

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MEDIATION OF VIOLENT INTRA-STATE CONFLICT: THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE MOZAMBICAN PEACE PROCESS

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Abstract

This essay discusses the role of NGOs in the mediation of violent intra-state conflicts. Based on the analysis of the Mozambican peace process, we tried to understand if informal actors and NGOs in particular would be best suited to mediate this type of conflict, as advocated by some. Against this current of thought, the author argues that official diplomacy still remains the most appropriate tool to lead the mediation of violent intra-state conflicts. In cases where multiple resources are used (multi-track), as was the case in Mozambique, formal actors and states, in particular, continued to play a decisive and unavoidable role because they had the resources that were not available to informal players. Informal diplomacy can complement formal diplomacy, but cannot replace it, and will always play a secondary and supporting role.

Keywords

Non-Governmental Organizations; conflict mediation; mediation strategies; Mozambican conflict; Community of San'tEgídio; Track One and a Half Diplomacy; Track One Diplomacy; Track Two Diplomacy; untreatable conflicts

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Introduction

In the past two decades, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have tried to further their involvement in the field of conflict resolution. Some authors advocate that action should be extended to the whole spectrum of conflict resolution, from prevention to peacebuilding, and include participation in formal mediation processes (Tongerren, 2005; Baharvar, 2001)¹, what Susan Allen Nan called *Track One and a Half Diplomacy* (T1,5D) and described as the intermediation activities carried out by unofficial actors - including NGOs - with official representatives of a government involved in a conflict, with the aim of promoting its peaceful resolution (Nan, 1999). The mediation of the Mozambican peace process that led to agreements in Rome in October 1992, attended by the Community of Sant'Egidio, is often singled out as an example of what could be the participation of informal actors, and NGOs in particular, in formal mediation processes.

Proponents of NGO participation in formal mediation processes argue that the traditional instruments of negotiation, mediation and conflict management failed in intractable conflicts (Fisher, 1989; Saunders, 1997); traditional diplomacy has major limitations and is not suited to this type of conflict, and therefore the solution lies in the use of informal intermediaries, which are particularly suitable for resolving such conflicts. Our argument is exactly the opposite. We argue that public diplomacy (T1D) still remains the most appropriate way to lead the mediation of violent intra-state conflicts. In cases where multiple resources are used (multitrack), as was the case of Mozambique, the formal actors and states, in particular, continue to play a decisive and unavoidable role because they have resources not available to informal players. Informal diplomacy can complement the formal one, but not replace it.

NGOs' involvement in mediation of the T1, 5D type has been insufficiently studied. This work seeks to contribute to the debate and clarification of the topic, analyzing the validity of the arguments presented by that current of thought. For this purpose, we use the theoretical formulations about mediation and mediation strategies proposed by Touval and Zartman (1985), which we will confront with the analysis of the peace mediation process in Mozambique, as it is repeatedly used as an example of what these organizations can do in mediation.

¹ In some cases mistakenly called "negotiation". Negotiation is a two party relationship, whereas mediation is a relationship involving at least three parties.



This paper thus has two main objectives: first, try to understand if informal intermediaries and NGOs in particular, regardless of their origin (national or international), are the most appropriate type of mediator to conduct the mediation of violent intra-state conflicts, and, second, in the case of a negative finding, ascertain, in the light of these theoretical formulations, what kind of actor - States and/or International Organizations - may be more appropriate to mediate these conflicts based, in both situations, on the analysis of the Mozambican peace process.

To this end, we start by clarifying what NGOs are, as it is a term with multiple meanings, for which reason it needs to be explained; subsequently, the theoretical postulates that act as a reference for understanding the possibilities (capacities versus limitations) of NGOs, states and international organizations in the field of mediation will be presented: and, finally, we shall revisit the Mozambican peace process, trying to explain the reasons for its success and the behaviour of different actors in the light of the theoretical frameworks presented, which, from our point of view, have a more complex explanation than that offered by the mainstream, which attributes the merit of the mediation to the Community of Sant'Egidio.

Non-Governmental Organizations: a Possible Definition

The importance of NGOs at international level has intensified over the past 20 years, including in what is commonly known as conflict resolution. They have become major partners in the international response to humanitarian emergencies, abuse and violations of human rights, and in the efforts to rebuild and reconcile societies affected by conflicts or natural disasters that prevent normal functioning². In many cases, they work as entities subcontracted by the UN, the EU and governments. The large differences between some of these organizations (interests, organizational and philosophical dynamics, capacities, access to the sources of power and information, economic resources, etc...) have hindered a consensus definition. This is coupled by the fact that the conceptual boundaries are sometimes imprecise. It is not always easy to distinguish, for example, a civic association or a charity from an NGO.

In the UN system, NGO is any voluntary non-profit entity organized at local, national or international level, acting of its own will and directed by people united around a common interest³. In fact, NGOs work to support and protect sectors of society neglected by governments or official institutions⁴. Since they are private voluntary organizations, they may also be called that (PVO)⁵. NGOs and PVOs acquire legal personality under the domestic legal regulations (Private Law, and in some cases, Administrative Law) of the state of origin. Although an NGO may have an eminently international vocation, the truth is that its legal existence is conditioned by the

² The UN report on global governance published in 1995 estimated the existence of twenty nine thousand international NGOs (INGO). The number of national NGOs is immeasurably higher.

