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Before the Peace: Ceasefire Durability in Ethnic Civil Wars

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BEFORE THE PEACE: CEASEFIRE DURABILITY IN ETHNIC CIVIL WARS

AN HONORS THESIS
PRESENTED BY
JUSTIN WINOKUR

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
HONORS IN THE MAJOR FIELD

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT
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ABSTRACT

Why do some ceasefires last for days, while others last for months or years? Previous research on ceasefires has not directly considered the question of ceasefire durability, or has focused solely on the dynamics of ceasefire durability in interstate war. In order to address these knowledge gaps, this study explores the question of ceasefire durability in the context of ethnic civil wars. It is hypothesized that ceasefire durability is related to belligerents' territorial satisfaction, relative power, and actor cohesion. Analyzing two ceasefires from the Bosnian civil war, the study finds that durability is a function of the interaction between territorial satisfaction and the presence of a mutually hurting stalemate. This interaction produces four types of ceasefires: (a) durable, with high satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate; (b) variable, with high satisfaction and no mutually hurting stalemate; (c) dependent, with low satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate; and (d) weak, with low satisfaction and no mutually hurting stalemate. This typology helps to clarify policy and timing choices for military officials, humanitarian organizations, and peace negotiators.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARBiH	Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
HV	The Croatian Army
HVO	Croatian Defense Council
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SVK	Krajina Serb Army
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
VRS	Army of Republika Srpska

“‘I know there is a cease-fire today, but I knew there would be no peace,’ the retired nurse said angrily, her eyes glistening but refusing to shed tears. ‘As long as the extremists are negotiating these agreements, there is no cause for trust.’”¹

“Front line commanders like Noman Burkin...believe they have a simple choice—to fight, or to die.”²

¹ Carol J. Williams, “Bullets Pierce Bosnia Truce, Hopes; Balkans: Cease-Fire in Sarajevo Fails to Take Effect. ‘I Knew There Would Be No Peace,’ Weary Refugee Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 June 1992.

² NPR, “Muslims in Mostar Prepared to Fight Croats to the End,” *All Things Considered*, 4 November 1993.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Hell had been unleashed in central Bosnia, and there seemed to be no end in sight. It was late April of 1993, and a second front of the Bosnian civil war had just opened. Throughout the previous year, the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims had worked in tandem to fend off the aggression of the Bosnian Serbs, who sought to carve their own state out of the newly independent Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. As the former Yugoslavia cannibalized itself, the scattered Serb elements fought to seize territory and create their own states, potentially laying the foundation for a Greater Serbia. Initially, this common enemy kept the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Croats on the same side of the fighting. Yet with time pressure began to mount. Inter-ethnic disputes and conflicting territorial aspirations placed great strain on their relationship, and in April this strain grew unbearable. Neighbors turned their guns on each other as Croats and Muslims began vicious ethnic cleansing campaigns throughout the country. The three-sided Bosnian catastrophe had begun.

As fighting escalated, the outside world watched vicariously through the eyes of reporters. On 27 April 1993, Christiane Amanpour of CNN related the following message to her American audience. In it, she details the circumstances surrounding a new ceasefire agreement:

The sound of gunfire and shelling still echoes through central Bosnia, and smoke is billowing from the hills as ever more houses are torched and more people are forced to flee their homes. In this village, Muslim soldiers and peasant warriors are trying to fend off the Croats. But this fighter's in tears. He says they don't have enough weapons and can't fight back. The killing goes on even as the U.N. tries to monitor these front lines, but these British soldiers have seen so many cease-fires come and go.³

³ CNN News, "Bosnian Serbs Launch New Offensive as Sanctions Tighten," 27 April 1993.

As if to underscore the routineness of this intense violence, even in the face of a promise to stop the fighting, a British UN soldier whimsically adds: “Yeah, it’s a typical Bosnian cease-fire.”⁴

A typical Bosnian ceasefire—a ceasefire that collapses before it has gotten off the ground, that steals peace of mind away from battered civilians, that disappoints a disgusted international audience. Such short-lived ceasefires do not belong solely to the Balkans; one must only look to Syria in recent months to find contemporary instances of these fragile agreements.⁵ Indeed, ceasefires are everywhere. It is certainly difficult to uncover a conflict in which the parties did not agree, at least once, to lay down their arms for a time. Yet these agreements, though practically ubiquitous in violent conflicts, are not well understood and exhibit highly variable effects. Though the “typical Bosnian ceasefire” was short, there were significant exceptions to this rule. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, for example, negotiated a Bosnian ceasefire that lasted for almost four months. Examining Europe beyond the Balkans, one finds even greater variation. Ceasefires in the “frozen conflicts” of Nagorno-Karabakh, Cyprus, Moldova, and Georgia have lasted for years without official agreement on the resolution of political incompatibilities. What makes these situations different from those short-lived agreements considered to be so “typical”?

Malin Åkebo writes that the central question of peace and conflict is: “What is it that leads belligerents to abandon lethal warfare and instead continue to disagree with one another without resorting to violence?”⁶ In this thesis I address a variation on this question, asking instead: What is it that explains *differences in how long* belligerents are willing to abandon lethal

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Jamie Tarabay, “Haley blames Russia for failure of Syrian ceasefire,” *CNN*, 13 March 2018. Accessed on 10 April 2018 at <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/13/middleeast/syria-ceasefire-failure-nikki-haley-intl/index.html>.

⁶ Malin Åkebo, *Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes: A comparative study* (Routledge: New York, 2017), p. 2.

warfare while still continuing to disagree with each other? This study asks why some ceasefires collapse in days, while others endure for months or years. I seek to answer this question specifically in the context of ethnic civil wars. More specifically, therefore, this is a study of the relationship between ethnic civil war and the length of time belligerents are willing to cooperate while still embroiled in disagreement.

A ceasefire is an agreement to stop fighting that does not address the underlying grievances responsible for the fighting in the first place. Ceasefires perform a separate function from peace settlements, political agreements that seek to resolve war-causing grievances. Ceasefires are challenging because the parties still have good reason to fight, despite having agreed to stop the violence.⁷ To explain variations in ceasefire durability is thus to explain which structures, short of an actual resolution to the conflict, are necessary to keep belligerents at peace.⁸ This is not a study of how ceasefires transition into peace settlements, nor is it a study of peace settlement durability. While I touch on some dynamics related to this question, my primary concern is with the presence of peace in the absence of conflict resolution.

In the following chapters, I construct a theory of inter-group cooperation rooted in the structural dynamics of ethnic civil war. This theory begins with Virginia Page Fortna's proposition that ceasefires are a type of cooperation between belligerents, rooted in reciprocity and deterrence.⁹ Beginning with this framework, I disaggregate ethnic civil war into its two component elements—ethnic conflict and civil war—in order to identify their impact on cooperation. I theorize that these two elements, when combined, interact with cooperation via

⁷ Virginia Page Fortna, *Peacetime: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 12.

⁸ By "peace" I mean "negative peace," defined by Galtung as the absence of direct, physical violence. This is the type of peace brought about by a ceasefire. It is the role of peace settlements to address other aspects of violence that might bring belligerents closer to a state of "positive peace." See Johan Galtung, "An Editorial," *Journal of Peace Research*, 1(1), 1964, p. 2.

⁹ Fortna, *Peacetime*, p. 12.

three mechanisms: territorial satisfaction, the relative balance of power, and actor coherence. Given these mechanisms, I posit that cooperation will be most difficult when belligerents are dissatisfied with their territorial holdings, when belligerents experience or perceive a mutually hurting stalemate, and when the actors exhibit major internal divisions. In such circumstances, ceasefire durability should be low. Conversely, if belligerents are satisfied with their territorial holdings, are not constrained by a mutually hurting stalemate, and are highly cohesive, ceasefire durability should be high.

I test this theory by comparing two ceasefire agreements signed during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, an emblematic instance of ethnic civil war. These cases were selected from the same conflict in order to ensure their similarity, which will help isolate changes in the independent variables and clarify any possible causal relationships with ceasefire durability. I use John Stuart Mill's method of difference to test these variables, which eliminates causality in factors that remain constant across cases with different outcomes.

The first ceasefire to be studied emerged from former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's late-December 1994 mediation mission, for which reason I have dubbed it the "Carter ceasefire." This ceasefire was signed by the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs, and endured for 78 days before collapsing in the winter of 1995. The second ceasefire was signed by all three major parties in the civil war—the Muslims, Croats, and Serbs—for which reason I have dubbed it the "tripartite ceasefire." This agreement endured for only 7 days in the spring of 1993, with major violations throughout. By comparing these two dramatically different ceasefires, I demonstrate clear connections between my theory of cooperation and ceasefire duration.

The results indicate that ceasefire durability is linked to the dynamic interaction between belligerents' satisfaction with their territorial holdings and the existence of a mutually hurting

stalemate. Despite my theoretical expectations, actor cohesion appears to have no direct causal relationship to ceasefire durability. In the Carter ceasefire, it was the confluence of low satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate that caused the ceasefire to endure. In contrast, the tripartite ceasefire collapsed quickly due to the belligerents' dissatisfaction and confidence in their military capabilities. In effect, an actor must be dissatisfied with the allocation of territory, *but also able to continue fighting*, in order for ceasefires to collapse quickly. Given the limited scope of my case studies, however, I am unable to test every constellation of these variables. As such, other interaction effects may be at work. Nevertheless, the key finding of this study is that ceasefire durability depends upon the nexus of satisfaction and capability, and that different types of durability arise from different configurations of these factors.

Extrapolating from the case studies, I present a typology of ceasefire durability that posits four different ceasefire types. *Durable* ceasefires exhibit high satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate, and should either endure or progress into a peace settlement. *Variable* ceasefires exhibit high satisfaction but no mutually hurting stalemate, and endure only if there is goodwill between parties. *Dependent* ceasefires exhibit low satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate, and endure only until belligerents no longer feel constrained by a mutually hurting stalemate. Finally, *weak* ceasefires exhibit low satisfaction and no mutually hurting stalemate, and will collapse quickly. Using this typology, I forward numerous policy recommendations regarding mediation, monitoring, and support, and suggest various approaches for humanitarian and negotiation missions.

This research will be useful for three primary audiences: military strategists, peace workers, and academics. Ceasefires are essential components of all three groups' work, be that work to construct a more effective military strategy, design a more complete approach to

humanitarian aid and peacebuilding policy, or to develop an ever-more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of peace and conflict. The pressing ubiquity of ethnic civil wars and the common occurrence of ceasefires in those wars makes this research of great interest to such specialists in peace and conflict.

Military strategists and experts in military affairs should find this study's findings to be of great import, given that ceasefires are tightly interwoven with military strategy. No strategist should use his or her tools without a full understanding of their functionality. It is therefore imperative that military officials comprehend the manifold structures underlying ceasefire duration. A deeper understanding of ceasefire durability will help military decision-makers better choose when to use ceasefire agreements, and better grasp how to most effectively support them.

Those who work on the policy side of peacebuilding and humanitarian aid will also find this research of use, for, like military strategists, ceasefires are an important element of their work. Many humanitarian missions necessarily coincide with a cessation of hostilities in order to ensure the safety of aid workers, and the insertion of those workers is frequently conditioned upon the establishment of a demonstrably stable ceasefire. Such conditional aid was used, for example, in Bosnia.¹⁰ Similarly, policy makers often condition peace negotiations upon the establishment of a stable ceasefire.¹¹ By providing a typology of ceasefire durability, the findings of this study will clarify when certain ceasefires are hospitable to or risky for missions on the ground in conflict zones. This will help both groups improve planning, resource effectiveness, and safety.

Finally, this work will be useful to scholars of peace and conflict who desire a fuller image of the role that ceasefires play in war. Malin Åkebo rightly notes that ceasefires, tools of

¹⁰ Andrew Katell, "Mediator Suggests U.S. Troops for Bosnia," *The Associated Press*, 2 February 1993.

¹¹ Åkebo, *Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes*, p. 2.

conflict management routinely employed by both mediators and belligerents, have been insufficiently analyzed relative to the frequency of their occurrence.¹² The conflict resolution literature has largely overlooked the study of ceasefires, concentrating instead on social processes more closely linked to the onset of war and the settlement of underlying incompatibilities between belligerents. This is a significant oversight, given that most major violent conflicts involve calls for and agreements on ceasefires, and that these ceasefires are intimately linked to the broader processes of waging and resolving war. To the extent that ceasefires have been studied, ceasefire *durability* has received little attention, and, where it has, this attention has not focused on intrastate warfare or ethnic conflict. My findings fill this gap by creating a clear link between ethnic civil war, cooperation, and ceasefire duration.

The State of the Art

Though their presence in the literature is far from proportional to their presence in war, ceasefires have nonetheless been considered by a number of scholars and practitioners. Generally, this literature offers important theoretical contributions that will improve our understanding of the mechanisms underlying ceasefires, their place in the broader nexus of war, and the importance of their study. We will also find, however, that there are conspicuous knowledge gaps that need to be addressed. These gaps are particularly apparent in relation to ethnic civil war, an essential absence given the increasing predominance of intrastate war in the post-Cold War era. This existing work can be stratified across four fields: ceasefires in the peace process, ceasefire onset and collapse, ceasefire durability, and ceasefire policy.

¹² Åkebo, *Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes*, p. 7.

Ceasefires in the Peace Process

A number of scholars have bridged the gap between the conflict management and conflict resolution literatures by exploring the role of ceasefires in the broader process of peacemaking. These studies seek to understand the impact of ceasefires on the resolution of underlying incompatibilities. In doing so, they embed ceasefire agreements in the context of general peace negotiations, linking two processes that have traditionally been considered distinct. These studies generally find that ceasefires can exacerbate conflicts and make them harder to resolve if they are not crafted and sequenced carefully.

Åshild Kolås, for example, examines the impact of ceasefires on the conflict between the Indian government and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim in Northeast India.¹³ She finds that ceasefires throughout the fighting have increased splintering among various militant factions, widened the scope of militant activities, and bolstered militant groups' political power and legitimacy.¹⁴ In effect, the Indian government's policy of signing ceasefire agreements and subsequently offering to negotiate has made the conflict's resolution more difficult by dividing and empowering militant groups.¹⁵

Similarly, in her study of ceasefire timing, Sylvie Mahieu argues that ceasefires can ultimately lengthen and increase the intensity of wars if they are not introduced at the right moment in the peace process.¹⁶ Her analysis finds that "premature" ceasefires either offer opportunities for belligerents to rearm, or, in certain instances, lead to complacency and an

¹³ Åshild Kolås, "Naga militancy and violent politics in the shadow of ceasefire," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 6 (2011).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 790-791.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 791.

¹⁶ Sylvie Mahieu, "When Should Mediators Interrupt a Civil War? The Best Timing for a Ceasefire," *International Negotiation* 12 (2007), pp. 224-225.

unwillingness to find a resolution—a state of frozen conflict.¹⁷ Ultimately, she concludes that negotiators should introduce ceasefires only after the belligerents have come to a consensus on the issues to be negotiated; after such a process agreement is established,¹⁸ negotiated peace will seem possible and the cessation of hostilities more acceptable.¹⁹ Yet while Mahieu argues that poorly-timed ceasefires worsen the human cost of conflict, others, such as Lottie Lane, maintain that ceasefires may help the international community manage human rights abuses in conflict zones.²⁰

Kristine Höglund's study of ceasefires in conflicts with non-state actors echoes Mahieu's basic sentiment that ceasefires can help the peace process, but only when the timing is right.²¹ She finds that ceasefires can function as useful confidence-building measures that allow parties to build the goodwill necessary for successful negotiations.²² However, a government calling for a ceasefire may also cast the non-state actor as illegitimate, harming the prospects of propitious negotiations in the long run.²³

Looking at the conflicts in Aceh and Sri Lanka, Malin Åkebo likewise finds that ceasefires can negatively affect peace processes if they are sequenced incorrectly.²⁴ She also finds that the negative impact of ceasefires can stem from their symbolism, their influence on the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Bergmann and Niemann define a process agreement as an “agreement to hold further rounds of negotiations, establishment of procedural aspects for talks or strategies for implementation of concessions (but no agreement on the substance of the dispute).” In effect, it is an agreement on the issues to be negotiated and the way in which those negotiations will unfold. See Julian Bergmann and Arne Niemann, “The European Union as an Effective Mediator in Peace Negotiations? Conceptual Framework and Plausibility Probe,” Mainz: Chair of International Relations, Johannes Gutenberg University, 2013.

¹⁹ Mahieu, “When Should Mediators Interrupt a Civil War?” p. 225.

²⁰ Lottie Lane, “Mitigating humanitarian crises during non-international armed conflicts—the role of human rights and ceasefire agreements,” *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 1, no. 2 (2016).

²¹ Kristine Höglund, “Tactics in Negotiations between States and Extremists: The Role of Cease-Fires and Counterterrorist Measures,” in *Engaging Extremists: Trade-Offs, Timing, and Diplomacy*, eds. I. William Zartman and Guy Olivier Faure (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2011).

²² *Ibid.*, p. 238.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

²⁴ Åkebo, *Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes*, p. 5.

internal dynamics of the parties, and the possibility that ceasefires might be “understood as accepting a particular on-the-ground reality”—an essential insight that will feature heavily in my theory of cooperation (see chapter 2).²⁵ They can, however, provide momentum to peace processes if they are structured in such a way as to open “political space.”²⁶ For Åkebo, then, ceasefires are not hopelessly destructive, but they do require particularly careful design in order to be effective at bringing belligerents closer to peace.

These issues are important for contextualizing ceasefires and understanding the depth of their interaction with conflict. Rather than being mere pauses in the fighting, ceasefires are deeply affected by, and have a significant impact on, the broader process of waging and resolving war. This dynamic relationship is at the heart of my own thinking on ceasefires and territorial satisfaction. However, these works on ceasefires in the peace process do not directly address why ceasefires collapse, and why there is such significant variation in their durability. For answers to these questions, one must look elsewhere in the literature.

Ceasefire Onset and Collapse

Numerous studies seek to explain the circumstances under which belligerents are likely to sign or break ceasefire agreements. These studies are not, however, concerned with variation in the period of time between ceasefire onset and collapse. James Smith concludes that belligerents typically encounter seven particular barriers to ceasefires: a lack of political will, which is derived from the lack of a mutually hurting stalemate; the fear of appearing weak, and the desire to appear strong; aggressive public statements that prevent politicians from later modifying their positions; a weak, passive, or uncritical inner circle of advisers; an insufficiently specific or

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

mutually acceptable ceasefire agreement; the proposal of a mediator seen as biased by at least one of the parties; and the external imposition of a ceasefire without sufficient commitment from the third party to continue providing security guarantees.²⁷ Despite having done the important work of accumulating these variables, Smith analyzes both interstate and intrastate wars simultaneously, thereby muddying any potential structural differences between the two. As a result, it is unclear if certain obstacles will arise only with certain types of war. Therefore, a further disaggregation of conflict type is necessary to uncover these relationships.

Smith's second obstacle is related, in part, to cultural markers of strength and weakness. The question of culture's role in the ceasefire process is addressed by Montgomery Saponé in her study of ceasefires in Northern Ireland. Saponé argues that "The key to the continuity of the conflict is neither economic nor sectarian, but cultural."²⁸ Saponé identifies perceptions of trustworthiness, fear, political philosophy, organizational structure, hardliners and spoilers, claims to territory, and claims to representation as the key cultural obstacles to ceasefires.²⁹ However, Saponé over-attributes, or even misattributes, certain variables to culture. For example, she considers the IRA's fear of disarmament, and its subsequent vulnerability to a still-armed British government, to be a cultural phenomenon.³⁰ Power asymmetries of this type are likely better understood from a rationalist perspective than a subjective cultural perspective, given that Saponé does not convincingly argue why such security calculations might be culturally dependent. Other variables of hers, such as organizational structure, walk a fine line between the cultural and the arbitrarily organizational.³¹ Though Saponé effectively argues for the role of

²⁷ James D.D. Smith, *Stopping Wars: Defining the Obstacles to Cease-Fire* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 8-10.

²⁸ Montgomery Saponé, "Ceasefire: The Impact of Republican Political Culture on the Ceasefire Process in Northern Ireland," *Peace and Conflict Studies* 7, no. 1 (2000), p. 24.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-42.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

culture in the formulation of political will, not all of her variables can be justifiably considered “cultural.” Moreover, many of the cultural variables she considers—such as fear, trust, and claims to territory—are derived specifically from the nature of the Troubles as an ethnic conflict. Sapone misses an opportunity to discuss the important structural relationship between ethnic conflict and the ceasefire process, and therefore does not do justice to the underlying processes at work. By specifically highlighting the relationship between ethnic conflict and cooperation in this study, I intend to draw a clearer causal line between the two phenomena.

Other scholars forward the notion that ceasefire collapse is related to the cost-benefit analyses of the belligerents. This logic posits that ceasefires fail because rebels will not cease hostilities if violence is their only leverage during negotiations; likewise, the government will not negotiate fairly if the rebels cannot apply pressure through violence. Mahieu, referencing Robert Clark³² and I. William Zartman,³³ writes, “Since both parties want to negotiate from a position of strength, a truce, even if initially accepted by them, will be short-lived and likely followed by a show of force by the rebellion in order to demonstrate their resolve and determination to the government.”³⁴ It is not beneficial for rebels to relinquish their access to violence, for the rebels’ sole means of leverage over the government is their use of force, as noted by Höglund.³⁵ This cost-benefit calculation is anticipated to lead rebels to resist and, ultimately, to break ceasefires.

Another logic of collapse maintains that ceasefires fail because effective negotiations and hostility cessations can only occur under the right battlefield conditions and with the right timing. According to the scholars in this stream of thought, ceasefires result from interventions

³² Robert P. Clark, “Negotiations for Basque Self-Determination in Spain,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 68.

³³ I. William Zartman, “Conclusions: The Last Mile,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 336.

³⁴ Mahieu, “When Should Mediators Interrupt a Civil War?” p. 211.

³⁵ Höglund, “Tactics in Negotiations between States and Extremists,” p. 238.

that create artificial pauses in the development of the conflict, and thus prevent the natural conditions for hostility cessation.³⁶ Certain violent processes must inevitably unfold in order for peace to become possible. As Edward Luttwak writes, “since the establishment of the United Nations and the enshrinement of great-power politics in its Security Council... wars among lesser powers have rarely been allowed to run their natural course... a cease-fire tends to arrest war-induced exhaustion and lets belligerents reconstitute and rearm their forces. It intensifies and prolongs that struggle once the cease-fire ends—and it does usually end.”³⁷ Here, Luttwak discourages outside intervention that prevents the “natural” evolution of conflict, ultimately imploring policy elites to “give war a chance.”³⁸ This logic is related to the concept of “ripeness,” originally forwarded by Zartman,³⁹ in that it demands structural preconditions—a mutually hurting stalemate—to arise before peace may endure. If a ceasefire artificially pauses a conflict before a specific point of exhaustion is reached, the belligerents will not respect the agreement and will break it as they seek to further adjust the battlefield conditions in their favor.

Others maintain that ceasefires will be durable if they are accompanied by either a process agreement, which will provide momentum for a peace settlement, or overbearing and powerful intervention, which will enforce commitment in lieu of a process agreement. Mahieu writes, “When a general formula for the negotiations has been achieved, it becomes propitious to persuade the parties to agree on a cessation of hostilities, not only because it is then more likely

³⁶ Edward N. Luttwak, “Give War a Chance,” *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (July/August 1999); Edward N. Luttwak, “The Curse of Inconclusive Intervention,” in *Turbulent Peace: The challenges of managing international conflict*, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall (Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace Press, 2001); Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” *International Security* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1996); Chester A. Crocker (Ed.), *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the hardest cases* (Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace Press, 2004).

³⁷ Luttwak, “Give War a Chance,” p. 36.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ I. William Zartman, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond,” in National Research Council, *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2000).

to last, but also because it will contribute to the achievement of a final settlement.”⁴⁰ With a process agreement in place, belligerents are more likely to understand the underlying dynamics of their conflict, are more likely to see pathways to a negotiated settlement, and are more likely to turn away from violence as a means of dispute resolution.⁴¹ Without an accompanying process agreement, ceasefires “are likely to be mere quick fixes, ultimately prolonging the duration of the state of war.”⁴² Indeed, Mahieu argues that only in certain rare instances of committed and powerful third party intervention can ceasefires endure without preceding process agreements.⁴³

Dogukan Karakus and Isak Svensson add to these propositions, arguing that external intervention and agreement design may not be universally applicable methods of producing reliable ceasefire agreements.⁴⁴ Studying numerous instances of ceasefires throughout the Syrian civil war, Karakus and Svensson find that informal and local peacemaking efforts were most important for establishing respected ceasefire agreements.⁴⁵ They qualify these results, however, by noting that they may reflect the particularities of the Syrian conflict, bringing to attention the importance of individual conflict contexts.⁴⁶

These various perspectives each offer their own way of conceptualizing ceasefire onset and collapse. Nonetheless, much is still missing from their contribution to the study of ceasefire *durability*, the subject of this work. The above studies reduce the analysis of ceasefires to a binary question of “collapse” or “no collapse.” This leaves unanswered the question of duration—that is, these logics do not adequately explain why some ceasefire agreements might

⁴⁰ Mahieu, “When Should Mediators Interrupt a Civil War?” p. 211.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁴⁴ Dogukan Cansin Karakus and Isak Svensson, “Between the Bombs: Exploring Partial Ceasefires in the Syrian Civil War, 2011-2017,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

last longer than others, even if they are all ultimately broken. It is true that conditions of collapse are necessary to understand durability, for their presence or absence determines whether or not the ceasefire will remain in place. As such, much of the above thinking on cost-benefit calculations and relative power will inform my own theory, presented in chapter 2. Nevertheless, these theories do not tell us *when* these conditions might arise, and *how long* it might take for them to arise under certain circumstances. This question is only briefly addressed by discussions of outside intervention, which hold that powerful third parties may, in some cases, cause ceasefires to last for as long as they provide security guarantees. However, it is not clear that third party intervention is the sole explanation for highly durable ceasefires, and this logic fails to explain durability variation in the absence of overwhelming intervention (as was the case for the two ceasefires to be studied in the following chapters). Still lacking is a general explanation of the underlying factors that affect the length of ceasefires. I seek to fill this gap in the literature by turning away from the binary question of collapse, addressing instead the issue of ceasefire durability.

Ceasefire Durability

The authoritative work on ceasefire durability was written by Virginia Page Fortna, who roots her study in a realist, rationalist perspective of ceasefire agreements.⁴⁷ According to this perspective, ceasefires are a type of cooperative effort. Fortna writes: “The fact that belligerents have reached a cease-fire in the first place suggests that they do not prefer fighting for its own sake. The fact that they have fought once already makes it a good bet that they have conflicting interests. Taken together, these conditions mean that peace is possible, but precarious. It requires

⁴⁷ For the seminal work on rationalist explanations for war, see James D. Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995).

cooperation.”⁴⁸ Cooperation, in this sense, means that belligerents must work together to not attack each other, even though they have not resolved the grievances that brought them to war initially. Drawing upon rationalist theory, Fortna argues that under conditions of global anarchy, commitments are unreliable; that, in the absence of trust, commitments derive their strength from systems of reciprocity and deterrence; and that certain obstacles, namely incentives to attack, fear, and accidents, can undermine these systems.⁴⁹ It is the role of written agreements to overcome these obstacles.⁵⁰ Ultimately, Fortna finds that strong agreements can and do effectively facilitate cooperation and increase ceasefire durability.⁵¹ This conceptualization of ceasefires as cooperation will serve as the crux of my own theorizing on ceasefire durability.

Though a landmark addition to the ceasefire literature, Fortna’s work focuses solely on interstate conflicts and disregards civil wars entirely. Fortna hypothesizes that the two conflict types should not require dramatically different treatments, noting: “The most important difference between maintaining peace after civil and interstate wars is that in the latter, belligerents have the luxury of leaving the fundamental political issues unsettled. It is extremely rare for civil wars to end with a cease-fire that does not at least *de facto* settle the underlying issue.”⁵² For instance, the *de facto* partition of Cyprus into a Greek Cypriot territory and a Turk Cypriot territory is the direct result of the long-duration ceasefire that has divided the island since the 1970s. Other scholars likewise note the relationship between ceasefires and the fear that battlefield realities will be transformed into *de facto* settlements. In the following chapter, I shall argue that this awareness—among other variables—is a key determinant of ceasefire durability

⁴⁸ Fortna, *Peacetime*, p. 12.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-20.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-37.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-214.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 215.

in ethnic civil wars. In performing such an analysis of ceasefire durability in ethnic civil war, this study will address Fortna's disregard for intrastate war, as well as the literature's general lack of work on ceasefire duration. This contribution will be essential for a policy space that has largely applied Fortna's conclusions without having first exercised proper analytic rigor.

