general staff accused Syria, Iran, Armenia, Greece, Cyprus and Serbia of providing weaponry to the PKK that shot down two Turkish helicopters in Northern Iraq.⁴³

⁴⁰ United Press International (20 June 1996).

⁴¹ IPS- Inter Press Service (18 September 1997).

⁴² Even though the partnership between Israel and Turkey is not considered a formal traditional alliance, some scholars argue that the nature of the agreements signed between the two states indicates a very strong strategic relationship equivalent to an alliance (see, Kibaroglu (2002). Plus, Turkish alignment with Israel could be seen as a counterbalancing move against Syria and Greece (both are sponsors of the PKK) since an agreement between Syria and Greece in July 1995 provided Greece access to Syrian air and naval bases, which alarmed Turkey at the time (see, Mufti (1998)).

⁴³ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (6 June 1997).

3.6.2.1. *Crossing the Rubicon and the Final Countdown: The October Crisis of 1998*

Turkey used all of the strategies outlined in the previous chapter in 1998. This comprehensive approach to respond to Syria together with the severity of coercive measures implied that Turkey wanted a lasting solution to the problem of Syrian sponsorship of the PKK. In early 1998, Turkey accused Syria again of using the PKK as a bargaining chip for water and territorial disputes (Hatay) again.⁴⁴ A joint Israeli-Turkish-US naval exercise was conducted in January 1998 which reflected Turkish balancing strategy against Syria and its allies (Ghariani, 2024). In August 1998, Turkey's exclusion strategy played a role when Turkey rejected a Syrian proposal to meet as a tripartite technical committee on sharing water. Turkey stressed that Syria should first deal with the problem of sponsoring the PKK before any meeting to take place in the future.⁴⁵

The most frequent use of coercive diplomacy took place during the October crisis in 1998. One can identify three variants of coercive diplomacy in this period. These are tacit ultimatum, ultimatum and the gradual turning of the screw that defines the whole process leading to the crisis.⁴⁶ When Turkish officials, in the National Security Council's meeting, discussed the steps to be taken against Syria for its sponsorship of the PKK, Turkey gave a tacit ultimatum to Syria. In the meeting, it was decided that Turkey would "send one last diplomatic warning to Damascus to cease supporting the PKK. If Syria fails to comply, Ankara will give the necessary answer, and reserves its right to retaliation." On the next day, Demirel's remarks on

⁴⁴ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (17 February 1998).

⁴⁵ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (25 August 1998).

⁴⁶ For variants of coercive diplomacy, see George (1991).

October 1, 1998, also qualify for a tacit ultimatum when he said, “I announce to the entire world that we reserve our right to retaliate against Syria, which has not given up its hostile stance despite all our warnings and peaceful initiatives... Our patience is running out”.⁴⁷

Moreover, the tone of accusations (shaming strategy) has already become harsher starting from 1996 but in 1998, these accusations were clearer and signaled an urgency that needs to be addressed. Hence, the Turkish ambassador to Syria, Yaşar Yakış, during the second mediation tour of Hosni Mubarak told the reporters that Syria was a threat to Turkish security due to its sponsorship of the PKK terrorism in early October 1998.⁴⁸ Süleyman Demirel reiterated these accusations when he met with Mubarak in Ankara and later Mesut Yılmaz on TV blamed Syria for being “the center of terrorism in the Middle East...”⁴⁹

As part of the coercive diplomacy strategy Turkey sent an ultimatum on October 8 by giving Syria 45 days to comply with Turkish demands. Turkey warned Syria that it would encounter military action if it failed to extradite Öcalan and end its harboring of the rebel group. As part of this strategy, Turkey also pursued a diplomatic offensive worldwide to explain its harsh stance against Syria starting with the UNSC and the European Parliament.⁵⁰ This study argues that the whole process of coercive diplomacy in which Turkey managed the October crisis could be viewed as a ‘gradual turning of the screw’ type of coercive diplomacy. From the beginning, Turkey wanted to coerce Syria into stop harboring the PKK by putting diplomatic pressure. Afterward, Turkey incrementally increased the coercive threats on Syria with the decision taken by the parliament and the National Security Council.

⁴⁷ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (1 October 1998).

⁴⁸ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (4 October 1998).

⁴⁹ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (6 October 1998)

⁵⁰ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (8 October 1998).

However, the gradual turning of the screw as the last attempt of Turkish coercive diplomacy, had to be replaced by the response strategy of blackmail since Syria had not complied yet.

Exclusion strategy was also used during the October crisis in 1998 when Turkey rejected the Syrian demands to talk by a statement from the Foreign Ministry saying that “at the moment Turkey wants to see whether Syria has put an end to her support to terrorism.”⁵¹ The statement also included that “the only issue in Turkey’s agenda is support given to the Kurdish rebels”⁵² after suspending the security and cooperation meetings with Syria that were conventionally held every three months (Altunışık, 1998). I think, Turkish insistence in these refusals signaled that Turkey is quite serious in its demands for the extradition of Öcalan and the termination of the sponsorship of rebels. The exclusion strategy coupled with other measures signaled an uncompromising attitude from Turkey.

Blackmail strategy was the last piece of coercion strategy that paved the way for ending the October crisis of 1998 which terminated the more than a decade-long Syrian sponsorship of the PKK.⁵³ Turkey used blackmail strategy in the form of a ‘show of force’ on October 3, 1998. Turkish jets from Malatya and Diyarbakır carried out low-altitude flights along the Syrian border with orders to retaliate if Syrians made any attack. A senior military official said that border maneuvers by the Turkish troops would go ahead if Syria maintained its hostility against Turkey. The blackmail strategy was also adopted verbally by Demirel who said “I am not just warning Syria, but the world. This cannot go on... a neighboring country cannot harbor bandits

⁵¹ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (16 October 1998).

⁵² The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (16 October 1998).

⁵³ San-Akca’s coding of intentional and de facto support years (till the end of 2010) for the Turkey-PKK-Syria triad shows that after 1998, there is no intentional support from Syria for the PKK. Only for the years 1999 and 2000, there is de facto support (unintentional/rebel’s selection of supporter states to acquire help) coded in the form of safe haven for members. For further information, see San-Akca (2016).

within its territory and then let them into Turkey.” He warned about Ankara’s right to self-defense. He maintained that “The matter is serious. Turkey has suffered a lot up until now, it does not want to do so anymore.” Also, the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* wrote that “all soldiers have had their leaves canceled and those who had been on leave were ordered to return to their units.” *Milliyet* newspaper added that soldiers from other parts of the region were dispatched to the Syrian border. Turkish jets and helicopters carried out reconnaissance flights along the Syrian border and the total number of troops was 10,000.⁵⁴ The following day, another news source reported that the Turkish army devised a three-phased plan. The first attack is planned on Syrian Air Force radar installations, air bases and missile positions. The second attack is planned to be made on the house of Öcalan in Beqaa Valley. Phase three planned to attack power stations. Foreign Minister İsmail Cem stated Turkey took all the possible steps to solve this problem diplomatically but Syria blocked every effort.⁵⁵ These forms of verbal blackmail exemplified a ‘threat to use force’.

Turkish Army Chief General Kırıkoğlu described the situation between Turkey and Syria as a state of undeclared war since both states deployed their troops on the border. Demirel said, “I declare to the international community that we retain the right to retaliate against Syria, which remains hostile to Turkey despite our peaceful efforts and repeated warnings.”⁵⁶ The strategy of blackmail reached a state of final countdown when Mesut Yılmaz said that as a final warning to Syria “we are running out of patience... and what we expect are not dry responses, but the appropriate steps to be taken.”⁵⁷ He also said in his address to the parliament that if

⁵⁴ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (4 October 1998).

⁵⁵ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (5 October 1998).

⁵⁶ IPS-Inter Press Service (5 October 1998).

⁵⁷ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (6 October 1998).

there is need for war, Turkey should make preparations for it.⁵⁸ After, he warned Syria again “Unless Syria collects its wits about it, it will be a holy duty for us to bring the world crushing on its head.”⁵⁹ Similarly, Demirel on October 19, visited Hatay and said “We tried all the peaceful methods and we tried them with patience... The Turkish nation cannot stand this pain anymore... Our state and our nation are powerful enough to abolish all kinds of evil that troubles our country. This has to be known by everyone.”⁶⁰

Eventually, the blackmail strategy worked by showing that Turkey’s threats were not empty, and Turkey could readily engage in military attacks and was serious about its demands. The blackmail strategy showed that Turkey was willing to take the risk of war by escalating the problem of sponsorship. The blackmail strategy implied that Turkey preferred the end of sponsorship more than avoiding a war. Blackmail in the Turkish case also demonstrated examples of compellence by risk and compellence by denial since Turkey wanted to increase the future costs of non-compliance for Syria (risk) and prevent Syria from supporting the PKK through the prospect of a war and hence prevent Syria from gaining benefits from the sponsorship (denial).⁶¹

Before the escalation of the conflict during the October crisis, there were several attempts to use dialogue through bilateral talks in July between foreign ministry officials⁶² and mediation efforts by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak,⁶³ Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi⁶⁴ and the Organization for Islamic Conference (OIC) to diffuse the tension between Turkey and Syria.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (9 October 1998).

⁵⁹ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (11 October 1998).

⁶⁰ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (19 October 1998).

⁶¹ For coercion strategies of risk and denial, see Byman, Waxman, and Larson (1999).

⁶² Deutsche Presse-Agentur (1 July 1998).

⁶³ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (6 October 1998).

⁶⁴ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (8 October 1998).

⁶⁵ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (15 October 1998).

A two-day security meeting between Turkey and Syria in Adana led to the signing of the Adana Agreement on October 20, 1998.⁶⁶ This agreement is considered to be a turning point for solving the long-standing issues of Hatay, water share and the PKK sponsorship between Turkey and Syria (Ataman, 2018). Syria accepted the Turkish demands and Turkey also wanted to ensure the monitoring of this agreement with a military presence at the border.⁶⁷ As another ultimatum, Turkey gave Syria a two-week deadline to cease its support for the PKK by closing the rebel camps in Syria and Beqaa Valley.⁶⁸ As part of the coercive diplomacy strategy, Turkey showed goodwill by offering a positive inducement for Syrian compliance through postponing the military maneuvers on the Syrian border and giving Syria more time to crack down on rebels.⁶⁹ Syria's designation of the PKK as a terrorist group and expulsion of Öcalan were seen as a clear sign of improving relations that followed Turkey's employment of dialogue and agreement strategies (Ataman, 2018).

3.6.3. Persuasion Strategies to Maintain the Status Quo (1999-2010)

Turkey started using the dialogue strategy toward Syria more often than before together with the response strategy of agreement after the Adana Agreement. Another notable development in this phase is the abandonment of the balancing strategy. Based on the analysis made in this study, it seems that Turkey was not using balancing compared to the period before 1998. This implies that balancing is often used when the relations are tense and compliance is not achieved yet from the other side. Likewise, coercive diplomacy and blackmail strategies are not visible after 1998.

⁶⁶ Associated Press International (20 October 1998).

⁶⁷ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (21 October 1998).

⁶⁸ Associated Press International (23 October 1998).

⁶⁹ Associated Press International (28 October 1998).

Only few instances of shame strategy were seen between 1999 and 2010. It seems that during this period, Turkish use of persuasion strategies was to maintain the positive state of affairs with Syria which denounced the PKK and terminated its support for the organization after 1998. In particular, agreement strategy increased vividly after 1998, in comparison to the others in a more cooperative atmosphere. Turkey used this strategy to appease the Syrian side to ensure their long-term cooperation by offering incentives through the agreements. With the normalization of relations between Turkey and Syria after the Adana agreement, the Turkish strategy of dialogue included diplomatic visits, talks, plans for cooperation, joint press conferences, and joint military exercises between the years 1999 and 2010.

Turkey's dialogue strategy was commenced with a Turkish military delegation's visit to Syria in February 1999.⁷⁰ Moreover, Turkey and Syria decided to boost their economic and commercial relations following the visit from Syrian deputy Prime Minister Salim Yassin in March 1999.⁷¹ In 2000, high-level visits between the two states continued and were culminated in an agreement to fight illegal immigration in 2001 (Oztig, 2019). Additionally, in 2002, a military cooperation accord was signed between Turkey and Syria (Oztig, 2019). Later, in 2003, the interior ministers of Turkey and Syria signed a security agreement to fight terrorism, drug, people smuggling and organized crime.⁷² These agreements indicate that Turkish and Syrian relations developed further not only diplomatically and economically but also in security cooperation such that in 2007 and 2009, they conducted a joint military operation inside Syria against the PKK militants, and Syria supported the Turkish military incursions inside Iraq (Oztig, 2019).

⁷⁰ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (24 February 1999).

⁷¹ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (23 March 1999).

⁷² Deutsche Presse-Agentur (17 December 2003).

Turkey signed a free-trade agreement with Syria in 2004 during Erdoğan's visit to Damascus. Following this visit, Syrian court jailed a PKK member which must have been received well by Turkey.⁷³ In the next year, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad visited Turkey and held a press conference with the Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer.⁷⁴ In 2007, a memorandum of greater cooperation for security was signed between Turkey and Syria in addition to a free-trade agreement. In 2009, Turkey and Syria signed a political declaration that enabled the foundation of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) and 50 (56 new agreements in another source⁷⁵) agreements and memoranda of understanding were signed concerning security, trade, water, culture, politics, health, environment, and transportation in addition to agreeing to create a visa-free regime. More importantly, Syrian security forces stopped and detained nearly 200 members of the PKK, showing military cooperation with Turkey.⁷⁶ In 2010, at the HLSCC meetings, there were 13 agreements signed between Turkey and Syria with regard to trade, tourism and investment (Oztig, 2019). A joint military exercise was made in April 2010 which received criticism from Israel with whom Turkey's relations were problematic already.⁷⁷ Lastly, by the end of 2010, foreign ministers of both states signed a cooperation agreement to fight terrorism.⁷⁸

From the end of the October crisis in 1998 till the Arab Spring in 2011, Turkey maintained good relations with Syria, adopting the persuasion-by-agreement strategy that ensured Syrian cooperation against the PKK. Between 2003 and 2007, Syria handed over 73 PKK militants in addition to the previously mentioned joint

⁷³ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (22 December 2004).

⁷⁴ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (13 April 2005).

⁷⁵ Deutsche Presse-Agentur (21 December 2009).

⁷⁶ ANSamed (6 May 2009).

⁷⁷ ANSamed (26 April 2010).

⁷⁸ The Xinhua General Overseas News Service (21 December 2010).

operations and cooperative relations against the PKK in Syria and Iraq (Oztig, 2019). Between 1999 and 2010, Turkey used the response strategy of agreement to increase the benefits of Syrian cooperation for the Syrian side through diversifying the content of the agreements in order to maintain the status quo and minimize the prospects of sponsorship.

3.7. DID TURKEY MEET THE SUCCESS CONDITIONS OF COERCION?

Turkey used *serious and credible threats* to intervene militarily if its demands for ending the sponsorship were not met. Moreover, on numerous occasions, Turkey utilized *positive inducements* by showing its goodwill on sharing the waters as well as its commitment to approach the disputes between them with diplomatic engagements to better communicate its demands. At the same time, Turkey carried a *stick* through shaming Syrian sponsorship of the PKK, counterbalancing against Syria through Israel, leveraging water resources, shuttle diplomacy to convince Arab leaders of Syrian sponsorship causing the main problem, and getting US support for its aggressive tone against Syria. Turkey had domestic *support*⁷⁹ for executing its offensive activities against Syria, which is reflected in the newspaper columns demanding airstrikes against Syria. Turkish leadership demonstrated a consistent policy that started with dialogues and but also adopted coercion strategies to show Turkey's resilience.

The degree of *urgency* for the Turkish demands was also explicit in both the 45-day ultimatum given by the Turkish government and the deployment of troops along the border, which signaled the gravity of the situation. Therefore, Turkish

⁷⁹ For an overview of conditions favoring a successful coercion, see Viggo Jakobsen, 2020.

actions against Syria qualify as a successful coercion occasion to deal with rebel sponsorship. Since the literature does not still have a success criterion for a successful non-coercive/persuasion strategy to influence the other party, I cannot make an evaluation here.

On the other hand, based on the typology of non-coercive response strategies, I propose some contextual conditions that may increase interstate dialogue and understanding for the initiation of a non-coercive response strategy aiming for the termination of sponsorship. These are lack of rivalry, presence of formal alliance between target and supporter states, common ideational norms (e.g., regime type), domestic stability inside the target and supporter states, existence of mediators (e.g., OSCE Minsk Group's involvement during Nagorno-Karabagh conflict in), existence of monitoring arrangements inside target states (e.g., UN peacekeeping missions), and good economic conditions to name a few.

3.8. CONCLUSION

Turkey adopted all of the response strategies identified in this study to counter the Syrian sponsorship of the PKK, generally starting with a milder tone, which escalated into harsher measures. Turkey at times used *serious and credible threats* to intervene militarily when its demands for ending the sponsorship were not met, but also utilized *positive inducements* by showing its goodwill on sharing the waters and diplomatic engagement on numerous occasions for better communication of its demands--though also carrying a *stick* through its renunciation of Syrian sponsorship of the PKK, friendly relations with Israel, leveraging water share, shuttle diplomacy to convince Arab leaders of Syrian misconduct in foreign affairs, and getting US support for its aggressive tone against Syria.