³ Still on the definition of NGO see also Gonçalves Pereira and Quadros (2000: 402) and Riquito (2001: 206). The World Bank defines NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development" (Operational Directive 14.70). In a broader use, the term NGO can be used to describe a non-profit organization acting independently from governments. NGOs are organizations that typically depend, entirely or in part, on charity or volunteer work.

⁴ *Idem*. The adopted definition does not include professional and commercial associations or foundations.

⁵ For other definitions of NGO see, for instance, Weiss and Gordenker (1996: 18-21) and Aall (2000: 124).



recognition of a state, and its legal personality in international law is not always clear cut.

With regard to the categorization of NGOs, the proposals advanced by scholars have not been ruled by consensus either. For example, Weiss and Gordenker (1996: 20) found four types of NGOs. The first, which is the most orthodox model, coincides with the one presented earlier; a private organization of citizens separated from governments, but active in social matters, non-profit and transnational in nature. The remaining three types, also called "significant deviations" because they are less autonomous from governments, should therefore be distinguished from what we commonly call NGOs.

The first, the QUANGO, almost non-governmental organizations, have relative autonomy, which decreases depending on their financial dependence on governments. The QUANGO includes organizations contracted by governments that provide specialized services such as, for example, the case of the International Rescue Committee⁶; the second group, called DONG, Donor-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations, is created for very specific and concrete purposes (e.g., demining in Afghanistan and support for women); and finally, the GONGOs, Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations, act as true agents of national policies. In the latter case, it is clear that the actions of NGOs act as the extended hand of a State, for which reason it is difficult to consider them as an NGO.

The absence of consensus repeats itself when it comes to adopting a taxonomy. Using the scope of action as a cataloguing criterion⁷, we can consider an NGO to be any organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering, promoting education, health care, economic development, environmental protection, and which monitors compliance with Human Rights, resolution of conflicts, etc., activities that do not end in this list (Aall, Miltenberger & Weiss, 2005: 89). Despite the tremendous variety, we can classify NGOs working in conflict zones in four principal activities: humanitarian assistance, human rights, building civil and democratic society, and conflict resolution. Their mandates and activities extend across the different phases of the life cycle of a conflict, i.e. even before the first signs of violence right through to the consolidation of peace⁸.

We shall focus our attention on NGOs that can be included in the more Orthodox concept, regardless of being organized nationally or internationally. The level at which an NGO is organized is not negligible; it is necessary to pay attention to the implications this may have in mediating a violent conflict. They are entities that are essentially different in terms of resources and knowledge of the societies affected by conflicts, for which reason they require a different treatment. National NGOs stem from

⁶ For further information on the International Rescue Committee please see the following website <http://www.theirc.org>.

⁷ As NGOs vary widely regarding their purpose, philosophy, knowledge and scope of activity, it is possible to classify them according to various types, depending on: their main vocation to provide emergency, assistance or development; their religious or secular inspiration; their priority (delivery or participation); or the priority given to the type of activities it supports (public or private).

⁸ Still on this subject, Ian Gary, for instance, classifies NGOs both regarding the methods and the scope of activities, considering two categories in both cases. As for the method, we have the hands off, which work behind the scenes, such as providing counselling services, and the hands on, which carry out activities on the ground. As for scope, we have the *ad hoc organizations*, whose mission is to contain the conflict and mitigate its effects; and those with systemic functions to intervene in the process of transforming mentalities and institutions. See GARY, I., "Confrontation, Co-operation or Co-optation: NGO's and the Ghanaian State During Structure Adjustment", in *Review of African Political Economy*, 23 (68), 1996: 149-169.



civil society and have information networks, contacts and knowledge of the society in which they operate and that are very different from large international NGOs. Our study focuses on NGOs that are primarily dedicated to conflict resolution, regardless of whether they develop activities in other areas⁹.

Mediation and Mediation Strategies

Before advancing to present different types of mediators and mediation strategies, we must clarify two crucial issues: first, the meaning of a Track 1 Diplomacy (T1D - formal official mediation) and Track 2 Diplomacy (T2D - informal/unofficial mediation), in order to ascertain whether T1D can be advantageously replaceable by other forms of mediation such as T1, 5D (already explained) or T2D, and if states are replaceable by other NGOs or informal actors in the management of violent conflict¹⁰; and, secondly, the need to adapt those concepts to intra-state conflicts. In many cases, we cannot talk of governments but only of the leaders of different factions, which often do not hold any office in the hierarchy of the State.

The term Track 1 Diplomacy (TD1) refers to official governmental diplomacy, or "the action technique of a government that primarily is a process whereby the communication made by a government addresses directly the decision making mechanisms of the other government" (Lerche, S., Lerche, C. and Said, A., 1994). It is conducted by the official representatives of a State and involves interaction with the other State (or with the top leaders of the litigant factions). The term Track 2 Diplomacy (T2D) has to do with unofficial interactions, informal contacts between members of adversary groups or nations, and these interactions are aimed at conflict resolution¹¹. The T2D is an area that is home to several concepts and terms, such as Interactive Conflict Resolution, Analytical Resolution of Problems workshops, sustained dialogue, and the so-called multilevel peace processes.

