Civil War Settlements and the Implementation of Military Power-Sharing Arrangements*

MATTHEW HODDIE

Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University

CAROLINE HARTZELL

Department of Political Science, Gettysburg College

This article considers the role that the implementation of peace agreements has on the prospects for fostering a durable peace following the negotiated resolution of civil wars. Focusing on the 16 peace agreements between 1980 and 1996 that have included provisions for the sharing or dividing of military power among former combatants, the authors find that the complete implementation of this aspect of settlements significantly improves the prospects for maintaining peace. They suggest that this proves to be the case because of the important and credible signals of conciliatory intent among former enemies that are made through the process of implementation. They find that implementation serves as a concrete signal of a genuine commitment to peace as signatories to an agreement prove willing to endure the costs associated with both compromising their original war aims and withstanding potential challenges from within their own groups. Based on these results, the authors offer policy recommendations focusing on the role that third-party actors and aid donors might play in facilitating the successful implementation of negotiated peace agreements.

Introduction

The recent growth in the academic literature concerning the resolution of civil wars reflects the international community's heightened attention to the challenge of establishing negotiated bargains capable of bringing bloody intrastate conflicts to an end. Having explored such issues as the conditions under which civil war combatants are most likely to agree to end a conflict through peaceful means (see Mason, Weingarten & Fett, 1999; Enterline & Balch-Lindsay, 2001), scholars have turned their attention to the question of how different aspects of the settlement process shape the prospects for a durable peace following the conclusion of civil violence.[1]

In this article, we consider one aspect of the settlement process – the implementation of peace agreements. We offer an explanation as to why the implementation of settlements is crucial for ensuring a durable peace and an empirical demonstration of the plausibility of our argument based on an examination of 16 civil war settlements reached between the

[1] Recent works concerning civil war settlements include Stedman (2001); Stedman, Rothchild & Cousens (2002); Walter (2002); and Fortna (2002).

303

years 1980 and 1996. We find that full implementation of settlements is associated with the maintenance of stability within postwar states because of the effects that this process has on the perceptions of former combatants. By implementing the provisions of a peace agreement, signatories engage in costly signaling regarding their commitment to the peace, signals that serve to reassure opponents about the prospects for long-term coexistence.

The article is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of the existing literature concerning the implementation of peace agreements and notes some common limitations associated with these studies. In the second section, we develop the claim that the full implementation of agreements often proves to be a crucial prerequisite to stability because it serves as a means for former combatants to signal their commitment to the maintenance of peace. In the third section, we substantiate this perspective regarding the implementation process and its relationship to durable peace through an examination of 16 negotiated settlements. We find that successful efforts to implement agreement provisions for the sharing or dividing of military power are strongly associated with peace in the long term. We conclude in the final section with a discussion of policy prescriptions that we derive from our findings regarding the importance of costly signaling in civil war settlements.

Existing Studies Concerning the Implementation of Civil War Settlements

Most of the academic literature relating to civil war peace agreement implementation has focused on the anarchic environment in which this process takes place and the challenges this presents for ensuring the maintenance of stability. These works tend toward the view that an immediate post-civil war

environment of pervasive uncertainty and distrust among former opponents makes the full implementation of settlements a challenging but crucial prerequisite to peace. According to this perspective, full implementation of peace accords proves important because it provides reassurances to wartime opponents that their partners in the settlement process value stability over conflict and remain committed to the process of establishing a self-enforcing peace.[2] This perspective highlights the central role that the issue of credible commitment plays in the post-civil war environment. As former opponents commit to living side by side following the end of war, they require proof that their contributions to settlement stability will not redound to their detriment in future interactions with their competitors.[3]

In short, advocates of the full implementation of peace agreements argue that this process is important because it serves to convince adversaries that the commitments they made to peace in the bargaining stage of the settlement process are credible. While we share this outlook, we view the existing literature as deficient in two important respects – one theoretical and another empirical. Our theoretical concern with existing studies is the failure to explain exactly how the process of settlement implementation serves to increase confidence among groups that the intentions of their former adversaries are benign. It remains uncertain exactly why it proves to be the case that the process of carrying out the terms of a settlement produces the credibility and trust necessary for a self-sustaining peace.

Our second concern regarding the

[2] For studies that offer this perspective regarding the importance of peace agreement implementation, see de Soto & del Castillo (1995); Hampson (1996); Stedman & Rothchild (1996); and Stedman (2001). See also United States Institute of Peace (1996).
[3] See Leeds (1999) and Walter (1997, 2002) for more on the issue of credible commitment.

established literature on peace agreement implementation rests on the evidence that has most often been employed to demonstrate the relationship between this process and the durability of peace. For the most part, previous studies of peace agreement implementation have taken the form of country-specific case studies rather than cross-national investigations.[4] This approach has provided a wealth of insights regarding the processes of implementation in individual states but has inhibited the development of a generalizable theory about how this process relates to the durability of peace.

This study seeks to remedy these two deficiencies. We develop a theory of the means by which participation in the implementation process cultivates the credibility of commitments. Negotiating and implementing peace agreements, we argue, generates costs for the parties who participate in the settlement process. By enduring these costs, groups send credible signals to their competitors that serve to emphasize the integrity of the commitment they have made to the peace. We then employ a cross-national study of 16 states that have had varying levels of success in their efforts to implement their settlements in order to validate our theory concerning a relationship between the costly signals associated with implementation efforts and the successful maintenance of domestic peace in the long term.

Signaling to Overcome Security Concerns: Enduring the Costs of Bargaining and Implementing Peace Settlements

The post-civil war environment is defined by uncertainty. New postwar governing institutions are often embryonic and have yet to demonstrate a capacity for resolving conflicts peacefully. Given this unsettled environment,

[4] Notable exceptions include Stedman, Rothchild & Cousens (2002) and Walter (2002).

parties to the dispute have little guarantee that war will not return beyond a faith that their former enemies hold a preference for peace over war. In the absence of evidence that further supports this hope, however, former combatants are likely to remain wary and reluctant to support a peace process with the potential to leave members of the collectivity at risk. How might parties genuinely interested in ending war move beyond the distrust created by the conflict and establish a self-enforcing peace? The principal way parties to a negotiated settlement can effectively overcome this distrust, we argue, is by making their commitment to peace apparent and credible to all by sending signals that have unavoidable costs attached to them. In the words of Fearon (1997: 69), this type of commitment is only likely to be perceived as credible 'when the act of sending it incurs or creates some cost that the sender would be disinclined to incur or create if he or she were in fact *not* willing to carry out' the obligation.