This case study reflects the same trend witnessed in the RSD showing the comparative abundance of non-coercive response strategies used by target states to end sponsorship than coercive ones. This pattern indicates that target states might not want to jeopardize their relations with supporter states by escalating the existing problem of sponsorship into a more intractable one and hence they prefer more non-coercive approaches of conflict management, particularly at the earlier stages of their interactions. State sponsorship of terrorism as a foreign policy objective for supporter states is already an approach to dispute that operates under the radar. Therefore, the frequent use of mostly non-coercive strategies by targets follows the same logic as a matching behavior.

The Turkish case also demonstrates that the response strategies were ‘successful’ because Turkey employed a multi-dimensional strategy including diverse responses to solve different aspects of the sponsorship dispute. Turkish strategies endeavored to resolve the conflict by adopting an incrementalist approach that gradually evolved from milder to harsher responses. This study shows that non-coercive responses were as important as coercive ones, especially to keep the dispute contained and controlled in an efficient manner. Consequently, there is no one silver bullet for target states against rebel sponsorship by their adversaries. This study argues that target states should utilize all forms of response strategies in a manner that is multidimensional, incrementalist, and giving adequate attention to non-coercive responses.

Third-parties to the conflict such as Israel and the US sometimes escalated the conflict because of their rivalry against Syria, but this situation also gave an advantage to Turkey with the military and intelligence support from the third-party states which threatened the Syrian side. Then, compatible interests between the parties

involved in the crisis might ease the chances for the target state's success in ending the sponsorship. Turkey, the US and Israel aligned on matters of security within the region, and in particular Turkish-Israeli security cooperation at the time provided a consistent bloc to solve the crisis in Turkey's favor, providing an opening for Turkey to signal credible threats. Future research could explore how target states respond to sponsors in different contexts. Unlike the Turkey-Syria-PKK triad, in which Turkey and Syria are rivals, prospective studies could investigate target behavior when the sponsoring states are non-rivals or even allies.



CHAPTER 4. HOW DO TARGET STATES RESPOND TO STATE SPONSORSHIP OF REBEL GROUPS? DETERMINANTS OF COERCIVE RESPONSE

“Successful threats are those that do not have to be carried out.” (Schelling, 1966, 10).

4.1. INTRODUCTION

How do target states respond to state supporters of rebel groups? Which factors are influential when a target state responds to a sponsor that provides support for rebels? External support to rebels threatens a state targeted by those rebels, by providing them with troops, safe havens, weapons, training, logistics, and many other forms of help (Byman, 2005; San Akca, 2016; Sawyer, Cunningham, and Reed, 2017). External support strengthens rebel groups, and stronger rebels pose more threats to target states because they become more likely to attain their goals via sponsorship (Aronson et al., 2015; Qiu, 2022). Previous literature on the responses to state sponsorship of terrorism has focused on intentional forms of support while tending to overlook the de facto support of these groups. Ignoring de facto support has led to a limited definition of state sponsorship, which usually implies just intentional/active/direct support. However, recent studies have shown that external

support could also be de facto (San-Akca, 2016). The difference between these two types of support is the agency. Intentional support refers to the explicit choice by a supporter state to help a terrorist organization for strategic and/or ideological reasons, while de facto support occurs when a rebel group takes the initiative in seeking out which state to receive help (San Akça, 2016). This conceptual development has not yet been transferred to studies of responses to state sponsorship of terrorism.

Extant literature is also limited to mostly the US or US-led international responses to states that are designated as sponsors of terrorism (Zoubir, 2002; Collins, 2004; Choi & Luo, 2013; Wang, Shen, and Han, 2022) although many other states have directly or indirectly been involved in aiding terrorist groups, and individual states have responded to the sponsorship in various forms other than the widely studied responses of use of force and sanctions (Smith, 1989; Collins, 2004; Waisberg, 2009; Lubell, 2010; Hakimi, 2015; Henderson, 2018). The study of target state responses fails to demonstrate the general patterns followed by target states in response to sponsorship.

Target states would arguably have different levels of threat perception stemming from various support types as well as different support levels. In its fight against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) the Turkish government response to de facto supporter countries like Lebanon or Belgium for allowing training camps and offices or safe havens for the leaders of the group, has been mostly non-coercive, such as criticisms or condemnation (San Akca, 2016; Agence, France Presse, 2005). On the other hand, the Turkish response to Iraq and Syria (intentional supporters) has included threatening elements such as warning to use military force in the Syrian case and actions like cross-border military operations in Northern Iraq (Facts on File World News Digest, 1998; Associated Press Online, 2007). Thus, target states may

behave differently when the support level changes from low (e.g. provision of offices) to very high (e.g., provision of troops or training camps) levels.

Furthermore, the strategic relationship between target and supporter state matters when target states react against the supporter states. Rival states would likely differ from allied states when target states react to state support of terrorism. The animosity between Pakistan and India led each state to support the rebels threatening the rival state, Pakistan and India have given coercive responses to one another in the forms of threats and instances of border clashes, assassination attempts with covert action, and even troop deployment along the borders (The Economist, 2001; Agence France Presse 1995; BBC, 2002; Agence France Presse, 2001). On the other hand, even though the US and Germany are formal allies, Germany was chosen by al-Qaeda for fundraising activities and as a safe haven for its members. This de facto help has only incited non-coercive diplomatic responses from the US, which resulted in cooperation to target the terrorists inside Germany (The Bulletin's Frontrunner, 2001).

I contend that target states are more likely to respond coercively if the support type is intentional and targets are more likely to use non-coercive responses if the support type is de facto. Moreover, I argue that support level is another determinant that impacts the severity of target responses. Lastly, the responses from target states are more likely to be coercive if the supporter states are rivals, and less likely to be coercive if target and supporter states have a formal alliance. I test these arguments with the newly collected Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD). I use triadic cases where a rebel group received intentional and/or de facto support in the NAG dataset (ver. 2015) (San Akca, 2016). I analyze 455 triadic cases between 1991 and 2010. These triadic cases included 58 different target states, 150 different terrorist groups,

and 102 different supporter states. This study provides an explanation of the consequences of external support by accounting for the variation in target state responses. The analysis shows that target states react to state support of rebel groups in coercive and non-coercive forms containing diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, covert and no response categories.

In this essay, I adopted a broadened definition of external support in both active and passive forms to account for the responses of target states toward the sponsors. Unlike extant studies, I aim to provide a generalizable account of target state behavior by analyzing a large number of cases to explain the behavior of target states faced with rebels that are externally supported. This is the first study to account for target state behavior against state supporters of rebels with a large number of cases and original data while also adopting a comprehensive definition of state sponsorship. By exploring various responses, this study takes the first step to identify which responses could be effective in the support termination. Hence, the implications of this study could yield policy prescriptions as well.

First, this study points out that a broader definition of state sponsorship that considers unintentional forms of support must be recognized because target states respond to de facto sponsorship of rebels as well. Second, this study fills the lacuna in the literature where the response patterns of target states are understudied by using an original dataset to explore various response types and their coerciveness. Third, this study identifies the determinants of target state responses as support type (intentional vs. de facto), support level and the strategic interaction between states. These findings could serve policymakers by providing a comprehensive framework for responses as a toolkit on how to terminate state sponsorship of terrorism through their foreign policies.

4.2. STATE SPONSORSHIP OF REBEL GROUPS

State sponsorship could be defined as the outcome of a selection process made by states to support a terrorist group and/or a selection process made by a rebel group to receive support from a state sponsor (San-Akca, 2016). This definition has evolved the study of state sponsorship by giving agency for the rebels as well, rather than assuming a principal-agent relationship between a state and the rebel group as the proxy, which has been widely treated as the explanation of state support of rebels in the literature (Byman & Kreps, 2010; Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Bapat, 2012; Payne, 2012; Berkowitz, 2018). Previous research assumes that sponsorship is occurring intentionally by neglecting the many instances of passive support of rebels, such as turning a blind eye to the rebel activities or limited state capacity to eliminate the presence of rebels (Collins, 2014; Byman, 2020). Some studies distinguish between sponsor or host states (Bapat et al., 2015), while few have addressed this issue by conceptualizing passive, indirect, and active direct forms of support (Byman, 2007). Recently, the incapacity of the supporter state/unintentional support as another form of support in addition to active and passive forms is recognized (Carter & Pant, 2019; Byman, 2020) but the empirical works have emphasized on intentional forms of support with the exception of San-Akca (2016).

This conceptual confusion about what sponsorship entails in terms of intentional vs. passive support necessitates a clear definition of sponsorship that does not dismiss the agency of terrorist groups. Recently, San-Akca's extensive work on the intentional and de facto forms of support types has filled the gap to identify which sponsors have lent which type of support to whom at the expense of which state, showing each triadic case in a respective year (2016) through the Non-State Armed Groups Dataset (NAG). The NAG dataset covers more rebel groups and time frames

than similar datasets such as the External Support Dataset (ESD), which is useful for current support information that also includes state support to states in the fight against terrorist groups and non-state actors as external supporters, but ignores unintentional support (Meier et al., 2023). Focusing only on the intentional support of rebels when studying state sponsorship limits our understanding of the various behaviors of target states. Since target states react to the sponsoring or even just being neutral toward the terrorist groups by external states, it is of paramount importance for the targets to distinguish between intentional and de facto support types when developing a response.

The studies of state sponsorship have focused on group-level studies, investigating which groups are more likely to receive the sponsorship (Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Carter, 2012), how sponsorship affects the group survival and capabilities (Carter, 2012), the influence of the sponsorship on rebel group's civilian targeting or non-violent tactics (Wood, 2010; Salehyan, Siroky & Wood, 2014; Petrova, 2019; Carter, 2022). Sponsor-related studies have explored the likely reasons and motivations of the support for rebels such as strategic interests, ideational affinity, or domestic incentives (Byman & Kreps, 2010; Payne, 2012; San-Akca, 2016, Qiu, 2022), the benefits of using the terrorist groups for sponsor's dirty works (Carson, 2016) or for increasing the bargaining power of sponsor over the target (Bapat, 2012), as well as potential risks for sponsors in terms of international condemnation, retaliatory sponsorship of terrorism and domestic disapproval in addition to agency loss and shirking when the rebels divert from the objectives set out by the supporter states (Berkowitz, 2018). Furthermore, a sponsor's motivation for conflict, constraints against open conflict between target and sponsor, and the plausible deniability (non-accountability), alongside the low expenses associated with

sponsorship compared to direct confrontation with another state, all create favorable conditions for state support of rebels (Byman, 2007; Payne, 2012; Khan & Zhaoying, 2020).

Finally, the role of external support on conflict termination is another strand of research, analyzing the impact of different support types on civil war termination (Sawyer, Cunningham & Reed, 2017). Earlier research on third-party intervention has mostly focused on direct military intervention and found mixed results in terms of conflict duration and termination (Regan, 2002, Akcinaroglu & Radziszewski, 2005; Cunningham, 2010). Diplomatic, economic, and military interventions have also been discussed by few scholars (Corbetta & Dixon, 2005; Regan & Aydin, 2006). Studies on target state behavior despite the external support from rebel groups are comparatively lower than sponsor-related or group-level studies. In fact, the target state response toward state support of terrorist groups is the least researched area in the literature (Carter & Pant, 2019). This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the target state behavior while also considering a broader definition of external support to rebels. By doing so, there could be more variation in target state responses to comprehend why target states behave in the way they do, as a next step.

4.3. RESPONSES OF TARGET STATES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing studies have looked at the responses by the US, international responses, or some individual responses of target states to external support of rebels (Collins, 2004; Bapat et al., 2015). Studies on how target states could persuade the sponsors to terminate support for rebels have shown various results. One advice for target states is to have the knowledge of the affair between the sponsor and the rebel group and the capability to sanction in order to hold the sponsor accountable as well

as to ally with the peers or patrons of the sponsor (Payne, 2012). Once the knowledge about the affair between states and terrorist groups is established, one of the widely used tools as a response to sponsors is sanctions. Scholars have analyzed the effectiveness of sanctions in terminating sponsorship and concluded that sanctions are more likely to be used against supporters with an intermediate level of state capacity, whereas sanctions are less likely to be imposed if the sponsor is a failed state or if the sponsor is stronger (Bapat et al., 2015). On the other hand, offering economic incentives such as increasing economic ties with a supporter state is thought to be rewarding by yielding more resources for the supporter/host to fight or expel the terrorist groups (Li & Schaub, 2004). Therefore, sanctions as sticks could be used for intentional sponsors, while economic cooperation as a carrot could be used for de facto supporters to terminate the sponsorship (Bapat et al., 2015).

Another form of widely studied reaction to the state support of rebels is the military response. Especially militarized responses that concern the activities of rebels inside a sponsor state endanger the sovereignty of the sponsor. Therefore, questions about the international law aspect of using force inside the sponsor's territory have arisen (Henderson, 2018). Militarized responses could cause tension in interstate relations. Then, the use of nonmilitary responses could be another option for states. Examples of nonmilitary responses toward sponsor states include condemnation, denunciation, legal prosecution, and economic sanctions (Wilner, 2018). Also, the clandestine nature of sponsorship might lead target states to use covert responses such as the US monitoring of Libyan diplomats' communication, which proved the involvement of Libya in the Berlin bombings in 1986 (Smith, 1989).

A notable study by Wilkenfeld et al. (2022) looks at gray zone conflicts in which target states respond to proxies with violence. They find that the use of proxies

(i.e., violent non-state actors - VSNAs) by challenger states limits escalation management since the presence of proxies almost guarantees a violent response from target states, whose responses to the challenger states are underexplored, yet. Also, Gleditsch, Salehyan & Schultz (2008) investigates the link between civil wars and interstate conflicts and finds that civil wars increase the probability of interstate militarized disputes. However, this study neither focuses on the immediate responses of target states to the challenger in regard to their support for VSNAs, nor identifies the type of responses (i.e., coercive and/or non-coercive or specifically diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, and covert measures).

Further, Andersen-Rodgers (2015) distinguishes between inaction, violent-military acts, non-violent military acts, verbal acts, economic acts, and political acts as the behavior of states in foreign policy crises. Nevertheless, this study does not engage with state sponsorship in particular and the proposed acts occur following a foreign policy crisis with another state rather than when attempting to avoid an interstate crisis. Target states can respond to state support of rebels before it escalates into an interstate crisis through non-coercive responses and cooperative efforts to counteract state sponsorship. Similar to Wilkenfeld et al. (2022), Andersen-Rodgers (2015) suggests that when rebel groups instigate foreign policy crises, they are more likely to end in violent crisis management techniques compared to crises instigated by states. On the other hand, Carter (2015) shows that target states face a compellence dilemma which makes them hesitant in using coercive measures that would incapacitate a supporter to terminate the rebel presence in the long term.

Overall, the studies concerning the target states' responses toward the sponsorship are limited in the sense that they do not explain why target states behave in the way they do when they encounter sponsors of terrorism. These studies often

look at a few numbers of cases and lack a general explanation of response patterns of target states and the determinants of the likely responses. By analyzing a large number of cases, this study looks at different forms of support types such as diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, covert, and no responses. Then, this study identifies the coercive and non-coercive responses to see when states compel state supporters of rebels with coercive responses and when with non-coercive responses. While there are limited studies to demonstrate what target states have done, I aim to cover more responses both in quantity and diversity by using a novel dataset with a comprehensive definition of state sponsorship of terrorism. I argue that the severity of responses depends on the level of perceived threats by target states. The determinants of changing levels of threat perception are identified as support type, support level and the existing strategic interaction between states as rivalry or formal alliance. I show that a broader definition of sponsorship is crucial since unintentional forms of sponsorship also impacts the severity of target responses.

4.4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THREAT PERCEPTION OF TARGET STATES AND EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Threat perception is key for understanding interstate relations, particularly when responses are concerned during international crises, conflicts, and disputes (Cohen, 1978; Stein, 2013). The level of threat perception is influenced by geographic proximity, aggregate power, and aggressive capabilities and intentions (Walt, 1985). In addition to the materialist connotations of threat perception theory, it is refined by acknowledging the role of ideational factors that influence threat perception of states. For instance, shared identities, culture, domestic politics, emotions, incomplete

information, institutional factors, risk aversion, endowment effect, and adherence to norms might impact the volume of threat perceived by states (Rousseau & Garcia-Retamero, 2007; Stein, 2013). In this paper, I argue that state support to rebel groups threatens target states and pushes targets to give various responses depending on the level of threat they perceived.

State sponsorship can undermine peaceful ways of solving conflicts between target states and terrorist groups. This argument is well established in third-party intervention research, which indicates that involvement of external actors prolongs the conflict (Regan, 2002, Cunningham, 2010). Also, state sponsorship of terrorism gives rise to uncertainty and national security problems for the target state and threatens the target's commitment to safeguard its citizens and territory (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020). In this case, state sponsorship creates favorable conditions for terrorist groups to thrive and inflict heavy losses on the target governments, which in return leads the target state to make retaliatory moves that would escalate not only the conflict between the target and the terrorist group but also an interstate conflict between the target and the sponsor state (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020).

Rebel groups acquire material support, ideological support, and political legitimacy through external state support (Carter, Van Nuys & Albayrak; 2020). All of these are costly from the standpoint of target states. Viewing the costs, target states are forced to act against sponsorship because of the increased threat stemming from the rise in political or material strength of terrorist groups through supporter states. External support to terrorist groups could cause an increase in civilian losses because research shows that especially religiously motivated terrorist groups, if sponsored by states, are more likely to adopt suicide terrorism (Carter, Van Nuys & Albayrak; 2020). Target states already alarmed by the sponsorship would be at grave danger if

the terrorists receiving the external assistance are religiously motivated whose tactic is to cause higher casualties. Then, external support increases the threat perception of target states due to human losses with the enhanced capacity of rebels.

