External Military Assistance to Civil Wars
The Unintended Effects of Intentional Interference



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ABSTRACT

Weary of the costs and condemnation associated with large-scale military intervention, countries increasingly rely on the provision of external military assistance to influence civil wars in their favour. The provision of weapons, matériel, and training with a military purpose aims to build local capacity to help partner militaries quell domestic insurgencies. Yet, such capacity building can potentially produce unintended consequences for regime stability and citizens' safety. This thesis thus inquires how the provision of external military assistance affects actors' incentives and strategies on the ground. By examining actors' participation in three forms of political violence—coup d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism—it allows for a comprehensive examination of violent strategies during civil war. The first paper, 'Building Capacity or Exacerbating Instability? US Military Training, External Military Assistance, and War-Time Coup Risk' examines the effect of US military training on the risk of military coup during civil war and compares it to the effects of non-US support. The second paper, "Trained and Equipped' to Kill Civilians? Quality of External Military Assistance and Government Forces' Targeting Profiles in Civil Wars' focuses on government forces' use of violence against civilians depending on the military sophistication of the support provided. The third paper, 'Trading One Problem for Another? External Military Assistance and Rebels' Use of Terrorist Tactics in Civil Wars' explores rebels' reliance on terrorist tactics in response to externally-backed government forces and hypothesises the role of democratic external supporters in enticing terrorist backlash. Drawing upon original data on external support for the period 1975-2017, I assess these relationships empirically using large-N statistical analysis and a matching strategy to account for the non-random provision of external military assistance. Findings suggest that external military assistance can reduce coup risk in case of non-US support but is linked to higher levels of violence against civilians and terrorist violence depending on the type of supporter and support provided.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AQIM	al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb
ASL	Ansar al-Sharia
BRD	Battle-related deaths
BAAD	Big, Allied, and Dangerous Database
CEM	Coarsened Exact Matching
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CTFP	Countering Terrorism Fellowship Program
CWM	Civil Wars Mediation dataset
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration programme
DR	Democratic Republic
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EMA	External military assistance
ESD	External Support Dataset
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
EUTM Mali	European Union Training Mission in Mali
EUTM Somalia	European Union Training Mission in Somalia
FE	Fixed-effects model
FIB	United Nations Force Intervention Brigade
GDP	Gross domestic product
GED	Georeferenced Event Dataset
GLM	Generalised linear model
Greenbook	US Overseas Loans and Grants
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
HIG	Hizb-I Islami-yi Afghanistan
ID	Insurgency Database
IED	Improvised explosive device
IGO	Intergovernmental organisation
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IMET	International Military Education and Training Program
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMI	International Military Intervention dataset

IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
KFOR	North Atlantic Treaty Organization Kosovo Force
LeI	Lashkar-e-Islam
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MIC	Managing Intrastate Conflict dataset
MID	Militarised interstate dispute
MILC	Managing Intrastate Low-Intensity Conflict dataset
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MIPS	Military Intervention by Powerful States dataset
MMP	Mapping Militants Project
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
NAG	Non-State Armed Groups dataset
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBREG	Negative binomial regression model
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NLFT	National Liberation Front of Tripura
NSA	Non-State Actor dataset
NSCN-IM	National Socialist Council for Nagaland - Isaac-Muivah faction
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSV	One-sided violence
PA	Population-average model
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PKO	Peacekeeping operation
PME	Professional Military Education Program
PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
PTIF	Political Instability Task Force
P5	Permanent members of the United Nations Security Council
RCI-LRA	Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army

RS	Resolute Support Mission
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TCC	Troop-contributing country
TPI	Third-Party Intervention dataset
TTP	Taleban Movement of Pakistan
UAV	Unmanned aerial vehicle
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
UN	United Nations
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Overview

Since the end of World War II, civil conflict has been both more frequent and more deadly than interstate war.[1] Estimates suggest that within fifty years, sixteen million people fell victim to intrastate wars.[2] Factors such as poverty, high unemployment, weak state capacity, and deposits of lootable resources conspire to create conditions prone to civil war. In this environment, citizens may take up arms against their sitting governments in the name of socio-economic betterment, ideological vigour, and political autonomy. Often, transnational non-state actors also exploit ungoverned spaces to further their ends. The resulting wars are predominantly fought in the Global South where poverty and legacies of violence often create a "conflict trap" of recurring violence.[3] It is in this context that third party states seek to influence the outcome of civil wars by offering their assistance to conflict parties.

The enormous human and financial cost of recent military interventions by the United States and allied states in Afghanistan (2001-2014) and Iraq (2003-2011) have led many to question the usefulness of full-scale military intervention.[4] The United States, since long the most active external supporter worldwide (cf. Chapter 3), was considered "tired of large land wars"[5] and deemed "unlikely"[6] to repeat a mission on a similar scale while troops were still deployed abroad. At the same time, devastating humanitarian conditions, large-scale refugee

[1] Therése Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflicts, 1946-2014', *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 4 (2015): 536–50; Therése Pettersson and Magnus Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2019', *Journal of Peace Research* 57, no. 4 (2020): 597–613.
[2] Patrick M. Regan, *Sixteen Million One: Understanding Civil War* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2009).
[3] Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.
[4] Stephen Watts et al., *The Uses and Limits of Small-Scale Military Intervention* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2012); Stephen Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017).
[5] Stephen Biddle, Julia Macdonald, and Ryan Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 1–2 (2018): 89.
[6] Robert M Gates, 'Helping Others Defend Themselves: The Future of U. S. Security Assistance', *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 3 (2010): 2.

flows, and the widely perceived threat of terrorism have generated a sustained interest to interfere in civil wars.

In the emerging political climate after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, policymakers and defence personnel increasingly looked for alternatives to 'boots on the grounds' approaches.[7] The focus shifted away from direct intervention towards more indirect ways of exerting influence: "Limited intervention,"[8] "light footprint,"[9] and "remote warfare"[10] became the keywords of the hour.[11] Rather than sending (ten) thousands of troops at great financial and human cost, foreign governments increasingly opted to "train, equip and advise allied or 'partner' militaries to enable them to defend themselves."[12]

This 'help for self-help' approach has led to an increased interest in external military assistance—the provision of training, weapons, and equipment with a military purpose to foreign armed forces—as a preferred tool of third-party influence in the 21st century.[13] As an alternative to direct military intervention,[14] we see this strategy being employed in conflicts across the globe. In these cases, foreign military personnel may still be present in the conflict-country, but in much smaller numbers and with a mandate that explicitly prevents them from

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[7] 'Boots on the ground' in this context refers to troops engaged in combat operations. Fernando M. Luján, 'Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention', Voices from the Field (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2013).
[8] Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*, 8.
[9] Luján, 'Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention', 8.
[10] Emily Knowles and Abigail Watson, *Remote Warfare: Lessons Learned from Contemporary Theatres*, Oxford Research Group (London: Remote Warfare Programme, 2018), 2.
[11] This impression was also confirmed in a roundtable discussion with members of the British Armed Forces and experts on military intervention conducted as part of a workshop on "The military/strategic effectiveness of remote warfare" I participated in on March 7th, 2018. The results of the roundtable are summarised in Knowles and Abigail Watson, *Remote Warfare: Lessons Learned from Contemporary Theatres*.
[12] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', 90.
[13] There is no universally-accepted definition of military assistance. Similar and at times synonymous concepts include, security assistance, security force assistance, security sector assistance, security cooperation, military capacity building or simply 'building partner capacity'. See Taylor P. White, 'Security Cooperation: How It All Fits', *Joint Force Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (2014): 106–8. The term *military assistance* is chosen here to stress the military nature of the assistance that excludes measures that may form part of larger efforts at improving the recipient state's security. It is also distinct from *military aid* in that it includes the provision of goods and expertise rather than solely funds for it. Cf. Chapter 2.
[14] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.

joining combat operations. At the same time, these measures are taken with the explicit intent to assist the recipient party in an ongoing conflict and are thus distinct from efforts at mediation or other less biased forms of involvement, e.g. humanitarian efforts or peacekeeping missions.

Although it has recently gained prominence, this type of external support is not a new phenomenon and has taken on different manifestations over time.[15] Commenting on US support to the Greek government during the Greek Civil War (1944-49),[16] Henry Grady, the US ambassador at the time, described the Greek military as

> an armed forces organization of 263,000 men, which is fed with American-purchased daily rations of 4,200 calories, clothed with American-purchased uniforms, equipped with American arms, transported by vehicles and pack animals supplied by America and trained and advised in operations by American and British officers.[17]

His description captures the essence of external military assistance—the provision of weapons, equipment, and training by the armed forces of one country to a foreign military with the intent to strengthen its ability to counter an armed opposition—as early as 1948.

Despite the imminent policy relevance of research on military-to-military cooperation, existing research on external support mostly focuses on the implications of outside support to rebels only or to governments and rebels in conjunction.[18] The highly politicised debate about "state sponsors of terrorism" has fuelled research into the adverse effects of offering funding, weaponry, and safe haven to non-state actors.[19] In contrast, the focus of this thesis lies on the support state actors provide to other states. As such, it not only fills an important gap in the literature, but it also accounts for the different normative environment that governs such

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Amikam Nachmani, 'Civil War and Foreign Intervention in Greece: 1946-49', *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 4 (1990): 489–522.
[17] Henry Grady, 'To the Secretary of State, 22 November 1948', *Foreign Relations of the United States* 4 (1948): 188–89.
[18] Idean Salehyan, 'The Delegation of War to Rebel Organizations', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 3 (2010): 493–515; Navin A. Bapat, 'Understanding State Sponsorship of Militant Groups', *British Journal of Political Science* 42, no. 1 (2012): 1–29; Patrick M. Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000).
[19] Daniel L. Byman, 'The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism', Analysis Paper No. 16, The Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Washington, DC, 2008, 1.

support and the differences in capabilities between state and non-state recipients that affect the translation of external resources into output.

External military assistance comes in many shapes. It can be a one-off show of support in reaction to a crisis, such as Singapore providing weapons and technical equipment to the government of the Philippines in its battle for the city of Marawi in 2017 after the city had been taken by Islamic State (ISIL) forces.[20] It can also manifest as a more long-term commitment to back a government against an insurgency as is the case for US support to the armed forces of the Philippines in their ongoing, decades-long fight against Islamist groups.[21]

External military assistance can be provided within an explicit counterterrorism framing as in the case of international efforts to support the Nigerian government in its fight against Boko Haram and the regional ISIL branch, or it can aim to counter a more general insurgent threat such as that presented by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda since the late 1980s, for instance. It may be the product of bilateral offers of support, such as Russia providing military equipment and training to the Syrian Assad regime since 2012, or the result of a multilateral effort, such as the European Union Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia) (2010-present) building local capacity in the fight against al-Shabaab.

The motivations for providing external support are manifold and often stem from both third parties' external and domestic security concerns. States provide assistance to back up a friendly government in a neighbouring country, to contain a terrorist threat they fear themselves, or to distract from a domestic political crisis. External supporters are great powers, middle powers, regional hegemons, or neighbouring countries; they range from states considered "pariahs" by the international community, such as Libya under Gaddafi, to countries acting with the full knowledge and approval of the United Nations (UN) Security Council.[22]

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[20] Robert Postings, 'The Battle of Marawi: A Brief Summary', International Review, 2017.
[21] Peter Chalk, 'U.S. Security Assistance to the Philippines: A Success Story Against Terrorism', *CTC Sentinel* 1, no. 3 (2008): 1–4.
[22] John Oakes, *Libya: The History of Gaddafi's Pariah State* (Stroud: History Press, 2011), 6.

Existing evidence suggests the success of external military assistance to aid conflict parties in defeating the opposition is mixed. For example, the US-led Syrian Train-and-Equip mission made headlines when it produced not more than a handful of active fighters a year after its inception in 2015, raising doubts about the cost-effectiveness of military assistance.[23] A 2018 study by the US Government Accountability Office finds that out of twenty-one projects run under the US Global Train and Equip programme in 2016-17, only eight improved local forces' capabilities.[24] Even if effective in the short run, case study evidence further casts doubt on the ability of military assistance to bring about lasting change.[25]

Besides concerns about its direct military benefits, critics have been quick to point to the dilemmas and unintended consequences that arise from propping up warring parties. These include greater state ability to repress, risk of equipment and expertise falling into the wrong hands, and further strains on already tense civil-military relations.[26] Recent experience has provided cause for concern: The leaders of the 2012 Malian coup were previously trained by US forces,[27] the United States cut military aid to Cameroon in 2019 over alleged human rights abuses,[28] and US-backed forces fighting ISIL faced US-provided weapons as a 2017 report found.[29] Are these incidents unique to US military assistance or do they represent the trade-off of any attempt of third parties to influence civil war outcomes?

This thesis enquires into the effects of external military assistance, a form of military-to-military cooperation, on civil wars and the ways it may adversely affect stability and the

[23] Spencer Ackerman, 'US Has Trained Only "Four or Five" Syrian Fighters against Isis, Top General Testifies', *The Guardian*, 16 September 2015.
[24] U.S. Government Accountability Office, 'Counterterrorism: DOD Should Fully Address Security Assistance Planning Elements in Global Train and Equip Project Proposals', Report to Congressional Committees May, 2018.
[25] Alex Neads, 'Improvise, Adapt and Fail to Overcome? Capacity Building, Culture and Exogenous Change in Sierra Leone', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 42, no. 3–4 (2019): 425–47.
[26] Stephen Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018).
[27] Craig Whitlock, 'Leader of Mali Military Coup Trained in U.S.', *The Washington Post*, 24 March 2012.
[28] Dionne Searcey, Eric Schmitt, and Thomas Gibbons-Neff, 'US Cuts Military Aid to Cameroon over Human Rights Concerns', *The New York Times*, 7 February 2019.
[29] Conflict Armament Research, *Weapons of the Islamic State* (London: Conflict Armament Research Ltd., 2017).

protection of civilians in conflict countries. The focus lies on the ways in which external support to states affects intrastate conflict dynamics. To that end, it places particular emphasis on the indirect, and potentially unintended, consequences of such assistance that are not only often unforeseen, but also insufficiently explored in the existing literature. It sets out to answer the following overarching research questions:

1) What are the indirect consequences of external military assistance for different manifestations of political violence?
2) How does external military assistance impact the tactical choices that actors make in a civil war context?
3) How do these potential side effects compare to those incurred by deploying foreign troops in a biased military intervention?

To address these questions, I present three related, but stand-alone papers. They examine the impact of external military assistance on three different types of domestic actors involved in a civil war, namely the military, the state as a whole, and the armed opposition, and the distinct avenues they can pursue in civil wars: staging *coups d'état,* committing *one-sided violence*, and using *terrorist tactics*.[30] In doing so, this thesis speaks to the relationship between the civilian component of regimes and militaries (coups d'état), states and civilians (one-sided violence), and states and their violent opposition (terrorist tactics) in the context of foreign military assistance. As such, it forms part of a larger research agenda that aims to integrate the study of different forms of political violence and treat them as distinct, but interlinked phenomena on a spectrum rather than looking at them in isolation.[31] This perspective helps uncover relationships among them and aims to represent some of the complexity actors face when navigating civil war environments.

A large body of research has mapped out the impact of different types of external support on conflict dynamics including on its duration, intensity, and outcome as well as on the

[30] As used in the civil war literature, the term one-sided violence refers to intentional violence against civilians (cf. Chapter 5).
[31] Stathis N. Kalyvas, 'The Landscape of Political Violence', in *The Oxford Handbook of Terrorism*, ed. Erica Chenoweth et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 10–33.

outcomes of interest in this thesis.[32] Yet, these studies are characterised by four major shortcomings that render further research necessary. First, the lack of cross-country data on military assistance has resulted in researchers relying on measures including any type of military support (including troop support), or to, second, limit their focus to the provision of US military aid only. This is problematic since it overlooks any differences in the effects of external military assistance and troop deployment that may depend on characteristics of the supporter or the support provided. These nuances are of particular interest to policymakers aiming to avoid full-scale military intervention without jeopardising military effectiveness, regime stability, and the protection of civilians. Third, and somewhat surprisingly, much of this research has prioritised the role of external support to non-state actors rather than focusing on military-to-military exchanges. This has left gaps in our knowledge of external military assistance from a third-party government to the armed forces of a recipient state yet to be filled. Fourth, existing studies largely fail to account for the selection effects that result from external supporters providing external military assistance to certain governments more readily than to others.

I argue that the introduction of external military assistance can have adverse effects on security and stability in recipient countries because it may impact overall military capabilities and change the balance of power between relevant actors. In civil war contexts, actors, including the civilian-led government, the military apparatus, and the armed opposition, need to choose what use to put their limited resources to. A critical choice here, is the decision who to direct violence against. The armed forces can decide to use their military power against an insurgent threat or turn against the political elite instead, the government can sanction strategies of targeting opposition combatants or civilians; rebels can choose to target military installations or revert to focusing their efforts on civilian installations. The central intuition of this thesis is that the provision of external military assistance by a third party to armed forces in a civil war changes

[32] Chapter 2 presents a detailed overview of the literature.

the decision-making calculus of i) not only the recipient military, but also other actors, and ii) in ways other than intended by third parties and, potentially, the recipient state.

Throughout the thesis, actors' choices are viewed from a rationalist standpoint, the basic tenets of which suggest that actors are rational utility-maximisers and behave according to a set of assumed preferences over outcomes.[33] While this perspective can account for the bounds imposed on actors by incomplete information, it inevitably falls short of capturing human behaviour in its entire complexity. Yet, a rationalist framework has the advantage of ascribing actors with purpose and stressing the strategic logic behind a chosen course of action. They are thus helpful in illuminating how seemingly affect-driven or counterintuitive actions can stem from a rational consideration of costs and benefits.[34] While the resulting causal mechanisms are necessarily parsimonious, they are meant to be of the kind that "self-consciously simplify the world in order to understand it."[35]

Each paper presents its own theoretical framework for the proposed relationship between external military assistance and the respective outcome variable. Yet, all three are ultimately concerned with the balance of power between actors. The distribution of capabilities has been much theorised in the civil war literature, for example in the context of conflict onset, escalation, and recurrence.[36] It further is of relevance when considering civil-military relations, violence against civilians, and the use of terrorism.[37] Making external military assistance available to conflict parties feeds directly into these dynamics: external backing enhances the role of the

[33] James D. Fearon, 'Rationalist Explanations for War', *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379–414.
[34] Stathis N. Kalyvas, 'Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria', *Rationality and Society* 11, no. 3 (1999): 243–85.
[35] Seva Gunitsky, 'Rival Visions of Parsimony', *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2019): 707.
[36] Fearon, 'Rationalist Explanations for War'; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Margit Bussmann and Florian Ranft, 'Distribution of Military Power and Prospects of Post-Conflict Peace', *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 22, no. 4 (2016): 385–92.
[37] Lindsay Cohn, Damon Coletta, and Peter Feaver, 'Civil-Military Relations', in *The Oxford Handbook of International Security*, ed. Alexandra Gheciu and William C. Wohlforth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 711–25; Reed M. Wood, 'Intrastate Conflict and Civilian Victimization', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jennifer C Gibbs, 'Domestic Terrorism', in *Handbook of Security Science*, ed. Anthony Masys (Cham: Springer Reference, 2018).

military vis-à-vis armed opponents and the political elite. This changes incentive structures and the ability to act upon preferences for both the weaker and stronger side. Notably, however, these changes do not only impact on violent behaviour on the battlefield. Rather, they often have indirect and unintended repercussions for other types of violent behaviour which form the core research interest of this thesis.

All three empirical analyses are further characterised by a positivist approach to the generation of knowledge and use quantitative methods to draw inferences from a sample of cross-country time-series observations for the larger population. The aim is to establish patterns of correlation and, where possible, causation between the independent variable of interest (external military assistance) and the respective outcome variables. For this purpose, I leverage information from several datasets. I have collaborated with the Uppsala Conflict Dataset Programme (UCDP) to improve and considerably extend a dataset on the provision of external support to all conflicts active in the period 1975-2017 by third parties worldwide. This newly available data is unique in its differentiation between types of support, its inclusion of support by both state and non-state actors, and its temporal and spatial reach (cf. Chapter 3). Data for the main dependent variables stems from the Global Instances of Coups dataset, the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (UCDP GED), and the Global Terrorism Data (GTD).[38] To guard against the possibility that third parties systematically select into providing external support to recipients with certain characteristics, I use matching techniques in all three analyses.

This thesis makes several core contributions to the study of civil wars. First, it conceptually delineates different forms of military intervention into civil wars and establishes external military assistance as one of them. The definition I propose is more directly linked to civil wars and applies stricter criteria for inclusion than previous research has in an attempt to

[38] Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 2 (2011): 249–59; Ralph Sundberg and Erik Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 4 (2013): 523–32; Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, 'Introducing the Global Terrorism Database', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 2 (2007): 181–204.

clarify the concept under investigation. Second, it presents original data on external support globally in the period 2010-2017, thereby considerably extending the observation period of previously available datasets. As such, it also represents the first systematic collection of information on military assistance for the period up to 2017 for third parties other than the United States.[39] Third, it explicitly theorises interdependences between violent tactics such as targeting combatants in conventional battle or civilians in acts of terrorism, thus contributing to our understanding of different manifestations of political violence as connected phenomena. Fourth, it presents the first systematic analysis of the effects of external military assistance on coups d'états, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism with a global reach.[40] Due to the collection of data on external support at the level of the individual supporter, it is further uniquely positioned to compare the effects of external military assistance by different types of supporters.

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows: The introduction proceeds with a discussion of the choice of outcome variables and the logic that connects all three empirical analyses. Each is then in turn briefly introduced with reference to a puzzle and the literature and methodology used to address it. The introduction concludes with a discussion of the scope and limitations of the thesis and the challenges posed by the chosen research design. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on external support. Since the literature on the three outcomes—coup d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism—will be introduced in greater detail in each of the empirical chapters, the focus here lies on the literature on the causes and consequences of external support and external military assistance. Chapter 3 describes the data collection process for the updated UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) and presents trends in the data used throughout this thesis. This is followed by three papers: Chapter 4

[39] Andrew Boutton, 'Military Aid, Regime Vulnerability, and the Escalation of Political Violence', *British Journal of Political Science*, 2019, 10.
[40] This refers to the inclusion of cases of external military assistance from third parties worldwide. Existing studies already consider support to civil war countries worldwide.

examines the coup risk regimes face as a result of the provision of external military assistance to their armed forces. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the effects of external military assistance on government one-sided violence. Chapter 6 focuses on rebels' use of terrorist tactics in response to the armed forces of the state receiving external military assistance. The thesis ends with a conclusion in Chapter 7 that summarises the main findings across all three papers and discusses the overarching academic and practical implications of the research presented.

1.2 Choice of Outcome Variables and Logic of the Thesis

Support from a third party changes conflict dynamics in numerous ways, several of which have already been explored in the literature (cf. Chapter 2). Focusing on variation in coups d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism as a result of external military assistance fills important gaps in the literature. Choosing to look at these outcomes conjointly allows to draw wider implications about actors' participation in different forms of violence and the interdependences between them.

Plotting a coup, targeting civilians, and committing terrorist attacks are three different violent behaviours certain actors can pursue in a civil war. They are by far not the only course of action available to actors, but they represent alternatives from a repertoire of violence at their disposal. As such, they imply the notion of a calculated choice actors make between policy options. All three papers thus share a common element in that they are concerned with actors' choices to participate in violent activities in the context of an armed conflict.

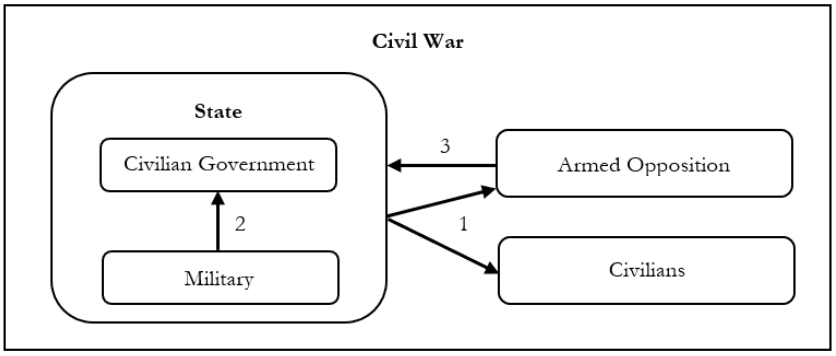
This design further allows to trace the effects of external military assistance, i.e. military-to-military cooperation, across three different actor combinations:

(1) civilian government vs. military (*coup risk*)
(2) state vs. civilians (*one-sided violence*)
(3) armed opposition vs. state (*terrorist tactics*)

This has the advantage of incorporating both the direct (combinations 1 and 2) and indirect effects (combination 3) of external military assistance on actors. It further challenges the notion

of the state as a unitary actor and grants insights into intra-regime dynamics (combination 2). By incorporating the effect on civilians, it further exceeds the traditional focus on government and rebel actors (combination 3) and takes into consideration the repercussions external military assistance has on non-combatants (combination 1). Figure 1 presents a schematic representation of the actor combinations this thesis examines.