The peace process provides the opportunity for settlement participants to send costly signals demonstrating their genuine interest in peace. In particular, two stages of this process provide valuable information regarding the intentions of former enemies: (1) the construction of a peace settlement and (2) the implementation of the settlement. As we demonstrate below, each of these stages in the civil war settlement process exacts high costs from the parties that engage in them.[5] These costs are associated

[5] Although we focus on two stages of the civil war settlement process, it is more accurate to describe this process as consisting of three stages: (1) the decision regarding whether or not to enter into negotiations, (2) settlement construction, and (3) agreement implementation. Parties have an opportunity to engage in costly signaling at the initial stage of the settlement process in the sense that the decision to enter into discussions with an enemy grants the opposition a degree of recognition. This involves a cost to all war participants by acknowledging competing claims regarding the legitimate right to govern the state. Agreeing to negotiate may prove particularly costly if talks collapse without reaching a mutually acceptable settlement, as it is difficult to withdraw recognition once it has been established.

with a loss of power vis-à-vis a former enemy as well as a potential loss of credibility or stature within one's own group. It is the very fact that individuals are willing to absorb these unavoidable costs – to engage in costly signaling – that suggests a genuine commitment to peace and reassures all parties to the settlement that they will not be the future targets of their domestic competitors.

The Costs of Signing a Settlement

One concrete signal of conciliatory intent among former enemies is generated through the construction and signing of a peace agreement that outlines the bargains necessary to end the war. An almost constant feature of these settlements is the mutual commitment to develop power-sharing and power-dividing institutions that specify the distribution of state influence among wartime adversaries. In our earlier study of 38 civil war agreements signed between 1945 and 1998, we found that only one of those agreements (Angola's short-lived 1989 Gbadolite Accord) failed to include any provisions for sharing or distributing power (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003).

The unambiguous intent behind the creation of power-sharing and power-dividing institutions is to limit the capacity of any one party to the conflict to dominate the postwar state and use its advantaged position to harm the interests or survival of its rivals. While often considered an important precondition to peace, making concessions to share or divide power is likely to be particularly painful to signatories. In most cases, the agreement to establish power-sharing or power-dividing institutions signals the end of the pursuit of what is typically (although not universally) the main objective of the war: monopoly control of the state. By committing themselves to participate in these institutions, signatories are creating a set of rules that will by virtue of their very existence limit

their capacity unilaterally to shape the postwar society.

In addition to the costs of conceding power to rivals for state control, there is also the likelihood that with the signing of a power-sharing settlement a group representative will lose credibility among some members of the collectivity he or she represents.[6] More militant interests resistant to compromise may condemn the settlement and those involved in its design for marginalizing or weakening the group in exchange for the more ambiguous rewards of peace. In some instances, those most dissatisfied with the power-sharing arrangement may even seek to challenge the continued leadership of settlement signatories.

Singer's (1991: 266) discussion of negotiations to resolve the conflict between Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka illustrates the breakdown of group unity that often follows commitment to a power-sharing arrangement. The competition between rival Sinhalese parties created a dynamic in which compromises with the minority Tamils consistently exacted high political costs for the accommodating faction:

> the UNP [United National Party] screamed 'sellout' when Bandaranaike concluded an agreement with the Tamils giving them a bit of autonomy in Tamil regions; and they did so again in the early 1970s, when Mrs. Bandaranaike (who took over the lead of the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party] after her husband's assassination in 1959) tried it. On the other hand, Mrs. Bandaranaike and the SLFP have screamed 'sellout' at every effort the UNP government has made to reach accommodation with the Tamil since they came to power in 1977.

In summary, the costs to a leader in signing on to a settlement are twofold. First, there is the cost of conceding the loss of war aims and the necessity of compromise with rivals. Second, there is the likelihood that the very act of agreement will create schisms

---

[6] Fearon (1994, 1997) has referred to this phenomenon as audience costs.

within parties to the agreement between those who prove more and less amenable to the compromises that have been reached.

While the recognition of these costs to group representatives makes negotiated settlements relatively rare, they are also the reason that these commitments are often highly credible and significant when reached. All sides to the agreement recognize that signatories are both limiting their own power and potentially creating schisms within their own faction. These costly signals are likely to be sent only by those who have a genuine interest in peace.[7]

The Costs of Implementing a Settlement

The implementation of the provisions of recently negotiated peace accords provides former combatants with another opportunity to assess whether the intent of former rivals is conciliatory or duplicitous. This is the stage in the process when parties to negotiations must demonstrate that they are credible partners in sustaining peace by assisting in the creation and maintenance of power-sharing or power-dividing institutions. Failure to participate in the implementation of peace accords exposes recalcitrant actors as preferring a return to war rather than the outcomes determined at the bargaining table.

Participation in the implementation of peace accords serves as a powerful indication of conciliatory intent in large measure because of the costs that parties to a settlement are willing to endure. The costs are the same as those associated with signing a settlement – setting limits on access to state power and accepting the possibility of becoming a

target of militant interests within one's own coalition of actors. What sets this stage of the peace process apart from the initial negotiations is that the real costs of the settlement become readily apparent to all parties. Any ambiguity regarding the price to be paid for stability becomes quickly clarified, and those costs may prove unacceptable. Stedman & Rothchild (1996: 20) make this point in the following terms:

> the pay-offs of implementing peace agreements are not common knowledge: no one knows for certain the rewards and costs associated with making peace or returning to war. Many settlements use elections to establish in part the pay-offs of peace. However, since the winner and loser in an election are not known in advance, the players are uncertain about the pay-offs regarding peace. A party may agree to a settlement only in the hope of winning an election; if the party loses the election, then it may prefer a return to war.

There is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that both the signatories to an agreement as well as their followers may be reluctant to continue to abide by a settlement's provisions once the costs associated with a durable peace have become clarified. The actions of late Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) party leader Jonas Savimbi following the signing of the Bicesse Accords is the commonly cited example of a leader who in his actions during the implementation stage of the peace process demonstrated a lack of credibility vis-à-vis his former adversaries. When it became clear to Savimbi that he was not the popular choice for president in initial postwar elections, he chose a return to war rather than submit to the loss of personal power that would have resulted from continued adherence to the agreement's provisions.

