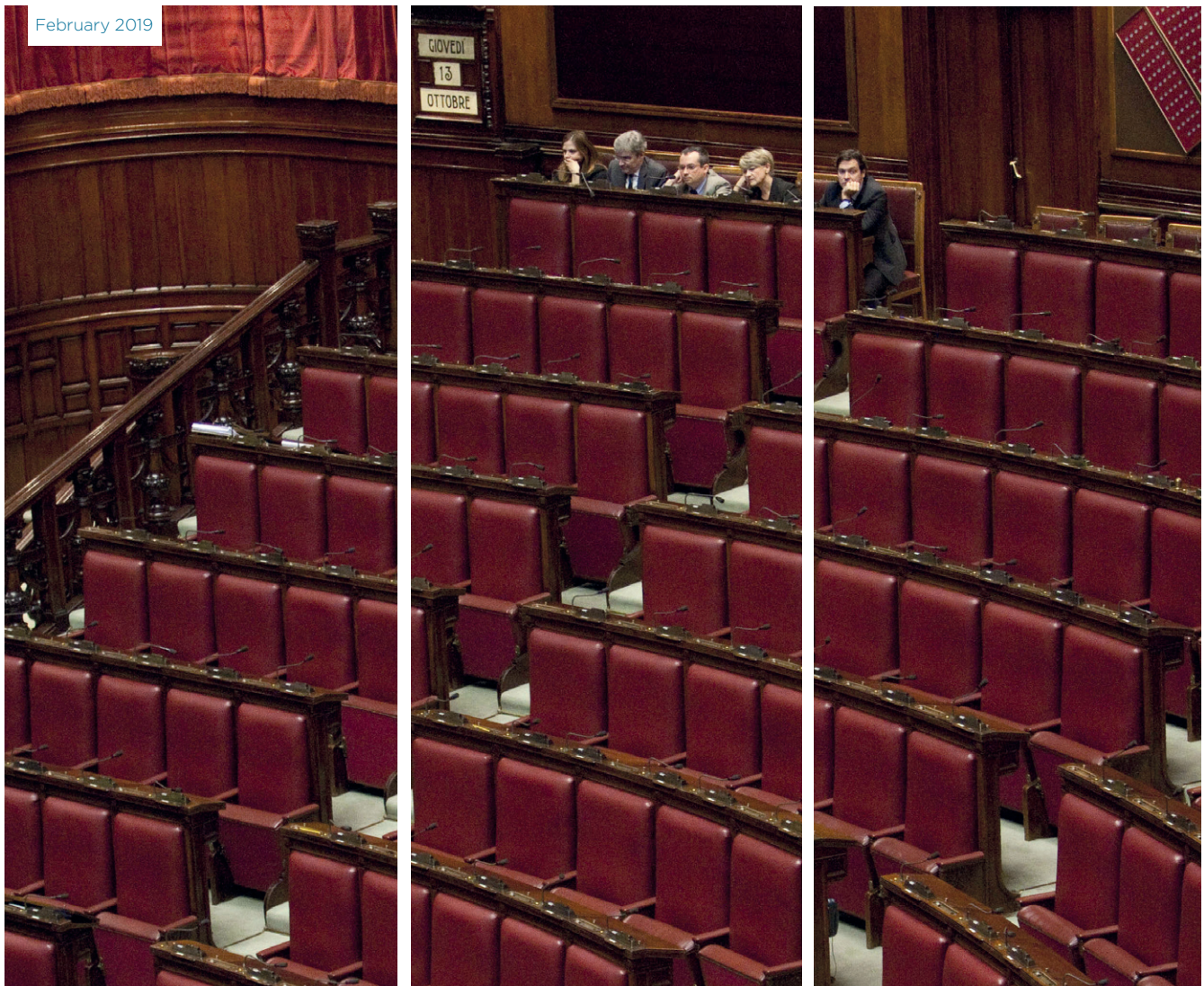


## Report

# Supporting or Resisting Change: Elite Strategies in War to Peace and Political Transitions



Andreas Hirblinger, Suzanne van Hooff, Molly Kellogg and Thania Paffenholz

Edited by Alexander Bramble  
Designed and typeset  
by Goo Ltd ([www.goo-ltd.fr](http://www.goo-ltd.fr))

This project was funded  
with UK aid from  
the UK government



The Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative (IPTI) is dedicated to evidence-based research and its transfer to policy and practice. The objective of the Initiative is to support sustainable peace by providing expertise and information on the inclusion of diverse actors in peace and transition processes. This expertise draws on the largest qualitative database of inclusive peace and political reform processes globally. The Initiative is part of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, and is led by **Dr. Thania Paffenholz**.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	5
1   Introduction .....	8
2   Elite Behavior in Inclusive Transitions .....	11
2.1 A Short Literature Review:	
The Struggle of Elites over Political Change .....	11
2.2 Conceptual Approach:	
Elite Strategy across Phases of Transition .....	14
3   Principal Elite Approaches .....	17
3.1 Negotiating Positions .....	18
3.2 Influencing Political Views .....	19
3.3 Shaping the Setting .....	20
3.4 Undermining the Process or Existing Settlement .....	21
4   Elites' Strategic Behavior across Phases of Transition .....	23
4.1 Phase 1: The Transition Trigger .....	23
Cluster 1: Elites Seeking to Disrupt the Status Quo .....	23
Cluster 2: Elites Seeking to Resist Change	
to the Status Quo .....	26
4.2 Phase 2: The Beginning of Negotiations .....	27
Cluster 1: Elites Seeking a Political Transition .....	28
Cluster 2: Elites Resisting a Political Transition .....	30
4.3 Phase 3: The Negotiations .....	33
Cluster 1: Elites Who Agree to Participate in	
and are Included in the Formal Negotiation Process .....	34
Cluster 2: Elites who Refuse to Participate in	
or are Excluded from the Formal Negotiation Process .....	38
4.4 Phase 4: The Conclusion of Negotiations .....	40
Cluster 1: Elite Actors who Support the Conclusion	
of the Process .....	40
Cluster 2: Elite Actors Who Resist the Conclusion	
of the Process .....	42
4.5 Phase 5: The Implementation Process .....	44
Cluster 1: Elites who Support the Implementation	
of the Agreement .....	44
Cluster 2: Elites who are Dissatisfied with	
the New Status Quo and thus Resist Implementation .....	46
5   International Responses .....	48
6   Conclusions and Policy Implications .....	53
Bibliography .....	56
Annex: List of case studies .....	59

## I Acronyms

BRA		Bougainville Revolutionary Army
DFID UK		Department for International Development
COHA		Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
COD		Collectif de l'opposition démocratique (Togo)
CDR		Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (Rwanda)
DRC		Democratic Republic of the Congo
DUP		Democratic Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
IASF		International Assistance Security Force
ICC		International Criminal Court
IPTI		Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative
JEM		Justice and Equality Movement (Sudan)
KPTJ		Kenyans for Peace with Truth and Justice
LJM		Liberation and Justice Movement (Sudan)
LTTE		Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
NATO		North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIC		National Cohesion and Integration Commission (Kenya)
NDC		National Dialogue Conference
RPF		Rwandan Patriotic Front
SRF		Sudan Revolutionary Front
TRC		Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TJRC		Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (Kenya)
UN		United Nations
US		United States

## | Executive Summary

This report discusses the strategies that national elites employ in order to influence political change during peace processes and political transitions. While efforts to end armed violence through a negotiated settlement have become increasingly inclusive, a small number of powerful individuals continue to shape the dynamics and outcomes of negotiation and implementation processes more than others. International efforts to end armed violence should therefore carefully consider how peace processes and political transitions are affected by the strategic behavior of elites who exercise power in the political, military, and economic realms, as well as in civil society. The following report addresses this need. It helps to strengthen the evidence base of DFID's Building Stability Framework by presenting a conceptual approach through which the behavior of elites can be analyzed, as well as illustrative examples from IPTI's case studies.

The report asks which **strategies** elite actors apply in order to influence political change in a formal peace process, i.e. the **objectives** they pursue, and the **approaches** they use in order to achieve them. To this end, it reconstructs the patterns of elite behavior across 43 peace and transition processes in IPTI's qualitative database.

The report identifies four principal **approaches** through which elites aim to influence political change:

- Elites **negotiate between conflicting positions**, i.e. they engage in efforts to resolve dispute through arriving at a common position, characterized by an overarching ethos of reciprocity.
- Elites **influence political views**, i.e. the manner in which the conflict and possible solutions to it are portrayed and perceived by key stakeholders in the conflict.
- Elites **shape the setting of the transition** in which the negotiation process takes place, i.e. the design of the peace process including who participates through which means as well as the parameters of the larger political context.
- Elites **undermine the process or existing settlement**, i.e. they deliberately obstruct or derail the negotiation process or an existing political settlement through violent or non-violent means.

Elites apply these four principal approaches at various stages along a given peace or transition process, in order to change the formal political arrangement in their favor. The report identifies **five distinct phases of**



**transition** that are characterized through critical moments in which elites can influence political change. For each phase, the report identifies **two major clusters** in which elites can be differentiated, depending on their interests and **objectives**. Clusters change from phase to phase as the overarching objectives of elites change. They also have a fluctuating membership, even within a phase, as elites move between clusters depending on their changing objectives.

→ The **first phase**—the transition trigger—marks the beginning of the process, caused by a trigger event such as popular protest or armed insurgency that creates a significant challenge to the political status quo. Here, elites either seek a change to the political status quo or aim to defend it. In this phase, efforts to undermine the political status quo dominate, as well as efforts to influence political views in support of their agenda.

→ The **second phase**—the beginning of negotiations—is characterized by a shift from armed or political confrontation towards negotiation, and the beginning of a formal process. Here, we differentiate between elites who support a transition process to renegotiate the political status quo and those who resist such efforts. In this phase, elites in both clusters prepare for a possible negotiation process, aiming to maximize their gains by shaping the setting early on. In cases where a negotiation is not considered compatible with their objectives, elites pursue efforts to undermine the process before it has begun.

→ The **third phase**—the negotiations—is characterized by a move away from political protest or armed confrontation towards negotiation and spans the main negotiation process, including major milestones such as ceasefire agreements or protocols. Here the main cleavage is between elites who have agreed to participate in and are included in a formal negotiation process and those who refuse to participate or are excluded from the process. Negotiation strategies dominate in the first cluster, but elites' efforts to influence political views, change the setting, or undermine the process in both clusters can have significant effects on the negotiation process.

→ The **fourth phase**—the conclusion of negotiations—ideally leads to the end of formal negotiations through the signing of a final agreement. Here, the major fault line is between elite actors who intend to conclude the process through the signing of an agreement and those who resist concluding the process, either because they want to continue to negotiate, or because they aim to achieve their objectives outside of it. While the first cluster will mainly invest in further negotiations and shaping the setting to prepare for the



political transition, the second cluster will prioritize efforts to undermine the process.

→ The **fifth phase**—the implementation process—ideally leads to the closure of the peace or transition process, usually through the implementation of respective agreement provisions. Here elite actors either support the implementation process, through shaping the setting of the transition, as well as, where necessary, continued negotiation, or resist the implementation of an agreement, instead aiming to undermine the process for instance by ignoring results, employing the use of violence, or consolidating power.

These findings encourage a re-evaluation of international support to peace processes. The report thus concludes with a short discussion of how foreign governments and international organizations have influenced both the resource bases on which elites have pursued their distinct approaches to influence political change, and their cost-benefit calculations. International stakeholders are invited to use the report's analytical framework to better understand the impact of elites on peace processes and political transitions.

## | 1. Introduction

Efforts to prevent or end armed violence through a negotiated settlement have become increasingly inclusive and now usually involve a relatively broad range of actors. Yet a relatively small group of influential individuals wielding a disproportionate amount of power and resources continues to influence negotiation and implementation processes more than others. While international policy emphasizes the merits of broad-based participation, these elite actors still play a pivotal role within inclusive arrangements. This is particularly the case in contexts characterized by weak formal political institutions. This report, therefore, analyzes the role played by elite actors—such as political and military leaders, as well as civil society representatives and influential business people—in influencing peace processes and political transitions.

Elites commonly aim to maintain their control, power, and resources. Yet political crises and armed conflict are usually characterized by a challenge to the political status quo and therefore open up the possibility of changes in the distribution of power and resources. Where political crises or violent conflicts occur, elite actors thus aim to influence the political dynamics in their favor, including through influencing the contexts and processes in which peace agreements are negotiated. While political change is often inevitable when a crisis occurs, elite actors will aim to influence the course of the transition in a way that safeguards their interests. This report aims to shed light on the strategies that elites apply to influence political change in their favor. It reconstructs elite actors' patterns of behavior by investigating the objectives that elites pursue as well as the approaches used to achieve those objectives.

The report discusses how various elites influence change in their favor across five phases of transition characterized by critical moments at which changes in the political status quo are likely, spanning from the events that trigger transitions through to the negotiation process and the implementation of agreements. Based on the results of our empirical study, we suggest differentiating between four principal approaches elite actors take to influence political change. First, elites negotiate positions, i.e. they engage in efforts to resolve dispute by finding common ground, characterized by an overarching ethos of reciprocity. Second, elites influence political views, i.e. the manner in which the conflict and possible solutions to it are portrayed and perceived by key stakeholders. Third, elites shape the setting in which the negotiation process takes place, i.e. the design of the peace process, as well as the parameters of the larger political context. Fourth, elites undermine the negotiation process or existing settlement, i.e. they deliberately obstruct or derail the negotiation process and its achievements through violent or non-violent means. The report sheds light

on how each of these four principal approaches are used by elites in the course of the peace and transition process by way of a detailed analysis of their behavior.