Figure 1: Schematic Representation of the Components of the Thesis



Besides a focus on different actor combinations, the choice of outcomes also speaks to a conception of political violence as a spectrum. According to this notion, political violence, defined as "any form of organized violence carried out by political actors, including governments, rebel groups, insurgents, or terrorist organizations," manifests in different forms.[41] Kalyvas identifies eleven distinct manifestations of political violence between low-level mass protests and highly organised interstate war. These include "civil war, genocide, ethnic cleansing, terrorism, intercommunal violence, military coup, political assassination, state repression, and lastly the violence associated with organised crime and cartels."[42] While in all cases violence is wielded for political purposes, the phenomena vary with regard to the perpetrators and targets of political violence. Importantly, although distinguishable from one another, they are interlinked. The use of terrorist tactics substitutes for the inability to fight a

[41] Benjamin A. Valentino, 'Why We Kill: The Political Science of Political Violence against Civilians', *Annual Review of Political Science* 17 (2014): 91.
[42] Kalyvas, 'The Landscape of Political Violence', 13.

conventional civil war;[43] a civil war can be a calculated risk to avoid a military coup,[44] and large-scale violence against civilians is born out of the conditions of a civil war environment.[45] When studying civil war, it is therefore paramount to consider these substitutions and hierarchies. This thesis represents an attempt to place them in relationship to one another.

In following this approach, it becomes possible to draw conclusions about the effect of external military assistance on the respective outcomes. What is more, it allows for a discussion of the connectedness of these phenomena and their interplay in a civil war context. How do coups occur during a civil war? How is terrorism chosen over insurgency? When do civilians become the target of combatants? The proposed research design allows to formulate answers to these and similar questions by giving equal consideration to three manifestations of political violence across three papers. The following section provides a brief overview of each of the papers in turn.

1.3 Three Papers on External Military Assistance

The first paper, entitled "Building Capacity or Exacerbating Instability? US Military Training, External Military Assistance, and War-Time Coup Risk," examines coup risk during civil war. It poses the question if external military assistance provided by the United States and other external supporters impacts on target countries' risk of experiencing a military coup. Existing work has identified training conducted under US foreign military training programmes as a risk factor of military-backed coups.

Distinguishing between technical training and professional training, I argue that US foreign military training bestows unique human capital on trainees unlike most of the training conducted as part of external military assistance during civil wars. Therefore, I expect the effect

[43] Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism', *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 49–80.
[44] Philip G Roessler, *Ethnic Politics and State Power in Africa: The Logic of the Coup-Civil War Trap*, Ethnic Politics & State Power in Africa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
[45] Kristine Eck and Lisa Hultman, 'One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data', *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 2 (2007): 233–46.

of training in particular and external military assistance more generally to vary between the United States and external supporters other than the United States. To account for the non-random allocation of external military assistance to conflict-countries, I use a matching strategy to analyse this relationship. I rely on existing data on coups to identify military-backed coup attempts and a newly updated dataset on external support during civil wars, the External Support Dataset (ESD), for cases of external military assistance in the period 1975-2017.

Findings from this analysis suggest that US military training is a poor predictor of military coup risk, at least during civil war. Further, military training provided by supporters other than the United States significantly decreases the risk of members of the military violently intervening in politics from 0.09 to 0.01. Non-US external military assistance shows the same effect, but the insignificant effect of equipment alone suggests it is largely driven by the negative relationship between training and coup risk. These findings have repercussions for the wider study of external support. They suggest that a focus solely on US military aid is potentially misleading. Instead, notable differences between different external supporters and the assistance they offer seem to exist.

The second paper, entitled "'Trained and Equipped' to Kill Civilians? The Quality of External Military Assistance and Government Forces' Targeting Profiles in Civil Wars" focuses on one-sided violence during civil war. Specifically, does the provision of external military assistance to foreign militaries escalate government-sponsored violence against civilians in armed conflict? Previous research is cautiously optimistic about the ability of military aid to dampen violence against civilians. Yet, it fails to account for the non-random assignment of such support and limits itself to examinations of US military aid only.

I argue that the provision of weapons, equipment, and training can have unintended consequences and lead to an escalation in violence against civilians because it introduces additional resources to the conflict context. The provision of high-quality military assistance, however, has the potential to shift the relative efficiency of targeting combatants as opposed to

civilians and thus leads to a decrease in the share of civilian deaths among all government-inflicted fatalities. I use a matching strategy to examine this relationship empirically drawing on existing data on one-sided violence and a recently updated version of the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) covering the period 1989-2017. It provides the first systematic analysis of this relationship considering support from third parties globally.

The findings suggest that when receiving external military assistance, government forces kill civilians at a rate almost twice as high as without such support. Among those cases with external backing, the relative share of civilians out of all government-inflicted deaths decreases from 59% to 2% when moving from lowest- to highest-quality external military assistance. This effect remains when controlling for the human rights commitments of the external supporter.

The third paper, entitled "Trading One Problem for Another? External Military Assistance and Rebels' Use of Terrorist Tactics in Civil Wars," shifts the focus to terrorist violence committed by rebel groups during civil war. It inquires whether training and equipping state militaries in conflict-affected countries affects rebels' use of terrorist tactics. Previous research has shown that rebels that are weaker, relative to the state, turn to irregular tactics, including terrorist tactics, more frequently.[46] At the same time, incumbent regimes often receive additional resources in the form of military assistance from third parties to build military capacity to counter insurgencies.[47]

I argue that the provision of external military assistance can lead to tactical adaptation in rebel violence. By altering the balance of capabilities and the fortification of targets, military assistance to governments can create incentives for rebels to increasingly rely on terrorist tactics and to focus their attacks on civilian rather than military targets in the conflict-country. This effect should be stronger if the military assistance is provided by a democratic state.

[46] Sara M. T. Polo and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 6 (2016): 815–29.
[47] Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.

Democracies are perceived of as more likely to be deterred by the costs of terrorism due to their sensitivity to the loss of civilian lives. I employ a matching strategy to examine this relationship empirically using existing data on terrorist attacks and relative target preferences and a recently updated version of the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD), both available for the period 1975-2017. This paper provides the first systematic analysis of the relationship between external military assistance and rebels' use of terrorist tactics that considers support from third parties globally.

The results suggest that in the presence of external military assistance rebel groups escalate their use of terrorist violence domestically to almost twice the rate of groups facing state forces without this military assistance. The already high share of civilian targets amongst these attacks increases by 0.4 to 0.98. There is little evidence, however, that the introduction of external military assistance to a conflict is responsible for the decision of rebel groups to adopt terrorist tactics in the first place.

1.4 Scope of the Thesis and Limitations

As any research project, this thesis does not come without its own set of limitations and challenges. This section therefore delineates the scope of the thesis and discusses some theoretical and methodological challenges that apply to all three papers. The conceptual work in Chapter 2 and the presentation of the data collection process in Chapter 3 provide further background information on these issues.

1.4.1 Agency of Actors

Actors choosing to provide military assistance do so for several reasons ranging from domestic political considerations to perceptions of an external threat environment (cf. Chapter 2). Undoubtedly, third parties have motives and strategic interests when they provide external support, and their influence extends beyond the mere decision to provide or withhold support. Through processes of conditionality and norm diffusion, third parties can

work towards aligning the interests of the recipient party with their own.[48] This way, third parties can play an important role in shaping actors' behaviours. According to this view, the identity, value commitments, and coercive power of the external supporter gain in relevance and can be a decisive factor in explaining the chosen strategies of actors on the ground.[49]

Yet, the three analyses presented here focus on changes in military capabilities that result from the provision of military assistance. Therefore, they are largely indifferent to the motives and interests of the supporter and their ability to use persuasion or coercion to reach them. It thus treats external military assistance as an exogenous shock to an existing equilibrium and only considers the characteristics of the provider insofar as they yield information on the type and quality of external military assistance (cf. Chapters 4-6).[50] While this runs the risk of underestimating the agency of external supporters, it has the advantage of examining the effect of the influx of resources independent of the stated goals and hard-to-discern true intentions of the supporter.

When I speak of unintended consequences of external military assistance, therefore, I assume a uniform set of basic preferences all external supporters share. With regard to the three outcome variables, these include the preference to keep the supported regime in power, violence against civilians low, and acts of terrorism to a minimum. Although these assumptions may not hold for each individual supporter, they will likely be true for the majority of them. Since recipient countries have to agree to being provided military assistance from another country, it

[48] Amelia Hoover Green, 'Learning Restraint: The Role of Political Education in Armed Group Behavior Toward Civilians', Simons Papers in Security and Development No. 30, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, 2013; Andrew M Bell, 'Military Culture and Restraint toward Civilians in War: Examining the Ugandan Civil Wars', *Security Studies* 25, no. 3 (2016): 488–518; Amira Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 41, no. 10 (2018): 776–800; Fiona Terry and Brian McQuinn, *The Roots of Restraint in War* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 2018).

[49] Idean Salehyan, David Siroky, and Reed M. Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities', *International Organization* 68, no. 68 (2014): 633–61.

[50] This is a common approach in related studies of external involvement, e.g. in the aid literature. See, for example, Richard A. Nielsen et al., 'Foreign Aid Shocks as a Cause of Violent Armed Conflict', *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 2 (2011): 219–32; Austin L. Wright, 'Economic Shocks and Rebel Tactics', HiCN Working Paper No. 232, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, 2016.

is unlikely they would allow for such military exchanges if they believed they were designed to exacerbate regime instability and domestic terrorism.

While regimes committing atrocities may invite in support aimed at fostering further one-sided violence, the consequences are still unintended in the sense that they run counter to international norms of the protection of civilians. Therefore, even if the outcomes were not unintended by a specific supporter, they are unforeseen in the sense that they run counter to general expectations about the direction and extent of their effects. This is the case if measures to increase military effectiveness inadvertently threaten regime security or violence against targets other than combatants.

While this approach is less concerned with the agency of external supporters, it brings to the fore the agency of the state, the military, and the armed opposition in the conflict-country. As such, it opens up the "black box" of the state to investigate sources of intra-regime conflict.[51] It also addresses the strategic decision-making calculus of rebel groups opposing an externally-backed state, to provide deeper insight on the behaviour of various actors. Yet here again it runs short of discussing in detail all actor groups affected and their motivations. Like combatants, civilians face strategic choices in the context of a civil war. A rich literature discusses the specific incentives and constraints civilians navigate in civil war environments and examines determinants of civilians joining an armed actor, forming self-defence militias, staying put or fleeing.[52]

[51] Erica De Bruin, *How to Prevent Coups d'État*, *How to Prevent Coups d'État* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020), 134.

[52] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*; Sarah E. Parkinson, 'Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War', *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 3 (2013): 418–32; Anastasia Shesterinina, 'Collective Threat Framing and Mobilization in Civil War', *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 3 (2016): 411–27; Evgeny Finkel, *Ordinary Jews: Choice and Survival during the Holocaust* (Princeton, NJ, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017); Chelsea Estancona et al., 'Civilian Self-Defense Militias in Civil War', *International Interactions* 45, no. 2 (2019): 215–66.

1.4.2 Variation in Supporters and Recipients

Another limitation is the narrow focus on military-to-military support. This prevents a closer look at the determinants and repercussions of non-state support.[53] While it would be desirable to include non-state support in some of the analyses, this type of data is less likely to be complete and reliable. Non-state actors may range from rebel groups to international organisations, diaspora networks, or wealthy individuals and most of the transfers will be below a threshold that is picked up in the data collection effort (cf. Chapter 3).

This limitation presents less of a problem than it might initially seem, given that there are only few cases of external military assistance provided by non-state actors to the armed forces of a state. Most cases of non-state support constitute troop support to government troops or external military assistance to other rebel groups (cf. Chapter 3). It can further be assumed that the assistance non-state actors can provide pales in comparison to the resources and expertise states can command. For these reasons, non-state actors are not included in the potential pool of supporters.

Furthermore, this thesis is limited to state actors as recipients of external military assistance. Surprisingly, the literature on external support to rebels is more developed than comparable studies on external support to governments rendering this focus a worthwhile line of enquiry.[54] This is partly because there exists a stronger consensus around the condemnation of sponsorship of rebel groups and partly because of the greater ease with which the phenomenon can be identified unambiguously.[55] Whereas militaries tend to foster bilateral cooperation for a number of reasons and often outside civil war contexts, providing funding or

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[53] Assaf Moghadam and Michel Wyss, 'The Political Power of Proxies', *International Security* 44, no. 4 (2020): 119–57.

[54] Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Daniel L. Byman and Sarah E. Kreps, 'Agents of Destruction? Applying Principal-Agent Analysis to State-Sponsored Terrorism', *International Studies Perspectives* 11, no. 1 (2010): 1–18; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.

[55] Stephen D. Collins, 'Dissuading State Support of Terrorism: Strikes or Sanctions? (An Analysis of Dissuasion Measures Employed Against Libya)', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27, no. 1 (2004): 1–18; Byman, 'The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism'; Niklas Karlén, 'Sponsors of War: State Support for Rebel Groups in Civil Conflicts' (PhD Dissertation, Uppsala University, Uppsala, 2017).

weapons to rebel groups can be more easily identified *as an attempt to assist in an ongoing conflict* which the definition of external military assistance used throughout this thesis requires (cf. Chapter 2). Since rebel groups face different constraints, for example in terms of accountability, extraction potential, and ability to negotiate on an international level, the theoretical propositions advanced in the three essays do not necessary hold for support to non-state recipients. Separate theorising and testing is required to describe these dynamics, which goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

1.4.3 Other Forms of Foreign Interference

States that provide military assistance are likely to provide other types of assistance as part of an integrated foreign policy approach. This includes both the provision of other types of *military* support, e.g. the deployment of troops, the granting of access to territory or the sharing of intelligence, as well as forms of *diplomatic* and *economic* support.[56] Here, third parties can shape incentives and disincentives through economic statecraft, e.g. through debt relief or sanctions, or provide diplomatic support in logistical matters or in front of international audiences such as UN bodies.[57] Evidently, different forms of intervention are related, and substitution effects are at play. Throughout the three papers, reference will be made to differences and similarities between external military assistance and troop support. However, a more detailed comparison between different types of foreign interference is not feasible within the limits of this dissertation.

Since the focus lies on outside attempts to affect conflict dynamics in one's favour, this thesis further does not speak directly to the literature on humanitarian intervention and

[56] Patrick M. Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 55–73; Patrick M. Regan, Richard W. Frank, and Aysegul Aydin, 'Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 1 (2009): 135–46.
[57] Patrick M. Regan, 'Choosing to Intervene: Outside Interventions in Internal Conflicts', *The Journal of Politics* 60, no. 3 (1998): 754–79; Patrick M. Regan and Aysegul Aydin, 'Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 5 (2006): 736–56.

development aid.[58] Military intervention that is primarily motivated by the moral obligation to protect civilians, for example, is likely to follow a different logic and have different effects on levels of one-sided violence than military resources that are extended to secure regime survival in light of an insurgent threat.[59] Further this type of intervention usually occurs without the approval or even against the explicit wishes of the target country. The two phenomena are thus conceptually distinct and this thesis is concerned with a form of biased military support to the government rather than military intervention against or regardless of government interest. I discuss the implications of economic aid for the relationships proposed in this thesis where appropriate.

1.4.4 Alternative Methodological Approaches

In this thesis, I refrain from more in-depth case studies using qualitative methods for several reasons. For one, collecting new cross-country data is a time- and resource-intense process. In the case of this thesis, the data collection on external support to all civil wars in the period 2010-17 and updates of previously coded observations involved research on 123 armed conflicts. This required several prolonged research stays at Uppsala University and close to nine months of coding. It therefore seemed sound to make as much use of the data as possible.

While insights from fieldwork would undoubtedly have added more nuance to the arguments and more fine-grained data, several factors discouraged me from pursuing this avenue. Field work in the context of civil wars presents risks for the researcher as well as the

[58] For an overview, see, for example, Matthias Dembinski, Thorsten Gromes, and Theresa Werner, 'Humanitarian Military Interventions: Conceptual Controversies and Their Consequences for Comparative Research', *International Peacekeeping* 26, no. 5 (2019): 605–29; Christoph Zürcher, 'What Do We (Not) Know About Development Aid and Violence? A Systematic Review', *World Development* 98 (2017): 506–22.
[59] Martha Finnemore, 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention', in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996); S. Neil MacFarlane, Carolin J. Thielking, and Thomas G. Weiss, 'The Responsibility to Protect: Is Anyone Interested in Humanitarian Intervention?', *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 5 (2004): 977–92; Sarah Kreps and Sarah Maxey, 'Mechanisms of Morality: Sources of Support for Humanitarian Intervention', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 8 (2018): 1814–42; Geoffrey P. R. Wallace, 'Supplying Protection: The United Nations and Public Support for Humanitarian Intervention', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 36, no. 3 (2019): 248–69.

individuals approached.[60] Matters of national security, such as external support, are particularly difficult to navigate safely. In addition, talking to perpetrators or survivors of political violence entails the risk of re-traumatisation and other psychological stress that would pose a burden on the interviewees.[61] Where testing of theories is dependent on such information, such measures might be justified. In this case, however, it is possible to test the hypothesised relationships with available quantitative data. Thanks to efforts by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program and other institutions with similar agendas, data on many of the phenomena of interest is readily available to researchers. Additional data I was able to gather through document analysis (cf. Chapter 3). For these reasons, it seemed unwise to embark on fieldwork.

An in-depth case study based on secondary sources would have also been possible. Yet, given the limitations of a thesis project, it would have meant sacrificing one of the three papers. This in turn, would have taken away from the overarching narrative linking different manifestations of political violence and delineating the effect of external military assistance with reference to different actor types. With the chosen methodological approach, I can compare the effects of external support by US and non-US supporters, countries with high and low military sophistication, and more and less democratic regimes on the state as a whole, the military specifically, and the armed opposition. The statistical analysis further allows to draw inferences beyond the cases included in the analyses. For these reasons, I decided that the large-N comparative perspective was of greater value at this stage and made most use of the data collected on external support to civil wars. Yet, case knowledge from the extensive coding of observations enters the three papers in the form of anecdotes and examples.

[60] Elisabeth Porter et al., *Researching Conflict in Africa: Insights and Experiences* (Japan: United Nations University Press, 2005); Elisabeth J. Wood, 'The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones', *Qualitative Sociology* 29, no. 3 (2006): 373–86.
[61] Janine N. Clark, 'Working with Survivors of War Rape and Sexual Violence: Fieldwork Reflections from Bosnia-Hercegovina', *Qualitative Research* 17, no. 4 (2017): 424–39.

1.5 Challenges Posed by the Research Design

No matter the choice of methodology, each comes with its own set of assumptions and, therefore, challenges. Some of the most pertinent ones regarding the research design and methodology chosen in this thesis will be discussed in brief here. A more detailed discussion of the limitations of the dataset follows in Chapter 3. Each empirical analysis further addresses the challenges of the chosen research design in a methodology section (cf. Chapter 4-6).

As this thesis aims to formulate and test the applicability of causal relationships between external military assistance and the three outcome variables—coup risk, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism—it faces the challenges of causal inference in non-experimental settings. Short of a randomised control trial, the identification of causes and effects is impeded by systematic biases and errors in our attempts to observe and measure the world around us.

Of particular concern in the studies presented here and similar studies elsewhere is the risk of any identified causal effects resulting from a selection effect rather than a genuine causal link.[62] If third parties provide military assistance only to civil war states with high risk of coups, poor human rights records, and frequent domestic terrorism, we should not be surprised to find that external military assistance correlates with one-sided violence, coup risk, and use of terrorist tactics. Interpreting this correlation as causal, however, would be a mistake. In the language of experiments, this represents a case of non-random assignment of the treatment (in this case the provision of external military assistance). As a consequence, the test group (civil wars with external military assistance) and control group (civil wars without external assistance) vary in characteristics other than the presence of external military assistance. It is then these differences that explain the administration of the treatment (the provision of external military assistance)

[62] Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Michael J. Gilligan and Ernest J. Sergenti, 'Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference', *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 3, no. 2 (2008): 89–122.

and also the outcome (coup risk, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism, respectively) rather than this effect being exerted by the treatment (external military assistance).

Very few situations outside the laboratory, especially in a cross-country context, replicate the conditions of an experiment. To mitigate these concerns as far as possible, quasi-experimental research designs, such as instrumental variable approaches, difference-in-difference analysis, and matching, may approximate experimental conditions.[63] They come with their own set of assumptions and conditions, so not every approach is appropriate for a given research proposal. Since the independent variable, external military assistance, is dichotomous and measures the absence or presence of such support, matching techniques are appropriate.[64]

Using a matching strategy, factors that are likely to determine the distribution of the treatment, e.g. provision of external military assistance, are first identified. In a second step, all observations are compared according to these factors and matches created that are as similar as possible on all dimensions explaining the treatment but differ on the treatment variable itself. This allows us to draw conclusions about the causal effect of external military assistance on the outcome variables with greater confidence. Yet, it should be noted that this thesis' main aim is to identify robust correlations between external military assistance and the outcomes of interest. Hopefully, this will serve future research as a starting point to identify cases for more in-depth comparison and identification of causal mechanisms.

The following sections defines core concepts used throughout this thesis and reviews the literature on states' choices to intervene in civil wars and the repercussions this has for a range of conflict-related outcome variables.

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[63] Stephen L. Morgan and Christopher Winship, *Counterfactuals and Causal Inference: Methods and Principles for Social Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[64] Myoung-jae Lee, *Matching, Regression Discontinuity, Difference in Differences, and Beyond* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

CHAPTER 2: CORE CONCEPTS AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

2.1 Introduction

Research on third-party involvement in armed conflict looks back on a rich tradition in political science.[65] Since long, scholars have recognised the external dimensions of intrastate conflicts.[66] As a consequence, the notion of civil wars as "internal" domestic affairs is largely discredited by now.[67] Over the decades, the study of civil wars and their external dimensions has developed into a multitude of related research agendas including studies on the causes and consequences of humanitarian aid,[68] humanitarian intervention,[69] foreign direct investment,[70] alliances,[71] foreign occupation,[72] peacekeeping,[73] and mediation efforts[74] amongst others. The

[65] Patrick M. Regan, 'Interventions into Civil Wars: A Retrospective Survey with Prospective Ideas', *Civil Wars* 12, no. 4 (2010): 458–59.
[66] Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, 'Transnational Dimensions of Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 3 (2007): 293–309.
[67] Erika Forsberg, 'Transnational Dimensions of Civil Wars: Clustering, Contagion, and Connectedness', in *What Do We Know About Civil Wars?*, ed. T. David Mason and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 100.
[68] Sarah Kenyon Lischer, 'Collateral Damage: Humanitarian Assistance as a Cause of Conflict', *International Security* 28, no. 1 (2003): 79–109; Reed M. Wood and Emily Molfino, 'Aiding Victims, Abetting Violence: The Influence of Humanitarian Aid on Violence Patterns During Civil Conflict', *Journal of Global Security Studies* 1, no. 3 (2016): 186–203.
[69] Danny Hoffman, 'The Civilian Target in Sierra Leone and Liberia: Political Power, Military Strategy, and Humanitarian Intervention', *African Affairs* 103, no. 411 (2004): 211–26; Alan J. Kuperman, 'The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans', *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (2008): 49–80.
[70] David Maher, 'The Fatal Attraction of Civil War Economies: Foreign Direct Investment and Political Violence, A Case Study of Colombia', *International Studies Review* 17, no. 2 (2015): 217–48.
[71] Emily K. Gade et al., 'Networks of Cooperation: Rebel Alliances in Fragmented Civil Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 9 (2019): 2071–97; Andrew Boutton, 'Coup-Proofing in the Shadow of Intervention: Alliances, Moral Hazard, and Violence in Authoritarian Regimes', *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2019): 43–57.
[72] Simon Collard-Wexler, Costantino Pischedda, and Michael G. Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 4 (2014): 625–57.
[73] Maline Meiske and Andrea Ruggeri, 'Peacekeeping as a Tool of Foreign Policy', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017).
[74] Levke Aduda and Margit Bussmann, 'Mediation and the Dynamics of Civilian Victimisation in Intrastate Conflicts in Africa', *Civil Wars* 22, no. 1 (2020): 64–86. For an overview, see, for example, Jacob D. Kathman and Megan Shannon, 'Ripe for Resolution: Third Party Mediation and Negotiating Peace Agreements', in *What Do We Know About Civil Wars?*, ed. T. David Mason and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 109–20.

cross-border effects of civil conflict are observed in issue-areas as diverse as refugee flows,[75] health,[76] economic development,[77] and organised crime.[78]

In what follows, I situate the study of external military assistance in the field of external support to civil wars as opposed to the closely related proxy war literature. Subsequently, I define the core concept 'external military assistance' and the concept of 'civil war' that presents a scope condition for the analyses presented in this thesis (cf. Chapter 4-6). As part of this chapter, I offer a note on the terminology used throughout this thesis. In a detailed review of the literature on external support, I then present both the causes and consequences of third-party involvement. This allows me to identify gaps in the literature regarding the potentially adverse effects of external military assistance that motivates the empirical analyses conducted as part of this thesis.