Atlas & Licklider (1999: 37) describe the potential for the development of schisms among former civil war allies during the implementation process in the following terms:

---

[7] This description of the post-civil war peace process has obvious parallels to Putnam's (1988) claim that international diplomacy takes the form of a two-level game in which negotiators contend with the interests of both a domestic audience and the other states participating in the bargaining. Within the context of the postwar state, the two levels of the game are (1) between former civil war adversaries and (2) within each party to the conflict.

post-settlement tensions often arise, not from reopening fissures between former foes but deepening divisions among former allies. . . . Certain groups or factions feel that they have not received their just desserts from the settlement or that the terms of the settlement threaten their interests or security. This tension mounts until either the former allies resort to violence against one another or the settlement supporters are forced to change policy and violate the settlement.

The process Atlas & Licklider identify indicates that the costs of accommodation become clear during the implementation of a peace agreement. Leaders are at greatest risk of facing challenges from militant members of their own group as individuals become aware and potentially dissatisfied with the price of the initial bargain.

In this sense, the implementation of a civil war peace accord provides valuable information to former combatants. If full implementation takes place, it indicates a sincere desire for peace as demonstrated by a willingness to endure both a loss of personal power and challenges from militant members of the group.

An Empirical Test

In earlier studies, we demonstrated that peace agreements are more likely to meet with success if the settlements include greater numbers of provisions for sharing and dividing power along four possible dimensions: the political, military, territorial, and economic bases of state power. We suggested that this result obtains because former combatants perceive the inclusion of multiple forms of power-sharing or division within a single agreement as offering mutually reinforcing guarantees of security. In signing the agreement, parties to the conflict have signaled their conciliatory intent toward their former adversaries through a commitment to a set of institutional rules limiting

their access to state power (Hartzell, 1999; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003).

Here we turn our attention to the set of signals of cooperative intent among former adversaries that takes place with the implementation of a peace agreement. As indicated above, we consider this stage of the peace process to be important because it is with implementation of an agreement that the ultimate costs of compromise are made clear to both signatories and followers. Rather than consider how efforts to implement all four forms of power-sharing provisions affect the prospects for postwar stability, we narrow our focus to considering the impact of negotiating and implementing only military power-sharing and power-dividing arrangements.

Our rationale for focusing solely on military arrangements is based on their central significance to the prospects for peace in postwar states. Prior to the signing of a settlement, a collectivity's army provides the greatest degree of security for a group as well as the most obvious source of leverage vis-à-vis adversaries. In most cases, the implementation of a military power-sharing or power-dividing arrangement requires that collectivities forgo the capacity to protect their own interests and instead entrust their security to the newly established institutions of the postwar state.[8] Thus, intense feelings of insecurity and resistance are likely to emerge around this issue, especially if the implementation of those provisions limits a group's capacity to provide for its own defense. Centering our analysis on this challenging aspect of many peace agreements should provide the clearest indication of how efforts to implement settlements influence the prospects of the maintenance of stability.

[8] Among the 16 settlements we consider, only 3 (Azerbaijan, Chechnya, and Georgia–South Ossetia) do not require any integration of the militaries. Yet even in these 3 instances, there is the requirement that the armies cooperate in one form or another following the settlement.

Case Selection

In order to substantiate that a relationship exists between the implementation of military power-sharing arrangements and durable peace, we identified all civil war settlements reached between the years 1980 and 1996 that specified the establishment of military power-sharing or power-dividing institutions.[9] We selected 1996 as the last year in which settlements could be included in the data analysis so that there would be in all cases at least five years since the signing of the settlement for efforts at implementation to take place.

We identified as civil wars those domestic conflicts settled within our specified time-frame that met the four criteria of the Correlates of War project: (1) the conflict resulted in at least 1,000 battle deaths per year; (2) the national government was one of the parties to the dispute; (3) there was resistance on the part of both the national government and its adversaries during the course of the conflict; and (4) the dispute occurred within a single political unit (Small & Singer, 1982). Between 1980 and 1996, 37 settled domestic disputes were consistent with these four requirements.

Among the identified 37 civil wars that ended between 1980 and 1996, a subset of 24 of these conflicts concluded via the process of negotiated settlement.[10] We considered a negotiated settlement to have been reached if representatives of the opposing sides to a conflict participated in the direct talks that led to the agreement. Third-party actors might play a role in the negotiations, but the antagonists had to meet to discuss conditions relevant to ending the dispute.

Finally, 16 of the 24 negotiated civil war resolutions reached between 1980 and 1996 included provisions for some form of the sharing or dividing of military power among former combatants. We designated an agreement as including such provisions if it called for any of the following: (1) creation of the state's security forces through the integration of former antagonists' armed forces on the basis of a formula representative of the size of the armed groups; (2) creation of the state's security forces on the basis of equal numbers of troops drawn from the antagonists' armed forces; (3) appointment of members of armed faction(s) that do not dominate the state, or of weaker armed factions, to key leadership positions in the state's security forces; and (4) allowing antagonists to retain their own armed forces or to create their own security forces.

What we seek to demonstrate in this article is that among these 16 cases, those negotiated settlements that were followed by full implementation of military power-sharing or power-dividing provisions were more likely to enjoy a durable peace than those that failed to implement such provisions.

Coding

Dependent Variable: The Maintenance of Peace Our dependent variable is settlement success, defined as the absence of a recurrence of sustained, violent civil conflict. We code settlements that have endured to the present without a return to war as long-term successes.[11]

---

[9] We chose not to investigate agreements signed prior to 1980 because of difficulties with obtaining reliable data on the implementation of older peace settlement provisions. Academic interest and research concerning questions of peace agreement implementation has developed only in recent years. For this reason, the more time that has elapsed since the signing of the agreement, the greater is the likelihood that information on implementation processes will be incomplete or unreliable in nature.

[10] Among these civil wars, those that were not resolved through bargaining by 1996 ended with a victory by one party to the conflict.

[11] Among the civil war settlements included in this study, none has failed after remaining stable for the first five years.

