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Anchoring the Peace: Civil Society Actors in Peace Accords and Durable Peace

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Is peace more likely to prevail when the peace accord includes civil society actors such as religious groups, women's organizations, and human rights groups? This is the first statistical study that explores this issue. The article develops key claims in previous research regarding the role of civil society actors and durable peace, and proposes a set of hypotheses that focus on legitimacy in this process. The hypotheses are examined by employing unique data on the inclusion of civil society actors in all peace agreements in the post-Cold War period. The statistical analysis shows that inclusion of civil society actors in the peace settlement increases the durability of peace. The results further demonstrate that peace accords with involvement from civil society actors and political parties in combination are more likely to see peace prevail. The findings also suggest that inclusion of civil society has a particularly profound effect on the prospects for overall peace in nondemocratic societies.

KEYWORDS *armed conflict, civil society, civil war, inclusion, peace agreement*

Many contend that peace processes are exclusive endeavors that too often fail to involve other actors besides the main belligerents. Negotiation processes aiming to bring conflict to an end frequently take place behind closed

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doors between two or more of the warring parties (Barnes 2002). Indeed, sometimes actors from civil society are deliberately left out of the negotiations. For instance, in the Bosnian peace process leading up to the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995, non-warring parties were excluded from the talks; reaching a deal among the main warring parties was given priority over the inclusion of civil society actors (Belloni 2001, 2008). At the same time, we know that it does happen that such actors are brought into the peace deal. Liberia is a case in point. The settlement reached in 2003 was signed not only by the government and two different rebel groups—the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL)—but also by eighteen political parties and several civil society organizations, such as the Inter-Religious Council for Liberia and the Mano River Women Peace Network. Thus, in some cases efforts are made to incorporate civil society, whereas in other instances such actors are excluded from the peace agreement.

However, we know very little regarding if and how the involvement of civil society actors in peace accords affect the durability of peace, and so far no quantitative study has statistically explored this issue. There is an emerging research field that is devoted to the role of civil society actors and durable peace, but most research has been limited to case studies. This article aims to begin filling this gap by conducting the first statistical evaluation of whether and how the inclusion of civil society in peace accords affects the durability of peace. I develop key claims in previous literature and propose a set of hypotheses that focuses on the role of legitimacy in this process. These are tested with unique data on the inclusion of civil society actors in all peace agreements signed in the post-Cold War period. The focus is on the formal involvement of civil society, more specifically whether civil society actors based on the text of the peace agreement are given a role in drafting the agreement, or the accord stipulates that they are to participate in the subsequent peace process. The results from the analysis are largely consistent with the expectation that the inclusion of civil society actors may serve to enhance the legitimacy of the peace process and increase the prospects for peace. To begin with, the statistical analysis shows that the inclusion of civil society actors in the peace settlement can serve to increase the durability of peace. The findings also demonstrate that peace deals with involvement from civil society actors and political parties in combination are more likely to see peace prevail. The results further suggest that the inclusion of civil society actors is particularly important for the overall prospects for peace in nondemocratic countries. Taken together, the results of this article suggest that the inclusion of civil society actors in peace accords can be of critical importance in anchoring the peace. The findings are robust to many alternative specifications and robustness checks. Since civil society actors could be more likely to become included if there already is an active and vibrant civil society present, a separate analysis was also

carried out to examine this possibility. The analysis showed little evidence of such a selection effect.

The article proceeds as follows. I begin by discussing the lacuna in previous research and then develop a few hypotheses concerning whether and how the inclusion of civil society actors influence the durability of peace. Next, I describe the research design, which includes a presentation of data on the involvement of civil society actors in 83 peace agreements, 1989–2004. This is followed by the results and analysis, which begins by delineating the patterns of how frequently such actors are made part of settlements, and then proceeds to present the findings from the statistical analysis. Last, I draw some conclusions and suggest avenues for future research.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DURABLE PEACE

Research Gap

There is an increasing body of literature that seeks to explore if and under what conditions the involvement of civil society actors may influence peacebuilding. However, this research is mainly limited to case studies (for example, Belloni 2001; Issaka and Bushoki 2005; Orjuela 2004; Paffenholz 2010a; Toure 2002; van Tongeren, Brenk, Hellema, and Verhoeven 2005; World Bank 2005). In fact, no quantitative study has statistically investigated whether civil society actors' involvement in peace accords have an effect on the durability of peace. The closest the research community has come in terms of providing such an analysis are the studies by Bell and O'Rourke (2007) and Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008), which both explore the involvement of civil society actors in peace agreements. Bell and O'Rourke (2007) give an interesting overview of provisions concerning civil society involvement in peace agreements, but they make no effort to assess whether this factor has an effect on the durability of peace. Similarly, in an analysis of about twenty peace negotiations, Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008) find that the involvement of civil society actors is positively associated with the durability of peace, but they rely exclusively on cross-tabulations and make no attempt to examine whether the relationship is statistically significant. Thus, we are still lacking a systematic analysis that statistically explores this issue.

Looking at previous large- N studies seeking to explain durable peace, it is true that they examine a broad range of factors including power-sharing arrangements, conflict and country characteristics, and the role of third parties, in particular the presence of peacekeeping forces (for example, Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Fortna 2004; Gurses, Rost and McLeod 2008; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007; Walter 2002). However, to the extent that the inclusion of actors in peace accords has been dealt with, the focus has been on how the warring parties affect the durability

of peace (Nilsson 2008). While this research is important, there is clearly a need to look beyond the warring parties and also study the involvement of nonwarring parties in peace processes. Hence, so far, our knowledge on this topic is limited, and this study seeks to make an empirical contribution to the field by providing the first statistical study on the inclusion of civil society actors and its impact on the durability of peace.