The analysis of elite behavior is based on a screening of IPTI's dataset of peace and transition processes, consisting of a total of 43 qualitative case studies. IPTI's dataset contains negotiation and transition processes selected through a purposive sampling strategy, intended to capture the variety of processes that have taken place in the post-Cold War era. The case studies cover different types and elements of peace and transition processes, including peace negotiations to end civil wars, National Dialogues to address political grievances and public unrest, as well as constitutional and political reform processes aimed at long-term settlements of conflicts. The case studies cover all major geographic regions and vary according to the type, stage, and intensity of the conflict, the actors involved, and the level of inclusivity.

A few words on methodology: in a first step, all 43 case studies were screened and coded using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software to identify the elites' patterns of behavior according to elite type and phase. In a second step, a smaller sample of 23 case studies were process traced in order to shed light on the dynamics between various elite strategies as well as the most significant contextual factors that shape them. Unless otherwise referenced, all empirical data stems from IPTI's collection of qualitative case studies. As the report presents results that do not claim to be generally representative of elite behavior in peace and transition processes, its primary worth lies in providing a conceptual framework, as well as illustrative learning examples and case-study material, that can support policymakers and practitioners when trying to make sense of elite behavior and identifying responses.

This report proceeds as follows: the second chapter provides a more comprehensive rationale of this research project and summarizes the major conceptual and methodological considerations on which this report builds, including how to understand peace processes as a struggle over political change and how we understand the major terms used throughout this report, such as "elites" and "strategy." It also includes an explanation of how we differentiate between five distinct phases in a given transition, and why. The third chapter discusses the four major elite strategies the project has identified: 1) negotiating positions; 2) influencing political views; 3) shaping the setting; and 4) undermining the process or existing settlement. This chapter elaborates the various strategic behaviors we have attributed to each strategy type. The fourth and most extensive chapter discusses the dynamics between the various elites for each specific phase. In order to make the complexity of these dynamics more easily comprehensible, the

chapter identifies major clusters of elite actors according to their common, overarching objectives across the sequence of moments dominating each phase, as well as the approaches they apply. This chapter is followed by a short discussion of how international actors have influenced both the resource bases on which elites have pursued their various approaches to influence political change, as well as their cost-benefit calculations. The conclusion of the report discusses implications for research, policy, and practice.

## | 2. Elite Behavior in Inclusive Transitions

International efforts to support peace processes and political transitions increasingly acknowledge the importance of inclusive arrangements. Key international policies and guidance stress that inclusion is pivotal for short-term conflict prevention, as well as for achieving and sustaining peaceful political orders in the long-term. While various definitions of and approaches to inclusion exist, they commonly aim to guarantee that participation in peace processes goes beyond the major conflict parties and that all relevant voices and perspectives are taken into account. It is now a widely accepted policy position that inclusive arrangements will generate stronger public support for peace processes and resulting agreements and thus foster their legitimacy. They are more likely to address the causes of conflict and reduce the likelihood of a return to violent conflict (United Nations General Assembly 2012, 25; United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Security Council 2018; World Bank Group and United Nations 2018). More importantly, inclusion is also increasingly viewed as a tool to give voice to vulnerable and less powerful groups. In particular, following UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the inclusion of women representatives has been widely promoted as a tool to strengthen gender equality and to fight sexual and gender-based violence (Porter 2007; Bell and O'Rourke 2010; United Nations 2017). Inclusion, and particularly women's inclusion, has also been associated with a more durable and a higher quality peace (Nilsson 2012; Paffenholz et al. 2016; Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018).

### 2.1. A Short Literature Review: The Struggle of Elites over Political Change

The current emphasis on broad-based, inclusive peacemaking arrangements risks overlooking the considerable efforts that have sought to understand and devise power-sharing arrangements between political and military elites. Indeed, theories of power-sharing suggest that “elite pacts” among political and military leaders can pave the way for broad-based consociational arrangements that will end conflict among the broader population (Zanker, Simons, and Mehler 2015). Elites maintain a central role in negotiating and implementing these arrangements, particularly where elite arrangements stand in tension with the needs and interests of the broader population, as well as the priorities of international partners, and may thus endanger the achievement of durable settlements (Mehler 2008; Curtis 2013).

This focus on inclusion and broad-based participation should therefore not distract from the fact that peace processes by and large continue to be dominated by and dependent on a relatively small number of powerful actors from the political, military, and economic realms as well

as civil society. As many conflict-affected contexts are characterized by weakness of formal political institutions, peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts often intervene in—and shape—environments in which power can be exercised through comparably small networks of influential individuals, i.e. elites (Themnér and Utas 2016, 256).

Elites have commonly been defined as persons who hold “strategic positions in powerful organizations,” including institutions and social movements, who are thus able to “affect national political outcomes regularly and substantially” (Field, Higley, and Burton 1990, 152). In conflict-affected contexts, they have a “disproportionate amount of political power, wealth and/or privilege and are thus able to make or influence decisions and implement policies that affect wider populations” (Cheng, Goodhand, and Meehan 2018, 10). While by definition elites play an important role in shaping peace processes and their outcomes, popular protests, armed conflicts, and their aftermaths characteristically see the position and authority of elites challenged by contending political and/or military forces. International peacebuilding and state-building efforts commonly aim to reduce the power of informal elite networks and their war-time governance arrangements by fostering formal institutions. Often, however, they have contributed to the return to systems of rule in which power continues to be exercised through informal means (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Barnett 2006; Barma 2017). This is because of the ambiguous role played by elites in undermining or supporting political change.

The relevance of elite behavior becomes more palpable when considering that war-to-peace transitions are characterized by the dynamics of elite formation, transformation, and decay. In transitional contexts, the position of elites is itself subject to change (Higley and Lengyel 2000; Hensell and Gerdes 2012, 2017). While the exclusion of non-elite stakeholders may diminish the chance of a legitimate and long-term settlement that addresses the causes of conflict and reduces inequality and violence against specific population groups, the exclusion of elite stakeholders makes a more immediate return to war or violence more likely. This is because, by definition, elite actors have control over the political apparatus, the means of violence, or the economic resources to counteract or compromise peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts and the stability of transitional political arrangements (Call 2012; Hensell and Gerdes 2017; Barnett, Fang, and Zürcher 2014). However, even in less extreme scenarios, elites will act strategically in order to secure their own survival. In some instances, elite actors may be willing to concede power fully, or in part, while less powerful elites may use peace processes to strengthen their political and economic positions and thus support reform agendas (Barnett, Fang, and Zürcher 2014, 615). More often than not, they will aim to maintain a status quo that guarantees their position (Barnett, Fang, and Zürcher 2014, 615). A better

understanding of the role played by elites at the negotiation table and beyond is thus pivotal for effective peace process support.

The role of elites has also been emphasized in the political (un)settlements literature, which stresses that during peace processes powerful actors renegotiate the distribution of power and resources and the “rules of the game” that characterize the political order (Rocha Menocal 2017; Laws and Leftwich, n.d.). The political settlements approach emphasizes the interplay between informal and formal institutions. As Cheng et al. have argued, formal peace processes need to reflect the underlying balance of power in order to reduce the risk of violent conflict and instability (Cheng, Goodhand, and Meehan 2018, 13). Importantly, this balance of power is itself up for negotiation. Indeed, the triggers of peace and transition processes—for instance, an armed insurgency or mass political protest—can be understood as challenges to political settlements that had previously been relatively stable. The approach also assumes that violence will only cease once there is a balance between the formal (institutional) distribution of benefits in a society and the informal distribution of power (Cheng, Goodhand, and Meehan 2018, 13). As the equilibrium of the political settlement is shaken up, elites act strategically to defend or maximize their political interests. While elites do resort to violence to renegotiate the settlement, this report highlights that they also apply a plethora of non-violent methods in their attempts to achieve their objectives.

Political settlements are continuously renegotiated and cannot be reduced to single events or critical junctures (Rocha Menocal 2017, 561). Nevertheless, peace processes and political transitions can be understood as periods of increased activity in which the stakes are extraordinarily high for all stakeholders involved, due to a possible return to violence and relatedly, the risk of casualties and military defeat. The political settlements literature emphasizes the informal nature of these negotiation processes, such as the role played by secret deals or patronage networks (Rocha Menocal 2017, 561; Phillips 2013). However, any effort to rearrange the distribution of power and the rules of the game in peace processes will also usually require agreeing on a new formalized arrangement that is ambiguous and “unsettled” enough to allow for further negotiation without resorting to violence (Bell and Pospisil 2017).

While a focus on the formal dimension of peace processes has been criticized for ignoring the relevance of informal, underlying power relations, this report demonstrates that a focus on elite behavior around formal peace processes is vital; where political crisis has become acute, formal political processes constitute the central stage on which elites seek to maximize their interests and influence political change in their favor. While the informal sphere continues to matter, peace processes always



retain a formal sphere in which a new settlement will ultimately have to be institutionalized. Consequently, elites will ultimately aim to achieve their objectives by participating, influencing, or boycotting the formal political process. Elites' efforts to influence political change in formal negotiation arrangements therefore constitute a critical dimension of the political dynamics through which violence and armed conflict can be prevented. A better understanding of elite strategies is thus vital for identifying pathways through which elites can resolve conflicting interests by non-violent means.

## 2.2 Conceptual Approach: Elite Strategy across Phases of Transition

The dynamics of conflict and cooperation between various elite actors have a strong impact on peace and political transition processes and may make the difference between a peaceful settlement and a return to violence. By capturing the repertoire of strategies through which elites aim to influence formal arrangements to fit their underlying interests, this report provides a pragmatic perspective that identifies tangible entry points for preventing violence and supporting the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Building on these considerations, the report sheds light on the strategies that elites use in war-to-peace transitions in order to influence political change. However, reconstructing elite strategies is not a straightforward task, as peace processes hardly ever unfold in a predictable and linear manner. Rather, they are characterized by a complex and often chaotic interplay of initiatives and activities, obscure and shifting interests, changing alliances between stakeholders, as well as ruptures or even collapses in negotiation efforts, followed by new attempts to achieve negotiated settlements. While in hindsight, one may ask which roles elite actors have played in supporting or resisting a given peace process and its outcome, the complexity of political dynamics precludes any such straightforward answer. Indeed, elite actors themselves rarely follow a well-defined master strategy, but adapt their behavior to shifting contexts, often in an ad-hoc manner that is difficult to predict.

The term “strategy” commonly implies a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term overall aim (Oxford Dictionaries 2018). More ambitious definitions stress that strategies aim to produce plans of action that link stated objectives (aims or ends) with the means (resources) and ways (methods) needed to achieve them. Strategizing thus involves considering the resources available and developing the methods necessary for reaching a particular objective (Freedman 2015). This more ambitious conception is challenging to put to use when conducting historical case-study research. Even when using qualitative research methods such as interviewing or participatory observation, identifying stated objectives remains a daunting

task, for reasons such as the purposeful misinformation that forms part of the “fog of war,” the respondents’ efforts to influence public perception or historical accounts in their own favor. Besides these methodological limitations, this report strikes a balance between the stated objective of understanding the course of action of elite actors in their efforts to influence political change and the need for analytical and conceptual tools that can serve as learning and planning resources for international stakeholders.

The report thus applies an approach to strategy that sheds light on the patterns of behavior that elite actors exhibit across a sequence of five distinct phases in a given peace or transition process. This assumes that each phase is characterized by critical moments around which elite actors will act strategically in order to maximize their interests in the struggle over political change. For instance, the establishment of a formal track one negotiation process means that formal changes to an established political settlement are likely to occur. Elites will either support such a development, if they are in favor of political change, or they will aim to prevent it. A focus on these phases thus helps to shed particular light on the more visible or formal activities through which elite actors aim to influence political change. While informal—and thus less visible—behavior is also crucial in renegotiating the political settlement, formal and visible acts are telling about the elites’ objectives (stated or not), as well as about many of the methods that they apply to achieve them. Concurrently, this perspective provides an analytical framework through which international responses to elite behavior can be formulated.

We differentiate between five phases of transition: 1) the transition trigger phase; 2) the phase leading to the beginning of formal negotiations; 3) the main negotiation phase, characterized by specific negotiation milestones such as the signing of protocols or ceasefire agreements; 4) the phase leading to the termination of formal negotiations; and 5) the phase concluding the peace or transition process, usually characterized by the implementation of provisions laid out in the peace agreement or political accord. We reconstruct elite behavior that occurs in relation to each of these phases. This five-phase differentiation provides the basis for our analysis of elite strategies. However, it is important to note that peace processes rarely follow this ideal-type, linear model. Rather, they are more often than not characterized by recurrent and cyclical dynamics, or process failure, which can occur during any phase.

When discussing elite behavior in peace and transition processes the report differentiates between five categories of elites. Elites have commonly been grouped according to their functional role in politics and society. They can be governmental, business, or military leaders, as well as leaders of political parties, professional organizations, the media, and civil society.

(Best and Higley 2018, 27). The report thus differentiates between elites in: 1) government, including the executive and legislative branches; 2) the military, including the formal army and government-affiliated military groups; 3) the political opposition, including political parties or influential individuals; 4) the armed opposition, including armed groups and militias; and 5) civil society, including interest groups and religious organizations, as well as the business community<sup>1</sup> and trade unions.