2.2 Fault Lines in Research on Third-Party Involvement

External interference in civil wars describes a broad set of actions. Like in other fields of the social and political sciences, the variety of terms used to describe the same, slightly different, and substantially distinct phenomena has contributed to conceptual stretching in conflict research.[79] A central fault line in the study of outside interference in armed conflict runs between the research clusters on 'proxy wars'[80] and 'external support,' also referred to as 'delegation' in the context of support to non-state actors.[81] The former tends to view intrastate

[75] Shweta Moorthy and Robert Brathwaite, 'Refugees and Rivals: The International Dynamics of Refugee Flows', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 36, no. 2 (2019): 131–48.
[76] Sima L. Sharara and Souha S. Kanj, 'War and Infectious Diseases: Challenges of the Syrian Civil War', *PLoS Pathog* 10, no. 11 (2014): 1–4.
[77] James C. Murdoch and Todd Sandler, 'Civil Wars and Economic Growth: Spatial Dispersion', *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 1 (2004): 138–51.
[78] Philippe Le Billon, 'The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts', *Political Geography* 20, no. 5 (2001): 561–84.
[79] Giovanni Sartori, 'Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics', *The American Political Science Review* 64, no. 4 (1970): 1033–53; David Collier and James E. Mahon, 'Conceptual "Stretching" Revisited: Adapting Categories in Comparative Analysis', *The American Political Science Review* 87, no. 4 (1993): 845–55.
[80] For a review of the literature on proxy wars, see, for example, Vladimir Rauta, 'Framers, Founders, and Reformers: Three Generations of Proxy War Research', *Contemporary Security Policy* 42, no. 1 (2021): 113–34.
[81] Vladimir Rauta, '"Proxy War": A Reconceptualisation', *Civil Wars*, 2021.

conflict as a stage for more powerful states to carry out their conflicts on. The latter starts at the unit of the armed conflict and examines how third-party involvement complicates existing conflict dynamics. In doing so, the study of proxy wars often applies qualitative methods to a smaller number of cases with an often historical focus,[82] while research on external support frequently relies on quantitative analyses of more recent cases.[83] Yet, notable methodological crossovers and deviations from this pattern exist.[84]

In its traditional sense, a proxy war refers to "an international conflict between two foreign powers, fought out on the soil of a third country; disguised as conflict over an internal issue of that country; and using some or all of that country's manpower, resources, and territory as means for achieving preponderantly foreign goals and foreign strategies."[85] Although the 'proxy war' concept has undergone some reconceptualisation recently, for many not familiar with the details of the proxy war debate, it continues to evoke Cold War power dynamics.[86]

Further, as San-Akca points out, notions of proxy war are unnecessarily "biased against nonstate actors, implying that they exist to the extent that states need them as proxies."[87] Similarly, states seeking help with their indigenous military capabilities from foreign militaries

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[82] Geraint A. Hughes, *My Enemy's Enemy: Proxy Warfare in International Politics* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2012); Michael A. Innes, *Making Sense of Proxy Wars: States, Surrogates & the Use of Force* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2012); Andrew Mumford, *Proxy Warfare* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013); Seyom Brown, 'Purposes and Pitfalls of War by Proxy: A Systemic Analysis', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27, no. 2 (2016): 243–57.

[83] Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*; Stephen M. Saideman, *The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy, and International Conflict* (New York City, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001); Salehyan, 'The Delegation of War to Rebel Organizations'; Idean Salehyan, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham, 'Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups', *International Organization* 65, no. 4 (2011): 709–44; Belgin San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016); Milos Popovic, 'Inter-Rebel Alliances in the Shadow of Foreign Sponsors', *International Interactions* 44, no. 4 (2018): 749–76.

[84] Tamm, for example, examines delegation to rebel groups primarily using qualitative methods, see Henning Tamm, 'The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars', *International Security* 41, no. 1 (2016): 147–81; Henning Tamm, 'In the Balance: External Troop Support and Rebel Fragmentation in the Second Congo War', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2019, 1–28. Hughes applies a proxy war perspective to the ongoing conflict in Syria, see Geraint A. Hughes, 'Syria and the Perils of Proxy Warfare', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 25, no. 3 (2014): 522–38.

[85] Karl W. Deutsch, 'External Involvement in Internal War', in *Internal War: Problems and Approaches*, ed. Harry Eckstein (London: The Free Press of Glencoe Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1964), 102.

[86] Rauta, '"Proxy War": A Reconceptualisation'.

[87] Belgin San-Akca, 'States and Nonstate Armed Groups (NAGs) in International Relations Theory', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3.

do not fit the proxy war paradigm well.[88] Often, external supporters agree only reluctantly to provide such assistance and while they grant their support to keep a regime in power, they do not necessarily hold an interest in the conflict beyond answering an ally's request for help.

In conflict research, the rival notion of 'external support' has more currency, because it emphasises the agency of support recipients in sponsorship relationships. Like the notion of 'proxy war,' and in contrast to another much-used concept, 'biased military intervention,' external support includes both indirect types of support as well as direct troop support. The presence of foreign troops then turns an intrastate conflict into an 'internationalised civil war.'[89]

2.3 Core Concepts and Terminology

Civil War

Armed conflict, more specifically intrastate conflict, is a scope condition for the entire thesis.[90] The aim of the thesis is to illuminate actors' choices of strategies when the rules of engagement change because of the violent transformation of politics and the changes to social order this entails.[91] Further, external military assistance, as defined in this research, is inherently tied to a conflict context. Therefore, the conceptualisation of civil war warrants some attention.

As with most concepts in political science, the definition of armed conflict is contested.[92] A minimum consensus in international humanitarian law suggests that "organised armed

[88] Reuters, 'Mali Asks France for Help as Islamist Militants Advance', *France 24*, 11 January 2013; Robin Emmott and Phil Stewart, 'Libya Sends New Request for Military Training to NATO', *Reuters*, 16 February 2017.
[89] Pettersson and Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2019'.
[90] Throughout this thesis, I use the terms intrastate war, civil conflict, and civil war interchangeably. When referring to armed conflict of a specific magnitude, e.g. more than 1,000 battle-related deaths, I refer to the level of conflict intensity specifically.
[91] Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman, *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder, CO; London: Lynne Rienner, 2003); Mathis Lohaus and Margit Bussmann, 'The Politics of Survival or Business as Usual? Exploring the Effects of Armed Conflict on Corruption', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 2020, 1–22; Elisabeth J. Wood, 'The Social Process of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks', *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 539–61.
[92] For an overview of this debate, see, for example, Nicholas Sambanis, 'What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (2004): 814–58; Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel, 'Civil War', *Journal of Economic Literature* 48, no. 1 (2010): 3–57; Nils P. Gleditsch, Erik Melander, and Henrik Urdal, 'Introduction - Patterns of Armed Conflict since 1945', in *What Do We Know About Civil Wars?*, ed. T. David Mason and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 27–48.

groups" must be engaged in "fighting of some intensity" to characterise an interaction as armed conflict.[93] In conflicts involving the state, this refers to the armed forces of a state and one or several non-state armed groups that showcase a minimum of internal organisation.[94] While these can be difficult to discern from the outset, it is usually at least possible to identify non-state armed groups retrospectively after they have reached a certain level of organisational capacity and engaged in more high-level violent activities.

To arrive at an operational definition of civil war, the discussion then becomes one of thresholds. Here, different measures coexist. While some set the cut-off point as low as 25 deaths, others use definitions of 200 or 1,000 battle-related deaths to distinguish armed conflict from other types of political violence.[95] As a result, competing lists of all civil wars co-exist.[96] Following the commonly used UCDP definition, a civil war will hereafter be defined as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year."[97]

Setting a relatively low threshold for the definition of civil war at 25 battle-related deaths has the advantage of capturing cases of low-level violence that otherwise fit our understanding of civil conflict. It also cautions against overestimating the violence-inducing effects of external military assistance by also examining its effects where overall levels of violence are lower. This comes with the risk of confusing civil wars with other types of political violence, among them

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[93] Mary E. O'Connell, 'Defining Armed Conflict', *Journal of Conflict Security Law* 13, no. 3 (2008): 398.
[94] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions', accessed 6 May 2020.
[95] Lotta Harbom, Erik Melander, and Peter Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007', *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 5 (2008): 697–710; Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*; Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982).
[96] See, for example, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, 'A Revised List of Independent States since the Congress of Vienna', *International Interactions* 25, no. 4 (1999): 393–413; Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, 'A Revised List of Wars between and within Independent States, 1816-2002', *International Interactions* 30, no. 3 (2004): 231–62; James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War', *The American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816-2007* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2010).
[97] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions'.

coups, incidents of one-sided violence, and terrorist attacks that this analysis turns to later. Ways to distinguish these phenomena conceptually and empirically will be discussed in the respective empirical chapters (cf. Chapters 4-6).

External Military Assistance

From foreign governments, to armed groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and international organisations, different actors can interfere in civil wars. This involvement can be in a supposedly impartial (e.g. mediation), even ideally apolitical spirit (e.g. humanitarian aid) or with the clear intent to side with one of the conflict parties.[98] Even then support can remain rhetorical, for example raising the concerns of a repressed minority in an international forum, such as the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, or publicly criticising the deeds of the opposition.

The stakes are higher when the external involvement surpasses words of encouragement or condemnation and involves the transfer of tangible material benefits, such as financial aid or travel documents. Of most note to the argument made here is the provision of material assistance to the military apparatus of a civil war country. Such external support can include the provision of troops, weapons, non-weaponry equipment, logistical support, funding, intelligence, access to military infrastructure and territory (cf. Chapter 3). The focus of this thesis is the provision of training and equipment, termed external military assistance.

As understood here, external military assistance refers to the provision of goods, services, and expertise with a military purpose by the armed forces of one to the armed forces of another state involved in one or several armed conflicts with the intent to assist in an ongoing conflict short of providing combat support. This includes the provision of weaponry and ammunition, non-weaponry equipment and logistical support as well as training and expertise.

[98] For a discussion on the overlap of political interest and humanitarian aid, see, for example, S. Neil MacFarlane and Thomas Weiss, 'Political Interest and Humanitarian Action', *Security Studies* 10, no. 1 (2000): 112–42.

This definition is compatible with the deployment of foreign troops to the conflict-country as long as the military personnel acts in a non-combat capacity, for example as in-country trainers.

External military assistance might occur *ad hoc* or as part of a more foresighted attempt to change conflict dynamics. Often, external supporters act unilaterally, but sometimes they join forces and form multilateral coalitions. It can constitute a bundle of equipment and training or the provision of one of the support types only. All instances of external military assistance have in common that they refer to support by state actors to state actors, i.e. military-to-military cooperation, with the intent to strengthen government forces in their fight against non-state opponents.

Depending on the country context, external military assistance goes by many names: security sector assistance, building partner capacity, and "train-and-equip" missions are but a few of them.[99] Two demarcations are of importance here. First, external military assistance as used throughout this thesis is different from regular, long-standing, and not directly conflict-related security sector reform.[100] Similar to economic aid, many countries receive financial and other types of external support when reforming their security apparatuses and building up military capacity.[101] This occurs regardless of whether the country is facing an organised armed opposition with a claim to government or territory or insecurity from other sources. Often,

[99] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'; J. Stewart Welch and Kevin Bailey, 'In Pursuit of Good Ideas: The Syria Train-And-Equip Program', Research Notes No. 36, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington, DC, 2016, 1.
[100] For a discussion of the definitional debate around security sector assistance, see, for example, Paul Jackson, 'Introduction: Second-Generation Security Sector Reform', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 12, no. 1 (2018): 1–10.
[101] Felix Heiduk, *Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia: From Policy to Practice*, Critical Studies of the Asia Pacific Series (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Anícia Lalá and Ann M. Fitz-Gerald, *Providing Security for People: Security Sector Reform in Africa* (Shrivenham: Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform, 2003); Ellen Laipson, 'Prospects for Midlle East Security-Sector Reform', *Survival* 49, no. 2 (2007): 99–110; Ana Maura Tomesani, 'International Assistance and Security Sector Reform in Latin America: A Profile of Donors, Recipients and Programs', *Brazilian Political Science Review* 12, no. 2 (2018): 1–30.

security sector reform is a part of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts[102] and can even support broader transitional justice processes.[103]

While this type of capacity building impacts on the conduct of conflict if it erupts, its main purpose from the outset is not one of exerting influence over an armed conflict.[104] Hence, security sector assistance tends to be broader often including extensive human rights training, Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes for non-military combatants, administrative support, and humanitarian elements.[105] The goal is to create "a security sector that is legitimate, sustainable, and under civilian control," whereas external military assistance is concerned with the narrower goal of "countering internal security challenges."[106] Conflating these two phenomena may lead to underestimating the potentially harmful effects of external military assistance that can lack a similar commitment to maintaining peace. As a result, instances of security sector assistance are not covered by the definition of external military assistance or external support.

Second, external military assistance can overlap with, but is not identical to arms sales and trade in arms.[107] Given that many countries lack the manufacturing capabilities and technological know-how to produce their own military equipment cost-effectively, transfers of arms and other non-weaponry equipment, such as armoured personnel vehicles and surveillance equipment, against compensation, are a regular feature of international trade.[108] They can occur

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[102] Albrecht Schnabel and Hans-Georg Ehrhart, *Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding* (Tokyo; New York, NY: United Nations University Press, 2005).
[103] Alexander Mayer-Rieckh, 'Dealing with the Past in Security Sector Reform', SSR Paper 10 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2013).
[104] This is not to say that such efforts are free from political interest or necessary benign in their effects. For a critical perspective on security sector reform, see, for example, Selver B. Sahin and Donald Feaver, 'The Politics of Security Sector Reform in "Fragile" or "Post-Conflict" Settings: A Critical Review of the Experience in Timor-Leste', *Democratization* 20, no. 6 (2013): 1056–80.
[105] Schnabel and Ehrhart, *Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding*, 6–9.
[106] Emma Skeppström, Cecilia Hull Wiklund, and Michael Jonsson, 'European Union Training Missions: Security Sector Reform or Counter-Insurgency by Proxy?', *European Security* 24, no. 2 (2015): 354–55.
[107] Cassady Craft and Joseph P. Smaldone, 'The Arms Trade and the Incidence of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1967-97', *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 6 (2002): 693–710; Arvind Magesan and Eik Leong Swee, 'Out of the Ashes, into the Fire: The Consequences of U.S. Weapons Sales for Political Violence', *European Economic Review* 107 (2018): 133–56.
[108] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *SIPRI Yearbook 2019: Armament, Disarmament and International Security* (Stockholm; New York, NY: Almquist & Wiksell; Humanities Press, 2019).

without either of the countries involved facing any political violence within their borders at all, fulfilling defensive purposes only. As such, they are conceptually different from intentionally influencing a conflict by providing militarily-relevant matériel and expertise.

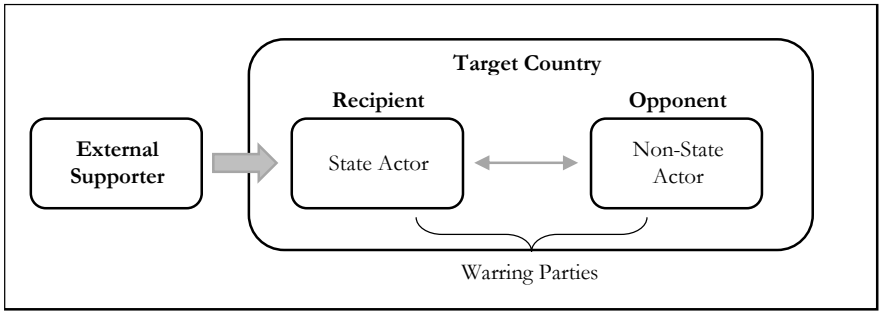
Terminology

For consistency, I will use the terms 'external support' when referring to all types of direct and indirect military support (cf. Chapter 3), 'external military assistance' when referring to the provision of weapons, equipment, and training specifically, and 'troop support' when referring to combat support only. In keeping with existing usage, I employ the terms military, economic, and diplomatic intervention to refer to a range of policy instruments that fall under each category as defined by Regan (cf. Chapter 3).[109] To distinguish this use of the term 'military intervention' from its use to describe the deployment of troops to a foreign country, I refer to the latter as 'biased military interventions' or indicate the provision of 'troop support' specifically. What is more, I use the terms external/foreign/third-party interference/intervention in their broadest sense to signal a form of outside involvement into civil war that can include diplomatic and economic measures in addition to military ones. I refer to the provider of support as the 'external supporter' and the beneficiary as the 'recipient' involved in a conflict with an 'opponent.' The actors active on both sides of a civil war are also jointly referred to as 'warring parties.' To the civil war country in which the conflict takes place, I also refer as the 'target country.'[110] Figure 2 provides a schematic representation of this use of terminology. Of course, both state and non-state actors can be recipients of support turning the respective other party into the opponent. The focus of this thesis, however, is on external

[109] Regan and Aydin, 'Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars'.
[110] In this I depart from Rauta's suggestion to uniformly adopt the terms "beneficiary" for external supporters, "proxy" for support recipients, and "target" for the opponent due to its association with proxy wars. See Vladimir Rauta, 'A Structural-Relational Analysis of Party Dynamics in Proxy Wars', *International Relations* 32, no. 4 (2018): 1.

military assistance provided by state supporters to state recipients designating non-state actors to the category of 'opponent.'

Figure 2: Visualisation of Use of Key Terms



2.4 Existing Research on External Support

Four strands of the literature on political violence are particularly relevant to the arguments advanced in this thesis. Besides studies on external support, they include research on coups d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism. For the purpose of brevity and to avoid repetition, this section surveys the literature on external military assistance and other forms of foreign interference where appropriate. Relevant research on the three outcome variables will be reviewed in greater detail in the literature review section of each empirical chapter (cf. Chapter 4-6).

Since scholarly interest in external military assistance is more recent and therefore less fully explored than the much broader study of external support, I review the literature on external support in addition to work with a narrower focus on external military assistance. This discussion of the literature includes findings on external support to rebels to the extent that they prove useful to understanding the dynamics of military-to-military cooperation.

2.4.1 The Determinants of External Support Provision

Early studies on foreign interference identify neighbours, major powers, allies, and states with colonial ties to the target country as most likely to emerge as external supporters in a civil

war.[111] In fact, the clear majority of military interventions including troop deployments is conducted by neighbouring states.[112] Later research goes on to explore the reasons for the decision to intervene in a foreign conflict in greater detail. These include strategic interests, domestic political considerations, and ties between external supporters and potential recipients—be they because of ethnic, economic, or ideological linkage. Characteristics of the potential support recipients and the conflict have further been shown to influence support provision. The following section discusses these reasons for third-party involvement in civil wars in turn.

Rather than humanitarian concerns, geopolitical considerations and strategic interests are often central to a supporter's decision to intervene in a foreign conflict.[113] A number of studies find that a history of conflict or political rivalry is a strong predictor of support for rebel groups opposing said rival.[114] The extent of this relationship is constrained by the target country's capability to retaliate against the external supporter, though.[115] The provision of external support can further serve to increase regional influence and gain access to strategic

[111] Frederic S Pearson, 'Geographic Proximity and Foreign Military Intervention', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 18, no. 3 (1974): 432–60; Deepa Khosla, 'Third World States as Intervenors in Ethnic Conflicts: Implications for Regional and International Security', *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 6 (1999): 1143–56; Douglas Lemke and Patrick M. Regan, 'Intervention as Influence', in *The Scourge of War: New Extensions on an Old Problem* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 145–68; Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict and Its International Dimensions, 1946-2004', *Journal of Peace Research* 42, no. 5 (2005): 623–35; Jacob D. Kathman, 'Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions', *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (2010): 989–1012; Jacob D. Kathman, 'Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, no. 6 (2011): 847–76. For an overview, see Zachary C Shirkey, 'Military Intervention in Interstate and Civil Wars: A Unified Interpretation', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[112] Harbom and Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict and Its International Dimensions, 1946-2004'.

[113] Marie Olson Lounsbery and Frederic S. Pearson, 'Civilian Victimization and International Military Intervention in Civil Wars', *Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 2 (2019): 201–14.

[114] Seden Akcinaroglu and Elizabeth Radziszewski, 'Expectations, Rivalries, and Civil War Duration', *International Interactions* 31, no. 4 (2005): 349–74; Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew J. Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992', *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (2000): 615–642; Michael G. Findley and Tze Kwang Teo, 'Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars: Actor-Centric Approach', *Journal of Politics* 68, no. 4 (2014): 828–37; Dylan Balch-Lindsay, Andrew. J. Enterline, and Kyle A. Joyce, 'Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process', *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 3 (2008): 345–63; Zeev Maoz and Belgin San-Akca, 'Rivalry and State Support of Non-State Armed Groups (NAGs), 1946-2001', *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2012): 720–34.

[115] Maoz and San-Akca, 'Rivalry and State Support of Non-State Armed Groups (NAGs), 1946-2001'.

resources.[116] In a way, backing a warring party then serves as a less costly substitute to interstate conflict.[117]

At the same time, the perceived threat of conflict spill-over and the anticipation of negative externalities, such as depressed regional economic development and refugee outflows, may serve as motivation to get proactive about a conflict and protect strategic interests.[118] Recent work suggests that the presence of migrants from a state experiencing conflict can shape future refugee influx.[119] Wary of the risks of conflict spill-over associated with refugee populations, third parties then intervene militarily in conflict zones to limit future refugee outflows.[120]

In addition, external support is usually not an isolated event: Close to half of the conflicts in the second half of the 20th century saw intervention by more than one state.[121] Research on the interconnectedness of external support has shown that states are mindful of other states' involvement in the conflict.[122] According to a logic of *balancing* and *bandwagoning*, states intervene in a conflict if one warring party is already supported by an ally, or start to support the side a rival is combatting.[123] During the Cold War, US biased military intervention was significantly more likely in armed conflicts that already saw such intervention by a Soviet-aligned country, for example.[124]

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116 Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992'; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 'Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process'; Jun Koga, 'Where Do Third Parties Intervene? Third Parties' Domestic Institutions and Military Interventions in Civil Conflicts', *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2011): 1143–66; Michael G. Findley and Josiah F. Marineau, 'Lootable Resources and Third-Party Intervention into Civil Wars', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 5 (2015): 465–86.
117 Bapat, 'Understanding State Sponsorship of Militant Groups'; Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Idean Salehyan, and Kenneth Schultz, 'Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 4 (2008): 479–506; Salehyan, 'The Delegation of War to Rebel Organizations'.
118 Idean Salehyan and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, 'Refugees and the Spread of Civil War', *International Organization* 60, no. 2 (2006): 335–66; Kathman, 'Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions'.
119 Vincenzo Bove and Tobias Böhmelt, 'International Migration and Military Intervention in Civil War', *Political Science Research and Methods* 7, no. 2 (2019): 271–87.
120 Salehyan and Gleditsch, 'Refugees and the Spread of Civil War'.
121 Aysegul Aydin and Patrick M. Regan, 'Networks of Third-Party Interveners and Civil War Duration', *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 3 (2011): 576.
122 Findley and Teo, 'Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars: Actor-Centric Approach'.
123 Aydin and Regan, 'Networks of Third-Party Interveners and Civil War Duration'.
124 M. Y. Yoon, 'Explaining U.S. Intervention in Third World Internal Wars, 1945-1989', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 4 (1997): 580–602.

Further, major powers are believed to condition their decision to engage in joint biased military intervention in favour of the same recipient on their preference alignment with the initial intervener. If these vary from one great power to another, a decision to intervene is counterintuitively more likely.[125] The reasoning behind this is that involvement allows to affect policy outcomes more effectively than if left solely to the initial intervener that holds diverging preferences. If preferences are aligned, however, states have a high incentive to free-ride and abstain from intervening themselves.[126]

Besides such strategic considerations, the decision to intervene has also been linked to the domestic politics of the potential supporter. Here, the decision to provide external support is rooted in a desire to avoid political instability and safeguard leaders' political—and sometimes physical—survival at home: If an incumbent government has fallen out of favour with the public, more visible forms of external support, such as troop deployment abroad, can function as a diversionary strategy to channel public anger against a common enemy.[127] Making use of a 'rally-around-the-flag' effect, a leader can "burnish their nationalist credentials with audiences at home."[128]

In addition, leaders that fear overthrow by their own military are often reluctant to endow it with resources.[129] Diverting resources to external actors can serve as an alternative strategy to deal with a combination of regime-internal and -external threats (cf. Chapter 4) by weakening a foreign enemy without empowering domestic elites.[130] As mentioned above,

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125 Stephen E. Gent, 'Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Interventions' 69, no. 4 (2007): 1089–1102.
126 Ibid.
127 San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*.
128 Daniel L. Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 37.
129 Peter D. Feaver, 'Civil-Military Relations', *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 211–41; Timothy Besley and James A. Robinson, 'Quis Custodietipsos Custodes? Civilian Control over the Military', *Journal of the European Economic Association* 8, no. 2–3 (2010): 655–63; R. Blake McMahon and Branislav L. Slantchev, 'The Guardianship Dilemma: Regime Security through and from the Armed Forces', *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 2 (2015): 297–313; Cameron S. Brown, Christopher J. Fariss, and R. Blake McMahon, 'Recouping after Coup-Proofing: Compromised Military Effectiveness and Strategic Substitution', *International Interactions* 42, no. 1 (2016): 1–30.
130 Amanda C. Skuldt, 'State Sponsored Terrorism? Leader Survival and the Foreign Policy of Fear' (PhD Dissertation, Univeristy of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, 2013); Tamm, 'The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars'.

foreign intervention further opens opportunities to gain access to resources that can be used to appease the opposition at home.[131] This way, threatened regimes can buy off opponents without increasing the risk of a coup d'état.