Mediation of the T1, 5D types takes place directly between unofficial mediators and top decision makers of the parties, but also with influential elements of society or the group in conflict. With top decision makers, it is direct mediation, consultation and facilitation of the inter-active resolution of problems carried out by unofficial mediators; with the influential citizens of society, the intention is to facilitate the resolution of problems and/or develop confidence-building measures. As we can see, the techniques used in T1, 5D and in T2D are similar and in some cases the same. However, there is a relevant difference that separates the two concepts, which has to do with the nature of the actors involved: in the case of T1, 5D, the lead actors of the parties are key decision-makers, while in T2D they are influential groups in society, or people who are expected to become so.

The theory of conflict resolution establishes various types of mediators and mediation strategies. The multiplicity of actors that can act as mediators is huge, from individuals, government officials, highly prestigious politicians and religious leaders, regional

⁹ Many NGOs working primarily in areas of action other than conflict resolution also claim the right to be involved in that activity.

¹⁰ In the present paper we shall use the conflict management definition proposed by Zartman and which is the elimination of violence and of forms related to violence in dealing with a conflict, allowing the resolution to be made at political level. In other words, to have violent demonstrations replaced by political events, in order to solve, transform and remove the causes of conflict (ZARTMAN, 1997: 11).

¹¹ FISHER, R.J., 1997: 261.



actors, NGOs and international organizations, *ad hoc* groups, and states, each of them bringing their trading interests, perceptions and resources into the negotiation process (Bercovitch, 1997). The mediation strategy to be adopted by a mediator always reflects those elements, which differ substantially whether it is an individual, states, institutions or organizations¹². Taking into account the scope of work, we will focus our attention just on the characteristics of formal mediation conducted by States and institutions/organizations - which include regional and international informal organizations and are carried out by the NGOs.

Of the various types of mediation strategies proposed by academics, we adopted the one developed by Zartman and Touval and which considers three behaviour categories, to be considered taken in ascending and gradual form, and which can describe in a comprehensive manner the actions of mediators: communicative, formulative and manipulative (Touval and Zartman, 1985). The adoption of a particular strategy does not mean that they carry out all tasks that it enshrines. Just a few of them are enough. Higher level task strategies typically include low-level strategies.

In **communicative** strategies, the mediator may behave in one or more of the following forms: establish contacts among the parties, earn their trust and confidence, look for ways to put them in contact, identify issues and interests underlying the dispute, and help clarify the situation. In this type of strategy, mediators avoid taking sides, try to empathize with litigants and provide them with important information that they do not possess. They can also transmit messages between the parties, encouraging them to begin a fruitful communication and ensure the interests of all of them are discussed.

Formulative strategies are more demanding than communicative ones, both for mediators and the parties. Besides some typical behaviours of communication strategies, formulating mediators can choose the locations of the negotiation rounds, control their pace and formality (the regiment), and control the underlying physical involvement in the negotiations; ensure the privacy of the mediation, suggest procedures, emphasize the common interests of the parties, reduce tensions, and control the times when the meetings should occur. According to this action rationale, the mediator who adopts a formulative strategy should, in the first place, deal with common problems, structure the agenda, help establish the conditions for building an acceptable outcome for the litigants; help them to save face (when applicable), maintain the negotiation process focused on critical issues, not letting it slip into unnecessary secondary quarrels, make proposals and fruitful suggestions, and suggest concessions that litigants may have to do.

At the top of strategies we find the **manipulative** ones, the most demanding of the three for both mediators and the parties. In addition to what has already been mentioned for the two previous strategies, manipulative mediators may still have the responsibility to keep the parties at the negotiating table, exercise their action in order to alter their expectations about the possible terms of an agreement and, at the same time, raise awareness of the cost of the absence of it. The manipulative mediator is also responsible for providing and filtering the information to be given; helping to undo previous commitments, rewarding parties who make the concessions, pressing them to

¹² A mediation strategy is considered to be a plan, approach or methods that a mediator resorts to in order to resolve a dispute (Kolb, 1983: 24), in Bercovitch, *op. cit.*: 136.



be flexible, promising them resources or threatening to end the negotiation process; offering to verify compliance with the agreements; adding incentives or threatening with punishment, and threatening to withdraw from the mediation.

The choice to adopt a certain behaviour or follow a mediation strategy and not another is not a fluke. It is influenced by specific factors pertaining to the conflict or the mediator. There are many factors that may determine the choice of a strategy. But to be effective, the mediation strategy and the mediator's behaviour must be consistent with their interests and the nature of the conflict (Bercovitch, 1997). According to Bercovitch, practice has shown, for example, that communicative mediation strategies tend to be more effective in low intensity conflicts, while manipulative strategies are more successful in high-intensity conflicts¹³. But on the other hand, to be effective, mediation strategies, as well as reflecting the reality of the conflict, must also mirror the features of the mediator. Manipulative mediators are not those who want to be so, but those who can be so.

Despite the fact that the scientific community has not reached consensus on the most effective mediation strategies - some argue that the communication- facilitation strategies are so (Burton 1969; Kelman 1992) - statistical data indicate that tougher mediation strategies of the formulative-manipulative type (Touval and Zartman 1985) produce better results.

Bercovitch also examined the characteristics of the three classes of mediators: individuals, states and institutions/organizations. Individual mediators represent themselves (academics, former heads of state, prominent figures from international organizations, etc...), and officially they represent nothing; they are not members of a government and do not hold political office. The informal mediation usually begins when the mediators are involved in a conflict on their own initiative. Acting individually, the action of these mediators is based solely on communication strategies and facilitation¹⁴ concerned primarily with the quality of the interaction between the parties and the creation of an enabling environment for the management of the conflict¹⁵. This type of mediation could be extremely useful to support a future formal mediation, in many cases opening the door to formal talks. The suggestions and ideas that arise in T2D can be brought to the negotiating table of T1D.