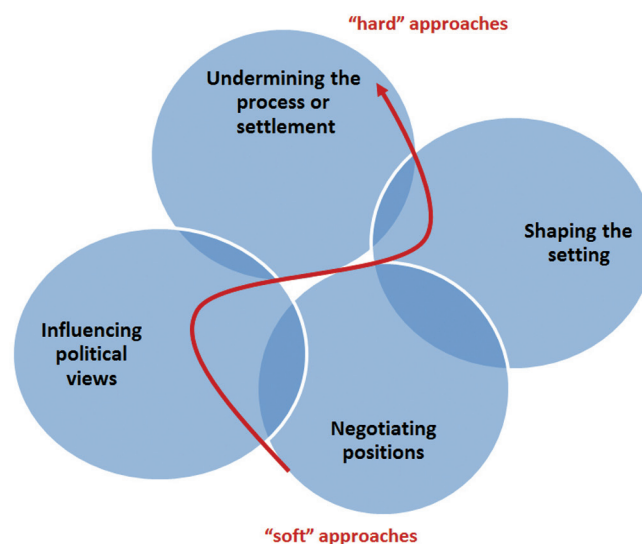
The report explores how actors belonging to these elite types act strategically across the five-phase sequence characterized by critical moments, discussed above. The number of actors involved and the complex dynamics of peace processes and political transitions make a comprehensive qualitative reconstruction of elite behavior an intractable task. To capture the most important dynamics, we distinguish between major clusters which can be differentiated according to an overarching strategic objective pursued in each distinct phase. Importantly, these clusters can, but do not necessarily, correspond to stable and organized political camps or alliances that exist in the real world. Rather, the cluster is used as an analytical tool.

<sup>1</sup> While businesses tend not to form part of civil society, the case study material analysed contains several instances where representatives of the business sector have advanced the interests of their specific constituency. While these actors weren't necessarily organized in associations, we nonetheless include them in the civil society category.

### | 3. Principal Elite Approaches

We differentiate between four principle approaches that capture the different lines of action and the distinctive methods through which elite actors aim to influence political change in peace processes and political transitions. These methods can be understood as the foundations of elite strategy, as they form the repertoire of action through which elites aim to achieve their intended objectives. When elites aim to influence political change according to their interest—such as in order to increase their political power or to implement specific political agendas or normative commitments—they do so through short-term and immediate strategic actions that can be clustered according to the four broad categories outlined below. These principal approaches are used by all elite types, across all phases of a given transition, and often in combination. While each approach requires specific means and resources, this chapter is primarily concerned with developing a typology of methods—i.e. the patterns of behavior through which elites aim to achieve their specific objective.

The four principal approaches can be clustered along a spectrum ranging from “soft” to “hard” methods, in which “soft” methods are often reciprocal and operate largely through the use of discursive persuasion and deliberation at the negotiation table and beyond, while “hard” techniques are unilateral and aim to change the setting in which negotiation efforts take place or undermine the negotiation process or settlement, including through the use of coercion and military force. Importantly, we understand these categories as a heuristic device through which to explore the behavior of elite actors; in reality, elite actors typically use more than one strategy simultaneously. Additionally, while the four categories differ qualitatively, they do not constitute absolutely clear-cut entities, as some strategic behaviors can be associated with more than one type of strategy.



### 3.1 Negotiating Positions

Elites' efforts to negotiate a new political settlement are at the core of peace and transition processes. We understand negotiation broadly as involving all efforts to resolve dispute through arriving at a common decision from divergent positions, characterized by an overarching ethos of reciprocity (Zartman & Faure, 2005: 11). This usually involves deliberation, i.e. the exchange of arguments between equal negotiation parties, with the aim being to convince the other conflict party of one's own opinion, and ideally to seek mutual understanding. It may moreover involve bargaining, i.e. efforts to arrive at a political settlement by agreeing on what each party will do for the other.

Our focus is on discernible and visible elite behavior, largely involving formal peace negotiation and visible (often official and public) statements, exchanges of opinion, or offers. While we also include secret or informal exchanges, our understanding of negotiation does not include strategies to negotiate the distribution of political authority or resources through clandestine and shadowy patron-client systems. Commonly, negotiation efforts play a minor role in the first phase, where the conflict parties aim to realize their political agendas by an escalation of the conflict through the use of force and armed violence or political mobilization. This is also true for Phase 5, the period of transition closure after the signing of a formal agreement, which is usually characterized by the implementation of agreement provisions; albeit this stage may require further negotiation. Negotiation behavior takes center stage in phases 2, 3, and 4, which focus on the establishment of a negotiation process, the reaching of negotiation milestones, and the conclusion of a final agreement.

When elites aim to influence political change through negotiation, they do so first and foremost by displaying a willingness to talk, and through participating in efforts to resolve disputes via a negotiated settlement. This means that they take part in formal negotiation efforts – mediated or unmediated – as well as efforts to implement the respective outcomes of this process (the latter stage is often characterized by a continued need to clarify and resolve conflicting positions). Negotiation can involve several behaviors that enable the stakeholders to reach a common position, including trust and confidence-building measures between the conflict parties, aimed at reducing subjective perceptions of fear, mistrust, and insecurity among stakeholders. It likewise involves consensus-building measures across the various stakeholder groups, i.e. efforts to strengthen agreement between stakeholders (often among the political or armed opposition) in regard to particular negotiation items, in an attempt to enhance their overarching negotiating position.

We also found that negotiation can entail separate, and often secretive, decision-making processes pertaining to the negotiation process or the content of agreements without the knowledge of other stakeholders. Elites who are a neutral third party can also operate as a mediator between the conflict parties and assist them in reaching an agreement. When negotiating, key behavior centers on concessions—i.e. elites' readiness to compromise and move towards a common position. Elites make or refuse concessions in order to achieve their desired objective. At times, concessions are made outside the formal negotiation setting or before negotiations have started (phases 1–2). At the same time, elites may be strategic about the topics covered in the process. They may be less than committed when addressing substantial elements of disputes or may aim to water down the negotiation agenda or the content of an agreement in order to safeguard their interests. Finally, negotiation involves the signing of agreements. These may be milestone agreements that present a step towards a negotiated settlement, such as an MOU, a protocol or ceasefire agreement, or final agreements intended to arrive at a common position to formalize a new political settlement.

### 3.2 Influencing Political Views

While aiming to arrive at a common position through negotiation, elite actors apply a range of other methods to influence the views of relevant stakeholders. These usually take place outside the formal negotiation setting and aim to influence political discourse regarding the conflict, such as the manner in which the conflict and possible solutions to it are portrayed. This involves efforts to change public views, i.e. the perceptions, opinions, and interests of key stakeholders in the conflict. In contrast to negotiation, influencing does not require a horizontal setting but can occur in a top-down or bottom-up manner, or among equals. In many cases, influencing plays a key role in the political dynamics that trigger the outbreak of conflict or political crisis in the first place, i.e. in the form of broad-based protest movements against an incumbent government, or for political (often pro-democratic) reforms. Thereafter, we found that elites seek to influence discourse in order to further their pro-peace or pro-conflict agendas, which can be instrumental in the escalation or de-escalation of conflict and affect (public) support for a given process. Indeed, pro-peace influencing has in many instances been pivotal for setting up negotiation processes in the first place, or for increasing public pressure on conflict parties to conclude agreements. Similarly, elites who oppose a given process may use their influence to reduce public support and undermine its legitimacy. Moreover, influencing can involve bringing specific items to the negotiation table, such as the interests of ethnic minority groups or special interest groups such as victims of sexual or gender-based violence.

Influencing strategies may involve the mobilization of public protests, i.e. elite actors organize, orchestrate, or encourage collective action in order to attain a particular political objective. Often, elites will mobilize their political constituents, such as political party followers or sympathizers, specific ethnic, religious, or regional constituencies, or members of specific interest groups. These mobilization efforts can be intended to support a peaceful settlement of the conflict, which often requires building broad-based multi-stakeholder alliances that cut across the various sectors of society. However, elites can use influence for the diametrically opposed purpose of conflict escalation. They may want to garner political support for their radical political positions or agendas that make a negotiated settlement more difficult. Additionally, elites may resort to other actions in order to increase political polarization, i.e. the incompatibility between the political stances of various stakeholders. Finally, we found that some elite actors may aim to influence public discourse by promoting transparency, for instance through research, analysis, or monitoring activities that provide conflict stakeholders with reliable information on various aspects of the conflict, the negotiation process, or efforts to implement agreement provisions.

### 3.3 Shaping the Setting

In addition to negotiation and influencing public discourse, elite actors also aim to shape the setting in which the negotiation process takes place. This primarily involves the design of the peace process, as well as the parameters of the larger political context, which have an impact on the ability of all actors to reach their objectives in the conflict in question. Elites' efforts to shape the setting first pertain to the negotiation process in a narrow sense. Indeed, calling for an end to the conflict through negotiation, and establishing a negotiation process or negotiation bodies such as peace negotiation across various tracks or more broad-based National Dialogues, can be understood as a first instance through which an actor tries to take pro-active control of a process. Elites can support such processes through political statements and financial or logistical support. Once a process is established, elites can retain control of the process when occupying a leading role, a method that is often displayed by elites in government. Elite actors may aim to manipulate the process by steering or controlling the proceedings, setting agendas, and influencing who is able to participate in the negotiations, for instance by supporting broader inclusion, undertaking steps to bring further stakeholders into the process, or by narrowing participation, for instance controlling the kind and number of participants in a process, as well as their ability to participate.

Beyond the negotiation table, elites can aim to shape the broader political environment through various forms of collaboration—i.e. the establishment of formal or informal alliances, coalitions or partnerships with other



stakeholders in the conflict—in order to pursue common interests and increase their influence at the negotiation table. However, other means to shape the setting beyond the negotiation table are by and large limited to elites that occupy positions in government or the armed forces because they can rely on executive power and the use of force. Elite actors may aim to intimidate representatives of negotiation parties and other stakeholders, including through the threat of violence, security measures, or military armament. More broadly, elites may aim to curtail the room for maneuver of other stakeholders who are not present at the negotiation table, by restricting the political space. For example, they may undertake efforts to reduce political liberties, such as freedoms of expression or association. In extreme cases, governing elites may declare a state of emergency and thus suspend fundamental tenets of the political order. However, incumbents may also take the diametrically opposed option, namely stepping down from power and thus opening up the opportunity for political change<sup>2</sup>. Such actions are usually a reaction to political protests or upheaval by opposition groups demanding a change in government or political reforms and thus an opening of political space.

### 3.4 Undermining the Process or Existing Settlement

Finally, elite actors also apply methods aimed at deliberately obstructing or derailing the negotiation process or its achievements. While many of these activities occur after a process has started, we include in this category those elite behaviors which unravel an existing formalized settlement in the first place. For instance, when elites escalate a political conflict in the first phase and seek military or political solutions without negotiation, these methods undermine the formalized outcomes of an earlier negotiation process, such as established political constitutions and offices. In contrast to the three other approaches, undermining a process or settlement is thus a purely destructive behavior. It involves unilateral actions that roll back on earlier achievements that led to a negotiated settlement, or actions that obstruct, derail, or sabotage an existing negotiation or implementation process.

This can involve relatively soft approaches, which often overlap with negotiating, influencing, and shaping strategies. Elites may boycott the negotiation process, declining to participate or withdrawing from the process in an effort to undermine it, or they may attempt to derail the process through other means, for instance by creating an atmosphere of fear and mistrust, by publicly speaking out against the process, or by rejecting results or calling achievements into question. Elite actors may also inhibit the work of mediators or mediation support actors, aiming to

<sup>2</sup> In a few cases, a change in government has been the consequence of the natural death of an incumbent. While this is not commensurate with our understanding of strategy, we nonetheless include these cases, as they bear largely similar consequences to a voluntary resignation from power.

establish alternative negotiation processes that better serve their purpose, or suspend or dismantle processes or bodies if they have the political authority to do so.

However, undermining a process most frequently involves the use of armed violence at a collective level. Elites that have influence over the armed opposition may direct violence against the government's armed forces or other government entities. In contrast, governing elites and elites with influence over the military may direct violence against established armed groups, as well as against parts of the civilian population associated with other conflict parties. Elites may also use armed violence targeted against individuals, such as prominent opposition figures, civil society representatives, intellectuals, or journalists. Importantly, this category does not differentiate between the legitimate or illegitimate use of force. What is important here is that force is used to roll back on previous commitments and provoke the breakdown of an established political settlement, or efforts to establish such a settlement in the first place.

The use of violence is the most drastic method through which elites may aim to undermine a peace process. It usually occurs when elites perceive that they will not be able to achieve their aims through the negotiation process alone, and may in the first instance involve enhancing their military capacity, such as through re-armament, tactical maneuvers, or forming alliances between armed groups. However, these forms of violence need to be differentiated from the uses of violence through which elites aim to achieve a strategic advantage at the negotiation table, for instance when they aim to create realities through armed violence on the ground that are more commensurate with their negotiation objectives (most common in ethnicized conflicts over territory), or when they aim to enhance their negotiation power by strengthening their military position.

## | 4. Elites' Strategic Behavior across Phases of Transition

This chapter discusses the behavior of elites in peace and transition processes in greater detail. It considers transitions triggered by public protests—in response to longstanding social, political, and/or economic grievances—as well as transitions from war to peace, in which different windows of opportunity create space for a renegotiation of the political status quo. These cases are either triggered by the outbreak of violence such as through a coup d'état, an insurgency, or an armed conflict, or by popular protests that often turn violent. However, they all commonly evolve into a formal peace process, which often leads to the conclusion of a formal peace agreement and/or the implementation of changes to formal political arrangements.

Using illustrative examples from IPTI's database, this chapter sheds light on the interplay of elites' strategies, as well as the interactions between various elite actors. The four principal approaches identified in Chapter 3 play out across a sequence of five phases in a given peace and transition processes: 1) the transition trigger; 2) the beginning of negotiations; 3) the negotiations; 4) the conclusion of negotiations; and 5) the implementation process. To explore common strategies in greater depth, we differentiate elites into two major clusters which share a common, overarching strategic objective within each phase. However, it is important to note that within each cluster, multiple actors and groups of actors exist, often with competing or misaligned interests. Additionally, the overarching objectives differ from phase to phase, and the composition of clusters is not fixed, as actors can shift from one cluster to another at any point.