Policy Documents

A number of scholars, practitioners, and humanitarian groups have worked to translate academic research on ceasefires into usable policy recommendations. These policy recommendations address the process of mediating, negotiating, and writing ceasefire agreements, often offering step-by-step instructions and cut-and-paste templates to guide agreement drafters.⁵³ Some of this work makes narrower prescriptions, focusing on particular provisions that concentrate on such vulnerable groups as women⁵⁴ and children.⁵⁵ These documents are not expressly engaged in the process of theorizing about ceasefires, but they do implicitly argue that ceasefire agreements are embedded in broader patterns of peacemaking and violence prevention, and that agreement design has the power to strengthen ceasefire durability. As we have seen in the previous discussions of ceasefires in the peace process and ceasefire durability, both of these assumptions have received scholarly treatment in their own separate

⁵³ For example, see: Nat Colletta, "Mediating Ceasefires and Cessation of Hostilities Agreements in the Framework of Peace Processes," in *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*, eds. Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah Cherian Mampilly, and Andrea Bartoli (Oxford: Praeger, 2011); United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (New York: United Nations, 2008); The Public International Law & Policy Group, "Ceasefire Drafter's Handbook: An Introduction and Template for Negotiators, Mediators, and Stakeholders" (May 2013); Luc Chounet-Cambas, "Negotiating ceasefires: Dilemmas & options for mediators," (Geneva: The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2011); Nicholas Haysom and Julian Hottinger, "Do's and Don'ts of Sustainable Ceasefire Agreements," paper presented at the IGAD Sudan Peace Process Workshop on Detailed Security Arrangements in Sudan During the Transition, and later revised for use by Peace Appeal in Nepal and Sri Lanka, 2010.

⁵⁴ Olivia Holt-Ivry, Allison Muehlenbeck, and Michelle Barsa, "Inclusive Ceasefires: Women, Gender, and a Sustainable End to Violence," *Inclusive Security* (March 2017).

⁵⁵ Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, "Checklist for drafting children and armed conflict provisions in ceasefire and peace agreements," 31 October 2016.

branches of the literature. What stands out, however, is that many of these documents claim to be universally relevant, while frequently citing Fortna's work on ceasefire durability. They intend to guide ceasefire drafters in any circumstance, but the social science on which they are founded has only rigorously studied ceasefires in wars *between* states. This marks a significant need for further research into ceasefire durability in intrastate wars. Ceasefire drafters desperately require evidence-based policy recommendations tailored specifically to the dynamics of civil wars. My findings will answer this need for empirical support by highlighting key relationships between ethnic civil war and ceasefire durability that can be directly addressed with policy.

The rest of this study will be dedicated to analyzing and testing the underlying dynamics of ceasefire durability in ethnic civil wars. In chapter two, I propose a theory of inter-group cooperation, which explores the cooperation-inhibiting characteristics of ethnic civil war. In chapter three, I specify my terms, outline my research methods, and explain my case selection. In chapter four, I analyze the high-duration "Carter ceasefire," and in chapter five, I analyze the low-duration "tripartite ceasefire." Finally, in chapter six I present conclusions, make policy recommendations, and suggest directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: A THEORY OF COOPERATION

Why do some ceasefires collapse in days, while others last for months or years? Why is cooperation in ethnic civil wars sometimes easy and sometimes impossible? As we have seen in the previous chapter, ceasefires are cooperative efforts to create peace in the absence of a meaningful solution to underlying incompatibilities.⁵⁶ They function through systems of reciprocity and deterrence, which make continued warfare costlier than peace.⁵⁷ However, such systems can encounter numerous roadblocks that make cooperation difficult.⁵⁸ Theoretically, ceasefires should be most durable when cooperation is easiest, and least durable when cooperation is most difficult.

In this chapter, I seek to expose the connection between cooperation and ethnic civil war. An examination of the underlying structures of ethnic and internal conflicts yields three primary factors that influence cooperation: territorial satisfaction, the relative balance of power, and actor cohesion. Cooperation is therefore anticipated to be a function of these three factors. I predict that ceasefire durability will be highest when belligerents are satisfied with the ceasefire lines, when a mutually hurting stalemate constrains equally-matched forces, and when there are few

⁵⁶ Virginia Page Fortna, *Peacetime: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 12.

⁵⁷ Virginia Page Fortna, *Peacetime: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 13.

⁵⁸ In her study of interstate war, for example, Fortna names “incentives to attack,” “fear of attack,” “accidents and involuntary defection,” and “distribution and relative gains” as primary challenges to cooperation. See: Virginia Page Fortna, *Peacetime: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 13-19.

competing groups within and between actors. Likewise, I expect the inverse to be true. To begin our exploration of this theory, let us first define ethnic civil war.

Ethnic Civil War

Ethnic civil war contains particular structures that interact with cooperation and have a great bearing on ceasefire durability. In effect, ethnic civil war is the unification of ethnic conflict and internal conflict, and occurs when internal conflicts become defined along ethnic lines. Roy Licklider defines civil wars as conflicts fought among “geographically contiguous people concerned about possibly having to live with one another in the same political unit after the conflict.”⁵⁹ Such conflicts unfold as the government becomes unable or unwilling to satisfactorily address issues of civil contention—what I. William Zartman calls the “breakdown of normal politics.”⁶⁰ Groups may have a variety of grievances against the government that can motivate them to take up arms and go to war. Zartman organizes these grievances along two dimensions: “neglect” and “discrimination.”⁶¹ A group is neglected when it perceives inequality in the distribution of material resources throughout society, while a group faces discrimination when it perceives itself to be receiving disadvantageous treatment because of its identity.⁶² As Zartman notes, “without distributional deprivation, identity remains a positive factor and not a motivation for conflict; without an identity element, distributional inequities remain unfocused

⁵⁹ Roy Licklider, “How Civil Wars End,” in *Stopping the Killing*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York: New York University Press, 1993), p. 9.

⁶⁰ I. William Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

and nonmobilizing.”⁶³ Although the ratio of this mixture may change, all civil wars possess a combination of material- and identity-based grievances.⁶⁴

According to Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, ethnic civil wars are conflicts “in which the goals of at least one conflict party are defined in (exclusively) ethnic terms, and in which the primary fault line of confrontation is one of ethnic distinctions. Whatever the concrete issues over which conflict erupts, at least one of the conflict parties will explain its dissatisfaction in ethnic terms.”⁶⁵ That is, no matter the ratio of neglect and discrimination, at least one of the parties to an ethnic civil war will perceive the conflict entirely through the lens of discrimination. In this framework, ethnic civil war is internal conflict defined along ethnic lines.

Who defines these grievances, and what is a “party” to an ethnic civil war? When considering the causes and tactics of these conflicts, it is essential to avoid monolithic images of ethnic groups. Fearon and Laitin have noted that many cases of “ethnic conflict” include multiple fighters with multiple ambitions, not all of which are necessarily “ethnic.”⁶⁶ Indeed, such conflicts are typically fought by a small number of armed thugs more concerned with pillaging than with ethnic identity.⁶⁷ This violence is generally fomented, organized, and permitted by a few elites who capitalize on inflammatory ethno-nationalist rhetoric for their own political gain.⁶⁸ These ethnic entrepreneurs couch issues in the language of ethno-national identity, bringing the perception of discrimination to the fore in order to garner political support and

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, “The study of ethnic conflict: an introduction,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict*, eds. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 4.

⁶⁶ James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February 2003), p. 79.

⁶⁷ John Mueller, “The Banality of ‘Ethnic War,’” *International Security* 25, no. 1 (Summer 2000).

⁶⁸ Stuart J. Kaufman, “Ethnicity as a generator of conflict,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict*, eds. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 92.

power.⁶⁹ As elites instigate conflict and allow it to unfold, brutal violence initiates processes of identity hardening that cause groups to self-segregate for fear of persecution.⁷⁰ Indeed, though there is a complex and dynamic interaction between the masses and the elites,⁷¹ it is elite-level instrumental politics that prioritizes identity-based grievances, shapes discourse, and permits violence. Thus, when “parties” are discussed, it is essential to recognize this manifold complexity. Ethnic conflicts are not the products of mass hysteria rooted in “ancient hatreds,” but are instead shaped, activated, and directed by elite decision-makers who benefit from a politics of discrimination and ethno-national grievance.

Elite-led discourses prompt and organize internal conflicts along “ethnic” dimensions. Now we must look deeply into these two elements—ethnic conflict and internal conflict—in order to identify their independent effects on cooperation. Let us begin by developing an understanding of the relationship between ethnicity, territory, and violence.

Ethnic Conflict and Territorial Satisfaction

When elites portray ethnicity as the primary organizing principle of separatist conflict, elements of ethnic identity come to play an essential role in determining the objects and methods of war. One element in particular—the attachment to territory—takes a central place in the ceasefire process. In the following section, I explain the “ethnic” connection to territory, its relationship to ceasefires and the broader peace process, and its bearing on cooperation.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” *International Security* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1996), pp. 140-145.

⁷¹ Stuart J. Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War,” *International Security* 21, no. 2 (Fall 1996).

Ceasefires, Homeland, & Peace

What is the “ethnic homeland”? Ethnic identity, according to Anthony Smith, is comprised of the following elements: a common name, a (perceived) common lineage, a (perceived) shared culture, a (perceived) historical tradition, a feeling of solidarity, and an attachment to a particular piece of territory—the homeland.⁷² The ethnic homeland derives its value not from its material utility, but from its spiritual and cultural force.⁷³ The homeland may not necessarily be rich in resources, a key trade route, or strategically advantageous in order to be of value; rather, it is the homeland’s connection to ethnic ancestry—the group’s allegedly common lineage—that imbues it with value. It is on the homeland that the group’s elders lived and died, that they battled and forged collective mythologies, and that the shared culture evolved.⁷⁴ These experiences give the land its spiritual value.⁷⁵ Most of Smith’s aspects of ethnic identity—lineage, culture, and history—give meaning to and enhance the spiritual relationship to territory. Likewise, territory acts as a physical validation of ethnic identity, situating ephemeral history, mythology, and culture in real space, thereby offering the group stability.⁷⁶

Ethnic identity as a temporal concept is “past-oriented,” deriving its potency from the historical-mythological considerations intertwined with the land.⁷⁷ Thus, territory is the central focus of this backward-looking-ness, and, by extension, the pole around which ethnic identity revolves. Territory is guarded because of its cultural role as the reifying element of the ethnic

⁷² Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: Blackwell, 1986), pp 22-30.

⁷³ Stephen Worchel, “Some Unique Characteristics of Ethnic Conflict and Their Implications for Managing the Conflict,” in *The Psychology of Ethnic and Cultural Conflict*, eds. Yueh-Ting Lee, Clark McCauley, Fathali Moghaddam, and Stephen Worchel (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), p 297.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ George A. De Vos and Lola Romanucci-Ross, “Conclusion. Ethnic Identity: A Psychocultural Perspective,” in *Ethnic Identity: Problems and Prospects for the Twenty-First Century*, 4th Ed, eds. Lola Romanucci-Ross, George A. De Vos, and Takeyuki Tsuda (New York: Altamira Press, 2006), p. 375.

collective. The ethnic group acts as a fierce custodian of the markers of its heritage, beholden to its ancestors and its posterity to protect this physical link that binds generations.⁷⁸ For this reason, territory is also seen a marker of existential security, without which the cultural and physical survival of the group is imperiled.⁷⁹

Since ethnic identity is singular, and since territory is the representative home of that singularity, homeland territory is perceived to be irreplaceable.⁸⁰ No other piece of land can serve the same purpose, for no other piece of land is so deeply engrained in collective story telling or so thoroughly soaked with the blood of one's forebears. This naturally sits in stark contrast to capitalist approaches to land ownership, which assigns value in accordance with potential economic utility, translates that value into a money price, and gives that land to the person capable of affording its price or outbidding competitors.⁸¹ Importantly, if the buyer does not acquire the initially desired parcel of land, he or she may easily seek out a different parcel that is equally satisfactory in terms of its economic value and productivity. This is not so in the case of ethnic homelands, whose spiritual value is independent of economic utility, whose value may not be assigned a price, whose possession is a mark of existential security, and which may not under any conceivable circumstances be sold by the group or bought by an outsider.⁸²

In his study of sacred spaces, Ron Hassner includes this concept of uniqueness as one of three factors that foster the perception of object indivisibility.⁸³ The other two factors are boundedness (that all parties must refer to the same object in its entirety, with no parts claimed

⁷⁸ Stephen Worchel, "Some Unique Characteristics of Ethnic Conflict," p. 298.

⁷⁹ Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 19-20.

⁸⁰ Stephen Worchel, "Some Unique Characteristics of Ethnic Conflict," p. 297.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Ron E. Hassner, *War on Sacred Grounds* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 41.

by just one party) and cohesiveness (that the division of the object would diminish its value).⁸⁴

Hassner notes that any of these elements in isolation is but a necessary condition for the perception of indivisibility; only when the three coincide are they sufficient for an object to be seen as indivisible. Indeed, indivisibility is a perceptual, not objective, reality.⁸⁵ Few (if any) issues are truly indivisible—yet, in order to transition objects from states of indivisibility to divisibility, one must undertake the herculean task of altering the patterns of thought in which they are embedded.⁸⁶

Hassner argues that it is difficult for plots of land to satisfy the sufficient conditions for perceived indivisibility. Land, he says, is rarely uniform in value (even nationalistic and historical value), such that some parts may be given away; that its bounds are rarely clear enough to define the size and location of the issue, such that compromises may be found; and that most land is fungible, such that it may be replaced by a different parcel of equal value.⁸⁷ I contend, however, that “homeland” territory in ethnic separatist wars has a more complex relationship with Hassner’s conditions.

The political elite, in order to legitimate and defend their territorial aspirations, will work to emphasize the “indivisibility” of their territorial desires, couching their claims in the language of the indivisible ethnic homeland. As a result, “homeland” territory—more than other types of territory—comes to be perceived as satisfying Hassner’s conditions of indivisibility. It is made so through the rhetoric of ethnic entrepreneurs. Yet these claims to the “homeland” may not, in reality, be unequivocally non-negotiable for elites, who, in times of dire peril, might compromise

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

⁸⁵ For more on indivisibility as a perception, see Hassner’s engagement with the literature on issue indivisibility. *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-171.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

on their goals in order to avoid total defeat. In such instances, internal conflicts over the value and scope of the land are pushed to the fore, as elites decide what may be given up and what must be defended at any cost. That is to say, conflict reveals the true “homeland”—or, at least, the delineations of the territory over which political elites will refuse to compromise.

How is this perception of the ethnic homeland related to ceasefires? Reflecting on Sun Tzu’s writings, Henry Kissinger once noted:

Perhaps Sun Tzu’s most important insight was that in a military or strategic contest, everything is relevant and connected: weather, terrain, diplomacy, the reports of spies and double agents, supplies and logistics, the balance of forces, historic perceptions, the intangibles of surprise and morale. Each factor influences the others, giving rise to subtle shifts in momentum and relative advantage. There are no isolated events.⁸⁸

As we have seen in the previous chapter, many scholars have explored the role of ceasefires in the nexus of war. When belligerents sign a ceasefire, they agree to much more than a temporary pause in the fighting. The cessation of hostilities comes laden with greater implications about the general peace process and the direction of negotiations. It is impossible to separate conflict management efforts from conflict resolution efforts—as Sun Tzu indicated centuries ago, the two influence one another dynamically and simultaneously.

Malin Åkebo finds that belligerents often perceive a connection between ceasefires and the confirmation of certain battleground realities.⁸⁹ The language of peace negotiations often accompanies ceasefire agreements, and, in separatist ethnic wars, such negotiations frequently concern the distribution of territory. Naturally, belligerents may anticipate—rightfully or not—that this distribution would closely mirror the distribution of territory as framed by the ceasefire lines. When belligerents agree to ceasefires, they are forced to consider the possibility that the territorial distribution at the time of the ceasefire may endure *ex-post* as the foundation of a peace

⁸⁸ Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin, 2011), p. 30.

⁸⁹ Åkebo, *Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes*, pp. 168-169.

settlement. This prompts a satisfaction calculation. Belligerents must ask themselves: would such a settlement be acceptable given the current frontlines? If frontlines closely approximate the desired territory, and therefore the conceptions of the ethnic homeland promoted by the political elite, then a ceasefire along those lines should be more acceptable. Belligerents will feel comfortable using the given territorial distribution as the basis for peace. It follows that territorial conflict is a series of satisfaction calculations, as leaders ask themselves whether certain possible divisions are acceptable or in violation of the “homeland’s” cohesion. This is, of course, a bare-minimum calculation. It is quite possible that more territory is desired (potentially to satisfy economic needs, strategic goals, or the demands of internal actors with different perceptions of the homeland’s scope). As conflict progresses, belligerents must determine how much of the imagined homeland they would truly be willing to lose. Ceasefires offer the opportunity to ask that question.

A particularly sensitive issue when determining territorial distribution should be the presence of ethnic enclaves in enemy territory. These enclaves are deeply dissatisfying to all parties. Ethnic conflict, as discussed above, is organized along dichotomous ethno-national fault lines. This contrasts with ideological civil wars, in which ideologues fight over the principles of social order and governance, vying for the hearts and minds of the people.⁹⁰ In such wars, belligerents draw from the same mobilization pool—the community to be governed—and seek to win their support.⁹¹ A capitalist can switch allegiance to communism, and an autocrat can be convinced of democracy’s merits. This is not so in an ethnic conflict.⁹² With the conflict parties

⁹⁰ Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” p. 139.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² In an ethnic conflict, it is true that one may switch allegiances from, for example, separatist to federalist. Nevertheless, the point is that individuals cannot change their ethnic identity, and thus cannot change the mobilization pool to which they belong.

arranged according to group affiliation, belligerents generally draw from distinct mobilization pools—the ethnic community.⁹³ The army representing group X can only call upon the service of members of group X; likewise, the army representing group Y can only recruit members of group Y. This means that both groups will perceive any members of the other group as potential military threats. These trapped individuals are effectively equivalent to “beleaguered combatants,” or soldiers trapped behind enemy lines.⁹⁴ As Bailey has discussed, the presence of beleaguered combatants poses a significant danger to ceasefire durability.⁹⁵

Ethnic enclaves create dissatisfaction in two ways. Let us imagine a city with a majority population of people from group X, surrounded by hostile forces from group Y. The leadership of group Y will want to eliminate the enclave in order to secure the territory on which it sits, and to neutralize its potential as a military threat. The leadership of group X, observing group Y’s attempt to cleanse the enclave, will want to somehow save their imperiled ethnic brethren. If they do not, members of group X will have to contend with the notion of either the mass murder of their co-ethnics, or major and difficult to accommodate refugee inflows from the enclave. It would instead be preferable for the enclave’s inhabitants to remain safely in their homes. Group X may therefore want to claim a corridor of land connecting the enclave to the primary territorial body. If they do not, the perpetually surrounded enclave will remain perpetually vulnerable. Thus, for group Y, the enclave is an obstacle to territorial contiguity and security. It must be destroyed. For group X, the inhabitants of the enclave must be defended. If its security cannot be guaranteed from afar, then it must be joined to the main territory. As parties consider a

⁹³ Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” p. 140.

⁹⁴ Sydney D. Bailey, “UN Cease-Fires: The Problem of Beleaguered Combatants,” *The World Today* 36, no. 6 (June 1980).

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 233.

ceasefire's relationship to the final peace, ethnic enclaves present a major conundrum. For both group X and Y, a solution with no enclaves would be most satisfactory.

In sum, belligerents perceive a connection between the territorial distribution at the time of a ceasefire and the final territorial distribution determined in the peace settlement. Therefore, ceasefires bring belligerents to make satisfaction calculations about territorial distribution. When agreeing to a ceasefire, belligerents review the frontlines in relation to their territorial desires. Simultaneously, they account for the presence of ethnic enclaves in enemy territory. If belligerents consider the arrangement of these factors to be dissatisfying as the foundation of a possible peace settlement, the ceasefire should collapse. On the other hand, if belligerents consider the arrangement of these factors to be satisfactory, the ceasefire should endure. As such:

Hypothesis 1: The more satisfied belligerents are with the territorial distribution along the ceasefire line, the greater the durability of the ceasefire.

Civil War, Actor Cohesion, and Relative Power

Civil wars typically involve combat between a “government,” which claims legitimacy over the political order and a monopoly over violence, and a “rebellion,” which uses force to contest the reigning government’s legitimacy.⁹⁶ Frequently, these wars take on external dimensions as outside actors become embroiled in the conflict.⁹⁷ Given this context, civil wars contain two factors that are fundamentally related to cooperation: relative power and actor cohesion. We shall see that these factors might lead to mutually hurting stalemates and spoilers,

⁹⁶ Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” p. 5.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

respectively, which have the capacity to either increase or reduce ceasefire durability through their effects on capability and commitment.

Relative Power

The relationship between belligerents in a civil war is typically marked by severe power asymmetry. Up until the point where the rebellion is able to topple the government, the government is likely stronger in both material, symbolic, and administrative terms.⁹⁸ As the ruling power, it possesses “legitimacy, sovereignty, allies, armies, and access to resources,” as well as “the right to determine the rules of the game for the rebellion’s struggle.”⁹⁹ The rebellion lacks all of these things, and must fight an uphill battle for its survival and success.¹⁰⁰ Often, the rebellion compensates in part for its deficiencies by emphasizing its commitment and attachment to ends as a balance to the material capabilities of the government.¹⁰¹

A central obstacle posed by power asymmetry is the inability to establish functioning reciprocal systems. When there is a power imbalance, it is exceedingly difficult for a mutually hurting stalemate to arise.¹⁰² Such stalemates occur when “both sides are locked in a situation from which they cannot escalate the conflict with their available means and at an acceptable cost.”¹⁰³ This inability to escalate the conflict undergirds systems of reciprocity and deterrence, which, as we have seen, allow ceasefires to function. If one side is not able to credibly deter an attack, reciprocity and mutual deterrence fail, dramatically increasing the difficulty of cooperation. Therefore, mutually hurting stalemates are key to durable ceasefires. If power is

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

extremely imbalanced, the stronger party (likely the government) may simply vanquish the opposition, or the opposition may employ guerilla tactics to continue fighting despite their weakness.¹⁰⁴ It is only when both parties enter a mutually hurting stalemate—whether real or perceived—that the utility of force will decrease and cooperation will increase in ease. As such:

Hypothesis 2: If there is a real or perceived mutually hurting stalemate, ceasefire durability will increase.

Internal conflicts are also subject to the external influence of third parties.¹⁰⁵ When this happens, the challenges of power asymmetry may be addressed by the third party. This can occur through either intervention or mediation. If intervening, the third party offers military support to the weaker party in order to level out the playing field and create a mutually hurting stalemate. Some scholars go so far as to argue that external intervention is the only way for belligerents in civil war to make credible commitments.¹⁰⁶ If acting as a mediator, the third party works to create the perception of a “turning point” in the conflict.¹⁰⁷ Such turning points serve as the beginnings of “soft” stalemates, in which belligerents perceive escalation and continued warfare to be against their best interests, regardless of realities on the ground.¹⁰⁸ Whether through intervention or the shaping of perceptions, external influence can serve to help balance power asymmetries, thereby creating more stable reciprocal systems and more durable ceasefires. As such, two hypotheses may be generated:

¹⁰⁴ For example, see Ivan Arreguín-Toft, “How the weak win wars,” *International Security* 26, no. 1 (Summer 2001).

¹⁰⁵ See Zartman’s discussion of regionalized, exploded, proxy, and supported conflicts. Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁶ Barbara Walter, “The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,” *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997).

¹⁰⁷ Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” p. 18.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Hypothesis 3: If there is external intervention on behalf of the relatively weaker party, ceasefire durability will increase.

Hypothesis 4: If there is third-party mediation, ceasefire durability will increase.

In short, because ceasefires require reciprocity and deterrence in order to function, relative power is a key element of ceasefire durability. If power is symmetrical (in reality or perception) and the belligerents find themselves locked in a mutually hurting stalemate, functioning systems of reciprocity and deterrence will ensure that the ceasefire will last. If power is asymmetrical, the stronger party will be able to continue fighting at little cost, and the ceasefire is likely to be less durable.

Actor Cohesion

No parties to a civil war are monoliths. Instead, belligerents are comprised of numerous factions jostling for power and influence.¹⁰⁹ These fractious power centers can result in the emergence of “spoilers,” defined by Stephen J. Stedman as “leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it.”¹¹⁰ These spoilers disapprove of the prospects for peace, and seek to perpetuate conflict or derail negotiations in order to realize their goals. Indeed, the presence of competing factions within and between actors hampers peace by making information unclear and loyalties unreliable.¹¹¹ Spoilers arise, coordination grows more complex, and commitments become difficult to uphold. Actor cohesion is thus intimately linked to

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Stephen J. Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997), p. 5.

¹¹¹ Barbara Walter, “Bargaining Failures and Civil War,” *The Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009), p. 253.

cooperation: more cohesive actors should be more able to credibly commit to respected agreements, while less cohesive actors should be less able to commit to the agreement, less trustworthy, and more likely to unintentionally violate the peace. As a result, we should expect ceasefire durability to increase as the parties to the agreement become more cohesive.

Spoiler dynamics are particularly salient within the rebellion. Any opposition movement begins with a variety of organizations protesting and presenting various demands on behalf of various groups.¹¹² As the movement evolves and seeks to mobilize popular support, it must work to pare down on this internal diversity in order to maximize its leverage and demonstrate both its legitimacy and representativeness.¹¹³ However, prolonged conflict with the government will challenge the unity of the movement, forcing it to work even harder to consolidate itself or risk the possibility of fragmentation.¹¹⁴ An enduring state of non-resolution encourages both “dissidents,” who question the adequacy of the leadership and offer their own alternatives, and “dreamers,” who fixate on and promote an unattainable notion of absolute victory, thereby undercutting moderate factions and inducing even greater diversity.¹¹⁵ These contrasting imperatives may create a negative feedback loop that paralyzes the movement, for “the movement needs solidarity in order to compel the government to provide it with some success, and it needs success to attract solidarity.”¹¹⁶ Internal struggles deprive the movement of success, and a lack of success deprives the movement of a basis on which to build unity. Yet unity is unstable even when victory approaches. The prospect of success tempts rival factions with defection, as they hope to approach the government independently and cut a better deal than

¹¹² Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” p. 14.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

would have been possible in coordination with the entire movement.¹¹⁷ This defection, if it produces a more-acceptable deal, may end up capturing the rest of the movement, resulting in a mutually beneficial settlement; on the other hand, it may further divide the movement and prolong the conflict.¹¹⁸ Overlaid onto these organizational dynamics are shifting leadership imperatives, as different phases of the movement's evolution call for different types of spokespeople endowed with different amounts of legitimacy.¹¹⁹

How do these internal divisions manifest in reality? The Sikh insurgency in Punjab during the late 1980s and 1990s was particularly fissiparous. Members of the movement have noted that they were split by a number of internal conflicts, and that violence between different Sikh militant groups was quite common.¹²⁰ A number of factions operated beneath the banner of the Sikh militant movement, such as the relatively moderate Khalistan Commando Force and the criminally involved Bhindranwale Tigers.¹²¹ There was often conflict between these more moderate and more extreme sects; for example, the Khalistan Commando Force would target members of the Bhindranwale Tigers in order to maintain the respectability of the movement as a whole.¹²² Moreover, the Khalistan Commando Force would eliminate some of its own members if they were thought to be abusing their power.¹²³ As a result of these internal struggles, participants in the insurgency expressed frustration not just at the Indian government, against which they were fighting, but also at "the extremist members of the militant cadres, who [are

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror In The Mind Of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 93.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

believed to have] destroyed the movement from within.”¹²⁴ Infighting damaged and weakened a deeply divided movement.