As for the coerciveness of responses, studies on how state sponsorship affects interstate relations have had mixed results. Andersen-Rodgers (2015) states that crises between states when triggered by non-state actors are more likely to result in violent crisis management techniques due to informational and commitment problems, compared to crises triggered by other states. On the other hand, Carter (2015) shows that target states carry a compellence dilemma because it could be costly to use coercive measures that would incapacitate a sponsor to remove the rebels in the long term and hence states might refrain from using harsher punishments to escape from a worse-case scenario.

Considering studies that treat sponsorship of terrorist groups as an alliance behavior, the literature lacks explanations of the outcomes of the balancing acts of sponsors against the target states. When a state faces terrorism sponsorship through alliance or cooperation with and negligence toward rebel groups or incapacity to curb rebel activities, they react to it, but systematic research of how they react has remained unaddressed in the literature. This study provides an explanation as to why some states give coercive responses while others do not when they counter sponsorship of rebels depending on the support type, support level and the existing strategic interaction between states. I treat responses as usual foreign policy behavior and activities of target states toward supporter states in the context of the sponsorship of the relevant rebel group.

4.4.1. Support Type: State sponsorship of rebels could take many forms including “safe havens to members and leaders, financial aid, providing headquarters and offices, training and training camps, arms, logistics, and transportation, troops, diplomatic support from states, diaspora groups, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations (IGO), VSNAs, and foreign political parties” (San-Akca, 2016). In general, in terms of the cause of support, sponsorship could be intentional or de facto. Intentional support refers to assisting a rebel group willingly by a state, while de facto support could include the cases where a rebel group chooses to receive help from a state (when a state is incapable of terminating the support or negligent). I posit that the level of threat perception of a target state would change depending on the support type.

It is harder to blame a state for being a passive supporter of terrorism compared to an active/intentional supporter (Carter, Van Nuys & Albayrak; 2020). Since attributability of the illegal activity to an agent (in this case, the sponsor state) is crucial in defending one’s own self-defense moves in terms of international law, target states could respond to intentional forms of support in more decisive ways to end the sponsorship compared to de facto support. Also, scholars argue that passive external support by low-capacity states provides the sponsors with considerable leverage to be used against the targeted states because when passive support exists, the sponsors do not usually control the rebels directly and hence, cannot make credible commitments to restrain the rebels. This bargaining chip could be used by sponsors for strategic gains in negotiations (Carter, Van Nuys & Albayrak; 2020). The response of target states could then be influenced by the type of support provided to rebels.

As mentioned earlier, previous studies have tended to dismiss de facto support in their analyses, which usually assume that there is a principal-agent relationship between the sponsor and the rebel group. However, the disregarding of de facto support is problematic because the principal agent theory neglects the cases where the government intentionally does not support the rebel group, but the rebel group tries to get help from external states. Moreover, rebels might bypass the directives of their supporters (San-Akca, 2016). Responding to de facto sponsorship of rebels is crucial for the targeted country given that active external state support has diminished recently but rebels are free to benefit from fundraising opportunities, abusing open and non-monitored borders, recruitment, and operational planning opportunities in external states (Banks, de Nevers & Wallerstein, 2008). These states either turn a blind eye to the rebel activities or are incapable of monitoring and preventing them, or they support the rebel activities that are not illegal in a democratic state. Target states are threatened not only by the intentional support of rebels but also by unintentional forms of support. This necessitates the inclusion of both intentional and de facto support types in the analyses when explaining the responses of target states.

The response of target states to the sponsor could be more coercive if their threat perception level increases due to the sponsorship. Intentional support of rebels increases the threat perception more compared to de facto support since in the former the sponsor is responsible for the support as the sponsor chooses to enable the rebel group, while in the latter the rebel group uses the opportunities presented in an external state and chooses to receive help. To account for both support types is to account for variation in responses of target states.

***H1a:** Target states are more likely to respond coercively if the sponsor states provide intentional support for rebel groups.*

***H1b:** Target states are less likely to respond coercively if the sponsor states provide de facto support for rebel groups.*

4.4.2. Support Level: Depending on the specific forms of support for rebel groups such as safe havens to members and leaders, financial aid, providing headquarters and offices, training and training camps, arms, logistics, transportation, and troops from states San-Akca provides that we can determine the level of support provided by sponsors (San-Akca, 2016, 51-83). The level of perceived threat may vary depending on the level of support provided for rebels. Some forms of support may contribute more to rebel capabilities than others and hence are regarded as high levels of support. By taking a closer look at the different support types to determine the support level, their effects on the responses of target states could be understood better. As San-Akca (2016) shows, different support types could be associated with distinct support levels based on the level of threat perceived by target states.

Previous works have not yet engaged with the link between support level and target response but a few studies have examined the impact of specific support types on conflict outcomes. Byman et al. (2001) argued that safe havens, financial assistance, political support, and troop support are more crucial than training, weapons, and other material support (p. 84-92). Balch-Lindsay et al. (2008) found that troop support is essential for rebel victory and a negotiated settlement. Also, Carter (2012) suggested that the providing foreign sanctuaries increases the likelihood of rebel defeat. Sullivan & Karreth (2015) confirmed the significance of troop support for rebel victory. More recently, Keels, Benson and Widmeier (2021) have found that

rebels that receive training are more likely to achieve favorable conflict outcomes than rebels without training. To sum up, these studies indicate that some support types make rebel victory more likely. Then, I argue that some forms of support may increase the level of perceived threat by target states compared to others and may cause more coercive responses toward sponsors.

I contend that as the level of support shapes the level of perceived threat by target states, target states might react differently to state supporters that provide very high or high levels of support compared to those that provide low or moderate levels of support. Target states may respond less coercively to lower levels of support, as they would be viewed as less significant forms of sponsorship. However, when higher levels of support are involved, which include more significant forms of support, target states may resort to more coercive responses. In 1997, Angola intervened militarily in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), knowing that the DRC provided training camps to the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda-Armed Forces of Cabinda (FLEC-FAC) (Strategic Comments, 1997).

***H2:** Target states are more likely to respond coercively if the supporter states provide higher levels of support for rebel groups.*

4.4.3. Strategic Interaction Between the Target and Supporter States: There is a gap in the literature to understand the influence of the prior status of relations between states on the responses of target states against the supporter. Rivalry and alliance between states are two different states of relations that could determine the behavior of targets because they inform about the strategic environment of the target. Strategic

rivalry is a relationship in which the parties perceive their adversaries as competitors and actual or potential military threats to each other (Colaresi, Basler & Thompson, 2008). Although other accounts follow a dispute density approach in the studies of rivalry (Diehl & Goertz, 2000), I adopt the diplomatic history approach because it is more suitable for this study to look at the diplomatic interactions between states to identify threats and respective reactions based on perception. As for alliances, they are defined as cooperation among states by common strategic interests or ideational convergence to balance the capabilities of rival states or threats (Waltz, 1978; Walt, 1987; Miguel, 2013; San-Akca, 2016).⁸⁰

Interstate rivalries are found to be an important motive for the external support of rebels (Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011; Maoz & San-Akca, 2012; San-Akca, 2016). Some scholars attribute a great deal of importance to interstate rivalry in the sense that they believe state sponsorship of terrorism is a byproduct of rivalries rather than a distinct form of dispute (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020). Despite the impact of rivalry on the decision to externally support a rebel group or on the decision of rebels to choose a rival state to operate in, there is little research showing the influence of rivalry on target responses to sponsorship. When rivalry is concerned, the target state might use retaliation, and this in return increases the escalation of the existing crisis into militarized disputes (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020). Given that rival states support terrorist groups in an attempt to avoid direct confrontation with their rivals in the first place, the futility of external support to evade militarized disputes and even direct confrontation is noteworthy. This means that rivalry among states might provoke

⁸⁰ It may be counterintuitive to think that supporter states would support rebel groups that fight against their allies. However, in the RSD, the total number of observations that included formally allied intentional supporters is 326/881, while 607/881 observations involve de facto supporters (52 observations are coded to have both intentional and de facto support) (881 observations out of 3719 consist of formally allied dyads).

states into escalation of conflict through target behavior with more coercive and punitive measures.

One of the reasons why sponsors support terrorist groups is to mask their military inferiority vis a vis the rival target state. The rivalry between Syria and Israel is the best example showing Syrian support of Hezbollah and Palestinian groups against Israel as a transnational balancing act (Aydınlı, 2022) to challenge, weaken and delegitimize the Israeli military actions (Berkowitz, 2018). Israel's response toward Syria has been aggressive compared to states that are non-rival such as Sweden, the UK, the USA, and Germany. Israel entered several wars with Syria and occupied the Golan Heights (Hof, 2009), whereas the Israeli response to nonrival supporters of Palestinian groups has been mostly diplomatic. For instance, in 2008, Israel shut down branches of Hamas-affiliated organizations in the UK and USA, asserting that they raised funds for attacks by Hamas (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 2008).

Rival states hinder the strategic advancement of their adversaries by externally helping terrorist groups fight against those opponents (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020). As a result, terrorist groups with the help of their sponsors threaten regional stability conducive to the development of the target states. Terrorist attacks are detrimental to industrial development, the tourism sector, and many other economic activities and weaken a target state in economic and military terms, thus hurting the balance of power (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020). Strengthened by external support, sponsored terrorist groups could cause more damage to the target states and heighten the threat perception of the target, stemming from the illegal cooperation or alliance between rival supporter states and terrorists. Therefore, target states could adopt a power projection strategy (e.g., cross-border attacks, pre-emptive strikes) against the rival

sponsors because of concerns about security and power distribution (Khan & Zhaoying, 2020).

If states perceive terrorist groups as a permanent threat emanating from their sponsorship by other states, leading to fear in the public, and causing human and material losses, then target states feel the urge to respond in kind since states react to their rival's behavior (sponsorship) by provocation (Khan, 2021). Linking territorial issues to state sponsorship of terrorism literature, Carter & Pant (2019) and Khan (2021) show that rivalry between states together with the phenomenon of external support of rebels could escalate interstate disputes and conflicts even into war. These studies show that the threat perception of states increases when there is rivalry among the target and sponsor states. Because rivalries involve uncertainty and distrust that further intensify the rivalry when a new problem or crisis is introduced (Thompson, 2001). When a rival sponsor provides assistance to a rebel group, target states may view this transnational alliance as alarming since the friend of the target's enemy is the enemy of the target state. As a result, external support may deepen the existing strategic hostility between target and supporter states. Therefore, the likelihood of war between a target and sponsor increases if rivals have a territorial dispute, engage in arms race, are part of alliances, have encountered militarized disputes before, sponsor terrorists and have hawkish incumbents at home (Khan, 2021). As an illustration, Arab-Israeli rivalry demonstrates how distrust between the two and supporting the Palestinian rebel groups increased the threat perception of Israel against the Arab states and made Israel adopt more escalating steps that eventually led to war (Khan, 2021). Hence, state sponsorship could be thought of as an intermediary step that provokes states into intensified conflicts or war when rivalry exists between the states.

This implies that target states might choose coercive responses against the sponsors when the sponsors are rivals.

H3: Target states are more likely to respond coercively if the sponsor state is a strategic rival.

Different from the rivals, target states may refrain from escalatory behavior when confronted with a formally allied supporter state since the formal alliance refers to the commitment to aid a partner, maintain neutrality in the face of conflict, abstain from engaging in military hostilities with others, and engage in consultation/cooperation during international crises (Gibler, 2009). Alliances between a target and a supporter state have received little attention in the sponsorship literature. Studies have looked at the influence of alliances of the target state with other states and found that external support to rebels is more likely to happen if the target government has allies during a civil war (Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011). While it is important to account for alliance networks in broader terms, when responding to a sponsor, the immediate concern for a target state is to think in terms of its relationship with the supporter state. I aim to fill this gap by looking at whether the target and supporter states have formal alliances and the impact of these alliances on the responses of target states.

I contend that alliances provide mechanisms to peacefully sort out differences and manage conflicts. Formal alliances could diminish the possible escalation of disputes. More importantly, the alliance between states could decrease the threat perception of the target state due to the sponsorship. Because of the alliances, target states could use less coercive measures to end sponsorship. Furthermore, if there is a

formal alliance between the target and the sponsor, sponsor states could cooperate with the target in eliminating the rebel activities. Overall, alliances might decrease the level of threat perception of a target when the benefactor of rebels is an allied sponsor. Then, the existence of a formal alliance between the target and the supporter could lead to less coercive responses when compared to the cases where the supporter is a non-ally or rival state.

***H4:** Target states are less likely to respond coercively if there is a formal alliance between the target and supporter states.*

4.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

I define target responses as foreign policy reactions of target states towards the supporter states in order to persuade or coerce them to end their sponsorship of rebel groups that harm the target states. In this dissertation, I use the newly coded Response to Sponsorship Dataset (RSD) that accounts for various yearly responses of target states between 1991 and 2010. Different from proxy warfare during the Cold War, for which the principle-agent theory is mostly fitted, I focus on the period after the Cold War to be able to see unintentional forms of external support to rebels as well. I follow the premises of selection theory for sponsorship behavior to identify a rebel group's selection of sponsor states in addition to the usual suspect of external support, i.e. states' selection to support a rebel group. Therefore, the Response dataset contains the triadic cases from the NAGs dataset (ver. 2015) by extracting the cases where a) a rebel group received intentional and/or de facto support from a state supporter, b) at least for 1 year, c) starting from the years in which at least 25 battle-deaths per year

were observed. The first criterion is adopted because I only deal with the rebel groups that receive at least one form of help in order to analyze the corresponding state response. The following two criteria are introduced because I assume that target states would be compelled to respond to sponsorship if the sponsorship duration is not temporary and when the rebels inflict heavy losses on the target. I used the NAGs dataset to identify the triadic cases because it is the only dataset that codes both intentional and de facto support types. Between 1991 and 2010, there are 3719 observations where the unit of analysis is a triad-year. A triad refers to a target group, a rebel group operating against the target state and a state supporter of the rebel group.

4.5.1. The Dependent Variable: The dependent variable in this essay is the *severity of response* that codes the responses of the target states within a given triad-year as inaction (0), non-coercive (1), coercive (2), and mixed (3) responses as a categorical variable. I define responses as *coercive* if the target state threatens the sponsor to use force or give militarized responses without the cooperation of the supporter state to end the sponsorship. In other words, coercive responses exist when the target state threatens or warns to use force or actually uses force. Responses are considered to be *non-coercive* when they lack a direct threat against the supporter states in the given year. If both coercive and non-coercive responses are used, then the observation is coded as *mixed*. When the target states do not respond to the sponsors, I code the triad-year as *inaction*. Usually, militarized responses are considered coercive however, there are cases where the target and the sponsor cooperate against rebels and the target state uses its military inside the territory of the supporter state alongside the military forces of the supporter. Diplomatic and domestic responses are rarely coded

as coercive. Economic responses in the form of punitive actions such as sanctions are coded as coercive. As for covert responses, they are coded as coercive when there are, for instance, targeted killings, assassinations, and displays of intelligence documents proving the connection between the sponsor and the rebels. A detailed explanation of what kind of responses are coded for each category is present in the codebook of the RSD.

4.5.2. The Independent Variables: The first independent variable in this essay is *support type* that refers to intentional and de facto support types to test the hypotheses 1a and 1b. The variable intentional is coded as 1 if the supporter states intentionally select the rebel group to assist, otherwise, it is coded as 0. For Hypothesis 2, the variable de facto is coded as 1 if the rebel group chooses to receive help from the supporter state, otherwise, it is coded as 0. I coded the variable of intentional and de facto from the NAG dataset (San-Akca, 2016). The second independent variable is *support level* which is coded as a categorical variable to test the Hypothesis 2.

Following San-Akca's intentional support level categorization, I coded the support level variable as low (0), moderate (1), high (2) and very high (3) as explained in San-Akca (2016, 83). Differently though, I added the de facto forms of support types that are associated the aforementioned support levels since following the same logic, target states would feel more threatened when there is a de facto training camp support for rebels when compared to a de facto office support.

For Hypothesis 3, I coded *rivalry* variable 1 if the target and supporter states are strategic rivals, otherwise, I coded it as 0. The strategic rivalry is coded by Thompson & Dreyer (2012). Miller (2019) organized the data for easy use from where I coded rivalry. Rivalry is measured by analyzing diplomatic engagements to

detect if the states treat one another as a threat and there are four types of rivalry such as spatial, positional, ideological, and interventionary rivalries. I coded rivalry variable as 1 if it included one or more types of rivalry.

Regarding Hypothesis 4, I use Gibler's (2009) Formal Interstate Alliance Dataset (ver. 4.0) from the COW project to identify if the target and supporter states have *formal alliances*. There are four types of formal alliances coded. These alliances include defense (defense pacts to protect one another), neutrality (promising to stay neutral), non-aggression (promising not to attack), and entente (agreeing to consult if a crisis occurs). They are separately coded as binary variables. I created the formal alliance variable and coded it as 1 if there is one or more types of formal alliances coded as 1; I coded formal alliances as 0 if there is not any type of alliance between the states.