### 4.1 Phase 1: The Transition Trigger

The first phase—involving the transition trigger—captures the initiation of a political transition and the initial events and dynamics that pose a significant challenge to the political status quo. A challenge to the status quo can occur through armed violence, including armed insurgencies or coup attempts, through popular protests, or a combination thereof. In this phase we differentiate between two clusters of elite actors: 1) those who seek to disrupt the status quo and aim to initiate political change; and 2) those who aim to maintain the status quo, as well as their related positions of power.

#### Cluster 1: Elites Seeking to Disrupt the Status Quo

The first cluster is made up of elites who support a disruption of the status quo, and thus trigger the transition process. Elite strategies to disrupt the

status quo include influencing the discourse through campaigns, protests, or targeted communication, undermining an existing political settlement through the use of violence, and/or shaping the setting by establishing new political parties or movements.

**A common first strategy is to influence public discourse through large-scale campaigns that mobilize the masses.** Many of the peace and transition processes analyzed are triggered by the eruption of public protests. While mass protests are often portrayed as “grassroots” movements, elite actors, such as civil society leaders or influential individuals in the political opposition, usually play a prominent role in facilitating, organizing, or even orchestrating their activities. Through the mobilization of public campaigns, protests, or strikes, elite actors aim to influence public opinion and disrupt the established political discourse. For example, during the 2011 uprising in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood—the main opposition party—supported civil society by providing logistical and technical support as thousands of protesters took the streets demanding political change. Two decades earlier in Togo, business leaders and associations, intellectuals, and academics held informal meetings to support collective action against the authoritarian regime in power, inspired by democratization in neighboring Benin. Public protests helped bring about the establishment of a National Conference in 1991 to renegotiate the existing political settlement.

**Elite actors may also aim to influence the discourse after an uprising through targeted campaigns aimed at specific stakeholders in order to reduce, or at times increase, the risk of violent conflict.** For example, shortly after the outbreak of violence in Kenya in December 2007 following a contested general election, prominent Kenyan peacemakers made considerable efforts to influence the views of powerful stakeholders, in particular Kenyan politicians, leaders of ethnic communities, the Kenyan media and the international community, urging them to call for peace and calm. Simultaneously, civil society elites lobbied international actors, calling for attention to the crisis and an internationally-mediated solution. These efforts contributed to the eventual acceptance by both the government and political opposition of an African Union-led external mediation.

Elites may capitalize on an unfolding political crisis, using public campaigns promising a peace process to advance their own political positions. For example, in Colombia, President Andres Pastrana ran his 1998 election campaign on the promise that if elected, he would initiate the peace process with the FARC. Simultaneously the FARC indicated that should Pastrana win presidential elections, they might be willing to negotiate, strengthening Pastrana’s campaign. Public campaigns are not always peaceful. Often violence is used to galvanize support, manufacturing a political crisis to force elites in power to listen. Following the disputed election results in

Kenya, public protests demanding electoral justice quickly took a violent turn, targeting ethnic groups associated with the elites in power. The high level of violence between late 2007 and early 2008 was unprecedented, resulting in more than one thousand deaths and hundreds of thousands of people displaced (Lindenmayer and Kaye 2009).

It is important to note that not all cases include a strategic effort by elites to influence views in the trigger moment. On the contrary, elite strategies can also be marked by a failure to influence public views, particularly in cases where elites lack either a distinctive political agenda or have a limited voice with which to effectively communicate. In Liberia in 2003 for example, a peace process was triggered following an escalation in violence during the civil war between the government forces and armed opposition groups. After thousands of civilians had been killed, the international community insisted on finding a peaceful solution to a conflict in which fighting groups had unclear political motivations, demands, or widespread support.

**Elites seeking to disrupt or dismantle the existing political system may employ strategies to undermine the system entirely.** Once the old political order has ceased to function, there is more space for envisaging and negotiating political alternatives. For instance, protest movements may be accompanied by the efforts of some elite actors—mainly governing or military elites—to topple an existing government through a coup d'état. This was the case in 1991 in Mali where civil society protests, inspired by the wave of democratization in West Africa, demanded an end to political dirigisme and the establishment of a multiparty system. Protests created space for a military coup against President Moussa Traoré, eventually leading to the convening of a national conference. Sometimes, protests can be instigated after an election, especially if elites in the political opposition deem the election results to be consequence of an unfair election process, such as in Kenya in 2007.

Many cases see an outbreak of armed violence on a much larger scale, when elites affiliated with an armed opposition aim to achieve political change through the use of military force. For example, during the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, elites interested in overturning the existing power structures aligned with U.S. forces, which resulted in a military defeat of the Taliban and created space for a political negotiation. In other cases, an increase in violence from an armed opposition group during civil war or a military stalemate can make a military solution seem less likely and increase a government's willingness to seek a political solution through negotiation. In Aceh, violence was escalated in the 1990s by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), the armed opposition group calling for independence from Indonesia. This brought international attention to the long-established violent conflict and increased the government's willingness to negotiate.

Finally, in this early phase **elites often begin to shape the setting of the political order, seeking to establish their preferred political arrangements in anticipation of shifting power structures.** These efforts may be aimed at changing the “rules of the game,” for instance by broadening the political space through the introduction of a multi-party system, or introducing or strengthening political freedoms. For example, in Nepal, following nearly a decade of violent conflict between the Maoist insurgency and the government, then King Gyanendra Shah carried out a coup d’état (2005) to assume direct rule. This antagonized the country’s mainstream political parties who responded by forming new political alliances and calling for the abolition of the monarchy in favor of a democratic transition.

With increased political space, opposition groups—either formerly suppressed or newly established—can try to shape the political landscape to their advantage. In some cases, this involves forming new political parties or building broad coalitions between groups across the social and political spectrum. Opposition demands in this early stage can be reinforced by cooperation or collaboration with civil society movements. For example, in Togo in 1991, opposition parties came together to form a single coalition, *Collectif de l’opposition démocratique* (COD), demanding the resignation of the incumbent and the establishment of a national conference. The coalition later established itself as a transitional government.

Military elites may also play a key role in this moment, when they opt to lead or support a pro-change movement, in some cases proactively establishing a new body, such as an interim or transitional government, to assume greater control early on. Often this can lead to shrinking, rather than broadening, of the political space. For example, in Egypt in 2011 the military severed ties with the governing elite, sided with protesters, and declared itself an interim government.

## Cluster 2: Elites Seeking to Resist Change to the Status Quo

While the trigger moment is brought about by elite actors who want to disrupt the status quo, elites in power often resist change as they are the primary beneficiaries of the existing political arrangements. Additionally, elites who have profited from the upheaval caused in the course of this moment, such as those profiting from the spoils of war, may also want to counteract further changes to the balance of power.

**Governing and military elites, or elites of the armed opposition, may aim to shape the setting of a potential process, or may aim to undermine a potential process before it begins.** Governments threatened by public protests and collective action may try to suppress mass movements by restricting political space in order to subdue challenges to the existing

political order. This can include legal action, such as declaring a state of emergency, restricting movement, or enforcing curfews, or military action, including employing the use of direct force to violently quell protesters. For example, shortly after protests broke out in Yemen in January 2011, inspired by the wave of uprisings in the region demanding democratic reform, a set of emergency laws were passed through parliament awarding the president sweeping powers to counter challenges to the government, including the use of violence, imprisonment, and censorship. Similarly, in response to the outbreak of 2007 post-election violence in Kenya, groups that identified as Kikuyu, aligned with the government in power, retaliated through organized violent attacks against suspected supporters of the opposition party contesting the general election, broadly targeting individuals with an ethnic identity associated with the opposition. Most of these Kikuyu groups consisted of youths hired and directed by the political elite benefiting from the status quo. The police also used excessive force against suspected supporters of the opposition to quell protests.

In cases where armed opposition challenges a government through the use of force, governing and military elites often opt to resolve the conflict through military means. For example, in Guatemala where violent conflict lasted for more than three decades, the government initially refused to negotiate with the opposition groups, claiming that the insurgents were defeated and demanding their surrender.

**In cases where a challenge to the existing settlement cannot be subdued, elites seeking to defend the status quo may consider negotiating with their adversaries.** Following attempts to quell protests, government leaders may negotiate with opposition groups, offering concessions in an attempt to fulfill the demands of protesters and remain in power without establishing a formal peace process. For example, in Togo and Benin the governments agreed to the creation of political parties. In Mali, the government released 30 political detainees associated with opposition parties. In some cases, the concessions involve a change in political leadership. In Egypt, President Mubarak announced a power-sharing arrangement with a vice president and promised not to run for re-election. Shortly thereafter, he resigned from power. In Yemen, President Saleh gave up his power after approval of the Gulf Initiative Agreement on 23 November 2011, and was succeeded by his former vice president, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Concessions may not suffice in meeting the demands of the political opposition, but they often work to create space for political transition processes.

## 4.2 Phase 2: The Beginning of Negotiations

The second phase—the beginning of negotiations—follows a transition trigger and is characterized by the start of a formal negotiation process. Elite



strategies tend to shift during this phase from armed or political confrontation towards achieving their goals through negotiation. As a possible transition process looms, the two primary clusters of elites in this phase have shifted to: 1) those seeking a political transition; and 2) those resisting a possible transition. During this phase, elites in both clusters aim to shape the setting of the negotiation table and begin preliminary negotiations with political opponents. As formal negotiations are established, elites often continue to influence the views of key stakeholders to increase their bargaining power at the table. In both clusters there may exist groups of elites who continue to use armed violence to achieve their objectives, seeking to undermine the establishment of a negotiation process.

### Cluster 1: Elites Seeking a Political Transition

Elites seeking a political transition may aim to use negotiations as an opportunity to advance new political agendas, or as an effort to suppress their demands for a change to the existing political settlement. In the first scenario, elites in this cluster strive to shape the setting of a negotiation or influence the views of stakeholders early on. In the later scenario, elites may try to undermine the process before it begins, by refusing to participate in a negotiation process or continuing to carry out armed violence.

**Leaders of armed and political opposition groups may push for or decide to participate in the negotiations if this helps them to achieve their political objectives.** During armed conflicts, this may be the case, particularly when victory on the battlefield seems unlikely, when they feel they have gained the upper hand, or when they are under pressure to end conflict through negotiated settlement. During the civil war in Rwanda, for example, an initial ceasefire agreement was negotiated only after a dramatic display of strength by the armed opposition group, the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), against the government in 1991, which gave the opposition group a strong position from which to negotiate. In the case of Togo, the newly established opposition group, the COD, agreed to co-participate in the 1991 National Conference only under pressure from international actors.

**Elites can increase their bargaining power by shaping the setting of a process early on.** For instance, they can proactively push for the establishment of new political bodies, such as inclusive (or exclusive) commissions, new political parties, or interim governing structures that can advocate for particular interests during negotiations. After the 1991 military coup in Mali, for example, during which President Traoré was arrested by army officers, civil society was concerned that the military would grab power through the newly formed National Reconciliation Council, led by military leaders. To check military power going into a transition process, the military and civil society established a new body—the Transition Committee

for the Well-Being of the People (CTSP)—which included a mix of civilian and military members and served as a transitional government. This increased the bargaining power and political influence of civilian elites, as the committee included 10 military members and 15 civilians.

Elite actors can make efforts to control the selection of participants who will be present at the negotiation table, the agenda, the design of the process, or the mediation team, in essence shaping the rules of the game and the players according to their interest. Civil society groups for instance often ask for broader inclusion, and, if granted, actively participate at different tracks and using various inclusion modalities. In Papua New Guinea, for example, three different groups successfully advocated to be represented during track one talks, with support from leaders of the main warring parties and facilitators: local leaders of warring parties (including local commanders), members of the Council of Chiefs and Council of Elders, and women in Bougainville. In Yemen, women secured a 30 percent quota in delegations to the National Dialogue Conference, as well as their own separate delegation in 2014, having been key leaders during early uprisings in 2011.

**In addition to shaping a negotiation process, elite actors often seek to influence important stakeholders during this phase through targeted communication strategies, lobbying efforts, or public campaigns.**

These activities may be geared towards strengthening public support and stakeholder buy-in for the peace process. Doing so can begin steering the direction of a negotiation process or the positions of key actors. This was the case in Kenya, where a group of prominent Kenyan peacemakers launched the seven-point Concerned Citizens for Peace Agenda in 2007, strongly influencing the AU-mediated talks that started a few weeks later. In Sri Lanka in 2000, the signing of an initial ceasefire to begin a peace process calling for the end of a 25-year civil war mobilized civil society to advocate for policymakers to pursue a peacebuilding process, and publicly campaign for peace through large-scale demonstrations and coalition building. Civil society used the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka (NPC) as a platform to increase their voice, securing their involvement in the peace process.

Finally, proponents of political change may not always support an incipient process in the form of negotiations. **In cases where negotiations are perceived as stifling the political agendas of groups seeking change, elite actors may try to undermine the process before it begins, by refusing to participate at the onset of planning for talks.** This was the case in Guatemala, where the military, right wing political parties, and the business sector initially boycotted the talks. This delayed the beginning of negotiations and increased bargaining power of these elites.

## Cluster 2: Elites Resisting a Political Transition

A political transition threatens the power of elites already benefiting from the established political settlement. For some elites, the beginning of negotiations marks an opportunity to reclaim legitimacy, maintain or re-establish control, or minimize losses. Like elites who fall into the first cluster, elites in this cluster who have principally agreed to use negotiation to resolve a conflict often aim to shape the setting of the negotiation process early on and influence the views of important stakeholders. In some cases, however, where elites consider continued violence as a more effective alternative strategy, they may attempt to undermine the process entirely.