Internal actor division of this sort is dangerous for cooperation because it undermines credibility and encourages spoilers. As noted above, the dynamic process of conflict produces numerous factions that vie simultaneously for different outcomes. Since these factions can act independently, credible promises are difficult to make.¹²⁵ The government, aware of the risks created by these internal divisions, may lose its willingness to cooperate with a potentially unreliable counterpart. If the government signs an agreement anyway, disgruntled factions might spoil the deal. In either scenario, increased internal divisions harm agreements and weaken cooperation.

It is important to contrast the disunity of the opposition with the relative organization of the state. Though any social group will contain some element of internal competition, the state is typically designed with clear hierarchies and structures of decision-making authority. This design fosters greater internal unity than possible in a loosely organized and constantly besieged rebel movement. Internal division is, nevertheless, possible in both actors. As such, actor cohesion is an important variable for both the opposition and the government.

This is also the case below the political level. Fortna draws attention to the importance of accidental defection in her study of interstate ceasefire agreements.¹²⁶ If military forces are disorganized and soldiers undisciplined, it is likely that the probability of accidental violations will increase. It is also likely that disgruntled actors at the political level can seize on this disorganization to mobilize dissidents and purposefully breach ceasefires. This issue will

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹²⁵ Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, “Actor Fragmentation and Civil War Bargaining: How Internal Divisions Generate Civil Conflict,” *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 3 (July 2013), p. 664.

¹²⁶ Fortna, *Peacetime*, pp. 17-18.

generally be more salient for the opposition than the government, given that the government should have an established military force and the opposition will have quickly scrapped together a militia. Yet it may be that disorganization is rife in either force. This military-level disorganization should amplify actor divisions and increase the difficulty of cooperation. As such:

Hypothesis 5: The greater the internal divisions of any actor, the lower the ceasefire durability.

As previously noted, civil wars are not purely internal phenomena, but frequently involve external actors in a variety of different formations.¹²⁷ In many conflicts, the government-rebel binary fails to fully explain the landscape of actors. Instead, there may be a multitude of participants in the civil war. In such non-dyadic situations, the coordination between actors becomes more complex than would be the case in a dyadic situation. Cunningham points to the issue of “veto players” in civil war resolution, arguing that it becomes increasingly difficult to find a mutually acceptable agreement as the number of stakeholders who must approve the agreement increases.¹²⁸ The same principle should theoretically apply to ceasefire agreements. This heightened complexity in turn poses a challenge to cooperation, since belligerents must grapple not only with internal but also external spoilers. Therefore:

Hypothesis 6: The more belligerents participating in the conflict, the lower the ceasefire durability.

¹²⁷ Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” pp. 4-5.

¹²⁸ David E. Cunningham, “Veto Players and Civil War Duration,” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (October 2006).

The scope of the ceasefire is related to the number of belligerents involved. Ceasefires may be either local or general. A local ceasefire seeks to prevent fighting in and around a certain region of a country, such as a city or province. A general ceasefire, on the other hand, seeks to prevent fighting in all theaters of combat. Local ceasefires are likely to involve fewer actors, whereas general ceasefires, due to their expanded scope, should necessitate the cooperation of a larger number of actors. Above I hypothesize that cooperation will become increasingly difficult as the number of relevant actors increases. Therefore, a related hypothesis may be derived:

Hypothesis 7: Local ceasefires will be more durable than country-wide ceasefires.

Ethnic Civil War & Cooperation

When ethnic conflict and internal conflict merge to produce ethnic civil war, they combine their own unique dynamics and social processes. Above, I demonstrated that the primary characteristics and underlying structures of ethnicity, ethnic conflict, and civil war pose three potential challenges to cooperation. The belligerents' satisfaction with the ceasefire lines, the relative balance of power, and actor cohesion all have the capacity to dramatically inhibit cooperation in ethnic civil war, resulting in less durable ceasefires and more constant fighting. Yet there may also be instances in which these aspects of ethnic civil war are not salient enough to inhibit intergroup cooperation. It is therefore useful to imagine two ideal-type scenarios: one in which cooperation is easiest and ceasefires most durable, and one in which cooperation is most difficult and ceasefires least durable.

In a high-cooperation scenario, the three factors should all facilitate successful cooperation. First, belligerents should be satisfied with the distribution of territory and willing to see it form the basis of a peace settlement. Second, power asymmetry should be minimal, with

either the parties themselves enjoying relative parity or a third party providing such parity from beyond the conflict dyad. Third, actor division should be low, with belligerents exhibiting strong organizational structures and effective means of controlling potential defectors. In addition, the conflict should be dyadic in nature. In this scenario, commitment to the agreement should be high, reciprocal systems should function, spoilers should be minimal, and coordination should be easy. In such circumstances, I predict that ceasefires will be most durable. Moreover, this constellation of variables would seem to foster the necessary environment for the negotiation of a final peace settlement—however, the question of conflict settlement and ceasefires in the peace process is beyond the scope of this study.

In a low-cooperation situation, the inverse should be true. First, territorial dissatisfaction should be high, with neither actor willing to accept the territorial distribution at the time of the ceasefire as the possible foundation for a peace settlement. Second, power asymmetry should be severe, with at least one of the parties holding definitive military dominance over its rival/rivals, and with no third parties intervening to foster balance externally. Third, actor division should be high, with at least one of the groups experiencing intense internal competition as rival factions compete for dominance. This should be compounded by a complex, non-dyadic landscape of belligerents and third-party participants. In such circumstances, commitment to the agreement should be low, reciprocal systems should fail, spoilers should be active, and coordination should be challenging. Ultimately, I expect ceasefires in this environment to be less durable.

Conclusion

Ceasefires are cooperative efforts, for belligerents must agree to stop fighting without having resolved their differences. This is possible, but contingent upon numerous structural

factors. In ethnic civil wars, cooperation is a function of territorial satisfaction, the relative balance of power, and actor cohesion. This may be graphically represented as such:

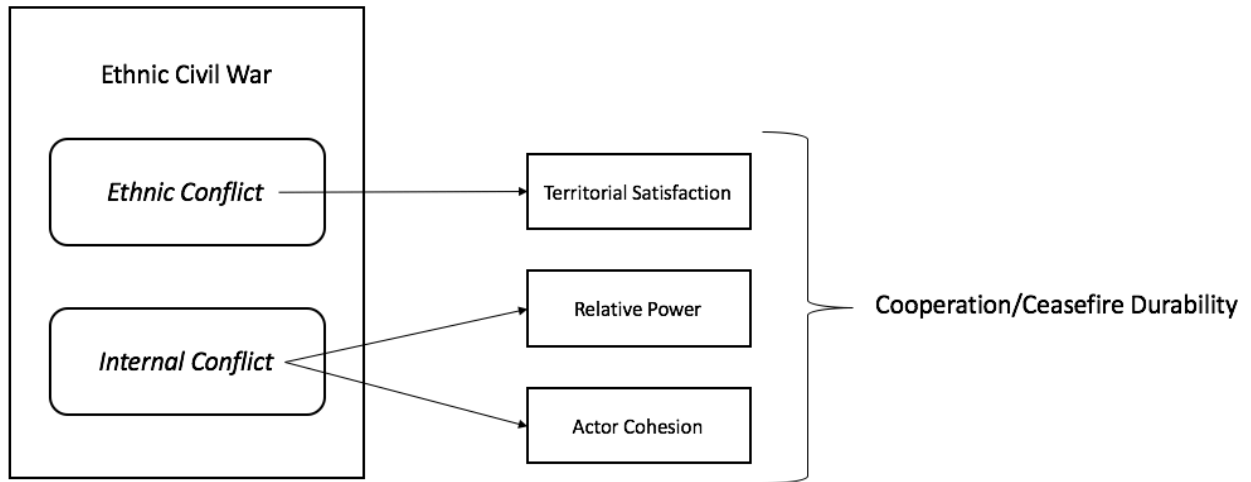


Figure 2.1: Ethnic civil war as related to cooperation.

When belligerents are satisfied with the territorial distribution, when they have entered a mutually hurting stalemate, and when they are highly coherent, cooperation should be easy and ceasefires should endure. Conversely, when they are dissatisfied with the territorial distribution, have not yet entered a mutually hurting stalemate, and are ruptured by internal divisions, cooperation should be difficult and ceasefires should collapse quickly. These ideal-types address the underlying mechanisms of ceasefire duration, and therefore go one step beyond existing knowledge about ceasefire onset and collapse in intrastate warfare. Likewise, they incorporate mechanisms of ethnic and internal conflict that are absent from existing thinking on interstate ceasefires. Yet it remains to be seen how these theoretical propositions compare to the reality of social behavior. In the following chapter, I operationalize my terms and discuss how I will test my hypotheses against actual cases of ceasefires in ethnic civil war.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

The fundamental argument of this study is that ceasefires are more likely to endure when cooperation between ethnic groups is easiest. In the previous chapter, I argued that cooperation in ethnic civil wars is a function of belligerents' territorial satisfaction, relative power, and internal cohesion. In order to determine the validity of these theoretical claims, I will test my hypotheses against two ceasefires in the Bosnian war: the 78-day "Carter ceasefire" of 1995, and the 7-day "tripartite ceasefire" of 1993. Aspects of the conflict relating to belligerents' territorial satisfaction, relative power, and internal cohesion will be carefully examined in order to develop an understanding of their connection to cooperation. As a multivariate study, the dependent variable (ceasefire durability) may be the product of any of the three independent variables (territorial satisfaction, relative power, actor cohesion), or, more likely, a combination of them. This study will seek to understand how all three independent variables work in tandem to produce different outcomes. In the following chapter, I explain how I will measure the dependent and independent variables and how I will conduct my case studies. I then present the conflict and ceasefires to be studied, and discuss the validity of my sources.

Measuring the Durability of Peace

The dependent variable is the period of time between ceasefire onset and collapse. Ceasefire onset is considered to be the moment that a ceasefire agreement enters into force. Ceasefire collapse is considered to be the moment when either the belligerents, international observers, or news sources declare that the ceasefire was broken and that war has begun anew.

This is not the only definition of ceasefire collapse. Fortna, for example, qualifies ceasefire failure as the date that belligerents began war according to the Correlates of War dataset (COW).¹²⁹ I cannot do the same, however, since COW does not account for short-lived management efforts.¹³⁰

Measurement of the period between ceasefire onset and collapse has been approached in a variety of ways. In her study of ceasefire durability, Fortna used large-*N* quantitative analysis to construct a duration model (enriched by a qualitative survey and case studies). “Duration models,” writes Fortna, “estimate the effects of independent variables on a dependent variable measuring a length of time, and they can incorporate our uncertainty about how long a phenomenon (in this case peace) will continue into the future.”¹³¹ Large-*N* duration analyses of this type are growing increasingly common in the peace durability literature.¹³² Regardless, such an extensive quantitative study is beyond the scope of this work.

In lieu of a duration model, I will use a cutoff point to create a binary distinction between “short” and “long.” In their study of more than 1,400 settlements, Scott Gartner and Jacob Bercovitch address duration by establishing a cutoff point of 8 weeks, or 56 days, for a short-lived settlement.¹³³ After presenting their statistical data, Gartner and Bercovitch also apply their cutoff point to a qualitative analysis of the Balkan conflict, demonstrating the relevance of their measures for my purposes.¹³⁴ Thus, for the sake of comparability, I will employ this same cutoff.

¹²⁹ Fortna, *Peacetime*, p. 48, p. 48n22.

¹³⁰ Scott Sigmund Gartner and Jacob Bercovitch, “Overcoming Obstacles to Peace: The Contribution of Mediation to Short-Lived Conflict Settlements,” *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (December 2006), p. 826.

¹³¹ Fortna, *Peacetime*, p. 44.

¹³² For example, see Stephen L. Quackenbush and Jerome F. Venteicher, “Settlements, Outcomes, and the Recurrence of Conflict,” *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 6 (November 2008), p. 730. See also Michaela Mattes and Burcu Savun, “Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements,” *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 2 (April 2010), p. 517.

¹³³ Gartner and Bercovitch, “Overcoming Obstacles to Peace,” p. 826.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 833-834.

Any ceasefires of a duration greater than 56 days will be categorized as “long,” and any ceasefires of a duration less than 56 days will be categorized as “short.” In some instances, of course, ceasefires are negotiated to be temporary and given specific durations, which may be less than 56 days. In such cases where intended duration is stipulated in an agreement, “success” will be achieved when the ceasefire has endured for 90% or more of the allotted time. For example, if parties agree that a ceasefire is to be in effect for 40 days, the ceasefire will have been a success if it lasts for 36 days or longer. It is also necessary to consider those instances where a ceasefire directly preceded a peace settlement. For example, on 5 October a ceasefire was signed in Bosnia that endured until the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords.¹³⁵ In these cases, ceasefire “duration” is not a useful concept, as the circumstances of the cessation of hostilities change dramatically with the introduction of political solutions. Therefore, such ceasefires that progress into peace settlements will not be considered in this study. I am only concerned with the duration of ceasefires in the absence of political resolutions to underlying incompatibilities.

The cutoff approach to duration measurement is imperfect because the cutoff is determined relatively arbitrarily.¹³⁶ For example, the above cutoff will consider a ceasefire of 60 days a success, a ceasefire of 40 days a failure, and a ceasefire of 5 days a failure. Intuitively, however, the 40-day ceasefire is closer to success than failure. Therefore, it is justifiably puzzling to judge it more akin to the 5-day ceasefire than its 60-day counterpart. To mitigate this issue, I have picked ceasefires at the relatively extreme ends of the duration spectrum in the Bosnian civil war (7 days and 78 days). There are many intermediary positions with less extreme cutoff points and intensity measurements that may be calculated. However, accounting for these

¹³⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1900-1995, Volume I* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2002), p. 392.

¹³⁶ For more on this, see Fortna, *Peacetime*, p. 43.

will serve only to muddy the results of this limited project, and would be best done using large-*N* quantitative methods. For my purposes, one need only know the circumstances under which ceasefire duration is longest and shortest in order to have a sense of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Further research can then clarify the gradations between the two poles.

This study focuses on the relationship between ceasefire durability and three independent variables. The values of these variables will be gauged using a number of guiding questions, which correspond to the hypotheses forwarded in chapter 2. The first independent variable of interest is any actor's satisfaction with the allocation of territory at the time of the ceasefire. Since actors will analyze ceasefire agreements in relation to possible peace settlements, ceasefire durability should be influenced by the extent to which the parties would accept permanent territorial division along the ceasefire line. As such, the following guiding questions direct my research: how satisfied are the belligerents with their territorial holdings? How large are the ethnic enclaves beyond the ceasefire lines? Qualitative sources, such as secondary historical literature, public statements, news reporting, and internal communiqués should offer insight into the intent of the belligerents to commit to non-aggression.

The second variable of interest is the balance of relative power between the actors. Previous measurements of relative power have taken a variety of different approaches. Paul Diehl, Jennifer Reifschneider, and Paul Hensel, for example, observed the ratios of population, economic, and military data included in the Correlates of War project's indicator of capability.¹³⁷ Reed Wood developed a calculation of relative rebel capability based upon infantry data

¹³⁷ Paul F. Diehl, Jennifer Reifschneider, and Paul R. Hensel, "United Nations Intervention and Recurring Conflict," *International Organization* 50, no. 4 (Autumn, 1996).

included in the UCDP database,¹³⁸ and Philip Hultquist expanded upon this calculation by including a time lag to account for the effects of approaching victory, settlement, or defeat.¹³⁹ Gartner and Bercovitch, drawing from the International Conflict Management dataset, created three dummy variables to determine if the conflict initiator was stronger, if the initiator was weaker, or if both parties had equal power.¹⁴⁰ Given that the cases under study lack sufficient representation in the data, I cannot directly appropriate any of the methods. However, I will use similar approaches. The following questions will direct my analysis of relative power: What is the ratio of infantry forces? What is the ratio of equipment? How do the belligerents perceive the power of their opponents? Who is providing external support to whom, how much support are they providing, and what is the character of that support? Is the conflict being mediated? These questions will be answered using soft measures, primarily news reporting and secondary historical literature. Some quantitative military data will also be provided by *Military Balance*, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, and Charles Shrader's history of the Muslim-Croat civil war in central Bosnia.¹⁴¹

The third variable of interest is actor cohesion. One notable approach to this variable is Kathleen Cunningham's measurement of actor fragmentation, which examines the number of autonomous actors all claiming to represent a single cause.¹⁴² This is a useful concept, which I will fold into a number of additional guiding questions. How many actors are engaged in the

¹³⁸ Reed M. Wood, "Rebel capability and strategic violence against civilians," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (September 2010).

¹³⁹ Philip Hultquist, "Power parity and peace? The role of relative power in civil war settlement," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 5 (September 2013).

¹⁴⁰ Gartner and Bercovitch, "Overcoming Obstacles to Peace," p. 826.

¹⁴¹ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1993-1994* (London: Brassey's, 1993); The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1994-1995* (London: Brassey's, 1994); Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1900-1995, Volume I* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2002); Charles R. Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia: A Military History, 1992-1994* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003).

¹⁴² Cunningham, "Actor Fragmentation and Civil War Bargaining," p. 662.

conflict zone? How many actors are party to the ceasefire agreement? What is the scope of the ceasefire? How fragmented are the actors? How contested is decision making? How efficient is the military chain of command, and how disciplined its fighting force? As with the other variables, these questions shall be answered using primarily soft measures provided by news reporting and secondary literature.

Testing the Durability of Peace

I will employ the method of difference initially forwarded by Mill to test the causal relationship between my independent and dependent variables. In this method, two cases with different outcomes are compared. Those variables that are shared among cases are not considered to be independently causal, while causality is attributed to those variables that vary across cases.¹⁴³ I expect to see each independent variable coded differently across the cases, which would account for the variation in their outcomes. If an independent variable were the same in both a short and long ceasefire, it would indicate that the variable itself is not solely responsible for the outcome. For example, were power asymmetry to be high in both a long and short ceasefire, the relative power of the belligerents alone would not seem to affect their ability to cooperate. Rather, I expect to find that power asymmetry will be high in shorter ceasefires, and low in longer ceasefires. The method of difference is useful because it eliminates causality in variables that are shared across multiple outcomes. Of course, if a variable is present in multiple outcomes, this may mean that certain variables are interacting to produce the result. Mill's methods do not account for interaction effects—it is up to the researcher to discover these

¹⁴³ John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, 8th Ed (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), pp. 482-483. Accessed at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/27942/27942-pdf.pdf>.

relationships between independent variables.¹⁴⁴ I will thus carefully consider such interactions as I conduct my analysis, but lack a reliable methodology to guide these observations.

The utility of Mill's methods has been the subject of major debate. It is neither possible nor necessary for me to engage fully with these methodological questions in this study; others have handled that task comprehensively elsewhere.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognize that small-*N* qualitative research such as this is far from capable of identifying perfect causal relationships. Even so, this method is quite useful for identifying preliminary, plausible relationships between variables.

Drawbacks & Problems

No methodology is foolproof, and the research design outlined above has some important flaws. First, and most essential, is that the method of difference is useful only for eliminating, not generating, hypotheses.¹⁴⁶ This means that, in order to establish causality, the researcher needs to have first asked the right questions. The methods in this study will reveal only if one of the hypotheses is incorrect. They will not introduce new variables that were not tested at all—the introduction of such variables is the burden of the researcher during the theorizing process. Though I am relatively confident that I have included the most relevant variables, there may be much that my theory does not take into consideration. In an extreme case, I may find that none of my independent variables correlate to the dependent variable as expected. On the one hand, this

¹⁴⁴ Jukka Savolainen, "The Rationality of Drawing Big Conclusions Based on Small Samples: In Defense of Mill's Methods," *Social Forces* 72, no. 4 (June 1994), p. 1221.

¹⁴⁵ For important examples of this debate, see James Mahoney, "Strategies of Causal Inference in Small-*N* Analysis," *Sociological Methods & Research* 28, no. 4 (May 2000); Stanley Lieberson, "Small N's and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases," *Social Forces* 70, no. 2 (December 1991); Savolainen, "The Rationality of Drawing Big Conclusions Based on Small Samples."

¹⁴⁶ For a fuller explanation, see Savolainen, "The Rationality of Drawing Big Conclusions Based on Small Samples," p. 1218.

is a useful result because it redirects research efforts; on the other hand, it does not inherently offer ideas for alternative hypotheses to be researched in future studies. In a potentially worse situation, I may find that the independent variables correlate to the dependent variable, but, in reality, a fourth variable that was not examined is the actual source of this ostensible causality. In such a case, any policy prescriptions or general knowledge derived from the results would be misguided, for I would have unwittingly assigned causality to non-causal variables.

It is also important to be candid about possible issues with data collection. Much of the history discussed in this study is contentious and fraught with dispute. Disagreements over the interpretation of historical data are commonplace among ethno-nationalists throughout the world, and the Balkans are no exception. Arguments continue to this day over what happened, why it happened, and how it might be rooted in centuries of complex and contested history. The hermeneutic practice, when applied to the holiest of national traditions, as well as to the lowest moments of (anti-)social behavior, easily transforms into the legitimization of terrible violence and oppression. Such is the root of epistemic violence, which stems from the (mis)interpretation of social-scientific data to justify the subordination or mistreatment of the object of study; though alternative evaluations may be possible, the academic sanctification of one singular understanding establishes this interpretation as an “uncontestable” system of knowledge.¹⁴⁷ I hesitate to unwittingly participate in the perpetuation of such systems of knowledge, which, in the Balkan context, are used to excuse certain groups of aggression while shunting the responsibility for horrid crimes onto the shoulders of others. Therefore, it is essential to consider

¹⁴⁷ Thomas Teo, “What is Epistemological Violence in the Empirical Social Sciences?” *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 4, no. 5 (2010). This concept can also be subsumed into the broader idea of cultural violence, as forwarded by Galtung. See: Ines-Jacqueline Werkner, “Zum Friedensbegriff in der Friedensforschung” [On the Concept of Peace in Peace Studies], in *Handbuch Friedensethik* [Handbook of Peace Ethics], eds. Ines-Jacqueline Werkner and Klaus Ebeling (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2017), pp. 22-23.

my sources critically, and to be honest about their potential biases and perspectives (whether malicious or unintentional). Given that their data serve as the foundation of this study, those biases and perspectives are, in many ways, incorporated into these pages.

I make particular use of two types of sources: military histories and newspaper articles.¹⁴⁸ As far as the latter is concerned, it is not difficult to see where there may be significant issues. Published during the conflict itself, these pieces lack the retrospective insight to contextualize the often confusing, fast-paced events on which they are reporting. Given my lack of proficiency in the Serbo-Croatian language, I worked almost exclusively with English-language sources from the U.S. and UK; though these reporters may not have been as deeply entangled in the nationalistic back-and-forth to which publications in the Balkans were party, it would be shortsighted to say that these Anglophone authors did not themselves have particular interests in or perspectives on the conflict. Both America and Britain were highly active participants in the Yugoslav wars, which were themselves embedded in a global shift of world order in the newly arrived post-Cold War era. Clearly no such writing can be entirely free of bias, and, while I have attempted to steer away from the most egregious examples of one-sided reporting, it is difficult to accurately determine to what extent the selected articles exhibit partiality. Nevertheless, such sources provide much-needed and detailed insight into developments on the ground, as well as into the thought processes of both the belligerents (through interviews) and the international community (through the voice of the author).

The military histories seem, at the outset, less partial—they are, after all, supposedly neutral, retrospectively contextualized historical accounts. But it is this seemingly “expert” neutrality that makes their danger particularly insidious. Such claims of “authoritative” findings

¹⁴⁸ The vast majority of these articles were accessed through the Lexis Nexis database.

can, as noted, serve as the basis of violent epistemologies. I make particular use of two studies: one by the CIA, and one by the military historian Charles R. Shrader. Regarding the former, the American public has generally viewed the Serbs as the primary engines of violence in Bosnia;¹⁴⁹ steeped in this discourse, any work published by the CIA might be expected to include, at least to some extent, this perspective on aggression and victimization. Regarding the latter, Shrader has reached controversial conclusions about the Muslim-Croat civil war in central Bosnia, flipping an established narrative by finding the Bosnian Muslims to be the primary aggressors and the Bosnian Croats to be the generally blameless victims.¹⁵⁰ It may, indeed, be that he has uncovered groundbreaking new evidence. Yet his reliance on Croatian narratives over those of Muslims may very well skew these results, as noted by Shrader himself.¹⁵¹ More speculative, but a necessary observation, is to note Shrader's years of work in American military institutions, as well as the book's publication in 2003, just as the United States began to engage in the Middle East following the 9/11 attacks. It may not be inconsequential that a book published at the intersection of these two circumstances would portray the Catholic Croats as victims and the Muslims as violent conquerors.

It is not my intention to indict Shrader or the CIA as elements of some devious propaganda machine, particularly as I can never truly know their intentions. I wish merely to demonstrate that the conclusions presented in their works may be far from empirically impartial,

¹⁴⁹ As images from the Balkans exposed the horrors of the war to the American people, public opinion turned in favor of the Bosnian Muslims and exerted pressure on the American government to act on their behalf. See Steven L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (New York: Sharpe, 1999), p. 202. These images were frequently selective and ideological. Contracts between media companies in the Balkans and the US stipulated the portrayal of Slovenia and Croatia as "western states," while the Serbs were to be portrayed as analogous to Nazis. See Marie-Janine Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert* [A History of Yugoslavia in the 20th Century] (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 2010), p. 318.

¹⁵⁰ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, pp. xvii-xix.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-213.

and that this ambiguity seeps into the evidence used in my own research. Acknowledging that the discipline of international affairs must be more responsible in its treatment of history (particularly given the irony that this is an account of ethnic conflicts, for which historical interpretation is a central tool of mobilization and manipulation), it is imperative that all scholars of peace and conflict recognize the ambiguity of their cases and approach their sources with a critical and honest eye.

Case Selection

I have used the most-similar method of case selection to determine which ceasefires are to be compared with the method of difference. The most-similar method seeks out cases that are similar in every respect, except for the variables of interest.¹⁵² For this reason, I selected ceasefires from only one conflict: the Bosnian war. The war in Bosnia is both highly dynamic and highly static in useful ways. Regarding its dynamism, the character of the conflict changed drastically throughout its lifespan. Beginning as a Serbian separatist movement within Bosnia, which had itself declared independence from Yugoslavia, the conflict quickly devolved into civil warfare marred by brutal ethnic cleansing. During this early period of the war, there was a relatively clear dyad composed of the Bosnian Serbs and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) on one end, and the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats on the other. Later, the failure of the Muslim-Croat alliance prompted the collapse of this dyad. As the Croat-Muslim civil war erupted in 1992, the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina took on a multipolar character. The final stages of the conflict saw a rebuilding of the Croat-Muslim alliance and a concomitant return to the conflict's original dyad, as well as a significant change in the level of international

¹⁵² Jason Seawright and John Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options," *Political Research Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (June 2008), p. 304.

involvement. Major NATO bombing campaigns and powerful international mediation changed the dynamics of the war and increased the pressure on belligerents to find a resolution. Despite all of this dynamism, however, important factors—such as the belligerents’ leadership, the geography of the area, the structure of the societies, and the history of contention—remained the same. This is methodologically important, as it allows for the control of variables that are not of primary interest. The conflict’s dynamism is likewise important, as it allows for the values of the independent variables to change over time within this static conflict environment.

I also selected cases from Bosnia because the conflict has proven to be invaluable in the study of ethnic civil war. The motivations of the belligerents and the structure of the conflict correspond harmoniously with existing thinking on ethnic civil war,¹⁵³ and there is significant precedent for the study of Yugoslavia’s violent collapse in similar research projects.¹⁵⁴ Though continuing this work on Bosnia may perpetuate a myopic focus on the dynamics of conflict in Southeast Europe, it increases the comparability of my results with other research on ethnic civil war. The benefits and tradeoffs of this focus on Yugoslavia’s demise merit more extensive discussion elsewhere; here, it suffices to say that there is precedent for the study of Bosnia in this field.

The collapse of Yugoslavia was a tremendously complex historical event, and a brief summary can hardly do it justice. The same is true of the subsequent war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nevertheless, in order to provide context for the cases, I present here a brief summary of the war

¹⁵³ This may, of course, be the case because much of the theorizing on ethnic civil war was done in the wake of Yugoslavia’s collapse. As a result, it could be that Bosnia does not correspond to the theory, but that the theory has been designed to explain Bosnia.

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Gartner and Bercovitch’s study of the effects of mediation on short-lived conflict settlements. Gartner and Bercovitch, “Overcoming Obstacles to Peace,” pp. 833-835.

in Bosnia, the rationale of its onset, the composition of its belligerents, and the path to its resolution.