Civil Society in Peace Accords

Why, or why not, should civil society actors be included in a peace settlement and how may this impact on the prospects for peace? While there is an increasing body of literature dealing with this issue, no coherent theories can be found. As Paffenholz (2010b:43) puts it, “. . . we face a real deficit of theories about the concept of civil society in peacebuilding.” There are, however, a number of arguments and ideas that have been put forward concerning how the involvement of civil society actors could influence the durability of peace, and I will here take a first cut at this issue by focusing on the role of legitimacy in this process. Drawing on previous research, I will develop key claims and propose a set of hypotheses that will enable a systematic evaluation of whether and how the inclusion of civil society in peace accords affects the prospects for peace.

Before doing so, I will first briefly outline how the concept of civil society is being used in this article. Civil society is a contested concept that can be defined in many different ways. Yet, civil society is commonly seen as separate from the state with its governmental institutions, and distinct from the political sphere, which comprises political parties (Spurk 2010:7). Belloni (2008:182) refers to civil society as “. . . the set of voluntary organizations and groups not created by the state . . .” In line with this, civil society is here seen as separate from the state and political parties, and consists of the wide range of voluntary organizations in society such as religious associations, women’s organizations, human rights groups, and trade unions. It is also acknowledged that civil society may in fact not be so “civil” (Krznicaric 1999; Orjuela 2003). If the actors are perceived as closely tied to the warring parties, or if they engage in corruption and pursue their own personal interests, they may lack the “social capital” that such actors otherwise could have brought into the process (Putnam 2000). This may reflect that civil society is as divided as the larger society in which it is embedded (Belloni 2008:207).¹ Moreover, whereas civil society actors can participate in various ways and at different stages of a peace process, in this article the focus is on their formal involvement as stipulated in the peace accord. Civil society actors are

¹It is thus acknowledged that civil society in some cases may be divided or may pursue interests of only a few individuals and hence not necessarily being representative of broader segments of society; however, to make a qualitative assessment of this issue lies outside the scope of this study.

considered to be included in a peace agreement when they—based on the text of the peace agreement—are given a role in drafting the agreement, or the agreement stipulates that they are to participate in the subsequent peace process. For example, civil society actors may have a seat at the negotiation table and act as one of the signatories to the agreement, or the peace accord may stipulate that they are to be given a position in some kind of monitoring body or commission during the implementation phase.

Previous research on this topic consists of arguments both in favor of and against the inclusion of civil society actors. On the one hand, it may be preferable to include actors from a broad range of society as a way of garnering support for the peace process; on the other hand, the inclusion of too many actors can complicate negotiations and may even prevent an agreement from being reached in the first place. Thus, there is a potential dilemma between enhancing the legitimacy of the peace process, and ensuring its efficacy (Jarstad and Sisk 2008). As regards efficacy, several scholars have emphasized that the inclusion of civil society actors may increase the complexity of the peace negotiations, which at worst can prevent an agreement from being reached (Cunningham 2007; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008).² According to Cunningham (2007:16), bringing in unarmed groups into the peace negotiations may involve additional veto players, which can make it more difficult to arrive at an agreement. Furthermore, even if such actors are not given the power to veto a settlement, by participating they will at least get some benefits from the peace deal, and thereby reduce the concessions that possibly can be given to the armed groups in order to make them stop fighting (Cunningham 2007). Thus, the inclusion of civil society actors may shrink the set of potential concessions and make it harder to convince the warring actors to stop fighting and implement the peace settlement.

Whereas some scholars think civil society actors would impede the efficacy of the peace process others argue that civil society actors may help build legitimacy for the peace process. For instance, Belloni (2008:199) states that while there are issues regarding efficacy to consider, “. . .the inclusion of civil society representatives in peacemaking negotiations can increase the legitimacy of a peace agreement and the prospects for its implementation . . .” Civil society is often viewed as able to contribute precisely in this regard, by facilitating legitimacy for the peace process (for example, Barnes 2002; Bell and O’Rourke 2007; Koppell 2007; McKeon 2005). More specifically, it has been suggested that there are at least three different roles that civil society actors may engage in so as to contribute to creating legitimacy and ownership of the peace process. First, sometimes there are consultations with civil society organizations to get to know their perspective on issues that are discussed among the warring parties. The dialogue process

²For a related discussion concerning the role of international human rights organizations in peace implementation, see Putnam (2002).

in Guatemala—where various representatives from civil society were given an opportunity to present their views on key issues—is often put forward as a successful example in this regard. Second, civil society groups that have a certain degree of political support may also be given a seat at the negotiation table in order to influence the negotiation process through representative decision making. Finally, there is the possibility of direct participation by actors at the grassroots level engaging in intercommunity meetings and other public fora. To exemplify, it has been suggested that the intercommunity meetings in Mali served an important role in creating ownership of the process; it was only after the peace process had been made highly inclusive with participation from large spectra of society that violence in the country subsided (Barnes 2002; McKeon 2005:572; Blaydes and De Maio 2010:20–23). Common for all these forms of participation is the notion that a peace process that is not merely top-down, but also contains elements of peacebuilding from below, is expected to produce more stable outcomes. Here civil society actors are key as they can contribute by creating an ownership of the peace agreement (for example, Lederach 1997; Prendergast and Plumb 2002). Thus, based on the above discussion the following hypothesis can be formulated.