**For elites resisting a political transition, negotiating their positions can help to legitimize or secure their hold on power.**

The participation of elites in this cluster may come as a result of political pressure or military losses. For instance, during the 1990–94 Rwandan civil war, the government agreed to begin a negotiation process due to regional pressure and the military gains of the armed opposition. In Liberia, then President Charles Taylor agreed to enter into negotiations as a result of significant gains for the military opposition (LURD) and immense political pressure brought about by well-orchestrated civil society campaigns and regional actors such as ECOWAS. The same logic also holds in cases where a transition has been triggered by popular protest. Following failed efforts to quell demands for political change and, in some instances, the forced resignation of leaders in power, government leaders may agree to participate in a formal process to negotiate power sharing arrangements. This was the case in Benin in 1989, where internal pressure from protesters, severe economic crisis, and external pressure from donors forced then President Kérékou to announce a national conference.

However, governing elites may also initiate a negotiation process from a position of relative strength. In these cases, the incumbent is inclined to solve the process through political means, assuming that they are well positioned to maintain political power through a negotiated settlement. Newly established governing elites may also be more willing to negotiate, in order to increase their political standing. During the second civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), then President Laurent-Désiré Kabila considered a negotiation process a threat to his hold on power. However, when President Kabila was assassinated in 2001, he was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila, who, unlike his father, entered into negotiations as a strategy to strengthen his own legitimacy both domestically and on the international stage.

Lastly, in some cases governing elites choose to support processes where

negotiation efforts are largely driven by elites stemming from civil society in an effort to minimize loss and resolve a conflict from the sidelines. In Guatemala, for example, President Cerezo supported the establishment of the Grand National Conference spearheaded by the Catholic Church with the stipulation that opposition groups must first lay down their arms. To maintain power, the President was looking to solve the political crisis without alienating his own armed forces and right-wing political parties. However, in the end the Guatemalan Armed Forces and the right-wing political parties decided to boycott the Grand National Dialogue.

**Like their counterparts, elites resisting a transition process may seek to shape the setting of an imminent negotiation by initiating or supporting a process early on, controlling how a negotiation is set up, who participates, and by which means.**

Governing elites, often in collaboration with elites from the political opposition and civil society, may proactively create conditions to either control or delegitimize track one negotiations, for instance by establishing competing bodies or processes that serve their specific interests. For example, during the transition process in the DRC, President Laurent-Désiré Kabila refused to attend, or issue travel authorization for others to attend planning meetings for political negotiations that could threaten his hold on power. He favored the alternative of a Constituent Assembly, for which he had personally appointed 300 members.

Elite actors also commonly create modalities for the inclusion of political groups and manipulate the participation of different actors in the process to their advantage. Their push for the inclusion of different stakeholder groups may vary, balancing the need to create a legitimate process with the desire to minimize change. For example, after the 1990 uprisings in Togo, having agreed to hold a National Conference, the President manipulated the selection of participants to disproportionately represent his stronghold. Similarly, in Sudan in 2009 the government aimed to influence the selection of participants to the Doha Civil Society Conference to settle the Darfur conflict. This strategic behavior is often continued throughout the negotiations. In other cases, governing elites may act less proactively, but nonetheless aim to retain control by expressing political support for a planned negotiation process, such as in the case of Guatemala described in the previous section.

In some cases, governing elites aim to exclude particular parties, such as radical political groups, from the negotiation process in order to avoid having to compromise with strongly incompatible views. During the 2001 negotiations in Bonn to establish a transition process for Afghanistan following the US-led intervention, the Taliban were entirely excluded from negotiations. Instead, the week-long process was designed to negotiate an agreement between more moderate groups already aligned in their

political stance against the Taliban.

In addition, the conflict parties, including governing elites and influential actors from the political and armed opposition, may want to limit the role and involvement of other actors, such as foreign states or members of United Nations peacekeeping or political missions, to maximize their control over process design early on. In Colombia, for example, the government and the opposition initially sought to keep international actors away from direct mediation or strong involvement in the process, to avoid internationalization of the conflict. Their stance shifted somewhat throughout the process, eventually allowing for international mediation, but their initial stance helped to set a precedent moving forward.

**To broaden political support, elites may try to influence the views of stakeholders through public campaigns or lobbying efforts in support of the ensuing negotiations.** Governing elites may aim to influence other stakeholders by pro-actively campaigning for peace. In Sri Lanka for instance, the government of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his ruling United National Party was largely supportive of the pro-peace movement. Following the signing of a ceasefire agreement, a large pro-government peace rally took place in September of 2002, with the government facilitating transportation and the organization of the event. Through such shows of support for the peace process, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe broadened his political support among the pro-peace elements of Sri Lankan society.

**Finally, in cases where a negotiation limits their political stronghold, elites may try to undermine an incipient peace process by continuing to refuse to participate and through the use of force.** In armed conflicts, governing elites, leaders or armed groups, or other influential stakeholders such as business leaders, may try to undermine a process by boycotting it from the start or refusing to participate, if they feel they can sufficiently achieve their objectives without negotiations. In Liberia, for example, the parties in conflict refused to sign an initial ceasefire pushed forward by the international community that would open space for a political dialogue, electing to pursue their political ambitions using continued violence. It was not until the Special Court for Sierra Leone issued an arrest warrant for then President Charles Taylor, accusing him of committing war crimes in the neighboring country, that the balance started to shift and leaders showed willingness to consider a negotiation process. Similarly, in the DRC and Sri Lanka, governing elites refused to officially support an impending process and did not attend preliminary planning meetings. In these cases, negotiation processes were only established after a change in government. This strategy can emerge at the beginning of negotiations but may continue during the various stages of the process.

Sometimes elites that form part of the armed or political opposition may also oppose or undermine efforts to establish a peace process because they assume that they will be better off in a context of continued armed conflict. For example, in 1997, during efforts to end the armed independence struggle in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, the leader of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), Francis Ona, boycotted the Burnham peace talks. In the course of the armed conflict, Ona had unilaterally declared Bougainville independent and had established a quasi-government, the Bougainville Interim Government (BIG), in the occupied territory. Ona refused to join the peace process, benefiting from his continued control over parts of the Bougainville territory and a copper mine, an asset that would later be a source of revenue for an independent Bougainville. He insisted that the status of Bougainville had been settled by his earlier unilateral declaration of independence (Regan 2003, 146, 151).

Early resistance to a negotiation process is often pursued as a strategy by elites such as more politically radical groups who accept a possible escalation of violence as a consequence of refusing to engage in negotiations. In Rwanda for example, the anti-Tutsi, Hutu extremist group, the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR), refused to sign the code of conduct contained in an earlier peace protocol and was thus excluded from the negotiations. As negotiations were established, the CDR continued its efforts on the battlefield, building up militias and carrying out massacres against Tutsis.

### 4.3 Phase 3: The Negotiations

The third phase—negotiations—is characterized by a formal, ongoing negotiation or dialogue process. At least two parties have agreed to come to the table during this phase and participate in formal talks to reach a new political settlement. All elite actors therefore tend to direct their behavior towards this process, as it is here where changes to the political settlement can now be formalized.

During this phase, there is little difference in strategies between those who previously sought to catalyze political change and those who hoped to maintain the status quo, as all actors are now seeking to maximize their gain at and around the negotiation table. However, not all groups are included or choose to participate in the formal process. Elites excluded from the formal process may aim to influence negotiations to get access to the table, or to advance their objectives outside of the formal negotiations. They may also choose to undermine the process entirely, if they do not believe that they can achieve their objectives at the negotiation table.

This moment is thus characterized by the dynamics in and between two

major clusters: 1) those have agreed to participate in and are included in a formal negotiation process; and 2) those who refuse to participate and/or are excluded from the negotiation process. As in the other phases, these categories are not fixed. Elites who initially agree to participate in a negotiation process may use their possible withdrawal as a bargaining chip. Likewise, elite actors who initially boycotted the process may later choose to join the process, in order to gain political standing and secure a position in the future political arrangement.

### Cluster 1: Elites Who Agree to Participate in and are Included in the Formal Negotiation Process

The first cluster is formed by elites participating in the formal negotiation process. For members belonging to this cluster, negotiating positions becomes a central approach to achieving their political objectives during this phase. Additionally, elites aim to improve their political position by continuing to shape the setting of the negotiation process, such as through controlling participation, and influencing discourse both at and away from the formal table. Elites unsatisfied with the ongoing process may use the threat of withdrawal to undermine the process.

**For elite actors in this cluster, negotiating positions with political opponents becomes a central strategy to achieve their objectives, bargaining with the opposition to maximize political gain or minimize loss.** Reaching a common ground usually requires elites to offer concessions to their opponents in order to come to a negotiated settlement that is better than each party's best alternative. Often, governing elites make concessions under conditions of extreme political pressure, which can stem from the public, international actors, or even from within their own government. Concessions can be made at or away from the negotiation table. In the case of Rwanda, for example, President Habyarimana made comprehensive concessions for democratic reforms and refugee return, to relieve international political pressure and reduce the risk of a violent attack from the armed opposition.

Successful bargaining can lead to the signing of partial or interim agreements that constitute important milestones between governing and military elites, the elites of the political and armed opposition, and, at times, civil society leaders. These can be ceasefire agreements, accords, or protocols that pave the way for further negotiation and future agendas and joint objectives, or determine timetables for the process and designate mediator roles. The signing of or refusal to sign an agreement is often used as a negotiation tactic by parties at the table. The Rwanda peace process helps to illustrate these dynamics. A first ceasefire agreement, achieved after a series of regional summits, opened space for negotiation to agree



on a future power-sharing arrangement. At a later stage, however, the armed opposition group the RPF refused to sign agreements, risking an escalation of conflict in the hope of securing further concessions from the government.

Finally, the signing of partial agreements can in some cases be understood as a sign of goodwill. In Colombia, for instance, the conflict parties signed the Loz Pozos Agreement to express their willingness to continue the negotiation process. In other cases, a party to the conflict may unilaterally declare a ceasefire to signal readiness for further talks, as the Maoists did in Nepal in 2005.

**During negotiations, elites at the table can try to influence the views of other stakeholders through informal talks, lobbying efforts, and communication with the public.** In many cases, leaders of civil society groups organize campaigns for an end to violence and for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. In Liberia in 2003, for example, civil society groups put pressure on conflict parties to come to an agreement through mass mobilization, public events, consultations with the conflict parties and mediation team, and joint declarations. In this case, pressure from civil society groups strongly influenced public and international discourse, making it politically infeasible for conflict parties to walk away from the negotiation table.

Leaders of civil society groups sometimes establish separate processes to assert greater pressure on the conflict parties and amplify their voices. For instance, during the Doha Process for Darfur (2009–2013), civil society organized a parallel, track two process through which they released the Doha Declaration asking for an immediate ceasefire and negotiations directly addressing the causes of conflict.

**Elites shape the setting of an ongoing negotiation process to advance their agendas by influencing participation to their advantage or manipulating the process.** Elites may aim to circumvent broad-based and inclusive processes, which give voice to popular grievances and political adversaries. During the Aceh peace process in 2001, for example, the government and opposition agreed to a process of democratic consultations with civil society to bring in Acehese perspectives and increase the legitimacy of the process. This failed, however, because the provincial governor of Aceh, tasked with leading the consultative process, refused to do so. Similarly, during the Kenyan peace process (2008–2013), the government opposed broadening the negotiation table to include more members of civil society, as there was a widespread suspicion that civil society groups were more closely aligned to the opposition party and would therefore strengthen their position in negotiations.

When elites are in a strong enough position, they may try to sideline or entirely exclude specific parties to the conflict from gaining a seat at the negotiating table. This was the case in Macedonia (2001–2013), where governing elites and leaders of the political opposition jointly chose to exclude the main conflict party, the National Liberation Army (NLA), in the newly formed interim government. Additionally, in Sri Lanka (2000–2004) the main conflict parties excluded representatives of the mainstream opposition and religious groups. Factions of the governing elite continued to shape the negotiation setting in their favor as negotiations progressed: the moderate incumbent Prime Minister sidelined hardline President Kumaratunga from the ceasefire signing process, in order to reach a deal with the armed opposition. A soft approach to making talks more exclusive is to make parts of the talks or the preparation for talks informal. In Sri Lanka, parts of the talks were kept secret from the President, and in Nepal King Gyanendra established secret negotiations with the Maoists after assuming executive power in a coup, deliberately excluding other political groups.

In cases where elite actors increase their position of power during the negotiation, they are sometimes better placed to control or manipulate the participation of other actors throughout the process. For instance, in Egypt in 2011 the military had declared itself an interim government after a transition trigger. Establishing a National Dialogue in phase two initially showed goodwill and a willingness to negotiate. However, military elites soon sought to control who participated in talks, where talks took place, and how decisions were made, compromising the legitimacy of the process. Ultimately, military control over the process prevented the National Dialogue from having any real influence on the outcome of the transition.

Broadening participation in a negotiation process is not always a detriment to the primary negotiating parties. On the contrary, in some cases broader inclusion can benefit elites at the table, increasing political support for certain positions, or ensuring the process is perceived as legitimate by the public. In the Inter-Congolese negotiations (1999–2003), for example, the government initiated the participation of new rebel groups and local militias to strengthen their position against externally-backed armed groups. In other cases, governing elites use consultations with members of civil society to increase the legitimacy of the process, such as in Northern Ireland (1994–2006) where public consultations were held to engage the public and create space for grassroots participation. It is important to note, however, that broadening participation is not always a show of integrity as elites also use consultations as an exercise to “tick the box” for inclusion, seeking to create the perception of a participatory process while simultaneously resisting adversarial voices. In the DRC, warring parties intimidated and harassed civil society representatives, particularly women,

who were consulted in local dialogue processes.