Even if irregular leader removal is not a risk, leaders are likely to pursue those policies that are in line with the interests of the domestic constituents they rely on to maintain power.[132] According to Carment and James, "the probability that a state will formulate interventionist policies reflects the degree of support for such ideas within a leader's ethnic constituency."[133] Similarly, trade with another country creates a societal group with a vested interest in the continuation of economic relations. When armed conflict threatens trade, interest groups are likely to register their grievances through bottom-up policy-making. This can motivate government interference in foreign conflicts to protect economic interests from the negative effects of conflict.[134] Klosek finds that states are significantly more likely to provide external support to civil wars to protect existing foreign direct investment and established arms trade than states without such corporate interests.[135]

The presence of transnational ties between societal groups has received much attention in this context. Much of the literature suggests that states are more inclined to intervene on behalf of a group they share a sense of commonality with.[136] In his transnational theory of

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131 Koga, 'Where Do Third Parties Intervene? Third Parties' Domestic Institutions and Military Interventions in Civil Conflicts'; Findley and Marineau, 'Lootable Resources and Third-Party Intervention into Civil Wars'.
132 Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).
133 David Carment and Patrick James, 'Two-Level Games and Third-Party Intervention: Evidence from Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans and South Asia', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 29, no. 3 (1996): 529. See also, Stephen M. Saideman, 'Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Conflicts: Vulnerability versus Ethnic Ties', *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1997): 721–53; Saideman, *The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy, and International Conflict*; Stephen M. Saideman, 'Discrimination in International Relations: Analyzing External Support for Ethnic Groups', *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 1 (2002): 27–50.
134 Aysegul Aydin, *Foreign Powers and Intervention in Armed Conflicts.* (Standford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).
135 Kamil C. Klosek, 'Military Interventions in Civil Wars: Protecting Foreign Direct Investments and the Defence Industry', *Civil Wars* 22, no. 1 (2020): 87–113.
136 David Carment, 'The International Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict: Concepts, Indicators, and Theory', *Journal of Peace Research* 30, no. 2 (1993): 137–50; Carment and James, 'Two-Level Games and Third-Party Intervention: Evidence from Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans and South Asia'; David R. Davis and Will H. Moore, 'Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior', *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (1997): 171–84; Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*; Gleditsch, 'Transnational Dimensions of Civil War'.

interventions, Mitchell proposes that transactional (economic, military, educational, political) and affective (ideological, religious, ethnic) linkages increase the likelihood of interventions.[137] This should especially be the case if the respective group is an advantaged minority in the sponsor and a disadvantaged minority in the target country.[138]

The effect of ethnic kin on third-party intervention has been confirmed empirically in a number of studies.[139] As would be expected, ideational ties—including ethnic, religious, and ideological links—between a supporter and a rebel group make both intentional support by a state and rebels choosing a state for sanctuary more likely.[140] Russian support for separatist co-ethnics in Ukraine's eastern Donbass region serves as an illustration of this dynamic.[141] Examining the reasons for US military and non-military intervention in intrastate disputes, Mullenbach and Matthews find that ideological and ethnic linkage with the opposition make US interference more likely.[142] This logic works in the opposite direction as well: During the Cold War, the United States intervened more frequently in countries with a domestic communist presence that ran counter to its ideological commitment to capitalism and liberal democracy.[143] San-Akca further finds that ideational ties, between the external supporter and the target country have a dampening effect on the likelihood opposition forces are supported. This holds even if the target is an adversary of the would-be supporter.[144] Recently, scholars have begun to further unpack the relationship between ideational ties and external support: Ives, for example, argues

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137 C. R. Mitchell, 'Civil Strife and the Involvement of External Parties', *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1970): 166–94.

138Davis and Moore, 'Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior'.

139 Will H. Moore and David R. Davis, 'Transnational Ethnic Ties and Foreign Policy', in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear Diffusion, and Escalation*, ed. David A. Lake and Donald S. Rothchild (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 89–103; Khosla, 'Third World States as Intervenors in Ethnic Conflicts: Implications for Regional and International Security'; Rupen Cetinyan, 'Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention', *International Organization* 56, no. 3 (2002): 645–77.

140 San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*.

141 Elise Giuliano, 'Who Supported Separatism in Donbas? Ethnicity and Popular Opinion at the Start of the Ukraine Crisis', *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, no. 2–3 (2018): 158–78.

142 Mark J. Mullenbach and Gerard P. Matthews, 'Deciding to Intervene: An Analysis of International and Domestic Influences on United States Interventions in Intrastate Disputes', *International Interactions* 34, no. 1 (2008): 25–52.

143 Yoon, 'Explaining U.S. Intervention in Third World Internal Wars, 1945-1989'.

144 Ideational ties include links based on ethnicity, religion, and ideology. See San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*, 26.

that the impact of religious identity links depends on the degree of religious institutionalism in external supporters. In states where religion is highly institutionalised, co-religious groups can exert pressure on the government more easily.[145]

Overall, certain conflicts are more likely to see external interference than others. Assuming a supporter's decision to get involved in a conflict to be based on a cost-benefit analysis, Regan predicts that third-party intervention will be most likely in conflicts of lower intensity, where the probability of success is higher.[146] Aydin argues that a history of past conflict and the ability of previous interventions to influence combatant behaviour in one's favour provide valuable hints to potential interveners about the feasibility of intervening in the conflict.[147]

Although some scholars have suggested that conflicts with an imminent humanitarian crisis are more likely to see foreign involvement, empirical evidence in favour of this argument has been inconsistent.[148] Rather, conflicts based on ethnic or ideological strife are more likely to attract outside intervention as are those where a democracy faces violent opposition.[149] The presence of lootable resources in the conflict-country is linked to significantly higher numbers of military and economic intervention on the side of the rebels.[150] Research shows that the Ugandan and Rwandan decisions to fight alongside rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), for example, are at least in part a function of the DRC's resource wealth.[151]

The studies presented so far have in common that they identify determinants of a specific type of third-party involvement or look at numerous types of interference in

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145 Brandon Ives, 'Religious Institutionalism: A Domestic Explanation for External Support of Rebel Groups', *International Interactions* 45, no. 4 (2019): 693–719.
146 Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*.
147 Aysegul Aydin, 'Where Do States Go? Strategy in Civil War Intervention', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 27, no. 1 (2010): 47–66.
148 Regan, 'Choosing to Intervene: Outside Interventions in Internal Conflicts'; Lemke and Regan, 'Intervention as Influence'; Olson Lounsbery and Pearson, 'Civilian Victimization and International Military Intervention in Civil Wars'.
149 Lemke and Regan, 'Intervention as Influence'.
150 Findley and Marineau, 'Lootable Resources and Third-Party Intervention into Civil Wars'.
151 Michael L Ross, 'How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases', *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (2004): 35–67.

conjunction. Most of the time, third parties do not simply face a choice between intervening or not; they choose between several foreign policy tools at their disposal and the option not to involve themselves at all. Scholars have therefore begun to model the choice between different types of foreign interference. These studies aim to explain what makes third parties rely on one type of intervention over another.

Drawing upon sociological insights, Corbetta links social proximity to warring parties to third parties' willingness to invest in more costly interventions, such as military intervention, over less costly alternatives like economic and diplomatic measures.[152] Comparing the onset of mediation, peacekeeping operations, economic sanctions, and biased military intervention, Kreutz and Cardenas find that high levels of sexual violence draw in UN and non-UN peacekeepers foremost.[153]

Modelling the occurrence of troops and weapons support, other types of military support, economic sanctions, and foreign aid as a first stage of a selection model, McKibben et al. demonstrate that different types of interventions have varying risk factors. Religious conflicts, for example, are more likely to see troop and weapons support provided to government forces and other types of military support offered to rebel groups.[154] While the consequences of different types of intervention have received more academic attention as the next section will demonstrate, relative intervention preference remains an altogether underexplored topic.

Although this thesis is concerned with the consequences of external support provision, more specifically the provision of external military assistance, a review of the reasons why external supporters choose to intervene yields important insights for this study. This overview has demonstrated that reasons to intervene are manifold, providing incentives for a diverse set

[152] Renato Corbetta, 'Between Indifference and Coercion: Third-Party Intervention Techniques in Ongoing Disputes', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 1 (2015): 3–27.
[153] Joakim Kreutz and Magda Cardenas, 'Women, Peace and Intervention: How the International Community Responds to Sexual Violence in Civil Conflict', *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 23, no. 3 (2017): 260–76.
[154] Heather Elko McKibben and Amy Skoll, 'Please Help Us (or Don't): External Interventions and Negotiated Settlements in Civil Conflicts', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2020, 1–26.

of third parties to become involved. Therefore, focusing on the external support provided by a single country such as the United States necessarily captures third-party involvement that is the result of a particular combination of incentives to intervene, neglecting others. To guard against this, the analyses in this thesis examine the effects of external military assistance by a variety of third parties.

Further, studies of the consequences of external interference are plagued by selection effects. Only with a sound knowledge of the factors that explain why third parties provide assistance in the first place can appropriate strategies to counter selection bias be designed. These include matching observations with similar risks of seeing foreign involvement for greater inferential leverage.[155]

Having reviewed the most important determinants of the provision of different types of external support, the focus now turns to the consequences of such involvement by outside powers. To this end, I first examine the literature on the effects of foreign interference on the outcomes most frequently studied in civil war research, before then introducing the emerging literature on external military assistance.

2.4.2 The Consequences of External Support Provision

Although the potential implications of external support provision are vast, researchers have mostly focused their attention on a number of commonly-studied conflict outcomes. These include the onset and spread of conflict, its intensity and the types of violence committed, its impact on civilians, how long conflicts last and what outcome they produce, and configurations of the post-conflict environment. I present existing research on how external support impacts on these outcomes in turn.

[155] Lee, *Matching, Regression Discontinuity, Difference in Differences, and Beyond*.

Conflict Onset and Diffusion

There are several ways external support contributes to a set of conditions that facilitate the outbreak of armed hostilities. The availability of external backing, e.g. through strong ethnic ties, is quite intuitively linked to a greater willingness for marginalised groups to pick up arms against a repressive government. It promises access to levels and types of resources that would not otherwise be available.[156] The support by diasporas and emigrant communities plays a crucial role in this context.[157]

Developing a novel measure of anticipated external support, Jackson, San-Akca, and Maoz find that when the balance of such expected support favours the opposition, uprisings are more likely.[158] While anticipated material support, including troops, weapons, sanctuary, and funds, fosters violent uprisings, anticipated diplomatic and political support is linked to non-violent uprisings. Close geographical proximity to two rival states, likewise increases the potential for external support and thus lowers the expected costs of fighting.[159] On the flip side, Cunningham suggests, a military intervention on the side of the government deemed "so overwhelming that the dissidents' costs of fighting exceeds their probability of victory" can prevent civil war.[160]

In a game-theoretic model, Cetinyan reminds us, however, that the presence of a potential supporter might increase rebels' demands, but does not make bargaining failure, i.e. the onset of conflict, more likely *per se*. According to the bargaining model of war,[161] it is only in

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156 Gleditsch, 'Transnational Dimensions of Civil War'.
157 Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 'Greed and Grievance in Civil War', *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–95; Gina Lei Miller and Emily Hencken Ritter, 'Emigrants and the Onset of Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 1 (2014): 51–64.
158 Jaime A. Jackson, Belgin San-Akca, and Zeev Maoz, 'International Support Networks and the Calculus of Uprising', *Journal of Peace Research* 57, no. 5 (2020): 632–47.
159 Mark Toukan, 'International Politics by Other Means: External Sources of Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 6 (2019): 812–26.
160 David E. Cunningham, 'Preventing Civil War: How the Potential for International Intervention Can Deter Conflict Onset', *World Politics* 68, no. 2 (2016): 308.
161 Fearon, 'Rationalist Explanations for War'; Robert Powell, 'Bargaining Theory and International Conflict', *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002): 1–30; Dan Reiter, 'Exploring the Bargaining Model of War', *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 1 (2003): 27–43; Barbara F Walter, 'Bargaining Failures and Civil War', *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 243–61.

the context of incomplete information, indivisible stakes, and an inability to credibly commit that conflict will erupt—with or without the likely involvement of a third party.[162] Building on this work, Thyne finds that "cheap signals"—"day-to-day communications that are apt to exhibit a high degree of volatility over time"—by a third party, if hostile, can introduce the level of uncertainty over a third party's intentions that fosters conflict onset.[163] Once the provision of a certain level of external resources is established, changes in the level of provision, especially sudden drops, are likely to contribute to political instability and violence. Nielsen et al. test this argument for economic aid but find the effect to be even stronger when including US military aid—the only country for which such data is available.[164]

Besides conflict onset, rebel sponsorship has further been associated with the internationalisation of intrastate conflict. Finding that civil war countries experience about twice the amount of militarised interstate disputes as countries at peace, Gleditsch, Salehyan and Schultz explain this association in part with reference to strategies of retaliation against third-party support for local rebels.[165] Supporters that grant sanctuary to rebels are further vulnerable to cross-border counterinsurgency attacks by the target state.[166] These can further increase tensions between neighbours.

Conflict Intensity and Targeting Choices

The increased availability of resources that can be translated into deathly weapons is expected to lead to higher levels of fatalities on the battlefield overall. Heger and Salehyan test this proposition empirically and find that troop support in favour of the government, the rebels, or both tend to increase a conflict's deadliness with balanced interventions showing the most

162 Cetinyan, 'Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention'.
163 Clayton L Thyne, 'Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 6 (2006): 941; Clayton L. Thyne, 'How International Relations Affect Civil Conflict: Cheap Signals, Costly Consequences' (PhD Dissertation, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, 2007).
164 Nielsen et al., 'Foreign Aid Shocks as a Cause of Violent Armed Conflict'.
165 Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz, 'Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes'.
166 Ibid.; Kenneth A. Schultz, 'The Enforcement Problem in Coercive Bargaining: Interstate Conflict over Rebel Support in Civil Wars', *International Organization* 64, no. 2 (2010): 281–312.

substantial and consistent effect.[167] Lacina similarly argues that foreign military and economic intervention is likely to increase the severity of conflict by enabling actors that otherwise would not have the capacity to compete militarily to join an armed conflict.[168] However, the operationalisation of external support as conflicts that began during the Cold War, where military assistance was more readily available, presents a rather crude proxy of foreign intervention.

Extending the period of observation to the date of the first battle-related death, as opposed to the more common thresholds of 25 or 1,000 battle-related deaths, allows de Sousa to distinguish between the effect of military, economic, and diplomatic interventions in periods of varying conflict intensity.[169] He finds that economic interventions, on the one hand, escalate violence in low-intensity conflicts that have not crossed the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths. Military interventions, on the other hand, impact on low-intensity conflicts only if the conflict has previously passed this threshold. The same holds for diplomatic interventions.[170] The violence-inducing effect of external support further depends on the type of supporter. Petrova demonstrates that material resources provided by diaspora groups can positively affect militants' switch to nonviolent tactics. State support does not show the same effect.[171]

Through its impact on the balance of capabilities, foreign interventions including the transfer of "funds, weapons, equipment, materiel or personnel that have immediate or potential coercive value" not only affect the level of violence,[172] but the type of warfare that characterises

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[167] Note that while the authors suggest that all types of intervention have this effect on fatalities, they control only for *military* interventions. See Lindsay Heger and Idean Salehyan, 'Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict', *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2007): 385–403.
[168] Bethany Lacina, 'Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 2 (2006): 276–89.
[169] De Sousa follows Regan's distinction between military, economic, and diplomatic interventions, see Regan, Frank, and Aydin, 'Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset'.
[170] Ricardo Real P. Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010', *International Interactions* 41, no. 4 (2015): 621–47.
[171] Marina G. Petrova, 'What Matters Is Who Supports You: Diaspora and Foreign States as External Supporters and Militants' Adoption of Nonviolence', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 9 (2019): 2155–79.
[172] Adam Lockyer, 'Foreign Intervention and Warfare in Civil Wars', *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 5 (2011): 2339.

a conflict.[173] Based on case study evidence from the Angolan Civil War (1974-1976), Lockyer argues that changes in the type, extent, and direction of external support explain whether belligerents adopt conventional, guerrilla, or irregular warfare in civil war.[174] As the balance of capabilities shifts, so does the type of warfare.[175]

Treatment of Civilians

Besides combatants' behaviour on the battlefield, external support shapes their interactions with civilians.[176] An extensive literature discusses the effects of third-party involvement on civilian victimisation,[177] including both lethal and non-lethal violence.[178] Two competing logics emerge. Proponents of one side argue that the availability of outside support relieves both rebel and government forces from the need to augment their fighting capability by violently extracting resources from the local population.[179] Actors disadvantaged by the provision of external support to an opponent may escalate their attacks on civilians, however.[180]

Supporters of the opposing view counter that external sources of support render an 'hearts and minds' approach redundant and attract opportunist recruits. This exposes civilians

[173] Stathis N. Kalyvas, 'Warfare in Civil Wars', in *Rethinking the Nature of War*, ed. Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom (London; New York, NY: Frank Cass, 2005), 88–108.
[174] Lockyer, 'Foreign Intervention and Warfare in Civil Wars'.
[175] Adam Lockyer, 'The Dynamics of Warfare in Civil War', *Civil Wars* 12, no. 1–2 (2010): 91–116.
[176] I include a discussion on the effect of external interference on the treatment of civilians here since it constitutes a commonly-examined aspect of conflict dynamics in the literature. The other two outcomes of interest in the empirical analyses, coup d'état and domestic terrorism, will not be discussed in this chapter as they are commonly theorised independent of a civil war context. I provide a review of the literature on these outcomes in Chapters 4 and 6.
[177] A more detailed review of this literature can be found in Chapter 5.
[178] For a distinction between the different types of violence against civilians, see Francisco Gutiérrez-Sanín and Elisabeth J. Wood, 'What Should We Mean by Pattern of Political Violence? Repertoire, Targeting, Frequency, and Technique', *Perspectives on Politics* 15, no. 1 (2017): 20–41. For examples of the literature on non-lethal violence, see Dara Kay Cohen, 'Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980–2009)', *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 3 (2013): 461–77; Karin Johansson and Mehwish Sarwari, 'Sexual Violence and Biased Military Interventions in Civil Conflict', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 36, no. 5 (2019): 469–93.
[179] see, for example, Jean-Paul Azam and Anke Hoeffler, 'Violence Against Civilians in Civil Wars: Looting or Terror?', *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 4 (2002): 461–85; Reed M. Wood, Jacob D. Kathman, and Stephen E. Gent, 'Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts', *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 5 (2012): 647–60; Reed M. Wood, 'Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 31, no. 5 (2014): 461–80.
[180] Reed M. Wood, 'From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence', *International Organization* 68, no. 3 (2014): 979–99; Johansson and Sarwari, 'Sexual Violence and Biased Military Interventions in Civil Conflict'.

to increased levels of combatant violence.[181] Increasingly, scholars have turned to characteristics of the intervener, such as a commitment to human rights,[182] and the relationship between external supporters and recipients to explain the inconsistent effects of external support on civilian victimisation.[183]

Research on rebel governance shows that rebels receiving funding, weapons, or training by a third party are more likely to provide social services, such as education and health services, to civilians during armed conflict.[184] Further, biased military interventions led by intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) positively impact on women's political rights. The same cannot be said for unilateral biased military intervention by the United States, however.[185]

Conflict Duration

As discussed above, states are often believed to intervene in a civil conflict to bring about an outcome favourable to them, be it for strategic or humanitarian reasons. Expectations about the conflict-terminating potential of external support are based on shifts in warring parties' capabilities. According to this view, support to either of the warring parties alters the balance of power in favour of the supported side allowing it to bring conflict to an end.[186] Hence, external support should be more decisive for conflict duration if supporting the rebels unless under conditions of relative parity or even superior rebel capabilities.[187] Indeed, military or

[181] See, for example, Jannie Lilja, 'Trapping Constituents or Winning Hearts and Minds? Rebel Strategies to Attain Constituent Support in Sri Lanka', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 2 (2009): 306–26; Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.
[182] Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.
[183] Lucy Hovil and Eric Werker, 'Portrait of a Failed Rebellion: An Account of Rational, Sub-Optimal Violence in Western Uganda', *Rationality and Society* 17, no. 1 (2005): 5–34.
[184] Reyko Huang and Patricia L. Sullivan, 'Arms for Education? External Support and Rebel Social Services', *Journal of Peace Research*, 2020, 1–15.
[185] Dursun Peksen, 'Foreign Military Intervention and Women's Rights', *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 4 (2011): 455–68.
[186] Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts'.
[187] Patricia L. Sullivan and Johannes Karreth, 'The Conditional Impact of Military Intervention on Internal Armed Conflict Outcomes', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 3 (2015): 269–88.

economic interventions that favour one warring party over the other are more likely to end conflict than neutral interventions that distribute resources in a nonpartisan way.[188]

Compared to the absence of external involvement, however, military interventions—even the expectation of foreign involvement[189]—increase conflict duration on average.[190] This continues to hold true even once assistance is terminated: Testerman finds that conflict in which external support to rebels is withdrawn have a higher probability of continuing in the subsequent year.[191] Many of the early studies, however, do not develop strategies to address any selection effects at play: quite likely, third parties intervene where a quick conflict resolution without outside support seems improbable.

Against expectations, a greater number of biased military interventions in favour of one of the warring parties does not correspond to quicker conflict termination. Balch-Lindsay and Enterline suspect that rather than giving one side a decisive military advantage, additional support to either side attracts further support for the opposing side introducing yet more resources to prolong the conflict.[192]

Besides troop support, more fungible resources such as direct financial support and arms transfer are particularly likely to decrease the chance of conflict resolution since they introduce uncertainty into the bargaining process.[193] Outside financing further increases armed

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188 Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts'.
189 Ibrahim A. Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, 'External Interventions and the Duration of Civil Wars', World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 2433, The World Bank, Washington, DC, 2000; Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 'Expectations, Rivalries, and Civil War Duration'.
190 Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts'; Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992'; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 'Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process'; David E. Cunningham, 'Blocking Resolution: How External States Can Prolong Civil Wars', *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 115–27; Katherine Sawyer Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and William Reed, 'The Role of External Support in Civil War Termination', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2015, 1–29.
191 Matthew Testerman, 'Removing the Crutch: External Support and the Dynamics of Armed Conflict', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 7 (2015): 529–42.
192 Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992'; Findley and Teo, 'Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars: Actor-Centric Approach'.
193 Sawyer, Gallagher Cunningham, and Reed, 'The Role of External Support in Civil War Termination'.

group survival and effectiveness, fuelling insurgency.[194] The negative impact of troop support on conflict duration is less pronounced, however, if a mix of military and economic measures is provided.[195]

A notable exception to this pattern of prolonged conflict is presented by Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom, who find that military intervention favouring the rebels is linked to shortened conflict duration.[196] That the same does not hold for pro-government support is explained with rebels' ability to elude traditional military confrontation on the battlefield.[197] In this regard, Roberts argues that it is particularly access to territory that allows rebels to resist state repression that prolongs conflict, whereas the provision of troops and weapons that enhance rebels' offensive capabilities can shorten conflict duration when given to already strong rebel groups.[198] Regan and Aydin further find that diplomatic intervention is conducive to conflict termination and, in combination, mitigates the negative effects of economic intervention on duration.[199] These findings, however, do little to refute the overall tendency that "on average external interventions increase the expected duration of a civil war."[200]

Conflict Outcome

Interested not only in when civil wars end but also with which result, several studies have examined civil war outcome. Here, pro-rebel interventions have generally been shown to increase the odds of rebel victory providing opposition forces with the necessary means to

[194] Daniel L. Byman, 'Passive Sponsors of Terrorism', *Survival* 47, no. 4 (2005): 117–44; Byman, 'The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism'; Stephen D. Collins, 'State-Sponsored Terrorism: In Decline, Yet Still a Potent Threat', *Politics and Policy* 42, no. 1 (2014): 131–59. For a notable exception, see David B. Carter, 'A Blessing or a Curse? State Support for Terrorist Groups', *International Organization* 66, no. 1 (2012): 129–51.
[195] Patrick M. Regan, 'Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 2 (1996): 336–59; Lemke and Regan, 'Intervention as Influence'.
[196] Collier et al. rely on Regan's measure of military and economic interventions. See Regan, Frank, and Aydin, 'Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset'.
[197] Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom, 'On the Duration of Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 253–73.
[198] Jordan Roberts, 'Targeting and Resistance: Reassessing the Effect of External Support on the Duration and Outcome of Armed Conflict', *Civil Wars* 21, no. 3 (2019): 362–84.
[199] Regan and Aydin, 'Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars'.
[200] Regan, 'Interventions into Civil Wars: A Retrospective Survey with Prospective Ideas', 461.

sustain a military challenge.[201] External military training, especially when provided by rebel groups or rebels-turned-governments with previous conflict experience, increases the chances of an outcome favourable to rebel groups. In case studies of the Angolan War (1975-1991) and the Nicaraguan Contra War (1979-1990), Hoekstra concludes foreign assistance to UNITA rebels and the Contras was crucial in preventing rebel defeat and imposing costs on the government, but ultimately insufficient to achieve victory.[202] If nothing else, boosting rebels' offensive capabilities makes a decisive outcome such as a negotiated settlement or an outright victory more likely than the conflict petering out over time.[203] Government victory is only aided by external troop support in cases where the government lacks conventional war-fighting capacity to begin with.[204]

Jones shows that timing matters in this context: biased military intervention against rebels increases the chances of government victory only once a conflict turns protracted. Biased military intervention in support of the rebels, in contrast, shows most effect early in the conflict. This is also when indirect support such as air support, military aid, equipment, intelligence, and advisors to boost the government sides' capabilities has the highest chance of success.[205]

External support further affects the chances of the conflict reaching a peaceful settlement. Karlén shows that rebels with outside support are less likely to enter into negotiations in the first place.[206] Once under way, the presence of third parties introduces a novel class of issues negotiations need to address, complicating mediation. These include troop