When it comes to mediation conducted by states, one must begin by distinguishing between large and small. Due to their small size and apparent lack of power or influence, small states do not represent a threat to the parties and are generally very well positioned to mediate, and they normally wait to be invited to do so. When they intervene, they tend to confine their activities to regional conflicts, and their strategies tend to be, in most cases, strategies based on dialogue and communication. Small states are very useful in this type of mediation¹⁶.

For the big states, the motivation to mediate is usually different; they use mediation as a vehicle to protect or promote their interests¹⁷. By offering a wide array of resources, the range of strategies available to them increases, and they can select the ones that suit them, a situation that is not within the reach of small states. They can use a

¹³ *Idem*: 138.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*: 140.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*: 147.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*: 142.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, Bercovitch quoting Touval: 142.



variety of stimuli (positive or negative), generate and guide the impetus of negotiations towards an agreement; and even alter their motivations, behaviours and expectations. More than any other actors, states are able to gather the necessary resources for the success of a mediation process. They have leverage and use the political and social influence at their disposal to persuade litigants to make concessions and reshape their strategic objectives towards an agreement.

The participation of international and regional organizations in mediation processes has also been subject of study. In 1994, Touval published an article in *Foreign Affairs* about the limitations of the UN in the field of mediation, in which he stated that the mediations conducted by that organization are successful only when the belligerents are exhausted and powers outside the conflicts have no willingness to continue to support their customers, whose usefulness has been exhausted with the end of the Cold War¹⁸. But Touval goes further and generalizes about the conclusions concerning the behaviour of the UN as a mediator to international organizations, saying that, in general, they have inherent characteristics that make them unable to be effective mediators in complex international disputes¹⁹.

Touval states that international organizations have great difficulty in carrying out some basic functions required of an effective mediator, due to the absence of significant political leverage over the parties, the lack of credibility of their promises and the negotiation inflexibility resulting from their slow and complex decision-making processes. These limitations are embedded in their DNA and are part of the intrinsic nature of international organizations. And nobody can change this reality.

International organizations mediate solely on the terms of the states they are part of, and only with the material and diplomatic resources they are provided with²⁰. Multilateral talks require a consultation and coordination process between the members of these organizations. A mediator must be able to influence belligerents in order to get them to change their positions. It requires, above all, leverage, which is derived from the military and economic resources that the great powers have in abundance, and that regional or international organizations do not have, being at the mercy of the good will of the States that compose them. The UN cannot even use the tools of international financial institutions and trade. In order to do so, it continues to depend on the decisions of the Member States. The problem of lack of resources and leverage also applies to all informal mediators.

Their vulnerabilities are perceived and exploited by the belligerents, who doubt their ability to fulfil both their promises of support and their threats of punishment. Due to decision systems that are peculiar to them, it is very difficult for international organizations to conduct dynamic negotiations, respond quickly, seize opportunities, and have the flexibility to adjust positions and proposals that will enable them to conveniently monitor the course of events. Once they have adopted a mediation strategy, it is not easy to change it so as to respond quickly to changing situations.

¹⁸ TOUVAL, Saadia (1994). "Why the UN Fails", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October: 44.

¹⁹ *Idem*: 45.

²⁰ However, this does not mean that international organizations and the UN, in particular, cannot play an important role, especially when their action is coordinated with the efforts of states. There are other reasons, namely to serve as a cushion and thus protect states from damages that may be caused by failed peacemaking processes.



International organizations only adopt measures around which consensus can be built, reflecting the logic of the lowest common denominator²¹.

International organizations are particularly useful as facilitators of communication between the parties, helping a greater understanding of opposing positions and clarifying their concerns, but are not designed for difficult disputes. International organizations do not have the conditions to carry out manipulative mediation strategies.

NGOs do not have the legitimacy of international organizations to mediate, and their behaviour in the mediation of violent conflicts is similar to that of other informal mediators. Using the argument rationale stated before, unlike states, and due to the fact they have very limited resources, NGOs have a very tiny number of strategies at their fingertips, the alternatives being confined to communication and facilitation strategies guided to quality-oriented interaction between the parties and to maintaining an environment conducive to conflict management. The fact that they will now talk to key decision-makers - a T1, 5 procedure - does not change this reality. Like the states, they will hardly have the ability to change the behaviour, expectations and strategic objectives of the parties in conflict.

To achieve this, it was necessary to have a persuasiveness that does not exhaust itself in dialogue and communication. To influence the course of a violent conflict, mediation cannot be limited to generating and sharing information; it has to use more assertive strategies that can alter the way the parties think and interact²². On the other hand, we must take into account the environment in which mediation takes place. The management of violent conflict has assumed as an environment of violence and widespread insecurity, not very conducive to interactive conflict resolution or conflict resolution workshops, which is substantially different from the environment that we live in a situation of peacebuilding, violent post-conflict, in a stable security situation more favourable to NGO activities.