**Elites can also shape the setting of a negotiation by controlling the distribution of authority in the negotiation mechanisms.** For instance, decision-making power shifted significantly during the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference (2002–2004), one of several successive conferences to resolve nearly a decade of violent conflict, when clan leaders were elevated to the Leaders' Committee, the committee with the strongest decision-making power, essentially shutting out all other delegates or alternative sources of power from having a strong role in the process. Initially designed to broaden representation of civil society members, the conference ultimately became a power struggle between faction leaders.

In many cases, governing elites and leaders of the armed opposition may coalesce in order to defend their interests vis-à-vis other stakeholders, including civil society or democratic movements. In Liberia, leaders of both armed groups and government representatives controlled the proceedings of the negotiations in order to avoid broader participation. In the DRC, the warring parties dominated the negotiations and were the only actors to have a substantial impact on the negotiations and the outcome.

**The negotiation parties may also shape the setting by forming umbrella movements or alliances in order to gain a stronger influence at the negotiation table.** In Rwanda, leaders of the domestic political opposition forged an alliance with the armed RPF in order to gain political leverage against the incumbent regime. During the Doha Process for Darfur, various armed groups merged into the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) coalition and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM). In the DRC, several opposition groups created an anti-government coalition, the “Union of Congolese forces for the full respect of the Lusaka Agreement and for the holding of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue”. Sometimes, governing elites may aim to increase their political leverage through alliance formation and collaboration with other political parties and civil society. The Inter-Congolese negotiations also saw local militia groups, the Mayi-Mayi, forming an alliance with incumbent President Kabila.

**Even while participating at the negotiation table, elites may still try to undermine the process entirely, by withdrawing from the process, breaking an agreement, or inciting violence.** In some cases, governing elites, the military, and the leaders of political opposition or armed groups use their participation in a negotiation process to secure military gains. For example, governments have used ceasefire agreements as an opportunity to re-arm, with the intention of ending the conflict through military means. In Macedonia in 2001, political parties reluctantly agreed to create a Grand

Coalition Government of National Unity, including four major parties from opposing sides. Their acquiescence to the coalition, however, was largely a stalling tactic for pursuing a military victory (for the Macedonian parties) or securing increased international mediation (for the Albanian parties). Finally, the use of targeted political violence may also be used to undermine any progress, at times breaking important milestone agreements, for example when the Nepalese military attacked and killed unarmed Maoists, breaking the agreed ceasefire.

## Cluster 2: Elites who Refuse to Participate in or are Excluded from the Formal Negotiation Process

The second cluster is formed by elites who either boycott the formal negotiation process or are excluded from it. Elites may use self-exclusion as a tool to undermine the process, either from the beginning (see phase 2), or in the course of the negotiations. In other cases, certain elites may want to participate but remain excluded by other players that seek to shape the setting of the process to advance their own agendas. While the negotiations are ongoing, these excluded elites continue to influence the formal negotiation process from the outside.

**Elites who are excluded from a negotiation process respond by attempting to re-shape the political setting in which a process is ongoing.** They do so by building alliances, forming new political parties, establishing parallel processes, or at times employing the use of violence to gain access to the table. New alliances can shift power dynamics and re-determine the main negotiating parties. In Nepal in 2003, major political parties excluded from King Gyanendra's secret negotiations with the Maoists formed an alliance against the king, which only strengthened as the king restored and dismantled the democratic government throughout the course of the peace process. Eventually, it was King Gyanendra who was excluded from secret negotiations with the Maoists as the newly formed Seven Party Alliance secured a new ceasefire agreement in 2004.

Excluded members of civil society often go to great lengths to be represented in the negotiations, even after the process has begun. This can involve reshaping existing structures to broaden inclusion or creating new structures. Women, in particular, have demonstrated creative ways to reshape the structures in order to gain access to a negotiation table. For instance, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition became a political party in order to participate in the talks that led to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, a process that was open only to formally established political parties and otherwise excluded women. In Somalia in 2000, a group of women civil society leaders presented themselves as the "Sixth Clan" when participants were chosen along the five traditional clan lines.

**When elites cannot gain direct access to formal negotiations, they may seek to influence the views of people outside and inside the process,** by lobbying stakeholders at the table, or increasing public pressure for specific agenda items to be discussed. A particularly devastating example is the use of hate speech by Hutu extremists during the Arusha Peace Accords for Rwanda (1992–93), from which the right-wing group, the CDR, was excluded. The CDR sought to influence the negotiations from outside the process, via campaigns, demonstrations, protests, political propaganda, and the use of violence. The CDR launched a media campaign through its own radio station, Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines, to protest their exclusion and call for representation at the negotiating table. This media campaign—which later became a tool to carry out genocide—increased polarization along ethnic lines, causing governing elites to split and forcing the President to offer further concessions.

**Alternatively, elites fearing that negotiations will go against their interests may try to undermine the process entirely by boycotting or dropping out of the negotiation process, or by inciting violence from the sidelines.** In Northern Ireland, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) walked out of the multi-party talks to end three decades of violence following the admission of their political rivals, Sinn Féin, to the negotiations. Talks led to the signing of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement by the British and Irish governments and all major political parties in Northern Ireland except for the DUP. Yet, the self-exclusion of a major political party from the political settlement was a contributing factor to the multiple collapses of the executive and suspensions of the Assembly, which ultimately led to renewed talks. In the case of Afghanistan, where the Taliban was excluded from participating in negotiations in Bonn in 2001, they increased their use of terrorist tactics in subsequent negotiation phases to serve as a demonstration of the extent to which their isolation might have been a mistake. Similarly in Papua New Guinea, the Me'ekamui, a splinter armed group that had formed out of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) under the leadership of Francis Ona, refused to participate in the constitutional reform process and instead continued to engage in localized violence and the armed occupation of parts of Bougainville.

For leaders in power, the use of violence to deliberately undermine a process can serve as a justification for the narrowing of political space, compromising the sustainability and legitimacy of the peace process. For example, the Afghan government responded to security threats by the Taliban and other insurgent groups during the negotiations process by focusing less on institutionalizing democracy and continuously restricting the democratic freedoms of its citizens. The narrowing of political space allowed for the continued dominance of warlords over permanent political institutions as the Bonn agreement was implemented.

## 4.4 Phase 4: The Conclusion of Negotiations

The fourth phase—the conclusion of negotiations—leads, or should lead, to the signing of a final agreement that concludes the formal negotiation process. Conflict parties at the table face a principal choice between signing or refusing to sign a final agreement, often determining the fate of a peace process. This moment is again characterized by two major clusters: 1) those who support the concluding process; and 2) those who resist the concluding process either because they want to continue to negotiate or because they aim to achieve their objectives in alternative ways.

### Cluster 1: Elite Actors who Support the Conclusion of the Process

This cluster is primarily characterized by its willingness to conclude a peace process through the signing of a final agreement. During this phase, elites in this cluster will apply a range of other strategies to make the signing of an agreement more likely. There are a variety of reasons why elites choose to support the conclusion of a negotiation. Elites can be motivated to sign a final agreement because it improves their political gain or minimizes political losses, or they are under severe external or internal pressure to do so. It is important to note that during this phase, just because elites show willingness to conclude an agreement, it is not necessarily indicative of a willingness to implement the agreement's provisions in the next phase.

**At the end of negotiations, elites may ultimately choose to avoid contentious issues that could constitute a hurdle for reaching a final agreement.** The conflict parties may avoid engaging in substantial topics or questions that lie at the heart of a conflict, hoping that the signing of an agreement will create space for peacebuilding or continued negotiation in subsequent phases. This strategic behavior may already be present during previous phases, but it becomes more visible the closer the process gets to a final agreement. In the Northern Ireland peace process, for example, the negotiating parties chose to exclude many contentious issues from the 1998 Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, leaving committees to address them further during the implementation phase, in the form of commissions and implementation bodies.

In some cases, conflict parties choose to ignore important issues or recommendations that surface during the negotiation phase, especially in cases where such recommendations do not serve the elites at the table. This may include recommendations that were put forth by official bodies established to legitimize negotiations by broadening inclusion, capturing the views of a more diverse group of people or other important elites. This was the case for example in Colombia (1998–2002), where recommendations

from the “Commission of Notables”—a commission made up of members nominated by the FARC and the government designed to provide recommendations to the negotiation table—were not implemented as the peace process ended shortly after the Commission submitted its report.

**Elites—including those at the table and those seeking to shape outcomes from a position removed from the table—may continue to influence political views in order to strengthen public support for an agreement, through lobbying, political campaigning, and activism.** These efforts can be vital for the achievement of a peace agreement. In Liberia, the activism of women’s groups was critical in securing the conclusion of negotiations. During the final round of negotiations in Accra in 2003, women’s groups staged a sit in, refusing to let conflict parties exit the meeting room before reaching a final agreement. During the Inter-Congolese Dialogue women employed similar strategies during the final stages of the negotiation process. When conflict parties threatened to leave negotiations without signing a final agreement, citing disagreements over technical issues, women delegates formed a human chain to block the exits of the meeting room where negotiations took place until an agreement was signed.

**In some cases, however, elites may re-shape the setting to secure the signing of final agreements by changing who is included at the negotiation table or who is in power.** This may include a shift towards broader inclusion, with the understanding that a bilateral agreement would simply not be considered legitimate. In Papua New Guinea, for instance, a variety of stakeholders became signatories to the agreement, including local warring leaders, representatives of the Council of Elders, and the Women of Bougainville.

Sometimes, incumbents have been forced to step down from power to persuade their counterparts to sign an agreement, as a result of mounting political pressure and few alternatives to safeguard their interests. For example, in Liberia just a few days before the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2003, then President Charles Taylor stepped down and went into exile, paving the way for a negotiated settlement.

**Establishing new bodies or processes through a final agreement can begin to shape the setting of the political transition.** These bodies or processes include implementation committees, new governing structures or bodies, or timelines for the next phase of a transition process. Often, establishing processes such as political reform commissions, constitutional commissions, or Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) is critical for reassuring negotiating parties of continued oversight and momentum following the conclusion of a negotiation, particularly for those seeking a change in the political settlement. In Nepal in 2006, for example, a

constituent assembly inclusive of all 26 parties was formed to draft a new constitution, to be widely shared with the public, for the transition to a federalist state.

In some cases, a final agreement may establish a transitional government, constituting a major step towards a new political settlement. In the DRC in 2006 and Afghanistan in 2001, parties established a transitional administration to operate until elections could be held. The establishment of transitional governments entails important power-sharing arrangements, such as for the distribution of cabinet positions, which shape the political environment in which a peace agreement will be implemented. In order to safeguard the fragile power equilibrium, conflict parties have sometimes chosen a neutral elite actor as chairman. In Liberia, for example, a civilian businessman, Gyude Bryant, was chosen as the interim Head of State. He was not a politician and fairly impartial and therefore did not pose a threat to conflict parties.

However, power-sharing arrangements are not always the solution. In some cases, elites successfully push for the establishment of new, autonomous or independent governments. At the conclusion of the Burao conference in 1991, Somaliland declared itself independent from Somalia, and a new interim government was established to administer the region. Similarly, in Papua New Guinea, the peace agreement called for a revision of the country's constitution and the establishment of an autonomous Bougainville government.

## Cluster 2: Elite Actors Who Resist the Conclusion of the Process

This second cluster is composed of elites who resist concluding the process because they prefer to continue the negotiation in order to maximize their gains, or because they aim to achieve their objectives through other means, or were excluded from the negotiation table in the first place. Elites in this cluster will likely attempt to reshape the political setting to prolong negotiations, or will try to undermine the process entirely.

**As part of the negotiation, elites can make reaching an agreement less likely by refusing to make necessary concessions, pressing other negotiation parties for further concessions, or rolling back from earlier commitments at the last moment.** When negotiation parties demonstrate a lack of willingness to make concessions or elite actors roll back from previous commitments, various rounds of negotiation may come to very little. For example, in the case of Sri Lanka, initial rounds of negotiation focused on humanitarian issues rather than addressing the political crisis at the root of the conflict. When political issues were finally brought to the



table, however, there was an increase in violence, rolling back on earlier commitments to a ceasefire. This type of resistance can be a precursor for efforts to undermine the peace process and seek political change through military means. Following the 2011 protests in Yemen calling for a change in leadership, the new President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi agreed to host an inclusive National Dialogue Conference (NDC). In 2014, the NDC reached a monumental agreement that Yemen would operate as a federation, with a widely inclusive government. Throughout the process, however, the Houthi movement was largely sidelined, and important political issues were not addressed. The results of the NDC were never implemented. Instead, military airstrikes were carried out against the Houthi opposition group, and a large-scale armed conflict ensued.

**Elites dissatisfied with negotiation results may ultimately try to undermine the process by withdrawing entirely and using force.** Both governing elites and leaders of armed or political opposition may exclude themselves from the signing of agreements if they do not feel that their interests are well represented in a possible final agreement or if they assume that they can better safeguard their interests without an agreement. In some cases, elite actors may consider that a return to armed violence is more favorable than the conclusion of an agreement. In Darfur, for example, the Government of Sudan withdrew from Doha talks in 2010, opting to resolve the crisis using military means. Later, the opposition group, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), also withdrew, severely compromising the legitimacy of negotiation outcomes.

Boycotts may be temporary, however, and do not necessarily lead to a complete failure of the process. In some cases, elites use their resistance to gain more leverage before continuing the negotiation, or agreements may be signed despite the withdrawal of certain actors. In cases where agreements are signed without key actors, such as in Darfur, the subsequent political environment tends to be tenuous, and the situation is often ripe for continued violence.