[201] Thyne finds an exception to this pattern for support from particularly weak third parties. Thyne, 'How International Relations Affect Civil Conflict: Cheap Signals, Costly Consequences'.
[202] Quint Hoekstra, 'The Effect of Foreign State Support to UNITA during the Angolan War (1975–1991)', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 29, no. 5 (2018): 981–1005; Quint Hoekstra, 'Helping the Contras: The Effectiveness of U.S. Support for Foreign Rebels During the Nicaraguan Contra War (1979–1990)', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2019, 1–21.
[203] Roberts, 'Targeting and Resistance: Reassessing the Effect of External Support on the Duration and Outcome of Armed Conflict'.
[204] Sullivan and Karreth, 'The Conditional Impact of Military Intervention on Internal Armed Conflict Outcomes'.
[205] Benjamin T. Jones, 'Altering Capabilities or Imposing Costs? Intervention Strategy and Civil War Outcomes', *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2017): 52–63.
[206] Niklas Karlén, 'Escalate to De-Escalate? External State Support and Governments' Willingness to Negotiate', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2020, 1–22.

withdrawal, limits on external military assistance and future intervention as well as the precise role of third parties in safeguarding peace agreements.[207]

While support for the government usually makes reaching a negotiated settlement more likely, the prospect of a peaceful solution decreases if the overall pattern of external support is balanced between the government and opposition forces.[208] The introduction of additional actors with potentially diverging goals and less incentives to negotiate, Cunningham argues, complicates negotiations, and impedes settlement.[209]

The probability that warring parties reach a negotiated settlement further depends on the type of intervention. Distinguishing between hard and soft interventions as well as economic sanctions and economic aid, McKibben et al. find the effect on negotiated settlements varies depending on the type of intervention and support recipient. Hard interventions in favour of the rebel side and soft interventions supporting the government side increase the probability of a negotiated settlement, whereas hard interventions supporting the government as well as economic sanctions and increases in foreign aid dampen its prospects.[210]

Post-Conflict Environment

Once a resolution to a conflict is found, third parties often play a crucial role in the successful implementation of negotiated settlements. With third parties providing credible guarantees that the terms of the agreement will be enforced, combatants can "demobilize,

[207] Sean W. Kane, 'Making Peace When the Whole World Has Come to Fight: The Mediation of Internationalized Civil Wars', *International Peacekeeping*, 2020, 1–27.
[208] Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992'; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 'Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process'; T. David Mason, Joseph P. Weingarten, and Patrick J. Fett, 'Win, Lose, or Draw: Predicting the Outcome of Civil Wars', *Political Research Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (1999): 239–68.
[209] David E Cunningham, 'Veto Players and Civil War Duration', *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (2006): 875–92; Cunningham, 'Blocking Resolution: How External States Can Prolong Civil Wars'.
[210] McKibben and Skoll, 'Please Help Us (or Don't): External Interventions and Negotiated Settlements in Civil Conflicts'.

disarm, and disengage their military forces and prepare for peace" in the uncertainty of the post-conflict environment.[211]

Apart from their role as security guarantors, external support networks can also have detrimental effects on the duration of peace, however. Arguing that ex-combatants with existing links to external supporters face both an increased opportunity and willingness to remobilise, Karlén finds that previous rebel sponsorship substantially increases the chances of conflict recurring in the short term.[212] Roberts suggests that it is particularly the provision of offensive military technology by external supporters, that risks the renewed outbreak of hostilities.[213]

The influence of third parties can hinder democratisation processes in post-conflict societies. Discrepancies between the preferences of the supporter's domestic support base and citizens in the target country mean that supporters are more likely to establish an autocratic regime that promises to implement desired policies. Notably, this finding holds for democratic just as much as for autocratic interveners.[214]

Even if external supporters refrain from actively interfering in the post-conflict state-building process, their support indirectly affects target countries' political landscape. The revenue from external funding can provide the necessary resources for rebel groups to turn into viable political parties.[215] Counterintuitively, these are more likely to participate in the political process and gain political power where such support stems from autocratic supporters. Marshall attributes this tendency to democracies' need to micromanage sponsorship relationships to avoid audience costs and satisfy domestic constituents.[216] According to Colaresi, rebels-turned-

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[211] Barbara F Walter, 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement', *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (1997): 336; Margit Bussmann, 'Military Integration, Demobilization, and the Recurrence of Civil War', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 13, no. 1 (2019): 95–111.
[212] Niklas Karlén, 'The Legacy of Foreign Patrons: External State Support and Conflict Recurrence', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 499–512.
[213] Jordan Roberts, 'Offense, Defense, and the Causes of Civil War Recurrence: The Effect of External Military Support on Peace Duration', *Hinckley Journal of Politics* 15 (2014): 28–37.
[214] Bruce Bueno De Mesquita and George W. Downs, 'Intervention and Democracy', *International Organization* 60, no. 3 (2006): 627–49.
[215] Michael C. Marshall, 'Foreign Rebel Sponsorship: A Patron–Client Analysis of Party Viability in Elections Following Negotiated Settlements', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 2 (2019): 555–84.
[216] Ibid.

government that relied on the support of a rival state are likely to face a crisis of legitimacy over their involvement with hostile regimes, however. This provides incentives for these newly-formed governments to impede democratisation, for example, by avoiding elections.[217]

2.4.3 Research on External Military Assistance

The overview of research on external support up to now highlights that most studies either focus on biased military intervention[218] or a category of external support that includes all types of military support equally.[219] The literature on external support to civil wars is further biased in favour of studying the effects of support to rebel groups.[220]

More recently, scholars have begun to disaggregate different types of external support to explain variation across various outcome.[221] Sawyer et al. separately test the effects of weapons, funding, intelligence, and territory provided to rebel groups on conflict termination.[222] Testerman distinguishes between "military assistance" including troop support and intelligence-sharing, "safe haven," "material aid" including weapons and non-weaponry equipment, and "financial aid" to rebels in his analysis of civil war duration.[223] In their distinction between hard and soft interventions, McKibben et al. draw a line between "hard" troop and weapons support and "soft" interventions including training, logistical support, funding, intelligence, and access to territory.[224] Jones defines "indirect interventions" as the provision of air support, military aid,

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[217] Michael Colaresi, 'With Friends like These, Who Needs Democracy? The Effect of Transnational Support from Rivals on Post-Conflict Democratization', *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 1 (2014): 65–79.
[218] Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 'Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992'; Gent, 'Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Interventions'; Peksen, 'Foreign Military Intervention and Women's Rights'; Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 'Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts'.
[219] Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts'; Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom, 'On the Duration of Civil War'; Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010'; Lockyer, 'Foreign Intervention and Warfare in Civil Wars'.
[220] Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz, 'Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes'; Wood, 'Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War'; Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.
[221] Roberts, 'Targeting and Resistance: Reassessing the Effect of External Support on the Duration and Outcome of Armed Conflict'.
[222] Sawyer, Gallagher Cunningham, and Reed, 'The Role of External Support in Civil War Termination', 10–11.
[223] Testerman, 'Removing the Crutch: External Support and the Dynamics of Armed Conflict', 540.
[224] McKibben and Skoll, 'Please Help Us (or Don't): External Interventions and Negotiated Settlements in Civil Conflicts', 3.

equipment, intelligence, and advisors to government or rebels forces to assess the role of different types of interventions on conflict outcomes.[225]

These studies have focused on support to rebels, ignored the role of military training, or conflated the provision of direct military support, such as air support, with the effects of more indirect types of support, however. Yet, there is an urgent need in the policy community to examine the effects of indirect military support to foreign armed forces.[226] Hesitant to engage in full-blown biased military intervention, especially when acting unilaterally (cf. Chapter 3), policymakers are interested in the potential and peril of boosting foreign militaries' capacity through training and equipping foreign armed forces.

Due to data limitations, existing large-N studies on the effects of external military assistance are restricted to observations on US military assistance. These studies examine the effect of US foreign aid, i.e. US expenditure on economic and military aid, on outcomes such as civil war onset,[227] belligerent violence,[228] government one-sided violence,[229] terrorist attacks,[230] counterterrorism cooperation,[231] recipient state cooperation,[232] state repression,[233] human

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225 Jones, 'Altering Capabilities or Imposing Costs? Intervention Strategy and Civil War Outcomes', 57.
226 Jennifer D. P. Moroney et al., *How Successful Are U.S. Efforts to Build Capacity in Developing Countries? A Framework to Assess the Global Train and Equip "1206" Program* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011); Watts et al., *The Uses and Limits of Small-Scale Military Intervention*; Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*; Welch and Bailey, 'In Pursuit of Good Ideas: The Syria Train-And-Equip Program'; Knowles and Abigail Watson, *Remote Warfare: Lessons Learned from Contemporary Theatres*.
227 Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.
228 Oeindrila Dube and Suresh Naidu, 'Bases, Bullets and Ballots: The Effect of U.S. Military Aid on Political Conflict in Colombia', *Journal of Politics* 77, no. 1 (2015): 249–67.
229 Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'.
230 Eric Neumayer and Thomas Plümper, 'Foreign Terror on Americans', *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 1 (2011): 3–17; Andrew Boutton, 'Of Terrorism and Revenue: Why Foreign Aid Exacerbates Terrorism in Personalist Regimes', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 36, no. 4 (2019): 359–84; Daniel Meierrieks Eugen Dimant, Tim Krieger, 'Negative Returns: U.S. Military Policy and Anti-American Terrorism', CESifo Working Paper No. 6693, 2017; Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.
231 Navin A. Bapat, 'Transnational Terrorism, US Military Aid, and the Incentive to Misrepresent', *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 3 (2011): 303–18.
232 Patricia L. Sullivan, Brock F. Tessman, and Xiaojun Li, 'US Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7, no. 3 (2011): 275–94; Carla Martinez Machain, 'Exporting Influence: U.S. Military Training as Soft Power', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65, no. 2–3 (2021): 313–41.
233 Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.

rights,[234] and coups d'état.[235] To circumvent this limitation, Sullivan et al. utilise the volume of major conventional weapons transfers to post-conflict countries and create a novel indicator based on machine-coded events data to assess the role of military aid on human rights in post-conflict countries.[236]

Even small-N research designs that could feasibly examine the role of external supporters other than the United States largely share the preoccupation with US military assistance. Comparing training, advice, and equipment provided to the governments of El Salvador, Iraq, and Korea, Biddle et al. assess the effectiveness of US military assistance in a case-study design.[237] Others focus on US training programmes specifically.[238] A few case studies examine bilateral and multilateral military training cooperation by other third parties such as India[239] and the European Union.[240]

As a consequence, our understanding of the effects of external military assistance by a range of external supporters is still poor. From the broader literature on external support we know, however, that characteristics of the external supporter matter for a range of outcomes, including conflict termination, treatment of civilians, and the post-conflict political landscape. Here, previous work shows that characteristics such as human rights commitments,[241] regime

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234 Wayne Sandholtz, 'United States Military Assistance and Human Rights', *Human Rights Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (2016): 1070–1101.
235 Clayton L. Thyne, 'Supporter of Stability or Agent of Agitation? The Effect of US Foreign Policy on Coups in Latin America, 1960-99', *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 4 (2010): 449–61; Stephen Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: Technical Appendixes* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018).
236 Patricia L. Sullivan, Leo J. Blanken, and Ian C. Rice, 'Arming the Peace: Foreign Security Assistance and Human Rights Conditions in Post-Conflict Countries', *Defence and Peace Economics* 31, no. 2 (2020): 177–200.
237 Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.
238 Tomislav Z. Ruby and Douglas Gibler, 'US Professional Military Education and Democratization Abroad', *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 3 (2010): 339–64; Jesse Dillon Savage and Jonathan D. Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 542–57; Edin Mujkic, Hugo D. Asencio, and Theodore Byrne, 'International Military Education and Training: Promoting Democratic Values to Militaries and Countries throughout the World', *Democracy and Security* 15, no. 3 (2019): 271–90.
239 B. S. Sachar, 'Cooperation in Military Training as a Tool of Peacetime Military Diplomacy', *Strategic Analysis* 27, no. 3 (2003): 404–21.
240 Skeppström, Hull Wiklund, and Jonsson, 'European Union Training Missions: Security Sector Reform or Counter-Insurgency by Proxy?'
241 Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.

type,[242] and investment in the military[243] can affect the impact external involvement has on conflict-related outcomes.

Once again, these studies focus on support to rebels or are limited to the high threshold of troop support. Therefore, systematic research on different types of external supporters and the ways the external military assistance they provide impacts on conflict-related outcomes is in urgent need. The data collected as part of this thesis allows for such comparisons across external supporters (cf. Chapter 3) and the papers presented in Chapters 4-6 explore the impact of different types of supporters in greater detail.

2.5 Conclusion

Having defined external military assistance and its scope condition, civil war, this paper has reviewed the literature on foreign interference into civil wars. States intervene in civil wars to protect strategic interests, appease domestic constituents, and support co-ethnics. They are selective about the conflicts they intervene in and the type of assistance they offer. Foreign involvement further affects all stages of the conflict process from its onset to its duration, outcome, and chances of a durable peace. It shapes conflict dynamics such as the type of warfare, the treatment of civilians, and the onset of negotiations. The effects of external involvement reverberate in post-conflict societies where they shape political institutions and players.

While existing research on third-party involvement has explored its effects on a multitude of conflict-related outcomes, the literature remains plagued by four major shortcomings: First, previous research focuses on biased military intervention at the expense of more indirect types of external support such as those involved in the provision of external

[242] Marshall, 'Foreign Rebel Sponsorship: A Patron–Client Analysis of Party Viability in Elections Following Negotiated Settlements'.
[243] Felix Haass and Nadine Ansorg, 'Better Peacekeepers, Better Protection? Troop Quality of United Nations Peace Operations and Violence against Civilians', *Journal of Peace Resarch* 55, no. 6 (2018): 742–58; Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*.

military assistance. Second, existing accounts of the effect of training and equipping foreign militaries almost exclusively focus on US military assistance. Third, previous research with a more global focus prioritises the analysis of external state support to rebels over state-to-state cooperation. Fourth, most existing studies on the consequences of external support fail to account for the non-random allocation of external support and are thus prone to selection bias.

Together with often widely inconsistent results on the effect of foreign involvement on conflict dynamics, these shortcomings render further investigation into the effects of external support, specifically external military assistance, necessary. This thesis therefore sets out to analyse the effects of weapons, equipment, and training support on actors' chosen strategies in civil wars. Besides filling a gap in the respective literatures on coups d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism, it contributes to the development of the literature on external support by addressing these shortcomings.

For one, theorising the role of external military assistance while controlling for the impact of external troop support in the empirical analyses allows me to isolate the effect of external military assistance. This contributes to our knowledge of external support short of troop deployment. Through extensive coding of external support by third parties worldwide (cf. Chapter 3), I am able to test the effects of external military assistance by a range of third parties and to demonstrate that a focus solely on the United States is potentially misleading. With its focus on military-to-military cooperation, this thesis further contributes to our knowledge on support to government rather than rebel actors. Lastly, the research designs of all three papers account for potential selection effects, even if challenges to causal inference remain.

The following chapter demonstrates how existing data is inappropriate to fill these gaps in the literature and presents the data collected to address these shortcomings.

CHAPTER 3: NEW DATA ON EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND TRENDS IN EXTERNAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE

3.1 Introduction

To investigate the questions raised in this research project, I rely primarily on observational data on external military assistance. While several datasets on foreign interference existed at the start of this project, none would have provided the required detail of information for the time period and geographical area under investigation. More specifically, there was no dataset available containing *yearly* data on military assistance short of troop support to *state* armed forces in conflict countries *worldwide* from states *worldwide* in a period that covers a substantive time span of the *post-Cold War era.* Closest to the data needed came the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD), an at the time unpublished collection of data on external support for the period 1975-2009 created in 2010 by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). Its main shortfall, however, was the limited time span as well as the missing coding for a few more complex conflicts, i.e. the inter- and intrastate conflicts over Kashmir that erupted following the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan,[244] and the Maoist and secessionist insurgencies elsewhere in India.[245] Nevertheless, the data has found wide application in conflict research, signalling the general need for dependable data on external support.[246]

To mitigate this lack of reliable data, I collaborated with the Uppsala Conflict Data Program in Uppsala, Sweden, to complete a dataset on external support in civil wars. For this

[244] Armed conflict over Kashmir broke out after the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. The interstate conflict between India and Pakistan starting in 1948 continues until today with periodical bursts of violence. A Kashmir insurgency demanding secession from India formed in the late 1980s and turned into an ongoing intrastate conflict in 1990. See Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'India: Kashmir', *UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia*, accessed 23 December 2020.

[245] Over time, India faced insurgencies by several Maoist groups such as the Maoist Communist Centre, the People's War Group, and the Communist Party of India-Maoist. It also faced a number of secessionist insurgencies, particularly in the north-eastern states Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, and Manipur.

[246] See, for example, Sawyer, Gallagher Cunningham, and Reed, 'The Role of External Support in Civil War Termination'; Karlén, 'Sponsors of War: State Support for Rebel Groups in Civil Conflicts'; Milos Popovic, 'Fragile Proxies: Explaining Rebel Defection against Their State Sponsors', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 5 (2017): 922–42; Eric Keels, Jay Benson, and Michael Widmeier, 'Teaching from Experience: Foreign Training and Rebel Success in Civil War', *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 2020, 1–22; McKibben and Skoll, 'Please Help Us (or Don't): External Interventions and Negotiated Settlements in Civil Conflicts'.

purpose, I spent a period of seven months as a visiting student at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University that also hosts the UCDP. During this time, I consulted with Mihai Croicu, who conducted the initial coding for the dataset, to create a new and more comprehensive coding sheet (cf. Table 12, Appendix A). In close consultation with experienced coders from UCDP, I began the process of coding new observations for the period 2010-2017.[247] The result is the finalised UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD), 1975-2017. It contains 10,387 observations, 3,601 of which were newly coded by me as well as 1,342 that represent improvements to existing coding that I contributed.[248] Taken together, close to half of the observations in the current dataset have been added or adjusted in the process of the update yielding an altogether more comprehensive and up-to-date dataset. The ESD will be made available online on the UCDP website and a corresponding data presentation paper is planned to be submitted for publication in spring 2021.

While the substantive chapters of this thesis focus solely on the provision of external military assistance by states to foreign governments involved in a civil war, this chapter presents the broader data collection project and resulting data that enable the analyses in the three papers (cf. Chapters 4-6). Consequently, the role of other types of support and support provided by non-state supporters is also addressed. This chapter aims to give the reader a chance to familiarise herself with the data and the ways in which it was collected. It further provides an opportunity to compare it to available alternatives. It discusses its advantages but also draws attention to its shortcomings and cautions the reader regarding the inferences that can be drawn from it. The article-based structure of this thesis means that any discussion of data in the papers itself is invariably brief. Since the data presentation paper and the new codebook of the ESD

[247] I included information for the years 2018-2020 as I came across them. Since this data is as of now incomplete, it is not included in the description of the data or the analyses that follow.
[248] In addition, I recorded information on external support during inactive civil war years in 482 observations that did not enter into the final dataset due to the lack of comparable data for the period 1975-2009.

have not been finalised yet, I provide a rather detailed account here, hoping it can serve as a reference for any questions that might arise with regard to data in the papers.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: First, I present and compare available datasets on foreign interference and discuss their appropriateness for my research. Second, I specify the scope of the ESD and provide operational definitions for key concepts employed throughout. Third, I outline the data collection process that occurred in the context of the update of the ESD. Fourth, I describe the data contained in the ESD in more detail and evaluate the accuracy of frequently-held beliefs about the provision of external support. Fifth and last, I conclude the data presentation by examining trends in the provision of external military assistance—the subset of external support that is of central interest to this research.

3.2 Overview of Existing Datasets

The flourishing literature on third-party involvement in civil wars in recent years (cf. Chapter 2) is not least the result of several time-series cross-sectional data collection efforts that made available a variety of datasets for quantitative research agendas to exploit. These datasets vary in geographical and temporal scope, actors and actions included as well as the level of aggregation at which they provide information.

Table 1 presents an overview of available datasets on external *military* support and lists their key features. Besides information on time span and geographical reach, it specifies the unit of analysis structuring the data collection and any scope conditions that limit the universe of cases under consideration. This is where a lot of the crucial variation between datasets lies that is often not obvious at first sight. For example, whether information on external support is recorded once per support event, month, year, or for the entire conflict has significant repercussions for the kind of questions the data can help answer. Table 1 provides a brief description of actors and types of support included in the various datasets to allow for wider

comparison between datasets. Table 2 then provides a more detailed overview of the specific sub-types of support included.

While some of the introduced datasets also hold information on other types of support, such as economic, diplomatic, and humanitarian assistance, I do not aspire to present a comprehensive list of data on non-military external support.[249] Similarly, where datasets hold information on additional topics, e.g. rebel capability, the discussion will be limited to comparing and critiquing the data on external support. For more information on the datasets, all relevant codebooks are referenced in the footnotes.

Data on Biased Military Interventions

The study of external military support in civil wars has its intellectual origins in research on biased military interventions, i.e. the purposeful dispatch of regular armed forces of a sovereign state across international boundaries.[250] As such, biased military intervention refers to "direct combatant or combat-preparatory military operations conducted upon foreign territory by units of a state's regular military forces."[251]

[249] For a more detailed overview of available datasets on all types of foreign intervention, see Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010', 623–28.
[250] Frederic S. Pearson and Robert A. Baumann, 'International Military Intervention, 1946-1988 - Codebook', Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (Ann Arbor, MI, 1993); Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet F. Kisangani, 'The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars', *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 4 (2009): 589–99.
[251] Herbert K. Tillema, 'Foreign Overt Military Intervention in the Nuclear Age', *Journal of Peace Research* 26, no. 2 (1989): 187.

Table 1: Overview of Available Datasets on Foreign Intervention

Dataset	Time Span	Geographical Coverage	Unit of Analysis	Scope Condition	Type of Supporter	Type of Recipient/ Target	Type of Intervention
Foreign Overt Military Intervention Data (Tillema, 1989)	1945-1985	global	conflict	conflict (undefined)[a]	state	state (T)[b]	military (troops)
Military Intervention by Powerful States (Sullivan & Koch, 2009)	1946-2003	only CN, FR, RU, UK, US (S)	event	none	state	state (T), non-state (T) individual (T)	military (troops)
International Military Intervention Dataset (Pickering & Kisangani, 2009)[252]	1946-2005	global	event	political issue or dispute (undefined)	state multilateral	state (R, T) non-state (R, T)[c] neutral	military (troops)
UCDP Dyadic Dataset (Pettersson, Högbladh & Öberg, 2019)[253]	1946-present	global	dyad-year	armed conflict (UCDP/PRIO)	state multilateral[d]	state (R) non-state (R)	military (troops)
Third-Party Interventions Data/ Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War (Regan, Franck & Aydin, 2009)[254]	1945-1999	global	conflict-month	armed conflict (>200 BRD)	state non-state[e] multilateral	state non-state neutral	military (troops/indirect) economic diplomatic
Interventions During Periods of Political Instability (Regan & Meachum, 2014)	1957-2007	global	event	high risk of civil war (as defined by authors)	state non-state[f] multilateral	state non-state neutral	military (troops/indirect) economic diplomatic
External Interventions in Africa (Sousa, 2015)	1989-2010	only Africa (R)	conflict-month	armed conflict (UCDP GED)	state non-state[f] multilateral	state non-state neutral	military (troops, indirect) economic diplomatic
Non-State Actor Data (Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan, 2013)	1945-2011	global	dyad-spell	armed conflict (UCDP/PRIO)	state non-state[g]	state non-state	military (troops/indirect) economic diplomatic
Insurgency Database (Jones, 2017)	1946-2012	global	insurgency	insurgency (as defined by author)	state[g] non-state[g] multilateral	state[g] non-state	military (troops/ indirect) economic

[252] Previous version of the data by Pearson and Baumann (1993).
[253] Previous version of the data by Harbom, Melander and Wallensteen (2008).
[254] Previous versions of the data by Regan (2002) and Regan and Aydin (2006).

Dangerous Companions Dataset (San-Akca, 2016)	1922-2010[h]	global	triad-year	previous or future armed conflict (UCDP/PRIO)	state[i]	non-state	military (troops/indirect) economic diplomatic
Outside Support for Insurgencies (Byman et al., 2001)	1991-2000	global	insurgency	insurgency (as defined by authors)	state, non-state[g]	non-state	support (unspecified)[j]
Rage Against the Machines (Lyall & Wilson, 2009)	1800-2005	global	insurgency	insurgency (as defined by authors)	state	non-state	military (indirect) economic
U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants (USAID, 2020)	1946-present	only US (S)	country-year	none	state	state	military (indirect) economic
SIPRI Arms Transfer Database (SIPRI, 2020)	1950-present	global	event	none	state non-state multilateral	state non-state IOs	military (indirect)
UCDP External Support Data (Meier, Karlén, Pettersson, Croicu forthcoming)[255]	1975-2017	global	triad-year	armed conflict (UCDP/PRIO)	state non-state multilateral	state non-state	military (troops/indirect) economic

Multilateral recipients or targets can be *ad hoc* coalitions or international organisations, e.g. NATO. Non-state recipients or targets can be non-state armed groups, non-governmental and non-profit organisations, or individuals. Where non-state actors do not comprise armed actors it is noted in the footnotes.

[a] Conflict can be any political turbulence, e.g. demonstrations, strikes, riots, attacks, coups, occupations, insurgencies, secession, interstate war, etc.