The fact that the mediator is a national or international NGO has different meanings. The range of civil society involvement in mediation processes, especially through NGOs emanating from that same society, must be carefully evaluated. It is an appealing idea that falls apart because the violent conflicts that are the focus of this intervention usually occur in pre-modern societies, without an active civil society, or in more developed societies in which civil society organizations have been destroyed by violence, reducing the ability to influence whatever it may be to the smallest possibility²³. The chance of giving them relief in the midst of a violent conflict is merely a fanciful construction. It is well intentioned but useless, as experience has shown over and over again.

²¹ TOUVAL, Saadia, *op. cit.*: 53.

²² *Idem*: 146.

²³ The Bosnian conflict is a flagrant example of this situation. The attempt to promote the Muslim secular alternative led by Adil Zulfikarpasic and Muhamed Filipovic, the extremism of the party led by Izetbegovic did not work, and crumbled in the sectarianism that permeated society in the beginning of the 1990s. An identical situation occurred in Somalia at the same time.



The Mediation of the Conflict in Mozambique: Actors and Strategies

Once the theoretical framework that is necessary for our analysis has been presented, we shall move on to the case study, identifying the actors involved in the mediation, their role and the strategies adopted by each of them. We resorted to the book by Cameron Hume, "Ending Mozambique's War", in which the author makes a detailed chronology of the peace talks and provides crucial clues to our understanding of the role and strategies adopted by the different players²⁴.

But before we proceed, we must insert the Mozambican conflict in the historical context and in the international and regional policy framework that existed in the late eighties. Neither super-powers nor neighbouring countries supported the continuation of the war. With the end of the Cold War and, consequently, the end of the links which each of the factions maintained with the great powers, the political and financial support to the war effort came to an end. In 1990, no government in the region was prepared to maintain and support its allies in Mozambique. The regional political situation had become conducive to conflict resolution. Exhausted and without resources, both contenders were aware that they were unable to win the conflict; the situation was at a point that Touval and Zartman called a painful stalemate. It was a situation that was ripe for mediation and, therefore, favourable to the success of mediation.

The choice of mediator was the first obstacle that had to be overcome. The selection would have to fall on someone who enjoyed the trust of both parties. Chissano wanted direct talks without the intervention of mediators, which Dhlakama opposed. For Chissano, the role of external players should be limited to good offices. For his part, Dhlakama wanted Mozambican bishops to act as mediators.

After several mishaps and failed initiatives, with the agreement of the Vatican and the diplomatic and financial support of the Italian Government, the Community of Sant'Egidio hosted the first round of negotiations that took place at its headquarters in Rome in July 1990. This round of negotiations was attended by three entities. In addition to the Sant'Egidio Community, it had the participation of the Mozambican churches and of the Italian Government.

Each party was represented in the group which, at the time still had observer status and was later to become the mediation group: The Community of Sant'Egidio represented by Don Andrea Riccardi and Matteo Zuppa, the Episcopal Conference represented by D. Jaime Goncalves, and the Italian Government, represented by Mario Raffaelli. This group remained unchanged until the end of the talks.

At the end of the first round of negotiations, Ambassador Raffaelli gave an interview to Vatican Radio explaining the roles played by the Governments of Kenya and Zimbabwe, giving them credit for reconciling the positions of the parties which led to direct talks. In practice, these were possible due to the combined action of various actors - the Italian Government, the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Church in Mozambique²⁵.

²⁴ Hume was number 2 in the hierarchical chain of the U.S. mission to the Vatican at the time peace talks were underway in Rome. In parallel, he was an observer and an active participant in the peace process.

²⁵ HUME, Cameron (1994). *Ending the Mozambique's War. The Role of Mediation and Good Offices*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace: 35.



Failing to agree about the African state to invite as mediator, the parties eventually agreed on the solution of the four observers, who, in practice, had worked as mediators (the mediation would be a collective action).

The mediation solution found enabled overcoming the obstacles placed by both the government and RENAMO. This formulation suited the wishes of the Government, which wanted a mediator who had a minor role and no manipulative ability, and the mediation requirements of RENAMO, i.e., a mediator rather than bilateral negotiations. As neither the Church nor the Community of Sant'Egidio followed a strategy of own mediation, we will examine only the strategy adopted by the mediation group where this NGO was represented. The participation of the Italian government in peace talks must be analyzed separately.

There were many actors who contributed to reach the Peace Agreement signed in Rome on 4 October 1992. In addition to the mediation group consisting of representatives of churches in Mozambique, the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Italian Government, the collaboration of several states must equally be taken into account. The involvement of two particularly active governments, although with different roles, Italy and the U.S., must be highlighted. Further away, but with an equally important role, came Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. At a later stage in the talks when military matters were discussed, the process was joined by the countries that became observers of the peace process: France, Portugal, and the UK jointly with the U.S. The UN also joined the talks with observer status, but its involvement was more oriented to discuss aspects of the implementation of agreed matters. And finally, Tiny Rowland, an English businessman, chairman of the Lonrho group, who held strong mining interests in Zimbabwe, and who made his jets available to mediators and to the parties for the frequent trips they had to do.

The Churches

Both academics and practitioners have neglected the role of religious elites - Roman and Anglican - in the management of the Mozambican conflict in their analysis. Their involvement dates back to 1984, when the first talks were held between the Government and RENAMO. It was in this context that the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) established the "Commission for Peace and Reconciliation" (CPR) in order to explore possible opportunities for dialogue and facilitate communication between the litigants. The CCM continued to act behind the scenes throughout the second half of the decade without, however, achieving great progress.