H1: *If civil society actors are included in the peace agreement, peace is more likely to prevail.*

Among the arguments in favor of including civil society actors, it has been emphasized that actors ought to come from different segments of society in order to create a consensus for the peace process (Barnes 2002; Koppell 2007; McKeon 2004). According to McKeon (2004), “. . . by opening peace negotiations to a wider range of social and political actors, the process can gain broader public legitimacy and in turn become more durable.” Likewise, Koppell (2007) states that the stability of war-torn societies depends “. . . upon the participation of all stakeholders, not just warriors; to succeed, peace agreements need broad legitimacy in society.” The underlying argument is that if actors from different spectra of society are included it is easier to build legitimacy for the peace process among the population at large. In turn, this will be of importance for the warring actors when they consider the cost and benefits of remaining at peace or going back to the battlefield. While civil society actors represent one critical set of actors, the involvement of other actors such as political parties can help facilitate a process characterized by inclusiveness, with a high degree of ownership from large segments of the population (McKeon 2005). Thus, peace could potentially be more likely to prevail if both civil society actors and political parties are included in the peace agreement. At the same time, political actors may in some conflicts have their own interests at stake in a way that other actors do not, and may, for example, serve to exacerbate

divisions (Orjuela 2003:201). In general, however, it is reasonable to expect that a peace accord that includes actors from different segments of society should make it easier to build legitimacy for the peace process, which could be of importance for making peace last. Hence, the second hypothesis is proposed to assess the effect of civil society actors in combination with political parties.

H2: If both civil society actors and political parties are included in the peace agreement, peace is more likely to prevail.

The type of political system within which civil society actors are operating is also likely to be of significance. Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008) suggest that civil society actors may be most needed in the peace negotiations where the warring actors are generally undemocratic. They argue that in cases such as Liberia where the warring parties consisted of various warlords, civil society actors can represent the broader segments of the population and possibly pressure the warring actors to act according to democratic principles. In contrast, in cases such as South Africa where both the apartheid government and the ANC were democratically elected among the constituencies that they represented, the participation of civil society actors was less urgent (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008:30–31). Similarly, Blaydes and de Maio (2010:23), propose that in situations where rebel groups are “. . . characterised by internally democratic institutions, this reduces the incentives for spoiler violence.” Hence, in societies with strong democratic values, there may be less need for civil society to become involved, whereas in nondemocratic regimes civil society actors may have a critical role to fill. We should thus expect to see that civil society actors is of particular importance for the durability of peace in nondemocratic societies as they there can represent a wider segment of the population and help build legitimacy for the peace process, and also pressure the parties into acting in a more democratic fashion. This leads to the third hypothesis.

H3: The inclusion of civil society actors in the peace agreement is expected to have a more pronounced positive effect on the durability of peace in nondemocracies compared to democracies.

Previous research on civil society in peacebuilding has not been very explicit regarding how the inclusion of civil society actors can influence the behavior of the warring actors. In particular, previous studies have not specified how the inclusion of civil society actors could affect warring parties on the inside as well as on the outside of the peace accord. There are, however, good reasons for why we should expect the involvement of civil society actors to influence both these two dimensions of durable peace.

First, the warring actors that are signatories to an agreement could potentially more easily be held accountable for their actions if civil society is involved. According to Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008:24) “. . .civil society participation in peace processes can also help set in motion dynamics that result in greater accountability from the combatant parties as they transition from negotiation to peacebuilding. . .” Involvement from civil society actors may result in an increased transparency of the peace process, as more actors gain insight in the negotiation process, get to know what has been agreed to, and become informed about how the implementation is supposed to be carried out. This should make it easier to hold the warring actors accountable for their actions in the implementation phase. McKeon (2005:571) brings out monitoring and compliance as one important role for civil society, and suggests that civil society may hold perpetrators of violations accountable for their actions. Thus, if some of the warring parties threaten to step back from previous promises they have made, or otherwise hinder the implementation of certain aspects of the peace accord, civil society can potentially put pressure on these actors. In sum, if civil society actors become involved, this could result in increased transparency and make it easier to hold the signatories accountable for their commitments, which in turn may affect their incentives to stick to peace.

The involvement of civil society actors may, however, not only affect the signatories, but can also serve as an indication to warring parties on the outside of an agreement that the support for continued violence in the society at large is reduced. Thus, the costs of engaging in violence may increase also for warring actors who did not sign the agreement. If society in general appears to be moving away from violence and there is an increased support generated for a peace process, outside rebel groups may find that the costs of continued conflict are increasing, for example, in terms of recruiting supporters. Hence, civil society actors could possibly help convince excluded actors that it is in their interest to refrain from violence. While spoilers may be found both on the inside and outside of a peace accord, all warring actors are likely to consider the potential costs and benefits of engaging in violence, and adapt their behavior accordingly (Greenhill and Major 2007). According to Blaydes and De Maio (2010), the inclusion of civil society actors can affect the prospects for peace in society, as a peace process where all relevant actors are included can serve to prevent spoilers from emerging. They argue that if groups feel that their interests are not represented at the negotiation table, such groups have incentives to act as spoilers in the wake of a deal. This suggests that the inclusion of civil society could affect not only the signatories, but also the warring actors on the outside of a deal. Hence, in order to assess the above arguments all hypotheses will first be examined with the conflict behavior of the signatory warring parties in focus, and secondly, by taking into account the conflict behavior of signatories as well as nonsignatories.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Data and Statistical Method

I employ data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Project (UCDP), which covers all internal armed conflicts in the period 1989–2004. If not stated otherwise, all the data used in this article comes from the UCDP. An internal armed conflict is defined as a contested incompatibility between the government and one or more opposition party, fought over government and/or territory, and which results in 25 or more battle-related deaths in at least one calendar year (UCDP 2008). Each conflict consists of one or more dyads, where the government and each rebel group have reached this level of 25 battle-related deaths. This means that there can be two or more such warring parties, of which one is always the government. The conflicts where the government and one or more rebel group have signed at least one peace agreement that regulate all or part of the incompatibility are included in the analysis. This results in a data set that covers 83 peace agreements reached in 40 different conflicts in the post–Cold War period.