4.5.3. Control Variables: One of the control variables is the *relative material power* of the target state. The response could vary according to the relative material capabilities of the target state because without those capabilities, devising a strategic response that is usually aimed at dissuading the supporter from helping the rebel group cannot be easy. The relative power of the target state vis a vis the supporter state is coded using Singer's (1987) the Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC score) from the National Material Capabilities (NMC) Data (v6.0), where the value of this variable is produced by the CINC score of target state divided by the CINC score of supporter state (power ratio). Relative power is a continuous variable. Furthermore, regime type, domestic instability and GDP per capita are controlled. I use Polity V (Marshall & Gurr, 2020) for combined polity score; Political Instability

Task Force (PITF) for ethnic wars, revolutionary wars, adverse regime changes, and genocide/politicide episodes and World Bank's GDP per capita data.

As for group-level variables, I use the identity of the rebel group as control if the rebel group is religiously oriented because religious rebel groups causing more civilian casualties might provoke the target to give more coercive responses as discussed in the literature (Carter, 2022). I use NAG dataset which coded religious rebels as a binary variable. Lastly, rebel objective might matter especially if the rebels aim secession or autonomy since these goals refer to a threat to the territorial control of target state. Since territorial disputes have caused spatial rivalries and wars; the target states might use more coercive means to avoid territorial disputes. I aggregate the rebel objective variables of secession and autonomy from NAG dataset (San-Akca, 2016) and generated the binary rebel objective variable which is coded as 1 if the rebels aim secession or autonomy.

Since the dependent variable is coded as categorical and the parallel regression assumption is violated between the different categories of response severity, I use multinomial logistic regression rather than ordinal logistic regression analysis (see Appendix D for the Brant test details). To control for time dependence, I use cubic polynomials. Also, to avoid heteroskedasticity, I use triad-clustered robust standard errors.

4.6. ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Testing the Hypothesis 1a, Table 8 demonstrates that intentional support is significant and increases the odds of any kind of response. In Model 2, with a unit change from 0 to 1 in intentional support, the multinomial logit odds of non-coercive response relative to inaction would be expected to increase by 0.54 unit while holding

all other variables in the model constant. The multinomial logit odds of only coercive response would be expected to increase by 1.11 unit and mixed response would be expected to increase by 1.17 unit, holding other variables constant. This means that target states view intentional support of rebel groups quite threatening and respond to the intentional supporters more coercively, which supports H1a.

Table 7: The Impact of Intentional Support on the Severity of Target Responses

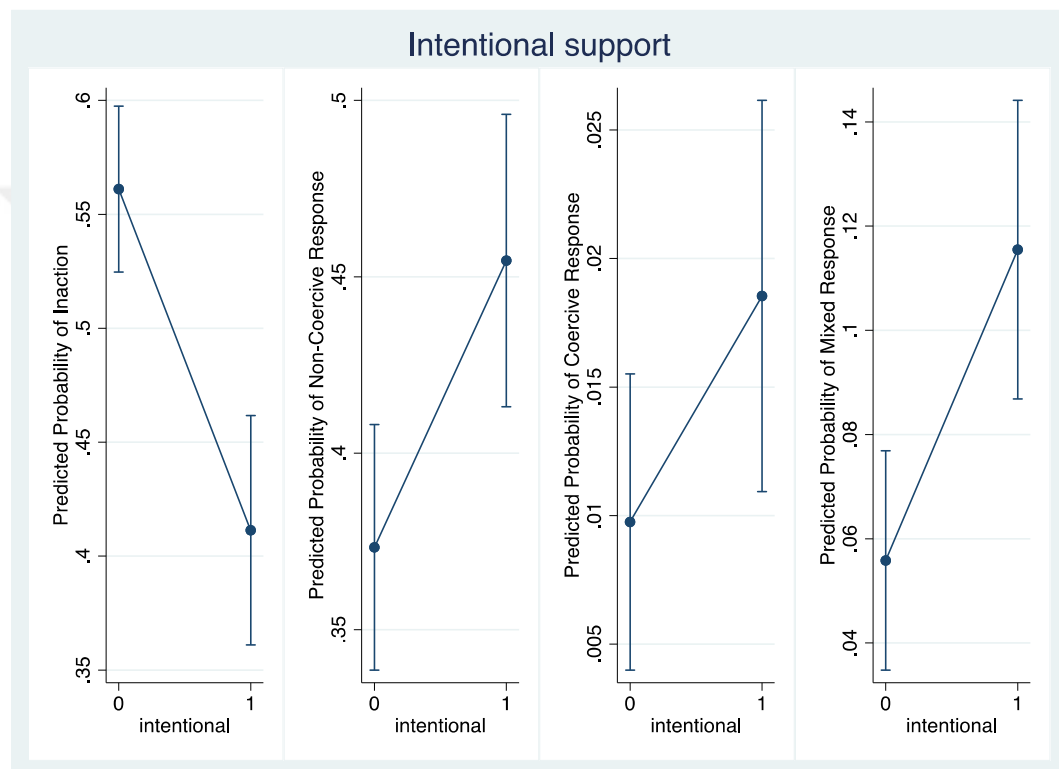
VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Intentional	0.527*** (0.132)	0.948* (0.434)	1.084*** (0.298)	0.540*** (0.133)	1.112** (0.389)	1.172*** (0.289)
Contiguity				0.516*** (0.133)	2.199*** (0.518)	1.878*** (0.384)
Relative power of target				0.000908*** (0.000228)	0.000733 (0.000701)	-0.000825 (0.00206)
Instability - Target				0.0481 (0.161)	-0.331 (0.421)	-0.0717 (0.355)
Instability - Supporter				-0.193 (0.137)	-0.387 (0.479)	0.141 (0.274)
Polity V - Target				-0.00699*** (0.00207)	-0.0173** (0.00546)	-0.0146*** (0.00439)
Polity V - Supporter				0.00372 (0.00322)	-0.0244** (0.00754)	-0.0182*** (0.00465)
Religious Rebel Group				-0.0892 (0.136)	-0.000247 (0.460)	0.439 (0.292)
Secession/Autonomy				0.00432 (0.136)	0.347 (0.455)	0.243 (0.294)
Time	-0.169* (0.0669)	-0.252 (0.233)	-0.0315 (0.119)	-0.146* (0.0684)	-0.201 (0.238)	0.0915 (0.141)
Time2	0.0230* (0.00893)	0.0403 (0.0267)	0.00625 (0.0151)	0.0215* (0.00906)	0.0394 (0.0280)	-0.00203 (0.0171)
Time3	-0.000672* (0.000325)	-0.00131 (0.000878)	-4.17e-05 (0.000541)	-0.000635 (0.000330)	-0.00130 (0.000945)	0.000161 (0.000594)
Constant	-0.292* (0.146)	-4.025*** (0.536)	-2.509*** (0.329)	-0.600** (0.225)	-6.116*** (0.787)	-4.784*** (0.600)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,598	3,598	3,598
ll	-3520	-3520	-3520	-3213	-3213	-3213

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

In Graph 6, from 0 to 1, intentional support decreases the predicted probability of inaction from 56% to 41%. On the other hand, intentional support increases the likelihood of non-coercive responses from 37% to 45% compared to inaction, the

likelihood of only coercive responses from nearly 1 to 1,9% compared to inaction, and the likelihood of mixed responses from 6% to 12% compared to inaction. These results show that when intentional support is observed, the probability of giving mixed responses (consisted of both coercive and non-coercive responses) doubles.

Figure 8: Substantive Effect of Intentional Support on the Severity Target Response



As for Hypothesis 1b, Table 9 displays that the presence of de facto support of rebel groups is significant and decreases the odds of any kind of response from target states toward state supporters of rebel groups. Then, Hypothesis 1b is supported in the parsimonious Model 2. Target states are less likely to respond coercively compared to giving *no response* when rebel groups are supported in de facto forms.

Table 8: The Effect of De Facto Support Level on the Severity of Target Responses

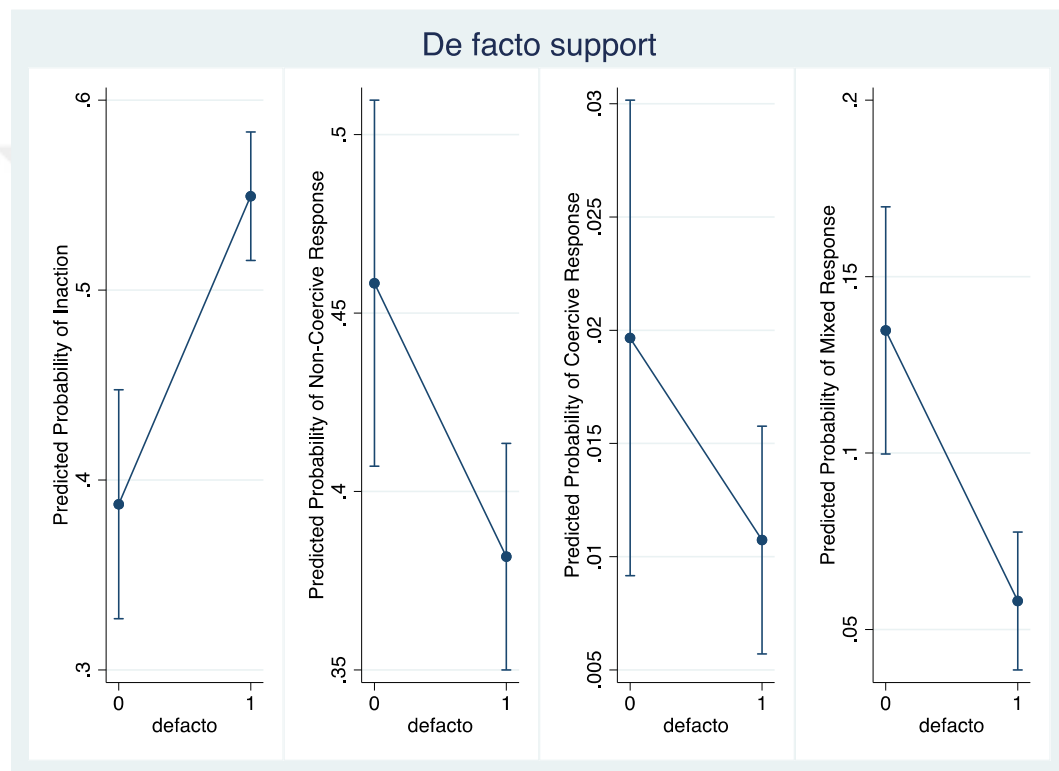
VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
De facto	-0.548*** (0.149)	-0.855 (0.448)	-1.177*** (0.293)	-0.570*** (0.154)	-1.150** (0.396)	-1.360*** (0.294)
Contiguity				0.522*** (0.132)	2.220*** (0.511)	1.906*** (0.382)
CINC score				0.000823*** (0.000218)	0.000558 (0.000677)	-0.00115 (0.00229)
Instability- Target				0.0483 (0.162)	-0.325 (0.418)	-0.0793 (0.356)
Instability- Supporter				-0.224 (0.136)	-0.493 (0.460)	0.0105 (0.285)
Polity V- Target				-0.00709*** (0.00206)	-0.0175** (0.00557)	-0.0147*** (0.00436)
Polity V- Supporter				0.00309 (0.00324)	-0.0258*** (0.00758)	-0.0202*** (0.00462)
Religious Rebel Group				-0.0710 (0.137)	0.0540 (0.454)	0.510 (0.291)
Secessionist/Autonomy Rebel Group				0.0584 (0.138)	0.479 (0.460)	0.407 (0.293)
Time	-0.170* (0.0670)	-0.254 (0.233)	-0.0361 (0.119)	-0.147* (0.0685)	-0.218 (0.239)	0.0733 (0.140)
Time2	0.0230* (0.00894)	0.0405 (0.0266)	0.00696 (0.0150)	0.0215* (0.00907)	0.0405 (0.0282)	-0.000853 (0.0171)
Time3	-0.000672* (0.000325)	-0.00132 (0.000873)	-6.15e-05 (0.000537)	-0.000634 (0.000330)	-0.00131 (0.000952)	0.000148 (0.000593)
Constant	0.304 (0.173)	-3.022*** (0.593)	-1.253*** (0.282)	-0.00891 (0.245)	-4.879*** (0.801)	-3.408*** (0.601)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,598	3,598	3,598
ll	-3520	-3520	-3520	-3211	-3211	-3211

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Figure 9 more clearly shows the substantive effect of de facto support type on the severity of target states' responses. Target states may feel more comfortable and do not respond at all to the supporter states when the rebel groups receive de facto support as there is an increase in the predicted probability of observing inaction from 38% to 54%. Conversely, the presence of de facto support decreases the predicted

probability of non-coercive responses from 45% to 38% compared to inaction, only coercive responses from nearly 2% to 1%, and mixed responses from 13% to nearly 6%. The almost halving drop in the probability of *only coercive* and *mixed* responses exhibits that target countries have low threat perception levels when de facto support is present.

Figure 9: Substantive Effect of De Facto Support on the Severity of Target Responses



As for Hypothesis 2, Table 9 shows that the impact of support level is statistically significant for *only coercive* in Model 2. This shows that when sponsor states increase the level of support provided for rebel groups, they are more likely to face *only coercive* responses relative to giving *no response* at all. Then, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Table 9: The Impact of Support Level on the Severity of Target Responses

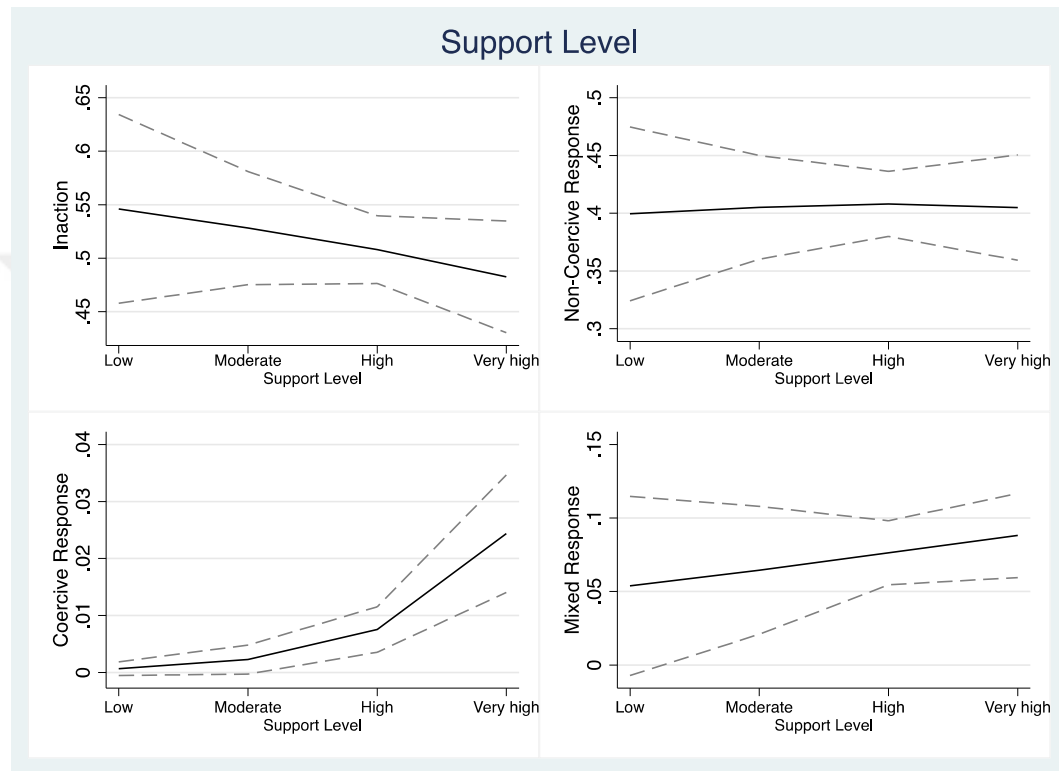
VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Support level	0.134 (0.0781)	1.562*** (0.342)	0.687** (0.242)	0.0513 (0.0829)	1.266*** (0.347)	0.233 (0.273)
Contiguity				0.468** (0.145)	1.613** (0.513)	1.716*** (0.414)
CINC score				0.000866*** (0.000241)	0.000660 (0.000775)	-0.00107 (0.00239)
Instability- Target				0.0845 (0.158)	-0.250 (0.436)	0.0595 (0.354)
Instability- Supporter				-0.169 (0.138)	-0.563 (0.452)	0.136 (0.279)
Polity V- Target				-0.00768*** (0.00212)	-0.0192*** (0.00541)	-0.0152*** (0.00438)
Polity V- Supporter				0.00331 (0.00331)	-0.0207** (0.00711)	-0.0165*** (0.00463)
Religious Rebel Group				-0.117 (0.138)	0.00991 (0.474)	0.384 (0.289)
Secession/Autonomy				-0.0429 (0.137)	0.167 (0.433)	0.116 (0.297)
Time	-0.174** (0.0664)	-0.313 (0.231)	-0.0629 (0.120)	-0.146* (0.0681)	-0.281 (0.234)	0.0647 (0.142)
Time2	0.0233** (0.00884)	0.0473 (0.0265)	0.00960 (0.0151)	0.0215* (0.00901)	0.0465 (0.0279)	0.000461 (0.0169)
Time3	-0.000692* (0.000321)	-0.00158 (0.000872)	-0.000181 (0.000532)	-0.000646* (0.000328)	-0.00151 (0.000946)	6.55e-05 (0.000580)
Constant	-0.332 (0.194)	-7.104*** (0.988)	-3.392*** (0.577)	-0.478 (0.245)	-7.884*** (1.300)	-4.570*** (0.725)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,598	3,598	3,598
ll	-3518	-3518	-3518	-3250	-3250	-3250

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Figure 10 shows that with one unit change in support level from low to very high levels of support, the predicted probability of inaction decreases from 54% to 48%. The most meaningful impact of support level is on *only coercive* behavior of target states especially when moving from moderate to very high levels of support

provision, as seen in Figure 8. When support level increases, the predicted probability of observing *only coercive* target responses increases from nearly 0 to 2,4 % compared to inaction.