Elites may also aim to shape the political setting and use force in order to undermine the process. The military campaigns launched by governing elites in Aceh and Sri Lanka, for example, coincided with a collapse of the respective peace processes. In Sri Lanka, the government navy sunk a boat of the armed opposition group LTTE that had been carrying a weapons shipment. This incident was followed by the LTTE's withdrawal from the peace process and a military offensive by government forces. In Aceh, following the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) in 2002, stipulating a joint framework to pursue an all-inclusive dialogue, governing and opposition parties accused each other of violating the terms of the agreement. The government then arrested members of

the opposition on their way to negotiations, and a military-backed mob intimidated the Joint Security Committee tasked with overseeing the implementation of the COHA. In 2003, the President declared a State of Emergency, compromising the implementation of the COHA, and the military launched a campaign against the armed opposition.

## 4.5 Phase 5: The Implementation Process

The final phase—the implementation process—captures the time between the signing of a final agreement and its full implementation. If successful, this leads to the establishment of a new permanent government through which the political settlement becomes formalized. In this moment, elites split into two clusters. They either 1) support the implementation process; or 2) are dissatisfied with the new status quo and thus resist the implementation process, by ignoring results, boycotting the implementation, or increasing violence.

### Cluster 1: Elites who Support the Implementation of the Agreement

This cluster is composed of elite actors who show commitment to implementing the provisions established in a final agreement. It is important to note that the formal negotiation processes in previous phases rarely resolve all outstanding issues. Elites in this cluster are thus also characterized by a willingness to continue ongoing negotiations.

**First and foremost, elites in this cluster help to shape a political setting that is suitable for the implementation phase.** For example, in Kenya, elites (the conflict parties) agreed to the establishment a number of implementation commissions, including the Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence (the Waki Commission); the Constitutional Reform Commission; the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission; an electoral reform commission (the Kriegler Commission); and the National Cohesion and Integration Commission. A ‘grand coalition’ government was also established, consisting of the four main political parties, which regarded one another with great suspicion. Within the government, elites competed to secure key positions, including within the implementation commissions (Hornsby 2012, 771).

**Following the agreement, elites may aim to influence public views and increase the public buy in to seek legitimacy for both the agreement reached and the newly established political institutions.** This is often achieved through broadening inclusion, such as through public consultations or public referenda. In Northern Ireland, for example, the signatories to the

1998 Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement sought to increase public legitimacy through a referendum. Two weeks before the referendum, the government and political elites launched the “Yes” campaign, framing any resistance to the agreement as backwards, and support as moving forward to a brighter future. The campaign received significant support from civil society actors and contributed to the positive outcome of the 22 May 1998 referendum.

In Kenya, civil society, particularly human rights groups, attempted to influence political views by focusing on a legal approach to justice for the victims of the crisis. The ‘Kenyans for Peace with Truth and Justice’ (KPTJ) coalition substantially informed the Waki Commission report. KPTJ also positioned their candidates as commissioners in the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) and the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). Civil society groups noted in hindsight that they should have invested more time in political lobbying for the implementation of the recommendations, since all of them had to pass in Parliament and therefore risked becoming politicized.

**Elections are also a common strategy to increase public buy in for the outcome of a negotiation process and shape the new political setting.**

For example, following the National Dialogue in Egypt, elections were held through which the Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohamed Morsi won the presidency, initially showing commitment to a peaceful transition process. However, President Morsi proceeded to narrow political space, later resisting efforts to implement a peaceful transition, as described in the next section. In Papua New Guinea, the adoption of the new constitution was followed by presidential elections and the inauguration of the new Bougainville Government in June 2005. In some cases, elites may seek to control who can participate in elections, supporting the implementation of the final agreement while attempting to maximize their political gain. In Togo, for example, the opposition banned the former leadership from participating in elections following the National Dialogue, increasing their own influence within the newly elected government.

Often, a formal agreement does not resolve all disputed issues and there may be different interpretations of the agreement or parts of it. In this context, **elites who are supportive of the implementation process will engage in continued negotiation efforts, which often take place in established implementation mechanisms.** For example, in the eight years after the confirmation of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement described above, power-sharing was suspended on six occasions, leading to a call for new negotiations. In 2006, leaders agreed to resume talks in St. Andrews, leading to the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly. In Afghanistan, talks in Bonn in 2001 specified a timeline for continued negotiations to establish a new government in Afghanistan in the coming

years. Signatories to the Bonn Agreement subsequently participated in an Emergency Loya Jirga, putting in place a transitional government, and a Constitutional Loya Jirga, establishing a new constitution.

## Cluster 2: Elites who are Dissatisfied with the New Status Quo and thus Resist Implementation

The second cluster is composed of elite actors who are dissatisfied with the new status quo as outlined in a final agreement and therefore aim to reshape the political landscape to their advantage, or aim to entirely undermine the implementation process.

**Elites may shape the political setting by influencing participation in a newly formed government or limiting the power of particular newly established bodies.** For example, after winning election following the National Dialogue process in Egypt in 2011, President Morsi took unilateral steps to reshuffle the military, removing the Minister of Defense and extending his own executive power, ultimately triggering a new crisis in the country. In Kenya, political and governing elites undermined the process by ignoring requirements and recommendations set by implementation committees such as the requirement for ethnic diversity in the government and the inquiry into patterns of post-elections violence. Governing elites tried to downplay threatening reports produced by the Commission of Inquiry, also known as the Waki Commission and instead attempted to establish a special tribunal that they could more easily control.

**Additionally, to undermine public support for agreement implementation or for the institutions created through the agreement, elites may employ strategies to influence public views.** Elite efforts to exercise political influence during this phase are often directed against newly established transitional institutions. For instance, in Nepal, public protests were organized by some influential leaders following the release of the interim constitution in order to campaign for a federal governance arrangement. The interim constitution was then amended to include a commitment to shift to federalism. Moreover, the Arusha Accords for Rwanda established the so-called Broad-based Transitional Government, composed of government and opposition forces, leading up to the general elections. The Arusha Accords, however, were never implemented in any meaningful way as the CDR, which had been excluded from the track one process, played a primary role in inciting genocide shortly after the signing of the Accords.

Elites who have successfully managed to hold onto power during the peace process may try to influence public views to discredit reports or accusations produced during the implementation period that pose a threat to their political standing. For example, following investigations in Kenya

by the Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence, the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced it would indict six suspects for their role in the organized violence. In light of this, government and political elites tried to influence public views by spreading anti-Western, anti-ICC propaganda, framing the ICC indictments as a Western intervention. Public support for the ICC decreased significantly before the 2013 elections and two suspects won the presidency and vice presidency.

**Elites who resist implementation may try to undermine or undo the process entirely, showing no commitment to implementing the provisions as stipulated in the agreement.**

Where elites may have been pressured to sign an agreement, or where important parts of the governing or military elite have been excluded, the implementation phase provides these actors with opportunities to roll back from the commitments made. Governing parties may, for example, ignore the results of the agreement entirely. In Somalia in 2004, the newly elected President Yusuf took unilateral steps that violated the Transitional Federal Charter negotiated earlier in the process when he called for African peacekeeping troops to support his government and nominated a Prime Minister. According to the Charter, a military request should first be endorsed by Parliament and a Prime Minister should be drawn from Parliament.

Elites may resort to undermining the process through military means, especially where military or armed group leaders' interests have not been sufficiently incorporated into the new political arrangements. Excluded armed groups have undermined implementation processes by boycotting them entirely or, in some cases, sparking a resurgence of violence. For instance, in Papua New Guinea, the Me'ekamui, a splinter armed group, refused to participate in the constitutional reform process and continued its localized armed struggle and occupation during the implementation phase. In the DRC, elections were held in July 2006, as stipulated in the final agreement signed in 2003. After the elections, however, armed groups who were not properly integrated into the national military resumed violent confrontation. In Egypt and Togo, after the consolidation of control by the newly elected governments, each country's military organized coups d'état to overthrow their governments and reclaim power. Undermining the implementation of a peace process often leads to a return to armed violence and ultimately to a failed transition.

## | 5. International Responses

The preceding chapters have discussed elite strategies in the domestic context in which peace processes and political transitions take place. This focus on the national level is mainly due to the fact that the (re-) negotiation of political settlements is first and foremost a domestic affair: the distribution of power and resources, as well as the rules of the game, pertain primarily to the national arena in which the conflict has occurred. What is more, IPTI's qualitative dataset of inclusive peace and transition processes mainly contains information about the domestic realm, on which research on inclusion by and large centers. This however should not distract from the fact that non-violent political crises and armed conflicts rarely take place in a "closed polity"; instead, a range of transnational factors frequently affect the prospects of achieving peaceful settlements (Gleditsch 2007; Gleditsch and Rivera 2017).

The role of international actors in peace and transition processes is most visible in cases that have seen high levels of international involvement. This is the case where foreign governments have supported one specific conflict party for ideological or geopolitical reasons, for instance due to historical ties or economic interests, or because they aim to reduce the risks of regional destabilization or spillover effects. International involvement also tends to be more visible in cases where states or alliances of states view the resolution of conflict as commensurate with their global or regional foreign policy agendas. A prominent example of international involvement in a peace process is the dialogue processes held in Afghanistan following the international military intervention against the Taliban. In this context, the US-led military intervention was a significant trigger to the transition process. Moreover, the military presence of the International Assistance Security Force (IASF) and later the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) constituted an important factor that shaped the setting of the transition. The three negotiation processes that followed the international military intervention—the negotiations in Bonn, the Emergency Loya Jirga, and the Constitutional Loya Jirga—were portrayed as national processes. However, they were characterized by strong international involvement, particularly on the part of the US administration, which for instance drew up certain "red lines" for engaging the Taliban in talks.

Less-known examples of significant international involvement in peace and transition processes include the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in the DRC and the Peace Process in Papua New Guinea/Bougainville. The civil war in the Eastern DRC was shaped considerably by regional dynamics, including the security concerns of the Rwandan government, as well as the economic interests of regional clandestine networks of business and military elites that had a vested interest in the exploitation of the Eastern DRC's natural

resources. In addition, several neighboring countries intervened militarily in support of the government or armed opposition groups. The Inter-Congolese dialogue finally saw South Africa taking a prominent role in the mediation efforts, hosting the talks in Sun City. Moreover, the South African lead mediator Thabo Mbeki influenced the conflict parties' negotiation positions by presenting various proposals for power-sharing arrangements. In the Papua New Guinea/Bougainville process, Australia and New Zealand supported the monitoring of a ceasefire agreement through the so-called Truce Monitoring Group. The countries offered to mediate between the conflict parties, and provided logistical and financial support for the negotiations, while emphasizing the need for local ownership.

These examples suggest that international involvement cannot be ignored. While elites' struggle over political change is primarily a domestic affair, international responses condition elite strategies in two distinct ways. First, they affect the resources and means that elites require in order to pursue their preferred strategies. Importantly, this may not be limited to material or financial resources, or technical skills and knowledge, but may also include the elite actors' motivation to pursue a specific strategy in the first place. Second, international responses can increase or reduce the costs of specific behavior, which means that they can make certain approaches and objectives less favorable by threatening and implementing negative consequences. International actors thus influence national elites' cost-benefit calculations. Using these two methods, international actors regularly enable or empower some elite actors, while constraining others.

Drawing on IPTI's qualitative case study data, the remainder of this chapter provides an overview of international efforts to condition elites' resource base and the cost calculations that shape their strategic behavior. The discussion is limited to international actors who are supportive of a peaceful settlement to a conflict. We thus exclude foreign policy that supports elites aiming to influence political change by means of armed violence. While international actors often directly intervene in peace processes and political transitions, the focus here is on how international actors influence the behavior of elites.

Initially, international actors can support elites' efforts to influence political change through **negotiation**, first and foremost through mediation, i.e. by supporting a dialogue or problem-solving process through which elites can reach a common position. Foreign governments and international organizations can do this on invitation, or offer mediation support proactively. This role is often taken on by representatives of international organizations such as UN special envoys and their staff or members of the UN Mediation standby team, but it can just as well be carried out by representatives of foreign governments such as heads of government,

special envoys, secretaries, or undersecretaries. Eminent leaders of foreign civil society such as high-ranking religious leaders can also exercise this role. Mediation support actors and subject experts have proven instrumental in providing advice to specific elite actors, helping them develop more nuanced positions on specific technical issues as well as providing options for conflict resolution.

International actors have also rewarded elites who have aimed at a negotiated solution and punished those who have played a destructive role. Moreover, they have been crucial for exerting political pressure on elites to reach and sign a final agreement. Foreign governments have also provided various kinds of support or pressure to strengthen or weaken an elite actor's negotiating position. Influence can be exerted for instance by providing or withdrawing financial aid, development aid, or military support, or by dispelling political or military elites and their followers from their territory. These actions generally affect elites' cost-benefit calculations and thus their willingness to make concessions, as well as their ability to maintain their negotiating positions.

International actors have also influenced elite actors' negotiation strategies by proposing agenda items, tabling specific proposals, or endorsing or rejecting specific negotiation positions or outcomes. At times, foreign governments have also set deadlines or issued ultimatums in order to push elites toward making concessions or signing agreements. Moreover, foreign governments, international organizations and commissioned agencies can also play a vital role in preparing more comprehensive reform proposals and supporting reform processes. By providing substantial input, they can increase the number of options available to elites eager to see their interests accommodated in a political change process. For instance, international experts have provided technical advice during constitutional reform processes and supported security sector reform efforts.