Independent Variable: Implementation of Military Power-Sharing or Power-Dividing Provisions

The independent variable is the degree to which the military power-sharing and power-dividing arrangements called for in the 16 peace settlements were implemented within five years following the signing of the agreement. Our logic for focusing on the initial five-year period following the settlement is twofold. First, it often takes an extended period of time to implement some of the types of measures opposing sides agree to as part of a settlement. Analyzing implementation efforts for a period shorter than five years would involve the risk of missing genuine efforts on the part of former adversaries to follow through on settlement commitments. Second, the value of implementation as a costly signal of conciliatory intent is likely to attenuate over time as peace proves durable. For this reason, implementation efforts following the first five years should appear less significant than those that occurred immediately following the end of the war.

Where possible, we coded implementation of the military agreements on an annual basis. By and large, we relied on two sources for coding the implementation of these agreements – the International Institute for Strategic Studies' yearly publications *Strategic Survey* and *The Military Balance*. These materials were also supplemented with case-study materials where possible.[12]

[12] Our use of a five-year period of analysis does pose a potential problem for assessing the influence that settlement implementation has on peace in those cases in which agreements specify a period of time (typically less than five years) within which settlement implementation should take place. When is implementation of a settlement best assessed? In theory, this issue could best be dealt with by rating implementation efforts based on whether or not they took place within the time period specified by the settlement. The limitation associated with this approach is that not all settlements indicate the period of time within which peace agreement implementation should be complete. In the interests of consistency, we have opted to analyze implementation efforts among all cases for the first five years even when settlements have specified a shorter period of time for this stage of the peace process.

We defined settlements as fully implemented if by the end of the five-year period former combatants had fulfilled all of the military power-sharing and/or power-dividing requirements outlined in the original agreement. Although efforts at demobilization or the creation of joint armies may have suffered delays during the five-year period, as long as parties were in compliance with the measures by the end of that time they were coded as having fully implemented their agreements regarding the exercise of military power. The Mozambican case is instructive in this respect. Mozambique's settlement called for government troops and Renamo's rebel forces to integrate in order to form a new national army. Renamo initially delayed sending students for officer training for the new joint army and the demobilization of Renamo and government troops was not completed until nearly two years after the peace agreement was signed. Ultimately, however, demobilization by both groups proved so successful that in 1995 President Joaquim Chissano announced that conscription would be necessary in order to get the new, integrated Mozambique Democratic Armed Forces up to full strength (*Military Balance*, various years).

We designated implementation as partial in those instances in which all parties to the settlement made some effort to follow through on their commitments but failed to implement them fully within five years. Two accords intended to end the civil war in Angola provide examples of partial implementation of military power-sharing provisions. The Bicesse Accords, signed in 1991, called for the creation of an army, totaling 40,000 men, which was to be evenly divided between government and UNITA troops. Although UNITA did send some of its troops to assembly points to be disarmed and demobilized, tens of thousands of guerrillas and their arms were concealed in

remote areas. By the time elections were held in September 1992, only 45% of government troops had been demobilized and 24% of the forces assembled by UNITA had given up their weapons. Angola's Lusaka Protocol, signed in 1994, also called for the creation of a unified national army, this time with a strength of approximately 90,000 troops. Although the integration process was deemed to have concluded in 1998 and UNITA claimed at that time to have completed the demobilization process, UNITA was reported to have 25–30,000 fully equipped troops that had not been demobilized (*Strategic Survey* and *Military Balance*, various years).

Finally, we defined settlement implementation as failed in those cases in which either some or all of the parties refused to live up to their commitments or no forward momentum took place regarding the measures to be implemented. The Cambodian settlement constitutes a case of failed implementation of military measures. The Paris Agreement, signed in 1991, called for the regroupment, cantonment, and disarmament of at least 70% of the forces of each of the four warring factions – the Communist Cambodian government, the forces under Son Sann, Sihanouk's forces, and the Khmer Rouge – with the remaining 30% to be incorporated into a new national army. Although the Phnom Penh government and the two non-communist factions cooperated to some extent in this operation, the Khmer Rouge refused to regroup and disarm its forces (*Strategic Survey*, various years).

Based on these criteria, we assess groups that fully implement the military measures to which they have agreed as having engaged in the most costly form of signaling regarding their commitment to the negotiated settlement. Groups that partially implement the military agreements signal a lower degree of commitment to the settlement, while groups that fail to implement the terms

agreed to may end up signaling something different all together – a marked lack of commitment to the settlement in whose construction they have participated.

Table I summarizes our assessment of the level of success at implementing the military power-sharing or power-dividing bargains specified in the 16 settlements; the narratives for each case provided in the appendix briefly outline the basis for the individual coding decisions.[13] There is a relatively good distribution of implementation successes and failures among the 16 negotiated civil war agreements that required military power-sharing among former combatants. We find that four states failed to implement these provisions, another four only partially fulfilled their commitments, and eight states fully implemented their plans for the sharing or dividing of military power.

Method

Prior studies of civil war settlement implementation typically have taken the form of detailed descriptions of the postwar politics of a particular state.[14] This article seeks to build on earlier case studies through a systematic, cross-national examination of the effect that implementation of military power-sharing and power-dividing arrangements have on settlement stability. By considering the effects of settlement implementation in multiple states, we seek to identify common patterns in the peace process that might not prove readily apparent when concentrating on the specifics associated with a single state's efforts to transition from civil war to stable polity.

A dilemma that we confronted in

---

[13] The narratives provided in the appendix (available from a link at http://www-polisci.tamu.edu/Hoddie/Index.htm) briefly describe the provisions of the settlement specifying the sharing or dividing of military power as well as post-settlement efforts at implementation.

[14] See, for example, the case studies in the edited volumes by Walter & Snyder (1999), Cousens, Kumar & Wermester (2001), and Stedman, Rothchild & Cousens (2002).