Figure 10: The Substantive Impact of Support Level & The Severity of Target Response



In Hypothesis 3, I posited the existence of a positive relationship between rivalry and the severity of target responses and it is supported as Table 10 demonstrates. Rivalry is significantly and positively impacting the severity of target states' responses. Therefore, target states are more likely to escalate the severity of their responses towards rival supporters and the likelihood of observing any kind of response increases when rivalry is present compared to giving *no response*.

Table 10: The Effect of Rivalry on the Severity of Target Responses

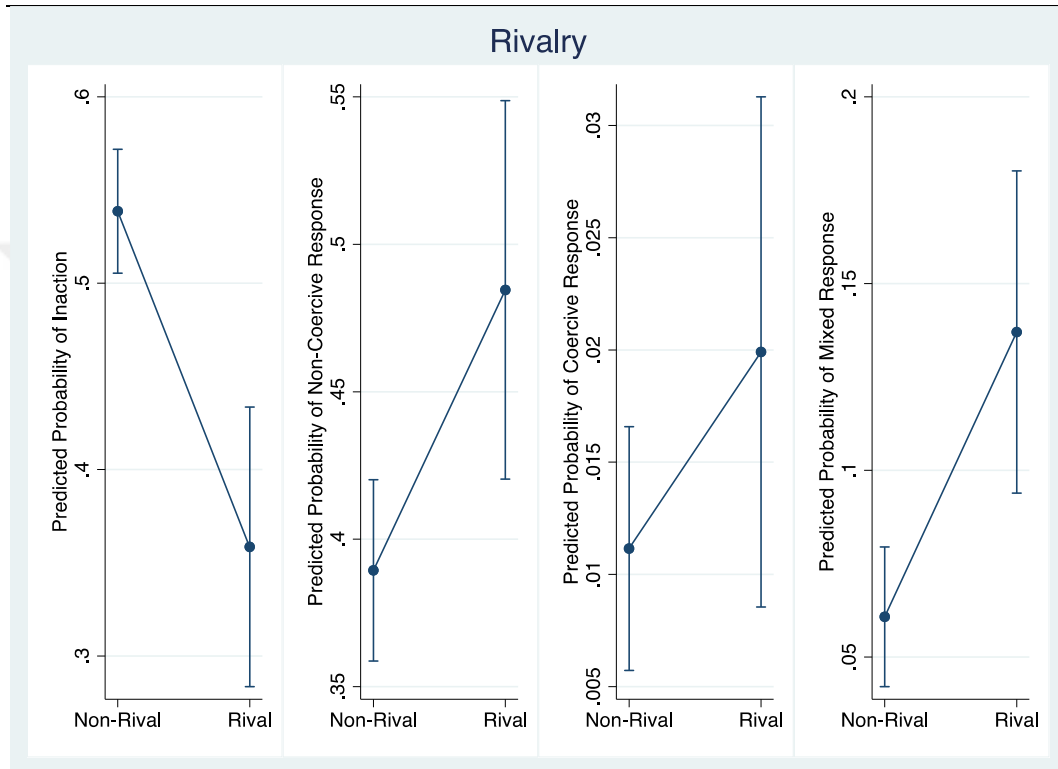
VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Rivalry	0.719*** (0.159)	1.241** (0.411)	1.640*** (0.299)	0.657*** (0.187)	1.167* (0.467)	1.367*** (0.330)
Contiguity				0.346* (0.141)	1.853*** (0.562)	1.446*** (0.407)
CINC score				0.00108** (0.000332)	0.000948 (0.000979)	-0.000353 (0.00176)
Instability- Target				0.0108 (0.157)	-0.342 (0.408)	-0.0998 (0.353)
Instability- Supporter				-0.195 (0.136)	-0.440 (0.476)	0.0827 (0.275)
Polity V- Target				-0.00842*** (0.00216)	-0.0196*** (0.00586)	-0.0166*** (0.00462)
Polity V- Supporter				0.00234 (0.00327)	-0.0267*** (0.00728)	-0.0215*** (0.00461)
Religious Rebel Group				-0.187 (0.138)	-0.238 (0.525)	0.156 (0.296)
Secession/Autonomy				0.0170 (0.137)	0.387 (0.463)	0.285 (0.289)
Time	-0.164* (0.0669)	-0.242 (0.230)	-0.0216 (0.122)	-0.147* (0.0681)	-0.212 (0.237)	0.0783 (0.143)
Time2	0.0224* (0.00892)	0.0392 (0.0263)	0.00547 (0.0153)	0.0218* (0.00902)	0.0410 (0.0282)	-0.000262 (0.0171)
Time3	-0.000668* (0.000324)	-0.00131 (0.000871)	-5.68e-05 (0.000539)	-0.000658* (0.000328)	-0.00137 (0.000954)	8.10e-05 (0.000586)
Constant	-0.211 (0.141)	-3.877*** (0.484)	-2.434*** (0.301)	-0.369 (0.220)	-5.586*** (0.789)	-4.200*** (0.592)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,598	3,598	3,598
ll	-3495	-3495	-3495	-3220	-3220	-3220

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

The substantive effects of rivalry could be seen in Figure 11. There is a decrease in the predicted probability of inaction from 53% to 35% since target states would see rival sponsors as a grave threat when they provide assistance to rebel groups that harm the target states. On the contrary, rivalry causes an increase in the predicted probabilities of non-coercive responses from 38% to 48%, coercive

responses from nearly 1% to 2%, and mixed responses from 6% to nearly 14%. The existence of rival sponsors nearly doubles the probability of observing *only coercive* and *mixed* responses from target states when confronted with external support.

Figure 11: Substantive Effect of Rivalry on the Severity of Target Responses



Finally for Hypothesis 4, the impact of formal alliances on the severity of target responses is presented in Table 11. The presence of a formal alliance between target and supporter states only significantly decreases the adoption of mixed responses in Model 2 when compared to giving *no response* at all. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is not fully supported. As a result, contrary to the expectations about the moderating effect of formal alliances, they do not have a significant effect on target state behavior except for mixed responses.

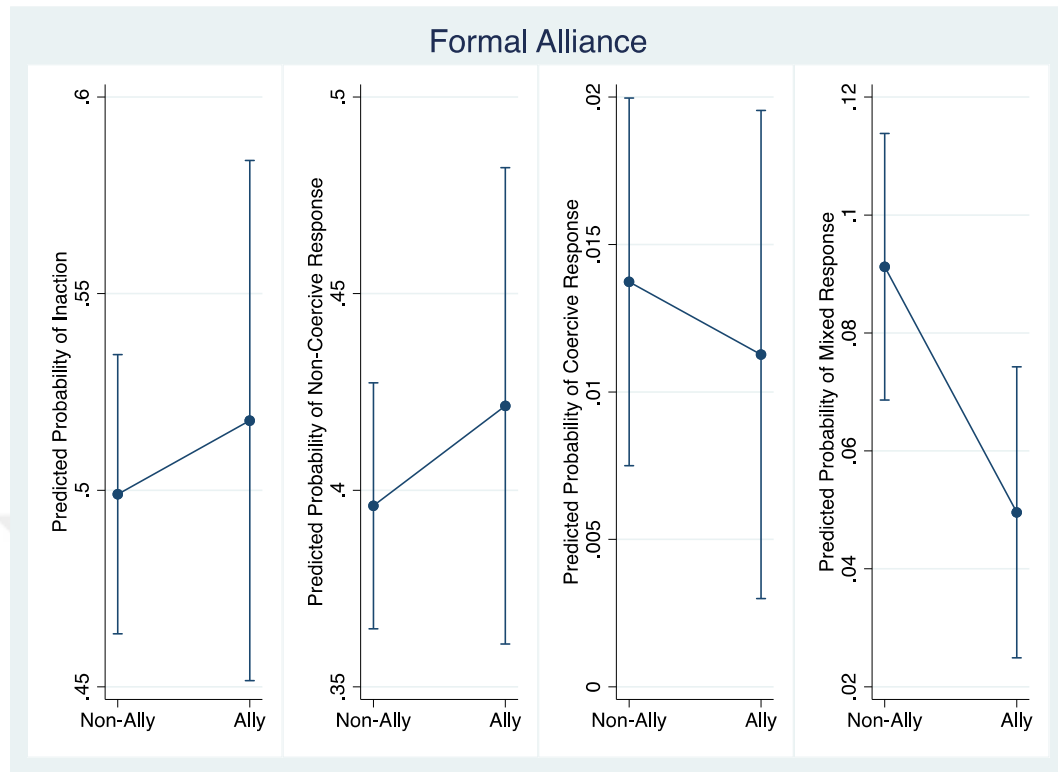
Table 11: The Effect of Formal Alliances on the Severity of Target Responses

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Formal Alliance	0.167 (0.149)	0.159 (0.493)	-0.0903 (0.338)	0.0169 (0.162)	-0.308 (0.523)	-0.716* (0.361)
Contiguity				0.492*** (0.137)	2.223*** (0.549)	1.983*** (0.378)
CINC score				0.000891*** (0.000262)	0.000623 (0.000937)	-0.00107 (0.00219)
Instability- Target				0.0863 (0.158)	-0.244 (0.397)	-0.00343 (0.353)
Instability- Supporter				-0.162 (0.137)	-0.341 (0.453)	0.232 (0.273)
Polity V- Target				-0.00771*** (0.00213)	-0.0187*** (0.00560)	-0.0160*** (0.00444)
Polity V- Supporter				0.00295 (0.00327)	-0.0235** (0.00735)	-0.0171*** (0.00451)
Religious Rebel Group				-0.113 (0.139)	-0.0580 (0.468)	0.393 (0.292)
Secession/Autonomy				-0.0305 (0.141)	0.228 (0.484)	0.0459 (0.305)
Time	-0.168* (0.0660)	-0.251 (0.232)	-0.0315 (0.117)	-0.142* (0.0675)	-0.209 (0.239)	0.0956 (0.139)
Time2	0.0228** (0.00881)	0.0399 (0.0264)	0.00555 (0.0149)	0.0211* (0.00895)	0.0403 (0.0281)	-0.00249 (0.0170)
Time3	-0.000677* (0.000320)	-0.00132 (0.000868)	-3.66e-05 (0.000531)	-0.000633 (0.000326)	-0.00134 (0.000948)	0.000154 (0.000590)
Constant	-0.125 (0.141)	-3.636*** (0.554)	-1.975*** (0.277)	-0.414 (0.223)	-5.541*** (0.812)	-4.146*** (0.623)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,598	3,598	3,598
ll	-3568	-3568	-3568	-3253	-3253	-3253

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Figure 12 also indicates the only significant result as the predicted probability of observing mixed responses decreases from 9% to nearly 5%. Compared to inaction, target states employ less mixed responses (almost a halving decrease) when a formal alliance exists between target and supporter states.

Figure 12: Substantive Effect of Formal Alliance on the Severity of Target Responses



4.7. CONCLUSION

In this essay, I aim to show the determinants of the responses of target states against state supporters of rebel groups. Extant studies have ignored de facto support in their empirical analysis usually when analyzing the motivations for sponsorship behavior. Here, I employ a comprehensive definition of sponsorship by including de facto support into the analysis in addition to intentional support behavior. The analyses have shown the relevance of de facto support and hence the need for its inclusion into the studies of external support of rebels. Also, the previous works have focused more on coercive responses such as sanctions or use of force. In this essay, the empirical analyses include inaction, non-coercive responses, only coercive responses and mixed responses.

The analyses in this essay indicate that the distinction between intentional and de facto support provision matter when target states formulate their responses toward sponsors. The empirical findings suggest that intentional support increases any kind of responses by increasing the likelihood of observing non-coercive and especially only coercive and mixed responses compared to inaction. Whereas de facto support causes the opposite by decreasing the probability of observing any kind of response from target states compared to giving *no response* at all. Moreover, the level of support provided for rebel groups is also crucial when target states devise their course of action to respond to the sponsors. When the rebel groups receive higher levels of support from their sponsors, target states increase the adoption of *only coercive* responses when moving from moderate to very high levels of support. Another important determinant to consider when analyzing target state behavior is rivalry as part of the strategic interaction between target and supporter states. Rivalry causes escalation in target responses by increasing the likelihood of observing non-coercive, only coercive and mixed responses relative to inaction. However, surprisingly, formal alliances only decrease the likelihood of mixed responses by target states relative to inaction.

These findings are important to lead the way for future research on determining which responses are useful to terminate the support for rebel groups. Providing predictions for the severity of target states' responses, this essay contributes to a gap in the literature where generalizable accounts of how target states respond to state support of rebel groups are missing. This essay highlights the broader patterns in target state behavior when they encounter state sponsorship of terrorism. For the first time, this essay identifies the factors that impact the target state behavior by looking at their foreign policy interactions with the supporter states. This study contributes to

the literatures of conflict management and foreign policy crises triggered by rebel groups.

As for the policy implications of this study, the empirical analyses reveal that target states are threatened by intentional sponsors, sponsors that provide higher levels of support, and rival sponsors. Against these groups of states, target states are more likely to demonstrate an escalatory behavior. Therefore, these groups of states should be more careful to risk their relationship with the target states as their sponsorship might cause interstate disputes and conflicts. Given that sponsorship of rebel groups as a foreign policy behavior aims to influence the target states without a direct confrontation, this policy may fail when the level of threat perception of target states elevates due to the aforementioned determinants. Moreover, some allied sponsor states may dwell on the alliance framework they share with the target states and think that they could sort out their differences even if they would sponsor the rebels harming target states. However, this research has shown that formal alliances might not matter in decreasing the severity of target responses when the sponsors are allies. Only the presence of de facto support does not seem to alarm the target states in terms of the threat perceived from the sponsorship.

Future research in addition to exploring the effective target responses to end the sponsorship, could analyze the impact of more rebel group-related factors such as rebel governance. Also, future studies could investigate the factors that lead some states to inaction even if they encounter the drawbacks of state sponsorship of rebel groups. Lastly, more research could be conducted to see if counterterrorism policies employed at home by target states have any influence on how they behave in their foreign relations with the sponsor states. This could be important because some target

states may decide to handle the problem of sponsorship by dealing with the rebel groups domestically rather than halting the sponsorship.



CHAPTER 5. REBEL DIPLOMACY AND TARGET STATE'S RESPONSES TO SPONSORSHIP: INQUIRIES INTO THE EFFECTS OF GROUP-LEVEL VARIABLES

“Civil wars may be fought internally, but any group fighting for state power must also navigate the international political system within which states operate.” (Huang, 2016).

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This study approaches rebel diplomacy as the first step for a rebel group to acquire any form of assistance from abroad. As Huang (2016) succinctly notes, rebel groups engage in diplomatic activities for a variety of reasons, long before external supporters' invitation. Even the opening of rebel offices in foreign states takes place via “unofficial channels” without formal invitations from foreign governments (Huang, 2016, 107). Rebel groups might enjoy the conditions, especially in democratic states abroad to open quasi-think tanks, diaspora communities, youth organizations, lobbying institutions, and cultural centers (Huang, 2016). Without rebel diplomacy, external support provision might not take place especially once

researchers think outside the parameters of principal-agent framework in which the relationship between rebels and external patrons is hierarchical.

The studies of rebel diplomacy have shown that rebel groups for various reasons engage in diplomacy (Coggins, 2015; Huang, 2016; Jones & Mattiacci, 2019). According to Sienknecht (2019, 203), among the conflicts that occurred between 1989 and 2006, in 65% of them rebel groups adopted rebel diplomacy. Most of the time rebel groups employed rebel diplomacy in the forms of opening lobby offices, sending emissaries abroad and creating a foreign affairs body. They also build direct communication structures although less often than the other forms.

This study aims to investigate the impact of rebel diplomacy on target states' responses to external supporters, which has not been previously explored in the literature. I argue that rebel diplomacy could increase the coercive responses by target states towards state supporters because diplomatic rebels would heighten the perceived level of threat by target states. I also posit that rebel objectives and political organizations could increase the effects of rebel diplomacy on the adoption of coercive responses by target states. I use the RSD to empirically test these hypotheses. The results point out that the effect of rebel diplomacy is significant in all of the models especially when rebel groups have goals of secession or autonomy and if the rebels have a political party. Conclusions from this study contribute to external support and rebel diplomacy literature.

5.2. PREVIOUS LITERATURE ON REBEL DIPLOMACY AND STATE SPONSORSHIP OF REBEL GROUPS

5.2.1. *Rebel Diplomacy*

Rebel diplomacy is defined as “a rebel group’s conduct of foreign affairs during civil war for the purpose of advancing its military and political objectives.” (Huang, 2016, 90).

Rebel diplomacy provides “visibility, credibility and acceptance on the world stage” for rebel groups (Huang, 2016, 91). More importantly, rebel diplomacy implies that rebel diplomats could engage in peaceful talks just like their wartime opponents, bolstering their legitimacy. Rebel diplomacy is a political tactic as other non-violent instruments such as propaganda, alliance formation, civilian governance and adherence to international laws that rebel groups use to achieve their goals. Rebel diplomacy should be understood as a tactical choice made to gain political influence in the international system that normally puts formidable obstacles to non-state entities (Coggins, 2015; Huang, 2016).