The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Situated in the south-east of Europe, the Balkans have long been populated by a variety of ethnic groups. These groups developed and solidified national identities as regional control ebbed and flowed through a number of formations: the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, the Serb-dominated Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the Axis occupation and Croat-dominated Ustaše regime of the 1940s, and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).¹⁵⁵ It was primarily the SFRY's charismatic leader, Josip Broz Tito, who reigned in ethnic divisions and maintained unity within the state.¹⁵⁶

Following Tito's death in 1980, political elites competing for control in the new power vacuum began to use ethnic identity to their advantage.¹⁵⁷ Eventually, maneuvering by Slobodan Milosevic, President of Serbia, brought the Serbs to dominate Yugoslavia's federal institutions.¹⁵⁸ Fearing for their well-being under this new political arrangement, Yugoslavia's other ethnic republics began to secede.¹⁵⁹ In June 1993, Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence from Yugoslavia, prompting war as the Serb-dominated Yugoslav People's Army invaded the republics.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ For a comprehensive history of Yugoslavia (in German), see Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert*.

¹⁵⁶ Carole Rogel, *The Breakup of Yugoslavia and the War in Bosnia* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), pp. 15-16.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-24.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20, p. 24.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-27.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Bosnia-Herzegovina was the most ethnically diverse of Yugoslavia's republics, with no majority national or religious group.¹⁶¹ In the wake of the Slovenian and Croatian secessions, Bosnia's President, Alija Izetbegovic, dismissed demands that the republic split into numerous autonomous regions for its many ethnic communities.¹⁶² In response, the Bosnian Serbs declared certain areas of Bosnia to be Serbian autonomous regions in September of 1991, and on 24 October 1991 the Bosnian Serbs established an autonomous Serb national assembly.¹⁶³ This separatist region was called the Republika Srpska, and the city of Pale was made its capital. War broke out between the Bosnian government and these Bosnian Serb separatists in April of 1992.¹⁶⁴ Initially, the Bosnian Croats fought alongside the Bosnian Muslims; however, from mid-1993 to mid-1994, the Bosnian Croats and Muslims fought each other as well.¹⁶⁵ The Bosnian Croats attempted to carve out their own autonomous republic, called the Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosna. These three groups were primarily represented by three military forces: The Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*, ARBiH) for the Muslims, the Croatian Defense Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće obrane*, HVO) for the Bosnian Croats, and the Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske*, VRS) for the Bosnian Serbs. Eventually, the war in Bosnia ended as combat in Croatia, a NATO bombing campaign, and international diplomatic efforts forced the parties to agree to a peace settlement.¹⁶⁶

I have selected two ceasefires to study from the Bosnian civil war. In chapter 4, I will look at the "Carter ceasefire." This ceasefire was the product of a mediation mission by former

¹⁶¹ In 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina was 43.7% Muslim, 31.4% Serb, 17.3% Croat, and 5.5% "Yugoslav." "Muslim" in the Bosnian context refers to a national, rather than solely religious, identity. See *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

U.S. President Jimmy Carter, and resulted in an agreement between the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Serbs that entered into force on 1 January 1995. Though it collapsed before its stipulated end-date, the ceasefire lasted for 78 days with no major breaches by either side. This ceasefire was selected because it was among the most durable that I could identify in the conflict, and is dramatically more durable than its counterpart to be studied in chapter 5. It is also typical of other long-duration ceasefires that were identified in preparation for this study, and thus generalizes well to other cases within the Bosnian context. The Carter ceasefire is also an important case, as it came at a time when the Bosnian government began to lose the support of the United States, its last internationally influential backer, and it preceded the final bout of fighting that would ultimately lead into the Dayton Peace Accords. As a long-duration ceasefire, I expect to find that the belligerents were satisfied with the territorial allocation at the time of the ceasefire, that their armies were locked in a mutually hurting stalemate, and that all actors were cohesive and well-organized.

In chapter 5, I will look at the “tripartite ceasefire.” This ceasefire was a three-way agreement between the Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Croats, and the Bosnian Muslims, which entered into force on 18 June 1993. Fighting continued even after the ceasefire took effect, and a major assault in central Bosnia on 24 June 1993 brought any illusion of its success to an end. I selected this ceasefire because it was among the least durable that I could identify, and stands in stark contrast to the Carter ceasefire’s durability. It is also reminiscent of other short-duration ceasefires that I was able to uncover—the sort of “typical Bosnian ceasefire” referred to in chapter 1. The case is also important, in that it came at a time of major transition in final peace negotiations and was among the first substantial efforts to manage three-way fighting between the Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. As a short-duration ceasefire, I expect to find that the

belligerents were dissatisfied with their territorial holdings, that there were significant power asymmetries between the armies, and that the actors were marred by major internal divisions.

In the following two chapters, I will closely examine the political and military contexts of these ceasefires, exposing the structures that resulted in their vastly different durations. The case studies will offer clues into the relationship between these structures and cooperation, which will in turn allow us to see more clearly the connection between ceasefire durability and ethnic civil war.

CHAPTER 4: THE CARTER CEASEFIRE

In this chapter, I analyze the long-duration Carter ceasefire. This agreement between the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs entered into force on 1 January 1995, and endured for 78 days before a Bosnian government offensive caused its collapse in the spring of 1995. Given the agreement's relatively long lifespan, the findings of this case study should offer insight into the factors that enhance ceasefire durability.

Despite ongoing fighting in the Bihac region, the Bosnian Serb side had significantly greater incentive to abide by the ceasefire agreement than the Bosnian government. At the time of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's mediation efforts in late 1994, the Bosnian Serbs had achieved the territorial ambitions that they had formally declared at the beginning of the war. Having just fought to a bitter stalemate with the Bosnian government, which was now empowered by its renewed alliance with the Bosnian Croats, and under the pressure of both economic sanctions and the possibility of NATO airstrikes, the Bosnian Serbs faced a grim reality if fighting was to recommence. The quick negotiation of a peace settlement seemed to be the only way for the Bosnian Serbs to capitalize on their tenuous military advantage. Initially, the peace plan offered by the Contact Group called for a dramatic reduction of Bosnian Serb territory. However, both the European Community and the United States, motivated by domestic frustrations, began to move away from their staunch demands that a peace settlement be favorable to the Bosnian Muslims. Rather, at this desperate point in the war, any peace settlement at all seemed desirable. This loss of support for the Bosnian Muslims opened brand

new bargaining space for the Bosnian Serbs. As a result, they could attempt to consolidate their territorial claims through negotiation, where they enjoyed the advantage, instead of military force, where they perceived a looming risk of defeat. Nevertheless, the Bosnian Serbs prepared military operations in anticipation of the failure of negotiations.

On the other side of the table, the Bosnian government openly favored the peace plan offered by the Contact Group, which would undo many of the Bosnian Army's territorial losses. A renegotiation of this plan with better terms for the Bosnian Serbs would be disastrous. However, stalemates and defeats in key battles throughout central Bosnia made clear the fact that continued fighting was not (at least for the moment) an option. As such, the Bosnian government was incentivized to agree to the ceasefire in order to buy time as it planned and prepared for a new offensive.

The duration of the winter ceasefire of 1995 was therefore contingent upon two factors: one, the Bosnian Serbs' confidence that they would benefit more from negotiation than force, and two, the amount of time it would take for the Bosnian Army to believe it could overcome the military stalemate and shift battlefield conditions in its favor. In the end, it was the Bosnian Army that renewed full-scale fighting, having spent the winter building confidence in its ability to successfully mount a major offensive against its opponent. The Bosnian Army ultimately seems to have never been committed to a permanent ceasefire. Given shifts in the international environment, such an agreement would have resulted in losses of territory that the Bosnian government considered to be unequivocally unacceptable. With satisfaction so low that commitment to the agreement was impossible, the ceasefire was to endure for only as long as the Bosnian Government perceived a mutually hurting stalemate. When military force once again became an option, the ceasefire collapsed.

In the following, I present a brief historical overview of the circumstances surrounding the Carter agreement before further exploring the role of satisfaction, relative power, and actor cohesion in the duration of the ceasefire. Ultimately, I find that this long-duration ceasefire exhibited low satisfaction, a mutually hurting stalemate, and moderately low actor cohesion. Interestingly, these results do not map onto the ideal-type imagined in chapter 2.

Summary

By the end of 1994, the war in Bosnia had taken a major toll on all of its participants. The VRS had lost its momentum, shifting to a defensive posture as the HVO and ARBiH ended combat operations against one another, entered into a Muslim-Croat Federation, and took the offensive.¹⁶⁷ Now faced with the unified fury of the Bosnian Croats and Muslims, the Bosnian Serbs' territorial possessions were in grave danger. November saw the VRS lose control of Kupres, as well as some territory near Tesanj, Konjic, and in the Livo-Glamoc valley; defenses against Muslim attacks on Mt. Vlasic, Mt. Stolice, Donji Vakuf, and Tesanj-Teslic, though successful, were costly and tiring.¹⁶⁸ Stalemate had set in. Fear was mounting among the Bosnian Serbs, however, that the tides could turn in favor of the Bosnian government.¹⁶⁹

It was in the context of this dire situation that Radovan Karadzic, President of the Republika Srpska, invited former U.S. President Jimmy Carter to mediate the Bosnian conflict.¹⁷⁰ After obtaining approval for the mission by President Clinton, arrangements were made to transport Carter and his negotiating team to Sarajevo.¹⁷¹ Before Carter embarked for

¹⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 251.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁷¹ The Carter Center, "President Carter Helps Restart Peace Efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina," 31 August 1994. Accessed at <https://www.cartercenter.org/news/documents/doc214.html>.

Bosnia on 18 December 1994, Karadzic pledged to free imprisoned UN peacekeepers and Muslim soldiers under the age of 19, guarantee the free movement of UN convoys, reopen the Sarajevo airport, and establish a ceasefire around the embattled city.¹⁷²

On 18 December 1994, Carter met with Bosnian President Izetbegovic, where the former U.S. president recommended that further negotiations be based upon the most current peace plan offered by the Contact Group, a mediation task force comprised of representatives from the U.S., UK, France, Germany, and Russia.¹⁷³ This peace plan demanded a 51-49 split of Bosnia's territory between a Muslim-Croat federation and the Republika Srpska, reducing the Bosnian Serb holdings by approximately one third from the 70 percent of Bosnian territory they had seized through military force.¹⁷⁴ On 19 December, following a meeting in Pale (the capital of the Republika Srpska), Carter announced that the Serbs had proposed a four-month ceasefire—a statement that Karadzic later denied, despite noting the need to consider such a possibility—as well as an offer to continue negotiations rooted in the Contact Group's peace plan.¹⁷⁵ The following day, Izetbegovic agreed to the four-month ceasefire after a meeting in Sarajevo with Carter.¹⁷⁶ Carter subsequently returned to Pale, where the Bosnian Serbs accepted a general ceasefire in Bosnia to begin on 23 December.¹⁷⁷ On 22 December, UN Special Envoy Yasushi Akashi received that same commitment from both Bosnian Muslim and Serb officials.¹⁷⁸ Izetbegovic and Karadzic, on 23 December, subsequently signed separate documents establishing a short-term ceasefire to last until 1 January, priming the parties for a four-month

¹⁷² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 28.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Roger Cohen, "Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports," *The New York Times*, 21 December 1994; Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 194.

¹⁷⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 28.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

“cessation of hostilities.”¹⁷⁹ At the time, such a cessation of hostilities was considered to be more substantial than a ceasefire, in that it required the withdrawal of forces and the insertion of UN troops in certain flashpoints—given the terminology established in this study, however, both agreements were effectively ceasefires.¹⁸⁰ After approval from the Bosnian Serb Assembly on 19 December and the signing of separate documents by Bosnian Government and Serb officials on 31 December, the Carter ceasefire took effect at noon on 1 January 1995.¹⁸¹ It was intended to last until 30 April 1995, 119 days after the start of the new year.¹⁸² On 2 January, the Bosnian Croats signed the agreement.¹⁸³

The parties faced a number of obstacles throughout January of 1995. A joint Muslim-Serb commission encountered significant difficulties arranging the withdrawal of Bosnian government forces from Mt. Igman from 4 January to 11 January, which became linked to a contentious dispute over the opening of supply routes into Sarajevo by the Serbs (resolved, along with a number of other issues, by agreement on 23 January).¹⁸⁴ More seriously, the Contact Group suspended its shuttle diplomacy efforts on 25 January after it became clear that the Serbs would not negotiate from the basis of the proposed peace plan.¹⁸⁵ Despite these setbacks, the Bosnian government and Bosnian Serbs were able to successfully swap 101 prisoners in Sarajevo—the first exchange of its kind since October of the preceding year—and the UN Security Council extended relief for its limited sanctions against Serbia by 100 days.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁸⁰ Cohen, “Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports.”

¹⁸¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 29.

¹⁸² Steven Greenhouse, “US and Russia Agree to Try to Extend Fraying Bosnia Cease-Fire,” *The New York Times*, 24 March 1995.

¹⁸³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 29.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

In February, there was further progress in the opening of routes into Sarajevo (though not for commercial use) and in the strengthening of the Muslim-Croat Federation.¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the Bosnian Serb Assembly again rejected the Contact Group plan on 13 February, and, in an effort to maintain control over the negotiations, banned any unauthorized interaction between Bosnian Serbs and the Contact Group.¹⁸⁸ A delicate game subsequently unfolded as the Contact Group eased sanctions in order to procure Belgrade's recognition of Croatia, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Slovenia, while the Bosnian Serbs conditioned consideration of the Contact Group's peace plan upon the status of these sanctions.¹⁸⁹ By the end of the month, Milosevic still steadfastly refused to recognize the independence of these republics.¹⁹⁰

Tensions began to rise at the end of February, with Krajina and Bosnian Serbs forming a joint defense council on the 20th to foster cooperation and pool resources in the event of a new round of fighting.¹⁹¹ On 6 March, Croatian, Bosnian, and Bosnian Croat military commanders signed a similar agreement to bolster military cooperation against Serbs in both Croatia and Bosnia.¹⁹² Then, on 20 March, the Bosnian government shattered the ceasefire by launching major assaults on radio installations at Mt. Vlasic and Mt. Stolice.¹⁹³ With Karadzic calling for the mobilization of all Bosnian Serbs on 26 March to counter the offensive, it became apparent that the ceasefire was no longer in effect.¹⁹⁴ Regardless, the Contact Group called for the ceasefire's extension past its 30 April expiration date on 27 March, 4 March, 19 April, and 20 April.¹⁹⁵ Meeting with Bosnian Government and Serb officials on 20 and 21 April, UN Special

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

Envoy Akashi attempted to secure an extension of the ceasefire, but the prospect was definitively rejected by both Sarajevo and Pale.¹⁹⁶ On 1 May 1995, the agreement's nominal end date, the ceasefire expired as fighting continued in Bosnia.¹⁹⁷ Indeed, it was the Bosnian government's offensive on 20 March 1995 that marked the true collapse of the Carter agreement.

Though the Carter ceasefire lasted only 66 percent of its anticipated duration (78 out of 119 days), it endured well beyond the 56-day cutoff established by Gartner and Bercovitch for short-lived settlements. The questions must now be asked: why did the ceasefire last for so long? Why did it ultimately collapse? And how did cooperation play a role in determining the agreement's durability? Let us now look to the variables of satisfaction, relative power, and actor cohesion to gauge how their interactions produced this 78-day ceasefire.

Satisfaction

How satisfied are the belligerents with their territorial holdings? How large are the ethnic enclaves beyond the ceasefire lines?

The Carter ceasefire is inextricably intertwined with the broader peace process that unfolded in Bosnia throughout the duration of the conflict. In many ways, it came at a critical period in the war: on the Bosnian Serb side, established territorial aspirations had not only been reached, but were in dire peril; on the Bosnian government side, the long-standing goals of Mt. Vlasica and Mt. Stolica seemed barely within reach, yet current trends in the international environment and peace negotiations threatened their realization. Mt. Vlasica and Mt. Stolica were essential radio transmitters, which the ARBiH had unsuccessfully attempted to seize for much of 1994.¹⁹⁸ In effect, Bosnian Serb territorial satisfaction was high, allowing them to commit to the

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

ceasefire and pursue a negotiated settlement, while Bosnian Muslim satisfaction was quite low, causing them to seek military avenues that would change battlefield realities.

In May 1992, just as the Bosnian conflict was beginning to unfold, Karadzic and Mate Boban, leader of the Bosnian Croats, met in Graz, Austria, to discuss the potential territorial partition of Bosnia.¹⁹⁹ Initially opposed to Bosnian independence, the Bosnian Serbs desired a union with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro), or, at the very least, a partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina.²⁰⁰ At the Graz meeting, the Bosnian Serbs offered a map of the partition. In this map, they controlled 70 percent of Bosnian territory.²⁰¹ 10 percent of this land was contested by the Croats, and 20 to 30 percent was contested by the Bosnian Muslims, shrinking Muslim holdings to a small central enclave.²⁰² Moreover, the Bosnian Serbs were adamant about possessing particular pieces of territory: parts of Muslim eastern Bosnia and parts of Sarajevo (which were to serve as the Republika Srpska's new capital) were non-negotiable.²⁰³ As the war progressed into 1993, it seemed as if the Bosnian Serbs would be willing to compromise on this partition in exchange for international recognition of their new state.²⁰⁴ When international recognition became a more distant prospect, however, Bosnian Serb officials continued to advocate for their initial position.²⁰⁵ Indeed, at this point in the war, the Bosnian Serbs had seized much of the territory initially set out in the Graz map: approximately 70 percent of Bosnia-Herzegovina fell under their control, the fulfilment of their aspirations in 1992.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁹ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 192.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

²⁰⁶ Julijana Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate," *The Associated Press*, 27 March 1995.



Map 4.1: The Graz Map of May 1992.²⁰⁷

In July of 1994, the Contact Group offered a peace plan that undermined all the Serbs had worked towards. This map called for the reduction of Bosnian Serb territory from its current (and long desired) 72 percent to a significantly lesser 49 percent, with the Muslim-Croat Federation receiving a 51 percent share of the territory.²⁰⁸ If this map were to be adopted, the Bosnian Serbs would lose hold of the territory they had long desired, which they considered absolutely necessary for their secession,²⁰⁹ and which they, in 1992, had demanded as solely their own. As the VRS lost its strategic advantage to a renewed Muslim-Croat alliance in late 1994 (see the following section on relative power),²¹⁰ it became apparent that Serb territorial gains could

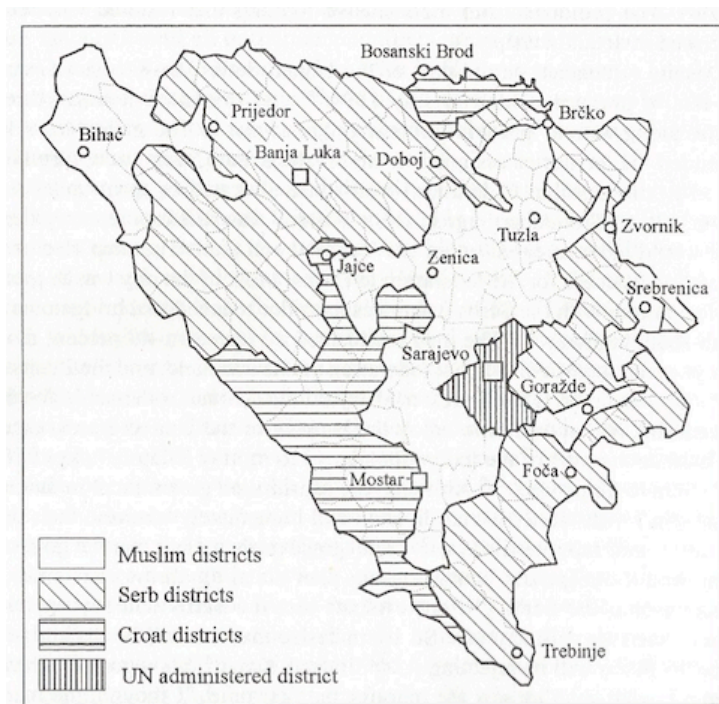
²⁰⁷ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 192.

²⁰⁸ John Pomfret, "Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire," *The Washington Post*, 21 December 1994.

²⁰⁹ Cohen, "Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports."

²¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 251.

realistically disappear.²¹¹ The diplomatic and military tides no longer seemed unequivocally in their favor.



Map 4.2: The Contact Group Map of July 1994.²¹²

Jimmy Carter's arrival in Bosnia offered the Bosnian Serbs an enticing way out of their predicament, for the former U.S. President's mission coincided with a major shift in U.S. foreign policy. President Clinton had long supported the Bosnian Muslims,²¹³ as did his constituency, given that and the American media routinely painted the Serbs as the brutal aggressors and oppressors in the Bosnian war.²¹⁴ However, a change in the administration's stance was forced as

²¹¹ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 194.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 304.

²¹³ John Pomfret, "Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs," *The Washington Post*, 20 December 1994.

²¹⁴ Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert*, p. 318.

Republicans swept congressional elections in 1994.²¹⁵ Clinton, still unable to achieve a settlement in a war widely horrifying to the American public, saw his reelection threatened by the foreign policy stalemate in the Balkans.²¹⁶ Pushed by concern for this domestic dissatisfaction, the U.S. in late 1994 changed course and aligned itself with the position of the European Community: the Bosnian Serbs were clearly the victors of the war, and the conflict needed simply to be settled quickly and in any way possible.²¹⁷ Therefore, as the Clinton administration offered its support to Carter's mediation mission, it maintained support (through Carter) of the Contact Group's peace plan and its territorial division of Bosnia. Yet it also provided major flexibility, for the first time, to the Bosnian Serbs. Indeed, it would appear as if Carter's mission as an unofficial representative of the U.S. government was an attempt by the Clinton administration to subtly open this new bargaining space for the Serbs without doing damage to its credibility.

In Pale, Carter's respectful dealings with the Serbs signaled that the U.S. would accept negotiations over the Contact Group plan, comforting the Serbs enough to give up previous demands that the plan be rejected entirely.²¹⁸ U.S. officials stated, "It was always true that territorial adjustments had to be made,"²¹⁹ openly marking the abandonment of their previous insistence that the Muslim-Croat Federation receive more territory than the Bosnian Serbs. In effect, Carter's mediation offered the Serbs a vast expansion of bargaining space at a time when military means seemed unlikely to secure their goals. A ceasefire combined with the opportunity to renegotiate Bosnia's territorial partition was thus an ideal package. An elated Nikola Koljevic,

²¹⁵ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 319.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

²¹⁷ John Pomfret, "Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs."

²¹⁸ John Pomfret, "Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire."

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

vice president of the Republika Srpska, declared after talks with Carter: “Yes, [the Contact Group peace plan] is open to negotiation, yes, the whole plan.... This is a victory for democracy, for us, for the Serbs.”²²⁰ Karadzic himself later remarked that “Everything is negotiable.”²²¹ With Carter signaling that the United States would no longer advocate for a settlement favorable to the Muslim-Croat Federation, the Bosnian Serbs capitalized on an opportunity to lay down their arms, seize their political advantage, and deliberately negotiate a deal tailored to their territorial aspirations.²²²

The Bosnian government, on the other hand, was staunchly opposed to a territorial partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina designed by the Bosnian Serbs, and the Muslim insistence on Serb capitulation as the path to peace was a point of tension between the government and its Western backers.²²³ Izetbegovic, however, placed a great premium on the idea of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a multiethnic state, and, unlike his Muslim nationalist counterparts, was amenable to the concept of partition in order to secure that end.²²⁴ It was the shape and scope of that partition that generated major challenges and conflicts in the peace process, for the Bosnian government would not accept the Serbs’ attempts to approximate the proposed Graz map of 1992.

After meeting with both the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian government, President Carter minimized as semantic differences what amounted to the key issue of Bosnia’s division: the role that the Contact Group’s plan would play in negotiations for a final peace.²²⁵ The Bosnian Serbs stated that talks would begin “with the proposal of the contact group as *the basis* for negotiation

²²⁰ John Pomfret, “Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs.”

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 197.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

²²⁵ Cohen, “Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports.”

of all points,” while the Bosnian government stated that talks would begin “with *the acceptance* of the proposal of the contact group as a starting point.”²²⁶ It is clear, however, that these differences amounted to more than pure semantics. Sarajevo preferred the plan and desired talks that would commence with the proposed 51-49 split of the country, whereas Pale rejected the plan and signaled that it would attempt to alter the proposal to more closely reflect the Bosnian Serbs’ 72 percent holdings at the time of the ceasefire.²²⁷ Moreover, according to the Contact Group’s plan, the Muslim-Croat Federation was to receive territory on which the majority of Bosnia’s industry, main cities, major airports, and higher education institutions were located, an outcome considered wildly unfair by the Bosnian Serbs.²²⁸ Karadzic himself argued that the proposed plan’s allocation of 30 percent of Bosnia’s resources to the Serbs was unacceptable, and that they deserved at least 50 percent.²²⁹ Thus, with the Serbs aspiring to distance themselves from the proposed map, “acceptance” of the plan was removed from their negotiating lexicon.²³⁰

The Bosnian government, fearful of such an unfavorable division and likely aware of the increased bargaining leeway allocated to the Bosnian Serbs by the shifting American position, resisted the Bosnian Serbs’ refusal to begin negotiations without formally rooting them in the Contact Group’s plan. Ejup Ganic, Vice President of the Muslim-Croat Federation, stated in late December, 1994: “Mr. Karadzic wants to start with the peace plan and then destroy it, while we want to build on it.”²³¹ That the Bosnian government perceived this possibility and feared its outcome was key to their (un)willingness to abide by Carter’s ceasefire.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

²²⁷ John Pomfret, “Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire.”

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Cohen, “Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports.”

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ *Ibid.*

Indeed, the process of negotiations signaled clearly to the Bosnian government the Bosnian Serbs' intentions, as well as the international community's support for movement away from the initial division proposed in the Contact Group's plan. In early 1995, a duplicitous United States attempted to reassure the Bosnian government that the Contact Group plan would be upheld, while hinting to the Bosnian Serbs that it could be changed.²³² On 25 January 1995, following a period of intense shuttle diplomacy, the Bosnian Serbs rejected the Contact Group's peace plan and caused the Contact Group to momentarily suspend talks.²³³ On 13 February 1995, the Bosnian Serb assembly once again did not accept the plan, and officially limited the interaction between the Contact Group and those Bosnian Serbs that favored the plan.²³⁴ The stated political rationale behind this rejection was that the plan would require the Bosnian Serbs to enter a unified Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, an outcome considered absolutely unacceptable by the assembly.²³⁵ In response, the Contact Group accepted a French proposal for concessions to the Serbs, namely the lifting of sanctions on Belgrade in order to secure the recognition of Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.²³⁶ The Bosnian Serbs' stubbornness was being met with inducements, concessions, and accommodation.

The Bosnian government hinted at its serious dissatisfaction with the direction of the negotiations in a number of portentous statements. When asked during the initial negotiations if the ceasefire agreement was a breakthrough with the Bosnian Serbs, Ganic made clear the government's mistrust of both the Serbs and the international community: "Unfortunately not. We might have a cease-fire in 72 hours. But I still worry, because President Carter signed some

²³² Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 322.

²³³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 31.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 322.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 322. See also Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 32.

papers with Karadzic, and we don't know what is in those papers. So, we have to wait and see.

We hope for a cease-fire, but from our experience we have to be careful.”²³⁷ Later, in mid-March of 1995—just as the Bosnian government prepared to break the ceasefire with its offensives on Mt. Vlasic and Mt. Stolice—Izetbegovic stated:

Germany understands our decision not to extend the cease-fire upon its expiry on 30th April unless the Serb side accepts the contact group peace plan. Of course, this does not mean that on 1st May we shall launch any offensives, nor that we are planning them at the moment. But, at the same time this means that we shall very effectively defend ourselves if need be. We have said several times and we are saying it again: we shall negotiate whenever we can, and fight whenever we are forced to.²³⁸

The Bosnian government was making itself clear: the ceasefire would not continue if the Bosnian Serbs continued to strive to uphold the status-quo through negotiations.