Table I.   Assessment of Implementation Efforts Among the 16 Peace Settlements Reached Between 1980 and 1996 that Included Provisions for the Sharing or Dividing of Military Power

Conflict settled	Assessment of implementation*	Settlement outcome
Angola, 1989–91	Partial	Return to war
Angola, 1992–94	Partial	Return to war
Azerbaijan, 1989–94	Failed	Maintenance of peace
Bosnia, 1992–95	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Cambodia, 1970–91	Failed	Maintenance of peace
Chad, 1989–96	Partial	Maintenance of peace
Chechnya, 1994–96	Complete	Return to war
El Salvador, 1979–92	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Georgia–SO, 1989–92	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Lebanon, 1975–89	Partial	Maintenance of peace
Mozambique, 1982–92	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Nicaragua, 1981–89	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Philippines, 1972–96	Complete	Maintenance of peace
Rwanda, 1990–93	Failed	Return to war
Sierra Leone, 1992–96	Failed	Return to war
South Africa, 1983–91	Complete	Maintenance of peace

* Within five years.

developing this study is the relatively small number of instances in which a negotiated settlement to civil war included a military power-sharing or power-dividing arrangement. That there are only 16 cases in the time-frame we examine means that we cannot employ a statistical methodology to demonstrate the relationship between implementation and the maintenance of peace. We instead rely on a form of analysis described by both Lijphart (1971, 1975) and Smelser (1973) as appropriate for the study of small datasets: the comparative method.

In contrast to individual case studies' attention to detail, the comparative method shares with statistical methodologies a concern with identifying causal patterns between variables (Lijphart, 1971, 1975; Smelser, 1973; Jackman, 1985).[15] A chief weakness of the comparative method relative to more sophisticated approaches is the inability to control statistically for the

influence of other potentially important variables.[16] This limitation is apparent in this study as we are unable to control for the effects of other factors likely to influence the prospects for a durable peace following civil war such as the intensity of the conflict prior to settlement, the potential participation of third-party actors in maintaining stability, or even the effects of efforts at implementing other aspects of the peace agreement not associated with military power-sharing. It is because of this absence of statistical controls that this study's findings should be interpreted as only suggestive of a relationship between variables.

Findings

We present our findings employing the comparative method in Table II. The table suggests a strong relationship between

[15] For a discussion of the value of the case-study approach as a means for testing the validity of theories, see Eckstein (1975) and King, Keohane & Verba (1994).

[16] In the words of Lijphart (1971: 684), 'The comparative method should be resorted to when the number of cases available for analysis is so small that cross-tabulating them further in order to establish credible controls is not feasible.' Also see Lieberson (1991) for a discussion of other problems associated with the comparative method.

Table II. Level of Implementation of Military Power-Sharing or Power-Dividing Provisions and the Maintenance of the Peace

Level of implementation	Return to war	Peace	Total
None	2	2	4
	(50%)	(50%)	(100%)
Partial	2	2	4
	(50%)	(50%)	(100%)
Complete	1	7	8
	(12.5%)	(87.5%)	(100%)
Total	5	11	16

successful efforts at implementation of an agreement's military power-sharing or power-dividing provisions and the maintenance of peace. In those eight instances in which former combatants either reneged on their commitments or only partially fulfilled expectations, there was an eventual return to war in exactly half of the cases. In contrast, the peace proved durable in seven of the eight cases (87.5%) in which post-civil war states with agreements requiring military measures fully implemented this aspect of the settlement. In only one of these eight cases (12.5%) did the country experience a return to civil war.[17]

This distribution among cases suggests that once an agreement has been reached requiring the sharing or dividing of military power between former combatants, the prospects for continuing stability are enhanced by faithful implementation of the arrangement. Peace proves much more durable if groups make good on the promises made at the negotiating table, with almost all states that have implemented military power-sharing or power-dividing mechanisms maintaining stable intergroup relations. This stands in significant contrast to those instances in which former combatants prove unwilling to fulfill their commitments to share the coercive instruments of the state, with only half of those states continuing to enjoy peace.

We interpret this finding as demonstrating the importance of the costly and credible signals that may be made by parties to the conflict during the different stages of the peace process. The act of simply agreeing to a peace settlement is an important first signal of conciliatory intent demonstrating that all signatories have a genuine interest in peace. This is indicated by the willingness of agreement participants to limit the scope of their own power and endure the challenges of critics within the group that inevitably emerge with efforts at compromise.

Implementation of the agreement serves as the second significant costly signal of conciliatory intent. Former combatants monitor the behavior of their adversaries for evidence that, once the costs necessary to endure for a successful compromise have been clarified for both leaders and followers, signatories are still committed to stability and peaceful coexistence. Evidence of a failure to act in a manner consistent with the agreement's provisions increases the likelihood that individuals will lose faith in the good intentions of their competitors and will opt for a return to conflict. This option

[17] The single instance of the return to conflict following implementation of military power-sharing occurred in Chechnya. Chechnya stands out as a case in which the military arrangements required by the settlement were particularly limited, including joint Russian–Chechen patrols and checkpoints manned by the opposing sides. The fact that these operations did not require substantial efforts by the warring parties may have limited their value as signals of a commitment to peace.

often proves preferable to having coopera-
tive actions abused for advantage by an
unreliable partner to the settlement.[18]

Our findings do raise a question for which
our test of the theory regarding costly sig-
naling, credible commitments, and durable
peace does not provide a ready answer: Why
did half of the cases that did not see full
implementation of the military provisions
agreed to as part of the settlement succeed in
maintaining the peace? One possible answer
to this question pertains to those cases that
were partially implemented. In at least some
of these cases, actors may have believed that
the failure to implement provisions fully was
the result of resource constraints, lack of
technical expertise, or other related factors
that do not reflect a lack of will to implement
the provisions on the part of the participants.
If some parties to a settlement have reason to
believe that others are engaging in costly sig-
naling through their implementation efforts
but are, for reasons outside of their control,
falling short on implementation, the former
may be reassured enough to give peace a
chance. It is precisely in these types of cases
that adequate access to resources and the
presence of third parties able to monitor

progress and facilitate communication
among parties may play a critical role in
helping to stabilize the peace. If, for example,
members of the international community are
able to convince one group of former
combatants that the other truly is making a
good-faith effort to implement settlement
provisions, an enduring peace may yet be
fostered.

Peace Processes as Signals of Conciliatory Intent: Policy Recommendations for Implementation Success

Informed by the view that the carrying out
of a civil war settlement's provisions is
important to the sustainability of peace, in
this section of the article we consider factors
that may improve the prospects for success-
ful agreement implementation. In particular,
we focus on two conditions that may
enhance the likelihood of effective agree-
ment implementation: (1) the presence of
third-party actors within the post-conflict
state and (2) a high level of economic
development in the state undergoing the
transition from war to peace.