In order to explore the role of civil society actors it is necessary to have data on the inclusion of such actors in peace accords. To this end, the data set TOPAD (Terms of Peace Agreements Data) is employed which contains information on the terms of all peace agreements in the period 1989–2004 (Nilsson, Svensson, and Sundberg 2006). This data set is based on the original texts of the peace agreements and uses the extensive list of peace agreements that is available from the UCDP.³ Importantly, for the purpose of this article, the TOPAD data set contains information on whether civil society actors were part of the peace agreement or not.

I use duration analysis as the statistical method, more specifically, I employ a Cox proportional hazards model. In such a model the interest lies in the duration of time until some event takes place. In this study, an event is considered to have taken place when the warring parties engage in a post-settlement armed conflict above the level of 25 battle-related deaths.⁴ All peace agreements are observed as of the year following the signing of the agreement until the parties engage in post-settlement armed conflict, or the observation period ends.⁵ I use a time-varying model, which makes it

³In a few instances, where the original texts could not be located, summaries of the peace agreements were used.

⁴Some parties may not necessarily have stopped fighting but simply continue to fight following the agreement.

⁵There are a few instances where the peace agreement is censored prior to the end of the observation period. If the signatories sign a peace agreement, stick to peace, and then reach another agreement, the subsequent agreement is seen as replacing the previous agreement. This means that the dependent variable has been censored at the time of the signing of the subsequent agreement, as there otherwise is a risk of overestimating the effect of the duration of peace.

possible to account for the fact that some of the variables vary over time; hence, for each of the 83 peace agreements there are multiple observations.⁶

Dependent Variables

Since there may be several warring parties in a civil war, and some may have signed the deal, while others not, it is of interest to not only study whether the signatories stick to peace or not, but also to explore if peace prevails or not in the conflict as a whole. Hence, I make a distinction between peace that fails as a result of post-settlement violence involving the signatories (thus, not taking into account violence involving outside actors), and peace that breaks down due to violence from either signatories or nonsignatories. Two dependent variables were created. The first variable makes it possible to address whether the warring parties that are signatories to a peace agreement stick to peace or not. The variable *Peace Duration—Signatories* captures the number of years that the signatory warring parties are at peace from the signing of the agreement until they engage in post-settlement armed conflict, or alternatively, if peace prevails, to the end of the observation period. The second variable captures the prospects for peace in the conflict as a whole, and takes into account the conflict behavior of all warring parties in the conflict (the actors may, or may not, have signed the deal in question). Hence, the variable *Peace Duration—All Parties* measures the number of years that the warring parties are at peace from the point where an agreement is reached until either a signatory or a nonsignatory engage in post-settlement conflict, or alternatively, if peace prevails, till the end of the observation period.⁷

Independent and Control Variables

Civil society actors are considered to be included in a peace agreement when they, based on the text of the peace agreement, are given a role in drafting the agreement, or the accord stipulates that they are to participate in the subsequent peace process. The variable *Civil Society Inclusion* is coded 1 if at least some civil society actor is included in the peace deal, and is otherwise coded 0. In order to assess whether civil society actors in combination with political parties has an effect on peace, the variable *Civil Society & Political Parties* was created.⁸ The variable is coded 1 if there is

⁶The total sample is 331 and 221 observations, depending on the dependent variable in focus.

⁷This variable takes into account the conflict behavior of not only the warring parties that were active prior to agreement in question, but also new warring parties that emerge in the conflict. Note that the interest lies with actors that are active in the same incompatibility and not actors in other conflicts. For example, in the conflict fought in Bodoland in India, all warring parties in that conflict are considered, but not the warring parties that are active in other conflicts in India (for example in Assam).

⁸I did not want to assess this relationship by including an interaction term and the two component variables since the inclusion of civil society and political parties are highly correlated (0.85).

both a civil society actor and a political party included in the peace deal, and is otherwise coded 0. Admittedly, these are crude measures to use in order to capture the involvement from civil society actors. There is variation not only in terms of the sheer number of actors that are involved, but also concerning the extent of their engagement in the peace negotiations, but currently there is no such data available. In fact, there is no record of the number of participants in the peace talks. Nevertheless, this inquiry can be seen as an important first step into exploring this issue.⁹

In order to examine the third hypothesis, I need information on whether the country is democratic or not. I use data from the Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited data set (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010) that builds on work by Alvarez, Cheibub, Limongi, and Przeworski (1996) and Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi (2000). Following their definition, the dummy variable *Democracy* is coded 1 where the “. . . executive and legislative offices are filled through contested elections . . .” and is otherwise coded 0 (Cheibub et al. 2010:97). To ensure the causal ordering, I use lagged values of this variable. This measure is employed as an independent variable together with the interaction term *Civil Society*Democracy* to assess if the inclusion of civil society is particularly profound in nondemocratic societies. The democracy variable is also used as a control variable in the other models.

In order to ascertain that the results obtained are not spurious I introduce some other control variables. I control for the number of warring parties in the conflict since this aspect may affect the inclusion of civil society actors and possibly also can make peace more fragile (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). Hence, the variable *Number of Warring Parties* captures the number of parties that have been active in the conflict since 1989 and onwards.¹⁰ Another factor that could affect the results is the type of deal reached. Some findings show that peace accords that contain a higher degree of provisions for power sharing are more likely to see peace endure (for example, Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). The variable *Power Sharing* captures the number of power sharing provisions—political, military, or territorial power sharing—that the settlement contains, ranging from 0 to 3.¹¹

It is also important to control for some of the characteristics of the conflict such as the type of conflict issue, the intensity of the conflict, and the duration of the conflict, as these have been found to affect the durability of peace (for example, Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Fortna 2003; Hartzell and

⁹Note that in line with most previous quantitative research on durable peace this study is limited to examining the stipulations in the agreements, and hence, does not look at the implementation of these provisions. For an exception, see Jarstad and Nilsson (2008).