This tension was also clear to the global community of observers, who, from the outset of the ceasefire, were dubious about the signatories' commitment to abide by its stipulations. On 21 December 1994, as Carter's mediation mission concluded, Roger Cohen reported for the New York Times:

... the durability of the cease-fire, the latest of more than 30 announced since the since the war began in 1992, and the eventual success of peace talks, remained open to question because, despite the agreement, none of the deep differences between Muslims and Serbs that caused the war have been resolved. These differences center on whether Bosnia should remain a single state or be dismembered, and what territory each side should get.²³⁹

Here, Cohen clearly links the final division of territory to ceasefire durability, and observes that the continued dispute over the Contact Group was not to bode well for an enduring cessation of hostilities between the Bosnian government and the Bosnian Serbs. Likewise, John Pomfret

²³⁷ Cohen, “Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports.”

²³⁸ BBC, “President Izetbegovic stands firm on not extending Bosnia cease-fire,” 20 March 1995.

²³⁹ Cohen, “Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports.”

reported for the Washington Post that ongoing territorial disputes indicated that fighting would likely begin anew after inclement weather conditions passed:

Despite the appearance that Bosnia's fratricidal combatants are lumbering toward a cease-fire, today's developments failed to guarantee that either side has abandoned its territorial goals. Bosnia's harsh winters make warfare difficult, so both sides may have decided to suspend fighting to buy time to prepare for more killing in the spring.²⁴⁰

To these reporters, the connection between the peace process and ceasefire durability was self-apparent, as was the negative impact of the fierce disagreement over the Contact Group's proposed partition.

Ultimately, it was the Bosnian government that shattered the ceasefire on 20 March 1995, though the Bosnian Serbs had themselves prepared offensive plans throughout the winter of 1995.²⁴¹ Tellingly, the first targets of the Muslim offensive were key radio transmitters on Mt. Vlasica and Mt. Stolice, both of which had been the subject of major ARBiH operations throughout 1994.²⁴² That the Bosnian government chose to continue this onslaught in these locations, after numerous previous failures, is indicative of the persistence of the government's territorial aims. Moreover, as Karadzic called on the international community's support in returning the frontlines to their positions at the start of the ceasefire, it became clear that the Bosnian Serbs would not tolerate a further loss of territory.²⁴³

How large are the ethnic enclaves beyond the ceasefire lines?

Much of the territory possessed by the Bosnian Serbs at the end of 1994 was inhabited by Bosnian Muslims. As negotiations over the Contact Group peace plan continued, Pale attempted

²⁴⁰ Pomfret, "Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs."

²⁴¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 289-290.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 300.

²⁴³ Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate."

to consolidate control over many of these enclaves. Karadzic expressed a clear commitment to maintaining possession of Brcko, Jajce, Sanski Most, Doboj, Gorazda, Zepa, Srebrenica, and the region of Posavina, all areas which were to be returned to the Bosnian government as per the proposed peace plan.²⁴⁴ In exchange, Karadzic intimated that Pale would willingly concede much of Sarajevo, though not the southern and western suburbs, which were to be used as the basis for the construction of a separate Sarajevo.²⁴⁵ However, the Bosnian Serbs also claimed that the Muslim enclaves of Gorazde, Zepa, and Srebrenica were major security risks.²⁴⁶ This territorial situation was untenable for the Bosnian government, as was the prospect of accepting more than 180,000 refugees into central Bosnia, where the civil war with the Bosnian Croats—begun, in part, over the ethnic balance between Croats and Muslims in light of anticipated refugee movements²⁴⁷—had only recently come to its tenuous close.²⁴⁸ The Bosnian Muslims, therefore, were clearly antagonized by the presence of significant irredenta in Serb-controlled Bosnia.

The issue of ethnic enclaves was less salient for the Bosnian Serbs, though their nationalist rhetoric was intended to foster the opposite perspective. President Carter experienced this firsthand upon visiting Pale, where Karadzic claimed that all of Bosnia's Muslims had been Serbs before the Ottoman Empire brought Islam to the region.²⁴⁹ In this Serb nationalist worldview, all of Bosnia's Muslims were, in a way, irredenta. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe that this justificatory historical interpretation was truly capable of overcoming the national barriers between the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims, particularly given that the

²⁴⁴ Cohen, "Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports."

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Pomfret, "Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire."

²⁴⁷ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 70.

²⁴⁸ Pomfret, "Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire."

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Bosnian Serbs engaged in the ethnic cleansing and genocide of Muslims, rather than their conversion “back” to “Serb-hood.”

What should we make of this tangle of ambitions, claims, and interests? Let us analyze this territorial contest in terms of satisfaction calculations and homeland. The Bosnian Serbs, as forwarded in the Graz map of 1992, desired 70 percent of Bosnian territory, an ambition which had been decisively satisfied. This territory was considered imperative for the establishment of the Republika Srpska, the state of the Bosnian Serbs. Military exhaustion, as will be explored in greater detail below, threatened these holdings in the event of continued fighting. However, a less risky, non-violent route opened as the Contact Group peace plan became negotiable with the realignment of international (particularly, American) interests. The Bosnian Serbs were satisfied with their territorial holdings, were satisfied with a ceasefire along the established frontlines, and thought possible the prospect of negotiating a final peace that conformed to the contours of these front lines. In short, Pale had every incentive to abide by the ceasefire, as long as the Contact Group continued to appear amenable to the adoption of a peace plan that closely matched the battlefield realities of late 1994.

In stark contrast, the Bosnian government was deeply dissatisfied with the distribution of territory in late 1994. However, as will be discussed in greater detail below, the ARBiH was militarily incapable of continuing an armed attempt to change this distribution. Yet negotiations were not progressing in the Bosnian government’s favor: increasingly abandoned by the international community, the Contact Group peace plan appeared liable to become unanchored from its initial 51-49 territorial split. A shift in the military balance was the only factor that could result in the upheaval of the status-quo and a more satisfactory territorial arrangement. Therefore, Sarajevo was never committed to an enduring peace; rather, it was to abide by the

ceasefire for only as long as was necessary to clandestinely prepare the ARBiH for an offensive that could realign the frontlines into a more favorable configuration.

Interestingly, this result does not corroborate Hypothesis 1, which anticipates that high dissatisfaction would result in shorter ceasefires. However, it does support the notion that high dissatisfaction will reduce the belligerents' cooperative will, and therefore make ceasefires more volatile as other conditions (such as relative power and actor cohesion) change.

Relative Power

What is the ratio of infantry forces? What is the ratio of equipment? How do the belligerents perceive the power of their opponents?

Looking at the balance of military capabilities and perceptions, it is clear that the parties had entered a mutually hurting stalemate in the weeks before signing the Carter ceasefire. During the ceasefire, major improvements to the Bosnian Army's structure and ability caused the ARBiH to believe that it could successfully break out of the stalemate and defeat the VRS in battle. This shift in perception prompted the winter offensive that ultimately caused the Carter ceasefire to collapse, indicating that the perception of a mutually hurting stalemate is fundamentally linked to ceasefire durability.

By mid-1994, there were stark differences in the operational specialties of the ARBiH-HVO tandem and the VRS. Data provided by *Military Balance* creates a particularly clear image of enemy armies with dramatically different competencies. As of 1 June 1994, the ARBiH comprised approximately 110,000 soldiers, the HVO approximately 50,000, and the VRS approximately 80,000. Taken together, the Muslim-Croat Federation possessed twice as many infantry as their Bosnian Serb foes—a ratio of 2:1. However, as of that same date, the balance of equipment (artillery, vehicles, heavy weapons, etc.) was the exact opposite. The ARBiH

possessed approximately 522 pieces of equipment, the HVO approximately 284, and the VRS approximately 1,742. In all, the Muslim-Croat Federation had approximately half as much matériel as the VRS—a ratio of 1:2²⁵⁰—which likely stems from the VRS having received many of the Yugoslav People's Army's resources.²⁵¹ For most of the war, this astounding mismatch had worked in favor of the VRS, which made significant inroads into Bosnia, as discussed above. 1994, however, was to prove a major turning point that would ultimately result in a stalemate and, subsequently, the Carter ceasefire.

In 1994, the VRS was pushed from an offensive to a defensive posture.²⁵² With the Washington Agreement having put an end to the Muslim-Croat civil war,²⁵³ the VRS now faced a unified fighting force, significantly stronger in concert than when divided by internecine combat.²⁵⁴ This new Muslim-Croat cooperation enabled a number of otherwise impossible offensives, freeing up both armies to concentrate their forces on a common goal.²⁵⁵ Success began to slip away from the Bosnian Serbs; though capable of halting ARBiH offensives on Mt. Vlasica, Mt. Stolice, Donji Vakuf, and Tesanj-Teslic in the spring of 1994, these persistent attacks drained the energy and capacity of the VRS.²⁵⁶ October of 1994 saw the situation grow even more dire for the Bosnian Serbs in Bihac, where territory was beginning to slip away, and November bore major losses for the VRS in Kupres, Tesanj, Konjic, and the Livno-Glamoc Valley.²⁵⁷ The Carter ceasefire came at this juncture of stubborn resilience and impending loss,

²⁵⁰ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1994-1995*, pp. 83-84.

²⁵¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 141. See also Rogel, *The Breakup of Yugoslavia*, pp. 21-22.

²⁵² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 251.

²⁵³ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 159.

²⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 251.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

as both the ARBiH and VRS felt the tides shifting but were too exhausted to see that shift through.

While the Bosnian Serbs worked towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict on their terms, the Bosnian government, committed to an eventual return to the use of force, began major reconfigurations of its military. Using the relative calm brought about by the ceasefire, the ARBiH dramatically improved its capabilities and competencies through a series of organizational and doctrinal changes.²⁵⁸ Most importantly, the Army converted its “Operational Groups” (OGs) into permanent divisions, which led to a redistribution of heavy equipment and facilitated strategic adjustments.²⁵⁹ By allowing for the dynamic concentration of precious resources wherever need was greatest, the divisions enhanced the Army’s mobility, logistics, fire control, responsiveness, and supply distribution—improvements that, though imperfect, signaled the evolving sophistication of the ARBiH.²⁶⁰ The Army also made improvements to its elite and special operations units.²⁶¹ These organizational changes resulted in a general improvement in the ARBiH’s efficacy and efficiency, with the intention of increasing gains while reducing losses and costs.²⁶²

The Bosnian Army remained infantry-heavy over this period of time, though its earlier material deficiencies were greatly ameliorated.²⁶³ This was due primarily to the settlement of the Muslim-Croat civil war, which opened coastal territory for arms shipments to central Bosnia; nevertheless, the Croat government confiscated or refused many shipments of essential equipment (notably, armor and artillery) as a tax for access to the coast, as well as out of

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 283.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

continued weariness of their former enemy.²⁶⁴ As a result, the Bosnian Army in early 1995 possessed only some tanks and heavy artillery, relying primarily on mortars for its indirect fire support.²⁶⁵ Ultimately, though the ARBiH was better equipped than ever before, it was still primarily an infantry force and needed to carefully allocate its sparse resources.²⁶⁶ Aware of this imbalance, and highly conscious of the negative impact it had on the ARBiH's offensive capabilities, Bosnian Army leadership reformulated doctrine to more accurately reflect and take advantage of its military realities.²⁶⁷ These changes resulted in major improvements to the Army's ability to contest the VRS and make territorial gains.²⁶⁸

In contrast to the Bosnian Army, the HVO made few improvements to its force structure, efficiency, or efficacy. Weak leadership, a reliance on the Croatian Army's (*Hrvatska vojska*, HV) command, and a dependence on Croatian Army equipment kept the HVO weak, subordinating it to the HV and hindering its autonomy in combat.²⁶⁹ Moreover, though the fighting between the HVO and the ARBiH had ceased, trust between the two was low, cooperation was tentative, and formal joint institutions were either totally lacking or generally insufficient.²⁷⁰

On the other side of the battlefield, the VRS was the weakest it had been since the war's onset. Though still able to maintain a grasp on its territorial gains, the defense of its positions was growing unsustainably costly.²⁷¹ Resources, such as ammunition and fuel, became increasingly spare, and reserves of (often undertrained) troops were drained as casualty rates and

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

desertions increased.²⁷² The VRS offset these difficulties, in part, through command, logistical, and maintenance support from the Yugoslav Army,²⁷³ as well as combat support (mainly in Bihac) through alliances with the Krajina Serb Army and Fikret Abdic's dissident Muslim army.²⁷⁴ Doctrinal changes were also put into effect to combat the ARBiH's growing effectiveness and accommodate the Bosnian Serb Army's increasingly dire material situation.²⁷⁵

When the Carter ceasefire took effect, the Bosnian Army almost immediately took advantage of the relative calm to increase its capabilities and prepare for a new phase of the war. The ARBiH's instrumental approach to the winter ceasefire is particularly apparent when looking carefully at the local preparations for the ARBiH's spring offensive in 1995. Soon after the Carter ceasefire's onset, the 7th Corps of the ARBiH began to undergo intensive preparations for its assault on Mt. Vlasic.²⁷⁶ Brigadier General Mehmed Alagic assigned 21,000 troops to the attack (dwarfing previous Bosnian Army assaults) and arranged weeks-long, highly specialized, and rigorous training regiments to prepare his troops specifically for a coordinated winter mountain offensive.²⁷⁷ New barracks, field hospitals, bakeries, and roads were built, equipment and supplies were stockpiled, officers were reeducated, troops practiced combat in daily exercises and simulations, officers meticulously planned every step of the assault, and individual soldiers were trained in specific skills needed to accomplish this particular attack.²⁷⁸ In short, the 7th Corps spent much of the winter, 1995 ceasefire not attempting to abide by the peace, but preparing to break it. As a visibility-impeding snow storm set in on Mt. Vlasic in late March of 1995, the ARBiH felt confident in its ability to surprise VRS positions and begin the fighting

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32, p. 222.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

anew.²⁷⁹ Its subsequent victory on Mt. Vlasic, though hard-fought, indicated that the military preparations had been well worth the while.²⁸⁰ As Belgrade placed sanctions on Pale for its continued refusal of the Contact Group's peace plan, the Bosnian Army's improvement in skill coincided with a major loss of morale among the Bosnian Serb fighters, causing a number of desertions that helped to weaken the VRS's position at Mt. Vlasic.²⁸¹ However, the Bosnian Army's defeat at Mt. Stolice, a result of both inclement weather and the VRS's still-greater skill, indicates that the Bosnian Serbs continued to be a generally superior force.²⁸² Nevertheless, the coordination of the two attacks, as well as the success at Mt. Vlasic, demonstrated the ARBiH's growing momentum and resolve.²⁸³

Of course, the Bosnian Serb Army did not rest on its laurels throughout the winter ceasefire. On 8 March 1995, only a few weeks before the ARBiH launched its offensive, VRS officials ordered the preparations of numerous offensives alongside plans for continued defensive operations.²⁸⁴ These ambitious plans were cut short by the Bosnian Army's intense spring offensive. Many never materialized, and, when some did, they were relatively unsuccessful; the ARBiH, fresh from its long winter preparations, continued to keep the VRS on the defensive.²⁸⁵

Hypothesis 2 predicts that a mutually hurting stalemate—actual or perceived—will result in greater ceasefire durability. The above results support this proposition. The Carter ceasefire came as the capacity gap between the VRS and the ARBiH shrank dramatically: the new ARBiH-HVO cooperation, an increasingly skilled and experienced ARBiH, and low manpower

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

²⁸¹ Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate."

²⁸² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 303.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 289-290.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

wore away at the Bosnian Serbs' resources and led to painful stalemates in late 1994. Though the VRS was still materially and operationally dominant as the Carter ceasefire brought relative calm to Bosnia, the power imbalance between the Bosnian Serbs and the Croat-Muslim tandem had been significantly reduced.²⁸⁶ This mutually hurting stalemate facilitated Carter's mediation efforts in December of 1994, yet the political and military will to accept the 4-month winter ceasefire was rooted in dramatically different strategic rationales. While the Bosnian Serbs sought to use the changing international environment to forge a favorable negotiated settlement and escape risky military solutions, the Bosnian Muslims sought to use the ceasefire to increase its military advantage and escape risky political solutions. The ARBiH's major, targeted military preparations throughout the winter of 1995 demonstrate just how little the Bosnian government was committed to respecting the ceasefire. The ARBiH was to abide by the agreements provisions for only as long as it believed the stalemate would continue; as the Army's military preparations changed both the actual balance of power as well as the leadership's confidence in victory, the Army felt prepared to renege on its commitments. The 78-day duration of the Carter ceasefire was therefore in large part a function of the preparations felt necessary by Bosnian Army officials. As their calculations of the relative power balance shifted over time, so did their willingness to respect the peace. The VRS, of course, planned some offensives at the beginning of March, causing the ceasefire's duration to be, in some ways, dependent upon a race for military preparedness between the Bosnian government and Bosnian Serbs. However, the VRS's efforts were too little and too late—the Bosnian Army's commitment to challenge the status quo from the very beginning of the ceasefire lent it the initiative.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Who is providing external support to whom? How much support are they providing? What is the character of that support? Is the conflict being mediated?

In terms of external military support, it was noted above that UNPROFOR troops were monitoring the ceasefire lines, thereby providing support in an effort to facilitate conditions of relative power symmetry.²⁸⁷ During the week-long preparatory ceasefire preceding the 1 January 1995 agreement, this involvement was generally military in nature.²⁸⁸ However, after the Carter ceasefire took effect, it shifted its mission to primarily humanitarian work.²⁸⁹ This would do little for either party to foster hesitance about returning to the offensive. More convincing, perhaps, was earlier discussion of NATO airstrikes on Bosnian Serb positions following escalated violence and difficulties for the UN peacekeeping mission in mid-1994.²⁹⁰ In fact, some air attacks were carried out against the Serbs in 1994, but to little effect.²⁹¹ These military threats, in conjunction with the mutually hurting stalemate between the ARBiH and VRS, likely incentivized Pale to accede to the ceasefire agreement and attempt to reach a negotiated settlement. Also notable is the lack of major outside arms support for the Bosnian Army; as mentioned above, the ARBiH was able to receive some weapons shipments after the settlement of the Muslim-Croat civil war, but essential equipment was still prohibited by the Croat government. More prohibitive was the continued arms embargo on the Balkans, which had been primarily responsible for perpetuating the equipment asymmetry between the HVO-ARBiH

²⁸⁷ Cohen, "Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports." See also Pomfret, "Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire."

²⁸⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 29.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 563.

²⁹⁰ Pomfret, "Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs."

²⁹¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1900-1995, Volume II* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2003), p. 563.

tandem and the VRS.²⁹² It was only in 1994 that smuggled weapons were able to offer some balance between the belligerents.²⁹³

As has been discussed extensively above, the conflict was mediated by the United States (through official representatives as well as through President Carter), the United Nations, the European Community, and members of the international community (the U.S., France, UK, Germany, and Russia) in the form of the Contact Group. It was also noted that the support of the international community generally shifted to the side of the Bosnian Serbs in late 1994, notably through their willingness to offer economic inducements to Pale and Belgrade by partially lifting tight sanctions imposed in 1992.²⁹⁴ Though this international support may have been effective in assisting the onset of the ceasefire, it did little to extend its duration once the Bosnian Army began its offensive.²⁹⁵

Hypothesis 3 posits that external intervention on behalf of the weaker party will increase ceasefire durability. Though the Carter ceasefire exceeds the cutoff point, the Bosnian Army (the weaker party) did not receive effective direct aid from the international community at any point: the humanitarian UNPROFOR mission of winter 1995 was not designed to provide military balance; arms shipments were stifled by the Croats; the international arms embargo continued to be enforced; and NATO airstrikes were not effectively employed until after combat had recommenced in the spring of 1995.²⁹⁶ These results, therefore, do not clearly support the proposition. However, since there was an effective military stalemate between the ARBiH and

²⁹² Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, pp. 35-36.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁹⁴ Pomfret, "Carter Gains Accord with Bosnian Serbs."

²⁹⁵ Greenhouse, "US and Russia Agree to Try to Extend Fraying Bosnia Cease-Fire"; Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate"; Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 300.

²⁹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: Volume II*, p. 563.

VRS in late 1994 at any rate, extensive international intervention may simply not have been necessary to achieve a durable ceasefire.

Hypothesis 4 posits that mediated conflicts will have more durable ceasefires. The Carter ceasefire supports this proposition. The international community was involved in extensive mediation efforts throughout late 1994 and early 1995, and the winter ceasefire—though it was neither observed for the entirety of its stipulated duration nor extended by the signatories—did endure well beyond the cutoff point.

Actor Cohesion

How many actors are engaged in the conflict zone? How many actors are party to the ceasefire agreement? What is the scope of the ceasefire?

The politico-military landscape of Bosnia in late 1994 was complex and contested. In all, five major actors were actively engaged in the conflict: the Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Muslims, the Bosnian Croats, the Krajina Serb Army (*Srpaska Vojska Krajina*, SVK), Fikret Abdic's rebel Muslims, the Yugoslav Army, and the United Nations.²⁹⁷ There were, however, roughly three sides: the Muslim-Croat tandem, the Serb coalition, and the international community. These alliances were typically more or less the products of common enemies than common goals, and their constituent elements—themselves divided internally—remained guided by their own personal goals and aims (see below for more on actor fragmentation).

Of these actors, three signed the Carter ceasefire: the ARBiH, the HVO (as part of the Muslim-Croat Federation), and the VRS.²⁹⁸ The agreement was primarily concerned, however,

²⁹⁷ Numerous other minor actors, such as the Serbian State Security and the Mujahedeen, were also involved. These actors, while important, had only secondary influence on the general political-military trends throughout the Bosnian war.

²⁹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 29.

with the military relationship between the ARBiH and VRS. This relationship was to be managed throughout the country, as the general ceasefire took effect across the entirety of Bosnia-Herzegovina.²⁹⁹ In January, the UN worked fruitlessly to gain the agreement of the SVK and Fikret Abdic, who were actively engaged in combat in the Bihac region of western Bosnia.³⁰⁰ In fact, on 28 December 1994 Fikret Abdic agreed to the principle of a ceasefire,³⁰¹ and on 2 January 1995 the UN stated that he would abide by the agreement and that the SVK would assume responsibility for his troops.³⁰² However, despite a UN announcement on 3 January that troop withdrawals from Bihac had begun, neither the SVK nor Abdic committed to the ceasefire.³⁰³ Fighting continued to rage in Bihac as a result.³⁰⁴

In hypothesis 6, I posit that a greater number of belligerents will increase the complexity of cooperation, leading to less durable ceasefires. The Carter ceasefire seems to support this proposition: fighting did continue in the militarily crowded region of Bihac, an area that Carter specifically mentioned as being subject to the ceasefire.³⁰⁵ Most of the actors involved in this combat were not party to the agreement; in some instances, however, the ARBiH and VRS did directly engage with each other.³⁰⁶ Yet in the rest of the country, where fewer parties were active, the ARBiH-VRS ceasefire held steady for 78 days. Hypothesis 7 posits that local ceasefires will involve less complex cooperation than general ceasefires, and therefore that local ceasefires will be more durable. Given that the Carter ceasefire exceeded the cutoff point despite its generality, the proposition is not corroborated.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 293.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

³⁰⁵ Cohen, "Bosnia Foes Agree to 4-Month Truce, Carter Reports."

³⁰⁶ See, for example, the attack on the Klokot reservoir. Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 293.

How fragmented are the actors? How contested is decision making?

As noted above, there were major divisions among all sides of the conflicts, as well as within each individual actor. Actor fragmentation was more pronounced in the Serb coalition, with the Bosnian Serbs, Krajina Serbs, FRY, and Abdic's Rebels all under autonomous leadership. The HVO-ARBiH tandem was a much less complex pole.

Internal divisions were particularly pronounced among the Serbs. At the end of 1994 and into 1995, long-standing social and political rifts grew deeper between the Serbs of the Republika Srpska and the FRY. These rifts—between ex-Communists, socialists, chetniks, and partisans—would come to open significant schisms at the highest echelons of the Bosnian Serb Army.³⁰⁷ These differences were also the products of conflicting approaches to military and political strategy. Radovan Karadzic was isolated and forced to face an alliance between Ratko Mladic and Slobodan Milosevic, for Milosevic, a more practical, decisive figure than Karadzic, was more ideologically attuned to the general of the VRS.³⁰⁸ Yet Mladic was also frequently at odds with Milosevic, who was more accepting of the idea of territorial compromise with the Muslims and Croats than the general.³⁰⁹ Nevertheless, his relationship with Milosevic was stronger than his relationship with Karadzic: Mladic saw the President of the Republika Srpska as corrupt,³¹⁰ and (like much of the VRS's military leadership) was disgruntled with Karadzic's political "stunts," including his agreement to stop the VRS offensive in Bihac as per the Carter ceasefire.³¹¹ Indeed, Mladic sought total victory in the war, while Karadzic generally sought the

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 288-289.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222, p. 286n15.

political favor of the West, supporting negotiations throughout the span of the conflict.³¹² These tensions would eventually grow powerful enough to result in Karadzic's failed demotion of Mladic in 1995.³¹³

The Bosnian Serbs' agreement to the Carter ceasefire was primarily the decision of Karadzic and the Republika Srpska's Supreme Command, made in spite of staunch objections from the VRS.³¹⁴ Officials in the Bosnian Serb Army believed that the ceasefire was a foolish strategic decision that would incur significant costs for the Republika Srpska in Bihac. For example, Colonel Milovan Milutinovic (chief of the VRS Information Service) later wrote of the decision:

The Supreme Command's decision to hear out former President of the United States Jimmy Carter and agree to yet one more cease-fire, thus halting the operation to break up the 5th Muslim Corps near Bihac, was surprising. According to numerous assessments, the halting of the operation near Bihac was a big mistake, the consequence of which was the loss of the strategic initiative.³¹⁵

The Bosnian Serbs were therefore clearly fragmented along many political, social, and military lines, leading to mistrust, squabbling, and disagreement over such decisions as the winter ceasefire of 1995.

In contrast, the Bosnian government was not comparably fragmented. There were, naturally, ideological divisions with the leadership. This rift occurred primarily along the fault line between pro-Western politicians that sought friendship with Croatia, and the belligerent military-hardliners in the Sandžak faction.³¹⁶ There was also a notable split between secularists and conservative Muslims.³¹⁷ However, none of these divisions had a significant impact on the

³¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

³¹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: Volume II*, p. 535.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 194.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Bosnian Army's strategic decision-making.³¹⁸ The Bosnian Muslims were much less fragmented than the Bosnian Serbs, and were less affected by this fragmentation.

How efficient is the military chain of command? How disciplined its fighting force?

As was made clear in the treatment of relative power above, the Bosnian Army underwent major organizational changes, reeducation programs, and intensive training regiments during the winter ceasefire of 1995. When ultimately the ARBiH launched its spring offensive, it had never once been more organized, disciplined, or operationally capable, and though the VRS was still a logistically and materially superior army, the ARBiH had made major strides to rival its organization.³¹⁹

Discipline was still high in the VRS, despite notable tension. Even when Karadzic requested a political solution to the Bosnian Army's attack on Mt. Vlasic, his soldiers were ideologically prepared to continue fighting.³²⁰ There seems to have been little will among the Bosnian Serb troops to deal diplomatically with their enemies, or to support such an approach. Harrowingly, when asked about the spring offensive, a local Serb commander, Maj. Milan Kikovic, replied: "We're only awaiting for Karadzic to give us an order to attack and we will not stop until we reach Travnik.... And if he signs [the Contact Group] peace plan, our people will cut off the hand he signs with."³²¹ Clearly the political tensions at the highest levels of the Republika Srpska's military command were reflected in its lower levels.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 283.

³²⁰ Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate."

³²¹ Mojsilovic, "Enraged by Government Offensive, Serbs Ready to Retaliate."

Taking all of these various factors into account, we arrive at a somewhat unexpected result. The Serbian side was more prominently fragmented than the Bosnian side, with a greater number of autonomous actors representing the Greater Serb cause than the number of actors representing the Muslim-Croat Federation. The Republika Srpska was likewise subject to more internal divisions, power contests, and ideological rifts than the relatively stable Bosnian government, and these divisions in the Bosnian Serb leadership had substantially more impact on strategic policy than those within the Muslim leadership. On the other hand, though the VRS had noticeable political tension within its military ranks and the ARBiH did not, the VRS was the operationally superior force, with the ARBiH having only just undergone the reorganization and training necessary to become a sophisticated military organization. Hypothesis 5 posits that greater division in any actor will reduce ceasefire durability, yet, despite the major disunity in the Serb side, the Carter ceasefire endured. Moreover, one may have predicted that, given their disunity, the Bosnian Serbs would have borne the responsibility for the ceasefire's collapse—it was, however, the non-fragmented and relatively unified Bosnian government that used its freshly disciplined, newly organized military to abrogate the agreement. These results do not support the hypothesis.