Rebel diplomacy could also cover the cyber domain where rebel groups use digital public diplomacy as a tool to promote their self-image viewed not only by their constituents domestically but also concerning the publics outside of their sphere. This way, rebel groups might increase their visibility and influence. Given that states’ ability has become limited to control the information flow in the new technologies of communication, social media have enabled many rebel groups to communicate their agenda, attract followers and advance their interests by redefining and expanding their spheres of influence via online public diplomacy. Also, it seems that weak rebel groups might use digital public diplomacy to hide their weakness and appear stronger (Bos & Melissen, 2019). This strand of the literature shows that there is a break away from the notion of rebel diplomacy as the “mimicry of statecraft” to an understanding of rebel diplomacy as “rebels interactions with foreign publics” (Bos & Melissen, 2019, 1333-1334) or “rebel marketing” (Bob, 2005). Public diplomacy when used by

rebel groups could help them draw attention to their activities and objectives from the international community. The idea of rebel marketing suggests that rebel diplomacy increases the chances for rebel groups to acquire competitive resources in the global marketplace of material and normative goods externally provided by sponsors (Bob, 2005; Bos & Melissen, 2019).

The reasons why rebel groups conduct rebel diplomacy are several. Firstly, rebel groups might attain formal recognition through rebel diplomacy. Formal recognition in return can provide representatives in formal bodies of international institutions, access to global markets, foreign economic help and official bilateral ties (Huang, 2016; Podder, 2017). For instance, Polisario as a rebel group seeking independence from Morocco attained diplomatic recognition from several states thanks to its diplomatic engagements. Formal recognition implies political support from the body that recognizes the rebel group. Rebel groups could come closer to their objectives once they secure international political support. For example, East Timor's independence in 2002 from Indonesia could be seen as a clear instance of successful rebel diplomacy's influence on the secessionist goals of a rebel group. Secondly, rebel groups could create an international image with rebel diplomacy that allows them to conduct foreign affairs which is conventionally a business for states and through this image rebel groups imply that if they are recognized they can control a state as they are already acting like one (Coggins, 2015; Huang, 2016). Rebel diplomacy in the minds of rebel groups can provide the benefits of being a state in international politics.

Thirdly, rebel diplomacy could also be viewed as a counter-diplomacy to delegitimize the target states (that usually form extensive diplomatic ties to form external allies) while upholding their side of the story in civil wars (Huang, 2016).

Fourthly, rebel diplomacy might influence the domestic support of rebel groups positively by signaling that they have foreign allies and are active international players which also ensures the loyalty of their domestic support bases. Popular domestic support in return might also boost external help to rebel groups as a mechanism that feeds each other in the long term (Huang, 2016). Moreover, when there are rival rebel groups that also claim to represent the same constituents, diplomatically engaged rebel groups are more likely to be seen as legitimate and resourceful both domestically and internationally (Kaplan, 2016). Furthermore, as the fifth argument for rebel diplomacy, rebel groups might engage in diplomacy to delegitimize an authoritarian target state for its repressive policies domestically that hinder or limit political mobilization for rebel groups and take the attention of the international community to the repressive policies of the target states. Lastly, rebel groups might view rebel diplomacy as a ‘cheap talk’ to gain material resources if they are weaker than the target state they are fighting against. Considering that external support is more likely to be provided for stronger rebel groups (vis a vis the target states) (Salehyan, Gleditsch & Cunningham, 2011), militarily weaker rebel groups might prefer to conduct diplomacy (to compensate the military weakness) to attain material resources (Huang, 2016).

Recent research on rebel diplomacy and negotiated settlements in civil wars show that rebel diplomacy positively affects the likelihood of negotiated settlements through the internal and external pressures to governments and rebel groups to be receptive to each other’s demands (Joshi, 2023). Similarly, absence or failure of rebel diplomacy might prolong conflicts especially if these conflicts are intervened by external foreign actors (Chan, 2015). There is also some research on investigating the effectiveness of public diplomacy in drawing attention from the international

community such as the Libyan rebels in 2011 when the Libyan rebels tried to gain international support, and fastly and efficiently presented their side of the story against the Qaddafi regime by projecting their image as a credible alternative to the government (Jones & Mattiacci, 2019). A similar study frames rebel diplomacy towards international organizations (IOs) such as the UN or EU as a ‘communicative/political debordering strategy’ adopted by rebels to internationalize the conflict and lobby their cause in order to gain international attention (Sienknecht, 2019). As a bottom-up process, through political debordering “rebels frame their expectations and demands according to international norms and therefore signal their compliance with the world political system.” (Sienknecht, 2019, 185).

Another strand of rebel diplomacy literature looks at the concept of “diplomacy from below” to analyze the diplomacy practices among subaltern groups rather than those involving state entities (Ghilarducci & Levorato, 2023). Lastly, some studies have examined the impact of ethnicity on rebel diplomatic efforts (strategic ethnic affection) and that external supporters who share the same ethnicity as the rebels are more likely to provide when the rebels frame their diplomacy around ethnic bonds (Somgynari, 2016). Relatedly, the presence of diaspora communities inside supporter states where rebel groups employ rebel diplomacy ensures the effectiveness of the political work by providing knowledge about the political decision-making processes inside those states (Sienknecht, 2019, 204).

Table 12: Rebel diplomacy literature.

Rebel Diplomacy	Target Audience	Spheres of Influence	Objective
<i>Rebelcraft</i>	States, IOs, NGOs	International politics	Formal recognition, statehood, external

			support provision (Huang, 2016).
<i>Rebel marketing</i>	Foreign publics	Cyber/Public diplomacy	Communication, international support, image projection (Jones & Mattiacci, 2019).
<i>Diplomacy from below</i>	Non-state groups, activist groups, rebel groups	Subaltern politics, global political arena	Organization of solidarity networks between non-state political actors (Ghilarducci & Levorato, 2023).
<i>Communicative /Political debordering</i>	IOs	World political system	International attention Sienknecht (2019).

By and large, rebel diplomacy as a developing literature has engaged with the external support literature. Apart from the use of social media to gain international support, the literature needs studies to understand the effects of rebel diplomacy in gaining external support. For this study, it is necessary to investigate the impact of rebel diplomacy on the responses of target states to external supporters, which has not been studied in previous literature.

5.2.2. Rebel Diplomacy and State Sponsorship of Rebel Groups

Rebel groups as strategic actors generally strive to receive outside support. Recent scholarship has analyzed the structural factors such as regime type, foreign intervention, rebel capacity and ethnic affiliation with supporter states. On the other hand, rebels might behave strategically ('strategic move') to receive support by shaping the perceptions of international audiences through rebel diplomacy (Jones &

Mattiacci, 2019, 740). Just like rebels' strategic use of ideology and demands (Tokdemir et al., 2021), civilian targeting (Wood, 2010) and selectively targeting peace agreements (Kydd & Walter, 2002), rebel groups adopt strategic use of diplomacy to influence and convince the potential state supporters to help them. Jones & Mattiacci (2019, 741) suggest that "to persuade political interveners that supporting the rebels will not be too time intensive or resource consuming, rebels will portray themselves as strong and resolute, capable of defeating the government in short order with international support."

Rebel groups might use rebel diplomacy since rebel diplomatic activities might provide political support that enhances the chances of receiving sponsorship from foreign states. This external support could take many material forms such as weaponry, logistics, training, intelligence, safe haven and troop support as well as immaterial forms such as ideational support (Coggins, 2015; Huang, 2016). Rebel groups, when adopting diplomacy to gain resources from foreign states, use persuasion rather than coercion, whereas domestically, they can secure resources from their constituency with a combination of persuasion and coercion (Huang, 2016). Therefore, rebel diplomats aim to appeal to the interests of potential state supporters since the convergence of interests could yield enormous benefits to the rebel groups, including achieving statehood (Huang, 2016). Jones and Mattiacci approach the study of rebel diplomacy by focusing on rebel agency and assert that "rebels will promote their own narrative of the conflict abroad by framing the conflict -that is, diffusing a specific account of the events on the ground. Through the strategic use of framing, rebels can mobilize support by shaping the cost-benefit calculations of the target." (2019, 741).

Studies of external support to rebel groups suggest that foreign states decide to lend their support based on their own strategic goals and agenda rather than rebel diplomatic engagements (Huang, 2016). From this point of view, rebel diplomacy could help external patrons check the rebel groups by constraining them to abide by the interests of the foreign supporters (Huang, 2016). Through rebel diplomacy, foreign supporters find information about the conditions in civil wars and rebels might “portray themselves as serious, credible alternative to the current government and thus worthy of foreign support.” (Jones & Mattiacci, 2019, 741). Then, rebel diplomacy becomes a medium of communication between rebels and potential foreign supporters that informs the foreign supporters about the possible outcomes of their support which is also shaped by rebel diplomatic activities. The most important information necessary for state supporters when deciding to assist the rebels is related to the costs of foreign support with regard to time and resources and the prospective benefits of foreign support. External supporters provide help when the costs are low and the expected benefits are high. Rebels can shape this information through rebel diplomacy to influence the foreign public and elites to shape the decision-making process of external support, thereby reducing the information asymmetry between foreign governments and their citizens (Jones & Mattiacci, 2019, 743).

Huang (2016) also suggests that rebel diplomacy is not necessarily a ‘weapon of the weak’. That is, contrary to the expectations that militarily or materially weak rebels engage in diplomacy, the evidence shows otherwise. This means that strong rebel groups might also conduct diplomacy. Non-material/ideational strength of rebel groups could increase through rebel diplomacy. Given that rebel diplomacy also makes it easier for rebel groups to garner both political and material external support internationally, rebel diplomacy would provide huge potential to increase rebel

strength both materially and politically/ideationally. Stronger rebel groups would be more likely to attain their goals of secession or autonomy when pursuing their agenda diplomatically abroad. The increase in rebel strength would cause a profound rise in perceived threat by target states. This is because an increased rebel strength materially could cause more damage to the target states in terms of both human and material costs. Additionally, increased political/ideational support for the rebel groups from international audiences would delegitimize the target states' national interests, thereby paving the way for the actualization of rebel groups' demands. Thus, rebel diplomacy threatens target states by increasing rebel strength.

5.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: REBEL DIPLOMACY AND THE THREAT PERCEPTION OF TARGET STATES

Huang's approach to rebel diplomacy provides that rebel's overseas diplomatic activities could be considered as part of rebel governance that traditionally focused previously more on local politics, violent strategies and domestic institutions. Rebel diplomacy ensures external support for the agenda of rebel groups internationally (Huang, 2016). Diplomatic developments favoring the rebel causes are those that usually endanger the national interests of target states. Diplomatic support to rebel groups provided by sponsor states is viewed as less controversial than overt military or financial support according to Huang (2016). On the other hand, given that states prefer helping rebel groups militarily or financially in a covert manner, I think, the first order of business for target states is to be openly angry at and criticize about the overt diplomatic state-rebel group engagements on the international forums.

Rebel diplomacy might cause problems for interstate relations between target and supporter states. Rebel diplomacy enables political campaigns inside a supporter

state. Viewing the environment in which rebel groups freely operate in a space of their own (foreign offices), target states usually raise their concerns to the supporter states. The existence of offices for rebel groups as hubs of rebel diplomatic activities threatens target states as these offices do not only serve for diplomatic engagements but also for other activities such as fundraising and recruitment (Byman et al., 2001). For instance, Hezbollah has received donations from diaspora communities worldwide in addition to Iranian and Syrian assistance in many forms including political, diplomatic, monetary and organizational support (US Department of State, 2022). Likewise, the LTTE had enormous lobbying activities with more than 50 political representations all over the world that enabled fundraising and propaganda for their cause (Sienknecht, 2019). I think having offices is a prerequisite for rebel groups to initiate and enhance rebel diplomacy in an effort to increase rebel material and ideational capabilities. Hence, target states would behave more coercively towards supporter states that provide offices, especially in the form of intentional support.

H1: Target states are more likely to respond coercively if rebel groups engage in rebel diplomacy.

Huang (2016) argues that rebel groups that aim for secession and domestic political mobilization are more likely to adopt diplomacy. Rebel diplomacy can provide rebel groups “to exhibit state-like behavior, present a political face, network with powerful leaders, and make the case for their cause” as significant tools serving secessionism (Huang, 2016). Since rebel diplomacy in this sense enhances the chances of statehood for rebel groups (Coggins, 2015), then target states would perceive the diplomacy conducted by secessionist rebel groups as more threatening.

Target states would view territorial loss or losing autonomy inside their borders as a huge threat to their national security and hence they would view the rebel diplomacy of secessionist or autonomy-seeking groups as a danger to their security. When state supporters or IOs provide a forum for the discussion of rebel political goals at the expense of target states, this might jeopardize the interests of target states and cause friction in the international relations of target states. For instance, Sienknecht (2019, 203) argues that if the PKK had not lobbied for its agenda in the EU, the EU could have been in favor of the Turkish government. Instead throughout the 1990s, the EU blamed Turkey for human rights violations against Kurds, politically supported the Kurdish cause and postponed an earlier agreement with Turkey about the Customs Union in 1994.

***H2:** Target states are more likely to respond coercively if secessionist and/or autonomy-seeking rebel groups engage in diplomacy.*

Rebel groups with domestic political mobilization that are found to be more diplomatic (Huang, 2016) could also be alarming for target states. Because these rebel groups have already a formal institution that provides them a domestic and legal outlook/institution such as a political party. When they also engage in diplomacy, internationally they present themselves as viable political partners that step up their legitimacy both at home and abroad. This gives a right to be heard for their demands, goals and ideologies. Target states might fear the repercussions of rebel diplomacy in the sense that rebel groups might attract more support than the target states from outside. The prospects of external support provision for the politically mobilized rebel groups could elevate the level of threat perceived by target states.

***H3:** Target states are more likely to respond coercively if rebel groups that have a political party inside the target states engage in diplomacy.*

5.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study looks at the time period from the end of the Cold War until 2010, when the NAGs dataset ends. The study of rebel diplomacy is more relevant for the post-Cold War period (Huang, 2016) because, during the proxy warfare in the Cold War, wartime rebel diplomacy was sidelined by ideological competition. Superpowers ensured external support based on the agents' (rebel groups) ideological commitments rather than their diplomatic abilities. The **dependent variable** in this study is the *severity of response*, which takes the value of 0 if there was inaction by target states, 1 if the target responded non-coercively, 2 if the target responded coercively, and 3 if the target used mixed responses (both coercive and non-coercive responses) within a given year. A coercive response includes verbal threats to use force, limited use of force, threats of sanctions, actual sanctions, and demonstrations of legal proofs of sponsorship behavior attributable to the supporter states. The dependent variable is nominal and since the parallel regression assumption is violated when using ordered logistic regression (see Appendix D), I use a multinomial logistic regression model. Similar to the previous analyses in the earlier chapters, I use cubic polynomials and triad-clustered robust standard errors.

5.4.1. Independent Variables

5.4.1.1. Operationalization of Rebel Diplomacy: According to Huang (2016), rebel groups engage in diplomacy when they open a political office abroad, send representatives abroad or establish a political body for conducting foreign relations.

For this study, I employ the first criterion of having political offices abroad to account for the existence of rebel diplomacy. The NAGs dataset codes for this condition in two forms: intentional provision of offices for rebel groups and de facto form of provision of offices. I use both of them to be tested for each hypothesis to see if the difference between them matters. I call intentional office provision as '*robust rebel diplomacy*' while intentional and/or de facto office provision as '*rebel diplomacy*' variable. Both of them are binary coded in the RSD for respective rebel groups. Other accounts of rebel diplomacy concerning rebel-to-rebel diplomacy or rebel groups' public diplomacy ("declaratory policies" of rebels (Bos & Melissen, 2019) do not necessitate the presence of third-party states as the recipient of rebels' communicative messages. Therefore, in this study, I am only concerned with "rebelcraft" as Huang (2016) puts it where the quasi-diplomacy conducted by rebel groups involves entities such as states or international organizations that might ascertain them some legitimacy or recognition. I think rebelcraft more directly threatens target states compared to the forms of rebel diplomacy where the target audience for the rebels are foreign publics or other rebel groups. Since there has not been yet any research to prove if rebelcraft is more threatening than other forms of rebel diplomacy, I hold this argument as an assumption. Also, since this study deals with target responses to state supporters with which the rebels engage diplomatically, rebelcraft is more relevant for the research question which is how rebel diplomacy affects the target responses to state supporters. I only report the impact of robust rebel diplomacy here, while in the Appendix, I include only *de facto rebel diplomacy* (de facto office provision for rebel groups) and *rebel diplomacy* (both de facto and intentional office provision for rebel groups), which were not significantly influencing the severity of target responses.

5.4.1.2. Operationalization of Domestic Rebel Political Organization: Previously, Huang (2016) used two alternative measures for rebel political organizations as schools (rebel governance through education provision for constituents) and legal political party/wing. In this study, I believe the existence of a legal political party should suffice because I am interested in more of the strength of political representation of a rebel group domestically rather than rebel governance through provision of education. I posited that the domestic political representation of a rebel group could be reinforced if rebel groups also engage in diplomacy for foreign audiences. This in return might threaten target states since rebel diplomats having a political party at home might be regarded as more legitimate and viable partners by foreign states and international institutions, which jeopardizes the target states' position and interests. Therefore, for H3, I operationalize the rebel political organization as rebels having a political party inside the target states which is coded as a binary variable in the NAGs dataset.

