

Effect of peace support/keeping operations on diplomatic relations and peaceful dispute resolution

The cell shows that the presence of peace support/keeping operations have moderate impact on diplomatic engagement and trust-building, influencing negotiations and ceasefire agreements.

Geographical region: Global, Sub Saharan Africa

Effect: Moderate positive effect ($g = 0.16$)

Confidence in study findings: Medium confidence

Short summary

Peacekeeping operations, particularly when combined with mediation, enhance diplomatic relations and peaceful dispute resolution. While peacekeeping alone does not significantly increase conflict termination, its presence strengthens mediation, improving negotiations and agreement longevity. A higher number of peacekeepers fosters trust, facilitates ceasefires, and improves local cooperation, particularly when rebels are weaker. However, involving multiple actors can complicate long-term peace implementation. Civilian peacekeepers play a key role in engaging state officials and reducing commitment issues, underscoring the importance of strong UN missions in managing mistrust and sustaining peace.

Long Summary

The Intervention

Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs), where

1) PSOs encompass all multi-functional operations, conducted impartially, normally by States or by international or regional organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), involving military forces and diplomatic and humanitarian agencies, and are designed to achieve a long-term political settlement or other specified objective, and

2), the deployment of UN peacekeepers into countries in a post-conflict setting. This involves the deployment of international troops and police, who work with local civilian peacekeepers to provide security to an area (UN Peacekeeping n.d.). Operations with primary or secondary objectives to prevent, halt or reduce the risk of atrocities are also considered within this category.

There are no studies of DDR in this cell.

How is the intervention expected to work?

Peacekeeping operations are expected to create stable conditions for diplomatic engagement and mediation, thereby strengthening peace agreement implementation and cooperation among conflict parties. These conditions facilitate negotiations, and support ceasefire agreements by

managing mistrust and commitment challenges - that is, commitment to a ceasefire seems more convincing in the presence of PKOs/PSOs. Hence these interventions may have an impact on diplomatic relations and peaceful dispute resolution.

Evidence base

This cell contains 8 studies: All 8 studies are quantitative studies.

Seven studies use global cross-country data, while 1 is confined to sub-Saharan Africa.

Evidence findings

While peacekeeping alone does not significantly increase the probability of conflict termination, its combination with mediation, particularly transformative peacekeeping, amplifies mediation's effectiveness in ending civil wars. Counterfactual analyses reveal that, without mediation and peacekeeping, the number of conflicts would have been significantly higher (Clayton, 2022). Although mediation alone does not substantially extend the duration of peace agreements, its interaction with UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) positively influences agreement longevity (DeRouen, 2018).

The findings further suggest that the combined efforts of mediation and peacekeeping are usually necessary for maintaining peace, with a more pronounced impact at lower probabilities of conflict recurrence. A higher number of UN personnel correlates with improved peace agreement implementation scores, though the difference is not substantial. Additionally, the presence of a UN political mission enhances the implementation process (Maekawa, 2019).

The presence of more actors (fractionalisation) increases the likelihood of negotiations by intensifying information challenges and motivating combatants to engage in dialogue. Conversely, a greater number of actors complicates the agreement stage due to increased complexities and the potential for spoilers. Fractionalisation also reduces the likelihood of successful implementation, as shifting alliances and unresolved information problems persist. Third-party involvement, while beneficial for successful implementation, can introduce challenges in earlier stages of a conflict (Findley, 2012).

Higher numbers of peacekeepers are linked to an increased likelihood of mediated negotiations in non-state conflicts, reflecting the critical role of security concerns in initiating negotiations. However, the number of peacekeepers does not appear to influence mediated negotiations in intrastate conflicts (Duursma, 2022). The study strongly supports mediation-based logic, emphasizing the critical role of civilian peacekeepers in fostering trust between conflicting parties and addressing underlying conflict issues. Civilian peacekeepers effectively engage with state officials to promote peace and significantly increase the likelihood of ceasefire agreements in non-state conflicts.

