

Engagement with VEOs in negotiations reduces violence.

89; 90; 91; 92; 93; 94; 95; 96

General Description of the Literature:

Many scholars in political science have used rigorous tools to produce evidence that engagement with VEOs in negotiations can reduce violence in some circumstances. In the general “bargaining” model of state-VEO interaction (Lake 2003), adopted by many political scientists and economists, the central premise is that violence by the VEO is a tool to extract a better bargain in terms of whatever the parties are arguing over (policy, territory, autonomy, etc.). Negotiations in this framework can reduce violence if the VEO is made better off and extracts some concession that will slow down the movement. Since governments often negotiate with terrorists (Bapat 2006), negotiations often occur albeit in secret (Lapan and Sandler 1988).

Formal models suggest that negotiations can be effective at reducing violence under certain conditions (Atkinson et al. 1987, Sandler & Scott 1987, Lapan & Sandler 1988, Bapat 2006). VEOs must establish a trustworthy reputation for negotiations to take place. Otherwise, any agreement will not be credible (Lapan and Sandler 1988; Bapat 2006).

Some case evidence suggests that certain types of groups will respond to negotiations while others will not (Hayes et al. 2003; Zartmen 2003). Hayes et al. (2003) hypothesize that “absolutist” VEOs or what roughly corresponds to “new terrorism” (Laqueur 1999) will not respond to negotiations with less violence.

Detailed Analyses

89: *Engagement with VEOs in negotiations reduces violence.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Qualitative evidence on this issue is mixed. Cronin (2009) cites the Israeli-Palestinian case as an example of negotiations seemingly leading to more violence, though the level of violence that would have occurred in the absence of negotiation is unclear. Cronin suggests that the Sri Lankan government's negotiation with the LTTE reduced violence, although government brutality ultimately ended the group. However, she also purports that negotiations rarely end terrorism or reduce violence as terrorist attacks only require a few disgruntled operatives. Clutterbuck (1992), offering anecdotes from a collection of cases, argues that negotiations can reduce violence since the more groups that negotiate, the less time they have to commit more violence. However, this can lead to attacks by other groups if concessions by the government are made.

Miller (1993) provides solid qualitative evidence of negotiating with terrorists as he uses the same organization (Black September) in three separate hostage negotiations. His results suggest that negotiations have mixed results. Similar quantitative evidence also finds mixed outcomes for negotiations (Friedland and Merari 1992).

Two empirical studies also address the hypothesis. Cronin (2009) attempts a cross-national quantitative empirical study that offers the inference that negotiations have little impact on the likelihood that terrorist groups end or thus that violence will end. Bapat (2006) restricts his empirical analysis to hostage negotiations, perhaps the most public form of negotiations, and finds evidence

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using the ITERATE database of transnational terrorist events from 1968 to 1991. While his two-stage model investigates commitment to negotiations and fulfillment, it is reasonable to assume some correlation with fulfillment and a reduction in future violence. He finds that groups operating in states that are weak are less likely to fulfill their obligations in bargaining.

Empirical Support Score: 2

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The discussed studies take place in the context of VEOs. Some arguments suggest that there is a difference based on time period (i.e., that negotiations were possible with some groups, but the new terrorists cannot be negotiated with). There is no corroborating evidence for this.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs

90: *Only good faith, substantive engagement with VEOs in negotiations reduces violence.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is no relevant empirical evidence.

Empirical Support Score: 0

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: N/A.

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context.

91: *In a domestic context, VEOs agree to negotiate if they can preserve their reputation (e.g., not be seen to lose) and there are credible guarantees that the government will not double-cross them.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is no directly relevant empirical evidence. However, Bapat (2006), addressed above, may tangentially inform this hypothesis if additional studies are conducted.

Empirical Support Score: 0

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: N/A

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context.

92: *It is generally in the government's best interest to negotiate with VEOs only when the group is gaining momentum.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is no empirical evidence addressing the hypothesis.

Empirical Support Score: 0

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: N/A

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context.

93: *VEOs are more likely to negotiate when they see themselves 'losing ground' (e.g., PLO).*

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Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is no empirical evidence addressing the hypothesis.

Empirical Support Score: 0

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Directly relevant.

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context.

94: *Negotiations with VEOs can benefit from third party involvement as mediators or guarantors.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is no empirical evidence addressing the hypothesis.

Empirical Support Score: 0

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: N/A

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context.

95: *Negotiating with VEOs can lead to more terror as a result of spoilers.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Kydd and Walter (2002) suggest spoilers have an incentive to derail peace processes as they have a stake in not allowing moderates to make some form of negotiated settlement. A case study of negotiations during the Palestinian-Israeli conflict serves as evidence for this claim. Cronin, citing Walter (2002), shows data that terrorist attacks that occur during negotiations lead to a 25% success rate for the treaty as opposed to 60% without attacks suggesting spoilers can influence future violence.

Empirical Support Score: 8

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The issue of importance is that this hypothesis is inherently conditional. If multiple groups are present in a conflict, negotiations can increase violence as one party will have an incentive to spoil the peace. It may not apply to situations with one clear VEO opponent. Since most of the current security threats fit this more fragmented model, this is directly applicable.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

96: *Negotiations do not lead to the demise of the VEO.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: As stated above, Cronin (2009) has case evidence and some cross-national evidence to support this claim. Jones and Libicki (2008) also suggest government accommodation can lead to defections and lead to the demise of a group.

Empirical Support Score: 3

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The relevant studies are in the context of VEOs; however, there is need for investigating in post 9/11 world using time-series data.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

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