These factors have been previously
identified as improving the prospects for
both agreement implementation and peace
maintenance in the works of other scholars
interested in the politics of post-civil war
states. This section's discussion is intended to
acknowledge the potential importance of
these factors to both the implementation of
peace agreements and the peace process more
generally despite the fact that our use of the
comparative method precluded their inclu-
sion as statistical controls in our empirical
investigation. Because we view the peace
process as taking the form of signals between
former combatants, our understanding of
how these two factors may condition settle-
ment success necessarily diverges in import-
ant ways from those of earlier studies.

---

[18] We considered the possibility that the relationship we
identify between the implementation of civil war settle-
ments and the maintenance of peace is spurious. One
factor that may condition both implementation and peace
is the casualty rate of the conflict the settlement is designed
to resolve. The relatively benign environments associated
with wars of low intensity might make former combatants
predisposed toward genuine implementation efforts and a
willingness to allow the nascent peace to endure unchal-
lenged. The existing literature on the durability of civil war
settlements has demonstrated that a relationship between
higher casualty rates and settlement failure exists (Hartzell,
Hoddie & Rothchild, 2001). Do higher casualty rates also
dim the prospects for settlement implementation? Our
analysis of the 16 cases included in this study suggests that
this is not the case. Among the eight settlements of con-
flicts with casualty rates below the median value for this
indicator, only three (37.5%) fully implemented their
settlements; for the remaining eight settlements of conflicts
with casualty rates above the median value, five (62.5%)
fully implemented their agreements. This suggests that
while more benign environments may be conducive toward
maintaining the peace, they do not appear to have a similar
effect on the likelihood of implementation.

Anarchy, Third-Party Actors, and Agreement Implementation

In many states experiencing civil war, central authority weakens to the point that the domestic environment approximates the anarchy that defines the international system. Based largely on this insight, the growing body of research that exists on civil wars and their resolution has borrowed a number of concepts from the international relations literature, including the security dilemma, credible commitments, and the role of imperfect information (see, for example, Hartzell, 1999; Posen, 1993; and Walter, 1997, 2002). These conditions, it is assumed, pose many of the same challenges for domestic groups implementing civil war settlements as they do for states seeking to carry out international agreements.

Civil war combatants that negotiate a resolution to civil war must also contend with two distinct dilemmas that emerge with the signing of an agreement within a state. These are additional hurdles to settlement implementation that are unlikely to affect the prospects for carrying out international agreements. As Walter (1999) observes, former enemies are required to (1) live within the same territory as their former enemies and (2) divest themselves of all means of self-defense.[19] The heightened security concerns generated by these two challenges in the domestic settlement environment have led most scholars to conclude that the prospects for successful settlement implementation are limited if former combatants are left to their own devices.

Recognizing that the civil war environment generates particular concerns among

former adversaries that limit their willingness to carry out intrastate conflict settlements, many scholars advocate a prominent, facilitating role for third parties during the implementation process (Walter, 1997, 1999, 2002; Stedman, 1997). The presence of a third-party actor, whether representing an international organization or state, is believed to have the effect of restoring order to the anarchic domestic environment and guaranteeing that the agreements made at the bargaining table will be carried out without harming the interests of any of the parties involved. In short, the presence of a third-party actor creates the security that is a prerequisite to implementation success.

Consistent with this article's emphasis on post-civil war military arrangements, Walter (1999: 46, emphasis added) discusses the role of external actors in minimizing the potential for cheating during the disarmament and demobilization of soldiers:

> Third parties can verify compliance with the terms of demobilization and warn of a surprise attack, they can guarantee that soldiers will be protected as they demobilize, and they can become involved if one or both sides resume the war. Third parties can thus ensure that the *payoffs from cheating no longer exceed the payoffs from faithfully executing the settlement's terms.* Once cheating becomes difficult and costly, promises to cooperate should gain credibility and cooperation should become more likely.

In a similar vein, Stedman (1997) outlines a set of three strategies (inducement, socialization, and coercion) that third parties might deploy in order to manage and control spoilers seeking to derail progress toward peace once a settlement has been reached. In this sense, both Walter and Stedman are suggesting that during the implementation stage of the agreement third-party actors are most effectively deployed as enforcers of the agreement. Their role is not only to identify potential spoilers to an agreement but also to impose high costs on settlement violators so that they have no choice but to return to

---

[19] As noted earlier in this article, negotiated civil war settlements have not always required former combatants to divest themselves of all means of self-defense. In rare cases, settlements have allowed combatants to keep their security forces or to create new security forces under their own control. We code these as instances of military power-dividing measures.

behaviors consistent with the original com-
promise.[20]

We share Walter and Stedman's view that
third-party actors have a potentially import-
ant role to play in facilitating agreement
implementation. Yet our perspective diverges
from that offered in their studies in two
respects. First, we think it is significant to
note that there are instances in which a nego-
tiated accord has been implemented and
peace has endured even in the absence of
third-party enforcement. Examples of such
successes considered in this study include the
resolved conflicts in both South Africa and
the Philippines. This suggests that the
absence of third-party enforcement is not
consistently the crucial prerequisite to the
establishing and maintenance of peace.
Second, given our understanding of peace
processes as taking the form of a set of signals
between former adversaries, we consider it
problematic to have third-party actors
defend the agreement against spoilers. Our
concern with this policy prescription is that
it has the potential to mask the intentions
behind the actions of parties to the agree-
ment. In other words, the presence of a third-
party force acting as agreement enforcer will
often mean that parties to the settlement will
not have the opportunity to assess whether
behavior consistent with the signed agree-
ment is based on a genuine desire for peace
or simply expedient behavior intended to
placate the interested third parties.

Because actions with the potential to serve
as signals of conciliatory behavior are likely
to be discounted if they are perceived as a
reaction to the demands of a third-party
enforcer, the establishing of trust among
former combatants becomes less probable
and peace may prove less durable once the
external actor leaves the scene. In this sense,
we believe that the most appropriate role for
third-party actors is simply that of an inter-
mediary between former combatants that
communicates its findings as it monitors and
verifies progress toward implementation.[21]
Indications that a third party has the inten-
tion of enforcing an agreement mean that
the value of the signal that comes with
implementation is lost.[22]

### Levels of Development and Agreement Implementation

In a study of the resolution of post-World
War II civil wars, Doyle & Sambanis (2000)
find a positive association between higher
levels of economic development and the
maintenance of peace. The reasons Doyle &
Sambanis (2000: 785) believe that this
association exists are most plainly stated as a
hypothesis: 'More developed economies with
lower levels of poverty should be both better
able to rebuild after war and less susceptible
to wars stemming from economic grievance.'