Where elites have aimed to **influence political views**, international actors have been instrumental in shaping their ability to do so. On the one hand, foreign governments and international organizations are often supportive of specific political agendas, including political reform courses. Besides political statements that encourage certain views and positions, this may involve exerting pressure through conditional funding and development aid. International actors may also support efforts to campaign or lobby for an overall peaceful settlement of a conflict, as well as to shape narratives on which basis a new political settlement can be formalized. This also extends to specific political positions, such as the upholding or strengthening of democratic standards or human rights, and to delegitimizing specific power-holding elites. International actors have amplified the campaigns and lobbying efforts of specific actors, for instance by providing financial and



technical resources to run their campaigns, or by echoing and supporting their messages.

Moreover, international actors have strengthened elites' ability to shape political views in a long-term and structural manner, for instance through training programs or the provision of technical and financial support for media hubs and radio stations. Through such outlets, they have also been pivotal in condemning or isolating elite actors with radical political views and in counteracting their political campaigns. In the long-term, elite's capacity to influence political views has also been shaped by international efforts to strengthen media access and freedom, such as by lending support to legal reform efforts, the development of technical infrastructure for effective communication, and capacity building measures for journalists and civil society activists.

International actors also have an impact on elite's ability to **shape the setting** of the peace process or the political transition. By endorsing and supporting a negotiation process, as well as encouraging parties to participate, they signal to the various elite actors that political change should happen through negotiation, thus delegitimizing other methods of advancing political change. The commitment of international actors thus contributes to producing a suitable political climate for a negotiation process. This can happen through statements or symbolic acts, such as inaugurating negotiation bodies or opening negotiation processes through formal ceremonies. Foreign governments may also encourage specific elite actors to participate in talks, thus providing additional incentives to join the process and center efforts to influence change on the negotiation table. However, they may also aim to dissuade specific actors from participating, for instance by offering exile or threatening elites in power with prosecution.

Sometimes, foreign governments and international actors will support an elite actor's effort to shape the setting. For instance, international mediators may enable informal negotiations by providing a discreet venue, they may engage in shuttle diplomacy in order to assist in preparing for more formal talks, or may provide venues and logistical support for such talks. At times they may contribute logistical and in-kind support to participants, thus enabling elite actors to shape the negotiation setting. They may also finance the negotiation process as well as bodies established for the implementation of peace agreements and other follow-on activities that form part of a political transition, such as elections or constitutional referenda. Funding is also pivotal in order to initiate and sustain transitional institutions that elite actors may want to create as part of the effort to arrive at a new political settlement.

Foreign governments have at times also initiated or supported technical committees through which specific negotiation bodies have subsequently been established. International support in shaping the setting is thus often critical in order to enable the negotiation process in the first place, as well as to broaden participation. Through expert technical support, international actors have also proven crucial in supplying process design options upon which elite actors can draw in order to achieve their objectives. Once processes are set up international actors also provide the monitoring and oversight through which specific negotiation arrangements can be safeguarded. Foreign governments and international organizations can also play a critical role in encouraging and supporting the inclusion of specific actors in the process, such as civil society groups. They can also contribute to coalition and alliance-building between stakeholder groups, for instance by hosting preparatory meetings for elites of the armed or political opposition, thus enabling better coordination and a stronger voice for them.

Where elites aim to **undermine the negotiation process or its achievements**, foreign governments and international organizations have in the past countered such efforts by increasing their political and economic costs. Foreign governments commonly exert diplomatic pressure in order to dissuade conflict parties from resorting to violence, including through public condemnation that reduces an elite's political standing in the international arena. A threat of sanctions, especially economic and trade sanctions, or targeted sanctions against individuals, also increases the costs of undermining a process. In addition, international actors can threaten the legal prosecution of war crimes and other acts of violence that warrant this. To produce evidence, foreign governments may also establish international observation missions, monitoring and verification mechanisms to control existing ceasefire agreements and security arrangements, or fact-finding missions to investigate war crimes and human rights abuses through which negotiation processes and their achievements have been undermined. International actors may also support non-governmental initiatives that produce such data.

Finally, international actors can aim to withdraw the resources elites require to undermine a given process. This primarily pertains to curtailing military support and support to the security sector, hindering governing and military elites, as well as elites in the armed opposition, from using force to achieve their preferred outcomes. This can be accomplished by cutting bilateral assistance, or enacting international sanctions, particularly arms embargoes. Ultimately, the United Nations and troop-contributing countries may deploy peacekeeping missions in order to prevent elites from undermining peace processes and their achievements.

## | 6. Conclusions and Policy Implications

This report has explored the objectives of elite actors and the strategies they employ in order to influence political change during peace processes and political transitions, based on a reconstruction of elites' patterns of behavior identified via analysis of IPTI's qualitative case studies of 43 inclusive peace processes and political transitions. The findings of this report can serve as a learning resource and as an analytical framework to support policy-makers and practitioners in the design and facilitation of inclusive peace and political transition processes.

The report has identified four principal approaches through which elites aim to influence political change: first, elites negotiate conflicting positions, engaging in efforts to resolve the dispute by arriving at a common position. Second, elites influence political views, i.e. the manner in which the conflict and possible solutions to it are portrayed and perceived. Third, elites shape the setting in which the negotiation process takes place. And fourth, elites undermine, derail, or obstruct the negotiation process or existing settlement.

Furthermore, the report has analyzed how elites apply these approaches along a sequence of five distinct phases of transition, each characterized by critical moments around which elite actors will act strategically in order to maximize their interests in the struggle over political change. For each phase, the report has differentiated between two major clusters of elite actors according to the overarching objectives they pursue in the struggle over political change.

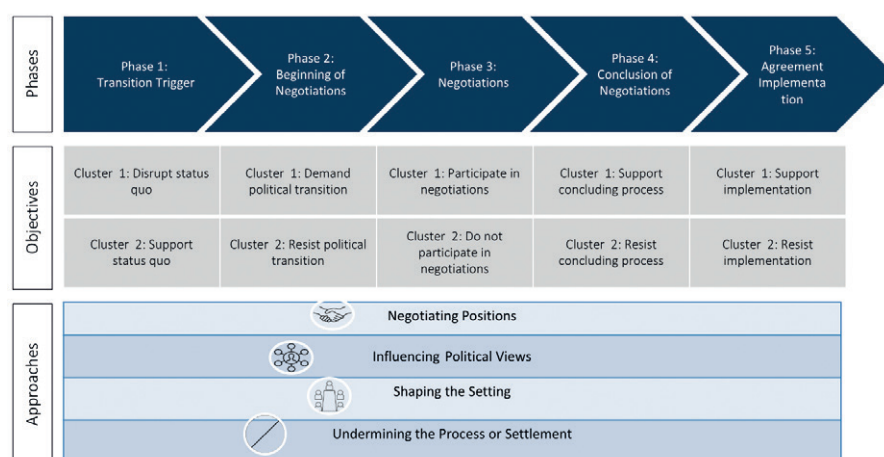
The first phase marks the beginning of the transition, caused by a trigger event, such as popular protest or armed insurgency, which causes a significant challenge to the political status quo. Here, elites either ask for a change to the political status quo or aim to defend it. In this phase, efforts to undermine the existing political settlement dominate, as well as efforts to influence political views in support of their agenda.

The second phase is characterized by a shift from armed or political confrontation towards negotiation, and the beginning of a formal negotiation process. Here, elites tend to split between a cluster that supports a transition process to formally renegotiate the political settlement and those who resist those efforts. In this phase, elites in both clusters prepare for a possible negotiation process, aiming to maximize their gains by shaping the setting early on. In cases where a negotiation is not considered favorable to achieving their objectives, elites pursue efforts to undermine the process before it has begun.

The third phase is characterized by a move away from political protest or armed confrontation towards negotiation. It spans the main negotiation process, including major milestones such as ceasefire agreements or protocols. Here the main cleavage is between those elites who have agreed to participate in and are included in a formal negotiation process and those who refuse to participate or are excluded from the process. Negotiation strategies dominate in the first cluster, but elites' efforts to influence political views, change the setting, or undermine the process in both clusters can have significant effects on the negotiation process.

The fourth phase ideally leads to the termination of formal negotiations through the signing of a final agreement. Here, the major fault line is between those elite actors who intend to conclude the process through the signing of an agreement and those who resist concluding the process, either because they want to continue to negotiate, or because they aim to achieve their objectives outside of the agreement. While the first cluster will mainly invest in further negotiations and shaping the setting to prepare for the political transition, the second cluster will prioritize efforts to undermine the process.

The fifth and final phase ideally leads to the closure of the peace or transition process, usually through the implementation of respective agreement provisions. Here, elite actors may either support the implementation process by shaping the setting of the transition, as well as, where necessary, continued negotiation, or they may resist the implementation of an agreement, instead aiming to undermine the process, for example by ignoring results, employing the use of violence, or consolidating power.



*Figure 1: Overview of analytical framework to analyze elite strategies in peace and transition processes*

The analytical perspective offered in this report also encourages a re-evaluation of the role of international actors in influencing elite behavior.

Foreign governments and international organizations have conditioned elite strategies in two distinct ways: first, they affect the means and resources that elites require in order to pursue their preferred strategies. This may not be limited to material or financial resources, or technical skills and knowledge, but may also include elite actors' willingness or inclination to pursue a specific strategy in the first place. Second, international responses can increase or reduce the political and economic costs of specific behavior, which means that they can make certain approaches and objectives less favorable by threatening and implementing negative consequences.

The results of this research can support governments and international organizations in their work in peace and political transition processes in different ways: first, the results highlight that peacemaking dynamics are not only influenced by elites stemming from the political and military realms, but also by influential civil society leaders and business representatives. Second, through a focus on elite strategies, the report offers a systematic perspective on elite behavior that cuts across actor categories and focuses on the dynamics between clusters of elites pursuing common objectives. This allows for international responses that are both more adaptive and directed towards supporting a political change process. Third, the framework introduced in this report can be used for the analysis, monitoring, and prediction of elite behavior and to develop more targeted response strategies. When applied to specific country contexts and phases of transition, the framework helps to capture elite behavior according to the typology of approaches introduced in Chapter 4, as well as to cluster elite actors according to their objectives in specific critical moments.

The critical moments discussed in this report should be understood as illustrative learning examples. In fact, each peace process and political transition is characterized by distinct events, dynamics, and courses of action. While this report identifies some of the most likely scenarios across the five distinct phases of transition spanning from the transition trigger to the implementation of agreements, policymakers and practitioners should be encouraged to think further about the next critical moment in a given process, the objectives elite actors are pursuing, and the approaches they are taking. Thinking about elite actors in clusters simplifies this task.

The results of this study also highlight the need for further research. For policy planning purposes, it could be useful to further investigate which specific elite strategies have been most successful in achieving their objectives, i.e. to develop a measurement of the effectiveness of elite strategies. Similarly, more research could be undertaken to better understand which international response strategies have been most effective in various circumstances.

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## | Annex: List of case studies

1. **Aceh** peace negotiations 1999-2003
2. **Afghanistan** Emergency Loya Jirga 2002, Constitutional Loya Jirga 2003-2004
3. **Benin** political transition 1990-2011
4. **Burundi** peace negotiations and implementation 1996-2013
5. **Colombia** peace negotiations 1998-2002
6. **Cyprus** negotiations 1999-2004
7. **Darfur** peace negotiations 2009-2013
8. **DR Congo** Inter-Congolese Dialogue 1999-2003
9. **Egypt** political transition 2011-2013
10. **El Salvador** peace negotiations and implementation 1990-1994
11. **Eritrea** constitution-making 1993-1997
12. **Fiji** political transition/constitution-making 2006-2013
13. **Georgia-Abkhazia** UN negotiations 1997-2007
14. **Guatemala** peace process 1989-1999
15. **Israel-Palestine** Geneva Initiative 2003-2013
16. **Israel-Palestine** Oslo I 1991-1995
17. **Kenya** post-election violence 2008-2013
18. **Kyrgyzstan** political reforms 2013
19. **Liberia** peace agreement and implementation 2003-2011
20. **Macedonia** Ohrid peace process 2001-2013
21. **Mali** political transition 1990-1992
22. **Northern Mali** peace negotiation 1990-1996
23. **Mexico** Chiapas uprising and peace process 1994-1997
24. **Moldova-Transnistria** negotiations 1992-2005
25. **Nepal** peace agreement and constitution-making 2005-2012
26. **Northern Ireland** Belfast (Good Friday) and St. Andrews agreements 1998-2006
27. **Philippines** Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace process 2010-2016
28. **PNG Bougainville** peace negotiations 1997-2005
29. **Rwanda** Arusha Peace Accords 1992-1993
30. **Solomon Islands** Townsville Peace Agreement and constitution-making 2000-2014
31. **Somalia I** National Peace Conference 1992-1994
32. **Somalia II** Djibouti process 1999-2001
33. **Somalia III** Kenya process (National Peace Conference) 2001-2005
34. **Somaliland** post-independence violence negotiations 1991-1994
35. **South Africa** political transition 1990-1997
36. **Sri Lanka** ceasefire, peace negotiations and elections 2000-2004
37. **Tajikistan** peace negotiations and implementation 1993-2000
38. **Togo** National Conference 1991
39. **Togo** Inclusive Dialogue 2006
40. **Tunisia** political transition and National Dialogue 2011-2016

41. **Turkey Armenia** protocols 2008-2011
42. **Turkish-Kurdish** peace process 2009-2014
43. **Yemen** National Dialogue 2011-2014



This material has been funded by UK aid from the UK government; however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

Suggested citation:

Andreas Hirblinger, Suzanne van Hooff, Molly Kellogg, and Thania Paffenholz. *Supporting or Resisting Change: Elite Strategies in War to Peace and Political Transitions*. Geneva: Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative (The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), February 2019

Cover image:

Empty oppositions seats in the Lower Chamber,  
Rome, Italy, 13 October 2011.  
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**IPTI, Graduate Institute  
Maison de la Paix  
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2  
1202 Genève**

[www.inclusivepeace.org](http://www.inclusivepeace.org)