[b] Target can be a subnational unit, e.g. city, state, colonial dependence, protectorate.

[c] Non-state actor not identified by name.

[d] Multinational coalitions included where appropriate, but members coded separately.

[e] Non-state supporters only included for diplomatic interventions and do not include armed actors.

[f] Non-state supporters do not include armed actors.

[g] Supporters not identified by name.

[h] Update in progress.

[i] Extension to non-state supporters in progress.

[j] Activities that qualify as support include military, economic, and diplomatic support.

[255] Previous version of the data by Högbladh, Pettersson and Themnér (2011).

Table 2: Overview of Support Types in Available Datasets on Foreign Intervention

Dataset	Military Support[a]	Economic Support	Diplomatic and Political Support
Foreign Overt Military Intervention Data (Tillema, 1989)	(1) troops (unspecified)[256]	N/A	N/A
Military Intervention by Powerful States (Sullivan & Koch, 2009)	(1) display of troops (2) limited air/naval power (3) limited ground commitment (4) extensive airpower (5) ground combat[257]	N/A	N/A
International Military Intervention Dataset (Pickering & Kisangani, 2009)	(1) troop incursion (2) air incursion (3) naval incursion (plus activities conducted)[258]	N/A	N/A
UCDP Dyadic Dataset (Pettersson, Högbladh & Öberg, 2019)	(1) troops (unspecified)[259]	N/A	N/A
Third-Party Interventions Data/Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War (Regan, Franck & Aydin, 2009)	(1) troops (unspecified) (2) naval forces (3) equipment or aid (4) intelligence or advisors (5) air support (6) military sanctions	(1) grants (2) loans (3) non-military equipment or expertise (4) credits (5) relieve past obligations (6) economic sanctions[260]	(1) mediation (2) forum (3) arbitration (4) recall of diplomats (5) offer (6) request[261]
Interventions During Periods of Political Instability (Regan & Meachum, 2014)	Description of intervention	Description of intervention	Description of intervention[262]
External Interventions in Africa (Sousa, 2015)	(1) troops (unspecified) (2) naval forces (3) equipment or aid (4) intelligence or advisors (5) air support (6) military sanctions	1) grants (2) loans (3) non-military equipment/expertise (4) credits (5) relieve past obligations (6) economic sanctions	(1) mediation (2) forum (3) arbitration (4) recall of diplomats (5) offer (6) request (7) political sanctions[263]
Non-State Actor Data (Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan, 2013)	(1) troops (unspecified) (2) military support (3) territory (intentional or *de facto*)[b]	(1) non-military support	(1) endorsement[264]
Insurgency Database (Jones, 2016)	(1) troops (unspecified) (2) sanctuary[b] (3) training[b] (4) lethal material[b] (5) non-lethal material[b]	(1) financial support[b]	N/A

256 Tillema, 'Foreign Overt Military Intervention in the Nuclear Age'.
257 Patricia L Sullivan, 'Military Intervention by Powerful States (MIPS) v. 2.0 Codebook', 2008, 8.
258 Emizet F. Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering, 'International Military Intervention, 1989-2005 - Codebook', Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (Ann Arbor, MI, 2007), 23–25.
259 Therése Pettersson, 'UCDP Dyadic Dataset Codebook v 19.1', 2019, 4.
260 Patrick M. Regan, 'Users Manual for Pat Regan's Data on Interventions in Civil Conflicts', 2000.
261 Patrick M. Regan, Richard W. Frank, and Aysegul Aydin, 'Users Manual "Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset"', 2006.
262 Patrick M. Regan and M. Scott Meachum, 'Data on Interventions during Periods of Political Instability', *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 1 (2014): 130–31.
263 Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010', 633.
264 David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, 'Codebook for the Non-State Actor Data v 3.3', 2012, 6–7.

Dangerous Companions Dataset (San-Akca, 2016)	(1) troops (unspecified) (2) safe haven to members (3) training camp (4) training (5) weapons/logistics aid (6) transport of military equipment/military advice (7) other support Same variables for *de facto* support (except for troops)	(1) financial aid Same variable for *de facto* support	(1) safe haven to leadership (2) headquarters Same variable for *de facto* support[265]
Outside Support for Insurgencies (Byman et al., 2001)	(1) military support (unspecified)	(2) economic support (unspecified)	(3) diplomatic support (unspecified)
Rage Against the Machines (Lyall & Wilson, 2009)	(1) material economic and **military aid** (2) sanctuary (intentional/*de facto*)	(1) Material **economic** and military aid[266]	N/A
U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants (USAID, 2020)	(1) Military aid (in $)[267]	(1) Economic aid (in $)[268]	N/A
SIPRI Arms Transfer Database (SIPRI, 2020)	Details of major conventional weapons system transfer[269]	N/A	N/A
UCDP External Support Data (Meier, Karlén, Pettersson, Croicu forthcoming)[270]	(1) troops (2) infrastructure/joint operations (3) territory (4) weapons (5) equipment/logistics (6) training/expertise (7) intelligence (8) other support (9) unknown type	(1) funding[271]	N/A

[a] Note that the categorisation into military, economic, and diplomatic support is conducted by the author except for the datasets based on Regan (2002). Access to territory is considered military support where it refers to the hosting of combat forces, e.g. military bases or rebel camps. It is considered political where it applies to groups of individuals not typically involved in combat, e.g. leadership. Training, infrastructure, logistical support, etc. that is targeted exclusively at military personnel or for military purposes is considered military support.
[b] Support type coded for rebel groups only.

265 Belgin San-Akca, 'Dangerous Companions: Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups (NAGs) Codebook v. April 2015', 2015.
266 Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, 'Rage Against the Machines Codebook and Replication Information', 2009, 4.
267 U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations', 2018, 7–9.
268 Ibid., 2–6.
269 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Arms Transfers Database', accessed 27 April 2020.
270 Previous version of the data by Högbladh, Pettersson, Themnér (2011).
271 Mihai Croicu et al., 'UCDP External Support Project - Disaggregated/Supporter Dataset Codebook, Version 1.0-2011', 2011, 8.

What distinguishes this definition of biased military interventions from militarised interstate dispute (MID)—a much researched outcome in conflict studies—is the one-directional use of force.[272] Whereas an MID is "a continuous conflictual interaction between or among states" and by definition dyadic in character, biased military interventions are unidirectional.[273] They "interpose a state directly into the conflict patterns occurring in another state" involving a breach of territorial sovereignty.[274] However, this political dispute in the target country might not have reached the threshold of armed conflict as is a necessary precondition for any study of outside support in civil wars. Further, intervention against a state or non-state target does not necessarily translate into support for the opposing faction. The Global Coalition against Daesh formed in 2014, for example, intervened against the so-called Islamic State in Syria without nominally supporting the governing Assad regime.[275]

Similarly, an intervention can target a sitting government without an armed opposition even having materialised that could benefit directly from it. Tillema's data on overt military intervention focuses on such hostile missions between 1945-1985, i.e. missions designed to oppose the sitting government, with a view to its potential to escalate to interstate war.[276] The Military Intervention by Powerful States (MIPS) dataset details all deployments of British, Chinese, French, Russian, or US forces with more than 500 personnel against a state or non-state actor between 1946-2003.[277] In both cases, a domestic dispute is not a pre-condition and, if present, aggression against the target does not necessarily equal support for the opposing faction.

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[272] Pickering and Kisangani, 'The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars'. For data on militarised interstate disputes, see Zeev Maoz et al., 'The Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) Dataset Version 3.0: Logic, Characteristics, and Comparisons to Alternative Datasets', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 3 (2019): 811–35.

[273] Maoz et al., 'The Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) Dataset Version 3.0: Logic, Characteristics, and Comparisons to Alternative Datasets', 814.

[274] Pearson and Baumann, 'International Military Intervention, 1946-1988 - Codebook', 1.

[275] The Global Coalition Against Daesh, 'Mission', accessed 13 January 2021; Richard Hanania, 'Worse than Nothing: Why US Intervention Made Government Atrocities More Likely in Syria', *Survival* 62, no. 5 (2020): 173–92.

[276] Tillema, 'Foreign Overt Military Intervention in the Nuclear Age'; Herbert K. Tillema, 'Foreign Overt Military Intervention in the Nuclear Age: A Clarification', *Journal of Peace Research* 26, no. 4 (1989): 419–20.

[277] For more information on the type of deployment included, see Table 2. Patricia L. Sullivan and Michael T. Koch, 'Military Intervention by Powerful States, 1945-2003', *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 5 (2009): 707–18.

Pickering and Kisangani's International Military Intervention (IMI) dataset updates Pearson and Baumann's initial version of the IMI data (1946-1988) to 2005.[278] It is the most comprehensive of the datasets on biased military intervention both in its temporal and geographic scope as well as with regard to the events it includes. In addition to hostile missions as described above, the IMI data includes missions actively supportive of the government as well as those that are neutral in character. These can include operations against non-state actors that the government is in a domestic dispute with or humanitarian interventions. Notably, intervention in support of the non-state opposition is also coded, albeit non-state recipients are not identified by name but treated as an aggregate. The data details the type and size of troops dispatched and distinguishes between seven types of intervention rationales: to protect economic, strategic, territorial, or diplomatic interests or a social group, to pursue non-state actors across borders or for humanitarian purposes.[279] Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago further build upon the IMI data to create a dataset of military coalition interventions between 1946-2001.[280]

Lastly, the UCDP Dyadic Dataset identifies all states that enter a conflict with troops to support the state or non-state opposition in an armed conflict between 1946-present.[281] Hostile missions as included in previously discussed datasets do not qualify since the focus is on actively supporting one side in a conflict. This also makes a conflict context a necessary precondition for observations to be considered. As this data enters the ESD as troop support, it will be discussed in more detail in that context.

The above presented datasets on biased military intervention are all limited to the deployment of troops. As such, they lack information on more indirect forms of support, which

[278] Pearson and Baumann, 'International Military Intervention, 1946-1988 - Codebook'; Pickering and Kisangani, 'The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars'.
[279] For more information on the type of troops included, see Table 2. Kisangani and Pickering, 'International Military Intervention, 1989-2005 - Codebook'.
[280] Ulrich Pilster, Tobias Böhmelt, and Atsushi Tago, 'Political Leadership Changes and the Withdrawal from Military Coalition Operations, 1946-2001', *International Studies Perspectives* 16, no. 4 (2015): 463–83.
[281] Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007'; Therése Pettersson, Stina Högbladh, and Magnus Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2018 and Peace Agreements', *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 4 (2019): 589–603.

are essential for the study of external military assistance short of troop deployment for combat purposes. The focus in these datasets is traditionally on hostile interventions against a foreign government, which is antithetical to military-to-military cooperation. What is more, in the case of supportive interventions, it does not necessarily link these to defeating a particular opponent. Except for the UCDP data, existing datasets code observations either independent of a conflict context and observations thus can occur at any time or the scope condition is insufficiently specified (cf. Table 1). Hence, the motivation for such interventions varies beyond the purpose of exerting influence on conflict dynamics which lies at the core of this study as well as the wider research paradigm on third-party intervention into civil wars.[282] The datasets introduced in the following sections include information on measures short of troop deployment and introduce some scope conditions that render them more useful for the study of external support to civil wars.

Data on External Support to Civil Wars

A founding figure in the study of third-party intervention, Regan's Third Party Intervention Data (TPI) opened up a new field of enquiry in conflict research.[283] Regan et al. (2009) merges and updates Regan's 2002 data on military and economic interventions with Regan and Aydin's 2006 data on diplomatic intervention, creating the broadest intervention dataset available to this day.[284] It holds information on six types of military, six types of economic, and six types of diplomatic support during civil war coded at the monthly level between 1944-1999. Regan and Meachum further expand this data to "periods of political instability" during which states are at high risk of

[282] Regan, 'Interventions into Civil Wars: A Retrospective Survey with Prospective Ideas'.
[283] Regan, 'Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts'; Regan, 'Choosing to Intervene: Outside Interventions in Internal Conflicts'; Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*. For an account of how this research shaped the field, see Regan, 'Interventions into Civil Wars: A Retrospective Survey with Prospective Ideas'.
[284] Regan, Frank, and Aydin, 'Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset'; Regan, 'Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts'; Regan and Aydin, 'Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars'.

civil war, allowing for analyses of third-party intervention in pre-war contexts.[285] Table 2 details the support types included in the respective datasets and allows for direct comparisons.

Conjointly, the datasets created by Regan and co-authors provide an unprecedented level of detail such as on the intervention date and size, the goals the intervention aims to achieve, and its success in doing so. The downside of such ambitious scope lies in the limitation to more formalised and highly visible types of support such as troops, naval forces, air support, and sanctions regimes (cf. Table 2). Inevitably, such a broad focus creates larger numbers of incomplete information e.g. on intervention size and increases the risk of false negatives in the data, i.e. cases that were missed due to the sheer range of cases that needed looking out for. Aside from concerns about the quality of the data, its main disadvantage lies in the time series expiring in 1999—just short of a decade after the end of the Cold War. As such, Regan et al.'s 2009 data lacks information on more current cases of interest here and complicates research into post-Cold War patterns of external support. To mitigate this shortcoming, Sousa has extended the data for the period 2000-2010, but the information is limited to conflicts located on the African continent.[286]

The Non-State Actor (NSA) Data provides information on external support for conflict dyads between 1946-2010—despite its name for both state and non-state actors.[287] With its novel data on rebel group characteristics, it has paved the way for some ground-breaking research including in the field of external involvement in civil wars, notably delegation to rebel groups.[288] Yet, the four rather crude types of support (cf. Table 2), of which only the highest level is stated for each supporter, limit the types of analysis this data enables. Jones' Insurgency Database (ID)

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[285] Regan and Meachum, 'Data on Interventions during Periods of Political Instability', 127. For an example of the application of this data, see Jungmoo Woo, 'Oil Export, External Prewar Support for the Government, and Civil Conflict Onset', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 513–26.
[286] Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010'.
[287] David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, 'Non-State Actors in Civil Wars: A New Dataset', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30, no. 5 (2013): 516–31.
[288] Idean Salehyan, 'No Shelter Here: Rebel Sanctuaries and International Conflict', *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (2008): 54–66; Salehyan, 'The Delegation of War to Rebel Organizations'; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham, 'Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups'; Sullivan and Karreth, 'The Conditional Impact of Military Intervention on Internal Armed Conflict Outcomes'; Ryan Grauer and Dominic Tierney, 'The Arsenal of Insurrection: Explaining Rising Support for Rebels', *Security Studies* 27, no. 2 (2018): 263–95.

mitigates this last shortcoming at least on the rebel side by distinguishing between different types of direct and indirect support rebels waging an insurgency between 1946-2012 receive (cf. Table 2). However, on the government side, only combat support is recorded and it fails to identify external supporters by name.

Both datasets further lack variation over time: the NSA dataset provides information on external support for a respective conflict spell—a varying time unit defined by the authors during which variables are believed to remain constant for a given conflict dyad—and the ID only once per insurgency. When annualised, this leads to little to no variation in observations over time and in some cases, support is assumed to be constant where other datasets suggest it is not necessarily. While similar in its inclusion criteria for state and non-state supporters and recipients, the ESD provides a more complete and considerably more detailed account of external support for the period it covers than the NSA or ID datasets. The study of external military assistance short of troop deployment is rendered (near-)impossible, due to the use of all-encompassing categories such as 'military support' or the focus on combat support to governments only.

The Non-State Armed Groups Dataset (NAG) focuses on support to non-state actors only.[289] In return, it allows a long observation period from 1922-2010 as well as detailed classification of support by type, similar to the one the ESD uses (cf. Table 2). While both the NAG and the ESD datasets specify each supporter and type of assistance provided, the NAG only considers support by foreign governments,[290] whereas the ESD provides information on external support by states and non-state actors.[291] The NAG is unique in its distinction between support that was volunteered and extracted involuntarily (*de facto support*) and includes information on

[289] San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*; San-Akca, 'Dangerous Companions: Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups (NAGs) Codebook v. April 2015'; Belgin San-Akca, 'Supporting Non-State Armed Groups: A Resort to Illegality?', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009): 589–613.
[290] According to the Dangerous Companions website, an update including support from a range of non-state supporters is planned. See Belgin San-Akca, 'NAGs - Dangerous Companions | Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups', 2015.
[291] Actors needs to be listed in the UCDP Actor List to qualify as a potential supporter. The list can be accessed at https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/index.html#actor.

political support, such as hosting "a physical office which does not command the violent activities of the organisation or headquarters to spread propaganda and raise funds, not necessarily directed towards violence."[292] These are activities not typically included in the ESD since support needs to be intentional and with a military purpose. While it is the closest match to the ESD with regard to support to rebel groups, the NAG dataset is unsuitable for the analysis at hand due to the sheer lack of information on military-to-military assistance.

An early prototype of this type of data is the list of insurgencies with outside support that Byman et al. compile for the period 1991-2000. While instances of military, economic, and political support qualify for inclusion, they are not kept apart in the presentation of the data, making it difficult to specifically identify cases of military support. A similar focus on insurgencies as the unit of analysis can be found in an original dataset Lyall and Wilson compile for a paper on the role of mechanisation in counterinsurgency wars.[293] It details information on whether an insurgency made use of a neighbouring state's territory or received material support including both military and economic aid. Covering the period from 1800-2005 it is by far the dataset with the longest time span. Yet, it is time-invariant, provides no information on the identity of the supporter, and remains silent on external support to states. As such, both these data collection efforts are equally as unsuitable for the purposes of this project as is the NAG.

Data on Military Aid

Akin to the dispersion of economic aid, governments provide military aid to foreign states. In contrast to economic aid, military aid refers to monetary or otherwise material support to "programs primarily for the benefit of recipient government armed forces, or aid which subsidises or substantially enhances military capability."[294] This aid frequently includes training and equipment

[292] San-Akca, 'Dangerous Companions: Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups (NAGs) Codebook v. April 2015', 28.
[293] Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, 'Rage against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars', *International Organization* 63, no. 1 (2009): 67–106.
[294] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations', 7.

for foreign armed forces or the financing thereof. As such, it would be a suitable measure of external military assistance. Unfortunately, precise data on military aid is hard to come by. The only country that provides detailed accounts of its yearly spending on military aid to recipient states is the United States.

The US Overseas Loans and Grants (Greenbook) holds information on yearly economic and military assistance from 1946-present (cf. Table 2).[295] While the funding agency and account listed provide some clues as to the nature of the military assistance, e.g. "International Military Education and Training" refers to training expenses whereas "Excess Defense Articles" refers to the provision of discounted military equipment, it is impossible to discern what kind of support was granted exactly.[296] Due to its comparatively high reliability and rare information on the scale of support, it has found much application in recent studies on the effects of military aid.[297]

Unfortunately, it reproduces the tendency to study US foreign policy as opposed to broadening the focus to include other countries' foreign policies.[298] This is particularly problematic where the research interest lies in a comparison of the characteristics of supporters or the consequences of all foreign interference on the ground. This is also the reason why this data is unsuitable for the research project at hand that aims to draw inferences about the effects of external military assistance by a range of different supporters.

The SIPRI Arms Transfer Database lists all official transfers of major conventional weapons from 1950-present.[299] As such, it is a valuable source for coding weapons and equipment

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[295] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations'.
[296] Ibid., 7.
[297] Sullivan, Tessman, and Li, 'US Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation'; Boutton, 'Of Terrorism and Revenue: Why Foreign Aid Exacerbates Terrorism in Personalist Regimes'; Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'; Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.
[298] See, for example, James M. Scott, *Deciding to Intervene: The Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); Mullenbach and Matthews, 'Deciding to Intervene: An Analysis of International and Domestic Influences on United States Interventions in Intrastate Disputes'; Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'. For a discussion of this bias, see Jeff D. Colgan, 'American Perspectives and Blind Spots on World Politics', *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 3 (2019): 300–309.
[299] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Arms Transfers Database'.

support (cf. Table 2) and was used to compile data for the ESD. Yet small arms and illicit transfers of weapons which constitute nearly all arms transfers to non-state actors and an important segment of those to states are not included. Further, from the information listed in the database alone, it is impossible to discern if arms transfers were part of a regular arms sale or long-standing agreements on military capacity building or specifically targeted at helping warring parties gain the upper hand in a conflict. Given the focus on one type of support only, it further runs short of capturing all cases of external military assistance and lacks information on training, for example. Therefore, it is equally ill-suited for the analysis at hand.

Other Related Datasets

Also noteworthy in the context of foreign interference more broadly are datasets on conflict management, including, most importantly, on mediation and peacekeeping missions.[300] The International Conflict Management (1945-2003) dataset,[301] the Civil Wars Mediation (CWM) Dataset (1946-2011),[302] the UCDP Managing Intrastate Low-Intensity Conflict (MILC) Dataset (1993-2004),[303] and the UCDP Managing Intrastate Conflict (MIC) Dataset (1993-2007)[304] covering Africa only provide information on a range of conflict management tools, such as arbitration, facilitation of talks, fact finding missions, dispatch of permanent observers or peacekeeping operations. The latter are also accounted for in several specialised datasets including both UN and non-UN peacekeeping missions.[305] Due to the clearly delimited nature and high visibility of such

[300] These datasets are not summarised in Table 1 because of their considerable differences to datasets on external military support. They merely provide a point of comparison.
[301] Jacob Bercovitch, 'International Conflict Management 1945-1995: Official Codebook for the International Conflict Management Dataset', 2002; Jacob Bercovitch and Judith Fretter, *Regional Guide to International Conflict and Management from 1945 to 2003* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004).
[302] Karl DeRouen and Jacob Bercovitch, 'Trends in Civil War Mediation', in *Peace and Conflict 2012*, ed. J. Joseph Hewitt et al. (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2012); Karl DeRouen, Jacob Bercovitch, and Paulina Pospieszna, 'Introducing the Civil Wars Mediation (CWM) Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 5 (2011): 663–72.
[303] Erik Melander, Frida Möller, and Magnus Öberg, 'Managing Intrastate Low-Intensity Armed Conflict 1993-2004: A New Dataset', *International Interactions* 35, no. 1 (2009): 58–85.
[304] Mihai Croicu et al., 'Mediation and Violence: Searching for Third Party Intervention That Matters.', Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, 3-6 April, 2013.
[305] Virginia P. Fortna, 'Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War', *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2004): 269–92; Nicholas Sambanis and Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl, 'UN and Non-UN Peace Operations', in *Multilateralism and Security Institutions in an Era of Globalization*, ed. Dimitris Bourantonis, Kostas Ifantis, and Panagiotes I. Tsakonas (London: Routledge, 2008); Mark J Mullenbach, 'Third-Party Peacekeeping in Intrastate Disputes, 1946-2012: A New Data Set', *The Midsouth Political Science Review* 14 (2013): 103–33; Chris Perry and Adam C. Smith, 'Trends in Uniformed Contribution to UN Peacekeeping: A New Dataset,

missions, the data can be provided in more disaggregated form, including exact dates, reliable listing of contributors, and troop strengths. Due to its often clandestine nature, this is not the case for external military support.

The information in these types of datasets is of limited use for the questions at hand, however. Mediation does not qualify as external support due to its non-partisan character, lack of material assistance, and required approval on both sides. As such, it is distinct from the phenomenon the ESD aims to capture. While the ESD includes a few UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) and other multilateral initiatives, such as NATO's Resolute Support Mission (RS) in Afghanistan, it is the exception. Only missions with mandates to support governments in their battle against an insurgency and where peacekeepers use force in pursuit of such goals are included. This is usually only the case for missions with robust mandates, such as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) or the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).[306]

Besides a move towards greater temporal disaggregation, researchers studying the role of third parties in conflict have also begun to collect and analyse data at the subnational level.[307] Following a broader trend in International Relations research, this type of data allows for the exploration of spatial variation within conflict-countries and can present unique opportunities for improved identification strategies.[308] Unfortunately, this type of data is usually highly classified or not reported at all when it comes to external support.

1991-2012', Providing for Peacekeeping No. 3 (New York, NY: International Peace Institute, 2013); Corinne Bara and Lisa Hultman, 'Just Different Hats? Comparing UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping', *International Peacekeeping* 27, no. 3 (2020): 341–68.

[306] Mats Berdal, 'The State of UN Peacekeeping: Lessons from Congo', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 5 (2018): 721–50; Arthur Boutellis, 'Can the UN Stabilize Mali? Towards a UN Stabilization Doctrine?', *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 4, no. 1 (2015): 1–16.

[307] Andrea Ruggeri, Han Dorussen, and Theodora-Ismene Gizelis, 'Winning the Peace Locally: UN Peacekeeping and Local Conflict', *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (2017): 163–85; Deniz Cil et al., 'Mapping Blue Helmets: Introducing the Geocoded Peacekeeping Operations (Geo-PKO) Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 57, no. 2 (2020): 360–70.

[308] Dube and Naidu, 'Bases, Bullets and Ballots: The Effect of U.S. Military Aid on Political Conflict in Colombia'.

3.3 An Update of the UCDP External Support Dataset

The previous discussion of available datasets demonstrates the wealth of data collection efforts in the field. While there are many datasets to choose from, none of them offers an exact match on the data requirements of this thesis: a global cross-sectional time-series dataset on the type and size of external military assistance by foreign states that precedes the end of the Cold War and runs until the present time. All introduced datasets have limitations on at least one of these dimensions as the comparison presented in Table 3 shows. Taken the strengths and weaknesses of all datasets into account, the ESD emerges as the most viable candidate for this research project. It is global in scope and allows for a distinction between weapons, matériel, and training as well as other types of support. Most importantly, it provides detailed information on military-to-military cooperation for all potential supporters and recipients of such assistance.