The willingness expressed by the Kenyan authorities to mediate a possible peace process was used by the CCM to dialogue with RENAMO leaders. The peace initiative promoted by the churches' leaders became public and Chissano mandated the CPR, led by Anglican Bishop D. Dinis Sengulane, to negotiate the conditions of an amnesty with RENAMO leaders. There was the coincidence that the leadership of FRELIMO was mostly Anglican, while the RENAMO leadership was mostly Catholic²⁶. The year 1988 marked the beginning of intense diplomatic activity which led to peace in 1992. The ongoing diplomatic activity did not, however, prevent the continuation of the fighting. In early

²⁶ HUME, Cameron, *op. cit.*: 27. "... RENAMO sent another message to the Holy See ... explaining that unlike the FRELIMO leadership, many of us,...including our President, are catholic ..."



1989, the Mozambican church leaders - Catholic and Anglican - launched a second initiative to explore existing contacts. Cardinal D. Alexandre dos Santos, Archbishop D. Jaime Gonçalves, Bishop Dinis Sengulane, and Pastor Jeremias Mucache (President of the CCM) met Chissano to persuade him to initiate dialogue with RENAMO²⁷.

Chissano agreed that the clergy met with representatives of RENAMO, as long as it took place outside Mozambique, which indeed happened but without tangible results²⁸. In 1989, echoing the call of the Mozambican clergy, Pope John Paul II publicly called for national reconciliation. In early 1989, the CCM and the Catholic Archbishop of Maputo met with representatives of the American faction of RENAMO (RENAMO elements residing in the United States), and high dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Mozambique, including D. Jaime Gonçalves, met with Dhlakama without the consent of Chissano.

However, the insistence of religious leaders turned out to have some positive effect. In August 1989, at the request of Chissano, Dhlakama was given, in Nairobi, a document with 12 points, to which Dhlakama replied by giving a 16-point document to be handed to Chissano²⁹. Chissano resorted to the good offices of the religious leaders as the way to define the conditions under which he would enter into direct negotiations. Alongside the good offices of other religious leaders, there were initiatives led by the Kenyan and American diplomacies which also aimed to convince the parties to enter into direct negotiations. The commitment of the clergy in bringing peace extended throughout the negotiating period, and the Mozambican churches were always present in the talks through D. Jaime Gonçalves, who was a member of the mediation group.

The Community of Sant'Egidio

Based on the results obtained thanks to the good offices of the four religious leaders and African governments, among which Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe stood out, and by exploring the long-time connections between Archbishop D. Jaime Gonçalves and the Italian Government³⁰, in July 1990 the Community of Sant'Egidio promoted the first direct meeting between representatives of FRELIMO and RENAMO in Rome, which became the epicentre of diplomatic activity. Significant steps towards peace were given during the negotiations conducted in October and November 1991: FRELIMO and RENAMO recognized each other and agreed on the future role of the UN; RENAMO's right to exercise party political activity was ratified with the signing of the General Peace Agreement (GPA)³¹.

The Community of Sant'Egidio played an important role in creating the physical conditions for holding the talks. In addition to providing its headquarters and welcoming the delegations of the parties to the talks, it ensured the political, logistical and financial support of the Italian Government needed to carry out the talks. It formed

²⁷ *Idem*. There had been an earlier initiative in 1988, promoted by President Arap Moi of Kenya who invited Chissano and Mugabe to a meeting in Nairobi to explore the possibility of negotiations.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ *Ibidem*: 28.

³⁰ D. Gonçalves was the key link that led to the Italian mediation. His friendship with members of the Community of Sant'Egidio went back over 20 years, to the time when he, as a young priest studying in Rome, became close to that religious organization. A few years later, he enlisted the help of the Community to put pressure on the Mozambican government to abdicate its anticlerical stance.

³¹ HUME, Cameron, *op. cit.*: 79.



part of the mediation group with two representatives, one of them its president. Using the words of Chester Crocker, the people of Sant'Egidio made history through their initial involvement. Their efforts created a critical mass of facts and a momentum which gave formal decision-makers (T1D) a case to support³². However, in terms of negotiations, the involvement of the community was small.

The Mediation Group

The mediation strategy adopted by the mediation group was of the communicative type. The group helped to maintain the dialogue between the parties and ensured that the relations of hostility and animosity were transformed into relations of cooperation, helping reconciliation through dialogue of the parties. In addition to the good offices given throughout the negotiation process, the mediation group made proposals and helped litigants to find alternatives.

The use of shuttling diplomacy was a recurring practice not only with delegations of the factions in Rome, as elsewhere with the top leaders of the parties, with the aim of agreeing on meeting agendas and on the sequence of issues to be discussed, or to unlock more complex situations which the heads of delegations in Rome had no delegated authority to do. For example, the mediation group went to Malawi in November 1990 to meet Dhlakama in order to unlock the impasse that was preventing the achievement of the cease-fire. In most cases, these actions were complemented by well planned state diplomacy, which proved to be quite effective³³.

Formulative mediators control the agenda and, accordingly, may alter it, set deadlines and control the pace and formality of the meetings; they can change the number of participants in the talks, bringing more players into the process so as to have more interests represented at the negotiating table. But this was not the case. The booking of meetings and the identification of the matters to be discussed were always made with the consent of the parties.