¹⁰The number of warring parties may vary over the years, and hence, the variable takes into account if there are warring parties that cease to exist, or alternatively, if new rebel groups emerge.

¹¹I use data on power sharing from the dataset TOPAD. The definitions concerning the different types of power sharing are in line with Walter (2002).

Hoddie 2003; Walter 2002). The variable *Conflict Issue* is coded 1 if the conflict concerns government control and is coded 0 if the conflict is fought over territory. Furthermore, the variable *Conflict Intensity* captures whether the conflict in a given year, or previously during the observation period, has reached the level of 1000 battle-related deaths.¹² If so, the variable is coded 1, and 0 otherwise. The variable *Conflict Duration* is measured as the number of years since the conflict first became active above the level of 25 battle-related deaths.¹³

Robustness Checks

I conduct some alternative specifications where I have sought to account for the vibrancy of civil society. Since there is no data set that accounts for the strength of domestic civil society, I have had to rely on other measures. To begin with, I employ a data set that contains information on global civil society networks. This data set is based on the Yearbook on International Organizations, which lists all organizations with members in three or more countries (Smith 2008; Union of International Associations).¹⁴ Whereas this measure focuses on transnational organizations, there are several studies showing that countries with a strong transnational civil society also have a more vibrant domestic civil society (for example, Lewis 2000; Stark, Vedres, and Bruszt 2006). Hence, this measure can at least in part be seen as a proxy for a more vibrant civil society. The variable *Count of Organizations*_{log} is a yearly count of how many such transnational organizations that are based in each country, divided by the population. Since this measure is highly skewed I use the log of this variable.

I also introduce a few measures to capture the opportunity for civil society actors to be active in society without risking physical reprisals (for example, extrajudicial killings) as well as the positive inducements that may facilitate an active engagement (for example, freedom of expression and right to organize). The data comes from the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset (2008). The variable *Physical Integrity Rights* is an index that ranges from 0 to 8, where 0 indicates no respect for four basic human rights (torture, extrajudicial killings, political imprisonment, and disappearances) and 8 indicate full respect for these rights. Similarly, *Empowerment Rights* is an index ranging from 0 to 10, where 0 indicates no respect for five basic human rights (freedom of movement, freedom of speech, worker's rights, political participation, and freedom of religion) and

¹²The reason for using a dichotomous measure is that there is no continuous measure of the causalities available in the UCDP data.

¹³This variable extends back in time prior to 1989 since some conflicts began before the start of the observation period.

¹⁴For details on coding see Smith (2004).

10 represent full respect for these rights (Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset 2008).¹⁵

In addition to the above specifications, I will explore the possibility that there might be a selection effect whereby civil society actors are more likely to be included in certain types of conflicts. Hence, I conduct a separate analysis where I examine this prior stage in the process. I first examine the determinants of the signing of peace agreements, and then move on to examine if the same set of factors affects the signing of peace agreements that include civil society. The data that is required to conduct this analysis is available in a dyadic data set covering all armed conflicts active under the period under study. In this data set, the unit of analysis is the dyad-year, and each dyad consists of a government and a rebel group that is engaged in an armed conflict, with yearly observations for each dyad.¹⁶ I created two dependent variables where the first variable *Peace Agreement* is coded 1 if the government and a rebel group in a given year reach a peace agreement and 0 otherwise. The second dependent variable *Civil Society-Peace Agreement* is coded 1 if the government and a rebel group in a given year reach a peace agreement that includes civil society, and is otherwise coded 0. I use basically the same set of variables as at the peace agreement level when examining whether there are any notable differences in explaining these two types of outcomes.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Before presenting the results from the statistical analysis, I will give some brief descriptive information. How common is it then that civil society actors are incorporated into peace agreements in civil wars? Out of the 83 peace agreements signed in the post-Cold War period, 34% (28) of the settlements included at least one civil society actor, while 66% (55) settlements did not. Moreover, the inclusion of civil society actors is frequently coupled with representation from various political parties. Out of the 28 peace agreements that included some kind of civil society actor, 22 of the peace deals also included one or more political party. Such peace accords can, for example, be found in Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guatemala, and Mexico. The Lusaka peace accord signed in 1999 in the DRC called for the inclusion of “. . . the political opposition as well as representatives of the *forces vives*,” meaning “. . .all the stakeholders representatives of

¹⁵This data is available in the Quality of Government Dataset (Teorell, Charron, Samanni, Holmberg, and Rothstein 2011).

¹⁶For further details on the structure of the dataset, see Nilsson (2008).

the civil society such as the churches, Trade Unions etc.”¹⁷ Similarly, the settlement reached in Mexico 1996 sought to incorporate both civil society and political parties. There are also peace settlements that included civil society actors but not political parties, for example, the Mindanao Final Agreement reached in 1996 in the Philippines, and the Bougainville Peace Agreement signed in 2001 in Papua New Guinea. The Bougainville agreement did not only stipulate that the legislature may include members that “. . . represent special interests, such as women, youth, churches,” but the agreement was also signed by a Bougainville women’s group.¹⁸ Thus, there are many different ways to involve civil society actors in the peace settlements.