Conclusion

As the Carter ceasefire took shape in late December, President of Bosnia Alija Izetbegovic stated: “I don’t see a chance for peace... but I do see a chance for a cease-fire.”³²² This prescient statement describes clearly the reasons for the ceasefire’s duration, and ultimately its collapse: a lack of commitment, but a need for time. While the Bosnian Serbs used the

³²² Pomfret, “Carter Gets Bosnian Foes to Agree to a Cease-fire.”

temporary peace to stave off impending military losses and negotiate a favorable peace, the Bosnian government used the ceasefire to prepare for a new offensive that would fundamentally change its bargaining leverage. The status quo in late 1994 was unacceptable to the Bosnian government, but its capacity to change circumstances via military force was thoroughly lacking. When the Carter ceasefire offered the window of opportunity to focus on military preparations, the Bosnian government graciously accepted, but with no intention of honestly pursuing diplomatic solutions.

What do the circumstances surrounding this agreement indicate about the relationship between ethnic civil war, cooperation, and ceasefire durability? Having endured for 78 days, the Carter ceasefire is well above the cutoff for short-term settlements established by Gartner and Bercovitch. In chapter 2, I predicted that low satisfaction, low relative power asymmetry, and high cohesion would be conducive to long-duration ceasefires. These predictions do not map precisely onto the case of the Carter ceasefire. Indeed, when evaluating the results, some surprising patterns make themselves apparent. When considering satisfaction, it is clear that the Bosnian government was deeply displeased by the location of the ceasefire line, and that large enclaves still existed beyond the potential line of partition. On the Bosnian government side, therefore, territorial satisfaction was quite low. When considering relative power, it is noteworthy that the VRS and ARBiH had reached a mutually hurting stalemate, for their different competencies (manpower for the ARBiH, equipment and training for the VRS) effectively balanced each other out; that international support, while initially coercive towards the VRS, ultimately shifted away from the Bosnian Muslims; and that mediators were highly active in facilitating negotiations. Power asymmetry can therefore be considered moderately low, for there was relative parity between sides, despite the ARBiH's slight disadvantage vis-à-vis the

VRS. This, in turn, fostered the perception of a mutually hurting stalemate. Finally, when considering actor cohesion, it was shown that the ceasefire was effective in areas where the signatories were less crowded by other actors, that the ceasefire applied generally to the entirety of Bosnia, and that division among the political leadership of the Serbs was extremely high, though the VRS was a slightly more disciplined fighting force than the ARBiH. In sum, there was high dissatisfaction, low power asymmetry with the perception of a mutually hurting stalemate, and moderately low actor cohesion.

Given these conditions, why did cooperation endure for so long? In effect, it seems as if the confluence of dissatisfaction and shifting capabilities was primarily determinative of the ceasefire's durability. The Bosnian government was, from the outset, never committed to a fully durable ceasefire, given the unacceptability of the frontlines possibly transforming into permanent lines of partition—the goal of the Serbs' negotiation efforts. They were, however, also militarily incapable of continuing to shift battlefield realities at the time of Carter's mediation mission, though the military tides seemed to be shifting in their favor. Thus, the Bosnian government was to respect the ceasefire until military preparations shifted their perceived ability to continue the fight and rearrange the frontlines into a more favorable configuration. Ceasefire duration, in this instance, was thus a function of dissatisfaction with territorial distribution and time necessary to shift the (perceived) military balance.

Interestingly, part of this process included increasing the organization and discipline of the ARBiH, *decreasing* the likelihood of spoilers; likewise, despite the high probability that spoilers would arise on the Serb side, they did not. Why, then, was it the Bosnian government that abrogated the agreement, and why did this abrogation not occur sooner? It may be that the Bosnian government's immediate military preparations comforted hardliners by concretely

signaling the government's intention to continue the fight, defusing internal tensions over the agreement. Likewise, on the Serb side, it may be that the pursuit of a negotiated settlement on terms favorable to the Serbs was a comforting signal to hardliners, despite their protests over the pause in Bihac. Moreover, that the Serbs did begin to plan military operations could have further acted to mitigate the protests of hardliners in the military leadership. Though these are speculative observations, their intention is to underscore the idea that the Carter ceasefire does not inherently preclude the notion that actor cohesion is unrelated to ceasefire durability. Spoilers may surely be problematic in other contexts. Yet the belligerents party to the Carter ceasefire were likely successful at taking actions that (perhaps unintentionally) quelled the protests of hardliners, reducing the saliency of their internal divisions and enhancing the ceasefire's durability.

These conclusions are only meaningful from a comparative perspective. As such, in the next chapter I analyze a different ceasefire of a different duration. Let us now examine the 7-day tripartite ceasefire of 15 June 1993, and the underlying sources of its immense instability.

CHAPTER 5: THE TRIPARTITE CEASEFIRE

Turning now to an earlier period of the Bosnian civil war, this chapter explores the short-duration tripartite ceasefire. This ceasefire, signed on 15 June 1993 and effective as of 18 June 1993, was marred by numerous violations before ultimately collapsing on 24 June 1993, just seven days after entering into force. In the following case study, I seek to identify the structural causes behind the ceasefire's quick collapse. Ultimately, I find that the tripartite ceasefire maps exactly onto my ideal-type of a low-duration ceasefire: with low territorial satisfaction, no mutually hurting stalemate, and low actor cohesion, the agreement could barely endure for a week.

The tripartite ceasefire was signed as the possible arrangement of Bosnia's borders and the allegiance of its stakeholders were thrown into particularly heightened disarray. This disarray all but precluded successful cooperation, and, as a result, the ceasefire endured only for a painful week filled with violations and breaches. In the weeks preceding the ceasefire, the landscape of the Bosnian conflict and the battlefield imperatives of the belligerents shifted dramatically with the start of the Muslim-Croat civil war and the collapse of the Vance-Owen peace plan (a peace settlement written by former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and former British Foreign Secretary Lord David Owen, and sponsored by the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia³²³). This plan required that the Serbs and Croats surrender significant portions of their territory, and refused to acknowledge any sort of ethnic partition of Bosnia. After its

³²³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

collapse, the Serbs and Croats proposed a new plan of their own design, which called for the three-way partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines. This arrangement, which ossified the territorial acquisitions of the Serbs and Croats, received the support of the European Community but engendered major rifts within the Bosnian Presidency. The Serb-Croat peace plan was to isolate the Bosnian Government in central Bosnia and seriously undermine its security. This security seemed more fragile than ever before as fighting broke out between the Muslims and Croats, with the Serbs bolstering either side as necessary in order to weaken their opponents. Needing to shift battlefield realities in order to win over international actors and gain negotiating leverage, the Bosnian Government had little incentive to abide by the ceasefire and implicitly accept the territorial demands of the Serbs and Croats. Needing to consolidate their gains, defend their acquisitions from a Bosnian Muslim offensive, and apply pressure on the Bosnian Government to accede to their demands, the Serbs and Croats were likewise compelled to continue fighting. Compounding these dynamics were stark political divisions and issues of military discipline, particularly within the Muslim and Croat sides, that further impeded cooperation and coordination. As the Bosnian war entered a liminal space in which previous demands for peace and tentative alliances were revealed to be purely transitory, the war's participants were to prove incapable of abiding by the ceasefire agreement.

Summary

The origins of the tripartite ceasefire and its collapse can be traced back to late 1992 and early 1993, when the tense relationship between the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats began to grow increasingly violent.³²⁴ In a 27 January 1993 joint call for peace, President Izetbegovic

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 191

and Mate Boban, leader of the Bosnian Croats, acknowledged these tensions, rooted in disputes over the arrangement of the Vance-Owen peace plan, the relocation of displaced peoples in central Bosnia, and the distribution of military power.³²⁵ Despite these calls for peace, on 15 April, the Bosnian Croats demanded for the second time that any Muslim soldiers in Croat-majority areas were to either disarm or relocate to a Muslim-majority region.³²⁶ When this ultimatum was refused, full-scale fighting erupted between the former allies in central Bosnia.³²⁷

On 16 April 1993, the HVO put contingency plans for a major attack on the Lasva Valley region into action.³²⁸ The offensive, marked by its brutal ethnic cleansing campaign,³²⁹ successfully overwhelmed the ARBiH. Surrounded, faced with a two-front war, and unable to access supplies, the Bosnian government's forces were terribly handicapped by early June of 1993.³³⁰ It was this dismal situation that General Rasim Delic, the Bosnian Army's new commander in chief, inherited.³³¹ His response was to reorganize the Army and its doctrine, culminating in a major counteroffensive throughout central Bosnia.³³² This counteroffensive included a successful assault on the central town of Travnik from 4 June to 8 June (encompassing three failed ceasefires), followed by massive pushes towards the southeast, east, and west.³³³ From 14 June to 15 June, the ARBiH overtook numerous villages near Novi Travnik;³³⁴ on 16 June, the ARBiH captured Kakanj;³³⁵ and on 18 June, the ARBiH began its

³²⁵ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 135

³²⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 191

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

³²⁹ See, for example, the Ahmici massacre of 16 April 1993. *Ibid.*

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

³³⁴ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 133.

³³⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 196.

assault on Novi Travnik.³³⁶ Meanwhile, as June of 1993 saw central Bosnia marred by Croat-Muslim fighting, the ARBiH continued its engagements with the VRS, notably in the Muslim enclave of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia.³³⁷

Throughout the summer of 1993, the political responses to these military developments were manifold. On 13 June, as the ARBiH expanded outwards from Travnik, the Bosnian Presidency issued a call from Geneva for a ceasefire between Bosnian Croat and Muslim forces.³³⁸ On 15 June, following a four-hour meeting at the Sarajevo airport,³³⁹ Commander Rasim Delic of the ARBiH, Commander Milivoj Petkovic of the HVO, and General Ratko Mladic of the VRS all signed a general ceasefire agreement to take effect at noon on 18 June.³⁴⁰ This agreement required that each side stop all military activities, cooperate with UN monitors and provide them with daily reports, allow UN monitors and humanitarian aid workers total freedom of movement, keep a military official available to manage and discuss disputes, and repair utilities such as water and electricity, rather than weaponizing them.³⁴¹ Moreover, Delic and Petkovic signed a separate accord pledging daily reports to the UN on the situation in central Bosnia, and Mladic signed an order allowing UN monitors freedom of movement throughout all Serb lines between Pale and Gorazde.³⁴²

This three-way ceasefire agreement was met with mixed reactions. Statements given by Delic seem to indicate that the Bosnian Government was generally supportive:

As far as the Bosnia-Herzegovina army is concerned, we shall observe everything that has been agreed, and it is up to the other sides to do the same. I personally think that what we want has been achieved. We want, above all, a cease-fire, and resolution in line with

³³⁶ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 134.

³³⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 185.

³³⁸ BBC, "Bosnian Presidency orders cease-fire between Croats and Muslims," 15 June 1993.

³³⁹ Chuck Sudetic, "Three Sides in Bosnia Sign One More Cease-Fire," *The New York Times*, 16 June 1993.

³⁴⁰ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 134.

³⁴¹ The Associated Press, "Main Points of Cease-Fire Agreement," 15 June 1993.

³⁴² BBC, "Bosnia Herzegovina: Muslim and Croatian Commanders Comment on Cease-Fire Agreement," 17 June 1993.

political decisions made so far, that is, what has been achieved so far in connection with the implementation of the peace plan in Bosnia-Herzegovina.... [UNPROFOR] has specified sanctions in the sense that they will supervise the agreement. But these are not yet concrete sanctions. I expect that the time will come for these too. But we do not want these sanctions to be reduced to reporting violations but to become real sanctions which ensure that the agreement is observed.³⁴³

Delic's cautious optimism was not, however, shared by the Bosnian Croat representative.

Petkovic gave the following, markedly more fatalistic statement in response to the ceasefire:

You know what, I shall believe in these agreements five days after they come into force. I shall forecast nothing... Well, I give it three days to see where [it will be observed], although hostilities can die down—perhaps not 100%—in two hours. All movements, everything can be halted if there is the will.... I do not know [if the ceasefire will be different from others], I do not know why it should be different. I am afraid it will be just like the previous ones.³⁴⁴

Petkovic also reportedly states, "I haven't got any faith in any of this anymore. It's enough to hear one bullet to have a whole street open fire."³⁴⁵ Ratko Mladic, in contrast to Delic's cautious optimism and Petkovic's fatalism, struck a boldly confident note in his post-agreement statement: "As far as we are concerned, this agreement will certainly hold.... I hope that our enemies will come to their senses and realize we must negotiate and not make war."³⁴⁶ Finally, Philippe Morillon, Commander of the United Nations forces in Bosnia, expressed a tremendous sense of relief on behalf of the international community: "It's another bit of paper, but I really needed it to be sure of being able to continue my mission. So we have put a number of practical conditions in this bit of paper.... The catastrophe we were about to plunge into—we have given ourselves a way to stop it."³⁴⁷

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ Sudetic, "Three Sides in Bosnia Sign One More Cease-Fire."

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁷ BBC, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: General Morillon Welcomes Signing of Cease-Fire Agreement," 17 June 1993.

Of these initial reactions, it was Petkovic's pessimistic fatalism that proved most prescient. After the ceasefire came into effect on 18 June, Muslim-Croat fighting continued around Vares, Visoko, Novi Travnik, and Mostar.³⁴⁸ Commander Barry Frewer, a UN spokesman, reported that he did not observe "any reduction of fighting" between the ARBiH and HVO.³⁴⁹ Though direct engagements with the Bosnian Serbs generally decreased, a UN peacekeeper's death was blamed by the Bosnian Army on Serb shelling, and some explosions were reported around Sarajevo.³⁵⁰ There were also reports from Sarajevo that eight people had been killed and 24 wounded in a Serb attack on Gorazde.³⁵¹ On 19 June, fighting continued to decrease despite each party accusing the others of ceasefire violations, particularly near Gorazde.³⁵² Fighting was also reported between the Muslims and Croats in Mostar and near Konjic, and more explosions and gunfire were reported around Sarajevo.³⁵³ On 20 June, combat and shelling continued across the country, and major Bosnian Croat troop movements were observed around Gornji Vakuf and Bugojno.³⁵⁴ According to a UN official, there was "still no lull whatsoever" as Jablanica, Konjic, Brcko, and the safe areas of Srebrenica, Zepa, and Gorazde saw fighting from all parties.³⁵⁵ The same official added that "the Serbs are being very cooperative, particularly considering that fact that they know as well as we do that the Bosnian Army is putting troops through Zepa. We're trying to stop them."³⁵⁶

³⁴⁸ Maud S. Beelman, "Muslims, Croats Fight Despite Cease-Fire; Canadian Soldier Killed," *The Associated Press*, 18 June 1993.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ Chuck Sudetic, "Fighting in Bosnia Eases Under Truce," *The New York Times*, 19 June 1993.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁴ Chuck Sudetic, "Fighting In Bosnia Is Said To Resume," *The New York Times*, 20 June 1993.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

This ongoing fighting reached its apex on 23 and 24 June, as major battles began between the Muslims and cooperating Croat and Serb forces in the Zepce, Zavidovici, and Maglaj area.³⁵⁷ Control over this essential region meant control over roads leading to the key Muslim cities of Zenica and Tuzla, as well as to Croatia.³⁵⁸ Zepce had not previously seen full-scale warfare, having maintained a tentative peace between its Croat and Muslim residents through a system of virtual ethnic apartheid.³⁵⁹ In addition, the HVO forces in Zepce were an important bulwark against the VRS,³⁶⁰ dissuading the ARBiH from attacking.³⁶¹ However, as the Bosnian Army began its June counteroffensive, the HVO in Zepce began military preparations and entrenchment operations in anticipation of an assault.³⁶² As the assault arrived, the HVO expelled all of the Bosnian Croats from Zepce, Zavidovici, and Maglaj in order to clear the region for extensive bombardment.³⁶³

It remains unclear who bears responsibility for the onset of this fighting. Some sources argue emphatically that the Bosnian Army fired the first shot, while others claim instead that it was the HVO.³⁶⁴ Given the situation's intense politicization, the instigator may always remain unknown. Regardless, just seven days after the tripartite ceasefire took effect on 18 June, it became undeniably clear that the agreement would not hold. Indeed, as Delic submitted a formal

³⁵⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 196-197.

³⁵⁸ Patrick Quinn, "Serbs and Croats Battling Muslims in Northern Bosnia," *The Associated Press*, 27 June 1993.

³⁵⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 196-197.

³⁶⁰ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 120.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 142.

³⁶³ Some claim that the clearing of civilians occurred on 25 June. See Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 197. Alternative sources claim that the withdrawal of Bosnian Croat civilians from Zepce began during the entrenchment period, before the attack began on 24 June. See Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 142.

³⁶⁴ For claims that the ARBiH began combat, see, Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, pp. 144-146. See also BBC, "Bosnia-Herzegovina; Croatian Radio: Two Negotiators Killed; Muslims Attack Northern Town of Zepce," 26 June 1993. For claims that the HVO began combat, see BBC, "Sarajevo Radio: HVO attacks Zepce and Zavidovici," 26 June 1993. For more on this dispute, see Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 197.

complaint to UNPROFOR about the ceasefire's violation,³⁶⁵ fighting raged between the ARBiH and the unlikely HVO-VRS alliance in Zepce and the surrounding area.³⁶⁶ Combat in the region was to continue into July,³⁶⁷ as was renewed fighting in Gorazde³⁶⁸ and Novi Travnik.³⁶⁹ As June came to a close, no illusions could remain that the tripartite ceasefire was, or would continue to be, in effect.

Unlike the 78-day Carter ceasefire, the tripartite ceasefire falls far below the 56-day cutoff for short-lived settlements established by Gartner and Bercovitch. We must now look to the dynamics of territorial satisfaction, relative power, and actor disunity to determine their impact on cooperation, and, ultimately, how their configuration contributed to this ceasefire's rapid collapse.

Satisfaction

How satisfied are the belligerents with their territorial holdings?

As military officials agreed to the tripartite ceasefire on 15 June 1993, and as fighting continued virtually unabated throughout the end of June, a number of concurrent political developments relating to plans for a final Bosnian peace unfolded. These military and political developments cannot be considered in isolation, for this particular moment in the evolution of the broader peace process carried with it significant military challenges for all parties. The distribution of territory was at the center of these challenges, for none of the parties were

³⁶⁵ Chuck Sudetic, "Serbs and Croats Mount Joint Attack on Muslim Town – Correction Appended," *The New York Times*, 27 June 1993.

³⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 197.

³⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 181, p. 197.

³⁶⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 185.

³⁶⁹ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 134.

satisfied with the frontlines as the basis of a peace settlement. Instead, each party felt compelled to continue using military force to adjust and solidify territorial claims.

Throughout the tripartite ceasefire's brief lifespan, peace negotiations at the highest level unfolded in parallel. On 16 June 1993, the day after the tripartite ceasefire was signed in Sarajevo, Tudjman, Milosevic, and Izetbegovic began talks in Geneva with Stoltenberg and Owen.³⁷⁰ These talks were to mark a key shift in the approach to a resolution of the Bosnian conflict, with Tudjman and Milosevic offering a controversial alternative to the increasingly hopeless Vance-Owen peace plan.³⁷¹ This shift in approach, and a concomitant shift in international power dynamics, necessitated a simultaneous reassessment of the battlefield.

The Vance-Owen peace plan called for the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into 10 autonomous provinces, unified by a weak central government.³⁷² According to its proposed division, three provinces would be majority Serb, three would be majority Muslim, two would be majority Croat, one would be mixed Croat and Muslim, and the tenth, Sarajevo, would be run via a power-sharing arrangement.³⁷³ Such a division would have allocated 43 percent of Bosnia's land to provinces with a Serb majority.³⁷⁴ At this point in the war, the Bosnian Serbs had seized control of 70 percent of Bosnian territory, which, as noted in the previous chapter, fulfilled the earlier aspirations of the 1992 Graz map.³⁷⁵ As such, the Vance-Owen plan was to necessitate a 40 percent reduction in Bosnian Serb territorial holdings.³⁷⁶ The Bosnian Serbs, unsurprisingly, were strongly opposed to this idea and refused to back the plan, citing the magnitude of the

³⁷⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 9

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

³⁷² Paul Lewis, "2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended," *The New York Times*, 16 June 1993.

³⁷³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

³⁷⁴ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 230.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

territorial losses and the resulting destruction of the contiguous state for which they fought.³⁷⁷ However, sanctions and diplomatic pressure forced Milosevic to not only support the peace plan, but to lobby for it among the Bosnian Serb leadership.³⁷⁸ This was acceptable to Milosevic for two reasons: first, he did not believe that that plan's territorial division would every truly come to fruition, and second, he anticipated accruing some benefits from the plan—namely, a ceasefire that would guarantee recognition of an autonomous Bosnian Serb state (note, here, his conviction that ceasefire agreements confirm battlefield realities).³⁷⁹ Milosevic's pressure eventually caused Karadzic, leader of the Bosnian Serbs, to accede to the plan on the condition that it receive ratification by the Bosnian Serb Assembly.³⁸⁰ The Assembly, in turn, voted for a referendum on the matter, which the Bosnian Serb people used to strike the plan down on 5 May 1993.³⁸¹

On the other side of the table, reactions to the Vance-Owen plan were mixed. The Bosnian Croats generally supported the plan, and accepted it immediately.³⁸² They were attracted to its territorial awards in central Bosnia and western Herzegovina,³⁸³ and particularly desired the access that it opened to the Croatian border.³⁸⁴ Like the Bosnian Serbs, however, the Bosnian Muslims were hostile towards the plan. Their commitment to the idea of a strong, unitary Bosnian state, and their revulsion at the idea of formalizing the results of Serb aggression and ethnic cleansing, compelled them to resist.³⁸⁵ Izetbegovic was, however, pushed by the

³⁷⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

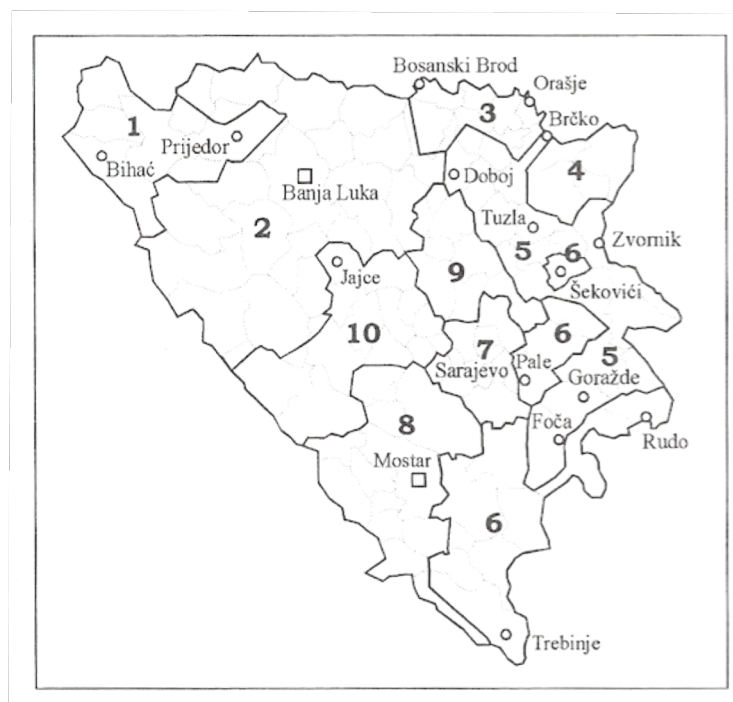
³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 182.

³⁸³ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 256.

³⁸⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

international community and the Bosnian Croats to sign, believing—as it turned out, correctly—that the Bosnian Serbs would ultimately cause the plan’s collapse.³⁸⁶



Map 5.1: The Second Revised Vance-Owen Plan of March 1993.³⁸⁷

Fundamental to the Vance-Owen plan’s failure was its lack of credibility and lack of support. Indeed, there was very little political will among any of the parties to accede to its provisions. The Bosnian Serbs, Muslims, and Croats continued their military campaigns, hoping to cement their territorial gains even after the latter had signed the plan.³⁸⁸ Compounding this was the international community’s inability, and particularly the United States’ unwillingness, to

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁷ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 238.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

send troops to enforce a peace to which the parties did not seem wedded.³⁸⁹ With a lack of Balkan political will discouraging the international community, and with no international community to enforce agreement among those without political will, the Vance-Owen plan was trapped in a catch-22 that ultimately spelled its doom.³⁹⁰

On 16 June 1993, as talks in Geneva began, the belligerents indicated that it would be necessary to replace the Vance-Owen peace plan with a new arrangement of their own design. After meeting with Milosevic and other Serb officials, Radovan Karadzic reportedly called the Vance-Owen plan “unrealistic,” saying: “The reality is we already have three entities... If they are not delineated properly, then let’s do it by negotiation and not by fighting.”³⁹¹ This delineation was the cornerstone of a new Serb-Croat peace proposal, presented officially by Milosevic on 19 June, the day after the tripartite ceasefire came into effect.³⁹² The new proposal called for Bosnia’s partition into three autonomous republics, largely reflecting the military frontlines established throughout the previous year’s combat.³⁹³ Under these circumstances, the Bosnian Muslims were to receive only 23 percent of the country’s territory,³⁹⁴ which was to be split between one pocket in central Bosnia and another pocket in the country’s northwest.³⁹⁵ The Serbs would hold the largest portion of territory, the Croats would receive the rest, and both groups would establish borders with their respective patron state.³⁹⁶ Serb and Croat territory would completely surround Muslim territory.³⁹⁷

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

³⁹¹ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

³⁹² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 9.

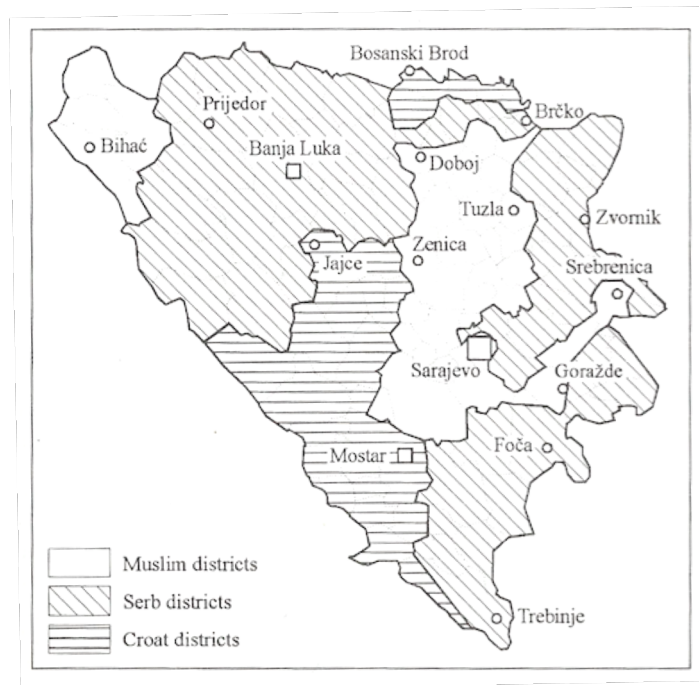
³⁹³ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

³⁹⁴ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 266. Note that in July of 1993 this number was increased to 30 percent, which became the frame for the following negotiations on Bosnia’s partition. See *Ibid.*, p. 268.

³⁹⁵ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

³⁹⁶ Maud S. Beelman, “Bosnia’s Warring Generals Sign Cease-fire,” *The Associated Press*, 15 June 1993.

³⁹⁷ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”



Map 5.2: The Serb-Croat Proposal of June 1993.³⁹⁸

Though the plan entailed a loose confederal structure joining the three regions together,³⁹⁹ the Bosnian Muslims feared that the Serb-Croat proposal was simply a pretense for the annexation of the Serb and Croat regions into Greater Serbia and Greater Croatia, respectively.⁴⁰⁰ These apprehensions may have been magnified by the Krajina Serb referendum advocating for unity with other Serb territories.⁴⁰¹ Though Tudjman made some efforts to console the Muslims,⁴⁰² these apprehensions about the Serb-Croat proposal created major rifts within the Bosnian government (see below). Indeed, on 18 June, as the plan was just beginning to take shape—and as the tripartite ceasefire took effect—Izetbegovic abandoned the negotiations in order to protest

³⁹⁸ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 273.