Table 3: Comparison of Most-Widely Used Datasets on External Support

Characteristic	**IMI**	**TPI**	**NSA**	**NAG**	**ESD**
global coverage	✔	(✔)	✔	✔	✔
time-varying (yearly or less)	✔	✔	✘	✔	✔
time span >2011	✘	✘	✘	✘	✔
time span <1975	✔	✔	✔	✔	✘
conflict criterion (25 BRD or less)	✔	✘	✔	✔	✔
state supporter	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
identified by name	✔	✔	(✔)	✔	✔
non-state supporter	✘	(✔)	✔	✘	✔
identified by name	-	✔	✘	-	✔
state recipient	✔	✔	✔	✘	✔
non-state recipient	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
types of support	**3**	**18**	**5**	**10**	**10**

Its major shortcoming lies in the limited time span (1975-2009) previously available. This is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, for purely descriptive purposes, it lacks information on the most recent civil wars. Especially with an eye to policy relevance, an up-to-date version of the ESD provides a valuable resource for decision-makers on ongoing conflicts such as those currently fought in Afghanistan, DR Congo, Syria, and Yemen.

Secondly, there is evidence to suggest that patterns of support have changed over time. Grauer and Tierney show how great power competition, norms of national self-determination, and

processes of globalisation conspired to shape patterns of increasing external support to rebels from the 19th century onwards to the beginning of the 21st century. Since much of the Cold War era was characterised by proxy war dynamics and external support was seen as an outgrowth of superpower competition for influence in the Global South, it is of particular interest to examine whether external support remains a phenomenon to be reckoned with after the end of the Cold War: How does the systemic change from a bipolar system to a "unipolar moment"[309] and the emergence of a multipolar world order affect external support patterns?[310]

The economic rise of China together with Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa in the 1990s and 2000s hold the potential for large-scale interference both regionally and globally.[311] The international response to the Gulf War in 1991 further ushered in an era of multilateral military response to conflicts worldwide—a precursor to the coalitions built to counter terrorist threats in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. These global transformations render an analysis of external support in the post-Cold War era even more necessary.

Byman et al. were one of the first to inquire specifically into the state of external support in the post-Cold War environment. Documenting *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements* between 1991-2000, they concur that "[w]hile outside support for insurgencies has continued since the end of the Cold War, the dimensions and nature of this aid and the identity of the providers have changed significantly."[312] Grauer and Tierney identify a switch from a period of state aid (1946-1989) to non-state aid (1990-2011) for rebels heralded in by the end of the Cold War.[313] Byman, on the other hand, deplores the emergence of "new state sponsors" that, rather than

[309] Charles Krauthammer, 'The Unipolar Moment Revisited', *The National Interest* 70 (2002): 5.
[310] Pickering and Kisangani, 'The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars', 590. For an analysis of the effect of multipolarity, see, for example, Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson, 'Strategic Rivalries, Protracted Conflict, and Crisis Escalation', *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 3 (2002): 263–87.
[311] See, for example, Pádraig R. Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa : The Geopolitics of South-South Relations* (London; New York, NY: Zed Books, 2013).
[312] Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, 2.
[313] Grauer and Tierney, 'The Arsenal of Insurrection: Explaining Rising Support for Rebels', 268–69.

providing direct support, maintain a culture of impunity towards the activities of so-called "terrorists" in a 2008 policy paper.[314]

Although having received less systematic inquiry, there is reason to believe that patterns of external support to governments have equally been affected by the changes in the global system due to the end of the Cold War. It is this suspicion that prompted Pickering and Kisangani to update the IMI data. As they commemorate, "[t]he world has obviously changed since 1988, and the inclusion of data points from the 1990s and the first half of the present decade should improve our understanding of what the use of military force entails in the post-cold War era."[315]

The end of the Cold War is not the only systemwide change that demands attention in this context. Karlén points to a second inflection point: In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, support to governments increased drastically at the expense of non-state actors, likely for fear of reputational costs encountered by being seen as supporting 'terrorist groups.'[316] This suggests that in addition to comparing Cold War and post-Cold War environments, researchers would be well-advised to compare the period up to 2001 to the ensuing "Global War on Terrorism" unleashed by President Bush and continued by subsequent generations of US presidents.[317] The rise of ISIL to global prominence in 2014 with the escalation of violence in Iraq and, shortly after, in Syria further ushered in large-scale counterterrorism cooperation and presents a third potential inflection point.

Not only do we see a dramatic increase in the number of internationalised intrastate conflicts, i.e. civil wars with foreign troop support, over the last decade.[318] This number is further bound to increase substantially when considering other types of external support short of troop deployment as is documented by the ESD for the same period. In fact, with a view to military-to-

[314] Byman, 'The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism', ix.
[315] Pickering and Kisangani, 'The International Military Intervention Dataset: An Updated Resource for Conflict Scholars', 590.
[316] Niklas Karlén, 'Historical Trends in External Support in Civil Wars', in *SIPRI Yearbook 2016: Armaments, Disarmaments and International Security* (Stockholm; New York, NY: Almquist & Wiksell; Humanities Press, 2016).
[317] U.S. Department of State, 'The Global War on Terrorism: The First 100 Days', accessed 7 May 2020.
[318] Pettersson and Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2019'.

military cooperation, there is reason to believe that the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and the protracted wars that followed in each case led to a change in intervention patterns away from direct intervention towards an increased reliance on external military assistance (cf. Chapter 1).[319]

These changes in quantity and type of support and identity of supporter over time and particularly since the start of this century give rise to new lines of enquiry and render the availability of up-to-date data of central importance. An update of the ESD to 2017 allows for research not only into possible variation between the pre- and post-Cold War era, but also to systematically compare external support pre- and post-9/11, and to explore the proliferation of conflicts with substantial external interference from 2014 on. It is for these reasons that an extension of the ESD for the period 2010-2017 was deemed useful both for this research project and for use by the wider research community. With the update to 2017, the ESD reaches furthest into the present time out of all available datasets. Far from perfect, it still represents the best fit for the proposed research project. As such, it forms the empirical foundation of all three papers presented as part of this thesis (Chapters 4-6). The following section describes the data generation process in greater detail before offering descriptive statistics and visualisations of main trends in the data.

3.4 Scope of the Dataset

Universe of Cases

Since the focus lies on the occurrence of external support to warring parties in armed conflicts, the universe of cases consists of all pairs of states and states and non-state actors involved in active armed conflict (cf. Chapter 2). While several lists of armed conflicts exist, by far the most popular in conflict studies in recent years has been the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset

[319] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', 89–90.

identifying all instances of state-based inter- and intrastate conflict in the period 1946-present.[320] With its inclusion of all armed conflicts resulting in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year, it produces one of the most comprehensive civil war lists.

Ideally, one would hold information on external support to state (or non-state actors) during the entire time of their existence, independent of the crossing of an admittedly arbitrary threshold of battle intensity. Some data collection efforts have attempted to do just that but had to concede the range of supporters or recipients considered, e.g. by focusing on rebel groups only, by limiting data collection to US assistance only, or by reducing the time span covered.[321] But even if such data was feasibly collected on a more encompassing scale, analyses might still have to be restricted to conflict-years. Due to the heightened attention armed conflicts receive in research and practice, they have become a popular unit of analysis or at least scope condition and much of the related data used in conflict research is available for conflict-years only. As such, efforts to expand data on external support beyond the conflict context are only worthwhile to the extent that research projects do not primarily rely on further data sources tied to a civil war environment. Since this project is firmly situated in a civil war context, focusing on years with armed conflict is, if not always ideal, at least an appropriate limitation.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the triad-year. It denotes the external support a specific recipient, e.g. a state, fighting a specific non-state actor, e.g. a rebel group, received from a specific external supporter in a given year.[322] Each observation in the dataset thus holds information on a triad of *recipient*, *opponent*, and potential *external supporter*. For example, in 2017, Malaysia (*external supporter*)

[320] Nils P. Gleditsch et al., 'Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 5 (2002): 615–37; Pettersson, Högbladh, and Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2018 and Peace Agreements'.
[321] Regan and Meachum, 'Data on Interventions during Periods of Political Instability'; San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations'.
[322] For a discussion of the triadic data structure, also see San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*, 44.

provided training to the armed forces of the Philippines (*recipient*) to support them in their fight against the Abu-Sayaf Group (*opponent*) active on Mindanao, the Philippines' second largest island. This information can then be aggregated to the recipient-dyad-year, denoting the sum of support a given actor involved in a specific dyad received in a given year or, where appropriate, the actor- or country-year.

Outcome of Interest

To arrive at an operational definition of external support, both components of the term need further clarification. Beginning with the 'support' component, it refers to material assistance given *to* a warring party with the *intent* to "assist in an ongoing conflict."[323] This is crucial as it excludes i) support provided *unintentionally*, for example when weak states cannot deny rebels sanctuary on their territory, and ii) *indirect* measures taken that effectively weaken a warring party but are not designed to support the opposing side.[324]

A good example are US airstrikes against ISIL and al-Qaida-affiliated groups in Syria that began in 2014.[325] While such measures inevitably have the effect of strengthening the position of the unaffected side (the Syrian regime) vis-à-vis its opposition (ISIL and al-Qaida-affiliated groups), it does not constitute a case of an external party taking a side in a domestic conflict, in this case between the Syrian government and ISIL. The military activity against opposition groups is not conducted with the aim of strengthening the incumbent regime and hence does not enter the dataset.[326]

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323 Croicu et al., 'UCDP External Support Project - Disaggregated/Supporter Dataset Codebook, Version 1.0-2011', 5.

324 For data on unintentional support, see the NAG dataset. San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*.

325 Helene Cooper and Eric Schmitt, 'Airstrikes by U.S. and Allies Hit ISIS Targets in Syria', *The New York Times*, 22 September 2014; Nick Paton Walsh and Laura Smith-Spark, 'Report: Airstrikes Target New Islamist Group in Syria', *CNN*, 6 November 2014.

326 The United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and allied Arab intelligence services clandestinely supported more moderate rebel groups in their fight against the Syrian regime. This is included in the dataset as support to the Syrian insurgents. See Seymour M. Hersh, 'The Red Line and the Rat Line: Erdoğan and the Syrian Rebels', *London Review of Books* 36, no. 8 (2014).

Similarly, one can assume that the training and equipment Kurdish and Free Syrian Army forces received from the United States and its allies were useful not only in their fight against ISIL, but also found application in the armed opposition to the Syrian regime or at least freed up resources that could then be directed towards that purpose. Yet, the mandate of the train-and-equip programme was clear on the limited goal to help defeat ISIL and candidates were required to "sign a pledge to fight only ISIL and not the Assad regime."[327] Again, this does not represent a case of intentional and direct support as is necessary to qualify as external support in this context.[328]

The requirement that support needs to assist with the conduct of war further imposes a limitation on the type of support considered. Statements of support in front of international bodies (political support), offers to mediate (diplomatic support), or the provision of humanitarian assistance (economic aid), all can be expressions of a willingness to exert influence over a conflict and its consequences, but they do not constitute attempts to alter the balance of militarily relevant capabilities between warring parties. External support, as considered here, is just that: an active attempt to impact on the course of a conflict through the provision of material assistance with a military purpose. Of course, this definition does not come without grey zones, either. Funding in the form of economic aid, for example, can be employed to alleviate a humanitarian crisis or provide the necessary capital to buy weapons on the global market. Here, the supporter's intent is of importance again. Funding that is directly dispersed to the recipient's department of defence or credits granted to buy military equipment clearly indicate a military purpose, for example.

Lastly, support needs to be external, i.e. originating from outside the conflict context. For states, this is usually a simple distinction: All third-party states that do not declare an incompatibility with the opposing party themselves are considered external to the conflict.[329] In the context of civil

[327] Welch and Bailey, 'In Pursuit of Good Ideas: The Syria Train-And-Equip Program', 4.
[328] The clandestine CIA train-and-equip programme that ran in parallel qualifies as external support. See Hersh, 'The Red Line and the Rat Line: Erdoğan and the Syrian Rebels'.
[329] In the coding of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, for example, the United Kingdom and Australia are not included as external supporters of the United States since they declared an incompatibility with the government of Iraq. Therefore, they are considered warring parties in the conflict.

wars, this has so far meant all governments other than the one targeted by the armed opposition qualify as external.

At the same time, supporters cannot be too far removed to appear in the dataset: third parties providing material assistance to a state that is providing external support to a warring party is not included. France's recent decision to provide weapons to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, who themselves support the Hadi government forces in the Yemeni civil war with airpower, training, weapons, and funding since the beginning of the conflict in 2015, does not constitute external support by France according to this definition.[330]

Similarly, support that mainly aims at ensuring the upkeep of a coalition that then supports a warring party does not qualify, either. The funding Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari made available for the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), a regional alliance to fight Boko Haram, in 2015 is not counted as support to Cameroon in its respective fight against the Boko Haram insurgency, for example.[331] While this support to coalition efforts matters, of course, it often presents a commitment to coalition partners rather than recipient states. Focusing on the resources provided directly to warring parties further avoids overcounting resources on the ground.

The line between internal and external actors is altogether more difficult to draw in the case of non-state support. Non-state armed groups often act transnationally and target governments in more than one state.[332] They are considered external to the conflict (and thus qualify as potential external supporters), where they are not (and have not been) in an active conflict with the same government. For example, support by al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), originally an Algerian rebel group, to Ansar Dine, the Tuareg Islamist rebel group that emerged in northern Mali

[330] Patrick Wintour, 'UK, US and France May Be Complicit in Yemen War Crimes – UN Report', *The Guardian*, 3 September 2019.
[331] Africa Defense Forum, 'The Multinational Joint Task Force Shows the Strengths and Limits of Collective Security Action', 2018.
[332] Gleditsch, 'Transnational Dimensions of Civil War'; Idean Salehyan, *Rebels without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Jeffrey T. Checkel, *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Tamm, 'The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars'.

in 2011, does not qualify as external support, since AQIM later stated an incompatibility of its own with the Malian government and is actively fighting government forces. This differentiation between external and internal groups is a necessary step to distinguish between rebel groups joining forces against a common enemy, as can frequently be seen in large multi-player conflicts with shifting alliances—Syria is a case in point here—, and the insertion of material capabilities genuinely external to the conflict that would not have affected the balance of power had they not been provided by a third party.[333]

Pool of Potential Supporters

While the universe of potential recipients and opponents is defined by the armed conflict context, the question of who qualifies as a potential external supporter arises. This question bears on both the type of actors included, and the geographical scope of potential candidates considered. The range of conceivable actors is wide: states, international organisations, organised armed groups, diaspora networks, non-profit organisations (NPOs), and individuals all can—and have—taken an interest in conflict outcomes that has translated into the provision of material assistance. Yet, including all of them as potential external supporters is neither feasible nor desirable as will be discussed in the following.

Table 4 presents an overview of the types of potential actors. They can be distinguished by their ability and willingness to use violence and their state or non-state character. State actors, both violent and non-violent, can act on their own or as part of a larger structure.[334] With its focus on states and rebel groups as external supporters, the ESD draws from the category of (potentially) violent actors.

[333] For literature on the causes and effects of rebel alliances in civil wars, see, for example, Seden Akcinaroglu, 'Rebel Interdependencies and Civil War Outcomes', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 5 (2012): 879–903; Popovic, 'Inter-Rebel Alliances in the Shadow of Foreign Sponsors'; Gade et al., 'Networks of Cooperation: Rebel Alliances in Fragmented Civil Wars'.

[334] Non-state actors can also form alliances or organise joint initiatives, but do not typically provide external support multilaterally.

Table 4: Typology of Potential Supporters

	Non-state	State	
		Unilateral	Multilateral
Non-violent	Individuals, diaspora, refugee populations, NGOs, NPOs, companies, lobby groups	Political parties	IGOs, PKOs
Violent	Rebel groups, 'terrorist' organisations, organised crime	States	Formal and informal coalitions, robust PKOs

Especially the support provided by non-violent non-state actors, e.g. diaspora networks, non-governmental or non-profit organisations, and even individuals, poses theoretical and empirical problems for data collection and analysis.[335] Firstly, there is reason to believe that the support provided by non-violent non-state actors is often qualitatively different to the support militarised actors can provide. Apart from funding where differences manifest only in quantity and not in the quality of assistance, the majority of material assistance will not be as clearly military in character. Shelter granted by diaspora communities in a neighbouring state, for example, does not fulfil the same strategic function as a sanctuary in a rebel camp across the border.

Secondly, it is further helpful to limit the range of potential supporters simply for reasons of data collection feasibility. Non-violent non-state actors come in so many guises that they are difficult to identify comprehensively. In the form of charity donations or distributed through family networks, their contributions are difficult to trace. Few organisations have specialised on monitoring such transfers. Here, the risk of missing a lot of the relevant instances of external support leading to false negatives is particularly high. Given that these support structures are less visible and likely to include fewer instances of military support compared to state and armed group support, the additional effort and potential for error do not seem justified.[336]

For the analyses proposed in the three papers put forward in this thesis, only support by foreign states is considered. This primarily reflects the research interest of this thesis in state-to-state cooperation in the context of civil wars. But it is also in line with the above stated assumptions

[335] Intergovernmental organisations pose less of a problem since in these cases support can usually be attributed to individual states.
[336] For a discussion of support by non-violent non-state actors, see, for example, Miller and Ritter, 'Emigrants and the Onset of Civil War'; Petrova, 'What Matters Is Who Supports You: Diaspora and Foreign States as External Supporters and Militants' Adoption of Nonviolence'.

about the qualitative and quantitative difference of material assistance offered and includes a risk of potential measurement error that is considered more acceptable. The total amount of external military assistance, i.e. weapons, equipment, and training, provided by non-state armed groups to state militaries is further extremely small (cf. Figure 7, Chapter 3). In most cases, this will not represent a more consolidated effort at "building partner capacity" or to "train and equip" less sophisticated armed forces, but isolated instances of weapons procurement or strategic advice by informants.[337] The ESD, however, includes support from both state and non-state armed groups and can thus be used for research projects with a different focus.[338]

Even a focus on states as external supporters does not come without its challenges. For one, 'the state' is not a monolithic actor. Rather, it represents a theoretical construct that encompasses a variety of actors and interests. It is not uncommon for parts of the bureaucratic apparatus that makes up a state to act without the knowledge or consent of the rest of the state in the realm of external support. Prominent candidates are the military, intelligence agencies, or political parties taking matters into their own hands (cf. Table 4).

These independent actions can lead to seemingly nonsensical observations in the dataset: The Pakistani government, for example, is a long-term ally of the United States in the 'Global War on Terror' launched in 2001 against al-Qaida and the Afghan Taleban. Yet, reports of Pakistan's military-controlled intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate, fostering close ties to the Taleban abound.[339] That in the context of conflict the military can step out of the government's shadow and impose its own preferences on foreign or domestic security policy even in (nominally) civilian-led regimes is the premise of the argument made in the first paper

[337] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', 90–92.
[338] Only non-state armed groups listed in the UCDP Actor List are considered. It includes all actors involved in state-based (1946-present) or non-state conflict (1989-present) or those committing one-sided violence (1989-present) in the periods for which data is collected. The list can be accessed at https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/index.html#actor.
[339] Tariq M. Ashraf, 'Taming the ISI: Implications for Pakistan's Stability and the War on Terrorism', *Terrorism Monitor* 6, no. 20 (2008): 1–6; Matt Waldman, 'The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents', Crisis States Discussion Papers No. 18, LSE Development Studies Institute, London, 2010.

(Chapter 4). It is thus possible that the same country is listed as a supporter of opposing sides in a civil war, indicating parts of the regime acting at least nominally independent of each other.[340]

With regard to geographical scope, is has been argued that only those states that make up a conflict-country's "politically relevant group" should be considered as potential supporters.[341] These include countries that are geographically contiguous, i.e. neighbouring states, and major powers that are likely to exert influence beyond neighbouring states.[342] This procedure has a rich tradition in the literature on interstate war, where identifying politically relevant dyads helps the selection of cases to analyse.[343] The basic notion behind this limitation is that not all pairs of states are realistic conflict dyads: For example, Papua New Guinea and Swaziland are unlikely to enter into an interstate conflict with each other for various reasons spanning from geography to national interests to military capacity. Listing each pair of possible state dyads does not only increase the coding effort dramatically, it also potentially skews results. As Lemke points out, "relevant dyads matter because they compromise the correct referent group, and thus function as a true control group, against which war dyads are compared."[344] They represent those cases that might have reasonably had the outcome of interest.

In the context of external support, this approach poses some serious limitations, however. Firstly, in contrast to interstate war that requires the deployment of troops or sophisticated air or naval capabilities, external support includes the provision of more indirect forms of support such as funding or weapons. While we would still expect neighbouring states and those with regional or global ambitions to take on a more active role (cf. Chapter 2), there is no conclusive theoretical or

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[340] Where sub-state actors clearly act without the consent of the ruling government, support was coded in a separate category denoting support by "elements of" the state. This was not done where support was likely provided with at least implicit permission of the ruling government, but such consent publicly denied.
[341] San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*, 46–47.
[342] Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, 'Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946–1986', *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (1993): 624–38. Maoz adds pairs of states that share a colonial or imperial past and San-Akca regional powers to this list, see Zeev Maoz, *Domestic Sources of Global Change* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 122–23; San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups*, 46.
[343] Douglas Lemke and William Reed, 'The Relevance of Politically Relevant Dyads', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 1 (2001): 126–44.
[344] Douglas Lemke, 'The Tyranny of Distance: Redefining Relevant Dyads', *International Interactions* 21, no. 1 (1995): 29.

empirical evidence to suggest external support from states outside this group is negligible.[345] It would, for example, exclude much of the support the United States receives in its fight against al-Qaida or Afghanistan in its conflict with the Taleban. Here, small and middle powers from across the globe provide vital support.

Secondly, case selection poses a problem primarily for the analysis of the decision to intervene. Here, it might be problematic to compare Eritrea's decision to regularly interfere in Ethiopia's intrastate conflicts since the late 1980s with Uruguay's decision not to take such measures regarding the Ethiopian conflicts. When it comes to analysing the effect of external support on conflict dynamics, as this thesis intends to, it is important that all support that was provided is accounted for regardless of its geographic origins. This makes it not at the least a question of research design. Lastly, statistical methods are available to counteract the overrepresentation of highly unlikely cases such as rare events logistical regression and Heckman selection models. It is for those reasons, that the universe of potential state supporters comprises all states.

In summary, the ESD provides information on cases of the direct and intentional provision of militarily relevant assistance from states or armed non-state actors external to the conflict to warring parties in an armed conflict. These include all inter- and intrastate conflicts active between 1975-2017. Information is provided at the triad-year level for both state and non-state recipients. The following section describes how information was coded for each triad of potential external supporter, recipient, and armed opposition.

[345] The only empirical evidence presented to this effect comes from Lemke and Reed who find that measurement error and selection bias from analysing politically relevant pairs only do not substantively affect estimates of interstate conflict. They do not provide evidence that analysing all cases inadvertently affects results, however. See Lemke and Reed, 'The Relevance of Politically Relevant Dyads'.

3.5 Data Collection

The data collection for the ESD update was conducted between December 2018 and March 2020. I personally coded all new or altered observations. The majority of the observations describing troop support further stem from the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1, which includes secondary warring support, i.e. combat troops being sent to assist a warring party in the conflict. Yet, the detailed case research at times revealed previously undetected cases of troop support that then entered the ESD and will be included in the next version of the UCDP Dyadic Dataset, version 21.1. The proposed additions and changes were reviewed by Niklas Karlén (Swedish Defence University), Therése Pettersson (UCDP), and Mihai Croicu (Uppsala University).

Sampling Strategy

Albeit all attempts at compiling a complete dataset, the ESD remains a sample, and strictly speaking a convenience sample as such. It can neither claim to document all cases of external support (population), nor are the cases included necessarily representative of the larger population as a random sampling strategy could ensure. Rather, it is a collection of known cases of external support to civil war parties. It should be noted that most datasets in the study of International Relations represent such inevitably error-prone attempts at depicting the true population of a phenomenon and that a considerable amount of research in the field would be rendered impossible without such tries. Therefore, the approach chosen here is by far no exception. Even when choosing a random sampling strategy, there is no guarantee that full information is available for the selected cases. Necessarily, any such data collection project represents the best effort to capture a phenomenon that is highly politicised and shrouded in secrecy and as such inherently difficult to measure. Yet, many pressing questions in conflict studies and beyond rely on data such as the one compiled in the ESD. In the end, it is a pragmatic choice and requires transparency about the sources of uncertainty and prudence when drawing inferences from results based on such data. At the very least, the ESD provides some improvements to previously used datasets until more appropriate data sources are available.

Sources

The dataset was coded using open-source material. For each warring party, i.e. state armed forces and non-state armed groups, an initial English-language search using the Google search engine was conducted with the name of the actor (and if necessary, variations thereof) and keywords such as 'weapons,' 'training,' 'funding,' safe-haven,' intelligence,' 'information-sharing,' 'support,' or 'backing.' Depending on the main working language(s) in conflict-countries and potential external supporters, searches were also conducted in German and French.[346]

With the given resources, it proved impossible to conduct a systematic search for each type of support plus its various synonyms for each warring party (let alone each potential supporter). However, first indications of support usually materialised quickly, and further research revealed other types of support or novel supporters. Where this search strategy detected no indication of support or alternatively affirmations that support was absent at all, I checked individually for support from the most likely supporters: great powers, former colonial powers, allies, and neighbouring states to minimise the risk of false negatives as much as possible.