5.4.1.3. Control variables: Rebel groups' **identity** might matter when trying to understand how target states react to the sponsors when they allow rebel diplomatic activities. Religion-based rebel groups could incite more coercive responses from a target state due to the heavy costs religion-based rebel groups inflict on targets in terms of civilian losses and waste of material resources to fight a rebel group. That is why I control for religion-based rebel groups in the analyses since they are more lethal and this could cause some of the observed variation in the coercive behavior of target states. In addition, I include other variables concerning rebel identity (ethnonationalist, leftist and other) and objectives (toppling an existing leadership,

change of regime, secession, autonomy, demands for policy change and other) that are already coded in the NAGs dataset.

5.5. ANALYSIS

Testing the Hypothesis 1, Table 13 shows that robust rebel diplomacy variable is significant for all the categories of the severity of response. Thus, intentional office provision for rebel groups (which is the proxy for rebel diplomacy) impacts the severity of target response positively and significantly. These results indicate that Hypothesis 1 is supported. Target states are more likely to give any kind of response when the externally supported rebel groups engage in diplomacy compared to giving *no response* at all. Among control variables, Table 16 displays that if rebel groups have an agenda to change the regime type of the target state, the likelihood of coercive ($p < 0.01$) and mixed responses ($p < 0.001$) decrease compared to inaction and the results are significant.

Table 13: Robust Rebel Diplomacy (Intentional Office Provision by Sponsoring States)

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non- coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non- coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Robust rebel diplomacy	0.493* (0.212)	0.957* (0.468)	0.889* (0.369)	0.564** (0.208)	1.149** (0.441)	1.071** (0.376)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership				0.161 (0.191)	-0.357 (0.974)	-0.318 (0.439)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type				-0.389 (0.204)	-1.922** (0.599)	-1.279*** (0.382)
NAG Obj- Secession				-0.371 (0.205)	0.323 (0.504)	0.180 (0.367)
NAG Obj- Autonomy				0.138 (0.236)	-0.429 (0.651)	-0.326 (0.459)

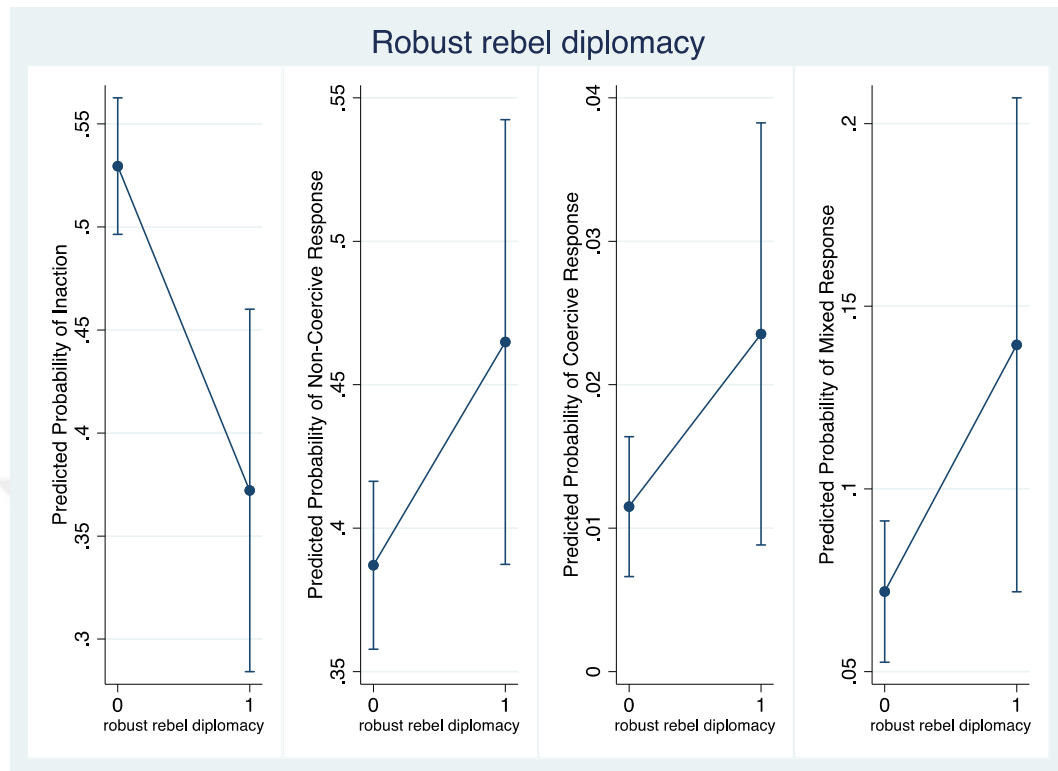
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change				0.201	-0.409	-0.481
				(0.202)	(0.724)	(0.430)
NAG Obj- Other				0.242	1.117	0.340
				(0.372)	(0.851)	(0.713)
NAG ID- No ID				0.00374	1.768	0.367
				(0.298)	(1.158)	(0.641)
NAG ID- Ethnonationalist				-0.0456	0.532	-0.451
				(0.315)	(0.880)	(0.647)
NAG- ID- Religious				0.0199	0.518	0.663
				(0.219)	(0.585)	(0.425)
NAG ID- Leftist				-0.140	0.916	0.457
				(0.241)	(0.566)	(0.486)
NAG ID- Other				1.613**	3.498*	2.829**
				(0.558)	(1.453)	(0.895)
Time	-0.168*	-0.249	-0.0293	-0.182**	-0.362	-0.109
	(0.0661)	(0.234)	(0.118)	(0.0672)	(0.239)	(0.119)
Time2	0.0224*	0.0391	0.00504	0.0258**	0.0565*	0.0172
	(0.00880)	(0.0266)	(0.0150)	(0.00895)	(0.0279)	(0.0152)
Time3	-0.000655*	-0.00128	-9.29e-06	-0.000771*	-0.00190*	-0.000437
	(0.000319)	(0.000878)	(0.000532)	(0.000325)	(0.000909)	(0.000540)
Constant	-0.137	-3.732***	-2.122***	-0.0621	-4.015***	-1.575**
	(0.138)	(0.512)	(0.254)	(0.293)	(0.868)	(0.517)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719
ll	-3552	-3552	-3552	-3445	-3445	-3445

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Figure 13 below shows the substantive effects of robust rebel diplomacy.

When rebel groups engage in diplomacy through the intentional office provision of supporter states, the predicted probability of inaction by target states decreases from 52% to 37%. However, there is an increase in non-coercive responses from nearly 38% to 46%, in coercive responses from 1% to nearly 2,2%, and in mixed responses from 7% to 14%. Especially, the increase in *only coercive* and *mixed* responses is doubled when rebel diplomacy is present. This means that the level of perceived threat by target states is increased by rebel diplomacy and causes the adoption of harsher measures.

Figure 13: Substantive Effect of Robust Rebel Diplomacy on the Severity of Target Response



As for Hypothesis 2, I test a conditional proposition where I limit the rebel groups by their objectives. Target states may perceive secessionist and autonomy-seeking rebel groups more threatening and may increase the severity of their response if those rebel groups engage in diplomacy. Table 14 shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression models for Hypothesis 2. In the models, I do not include *NAG ID- Ethnonationalist* variable since it may correlate highly with rebel objectives of secession and autonomy. The results display that Hypothesis 2 is supported. The likelihood of observing *only coercive* responses compared to inaction increases when secessionist and/or autonomy-seeking rebel groups engage in diplomacy as they could be more threatening for target states. Target states have more to lose when it comes to these rebel groups and are more likely to use *only coercive* responses towards sponsors that enable them.

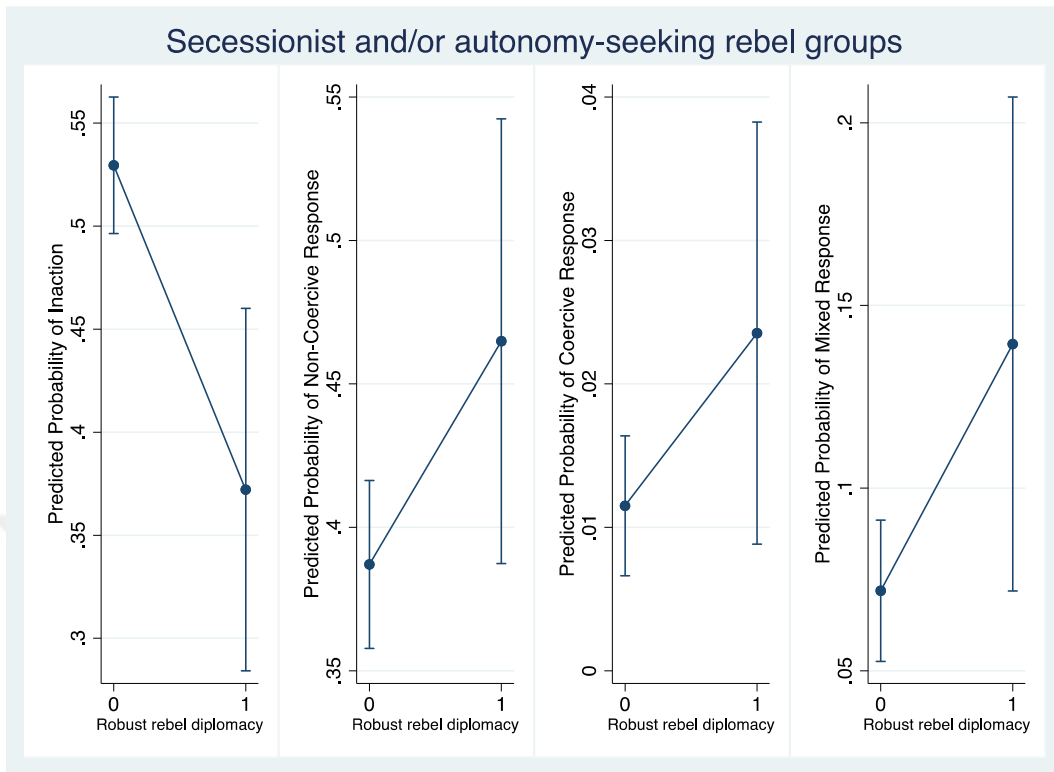
Table 14: The Impact of Secessionist/Autonomy-Seeking Rebel Diplomats on the Severity of Target Responses

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Robust rebel diplomacy	0.164 (0.282)	1.180* (0.576)	0.477 (0.550)	0.302 (0.272)	1.763*** (0.510)	0.690 (0.583)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership				0.141 (0.475)	2.548 (1.845)	0.828 (1.506)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type				-0.683 (0.395)	-0.187 (1.682)	-0.912 (1.088)
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change				-0.163 (0.344)	-0.290 (1.258)	-1.004 (1.162)
NAG ID- No ID				-0.0726 (0.607)	2.954** (1.016)	2.040** (0.760)
NAG- ID- Religious				0.0726 (0.328)	-1.199 (1.566)	0.428 (1.079)
NAG ID- Leftist				-0.307 (0.331)	1.210* (0.608)	0.959* (0.460)
Time	-0.148 (0.102)	-0.175 (0.230)	0.0586 (0.163)	-0.157 (0.103)	-0.217 (0.245)	0.0179 (0.179)
Time2	0.0236 (0.0126)	0.0252 (0.0277)	-0.0111 (0.0194)	0.0267* (0.0128)	0.0365 (0.0306)	-0.00388 (0.0202)
Time3	-0.000677 (0.000432)	-0.000637 (0.000963)	0.000709 (0.000666)	-0.000803 (0.000444)	-0.00102 (0.00107)	0.000465 (0.000669)
Constant	-0.355 (0.226)	-3.893*** (0.614)	-2.181*** (0.371)	-0.228 (0.231)	-4.527*** (0.724)	-2.407*** (0.477)
Observations	1,843	1,843	1,843	1,843	1,843	1,843
ll	-1760	-1760	-1760	-1707	-1707	-1707

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Figure 14 shows that there is a decrease in the predicted probability of inaction from 51% to 41% when secessionist and/or autonomy-seeking rebel diplomats exist. Contrarily, there is an increase in the predicted probability of *only coercive* responses from nearly 1% to nearly 2,2%. Target states almost double the use of *only coercive* responses compared to inaction when they are confronted with the sponsorship of rebel diplomats aiming for secession and/or autonomy.

Figure 14: Substantive Impact of Rebel Diplomacy When Rebel Objectives are Secession and/or Autonomy



Lastly, I test Hypothesis 3, this time using the condition of the presence of political party representing the rebel groups inside the target states. I posited in Hypothesis 3 that target states may view the diplomatic activities of rebel groups which have a political party presentation at home as more threatening compared to rebels that do not enjoy political presentation. Table 15 presents that this hypothesis is not supported. Contrary to the expectations in Hypothesis 3, rebel diplomats with a political party at home do not cause an increase in any of the responses compared to inaction.

Table 15: The Impact of Rebel Diplomats that Have A Political Party on the Severity of Target Responses

VARIABLES	(Model 1)	(Model 1)	(Model 2)	(Model 2)	(Model 1)	(Model 1)
	Non-coercive	Coercive	Mixed	Non-coercive	Coercive	Mixed
Robust rebel diplomacy	0.942 (0.575)	3.150** (1.150)	1.274 (0.837)	0.926 (0)	3.566 (0)	1.121 (0)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership				1.562 (0)	13.25 (0)	1.774 (0)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type				-1.578 (0)	-34.93 (0)	-20.21 (0)
NAG Obj- Secession				0.503 (0)	25.49 (0)	4.040 (0)
NAG Obj- Autonomy				0.521 (0)	-9.570 (0)	3.202 (0)
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change				-0.818 (0)	-10.96 (0)	0.178 (0)
NAG ID- No ID				2.251 (0)	34.99 (0)	3.841 (0)
NAG ID- Ethnonationalist				0.189 (0)	-0.291 (0)	-18.61 (0)
NAG ID- Religious				-0.207 (0)	22.69 (0)	-31.66 (0)
NAG ID- Leftist				1.941 (0)	36.71 (0)	3.129 (0)
Time	-0.150 (0.161)	-0.391 (0.488)	0.242 (0.315)	-0.194 (0)	-0.0768 (0)	0.325 (0)
Time2	0.0270 (0.0220)	0.0439 (0.0701)	-0.0326 (0.0434)	0.0321 (0)	0.0184 (0)	-0.0377 (0)
Time3	-0.000828 (0.000798)	-0.000714 (0.00238)	0.00158 (0.00153)	-0.000835 (0)	5.53e-05 (0)	0.00182 (0)
Constant	-0.330 (0.372)	-4.252*** (0.697)	-2.352*** (0.691)	-0.917 (0)	-29.71 (0)	12.51 (0)
Observations	503	503	503	503	503	503
ll	-487.2	-487.2	-487.2	-391.9	-391.9	-391.9

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Lastly, I include Table 16 as a robustness check adding different control variables including state-level factors. The effects of rebel diplomacy on the severity

of target responses compared to inaction mostly remain significant except for the *non-coercive* responses in Model 2. Target states are more likely to increase the adoption of *only coercive* and mixed responses compared to inaction when external support is provided for rebel groups that engage in rebel diplomacy. These results exhibit the strength of rebel diplomacy variable in explaining the severity of target responses.