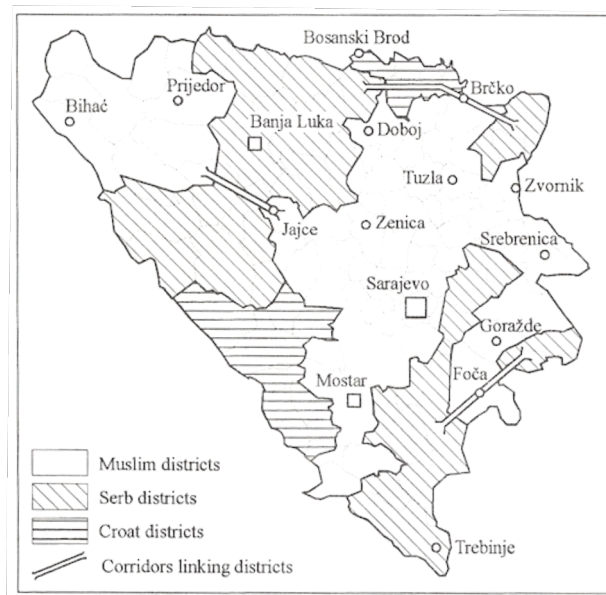
³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁴⁰⁰ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

⁴⁰¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 9.

⁴⁰² For example, early in the Geneva negotiations Tudjman offered the Muslims free use of a Croatian port at Ploce. See Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

the territorial claims of the Serbs and Croats,⁴⁰³ calling the plan “genocidal.”⁴⁰⁴ Tension rose within the Bosnian government caucus, as some members of the Presidency sought to continue negotiations, and others—like Izetbegovic—sought to abandon them; eventually, the peace talks continued with a Bosnian government delegation that did not include Izetbegovic.⁴⁰⁵



Map 5.3: The Bosnian Presidency Proposal of June 1993.⁴⁰⁶

As the belligerents forged a new bargaining space, the international community reevaluated its position. On 21 and 22 June, the European Community met in Copenhagen, where it declared its continuing support for a unified Bosnia and its non-recognition of land seized by force.⁴⁰⁷ Nevertheless, consensus was difficult to find; the French, for example, wanted the new peace plan to maintain many of the Vance-Owen plan’s features, whereas the Italians wanted to

⁴⁰³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁶ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 272.

⁴⁰⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 9-10.

embrace the proposed three-way partition and focus on minority protections.⁴⁰⁸ After Milosevic debuted a proposed map on 23 June, European diplomatic pressure began to mount on the Bosnian Government to accept the deal, infuriating the increasingly isolated Muslim delegation.⁴⁰⁹ On 24 June, one day after Milosevic proposed his map in Geneva, fighting began in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj region. After the tripartite ceasefire had undeniably dissolved, Lord David Owen, the EC's mediator, reportedly scorned Izetbegovic for his seeming unwillingness "to make the necessary compromise to save people."⁴¹⁰ This marked the beginning of the EC's preference for *any* settlement, as opposed to its previous insistence on a settlement favorable to the Muslims.⁴¹¹

As the Europeans began their movement towards the Serb-Croat plan, the Bosnian Muslims looked elsewhere for support. The Bosnian Government had, in fact, grown confident that NATO was preparing an intervention in Bosnia, and had to be pressured by the U.S. to continue attending the Geneva talks.⁴¹² At the talks, media reports publicized the United States' support of the Bosnian Muslim position and noted its role as a counterbalance to the Europeans, though in private the U.S. seems to have also pressured the Muslims to accommodate the Serb-Croat proposal.⁴¹³ The Bosnian Muslims were growing increasingly isolated, a condition that would reach its apex with Carter's mediation mission in late 1994.

From the perspective of satisfaction calculations and homeland, it is clear to see why the tripartite ceasefire did not hold. The Bosnian Serbs and Muslims were deeply dissatisfied with the Vance-Owen plan. It did not recognize the military realities that the Bosnian Serbs had

⁴⁰⁸ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 266.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁰ Patrick Quinn, "Serbs and Croats Battling Muslims in Northern Bosnia."

⁴¹¹ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 266.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

established, it threatened their pursuit of an autonomous state, and it deprived them of territorial aspirations that had been envisioned since the start of the war. On the other hand, the Bosnian Muslims, who were reeling at their loss of territory and fearful of annexation by Croatia and Serbia, found the plan to be too generous to the Serbs. Lacking political will and international commitment, the Vance-Owen plan collapsed. As a result, the parties opened a new, unexplored bargaining arena. The Serb-Croat proposal that emerged in this space was dramatically more favorable for the Serbs, equally as favorable for the Croats, and enticing to a tired and frustrated international community. Nevertheless, the international community still had some reservations, and the Bosnian Muslims were deeply opposed to the proposal's initial allocation of territory. In this liminal space between two proposals, all of the belligerents—Serb, Croat, and Muslim alike—decided to make military moves to bolster their leverage and assert the legitimacy of their claims. For their part, the Serbs and Croats needed to convince the international community (and, perhaps, the Muslims themselves) that war was so costly and outcomes so certain that their partition proposal was the only sensible option. The Muslims, in contrast, needed to contest these certainties in order to win back international support and bolster their negotiating power, if not completely reshape the agreement from the ground up. There was, therefore, no certainty at all. Peace in Bosnia began to take a new and unfamiliar shape in June of 1993, and each party was compelled to assert its desired outcome by force. Bargaining was to take place on the battlefield as much as in Geneva, and combat continued virtually unabated despite the 15 June ceasefire.

How large are the ethnic enclaves beyond the ceasefire lines?

Isolated ethnic enclaves played a major part in reducing trust among the belligerents and increasing their territorial dissatisfaction. Pressure on both Bosnian Muslim and the Bosnian

Croat enclaves undermined goodwill among the parties, and generally handicapped their willingness to cooperate. This was particularly true of Gorazde, the only Muslim enclave that the Serbs had not captured in the formerly Muslim-dominant Drina River valley.⁴¹⁴ One day after the tripartite ceasefire was signed on 15 June, a frustrated Izetbegovic abandoned discussions about the new Serb-Croat peace plan, telling reporters: “I can’t continue talking because of the fighting in Gorazde,”⁴¹⁵ and insisting that ongoing Serb assaults posed an existential threat to the enclave.⁴¹⁶ Similar feelings abounded over Srebrenica and Zepa, other UN safe areas that saw continued fighting and Muslim guerilla operations.⁴¹⁷ On 20 June, four days before the ceasefire’s ultimate collapse, a UN official commented that “Zepa, Srebrenica and Gorazde are just a mess,”⁴¹⁸ but that conditions in Srebrenica were even more dire than those in Gorazde.⁴¹⁹ The Bosnian Muslims were so incensed by the pressure on these enclaves that a Bosnian Army commander threatened the use of chlorine gas if the Serbs did not relent.⁴²⁰ Regardless of the threat’s dubious credibility, the statement clearly signaled the passion the Bosnian Muslims felt for these enclaves and the rage their circumstances fomented.

Given the significance of Gorazde, Srebrenica, and Zepa, the Bosnian Government was unlikely to abandon these enclaves in a peace plan or cooperate with those enemies antagonizing their isolated coethnics. As such, a ceasefire freezing the established frontlines and potentially leading into the Serb-Croat peace proposal—which would have given the Serbs the territory on which the enclaves were situated—was intolerable. Gorazde, Srebrenica, and Zepa were major

⁴¹⁴ Sudetic, “Three Sides in Bosnia Sign One More Cease-Fire.”

⁴¹⁵ Lewis, “2 Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas – Correction Appended.”

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁷ Chuck Sudetic, “Fighting In Bosnia Is Said To Resume.”

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*

hindrances to cooperation between the Serbs and Muslims, and this, in part, undermined the tripartite ceasefire's viability.

The Bosnian Croats, too, felt the pressure of threatened enclaves. In central Bosnia, the cities of Vitez, Kiseljak, Konjic, and Zepce remained essential Bosnian Croat enclaves, whose people were in grave danger of succumbing to the Bosnian Army's forces.⁴²¹ Fearing for their safety, the HVO units in these areas sought help from both Croatia and, interestingly, the VRS (see the below discussion of relative power).⁴²² In effect, the Bosnian Croats were tremendously dissatisfied with the insecurity of their enclaves in central Bosnia, and looked towards military force to ameliorate their position.

Hypothesis 1 posits that ceasefires will be less durable when there is dissatisfaction with the territorial distribution. The above results strongly corroborate the hypothesis. By 18 June, when the tripartite ceasefire came into effect, the Bosnian Serbs and Croats had the territory they desired, but, for the Serbs, the reigning Vance-Owen peace plan was deeply dissatisfying. A ceasefire under such conditions was unacceptable, for they could not afford to appear willing to entertain its proposed divisions. The Muslims were likewise unprepared to accept a ceasefire under the conditions of the Vance-Owen plan, and hoped for battlefield and international tides to turn in their favor. The Croats, too, feared for the security of their enclaves in central Bosnia and sought to defend them with military force. With such deep dissatisfaction, and such incentive to continue fighting as new proposals were offered, none of the parties could fully commit themselves to the tripartite ceasefire agreement.

⁴²¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 181-182.

⁴²² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

Relative Power

What is the ratio of infantry forces? What is the ratio of equipment (artillery, tanks, airborne weapons, sea-based weapons, etc.)? How do the belligerents perceive the power of their opponents?

As June began, Bosnia's armies had dramatically different capabilities. These asymmetries, and the impact they would have on alliance building, were to be a significant challenge to the tripartite ceasefire's longevity. Of even greater importance, however, were the optimistic perceptions that the armies had of their own ability to achieve victory, a product of self-interested alliances, gambles on external help, and hope. Unconstrained by a mutually hurting stalemate, the belligerents remained confident in their ability to secure their ambitions with military might.

Military Balance offers data accurate to 1 June 1993, a mere 14 days before the ceasefire was signed. At this point, the ARBiH had 180,000 soldiers, the HVO had 50,000 soldiers, and the VRS had 80,000 soldiers, resulting in a ratio of 6:2:3.⁴²³ In terms of manpower, therefore, the Bosnian Army was clearly superior to both of its enemies. However, throughout 1993 the VRS often came to the support of the weaker side in the Muslim-Croat civil war in order to sharpen the losses of both sides;⁴²⁴ this was the case in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj area, where the VRS provided support to an outnumbered HVO.⁴²⁵ In such instances of cooperation, the manpower advantage of the Bosnian Army could be mitigated. The inverse was true of the militaries' access to matériel. In early June, the ARBiH possessed 62 pieces of equipment (such as heavy weapons, artillery, and vehicles), the HVO 550, and the VRS 1,565, for a ratio of 0.3:3:7.⁴²⁶ It is difficult

⁴²³ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1993-1994*, p. 74.

⁴²⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 179-180.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁴²⁶ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1993-1994*, pp. 74-75.

to overstate the extent to which the Bosnian Army was materially disadvantaged; nevertheless, the aforementioned variability in military coordination during this three-sided war could sometimes dampen asymmetries.

It was in this highly asymmetric context that the ARBiH received new leadership.⁴²⁷ The Bosnian Army throughout 1992 and early 1993 was led by Sefer Halilovic, who commanded a massive, volunteer-heavy army with a rudimentary organizational structure and a significant lack of equipment and training.⁴²⁸ On 8 June 1993—seven days before the tripartite ceasefire was signed—Halilovic was replaced by Rasim Delic, who intended to improve the Army's discipline and professionalism.⁴²⁹ Though these structural adjustments necessitated long-term efforts that did not drastically change the situation in June,⁴³⁰ Delic did make strategic choices that had an immediate and profound impact on the ARBiH's self-perception and role in the war.

Acknowledging that the Army could not survive the loss of morale that would accompany a static defensive position, Delic pursued offensive victories in order to inspire his troops.⁴³¹ Most notably, this included the capture of Travnik, a battle which the Bosnian Army had begun under Halilovic on 4 June and which Delic inherited on the 8th.⁴³² Despite signing a general ceasefire upon assuming command, Delic continued the offensive and cleared Travnik, taking advantage of the Muslim's local manpower advantage and dedicating twice as many troops to the battle as the HVO.⁴³³ Thereafter, he pushed his forces deeper into central Bosnia and captured numerous key cities through 16 June, one day after the tripartite ceasefire was signed.⁴³⁴

⁴²⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 180.

⁴²⁸ Over 90% of the ARBiH in this early period was comprised of volunteers. *Ibid.*

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁰ For example, Delic's symbolic rooting out of organized crime in the ARBiH's 9th and 10th Mountain Brigades did not take place until October 1993. See *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 181

⁴³² *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

The victory at Travnik was of tremendous importance to the ARBiH, causing morale to soar among its soldiers.⁴³⁵ This boost in morale marked an important shift in the Bosnian Army's perception of itself, increasing its confidence in spite of its material disadvantages. It was this sense of momentum and capability, paired with the Army's manpower advantage, that caused a British UNPROFOR official to comment that "the [ARBiH] appear to have no intention of surrendering their present advantage, by observing the cease-fire."⁴³⁶ On the eve of the tripartite ceasefire, the Bosnian Army appeared prepared to capitalize on their initiative and pursue military victory.

Like the ARBiH, the HVO began 1993 as a relatively weak organization, having relied mainly upon the Croatian HV to achieve military victories throughout the previous year.⁴³⁷ This changed with the onset of the Muslim-Croat civil war in April of 1993. In the early phases of the war, the Bosnian Croats had been able to comfortably manage minimal lines of confrontation with the VRS while keeping careful watch over their Muslim neighbors.⁴³⁸ When the Muslim-Croat alliance dissolved, however, the HVO added to this defense against the VRS a higher intensity and larger-scale conflict with the Bosnian Army.⁴³⁹ Though the ARBiH was not as skilled as the VRS, the sheer magnitude of its force posed a challenge to the comparatively miniscule HVO, which now needed to spread its few soldiers across two theaters.⁴⁴⁰

Throughout June, as the Bosnian Army's counteroffensive swept through Travnik and Kakanj, the HVO incurred intolerable losses.⁴⁴¹ On 9 June, as Delic disregarded a general ceasefire and pushed his forces through and beyond Travnik, Mate Boban made a public appeal

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁶ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 134.

⁴³⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 181.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

for assistance to Tudjman; on 30 June, the political head of the HVO, Jadranko Prlić, called for a general mobilization of all Bosnian Croats between the ages of 18 and 60.⁴⁴² At this point in the central Bosnian offensive, the HVO had lost 2,000 soldiers, and 60,000 Bosnian Croats had fled their homes.⁴⁴³ Faced with a large manpower disadvantage, isolation in central Bosnia, and a highly motivated Muslim opponent, the HVO had no option but to seek assistance from the HV, and, surprisingly, the Bosnian Serbs.⁴⁴⁴ The HV did not come to the aid of the Bosnian Croats until late July, long after the attack on the Žepče-Zavidovići-Maglaj region finally dissolved the tripartite ceasefire.⁴⁴⁵ However, June saw the beginning of cooperation between the HVO and VRS, which would prove to be of central importance to the dynamics of the Bosnian war in 1993.

The start of the Muslim-Croat civil war opened new military possibilities for the Bosnian Serbs, whose foes were now distracted from a unified defense by their internecine rivalry. VRS strategy throughout 1993 was focused on the consolidation of Bosnian Serb control over the Drina valley, a goal which had been denied by successful ARBiH offensives in 1992.⁴⁴⁶ The dissolution of the Muslim-Croat alliance provided a welcome chance for the Bosnian Serbs to partially disengage and focus on defending their gains from the previous year, watching gleefully as their enemies slaughtered one another.⁴⁴⁷ For example, the VRS sat atop Mt. Vlasić—where the later military drama of the Carter ceasefire would unfold—and looked down upon Travnik as the ARBiH pushed out the Bosnian Croats, sending only an occasional round of shelling into the fray.⁴⁴⁸ Yet the Bosnian Serbs could not remain completely detached. The Muslim-Croat civil

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

war was clearly in the interest of the VRS, incentivizing the Serbs to offer support to whichever side appeared weakest in order to maximize the conflict's duration and costliness.⁴⁴⁹ This aid took the form of propaganda, indirect fire support, and, occasionally, direct assistance from VRS armor and soldiers.⁴⁵⁰

The VRS, therefore, acted as a dynamic balance in the Muslim-Croat civil war. In Maglaj and Tesanj, for example, it supported the Bosnian Croats' offensive operations,⁴⁵¹ while in the Croat enclaves of Konjic, Kiseljak, and Zepce the VRS supported the HVO's defensive operations.⁴⁵² On the other hand, in the southern Neretva valley the VRS worked against the Bosnian Croats by holding their fire against the Muslims.⁴⁵³ This type of balancing was particularly important in Zepce, where the HVO had been pushed to the brink of defeat following an ARBiH offensive on 18 April.⁴⁵⁴ Entirely surrounded, the only channels of communication available to the Bosnian Croats were those that passed through VRS-controlled territory, leading the two armies to sign a local ceasefire on 14 June that marked the start of regional VRS-HVO cooperation (one day before the general tripartite ceasefire was signed).⁴⁵⁵ When fighting broke out in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj region, the VRS actively collaborated with the HVO against the Muslims, contributing armor and troops that proved decisive for securing a Croat victory.⁴⁵⁶ This support ultimately allowed the Bosnian Croats to seize the strategic initiative in early July.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁴⁵¹ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 135.

⁴⁵² Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

⁴⁵³ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 135.

⁴⁵⁴ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 142.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.* Shrader also notes that the Serbs in this region were not to be incorporated into Serb-controlled areas under the Vance-Owen plan and therefore may have been willing to cooperate with the HVO, ostensibly to challenge the battlefield status-quo. See *Ibid.*, p. 204n13.

⁴⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 180, p. 197.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

The Bosnian Serbs' balancing act was thus essential to power asymmetries and perceptions in June of 1993, particularly in that period of time surrounding the tripartite ceasefire. When the Bosnian Serbs did directly engage with its enemies in June, as in clashes between the ARBiH and VRS near Gorazde and Trnovo, there was no clear victor, though July saw the VRS advance aggressively through ARBiH positions.⁴⁵⁸ It is clear, then, that the balance of power in Bosnia during the summer of 1993 was inconclusive and contested. The ARBiH dominated in morale and manpower, the HVO had a slight equipment advantage and benefitted from significant VRS support, and the VRS could rest its well-equipped but small force while helping its enemies weaken themselves. None of the forces recognized a mutually hurting stalemate, and were prepared to continue fighting to secure the strategic initiative. Unlike on Mt. Vlasica in 1994, where the VRS and ARBiH were both badly suffering while gaining no territory, the entirety of Bosnia in 1993 was fluid and dynamic. Hypothesis 2 posits that an actual or perceived mutually hurting stalemate will increase ceasefire durability. In late June of 1993, as the tripartite ceasefire took effect, none of the parties felt or perceived such a stalemate, believing instead that they could feasibly achieve their strategic aims through continued combat. Given that the tripartite ceasefire was largely ineffective, these results corroborate the hypothesis.

Who is providing external support to whom? How much support are they providing? What is the character of that support? Is the conflict being mediated?

As previously discussed, many international actors were involved in mediating the Geneva talks that marked the transition between the Vance-Owen and Serb-Croat plans. At that point in the conflict, however, there was very little external military intervention beyond the

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

presence of UNPROFOR. On 18 June, the UN Security Council voted to bolster the UN peacekeeping force with an additional 7,600 troops, but these reinforcements were not to deploy for a number of weeks.⁴⁵⁹ Indeed, much of the role of external actors in the period surrounding the tripartite ceasefire was rooted in anticipation and perception. The Bosnian Muslims, particularly the hardliners among them, sought to secure military action from NATO by continuing to fight.⁴⁶⁰ Moreover, the Bosnian government was so convinced that NATO was on the verge of intervention that the U.S. had to force them to negotiate in Geneva, instead of simply continuing the fight until help arrived.⁴⁶¹ Likewise, Delic was adamant upon signing the ceasefire agreement that the UN should strictly enforce sanctions on ceasefire violations.⁴⁶² The Bosnians, therefore, were to receive no actual aid in late June; isolated and alone, their military maneuvers were not undergirded by, but rather intended to garner, international support.

The Bosnian Croats were in a better, but still isolated position. As previously noted, the Bosnian Army's June counteroffensive in the Lasva valley region clearly demonstrated the HVO's tactical and organizational inadequacies, resulting in its numerous calls for support from Croatia.⁴⁶³ Unlike the Muslims, whose ethno-cultural isolation made them dependent upon the will of the international community, the Bosnian Croats were able to call upon a neighboring patron state interested in the security of its coethnics. As the HVO turned on the Bosnian Muslims in May of 1993, Tudjman appealed to the Bosnian Croats to cease their attack, arguing that it would benefit only the Serbs.⁴⁶⁴ The HVO disregarded these appeals, and, as the Bosnian Army began to lose in early June, their calls for assistance trapped Tudjman in a difficult

⁴⁵⁹ BBC, "Bosnia Hercegovina: Muslim and Croatian Commanders Comment on Cease-Fire Agreement."

⁴⁶⁰ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 256.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴⁶² BBC, "Bosnia Hercegovina: Muslim and Croatian Commanders Comment on Cease-Fire Agreement."

⁴⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 182.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

position: national interest compelled Zagreb to protect the fate of Herceg-Bosna, but international audience costs and the risk of sanctions deterred it from actively participating in Bosnia.⁴⁶⁵ Tudjman vacillated throughout June until finally choosing the national interest, sending HV troops into Bosnia in late July.⁴⁶⁶ This patronage would prove essential to the continued survival of the HVO and the cause of Herceg-Bosna.⁴⁶⁷ Though decisive, this support was far from guaranteed when Petkovic signed the tripartite ceasefire in mid-June. At that time, the Bosnian Croats could only hope that Zagreb would come to their rescue.

Finally, though Serbia and Russia offered diplomatic support to the Bosnian Serbs,⁴⁶⁸ the VRS seems to have received little to no external military aid at this point in the conflict. Given the strength of its military leadership, the quality of its equipment, and the talent of its soldiers, the Bosnian Serb Army was largely left to its own devices.

The above results support hypothesis 3, which argues that external intervention on behalf of the weaker party will increase ceasefire durability. No external parties came to the assistance of either the HVO or ARBiH, who were both desperately attempting to secure help from outside powers. If anything, this lack of support helped to shorten the tripartite ceasefire, since both parties felt compelled to keep fighting as a means of dragging outsiders into the conflict.

As belligerents waited for the international community to intervene on the ground, and as the international community waged diplomatic warfare over the new peace plan in Geneva, a number of actors attempted to oversee and coordinate the ceasefire agreement. In January of 1993, the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats established a Joint Coordinating Commission

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁸ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 243.

(JCC) to implement an earlier ceasefire between an increasingly hostile HVO and ARBiH.⁴⁶⁹ Despite concerted efforts, the JCC was unable to control the situation on the ground, and observed ineffectually as tensions between the Croats and Muslims burst into civil war.⁴⁷⁰ The JCC was replaced by the Joint Operational Center (JOC) on 22 April, as stipulated by the Izetbegovic-Boban call to cease hostilities, a joint response to the still-escalating conflict.⁴⁷¹ On 25 April, the European Community Monitor Mission representative at the JOC noted that the organization had yet to take effective action, but remained hopeful that leadership from the former JCC would successfully bring their experience to bear.⁴⁷² To buttress these monitoring efforts, as noted above, the signatories of the tripartite ceasefire also signed auxiliary documents intended to facilitate UN monitoring: the HVO and ARBiH agreed to provide daily updates to UNPROFOR, and the VRS ordered that an eight-person UN team be allowed to pass freely through Serb lines.⁴⁷³

Despite these efforts to mediate potential disagreements and violations, the monitoring mechanisms proved highly ineffectual, and combat continued unabated. In certain instances, the UN monitors were even prevented by the belligerents from performing their mission, as when Bosnian Croats stopped a UN monitoring team from entering Maglaj in late June.⁴⁷⁴ On 28 June, discouraged by the intense combat between the ARBiH and HVO following the dissolution of the tripartite ceasefire, the JOC dissolved itself.⁴⁷⁵ While international mediators attempted to successfully forge a peace agreement, ceasefire mediators and monitors on the ground were largely ineffective.

⁴⁶⁹ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 125.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

⁴⁷³ BBC, "Bosnia Hercegovina: Muslim and Croatian Commanders Comment on Cease-Fire Agreement."

⁴⁷⁴ Patrick Quinn, "Serbs and Croats Battling Muslims in Northern Bosnia."

⁴⁷⁵ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, pp. 134-135.

According to hypothesis 4, mediated conflicts should have more durable ceasefires. It is apparent that in June of 1993, mediators and mediating bodies were hard at work in Bosnia. Efforts were made not only to manage the political conflict, but to directly manage the ceasefire as well. In spite of this, the tripartite ceasefire fell far short of the 56-day threshold, thereby disconfirming the proposition.

Actor Cohesion

How many actors are engaged in the conflict zone? How many actors are party to the ceasefire agreement? What is the scope of the ceasefire?

As the tripartite ceasefire came into effect, it was expected to constrain the behavior of three armies. Yet the situation was much more complicated, for each actor was marked by deep internal divisions and implicated in complex international coalitions. In this context of low actor cohesion, cooperation was extremely difficult. However, the historical data does not conclusively indicate that this low cohesion was a fundamental cause of the tripartite ceasefire's collapse.

In the summer of 1993, four actors were primarily responsible for influencing the direction of the Bosnian civil war: the ARBiH, HVO, VRS, and UNPROFOR. At this point in the conflict, Fikret Abdic, a Bosnian Muslim businessman and political magnate, had not yet declared his rebellion and opened the complex theater of war in Bihac, thereby simplifying the landscape of influential belligerents. However, as will be seen below, Izetbegovic's handling of the June Geneva talks was a major force in Abdic's pursuit of power. Of these parties, all three of the primary belligerents—the Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs—signed the tripartite ceasefire agreement, which was to be a general ceasefire covering the entirety of Bosnia-

Hercegovina.⁴⁷⁶ I argue in hypothesis 6 that a greater number of belligerents will decrease ceasefire durability by making cooperation more complex. The circumstances of the tripartite ceasefire support this proposition: with three belligerents party to the agreement, the coordination of their conflicting interests and needs was virtually impossible (as well as politically undesired). Moreover, I posit in hypothesis 7 that local ceasefires will be more durable than general ceasefires; again, this proposition is supported. The country-wide tripartite ceasefire agreement, signed by three belligerents, fell far short of the 56-day cutoff.

How fragmented are the actors? How contested is decision making?

Already by the summer of 1993, actor fragmentation and power struggles were endemic to the belligerents in the Bosnian civil war. These characteristics were particularly pronounced within the Bosnian Muslim side, where crime, hardliners, and dissidents placed immense pressure on the established structures of hierarchy. Organized crime in Sarajevo would be a time-consuming distraction for Alija Izetbegovic throughout the second half of 1993,⁴⁷⁷ and it was not until October of that year that Rasim Delic would take steps to undermine criminal influence in the military.⁴⁷⁸ Pressure also came from hardliners in the Bosnian government, who created rifts over strategic policy decisions and pushed the ARBiH to continue fighting throughout early 1993 in order to force Western intervention.⁴⁷⁹ Ultimately, the most meaningful division within the Bosnian government emerged from the tension between Izetbegovic and Fikret Abdic, a Bosnian business mogul who had won the presidential race, but for indeterminate reasons had ceded the

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁴⁷⁷ Rogel, *The Breakup of Yugoslavia*, p. 33.

⁴⁷⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 180-181.

⁴⁷⁹ Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 256.

position to Izetbegovic.⁴⁸⁰ Abdic heavily criticized Izetbegovic's decision to boycott the Geneva talks on 21 June, causing the Bosnian Presidency to send a delegation to the talks without Izetbegovic.⁴⁸¹ This was perceived as an attempt by Abdic to contest Izetbegovic's power,⁴⁸² a seemingly accurate analysis in light of Abdic's later breakaway rebel movement in Bihac.⁴⁸³

Decision making within the Herceg-Bosna leadership appears to have been less contested, but, as we have seen above, coordination between the Bosnian Croats and Zagreb was far from easy. Moreover, although Tudjman eventually supported the Croat national interest by sending troops into Bosnia, his autonomy and self-interest called his reliability into question. A similar dynamic was at play on the Serb side. The aforementioned division between Belgrade and Pale over the Vance-Owen peace plan showcases a patron-subject division akin to that among the Croats. Compounding this was the Karadzic-Mladic/Milosevic split, which fostered significant internal decision-making tension among the Serbs (as explored at length in the previous chapter). In the summer of 1993, none of the Bosnian civil war's belligerents were free of these internal political tensions.