This can at the very least give an indication of civil society actors’ inclusion in peace accords, and make it possible to distinguish peace deals that did not give any role to civil society actors, from those that had some kind of involvement from such actors. Notably, in the peace agreements where civil society actors were included, the involvement could be more or less extensive; whereas some actors had a seat at the negotiation table, others were just given a minor role in the peace accord. Keeping this in mind, civil society actors were given at least some role in more than a third (28 out of 83) of the peace accords that were signed in the post-1989 period.

Effect on Durable Peace

I now turn to the question of whether the involvement of such actors has any kind of impact on the durability of peace. Recall that the dependent variable *Peace Duration—Signatories*, refers to the conflict behavior of the signatories and whether these actors stick to peace or not. The dependent variable *Peace Duration—All Parties*, in contrast, considers the conflict behavior of signatories as well as non-signatories. The hazard ratios are reported and these are interpreted relative to one. For example, a value of 1.35 means that the risk of peace failing is increased by 35%, whereas a value of 0.55 indicates that the risk of peace breaking down is decreased by 45%. The results from the main statistical analysis are available in Table 1.

The first hypothesis suggested that inclusion of civil society actors increases the durability of peace. If we begin by looking at whether the signatories stick to peace, the first model shows that the variable *Civil Society Inclusion* has a significant effect at the .05 level (Model 1, Table 1). Turning to the effect of this variable on the overall prospects for peace, that is, when

¹⁷See Annex A, Article 5.2a; and Annex C of the 1999 peace accord in DRC. For the text of many of these peace agreements, see UCDP (2008).

¹⁸See Article B4, and the list of signatories to the agreement.

TABLE 1 Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Accords and the Risk of Peace Failing

	Peace Duration—Signatories			Peace Duration—All Parties		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Civil Society Inclusion</i>	0.459** (0.158)		0.527* (0.182)	0.502** (0.143)		0.567** (0.154)
<i>Civil Society & Political Parties</i>		0.379*** (0.134)			0.395*** (0.122)	
<i>Democracy</i>	0.926 (0.457)	1.062 (0.562)	1.509 (1.096)	1.217 (0.540)	1.392 (0.639)	1.574 (0.888)
<i>Civil Society*Democracy</i>			0.387 (0.374)			0.517 (0.406)
<i>Number of Warring Parties</i>	1.013 (0.120)	1.066 (0.127)	0.999 (0.112)	1.314*** (0.104)	1.363*** (0.113)	1.291*** (0.100)
<i>Power Sharing</i>	0.528*** (0.112)	0.535*** (0.114)	0.506*** (0.110)	0.745** (0.112)	0.758* (0.115)	0.733** (0.109)
<i>Conflict Duration</i>	1.001 (0.018)	0.998 (0.019)	1.003 (0.017)	0.998 (0.015)	0.994 (0.016)	0.999 (0.015)
<i>Conflict Intensity</i>	2.541** (0.940)	2.857*** (0.975)	2.671** (1.023)	1.875** (0.528)	2.111*** (0.547)	1.895** (0.524)
<i>Conflict Issue</i>	2.005 (0.936)	2.009 (1.009)	2.530* (1.404)	1.370 (0.517)	1.476 (0.606)	1.589 (0.736)
Observations	331	331	331	221	221	221
Number of subjects	83	83	83	83	83	83
Number of failures	29	29	29	51	51	51
Log likelihood	-112.999	-112.684	-112.689	-203.420	-202.506	-203.107

Note: A Cox proportional hazards model is employed. Hazard ratios rather than coefficients are reported, with robust standard errors statistics given in parentheses clustered on conflict. *Statistically significant at the .10 level. **Statistically significant at the .05 level. ***Statistically significant at the .01 level. Two-tailed tests are used. Stata 11.1 was used to generate the statistical results.

considering all warring parties in the conflict, there is again a statistically significant effect at the .05 level in the expected direction (Model 4, Table 1). If civil society actors are included in the peace deal, the risk of peace failing regarding the signatories is reduced by 64%, whereas the corresponding figure for the overall peace is 50%. Thus, the inclusion of civil society actors does seem to matter for the durability of peace concerning both dimensions of peace.

The findings regarding the second hypothesis confirm the expectation that it is of importance for the durability of peace to include both civil society actors and political parties in the peace deal. When investigating the effect of the variable *Civil Society & Political Parties*, a statistically significant effect is found at the .01 level indicating a decrease in the risk of post-settlement armed conflict involving the signatories (Model 2, Table 1). More specifically, if there are both civil society actors and political parties included in a peace accord, the risk that peace fails concerning the signatory warring parties is decreased by 62%. When instead looking at the effect of this variable on the overall prospects for peace, that is, when signatories as well as nonsignatories are taken into account, there is again a significant effect in the expected direction at the .01 level (Model 5, Table 1). Similarly to the results regarding the signatories, the risk of the overall peace breaking down is reduced by 60% if there is a combination of civil society actors and political parties in the peace accord. Given that civil society actors and political parties frequently are being made part of the same settlement makes it difficult to disentangle the separate effects of these actors. Indeed, since there is a high correlation between political parties and civil society it would be inappropriate to include separate measures for these two types of actors in the same model. Yet, it is reassuring that this combined measure comes out highly significant across all models, and the analysis shows no indication that adding more actors has a negative effect on the post-settlement peace. The result rather seems to suggest that it is important for the durability of peace to have different spectra of society included as a way of garnering support and legitimacy for the peace process.