Table 16: Robustness Checks - The Impact of Robust Rebel Diplomacy

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Robust rebel diplomacy	0.546** (0.209)	1.111* (0.449)	1.032** (0.382)	0.416 (0.222)	1.343** (0.438)	1.118** (0.409)
Secession/Autonomy	0.180 (0.285)	0.489 (1.136)	0.664 (0.603)	0.203 (0.284)	0.362 (0.839)	0.807 (0.523)
Political party dummy	0.133 (0.217)	0.477 (0.670)	1.032* (0.495)	0.0795 (0.212)	0.324 (0.599)	1.227* (0.539)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership	0.183 (0.185)	0.0307 (1.103)	-0.0207 (0.456)	0.124 (0.198)	-0.329 (0.774)	-0.0398 (0.392)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type	-0.479* (0.205)	-1.837** (0.593)	-1.247*** (0.358)	-0.501* (0.216)	-1.714** (0.594)	-1.102** (0.342)
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change	0.196 (0.196)	-0.253 (0.676)	-0.399 (0.415)	0.0823 (0.197)	-0.129 (0.609)	-0.113 (0.405)
NAG Obj- Other	0.358 (0.365)	1.625 (1.091)	0.939 (0.709)	0.505 (0.458)	1.620 (0.863)	0.704 (0.846)
NAG ID- No ID	-0.154 (0.274)	1.775 (1.084)	0.542 (0.611)	-0.0672 (0.310)	1.116 (0.935)	-0.563 (0.653)
NAG ID- Ethnonationalist	-0.353 (0.298)	0.292 (0.941)	-0.862 (0.574)	-0.445 (0.316)	-0.103 (0.799)	-1.421** (0.518)
NAG- ID- Religious	-0.0808 (0.206)	0.617 (0.553)	0.879* (0.416)	-0.169 (0.254)	0.449 (0.573)	0.477 (0.525)
NAG ID- Leftist	-0.210 (0.240)	0.838 (0.550)	0.466 (0.449)	-0.332 (0.260)	0.747 (0.539)	-0.00900 (0.583)
NAG ID- Other	1.565** (0.554)	3.622* (1.466)	3.231*** (0.914)	1.913** (0.605)	3.818* (1.690)	3.704*** (1.106)
Contiguity				0.640*** (0.166)	2.130*** (0.542)	2.280*** (0.424)
Polity V- Target				-0.00283 (0.00243)	-0.0211*** (0.00610)	-0.0174*** (0.00483)
Polity V- Supporter				0.00275 (0.00363)	-0.0187** (0.00618)	-0.0132*** (0.00382)
GDP/pc- Supporter				0.00406 (0.00531)	-0.00751 (0.0213)	-0.0681* (0.0295)
GDP/pc- Target				0.0138 (0.0111)	0.0207 (0.0197)	0.0645** (0.0197)
Instability- Target				0.242 (0.160)	-0.141 (0.414)	0.0249 (0.336)
Instability- Supporter				-0.0919	-0.105	0.319

				(0.151)	(0.423)	(0.296)
Relative power of target				0.000563***	0.000545	-0.00412
				(0.000158)	(0.000564)	(0.00544)
Time	-0.194**	-0.344	-0.0996	-0.170*	-0.392	0.0354
	(0.0670)	(0.237)	(0.121)	(0.0738)	(0.246)	(0.151)
Time2	0.0270**	0.0537	0.0159	0.0245**	0.0607*	0.00641
	(0.00892)	(0.0275)	(0.0153)	(0.00940)	(0.0287)	(0.0180)
Time3	-0.000810*	-0.00179*	-0.000373	-0.000753*	-0.00201*	-0.000165
	(0.000324)	(0.000899)	(0.000542)	(0.000336)	(0.000956)	(0.000611)
Constant	0.0926	-4.525***	-2.239***	-0.404	-5.649***	-4.315***
	(0.279)	(1.088)	(0.643)	(0.338)	(1.059)	(0.868)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,257	3,257	3,257
ll	-3441	-3441	-3441	-2802	-2802	-2802

Robust standard errors in parentheses,

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

5.6. CONCLUSION

Rebel diplomacy whether to initiate external support or to prolong it, is essential for rebel groups to gain legitimacy, and representation in the international forums and communicate their agenda at the expense of target states both for domestic and international consumption. The empirical analyses in this study have shown that when rebel groups that engage with diplomacy are provided with external state support, the level of target states' threat perception increases and therefore the severity of target responses increases toward external state supporters. Externally supported rebelcraft is viewed as more dangerous when rebel groups also aim for secession or autonomy leading the target states to respond coercively to the sponsors.

Future studies could look at counter-diplomacy efforts of target states when the rebel groups engage in diplomacy are supported by foreign states especially through case studies. For instance, target states might adopt more diplomatic responses when they cannot use coercion. In the case of Angola against the UNITA, rebel diplomatic activities in the US, provoked Angola into counter-diplomacy to

lobby its side inside the US. Angola did this by hiring a public relations firm as UNITA did the same earlier (Huang, 2016). Likewise, Turkey used lobbying activities against the PKK whose rebel diplomacy activities were considerably increased by 1990s in the European Parliament. Turkish counter-diplomacy worked for institutional exclusion of the PKK through its designation as a terrorist organization by the EU countries (Sienknecht, 2019). Examples like these highlight the importance of contextual factors that needs an in-depth analysis through case studies, in particular for better theory building.

Future studies could also look at the influence of domestic developments such as counterterrorism/counterinsurgency strategies against rebel groups or conflict outcomes (between target and rebel groups) inside target states to understand their reflections on interstate relations (between target and supporter states) with regards to rebel diplomacy. Rebel diplomatic activities might go up or down during civil wars depending on the target states' strategies against rebels. At the micro-level, future studies could also investigate how target governments enter into a deal with rebel diplomats internationally featuring specific strategies they comparatively adopt (such as hiring a public relations firm).

The implications from this study reveal that target states take rebel diplomacy seriously when they interact with state sponsors of rebel groups. This study also shows the importance of profiling rebel groups by their characteristics that would positively impact their legitimacy and reputation when they engage in diplomacy. In doing so, this essay has identified rebel groups with a political party wing, secessionist, and autonomy-seeking rebel groups as more threatening for target states when these rebels become diplomats. However, more research is needed to interpret the interplay between rebel group features and supporter states' advantages over

target states to understand why even in the presence of the threatening factors associated with rebel diplomacy, target states remain passive or non-coercive against the state sponsors.



CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

The need for empirical studies to account for target state behavior against state sponsors of rebel groups as a driving point has motivated this dissertation. The external support literature has not yet engaged with conflict management studies to identify how target states have been reacting against state sponsors and to suggest what they can and perhaps should do to terminate such animosity. This dissertation takes the first step to identify target states' responses toward state supporters of rebel groups by adopting the selection theory's definition of state sponsorship. In this theory, rebel agency is accounted for in addition to the basic premises of the principal-agent theory that has been used many times to date to depict the relationship between rebel groups and external supporters. On the other hand, when target states enter into the picture, a triadic relationship occurs, which necessitates a broader definition of sponsorship to analyze how target states perceive the state support for rebel groups.

When external support takes place, the national interests of target states would dictate how they behave following a realist theory of international relations. Threat perception theory fits neatly to this picture, where target states decide to act based on their perceived level of threat. Depending on support type, support level, the strategic interaction between states and rebel diplomacy, target states may respond only

coercively, non-coercively or using mixed responses in addition to inaction as a non-response. These categories depict the severity of responses by target states. Analyzing how the severity of target states changes depending on state-level and group-level factors, this dissertation builds a generalized pathway into predicting the target responses to state sponsorship of rebel groups.

This dissertation introduces the Response to Sponsorship (RSD) dataset in Chapter 2, which codes specific target responses between 1991 and 2010 towards state supporters within a given triad-year. The specific responses include diplomatic, militarized, economic, domestic and covert responses. Future additions of support termination data could enhance the utility of this dataset to evaluate the effectiveness of responses in terminating the sponsorship, and prescribe policy suggestions. One of the limitations of this dissertation is the lack of a longer time period to account for target state reactions. This issue can be remedied by future research especially to cover the period after 2010.

In Chapter 3, this dissertation conceptually contributes to the external support and conflict management literature by utilizing the codebook of the RSD to determine the general patterns in response strategies of target states. Through a retrospective reading of the codebook and coding notes, this study identifies coercive (coercion) and non-coercive (persuasion) response strategies. Coercive strategies follow from the extant literature and include blackmail and coercive diplomacy. Non-coercive strategies are conceptualized for the first time, based on the RSD as persuasion by dialogue, persuasion by agreement, persuasion by shame, persuasion by exclusion, and persuasion by balancing. This chapter also includes an in-depth case study of Turkish response strategies against the Syrian sponsorship of the PKK to illustrate and analyze each response strategy, as Turkey used all of them during 1991 and 2010.

In Chapter 4, this dissertation aims to understand the effects of state-level variables on the responses of target states. The influence of support type, support level, rivalry and formal alliance is investigated in this chapter. The findings indicate that the severity of target responses increases if there is intentional support, higher levels of support provision, and rivalry among target and supporter states. Conversely, the severity of target responses towards sponsor states decreases if there is de facto support. Formal alliance between target and supporter states only decreases the likelihood of mixed responses.

Lastly, Chapter 5, employs group-level variables to understand their impact on target state responses. Specifically, this chapter focuses on rebel diplomacy as the main explanatory variable which was found to be increasing the severity of target responses significantly. Then, the chapter identifies the conditional effects of rebel objectives of secession and autonomy, and the presence of a rebel political organization, which magnified the effects of rebel diplomacy on target states' only coercive responses.

This research concludes that factors that downplay the agency of rebel groups such as the state-centric international system, and national interests of states when forming transnational alliances have decreased enormously in the post-Cold War era. With the advent of new technologies, rebel groups are more able to reach not only foreign states by themselves to initiate external support provision but also, they could communicate their side of the story to foreign publics. While external support is usually understood as foreign states deciding to help a rebel group with its own foreign policy goals, selection theory's adoption in the field has shown the other side of the coin where rebels also make use of the opportunities to exert influence and receive support from third-party states. Target states should beware of this increasing

activism of rebel groups to acquire external assistance and develop mechanisms to hinder the deterioration of interstate relations due to the sponsorship of rebel groups. One such mechanism could be to enhance studies of response effectiveness to identify peaceful ways of ending the sponsorship of rebel groups. As argued in this dissertation, non-coercive responses are the most frequently utilized measures by target states against the state sponsorship of rebel groups. Future studies could investigate the ways in which these non-coercive responses/persuasion strategies could be made more effective for support termination.

Target states should be more careful when they encounter supporters who provide intentional support, higher levels of support, and are strategic rivals. Sponsoring states too should take into consideration that their behavior in the forms of intentional support, higher levels of support, and inter-state rivalry could give birth to new conflict, escalate the existing tensions between states and might even cause militarized disputes. Hence, a sponsor's strategy of indirect involvement in a conflict may transform into a direct confrontation with the target state depending on support type, support level and existence of rivalry. Target states should also be more cautious against the externally supported rebel diplomats since their reputation is at risk if they cannot counteract the rebelcraft and only utilize coercive measures against state sponsors. Target states should also be aware of the various response strategies outlined in this dissertation that range from coercion to persuasion strategies. The case study analyzed here demonstrates that the use of response strategic incrementally and comprehensively can yield positive results for target states in terms of ending a sponsorship.

The findings of this study indicate some limitations. Firstly, when it comes to formal alliances between states, a better understanding and measurement of alliances

or partnerships among states is necessary to effectively gauge their influence on target responses toward state supporters. For instance, formal alliances may include defense pacts among rival states. While rivalries increase the chances of observing coercive behavior from target states, the question of whether defense pacts among rival states will mitigate the probability of coercive target behavior or not needs further analysis. Secondly, additional research is required to elucidate the rationale behind certain states' adoption of mixed responses involving both coercive and non-coercive measures. Similarly, further study of a *holistic/comprehensive response approach* involving the utilization of diverse forms of responses such as diplomatic, economic, militarized, domestic, and covert responses simultaneously is imperative to understand the variegated behavioral patterns of target states when confronted with state sponsorship of rebel groups.

The need for studying target responses have gained more importance as the problem of state sponsorship is growing for countries like Turkey, considering the support provided for the PYD in Syria by the USA, which has been a traditional ally of Turkey. Turkey has to develop strategies to end the sponsorship of rebel groups that threatens its national security especially because rebel groups like the PYD as the offshoot of the PKK, aims for an independent state targeting Turkish territories as well. Then, studies of conflict management and foreign policy crises have to engage the issue of sponsorship with more empirical works and case studies to analyze the behavior of target states, and in the end, to provide roadmaps for target states.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE IMPACT OF *REBEL DIPLOMACY* (BOTH INTENTIONAL AND DE FACTO

OFFICE PROVISION FOR REBEL GROUPS) ON THE SEVERITY OF TARGET RESPONSES

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Non-coercive	(Model 1) Coercive	(Model 1) Mixed	(Model 2) Non-coercive	(Model 2) Coercive	(Model 2) Mixed
Rebel diplomacy	0.0848 (0.142)	0.163 (0.429)	0.289 (0.302)	0.142 (0.150)	0.455 (0.401)	0.588 (0.300)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership				0.198 (0.194)	-0.252 (0.964)	-0.297 (0.435)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type				-0.345 (0.204)	-1.894** (0.618)	-1.299*** (0.385)
NAG Obj- Secession				-0.330 (0.205)	0.433 (0.500)	0.255 (0.372)
NAG Obj- Autonomy				0.211 (0.235)	-0.292 (0.665)	-0.256 (0.460)
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change				0.246 (0.198)	-0.377 (0.765)	-0.516 (0.438)
NAG Obj- Other				0.342 (0.370)	1.270 (0.885)	0.426 (0.746)
NAG ID- No ID				0.0699 (0.298)	1.861 (1.144)	0.493 (0.631)
NAG ID- Ethnonationalist				-0.0368 (0.319)	0.502 (0.904)	-0.522 (0.665)
NAG- ID- Religious				0.0229 (0.221)	0.568 (0.593)	0.707 (0.433)
NAG ID- Leftist				-0.121 (0.241)	0.974 (0.551)	0.529 (0.456)
NAG ID- Other				1.666** (0.554)	3.641* (1.420)	2.982*** (0.874)
Time	-0.168* (0.0658)	-0.251 (0.232)	-0.0304 (0.117)	-0.182** (0.0670)	-0.360 (0.241)	-0.108 (0.119)
Time2	0.0224* (0.00877)	0.0393 (0.0262)	0.00488 (0.0147)	0.0254** (0.00893)	0.0559* (0.0281)	0.0164 (0.0151)
Time3	-0.000658* (0.000318)	-0.00129 (0.000861)	-7.92e-06 (0.000521)	-0.000755* (0.000324)	-0.00189* (0.000919)	-0.000404 (0.000536)
Constant	-0.102 (0.140)	-3.637*** (0.499)	-2.079*** (0.257)	-0.131 (0.294)	-4.150*** (0.873)	-1.667** (0.521)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719
ll	-3569	-3569	-3569	-3459	-3459	-3459

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

APPENDIX B. THE IMPACT OF *DE FACTO* REBEL DIPLOMACY ON THE SEVERITY OF TARGET RESPONSES

VARIABLES	(2) Model 1	(3) Model 1	(4) Model 1	(6) Model 2	(7) Model 2	(8) Model 2
De facto rebel diplomacy	-0.211 (0.167)	-0.561 (0.547)	-0.271 (0.355)	-0.181 (0.168)	-0.337 (0.591)	-0.0410 (0.388)
NAG Obj-Toppling an existing leadership				0.233 (0.190)	-0.144 (0.945)	-0.188 (0.443)
NAG Obj- Change of regime type				-0.299 (0.201)	-1.748** (0.621)	-1.171** (0.411)
NAG Obj- Secession				-0.316 (0.209)	0.459 (0.523)	0.303 (0.381)
NAG Obj- Autonomy				0.245 (0.232)	-0.148 (0.668)	-0.117 (0.466)
NAG Obj- Demands for policy change				0.305 (0.197)	-0.181 (0.804)	-0.348 (0.462)
NAG Obj- Other				0.377 (0.374)	1.391 (0.864)	0.543 (0.770)
NAG ID- No ID				0.0432 (0.299)	1.803 (1.137)	0.456 (0.638)
NAG ID- Ethnonationalist				0.0227 (0.318)	0.662 (0.871)	-0.372 (0.636)
NAG- ID- Religious				0.0197 (0.224)	0.561 (0.597)	0.717 (0.445)
NAG ID- Leftist				-0.146 (0.242)	0.928 (0.599)	0.505 (0.474)
NAG ID- Other				1.636** (0.546)	3.580* (1.406)	2.969*** (0.846)
Time	-0.168* (0.0662)	-0.252 (0.231)	-0.0322 (0.116)	-0.177** (0.0673)	-0.353 (0.240)	-0.0982 (0.117)
Time2	0.0229** (0.00885)	0.0407 (0.0262)	0.00622 (0.0147)	0.0252** (0.00896)	0.0555* (0.0280)	0.0158 (0.0150)
Time3	-0.000682* (0.000322)	-0.00135 (0.000860)	-6.50e-05 (0.000521)	-0.000755* (0.000326)	-0.00188* (0.000920)	-0.000399 (0.000536)
Constant	-0.0509 (0.139)	-3.523*** (0.517)	-1.958*** (0.257)	-0.155 (0.291)	-4.223*** (0.850)	-1.746*** (0.516)
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719	3,719
ll	-3567	-3567	-3567	-3466	-3466	-3466

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

**APPENDIX C. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INDEPENDENT & CONTROL
VARIABLES**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Rivalry	3,719	0.2	0.4	0.0	1.0
Formal alliance between Target and Supporter	3,719	0.2	0.4	0.0	1.0
Contiguity	3,719	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Intentional	3,719	0.4	0.5	0.0	1.0
De facto	3,719	0.7	0.4	0.0	1.0
Secession & Autonomy	3,719	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Polity score of Target	3,598	-5.4	24.5	-88.0	10.0
Polity score of Supporter	3,719	-3.3	20.0	-88.0	10.0
Supporter Instability	3,719	0.3	0.4	0.0	1.0
Target Instability	3,719	0.8	0.4	0.0	1.0
Relative power (Target/Supporter)	3,719	11.6	100.1	0.0	1655.6
GDP per capita of Supporter	3,625	10.6	14.7	0.0	96.9
GDP per capita of Target	3,459	6.1	10.0	0.0	50.4
Religious rebel group	3,719	0.4	0.5	0.0	1.0
Support level	3,719	1.9	0.8	0.0	3.0
Rebel diplomacy	3,719	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.0
Robust rebel diplomacy	3,719	0.1	0.3	0.0	1.0

APPENDIX D. BRANT TEST OF PARALLEL REGRESSION ASSUMPTION

	chi2	p>chi2	df
All	214.07	0	32
Intentional	0.5	0.779	2
De facto	4.46	0.108	2
Support level	23.52	0	2
Rivalry	0.82	0.663	2
Formal alliance	17.34	0	2
Contiguity	28.09	0	2
CINC score	4.16	0.125	2
Target PITF	2.17	0.337	2
Supporter PITF	6.49	0.039	2
Polity V- target	2.8	0.247	2
Polity V- supporter	74.51	0	2
Religious rebel groups	12.57	0.002	2
Autonomy & Secession	2.33	0.312	2
time	5.48	0.065	2
time2	5.09	0.079	2
time3	4.77	0.092	2

A significant test statistic provides evidence that the parallel regression assumption has been violated.