The low-profile of the mediation conducted by the mediation group had little influence; the group had no power to grant legitimacy to any diplomatic agreement; it had very low capacity to support the implementation process that was being devised³⁴. At times and in some respects, the behaviour of the mediation group was close to formulative strategy: the group advised the delegations on technical issues, helping them identify, select and expand possible options³⁵.

However, when the flexibility of the parties disappeared and the mediation group lost control of the agenda³⁶, it had to use the help of external actors who had greater persuasion powers on the parties, that is, resort to the assistance of one-track diplomacy, especially from the U.S. and Italian governments. The same happened when they had to discuss technical matters, namely of a military nature, which members of the mediation group had no knowledge of.

³² *Idem*: xii.

³³ The example advanced by HUME on p. 63 illustrates this complementarity and coordination perfectly.

³⁴ *Idem*: 95.

³⁵ *Ibidem*: 73.

³⁶ *Ibidem*: 62.



The States

The action of the mediation group was closely monitored and supplemented, at all times, by the diplomacy of various states, especially when it came to resolving issues of great complexity or when the parties were more reluctant to reach an agreement. African and Western governments were needed at various stages of the talks, in order to: overcome the impasse between the heads of the delegations based in Rome; talk to the top leaders; create legitimacy and set deadlines; and force the convergence of opinion on issues that otherwise would still be unresolved³⁷. According to Chester Crocker, the discreet conduct of official diplomacy was instrumental in the formulation of the sequence of issues to be addressed and in defining the way forward in the field of military and constitutional arrangements³⁸.

The Italian diplomacy was at the forefront of these initiatives, as it tirelessly promoted and organized many meetings among the leaders of the factions and ensured the presidency of the Joint Verification Commission (JVC) through its ambassador in Maputo³⁹. Italy was also deeply involved in various good offices' initiatives and in shuttle diplomacy, through its ambassador in Maputo, who met several times with Dhlakama and Chissano⁴⁰. In addition, the Italian Government borne much of the expenses, including travel and accommodation of the delegations, and the political coverage of the mediation. In early 1992, the Italian Parliament authorized the government to use up to 1% of its foreign aid budget in favour of the peace process. In addition to its representative in the mediation group, there was direct and effective involvement of the Italian government and diplomacy in the mediation process.

The United States also played a crucial role right from the start of the talks, providing technical advice, encouragement and public support for the peace process. They formed a team of personnel from the State Department to constantly monitor the progress of the talks, and it provided decisive support to the mediation group, particularly to the RENAMO delegation, in technical areas that required the assistance of experts. To help overcome some negotiating difficulties, members of this team, acting in tandem with the mediation group, met separately with delegations to convince them to adopt more flexible positions.

The U.S. involvement was not limited to the team that followed the talks. In moments of impasse, the United States intervened at a "high" level, "advising" the parties, particularly RENAMO, to moderate their positions. The U.S. presence in the negotiations was critical because of the "persuasiveness" they possessed on the litigants, RENAMO in particular. The Italian and American governments, especially the latter, followed a formulative strategy which, in some cases, showed signs of typical manipulation strategy.

From October 1991, the U.S. support to the mediation process became more active, significantly increasing the involvement of its diplomacy in the talks. Both the Secretary

³⁷ *Ibidem*: xi.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ Apparently, the only one who ignored the instrumental role of Italian diplomacy in support of the talks was the actual Italian Foreign Minister, when, in February 1992, he suggested that Italy also joined the talks as an official observer. HUME, *op. cit.*, p.90.

⁴⁰ *Idem*: 127.



of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen, as his assistant, Jeffrey Davidow, started to meet more often, not only with the leaders of the factions, in parallel diplomacy to that of the mediation group, to "help" them give more rapid and certain steps towards peace, but also with African leaders whose contribution to the peace process could be important. The involvement of U.S. diplomacy was also essential to ensure the presence of the UN in implementing the security agreement, and guarantee the connection with the Security Council.

The collaboration of several neighbouring states with the mediation group was also important. Supplementing its action, they put pressure on Chissano and Dhlakama not to leave the dialogue and to make concrete decisions. Various African statesmen helped the mediation group in the final phase of the talks. Mugabe was perhaps the most important African leader in this task. In September 1992, the mediation group urged Mugabe to help overcome an impasse over negotiations. The delegations in Rome were not able to reach an agreement on the size of the Armed Forces, the reform of police and security services, and how to organize the civil administration in areas controlled by RENAMO. Mugabe arranged a meeting between Dhlakama and Chissano in Botswana, where they agreed to set up a committee to oversee the security services.

When military matters and how to implement them started to be discussed, the Italian Government took an even more prominent role, providing the mediation group with experts to guide and direct the discussion. This forced the introduction of changes in the structure of the talks, namely increasing the size of delegations to include teams of military experts, including those provided by the observer countries (France, Portugal, UK and USA)⁴¹.

The convenience of involving a hard nucleus of countries that could offer the mediation group and delegations not only technical advice on these issues, but also potentially contribute with military forces to implement the peace agreement, apart from the participation of the UN itself, became evident. With the exception of Italy and the U.S., the behaviour of the remaining state actors was characterized by facilitating contacts, exploring the persuasiveness capacity of certain African leaders on their Mozambican partners.