The third hypothesis proposed that civil society actors have a more profound effect in nondemocracies than in democracies. In order to explore if there exist such an effect, I added the interaction term *Civil Society*Democracy*. In a model with an interaction term, the variable of interest shows the effect of this variable when the other variable is held at 0 (Braumoeller 2004). Hence, I evaluate the effect of civil society inclusion in the context of nondemocratic regimes by looking at the hazard ratio of the civil society variable. The variable *Civil Society Inclusion* show a weakly significant effect at the .10 level on the likelihood that the signatories stick to peace in nondemocratic countries (Model 3, Table 1). However, such an effect is also found when looking at the effect of civil society only in democracies suggesting that there is no notable difference between these

two contexts. Turning to the effect on the overall prospects for peace, taking into account the conflict behavior of all warring parties, the findings show that the inclusion of civil society actors has significant effect at the .05 level in nondemocracies (Model 6, Table 1), whereas no such effect is found in democracies. Thus, the third hypothesis only receives support when it comes to the overall durability of peace. The results show that the inclusion of civil society actors in a peace accord reduces the risk that the overall peace fails in nondemocracies by about 43%.

The above findings suggest that inclusion of additional players into a peace accord does not have negative implications for the durability of peace as been suggested in some previous work (for example, Cunningham 2007). In contrast, the results rather seem to indicate that given that a settlement ultimately is reached, the inclusion of civil society actors is beneficial for peace. At the same time, and as mentioned above, the civil society measure does not capture the number of actors involved, or whether civil society has a seat at the negotiation table, and future research should therefore investigate this issue further. So far, however, there is nothing to suggest that civil society actors should be excluded from the peace accord; rather, the findings consistently show that civil society inclusion does matter for post-settlement peace. It is found that the inclusion of civil society actors in peace accords can serve to increase the prospects for peace. The statistical analysis further demonstrates that it is important for the durability of peace to include actors from civil society in combination with political parties. The findings thus support previous studies suggesting that involving actors from different segments of society appears to be beneficial for peace (for example, Barnes 2002; McKeon 2005). In addition, I examined if the involvement of civil society actors is especially relevant in societies lacking strong democratic institutions. In line with previous work on this topic, the results showed that the need for civil society inclusion might be stronger under certain conditions, as it was found that civil society inclusion is of particular importance for the overall peace in nondemocratic settings (for example, Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). Taken together, the results here are largely consistent with the idea that the inclusion of civil society in peace accords can serve to enhance legitimacy of the peace process, which in turn would likely enhance the prospects for peace.

These results have been obtained while controlling for some critical factors identified in previous research.¹⁹ Looking at some of the significant effects of the main control variables one can note that the number of warring parties significantly affects the risk that the overall peace in the conflict breaks down, but does not affect the post-settlement conflict behavior of the signatories. This makes sense as this factor can be expected to have

¹⁹I have also estimated trimmed models, where the insignificant variables have been dropped. The results are basically the same.

a more immediate effect when the conflict behavior of all parties in the conflict is taken into account, whereas the effect on the signatories may be more limited. In addition, in line with previous research on durable peace I find that the degree of power-sharing provisions increases the likelihood that the warring signatory parties will stick to peace following an accord (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). Moreover, consistent with some other findings in previous research, the results show that conflicts of higher intensity are more likely to see peace break down after a peace settlement (for example, Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Fortna 2003; 2004; Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007).²⁰

I have also conducted a number of robustness checks. How vibrant civil society is could possibly affect the results and in an effort to address this issue, I control for the *Count of Organizations*_{log} and *Physical Integrity Rights* and *Empowerment Rights* (see online appendix). The main findings hold also after controlling for these factors.²¹ Moreover, and related to this, civil society actors may be more likely to be included in certain types of conflicts. In order to examine if there exists such a selection effect, I first explore the determinants of the signing of peace agreements in general, and then proceed to study if the same set of factors affects the signing of peace agreements that include civil society. As mentioned, this analysis is conducted using a dyadic data set where the unit of analysis is dyad-year, and each dyad consists of a government and one rebel group engaged in internal armed conflict. I have included a key set of factors that all potentially could affect the likelihood of reaching a negotiated settlement, such as various characteristics of the conflict and the type of political system. The results are available in Model 7–8, Table 2.

As can be seen from these models, the results are very similar for both types of outcomes. The variables *Number of Warring Parties*, *Conflict Issue*, and *Conflict Duration* are all statistically significant at the .10 level or better, whereas the two other variables *Conflict Intensity* and *Democracy* are not statistically significant in either model.²² Hence, there is little to suggest that the types of conflict that produce agreements with civil society actors are different from the larger sample. While the results are very similar, it is still

²⁰The empirical domain of this study differs somewhat from earlier work in that the present study covers both high-intensity and low-intensity conflicts, whereas previous studies focus on full-scale civil wars. In order to ensure that the low-intensity conflicts are not driving the results, I split the sample in low-intensity and high-intensity conflicts, respectively, and reestimated the main models. Since the sample is much smaller some variables are dropped and the results are weaker in terms of statistical significance. However, the results in the sample with the high-intensity conflicts are similar to the main findings, whereas the results are no longer statistically significant in the sample with low-intensity conflicts. Thus, the results are not simply an artifact of including also low-intensity conflicts in this study.

²¹When controlling for the count of organizations in the model examining the third hypothesis, the significance drops to the .10 level.

²²I included a count for time since last peace agreement, and time since peace agreement with civil society inclusion, respectively, along with three cubic splines.