From a capabilities-based perspective, larger deployments of peacekeeping troops help create secure conditions for negotiations, facilitate logistics to bring conflict parties together, and exert military pressure to encourage ceasefire agreements (Duursma, 2022). The presence of peacekeeping troops also positively impacts peace maintenance, although peacekeeping shows a negative relationship (Emmanuel, 2015). Larger UN missions are also associated with improved cooperation among local actors. However, this effect depends on the relative strength of rebels compared to the government. Specifically, when rebels are weaker, the presence of a robust UN force significantly enhances cooperation. These findings underscore the ability of UN

peacekeeping missions to manage mistrust and address commitment challenges in civil wars, particularly when missions are strong, and rebel forces are at a disadvantage (Ruggeri, 2013).

Included studies

Clayton (2022) analyses mediation and peacekeeping for managing conflicts, with mediation aiming to facilitate negotiated settlements and peacekeeping focusing on preventing agreements from collapsing. These tools are often used simultaneously, especially in intrastate conflicts, where peacekeeping operations create a favorable context for mediation by providing independent information and stabilizing the situation. The study examines the effectiveness and complementarity of mediation and peacekeeping in ending violent conflicts, particularly in the post-Cold War period.

The study uses a variety of model specifications, including binary time-series cross-sectional (BTSCS) models and Heckman selection models, to evaluate the effects of mediation and peacekeeping on conflict termination. The analysis covers both inter- and intrastate conflicts from 1946 to 2013, using data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). The study includes 1,523 observations of intrastate conflict-years and 258 interstate conflict-year observations, allowing for a detailed examination of the conditions under which mediation and peacekeeping are effective. The study is rated medium confidence as it is a non-experimental study.

The study finds that PKOs, combined with mediation, have a positive effect on diplomatic relations & peaceful dispute resolution.

DeRouen (2018) examines the role of mediation and United Nations peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) in civil war peace agreements, focusing on their combined effect in reducing the risk of renewed or continued violence and enhancing the duration of peace agreements. The context includes various civil war scenarios globally, with a specific case study on the peace process in Guatemala during the 1990s, where mediation and peacekeeping efforts were instrumental in ending a long-standing conflict.

The research utilizes a sample of 154 civil war peace agreements signed between 1975 and 2011, sourced from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). The study employs logit and hazard models to analyze the effects of mediation and UNPKOs on the likelihood of violence recurrence and the duration of peace agreements. The analysis includes control variables such as agreement design, democracy, and income per capita. The study is rated low confidence due to its non-experimental design and little description of the intervention.

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Maekawa (2019) examine the effect of UN involvement and in the success of peace agreements which is measured by the risk of defections during the peace accord implementation phase. The authors discuss commitment to the peace process - that is whether the combatants are committed to achieving peace or may use the peace process as an opportunity to regroup and rearm and then resume hostilities. They distinguish between voluntary and involuntary defections, and so two different types of commitment problems. Voluntary defection is when a party intentionally reneges on a promise; involuntary is where they are unable to keep the promise due to factors beyond their control, notably polarised voting and weak state capacity. They argue that military presence in a UN peacekeeping mission is necessary when voluntary defection is likely.

The authors analyse the effectiveness of UN missions judged by the implementation of peace agreements. They use data from the Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset from 1989 to 2010, and on personnel commitments to UN peacekeeping operations. The Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset provides a peace agreement implementation score, which is the outcome variable. The study is rated medium confidence as it is a non-experimental study. It also takes no account of selection bias.

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Ruggeri (2013) examines the role of United Nations peacekeeping operations (UN PKOs) in fostering cooperation between local governments and rebel forces in African civil wars. The focus is on how the size of the UN mission influences the willingness of local actors to cooperate, particularly in contexts where there is a significant imbalance of power between government and rebel forces. The study highlights the case of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) as an example of a successful intervention where increased troop deployment led to improved cooperation.