How efficient is the military chain of command? How disciplined its fighting force?

The ARBiH in the summer of 1993 was just beginning to professionalize its forces, a process that would not be fully realized until the reorganization efforts of the 1995 Carter ceasefire. Soon after departing from the Bosnian Army in early June, Halilovic took note of the ARBiH's imperative need for increased discipline, writing:

The question of military discipline is the question of our survival... Of course, it is urgently necessary to organize courses in the brigades for squad commanders, courses at

⁴⁸⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 187.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.

the corps level for Army and company commanders, and a military officers' school at the main staff level for schooling junior officers and officer cadres, and all this for the purpose of strengthening military discipline, and therefore combat discipline.⁴⁸⁴

Though Halilovic had provided the basic structures of military organization, it was the task of his successor, Rasim Delic, to guide the ARBiH to its full potential.⁴⁸⁵ As noted above, Delic did take important steps with the ouster of crime lords in the 8th and 10th Mountain Brigades in October of 1993, but these important signals did not come until long after the tripartite ceasefire had been broken.⁴⁸⁶

A central challenge to Bosnian Army leadership and discipline came from the Muslim refugee population in central Bosnia, which was characterized by an increasingly religious, hardline worldview.⁴⁸⁷ Refugees poured into the Travnik-Zenica region from Jajce, Donji Vakuf, and western Bosnia, infuriated and radicalized by the human rights abuses inflicted upon them by the Serbs, and, later, the Croats.⁴⁸⁸ From these hardened identities emerged the 7th Muslimski and 17th Krajina Brigades of the ARBiH III Corps,⁴⁸⁹ Bosnian Army units composed primarily of refugees cleansed from their homes.⁴⁹⁰ These untrained soldiers were angry, eager, and had very little left to lose, but their lack of discipline was worrisome to the Army's leadership, as was the increasing number of foreign Islamic volunteers in the units.⁴⁹¹ Despite the soldiers' transgressions (such as the harassment of locals because of their religious beliefs) and the Army's concern, the highly able 7th Muslimski and 17th Krajina Brigades were used to lead the ARBiH's central Bosnian counteroffensive in June.⁴⁹² Later in June, it was this same ARBiH III

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁹ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 37.

⁴⁹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 195.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*

Corps that fought against the HVO-VRS tandem in the Zepce-Zavidovici area as the tripartite ceasefire collapsed. Some sources report that it was in fact the ARBiH III Corps that initiated fighting,⁴⁹³ though, as previously noted, this history is contentious and unclear. It is, however, reasonable to accept the proposition that the ARBiH III Corps differed dramatically from other Bosnian Army units, and that the “gulf in understanding” between these hardline units and their counterparts extended to the relationship between the ARBiH III Corps and the political leadership in Sarajevo.⁴⁹⁴ Indeed, it was resistance on the part of the ARBiH III Corps commander, Enver Hadzihasanovic, that led, in part, to the dissolution of the frustrated and ineffectual JOC.⁴⁹⁵ Whether or not the Bosnian Army is to blame for fighting in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj area remains unclear. It is, however, abundantly apparent that there were significant discipline and cooperation problems within the Bosnian Army as a result of the ARBiH III Corps’ hardline attitude.

In contrast, the Bosnian Croat forces, particularly those around the Zepce-Zavidovici- Novi Seher region, were relatively organized and disciplined.⁴⁹⁶ Nevertheless, criminal elements in Kiseljak and Mostar marred discipline, and most HVO troops, having been drafted or brought in from reserves, lacked the will to fight when they were away from their home regions.⁴⁹⁷ Moreover, though Commander of the Operational Zone Central Bosnia Colonel Blaskic issued detailed orders to his subordinates on 16 June to direct the implementation of the tripartite ceasefire, and though these orders appear to have reached the lower levels of the military command, the frequent breaches of the agreement indicate that there were major compliance

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 147.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁴⁹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, p. 225.

issues.⁴⁹⁸ If it is to be believed that the Bosnian Croats began fighting in the Zepce-Zavidovici area in late June, then either the HVO had significant discoordination between its high-level and low-level commands, or the actual political will of the high-level command to observe the agreement was lacking. Given that this question is largely unanswerable with the current historical data, it can be said that, at the very least, the HVO had fewer discipline issues than the ARBiH. Nevertheless, neither group could approximate the professionalism of the VRS.⁴⁹⁹

Hypothesis 4 argues that ceasefire durability will decrease as actor division increases, and the above results support the proposition. The Muslims, Croats, and Serbs were all highly fragmented and marred by contested decision-making processes. Moreover, the ARBiH and HVO in 1993 were marked by discipline and coordination issues. It remains unclear if spoilers were responsible for the onset of fighting in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj area; nevertheless, the high levels of actor division during the summer of 1993 did make the tripartite ceasefire extraordinarily complex to coordinate, monitor, and manage.

Conclusion

The tripartite ceasefire came at a moment of transition and uncertainty in the Bosnian civil war. The belligerents were in the process of abandoning the Vance-Owen peace plan and laying the groundwork for something new; the international community was beginning to shift its diplomatic weight away from the Muslims, and remained resistant to the possibility of intervention; and the belligerents—particularly the ARBiH and HVO—all saw victory as possible, but were desperately attempting to secure outside assistance while simultaneously organizing their forces. In these circumstances of constant change and tremendous uncertainty,

⁴⁹⁸ Shrader, *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia*, p. 134.

⁴⁹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, pp. 141-142.

continued fighting was too beneficial and the cessation of hostilities too complex to be successful. The tripartite ceasefire, having lasted for barely 7 days, is emblematic of these dynamics.

Looking categorically at the variables of interest, it is clear that the tripartite ceasefire maps neatly onto the theoretical model established in chapter two. There, I argued that high territorial dissatisfaction, high power asymmetry, and high actor division would result in less durable ceasefires. In June of 1993, none of the belligerents were fully satisfied with the situation on the ground, and were not prepared to stop fighting until they had unequivocally achieved the leverage necessary for a negotiated settlement to fall in their favor. Territorial dissatisfaction was, therefore, high. Though the armies did find ways to balance each other, particularly with the VRS offering its self-interested support to the HVO and ARBiH, each belligerent held the perception that it could continue to achieve gains through military force. As a result, no mutually hurting stalemate set in. Finally, each actor faced significant internal divisions, and, though it cannot be said confidently that spoilers ended the tripartite ceasefire, these divisions certainly made coordination and cooperation more difficult. Thus, actor cohesion was low. Ultimately, each variable was at its fullest expression in the summer of 1993, and, as expected, the ceasefire fell far below the cutoff point. Cooperation under the circumstances in June was all but impossible.

It now remains to be seen how these two ceasefires of dramatically different duration—the 78-day Carter ceasefire and the 7-day tripartite ceasefire—compare to one another. In the following chapter, I conclude the analysis by directly comparing these cases, identifying important variables, exploring interaction effects, and offering an explanation as to why these two ceasefires might exhibit such drastic variation in their durability. I then use these

conclusions to construct a typology of ceasefire durability and generate numerous policy recommendations. Finally, I discuss methodological issues that may have impacted my results before offering suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

What have we learned? I began this undertaking by positing a connection between ceasefire durability and three factors related to cooperation: territorial satisfaction, the relative balance of power, and actor cohesion. Territorial satisfaction relates to belligerents' commitment, in that they perceive a connection between territorial allocation at the time of the ceasefire and the possible distribution of territory in the final peace settlement. If political elites feel as if the ceasefire lines do not acceptably interface with their image of the "ethnic homeland," they are not likely to respect the agreement. Relative power relates to belligerents' capabilities, in that power asymmetries should undermine the systems of reciprocity and deterrence that allow ceasefires to function. If the belligerents are not locked in a mutually hurting stalemate, continued fighting will not be costly enough to make a ceasefire appealing. Finally, actor cohesion relates to belligerents' credibility and commitment, in that internally divided actors may give rise to spoilers that work to violate and collapse the agreement.

I expected ceasefires to be more durable when the belligerents were satisfied, locked in a mutually hurting stalemate, and internally cohesive. Conversely, I anticipated that ceasefires would be less durable when the belligerents were dissatisfied, when power asymmetries were high, and when there were marked internal divisions. As I present the findings below, it will become clear that ceasefire durability is the product of an interaction effect between satisfaction and the perception of a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS). After exploring this idea, I present a typology of situations under which we should expect different outcomes in ceasefire durability,

and offer policy recommendations to enhance ceasefire durability in each case. I then discuss methodological issues, and suggest directions for future research.

In order to test my theoretical propositions, I analyzed two cases from the Bosnian civil war—the long-duration Carter ceasefire and the short-duration tripartite ceasefire. Let us now employ Mill’s method of difference to compare these two ceasefires. According to the method of difference, causality cannot be solely attributed to any variables shared between two cases of different outcomes. Rather, only those variables that are unique to each case can independently explain variation in the dependent variable. Ordering the cases in the following table gives us these results:

Case	Territorial Satisfaction	Mutually Hurting Stalemate	Actor Cohesion
Carter ceasefire (long)	Low	Yes	Moderately low
Tripartite ceasefire (short)	Low	No	Low

Figure 6.1: A comparison of the cases using Mill’s method of difference.

In both the Carter and tripartite ceasefires, parties exhibited low territorial satisfaction and low actor cohesion. As such, these variables cannot independently explain the differences in their duration. Rather, Mill’s methods indicate that the presence of a mutually hurting stalemate should directly correlate to ceasefire durability. If parties are constrained by a mutually hurting stalemate, ceasefires will endure; without a mutually hurting stalemate, they will quickly

collapse. Yet looking back on the case studies, we see a more complicated picture: an interaction effect between satisfaction and relative power.

The case studies indicate that ceasefire durability is a function of belligerents' satisfaction with the territorial distribution at the time of the ceasefire, and their ability to change that distribution if they are dissatisfied. Neither factor alone determines ceasefire durability. Mutually hurting stalemates decide the capability—that is, whether or not belligerents will be *able* to break the ceasefire. Yet ability must be accompanied by motivation. Territorial satisfaction, therefore, decides the desire—whether or not the belligerents will *want* to break the ceasefire. As I will show in my typology below (see Figure 6.2), different configurations of ability and desire will lead to different types of ceasefire durability. Indeed, we have already observed two of these configurations in the Carter and tripartite ceasefires.

As the ARBiH and VRS agreed to the Carter ceasefire, it was apparent that the ARBiH was fearful that the reigning territorial distribution, which greatly favored the Bosnian Serbs, would form the basis of a peace settlement. Yet the two militaries had come to a stalemate in the months before Carter's mediation mission. While the Bosnian Serbs used the ceasefire to pursue a favorable peace settlement, the Bosnian Muslims used the ceasefire to build up their forces. These military preparations caused the Bosnian government to believe that the military balance was now in their favor, altering their perception of a mutually hurting stalemate. The Carter ceasefire therefore endured for as long as the Bosnian government remained dissatisfied, but unable to confidently use force. As soon as it believed that it could effectively use its military to attain a more satisfactory outcome, the Bosnian government broke the ceasefire.

As in the Carter ceasefire, the parties to the tripartite ceasefire were all dissatisfied with the reigning territorial distribution. However, they all believed that they could reasonably

achieve a more satisfactory outcome through the continued use of force. In various theaters of war, the VRS, HVO, and ARBiH all had a military advantage that they pressed in spite of the ceasefire agreement. Dissatisfaction impeded their commitment to the idea of a ceasefire agreement; capability allowed them to violate the agreement with impunity. Therefore, none of the parties needed time to build the capacity to achieve their goals. Instead, they could immediately use their militaries to pursue more favorable territorial outcomes.

According to the method of difference, the case studies indicate that actor cohesion is not causally related to ceasefire durability. Historical data, however, is lacking. This makes it difficult, for example, to determine if the ARBiH III Corps in fact spoiled the tripartite ceasefire. Given the current record, it cannot be said that this was the case, indicating that neither ceasefire collapsed as a result of spoiler dynamics. This removes actor division as a causal variable. Instead, the available data shows that actor divisions exacerbate the existing impediments to cooperation produced by dissatisfaction and power asymmetries. When, for example, the tripartite ceasefire collapsed, the cause was primarily its particular confluence of dissatisfaction and power asymmetry. Yet the extremism of the ARBiH III Corps' leadership inhibited (among other things) the efficacy of the JOC, further weakening already ineffective mechanisms intended to increase ceasefire durability. This is not causality. However, further research (see below) will be necessary to corroborate the result.

Given the interaction effect between satisfaction and capability, it is possible to extrapolate a number of additional interactions that are linked to cooperation. These interactions can be paired with policies intended to facilitate cooperation and increase ceasefire durability.⁵⁰⁰

⁵⁰⁰ As noted in the introduction's discussion of ceasefires in the peace process, there is not a clear connection between durable ceasefires and peace settlements. While the policies that I recommend in this study are intended to increase ceasefire durability, I do not intend to imply that these policies should lead to the resolution of the conflict. This may certainly be the case. However, it may also be that durable ceasefires in fact worsen wars and

The following paradigm outlines four possible ceasefire types, which will be explored in detail below.

		<u>Mutually Hurting Stalemate</u>	
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<u>Satisfaction</u>	<i>High</i>	<u>Durable</u> <i>Ceasefire endures, potentially progresses into a peace settlement.</i>	<u>Variable</u> <i>Ceasefire endures if there is good will, or collapses as parties seek additional value.</i>
	<i>Low</i>	<u>Dependent</u> <i>Ceasefire endures until perception of stalemate changes.</i>	<u>Weak</u> <i>Ceasefire collapses quickly.</i>

Figure 6.2: A typology of ceasefire durability.

Ceasefire Type 1: Durable

Durable ceasefires occur when belligerents are satisfied with the ceasefire lines and have entered a mutually hurting stalemate. These ceasefires endure because belligerents have achieved their core territorial ambitions and lack the military ability to pursue additional gains. Pleased by their situation and unable to progress any further, the belligerents should see no rational reason to

make them more difficult to resolve. This study is intended to clarify the dynamics of ceasefire durability, and to aid those who call for durable ceasefires before initiating humanitarian missions and peace negotiations. I implore these individuals to think critically about the role of ceasefires in the broader arc of conflict before calling for their establishment.

abrogate the agreement. In such circumstances, it is possible that the belligerents will be prepared to negotiate a mutually acceptable peace settlement and put an end to the conflict. However, it is also possible that the belligerents may seek to use military force to procure additional value, beyond that which satisfies their minimum requirements. In order to do this, belligerents will need to use the window of opportunity provided by the ceasefire to build up their military forces and grow confidence in their ability to escape the stalemate.

Durable ceasefires should therefore be approached with a combination of *maintenance and monitoring*. Maintenance refers to the fact that these ceasefires are already quite durable unto themselves, given the concurrence of satisfaction and a mutually hurting stalemate. As such, little needs to be done to increase the structural durability of the agreement. Instead, policy should be directed at maintaining satisfaction with the territorial distribution and perpetuating perceptions of a mutually hurting stalemate. This means that strict monitoring regimes should be put into effect, so that military buildups and changes in posture can be made open and visible. This will either discourage such buildups by prompting equal buildups in the opposing force (thereby maintaining deterrence), or it will signal when the ceasefire is on the verge of collapse.

Humanitarian organizations and peace negotiators should find that durable ceasefires are best suited for missions in the conflict zone. When buttressed by effective monitoring regimes, the agreement will either be strong enough to foster extended missions, or an impending collapse will be broadcast clearly enough to safely remove at-risk aid workers and negotiators before combat begins anew.

Ceasefire Type 2: Variable

Variable ceasefires occur when belligerents are satisfied with their territorial holdings, but no mutually hurting stalemate deters them from the continued use of military force. Such ceasefires may progress in one of two ways. If the belligerents have no additional territorial ambitions, or if they have a sufficient amount of goodwill, the ceasefire should endure. If the belligerents seek to procure additional value beyond their minimum level of satisfaction, no military obstacles prevent them from immediately breaking the ceasefire and continuing the fight. Variable ceasefires thus occupy a precarious space between durability and weakness, balanced entirely on the belligerents' perceptions of themselves and of each other. If both parties demonstrate the necessary will, satisfaction may be enough to propel the cessation of hostilities forward. Yet if the belligerents desire more land, or if they fear that the other belligerent shall attack out of greed, then the ceasefire is likely to endure only for as long as it takes for the belligerents to feel sufficiently confident or threatened.

Variable ceasefires should be approached with a combination of *mediation, then support*. Mediators should work with the belligerents to maintain current levels of satisfaction and prevent greed, despite their ability to continue fighting. This may involve, for example, emphasizing the costs of war relative to the meagerness of potential gains, as well as highlighting the benefits of continued non-violence. Mediators should also serve as interlocutors between belligerents, communicating their continued satisfaction with and commitment to the established territorial distribution. Since both parties are beginning from a point of satisfaction, these efforts should be sufficient to stave off collapse. Moreover, dialogue-based methods are preferable to military support because they are less likely to instill fear and cause misperceptions. However, if mediation seems to be ineffective at reigning in greed, third parties should support the ceasefire

through more direct measures. An important first step would be sanction regimes that increase the cost of greedy territorial grabs and raise the benefits of the continued observance of the given ceasefire lines. A more invasive next step would be the creation of a mutually hurting stalemate by offering either additional military supplies or direct military intervention. This would create deterrence dynamics that should prevent greed from imperiling the agreement, thereby enhancing the ceasefire's durability.

Humanitarian organizations and peace negotiators should exercise caution when undertaking missions during variable ceasefires. As long as satisfaction prevails and fear is minimal, the ceasefire is likely to endure. However, in the absence of a mutually hurting stalemate, these conditions could quickly change and endanger aid workers and negotiators stationed in the conflict zone.

Ceasefire Type 3: Dependent

Dependent ceasefires occur when belligerents are dissatisfied with the given territorial distribution, but are prevented by a mutually hurting stalemate from taking action to change this distribution. The durability of such ceasefires depends upon the length of time it takes for belligerents to increase their confidence in the utility of military force, as was the case in the Carter ceasefire. Dissatisfied belligerents will not commit to the ceasefire, and must use the pause in the fighting to improve their military capacities. The ceasefire will collapse only when they feel able to, or are actually able to, successfully escape the mutually hurting stalemate and forcefully alter the distribution of territory.

Dependent ceasefires should be approached with a combination of *mediation and monitoring*. Mediators must engage with the belligerents to find possible ways of overcoming

their dissatisfaction with the territorial distribution. All the while, monitoring regimes should broadcast military buildups and changes in posture. As noted above, this will either prompt a deterrence response from the enemy, or it will signal to at-risk individuals, such as humanitarian workers and negotiators, that the ceasefire is likely to collapse.

Humanitarian organizations and peace negotiators should be aware of the risks associated with missions during dependent ceasefires. If no monitoring regimes are in place, the ceasefire could collapse unexpectedly once one of the belligerents has achieved a certain amount of confidence in its military capabilities. International groups should feel confident beginning missions in these circumstances, but should prepare contingency plans for quick emergency exits in the event of a sudden collapse, as was the case with the Bosnian Army's offensive on Mt. Vlasic.

Ceasefire Type 4: Weak

Weak ceasefires occur when belligerents are dissatisfied with the distribution of territory and are not prevented by a mutually hurting stalemate from using force. Conflict parties therefore have both the motivation and means to continue fighting. Under such circumstances, ceasefire agreements are not likely to endure.

Weak ceasefires should be approached with a combination of *mediation and support*. International mediators should work to either alter belligerents' perceptions of acceptable territorial distributions, or (the likelier option) bring about a "turning point" that will result in a perceived stalemate.⁵⁰¹ To support these efforts, external third parties should support the weaker military force by imposing sanctions and offering material aid or direct intervention. These

⁵⁰¹ Zartman, "Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts," p. 18.

policies should alter cost-benefit calculations and create functioning systems of reciprocity and deterrence, enhancing ceasefire durability.

Humanitarian organizations and peace negotiators should avoid sending vulnerable workers into conflict zones during weak ceasefires. These agreements are likely to be ineffective and to collapse quickly. Aid workers and negotiators on the ground will be at high risk, and will likely be thrust into mortal danger as conflict intensity fails to substantially decrease.

These structural characteristics, outcomes, and policy recommendations can be comprehensively organized in the following table:

Mutually Hurting Stalemate	Satisfaction	Outcome	Policy
Yes	High	Durable	<i>Maintenance & Monitoring</i>
No	High	Variable	<i>Mediation, then Support</i>
Yes	Low	Dependent	<i>Mediation & Monitoring</i>
No	Low	Weak	<i>Mediation & Support</i>

Figure 6.3: Ceasefire type and policy recommendations.

Though these are useful results, their supporting empirics are far from perfect. This study is a necessary preliminary step for a deeper understanding of cooperation, ethnic civil war, and ceasefire durability. It is, however, of a limited scope, and comes burdened with certain methodological flaws that bear recognition and amelioration in future research. Most importantly, as I discussed in chapter 3, Mill's method of difference cannot generate hypotheses,

but instead serves only to eliminate them. Though I attempted to be cautious and comprehensive in my theorizing, there may be certain important variables that I have overlooked. It may be that these missing variables are the true sources of causality. As such, future research should seek to identify other variables that may impact cooperation in ethnic civil war, and incorporate them into tests of ceasefire durability. This study, for example, looked at ethnicity as a broad cultural phenomenon, but it did not compare the effects of different cultural systems on cooperation, as did Sapone.⁵⁰² Future research on such additional variables will help to clarify our understanding of ceasefire durability in ethnic civil wars.

In terms of the direct comparison of the Carter and tripartite ceasefires, some important omissions reduce my confidence in certain results. Both ceasefires were general, taking effect across the entirety of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Since there was no variation in this regard, it cannot be said whether hypothesis 7 is truly corroborated or not. It will be necessary to directly compare the durability of local and general ceasefires in order to arrive at such a conclusion.

As noted earlier in this chapter, I reject the causality of actor coherence only tentatively. There are two reasons for this. First, much is to be desired from the data. Where actor coherence may have played an essential role in causing a ceasefire collapse, the historical record is deeply politicized and quite inconclusive. It is clear that, when the tripartite ceasefire fell apart, the ARBiH III Corps was culturally distinct from the rest of the Bosnian Army. Composed of refugees who had been subjected to terrible atrocities, the level of religiosity and anger in the Corps increased its volatility and aggression. However, there is no definitive account of who—the ARBiH or the HVO—bears the burden of responsibility for combat in the Zepce-Zavidovici-Maglaj region. In light of this, it cannot be said that the ARBiH III Corps spoiled the ceasefire by

⁵⁰² Sapone, “Ceasefire: The Impact of Republican Political Culture.”

attacking HVO positions in Zepce. This merits deeper archival study into the onset of that particular bout of fighting, which is unfortunately hampered by the situation's political overtones.

Second, the method of difference is a Boolean method, and does not measure subtle changes in the value of the independent variable. Actor cohesion in the Carter ceasefire was coded as “moderately low,” while actor cohesion in the tripartite ceasefire was coded as “low.” In both circumstances, the belligerents were hampered by numerous internal divisions; however, these divisions were slightly less pronounced in the winter of 1995 than the summer of 1993. These differences are not stark enough to merit differentiation in the method of difference, and therefore I considered them to be of equal value. As a result, the method of difference does not attribute causality to this variable. On the one hand, one may dispute my use of Mill's method in this instance, arguing instead that “moderately low” and “low” are distinct enough to merit causality. I would suggest, however, that a more sensitive approach is necessary to truly understand the relationship between actor cohesion and cooperation. This means, for example, constructing linear regression models that clarify relationships between actor cohesion and cooperation at numerous continuous values of the independent variable.

It would have also been useful to compliment the method of difference with the method of agreement. In this study, I compared only two ceasefires of different outcomes to eliminate variables shared across cases. A next step would be to compare two ceasefires of the *same* outcome to eliminate variables that are distinct among cases. Doing so would further clarify our understanding of the structural sources of ceasefire durability and weakness. Given the limited scope of this study, however, I could choose only one approach. I selected the method of

difference, feeling that it was more appropriate for directly answering the question of variations in ceasefire durability, which inherently requires a comparison of different outcomes.

In chapter 3 I discussed the issue of cutoff points. It bears repeating here that these cutoff points are arbitrary, and can skew our understanding of causality. Given that the scope of my research permitted only a brief qualitative analysis of a limited number of case studies, using a cutoff point to distinguish long-duration ceasefires from short-duration ceasefires was the most sensible approach. It is also not an unprecedented approach; by using Gartner and Bercovitch's same cutoff point for short-lived conflict settlements, my results should be comparable to those of other researchers. Moreover, by selecting two ceasefires at drastically different ends of the duration spectrum, I was able to maximize the contrast between the two cases and mitigate some of the issues that would result from an arbitrary cutoff. Nevertheless, future research should endeavor to address ceasefire durability from a large-*N* qualitative perspective, using duration modeling to derive a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon than is possible using the cutoff method.

It is important to recognize the problems inherent in generalizing from small-*N* studies. This is a study of ceasefire durability in ethnic civil wars, and thus its conclusions and policy implications are intended to be universally and generally applicable. This is a bold intention, given that my case studies deal solely with Bosnia, a single conflict between a limited number of people in a small region of the world. Some may argue that I have simply constructed a theory of Bosnian ceasefires. I feel, however, that the circumstances of the Bosnian conflict are sufficiently representative of ethnic civil war dynamics to allow for some level of generalizability. Nevertheless, a necessary next step to test the external validity of my results

would be to either perform this same study in a different region, or to perform a large-*N* study of ceasefire durability in ethnic civil wars around the globe.

Finally, it is likely that these theoretical considerations are applicable beyond the realm of ethnic civil war. Ethnic conflict may make claims to territory particularly contentious, given that elites are able to employ the concept of the ethnic homeland to bolster the perception of indivisibility. Nevertheless, my theory indicates that whenever territorial aspirations and relative power are relevant, their interaction should help to explain ceasefire durability. As a result, the ceasefire durability typology and its concomitant policy recommendations may be analytically significant for a much broader universe of cases than considered in this study.

For example, on 26 March 2018, the Nigerian government acknowledged that it was in talks with the insurgent group Boko Haram to negotiate a ceasefire and end violence that has ravaged the country since 2009.⁵⁰³ Though the insurgency is not organized along ethnic dimensions, the durability of this ceasefire should nevertheless depend on both parties' territorial satisfaction and relative power. It is likely that satisfaction is low, since Boko Haram seeks to carve out its own Islamic State, but has lost much of the territory it had won during the initial phases of its insurgency.⁵⁰⁴ Simultaneously, a mutually hurting stalemate may be on the horizon, given that Boko Haram's attacks are increasing in frequency and intensity, but remain isolated to only a limited number of locations.⁵⁰⁵ If such circumstances continue, it is likely that any agreement between the Nigerian government and the insurgents will result in a dependent ceasefire. This knowledge will help the parties determine whether or not a ceasefire is actually in their best interests, and, if the agreement is signed, how they should work to maximize its

⁵⁰³ Felix Onuah, "Nigeria talking to Boko Haram about possible ceasefire," *Reuters*, 26 March 2018.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁵ Mark Wilson, "Nigeria's Boko Haram attacks in numbers – as lethal as ever," *BBC*, 25 January 2018. Accessed at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42735414>.

durability and prepare for its collapse. Likewise, this knowledge will help the international community by clarifying the risks associated with work in the conflict zone during the ceasefire. Though the Boko Haram insurgency is not an ethnic conflict, it is quite plausible that my theoretical insights are applicable to its context, and that my policy recommendations will be useful for future conflict management efforts. In order to strengthen these claims, future research should apply this theory to a variety of conflict contexts in order to test the limits of its relevance.

Until now, no analytical framework has existed to systematically approach and diagnose ceasefire durability. But more work remains. Further studies need to uncover other important variables, strengthen the evidence that the variables considered in this study are indeed causal, and test the external validity of the results. This will deepen our understanding of cooperation in ethnic civil wars and lead to better decision-making as ceasefire agreements are negotiated and signed. Though only a single thread in the broad tapestry of global peace and conflict, such knowledge will allow us to more effectively manage the violence of the future.

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