TABLE 2 Explaining the Signing of Peace Accords, and the Signing of Peace Accords with Civil Society Inclusion

	Peace Agreement	Civil Society-Peace Agreement
	(7)	(8)
<i>Number of Warring Parties</i>	0.312*** (0.117)	0.405** (0.175)
<i>Conflict Issue</i>	0.594* (0.328)	2.027*** (0.567)
<i>Conflict Duration</i>	-0.060*** (0.018)	-0.071** (0.031)
<i>Conflict Intensity</i>	0.160 (0.307)	0.351 (0.511)
<i>Democracy</i>	-0.143 (0.303)	0.481 (0.520)
<i>Years</i>	0.711 (0.440)	0.718 (0.541)
<i>Constant</i>	-3.690*** (0.616)	-6.543*** (0.794)
Observations	1410	1410
Log likelihood	-286.060	-134.918

Note: A logit model is employed with robust standard errors in parentheses clustered on conflict. Splines are included but not reported here. *Statistically significant at the .10 level. **Statistically significant at the .05 level. ***Statistically significant at the .01 level. Two-tailed tests are used. Stata 11.1 was used to generate the statistical results.

interesting to see that the coefficient for *Conflict Issue* is larger and statistically significant at a higher level when one considers the peace agreements with civil society inclusion, than when looking at all peace agreements. This could indicate that civil society actors are somewhat more likely to be involved when the conflict is fought over government power rather than territorial claims. Overall, however, the results for these two types of outcomes are very similar showing little evidence of any selection effect. Moreover, it should also be recognized that the analysis here does not rule out the possibility that the inclusion of civil society may serve to complicate negotiations and under some conditions even prevent agreements from being signed. Ideally, I would have liked to explore if certain types of peace negotiations—those that include civil society and those that do not—are more or less likely to result in a settlement in the first place. But there is no data available on the participation of civil society actors in peace negotiations that would make it possible to explore such dynamics, and this is an issue that has to be left for future research. Thus, more research is needed in order to explore the scope conditions under which civil society actors may influence the signing of peace settlements. What the analysis here does suggest, however, is that where an agreement is ultimately reached and civil society is being included in some way, peace is more likely to last.

Furthermore, I also estimated some alternative models regarding the main findings for the peace agreement data set.²³ For example, I controlled for the deployment of peacekeeping forces, economic development in the country, whether the peace accord included all warring factions, and for some alternative measures of the type of political system.²⁴ The key findings are very similar also after having controlled for these factors in previous research.²⁵ It deserves to be mentioned that consistent with previous research on peacekeeping (for example, Fortna 2004; Quinn et al. 2007; Walter 2002), I find a positive and significant effect of the presence of peacekeeping forces when looking at the overall prospects for peace (see online appendix). Yet, even when controlling for peacekeeping, civil society is still found to be a critical factor in explaining durable peace.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has provided the first statistical evaluation of whether the incorporation of civil society actors in peace agreements affects the prospects for peace. To begin with, it could be shown that inclusion of civil society actors is in fact quite common; one third of the peace accords have at least some kind of involvement from civil society. As regards the impact of civil society actors on the prospects for lasting peace, the findings from the statistical analysis demonstrate that the inclusion of civil society actors does matter for the durability of peace. It could also be shown that the inclusion of civil society actors and political parties in combination significantly influences the durability of peace. Furthermore, the statistical evidence indicates that it is of particular importance for the overall prospects for peace in nondemocratic societies to include civil society actors in the peace deal. Taken together, the empirical findings are supportive of the theoretical

²³The results are very similar when clustering on country. I also tried using a Weibull model, and the results are basically the same except for hypothesis 1 when focusing on the signatories, which then fails to reach statistical significance. Given that the Weibull model assumes a parametric form the distribution, the difference in result is likely to be due to the fact that this functional form does not fit the data very well. Since I use a Cox proportional hazards model that make the assumption that the risk is proportional over time, I tested this assumption using the Schoenfeld residuals. Some of the covariate tests indicate violations (the global tests show no sign of violations). To address this potential problem, I have interacted the violated variable with time and added this new variable to the models, and then repeated the tests (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004:132–136). After doing so, no violations could be found for any of the covariates, and the main results are the same.

²⁴For instance, I also used a continuous measure *Polity* (ranging from -10 to $+10$), and added a squared term of this variable to account for a possible curvilinear relationship, but the results are the same. The data comes from the Polity IV dataset (Marshall and Jaggers 2011). The peacekeeping data is from Heldt and Wallensteen (2006), whereas the data on population and GDP per capita is from the National Accounts Main Aggregates Database, United Nations (2009).

²⁵The only result that is affected concerns the third hypothesis, where the civil society variable just barely misses statistical significance when controlling for the inclusion of warring parties.

expectations put forward suggesting that when wider spectra of society become involved in a peace process this can increase legitimacy of the process, which in turn may contribute to durable peace. Importantly, there is nothing in the statistical analysis suggesting that the inclusion of civil society actors in peace accords has negative implications for the durability of peace.

At the same time, there are important aspects regarding the role of civil society actors that could not be explored within the scope of the present study. For example, it was not possible to distinguish between the different functions civil society actors may have in this process, and future research should therefore examine this further. Hence, a fruitful next step could be to further explore whether civil society actors are most needed in the dialogue phase, whether they should be given a seat at the negotiation table, or if it would be most important to involve them in the implementation phase. Finally, whereas this study has provided statistical evidence that peace is more likely to become sustainable if civil society actors are included, it should be complemented with investigations into the potential mechanisms at work. Indeed, a valuable step for future work is to carry out case studies in order to identify causal pathways.

This article comes with important policy implications. Third parties often spend a lot of resources and effort in peace processes in order to create sustainable solutions to civil wars, for instance, by providing support to various actors engaged in peace initiatives. The results here demonstrate that civil society actors such as trade unions, women's organizations, and religious actors preferably should be given a role in peace settlements. As a way of anchoring the peace, and building legitimacy for the peace process, peacemakers should strive to involve actors from wide spectra of society in the peace accord.

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