The research utilizes newly collected event data on UN peacekeeping operations in Africa from 1989 to 2005. The data includes reports from the UN Secretary-General, which document cooperative events during peacekeeping missions. The study employs a negative binomial regression model to analyze the count of cooperative events, considering factors such as the size of the UN mission and the balance of power between government and rebel forces. The study is rated low confidence due to a lack of clear description of the evaluation question and it is a non-experimental study.

The study finds that PKOs have a positive effect on diplomatic relations.

Findley (2012) explores how earlier decisions and conditions in civil wars influence later stages of peace processes through path dependence. It examines civil war resolution as a sequential and interdependent process, focusing on the stages of negotiation, agreement, and implementation.

Using a nested logit model, Findley investigates key factors such as stalemates, the number of actors involved, third-party interventions, and power-sharing arrangements to determine how they shape outcomes at different stages. The study is rated as a low-confidence quantitative study.

The study finds that PKOs have a positive effect on diplomatic relations but can have a negative effect on dispute resolution in the initial stages.

Duursma (2022) introduces the African Peace Processes (APP) dataset, which provides comprehensive data on peacemaking efforts in Africa, covering both mediated and unmediated rounds of negotiations in state-based, intrastate, and non-state conflicts between 1989 and 2019. The dataset is built on data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and allows researchers to explore the dynamics of peace negotiations in Africa across different conflict types. The authors discuss the rationale for creating the dataset, the data collection process, and present some initial patterns observed from the dataset. They also demonstrate how the dataset can be used to examine relationships, such as the association between peacekeeping troop deployment and the onset of mediated negotiations.

The study finds that higher numbers of peacekeepers have a positive effect on diplomatic relations for non-state conflicts through mediated negotiation and no effect on intrastate conflicts' negotiation process. The study is rated as a low-confidence quantitative study.

Duursma (2022) examines the role of both military and civilian peacekeeping components in facilitating the conclusion of local ceasefires in non-state conflicts. The author proposes two competing logics for understanding the impact of peacekeeping on ceasefires: the mediation-based logic, which highlights the role of civilian peacekeepers in facilitating negotiations and resolving issues, and the capabilities-based logic, which emphasizes the importance of military peacekeepers in providing security, logistics, and military pressure during ceasefire negotiations. The study uses an instrumental variable estimation to account for potential endogeneity issues. The results show support for both logics, with mediation by peacekeeping staff having a generally positive effect, and military peacekeeping troops showing a mixed effect but ultimately positively correlated with the conclusion of ceasefires. The study is rated as a low-confidence quantitative study.

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Emmanuel (2015) investigates the role of economic aid as a peace incentive in post-conflict African countries. It examines how changes in donor aid patterns, particularly increases in economic assistance following peace agreements, can influence the success and longevity of peace processes. The context of the study spans 53 African countries, focusing on peace processes from 1989 to 2006.

The research utilizes a longitudinal dataset comprising 1,166 observations from 53 African countries over 22 years (1989–2010). The study employs various statistical techniques, including Generalized Least Squares (GLS) random-effects regression, to analyze the data. The analysis considers six explanatory variables: aid change, conflict intensity, state capacity, level of democracy, peacekeeping, and military victory. The dependent variable is the success of peace processes, defined as maintaining peace for at least five years post-agreement.

The study finds that economic aid plays a significant role in supporting peace processes. The aid change variable is positive and highly significant, indicating that increased economic assistance after a peace agreement enhances the likelihood of sustaining peace. The presence of peacekeeping troops also positively impacts peace maintenance, although peacekeeping shows a negative relationship. The study concludes that donor economic aid is a critical element in achieving lasting peace, suggesting that substantial development assistance can provide strong incentives for peace. The study is rated as a low-confidence quantitative study.

Confidence assessment

Overall, the cell is rated medium confidence.

Other outcomes in this cell/study

- Violence and atrocity prevention/Nature and scale of violence or atrocities