This article's perspective on peace pro-
cesses taking the form of mutual signals of
conciliatory intent offers a different expla-
nation for why more economically developed
states emerging from bargained settlements
to civil war may enjoy greater success in
maintaining peace. The financial resources of

---

[20] Walter (2002: 24–26) specifically discounts the role that
costly signals made between former adversaries may play in
resolving civil conflicts, suggesting instead that third-party
enforcers provide the most assured path to peace. Her skep-
ticism about the value of signals made between former
adversaries is largely based on a belief that groups have a
limited capacity to monitor and verify settlement compli-
ance by their competitors. Yet it seems unwarranted to
suggest that costly signals between former adversaries and
the efforts of third-party enforcers are mutually exclusive
mechanisms for encouraging stability in states emerging
from civil war. Third-party actors may serve a valuable
function as their efforts to monitor and verify implemen-
tation efforts amplify the costly signals made at this stage
of the process.

[21] This view regarding the role of third-party actors as
monitoring rather than forcing compliance is articulated in
Stedman & Rothchild (1996).
[22] We are suggesting that third parties limit their actions to
observers of agreement implementation, but this would
not prohibit them from taking a more active role and inter-
vening if parties engaged in large-scale acts of violence.
Once mass violence has emerged, the issue of whether
costly signals of conciliatory intent have been made by
parties to the agreement is obviously no longer relevant.

Figure 1. Postwar Life Expectancy and Implementation of Military Power-Sharing or Power-Dividing Provisions to Civil War Settlements
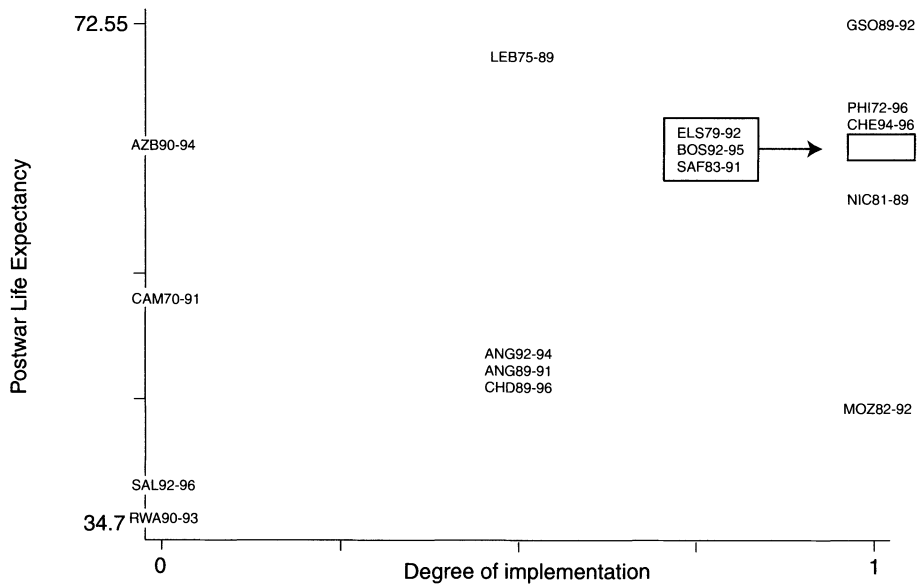
Key to data points: Cases of failed implementation – Rwanda (RWA90-93), Sierra Leone (SAL92-96), Cambodia (CAM70-91), and Azerbaijan (AZB90-94). Cases of partial implementation – Chad (CHD89-96), Angola (ANG89-91), Angola (ANG92-94), and Lebanon (LEB75-89). Cases of full implementation – Mozambique (MOZ82-92), Nicaragua (NIC81-89), South Africa (SAF83-91), Bosnia (BOS92-95), El Salvador (ELS79-92), Chechnya (CHE94-96), Philippines (PHI72-96), Georgia, South Ossetia (GSO89-92).

wealthier states give the participants in peace processes of those countries a greater capacity to implement the programs first outlined in peace settlements. De Soto & del Castillo (1994) note that the costs of implementing a peace settlement can often prove overwhelming to a developing state. De Soto & del Castillo (1994: 72) calculate the costs for implementing the Salvadoran accords for a single year in the following terms:

> For 1993 alone, El Salvador needed about $250 million to reintegrate ex-combatants into society (through purchase of land, agricultural credit, housing, credit for small enterprises, pensions for the disabled, etc.) and to promote democratic institutions (National Civil Police, National Public Security Academy, human-rights activities, and activities related to the coming elections).

This suggests that countries need substantial financial resources to implement peace settlements. As a result, participants in peace

processes within countries with greater levels of wealth often have an advantaged ability to offer the conciliatory signals associated with faithful agreement implementation that tend to foster a durable peace.

Figure 1 offers support for the claim that higher levels of economic development are associated with a greater capacity to implement the military power-sharing or dividing aspects of settlements. Using life expectancy following the end of the war as a proxy measure of development, the figure indicates that among the 16 cases with settlement provisions for the sharing or dividing of military power there is an approximate relationship between economic development and implementation success.[23] Most strikingly,

[23] Data for postwar life expectancy collected from the Doyle & Sambanis (2000) dataset used in their article 'International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis'. Data available at http://www.worldbank.org/research/conflict/papers/peacebuilding/.

the figure demonstrates that two of the four cases of complete implementation failure are among the poorest states included in our dataset: Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

Because signals of conciliation associated with agreement implementation are often costly, states undergoing the transition from civil conflict to peace should have ready access to international assistance that would facilitate their meeting the expectations outlined in the settlement. Without such assistance, the failure to carry out settlement provisions as a result of resource scarcity carries the risk of being misperceived as an act of bad faith by former adversaries and has the potential to reignite hostilities.