The United Nations and Other Non-State Actors

The UN and Tiny Rowland also collaborated in the peace process, but in a very different way. In the list of players who participated in the peace process we must inevitably include the UN, not forgetting, among other particularly important things that it led, the coordination with key governments in the region and the organization of a donor's conference in Maputo. To implement the agreements it was necessary to mobilize the contribution of other actors to a resource pool. Once the peace agreement was signed, it was necessary to implement it, and this was where the role of the UN was crucial.

The procedures of this implementation had to be negotiated with the UN itself. Unlike the mediation group, the UN Secretary-General could now deal with the parties from a strong institutional position, which included permanent detailed rules for the peacekeeping, the management of humanitarian aid programmes, a network of state

⁴¹ It was in this context that in June 1992, at the 10th round of negotiations, the invitation to France, Portugal, United Kingdom, U.S., and the UN to join the talks with observer status was approved.



donors of money and manpower, and the requirement of approval of the SC⁴². As noted earlier, Tiny Rowland played an important role in providing air transportation to the delegations and Mozambican leaders when and where necessary.

Conclusions

The analysis of the Mozambican peace process led us to four main conclusions. First, the case study does not empirically demonstrate the thesis that informal intermediaries and NGOs in particular are the most appropriate type of mediator to conduct the mediation of violent intra-state conflicts. The mediation of the Mozambican peace process cannot be considered an action of the T1, 5D type, let alone one of the T2D type⁴³. As such, supporting that view has no empirical validity. Reducing the Mozambican peace talks to the role played by the Community of Sant'Egidio is factually incorrect, because it was never a true mediator⁴⁴.

Secondly, the peace mediation was a multi-track process in which the states played a decisive role. We found it to be equally inaccurate to attribute the merit of the peace initiative to the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Vatican, to the detriment of the role played by states, where the Italian and American figured prominently. The collective mediation arrangement adopted, which included representatives of a State, of an NGO and a Church was, undoubtedly, *sui generis*. But due to the limited resources at their disposal, the ability of the mediation group to influence and persuade the factions' litigants was very limited. Whenever there was an impasse whose resolution appeared to be more difficult, the mediation group had to ask for the diplomatic assistance of influential states endowed with the resources they lacked (mainly Italy, the U.S. and Zimbabwe). In practice, what prevailed was the diplomacy of states.

Third, in light of the Mozambican peace process, we found that NGOs and TD2 processes may, in general, complement the action of traditional agents (states and international organizations), but are still far from being able to replace them or even take action on an equal footing. Due to the fact that NGOs lack the legitimacy, capacity or the stability of sovereign states, the latter still continue to play an indispensable and irreplaceable role, which attests the vital importance of formal mediation in the management of violent conflicts.

Fourth, Mozambique's case has shown the reconciliation potential of the designated sources of social power, including ideological ones, in this case expressed through religion and religious elites (Mann, 1986). This is a topic whose application to conflict resolution has been insufficiently studied and that goes beyond the scope of this work. The Anglican and Catholic elites contributed greatly for the success of the peace talks, as they acted in a concerted way with the leaders of FRELIMO and RENAMO, their religious supporters. Not only was most of the leadership of RENAMO Catholic, as mentioned above, but the leadership of FRELIMO had many Anglican Church followers. If Chissano and Dhlakama had been Muslims, the influence of Christian religious elites

⁴² *Ibidem*: 139.

⁴³ Crocker stressed that negotiations of the Mozambican case were in no way a pure example of T2D. *Ibidem*, p. xi.

⁴⁴ As mentioned in the text, the Community of Sant'Egidio only contributed with two members to the mediation group, which included one representative of the Mozambican Church and another from the Italian Government.



on them would have been completely different. In an attempt to act on the success of the Mozambique case - poorly understood and poorly studied - the Community of Sant'Egidio later tried to get involved in mediating the conflict in Kosovo, without any result. It missed a correct interpretation of events in Mozambique.

We think that the conclusions we have reached after examining the case of Mozambique can be generalized. Unlike championed by many schools of thought, this case empirically confirms our argument and the critical importance of T1D in the management of violent conflicts. In these cases, T2D may support the efforts of diplomacy, but will always play a secondary role and support. T2D and, therefore, the involvement of NGOs, may be particularly important in other life stages of a conflict, for example, during peacebuilding, in supporting reconciliation between estranged groups. One cannot underestimate in any way the role played by these organizations, for example, in humanitarian action or in support given to the reconstruction of war-torn societies, but not in violent conflict mediation. The direct involvement of NGOs in the mediation of violent conflict has not been common, but the few cases they were involved in cannot be considered successes. The number of NGO interventions in this area speaks for itself⁴⁵.

The T1, T2D and 5D concepts are very appealing, but whose usefulness is questionable when applied to the management of violent conflicts. The same can be said with regard to civil society's involvement in mediation of violent conflicts. This is an equally appealing idea that collapses when one considers that violent conflicts tend to occur in pre-modern societies, without an active civil society, or in more developed societies but in which civil society organizations have been destroyed by violence, reducing its potential ability to influence and persuade due to their tiny size.

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⁴⁵ Among others, we stress the talks between the Nigerian government and the rebel leaders of Biafra during the 1967-70 conflict, under the auspices of the Quakers; the disastrous experience of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Uganda in the mid 1990s; the coalition of NGOs in mediating a ceasefire in Sudan in the 1970s; the Inter-Religious Council in Sierra Leone; and other NGOs in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria.



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