Conclusions

This article offers two contributions to the growing literature on the processes associated with the resolution of civil wars. First, this study develops a theory to explain why settlement implementation is important for building an enduring peace in states emerging from violent civil conflict via negotiated settlement. By implementing the provisions of an agreement, leaders of the compromising groups are unambiguously signaling their genuine commitment to peace. These signals are understood to be credible because they are associated with heavy costs to the implementing parties in terms of both an immediate loss of political power vis-à-vis their competitors in the war and the likely loss of support among the more militant members of their own groups. We believe that it is the willingness to endure these costs in an effort to demonstrate a preference for stability that allows former antagonists to surmount security concerns and move toward a self-sustaining peace.

A second contribution of this study concerns its methodology. This article is among a very few to undertake a systematic, cross-national examination of the effect that

implementation has on settlement durability. Although case studies of agreement implementation have helped to identify particular characteristics of the implementation process as well as challenges associated with fulfilling settlement obligations, this literature has yet to develop generalizable theories regarding the peace process. The findings of this study suggest that future cross-national research should prove a valuable enterprise in efforts to further develop theories concerning the peaceful and durable resolution of civil wars.

References

Atlas, Pierre M. & Roy Licklider, 1999. 'Conflict Among Former Allies After Civil War Settlements: Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad, and Lebanon', *Journal of Peace Research* 36(1): 35–54.

Cousens, Elizabeth M.; Chetan Kumar & Karin Wermester, eds, 2001. *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

de Soto, Alvaro & Graciana del Castillo, 1994. 'Obstacles to Peacebuilding', *Foreign Policy* 94 (Spring): 69–74.

de Soto, Alvaro & Graciana del Castillo, 1995. 'Implementation of Comprehensive Peace Agreements: Staying the Course in El Salvador', *Global Governance* 1(2): 189–203.

Doyle, Michael W. & Nicholas Sambanis, 2000. 'International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis', *American Political Science Review* 94(4): 779–801.

Eckstein, Harry, 1975. 'Case Study and Theory in Political Science', in Fred I. Greenstein & Nelson W. Polsby, eds, *Handbook of Political Science, Volume 1, Political Science Scope and Theory.* Reading, MA: Addison Wesley (79–138).

Enterline, Andrew J. & Dylan Balch-Lindsay, 2001. 'By Sword or by Signature? A Competing Risks Approach to the Civil War Process, 1820–1992', available at http://www.psci.unt.edu/enterline/Working%20Papers/BySwordOrBySignature.pdf.

Fearon, James D., 1994. 'Signaling Versus the Balance of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 236–269.

Fearon, James D., 1997. 'Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands Versus Sinking Costs', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(1): 68–90.

Fortna, Page, 2002. 'Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? And If So, How?', paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, 29 August–1 September.

Hampson, Fen Osler, 1996. *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail.* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Hartzell, Caroline A., 1999. 'Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43(1): 3-22.

Hartzell, Caroline & Matthew Hoddie, 2003. 'Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management', *American Journal of Political Science* 47(2): 318–332.

Hartzell, Caroline; Matthew Hoddie & Donald Rothchild, 2001. 'Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables', *International Organization* 55(1): 183–208.

International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance,* annual editions. London: IISS.

International Institute for Strategic Studies. *Strategic Survey,* annual editions. London: IISS.

Jackman, Robert W., 1985. 'Cross-National Statistical Research and the Study of Comparative Politics', *American Journal of Political Science* 29(1): 161–182.

King, Gary; Robert O. Keohane & Sidney Verba, 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Leeds, Brett Ashley, 1999. 'Domestic Political Institutions, Credible Commitments, and International Cooperation', *American Journal of Political Science* 43(4): 979–1002.

Lieberson, Stanley, 1991. 'Small N's and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reason-ing in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases', *Social Forces* 70(2): 307–320.

Lijphart, Arend, 1971. 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682–698.

Lijphart, Arend, 1975. 'The Comparable-Cases Strategy in Comparative Research', *Comparative Political Studies* 8(2): 158–177.

Mason, T. David; Joseph P. Weingarten, Jr. & Patrick J. Fett, 1999. 'Win, Lose, or Draw: Predicting the Outcome of Civil Wars', *Political Research Quarterly* 52(2): 239–268.

Posen, Barry, 1993. 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict', *Survival* 35(1): 27–47.

Putnam, Robert, 1988. 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organization* 42(3): 427–460.

Singer, Marshall R., 1991. 'Prospects for Conflict Management in the Sri Lankan Ethnic Crisis', in Joseph V. Montville, ed., *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies.* New York: Lexington (259–286).

Small, Melvin & J. David Singer, 1982. *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816–1980.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Smelser, Neil, 1973. 'The Methodology of Comparative Analysis', in Donald Warwich & Samuel Osherson, eds, *Comparative Research Methods.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall (42–86).

Stedman, Stephen John, 1997. 'Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes', *International Security* 22(2): 5–53.

Stedman, Stephen John, 2001. 'International Implementation of Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Findings from a Study of Sixteen Cases', in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall, eds, *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict.* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press (737–752).

Stedman, Stephen John & Donald Rothchild, 1996. 'Peace Operations: From Short-Term to Long-Term Commitment', *International Peacekeeping* 3(2): 17–35.

Stedman, Stephen John; Donald Rothchild & Elizabeth M. Cousens, eds, 2002. *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace*

Agreements. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner & International Peace Academy.

United States Institute of Peace, 1996. 'Why Peace Agreements Succeed or Fail', *PeaceWatch* 3(1): 1.

Walter, Barbara, 1997. 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement', *International Organization* 51(3): 335–364.

Walter, Barbara, 1999. 'Designing Transitions from Civil War', in Barbara Walter & Jack Snyder, eds, *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention*. New York: Columbia University Press (38–69).

Walter, Barbara. 2002. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Walter, Barbara & Jack Snyder, eds, 1999. *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention*. New York: Columbia University Press.

MATTHEW HODDIE, b. 1969, PhD in Political Science (University of California, Davis, 2000); Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University (2001–). Recent articles in *International Organization*, *Political Studies*, and *American Journal of Political Science*.

CAROLINE HARTZELL, b. 1962, PhD in Political Science (University of California, Davis, 1994); Associate Professor, Gettysburg College (1993–). Recent articles in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *International Organization*, and *American Journal of Political Science*.