While I used a broad range of online sources to identify potential instances of external support as defined above, the reports need to be corroborated by a credible source to enter the dataset.[347] These include newspaper articles from quality news outlets, e.g. The Guardian, The New York Times, Deutsche Welle, Al Jazeera, Le Monde, policy briefs from recognised institutions, e.g. Council on Foreign Relations, Chatham House, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, official government outputs such as reports, press releases or websites, reports by non-governmental organisations, e.g. Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group, and Amnesty International, and IGOs, e.g. UN bodies, as well as academic sources such as peer-reviewed journal

[346] As noted above, troop support is systematically scanned for in the compilation of the UCPD Dyadic Dataset and was not separately searched for in the process of updating the ESD.
[347] For an observation to be included, at least one of the sources that describes external support must have no discernible self-interest in such claims. If, for example, only government sources of the targeted state report external support to its opponent and no other source validates this claim, it is not included. If other sources report the claim, but have doubts about its accuracy, it is coded as alleged support.

articles and books. I made use of both the libraries of the University of Oxford and Uppsala University for research on historical cases of support.

To achieve maximum comparability over time, serial publications were given special consideration. Changes in support over the years are more likely to register in these recurring descriptions of support that apply the same criteria year after year. Therefore, all available annual US State Department Country Reports on Terrorism from 2007-2018 were scanned for relevant information. They provide information on US counterterrorism partners and any joint initiatives, list countries designated as "state sponsors of terrorism," and provide a profile for each designated "foreign terrorist organization" including a section on funding and external aid.[348]

The annual reports by UN Panels of Experts reporting to the respective UN Sanctions Committees further yield valuable insights.[349] They monitor the procurement of arms and violations of arms embargoes for both state and non-state actors depending on the mandate. A list of all Sanctions Committees from which reports were consulted can be found in Table 11, Appendix A. For (combat and non-combat) troop contributions to multilateral operations, the annual International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Military Balance assessment was consulted for the years 2010-2018.[350] For the countries for which it was available, irregularly published reports by Conflict Armament Research and Small Arms Survey were screened.[351] The long-ranging entries in the SIPRI Arms Transfer Database on (registered) global arms transfers and the Security Assistance Monitor for US spending on security assistance per country further proved helpful in identifying trends and substantiating unverified reports.[352]

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348 U.S. Department of State, 'Country Reports on Terrorism 2018', 2019, 5. The reports can be accessed at https://www.state.gov/country-reports-on-terrorism/.
349 The reports can be accessed at https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/information.
350 See, for example, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 'The Military Balance', vol. 119 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).
351 For example, the Small Arms Survey runs the website The Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan (HSBA) with regular publications on external support to the warring parties in Sudanese and South Sudanese conflicts. Small Arms Survey, 'Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan', accessed 6 May 2020.
352 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Arms Transfers Database'; Security Assistance Monitor, 'Data', accessed 6 May 2020.

Where this multi-step process of research and triangulation did not yield reliable results, I further compared the coding of cases to support to armed actors described in the profiles of the Big, Allied, and Dangerous (BAAD) Database,[353] the Mapping Militants Project (MMP),[354] the Australian government's listed terrorist organisations,[355] the Dangerous Companions project,[356] and UCDP's own conflict encyclopaedia.[357] Where inconsistencies could not be resolved, further in-depth case research was conducted using academic sources.

As a result, each newly added or edited observation is supported by at least one reference, which might hold information for several entries (over time or across cases). Where no single reference provided all necessary details for inclusion in the dataset, further references were added that jointly make a strong case for inclusion of an observation. Specifically, to demonstrate the actors' intent, this was often necessary.

Coding of Observations

The dataset records the following ten types of external support:

i. troops
ii. access to infrastructure/joint operations
iii. weapons
iv. matériel/logistics
v. training/expertise
vi. funding
vii. intelligence
viii. access to territory
ix. other support
x. unknown support

[353] Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, 'Big Allied and Dangerous Dataset Version 2', 2015.
[354] Stanford University, 'Mapping Militant Organizations', accessed 4 May 2020.
[355] Department of Home Affairs, 'Listed Terrorist Organisations', accessed 4 May 2020.
[356] San-Akca, 'NAGs - Dangerous Companions | Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups'.
[357] Please note that these sources were used for comparison only and not as references for observations that entered the dataset (except for the UCDP encyclopaedia for which references for entries are stored in the system). It is of course possible that the primary sources used for the profiles were also used as references for this dataset. Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia', accessed 4 May 2020.

Table 5 provides a brief description of each of the categories. For more information on the specific measures that are included or excluded under each category, a detailed coding sheet is included in Table 12, Appendix A.

Table 5: Short Description of External Support Types

Troops An external supporter sends combat troops to fight alongside a primary warring party. This is the most invasive type of support and corresponds to the secondary warring support in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset.[358]
Access to infrastructure/joint operations An external supporter allows a warring party to use its own military infrastructure, e.g. bases, intelligence gathering stations, or conducts joint operations such as border patrols and joint intelligence operations. Note that this category denotes considerable cooperation short of combat support (cf. troop support).
Weapons An external supporter provides weapons or ammunition to a warring party on conciliatory terms or through non-conventional channels, e.g. as donations or in violations of an arms embargo.
Matériel/Logistics An external supporter provides non-weaponry equipment with a military purpose to a warring party on conciliatory terms, e.g. communication technology, medical supplies, vehicles, building material, or assists with logistics, e.g. troop transports, running of field hospitals or maintenance work.
Training/Expertise An external supporter provides training (in situ or on the supporter's territory) to members of a warring party, sends military experts at headquarter level, or otherwise makes available technical know-how.
Funding An external supporter provides any form of economic aid to a warring party destined to fund waging the armed conflict.
Intelligence An external supporter provides a warring party with intelligence material, e.g. maps, satellite imagery, information on troop capability.
Access to territory An external supporter allows a warring party to use territory under its control, e.g. to set up bases, for cross-border raids or as sanctuary.
Other Support An external supporter provides material assistance with direct bearing on the waging of armed conflict to a warring party which does not fit any of the previous categories, e.g. intermediating the transfer of weapons.
Unknown Support An external supporter provides material assistance of unspecified type to a warring party.

[358] Croicu et al., 'UCDP External Support Project - Disaggregated/Supporter Dataset Codebook, Version 1.0-2011', 17.

If any of the above types of support is identified, the overall measure for external support is set to 1, indicating external support in a given year. Ideally, sources specify the type and duration of support in addition to supporter and recipient. In keeping with previous coding decisions, references to external support without specified supporter or recipient were not included. Where the type of support was underspecified, the category 'unknown support' was chosen. Hence each observation with external support has at least one of the subtypes of support coded as present.

Support terminates when no account confirms support for a given year. Where support continues at a near future point in time, a discretionary decision is taken whether the absence of documentation of support in the respective year is likely to represent a true change in support or an artefact of the data generation process, e.g. the conflict not receiving the same amount of media attention anymore. In these cases, a separate search for any indication of change in or termination of support was conducted.

When reports ascribe the provision of support to a sub-state actor, e.g. an intelligence organisation or a regional administration, the dataset distinguishes between cases where the actions of the sub-state actor are, according to all available information, likely to be condoned by the government, but such approval is publicly denied, and those where the government does not sanction the provision of support but is for some reason unable to enforce this policy. In the former case, support is coded as regular (or alleged) state support, but there might be support coded to both sides if the substate actor supports a different side to the one the government officially supports. In the latter case, support is coded as 'elements of' the state in question providing assistance.

All efforts were made to confirm (or refute) each claim of external support, however, this was not always conclusive. Where it was impossible to confirm support with any credible reference, but allegations of such support were widespread and influential, they were added as 'alleged support.' This is by definition a backup category and the use of this data should include further

research into the cases listed thereunder. Yet, it allowed the inclusion of some much-discussed, but hard to prove cases whose non-inclusion seemed equally problematic.

3.6 Description of the External Support Dataset

Thanks to the detailed information on type of supporter, support, and recipient the ESD holds, it yields itself to a variety of inquiries. This section briefly describes the structure of the dataset and the units of analysis that it can be transformed into, depending on the research interest. It then presents descriptive statistics based on the data. These provide an opportunity to explore trends in the provision of external support in general and external military assistance in particular.

3.6.1 Structure of the Dataset

The universe of cases is defined by the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1, a dyad-year version of the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset 18.1.[359] For each year, it lists all dyads of states and state or non-state opponents involved in an active conflict. Table 6 displays a simplified representation of the data structure in the UCDP Dyadic dataset 18.1.

Table 6: UCDP Dyadic Data Structure (simplified representation)

Year	Side A	Side B	Dyad	Conflict
2013	Government of Pakistan	TTP	Government of Pakistan – TTP	Pakistan
2013	Government of Pakistan	Lashkar-e-Islam	Government of Pakistan – LeI	Pakistan

This baseline dataset is then expanded into directed dyad-years, i.e. each side B is added as a new actor so that both side A and side B involved in a dyad have a separate row in the dataset (with the same dyad identifier) and external support to either can be noted. Table 7 provides a simplified representation of the structure of the dataset. If more than one third party supports a warring party in a given year, as is for example the case for the Taleban Movement of Pakistan (TTP), a new row is added for every additional supporter. If a warring party receives no support in

[359] Gleditsch et al., 'Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset'; Pettersson, Högbladh, and Öberg, 'Organized Violence, 1989–2018 and Peace Agreements'.

a given year, it remains in the dataset with one observation displaying a zero on the external support variable (and the subtype variables), e.g. Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) in Table 7.

Table 7: ESD Data Structure (simplified representation)

Year	Actor	Dyad	Conflict	Ext. Supporter	Ext. Support
2013	Government of Pakistan	Government of Pakistan – TTP	Pakistan	United States	1
2013	TTP	Government of Pakistan – TTP	Pakistan	Al-Qaida	1
2013	TTP	Government of Pakistan – TTP	Pakistan	IMU	1
2013	Government of Pakistan	Government of Pakistan – LeI	Pakistan	United States	1
2013	LeI	Government of Pakistan – LeI	Pakistan		0

Therefore, every observation in the ESD represents a directed conflict dyad-year and holds information on one potential external supporter to side A. The unit of analysis in the most disaggregated form of the dataset is thus the triad-year, that is the observation of support is specific to a given recipient involved in a given dyad in a given year. In the case of Myanmar, for example, India provided the Burmese military with equipment including weapons, training, and intelligence to conduct raids against rebel groups in its remote northern states that frequently attack in India's north-eastern provinces. India, however, has not actively supported Myanmar in its long running conflict with rebel groups elsewhere, e.g. along the Chinese border or in the south, during the observation period.[360]

This information can then be aggregated to the actor-year (independent of the dyad or conflict the actor is involved in), dyad-year (independent of which actor receives support), or conflict-year (independent of which dyad or actor receives support) whereby information on the external supporter and type(s) of support are combined to an aggregate, e.g. presence or absence of external support, number of supporters, combination of support types, etc. All aggregated versions of the data used in the following exclude support by elements of a state and alleged support when creating aggregate values. Overall, the dataset is compatible with any other data that employs

[360] Users interested in the overall capacity of a given country's military apparatus are of course free to aggregate external support to the actor-year.

UCDP identifiers or can otherwise be merged with the UCDP database, e.g. using Gleditsch and Ward country codes.[361]

3.6.2 Trends in External Support Provision

The dataset holds information on 212 armed conflicts fought across 472 dyads active in 97 countries over the period 1975-2017.[362] In 88% of all recorded conflicts, government forces face rebel forces in an intrastate conflict instead of the armed forces of a sovereign state. Across both intra- and interstate conflict, the provision of external support is the norm rather than the exception (cf. Table 8). During the period under investigation 68% of interstate and 80% of intrastate conflicts experienced foreign involvement.[363] Although there is a noticeable gap in the distribution of external support across the different types of conflict, a Pearson's Chi^2-test returns insignificant indicating no systematic difference between external support patterns by conflict type.

Table 8: Frequency of External Support by Type of Conflict

		External Support		
		No	Yes	Total
Type of Conflict	Interstate	8	17	25
		32%	68%	
	Intrastate	37	150	187
		20%	80%	
	Total	45	167	212
Pearson's Chi^2=1.97; Pr=0.16				

This trend is relatively consistent over time. The relative frequency of conflicts with external support hovers between 70% and 94% of all armed conflicts over the last four decades. Figure 3 presents the share of conflicts with external support over time. As Figure 3 demonstrates, a period of relatively fewer conflicts with external involvement in the late 1980s and 1990s was followed by a rapid increase in the number of conflicts with external support in the early 2000s peaking in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and then again in 2010.[364] The sudden drop to

[361] Gleditsch and Ward, 'A Revised List of Independent States since the Congress of Vienna'.
[362] If not otherwise noted all descriptive statistics in this section are based on the full dataset excluding inactive years and cases of alleged support or support by elements of a state.
[363] The frequency of dyads (as opposed to conflicts) with and without external support in intrastate wars follows the same relative distribution.
[364] The graph is based on data including support by state and non-state supporters to both the government and rebel sides and in all types of conflict.

1990s-levels of external support in 2004 seems puzzling at first. However, a closer look at the data reveals that this is largely a function of the termination/intermission of conflicts rather than a change in the provision of external support during that time.[365] The return to higher numbers of external support in the following years yields further confidence that external support levels were, on average, higher in the post-9/11 period. This impression is also confirmed by fitted lines for observations of the Cold War (1975-1991), pre-9/11 (1992-2000), and post-9/11 periods (2001-2017). Yet, they show that the provision of external support is overall on a downward trend during both the Cold War and post-9/11 periods. Only in the pre-9/11 period does the fitted line show a clear upward trajectory.

Figure 3: Relative Frequency of Active Conflicts with External Support over Time

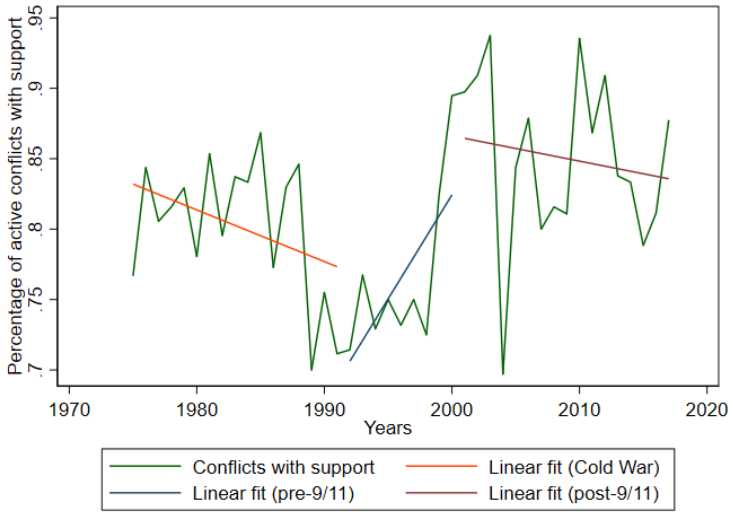


Figure 4 provides an overview of the different types of conflicts and the number of conflicts with external support. The vast majority of conflicts in the period 1975-2017 can be characterised as intrastate conflicts with external support (orange area) compared to a much smaller portion of intrastate conflicts without external involvement (green area). The relative frequency of interstate conflicts with (purple area) and without external support (blue area) fluctuates more strongly which is largely a consequence of the overall small number of interstate conflicts. As Table 8

[365] Out of the nine conflicts with external support in 2003 that do not appear as conflicts with external support in 2004, seven turn inactive in 2004. Hence, external support was no longer recorded in these cases.

demonstrates, conflict parties in interstate wars receive external support almost as often as those involved in an intrastate war but occur much less frequently.

Figure 4: Frequency of Conflict Types over Time

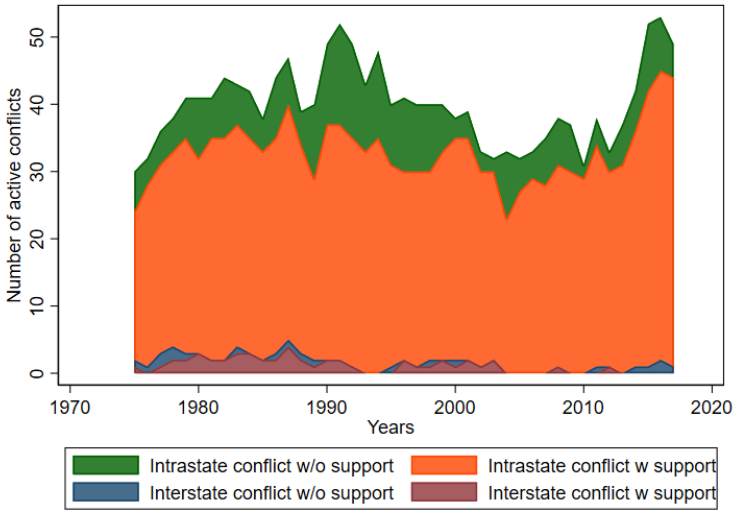
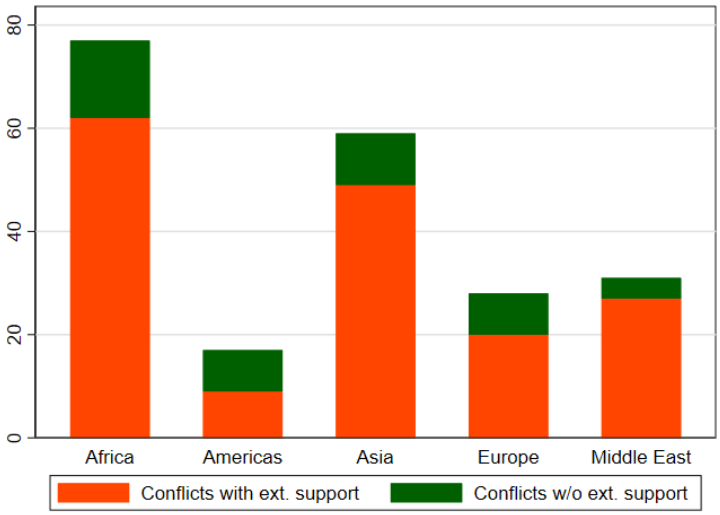


Figure 5 provides insights into the regional distribution of conflicts with and without external support. 87% of conflicts in the Middle East receive external support, whereas only just over half of all conflicts in the Americas show such foreign involvement. In absolute terms, the majority of conflicts that receive external support are located in African and Asian countries, following the overall geographical distribution of armed conflicts worldwide.

Figure 5: Conflicts with and without External Support by Region



Type of Supporter

Having established the general patterns of external support over time and space and across conflict types, the focus now turns to the providers of support. The dataset contains information on external support by 158 different state supporters and 149 non-state supporters.[366] Table 13 in Appendix A provides a list of all external state supporters in the dataset ranked by the extent of their activity.[367] Overall, the United States is the most proliferate external supporter having involved itself in 83 different conflicts during the observation period. This is followed by Russia (50 conflicts), France (46 conflicts), and China and Libya with 33 conflicts each. Table 9 presents the most frequent external supporters by decade.

Table 9: Top-5 External State and Non-State Supporters by Decade

	1975-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2009	2010-2017
State	United States (22) Libya (18) Russia (18) Cuba (13) China (9)	United States (27) Russia (20) Cuba (15) Libya (15) East Germany (11)	United States (27) Russia (14) France (13) Libya (13) China (12)	United States (22) France (9) India (8) Iran (8) Pakistan (8)	United States (44) Russia (21) France (20) United Kingdom (19) China (16)

Number of active conflicts an external supporter provides support to in brackets.

The hegemonial role of the United States as the most important provider of external support is uncontested throughout the decades. As was to be expected, this is rivalled by Soviet involvement during the Cold War decades. Russian support continues to be high during the 1990s when the break-up of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia generated a number of conflicts where Russia saw its core interests at risk. The activity of other Communist states, such as East Germany and Cuba, however, stops or declines noticeably after the end of the Cold War with Asian and European powers taking on a more active role. Interestingly, we see a return to

[366] Note that only non-state actors listed in the UCDP Actor List are included as external supporters. The list can be accessed at https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/index.html#actor.

[367] Table 13 provides a ranking of all state supporters by the number of conflicts, dyads, and dyad-years they provide external support to. The number of dyad-years an external supporter provides support to provides additional information on the temporal extent of the external supporter's commitment.

high levels of Russian involvement over the past decade, after Russia dropped from the list of most frequent supporters for the first time in the 2000s. This reflects the highly publicised role Russia plays in conflicts in countries such as Libya, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen starting in 2014.

Of note is also Libya's consistent inclusion in the list of most proliferate external supporters up until the end of the century when it just about misses the cut, ranked as among the sixth most active external supporters. The 2011 NATO-intervention sanctioned by Security Council Resolution 1973, the subsequent death of Muammar Gaddafi, and the regime change it ushered in then led to a drastic change in foreign policy: Over the last decade, Libya was involved in no more than two foreign conflicts, namely in Sudan and Syria, securing a place at the bottom of the list. Although not the primary purpose of the mission, the NATO intervention then also serves as an example of how biased military intervention can in turn change support patterns.

Over the last decade, and for the first time since the beginning of the observation period, the list of most frequent supporters includes all five permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5). Given the potentially detrimental role external supporters can play in intrastate conflicts, as this thesis examines, this is a concerning trend. If those states tasked with the upkeeping of peace and security are also among the most disruptive when it comes to foreign conflicts, the potential for more disorder arises. Equipped with far-reaching veto powers in the UN Security Council, it is further unlikely that interventions by any of the P5 states will draw the same amount of scrutiny by the UN Security Council and other bodies tasked with oversight in order to maintain international order.

Overall, and in line with existing research, this data suggests that great powers are particularly likely to interfere in foreign conflicts (cf. Chapter 2).[368] Yet, the inclusion of states like India and Iran at the top of the list speaks for the role regional powers can take on at least for

[368] Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, *Balancing Risks: Great Power Intervention in the Periphery* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Gorm R. Olsen, '"Great Power" Intervention in African Armed Conflicts', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 28, no. 2 (2015): 229–45.

periods at a time. Also of note is the diversity of regime type the 20 most frequent state supporters display (cf. Table 13, Appendix A). Here, highly democratic states such as Belgium, France, and Germany are sharing the ranks with states that score lowest on V-Dem's Liberal Democracy Index, such as Chad, Cuba, and China.[369]

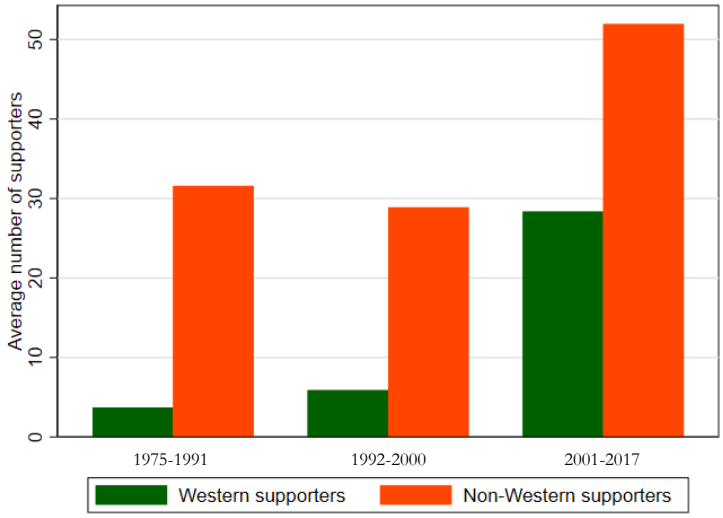
Foreign involvement in conflicts is sometimes viewed as the product of a Western agenda to enforce peace or bring about regime change.[370] Research on Western and non-Western military intervention further suggests that the identity of the supporter has implications for the type of support provided and the outcomes it produces. The effectiveness of troop support in bringing a conflict to an end, for example, varies between Western and non-Western supporters.[371]Although the concept of the 'West' is contested, it is useful to examine external support from this angle if nothing else to rule out that this is a phenomenon exclusively or predominantly driven by countries in the (northern) Western hemisphere.[372]

Figure 6 shows the average number of Western and non-Western external supporters by time period.[373] For the Cold War period (1975-1991), the post-Cold War period (1992-2000), and the post-9/11 period (2001-2017), the average number of non-Western supporters is much larger than the average count of Western supporters. Notable however is the drastic increase of Western supporters in the period following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This is in part a reflection of the large multilateral coalitions the United States built for its biased military interventions in

[369] Anna Lührmann et al., 'Democracy for All? V-Dem Annual Democracy Report 2018' (Gothenburg: V-Dem Institute, 2018), 22–23.
[370] Anke Hoeffler, 'Can International Interventions Secure the Peace?', *International Area Studies Review* 17, no. 1 (2014): 75–94; James A. Piazza and Seung-Whan Choi, 'International Military Interventions and Transnational Terrorist Backlash', *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (2018): 686–95.
[371] Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*.
[372] For a critical discussion of the concept of 'the West,' see, for example, Edward W Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Walter D. Mignolo, 'The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference', *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 1 (2002): 57–96.
[373] In total, 41 countries were coded as Western states for the purposes of this analysis. They include Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, and all members of the European Union and the European Free Trade Association.

Afghanistan (2001-2014) and Iraq (2003-2011), in which large numbers of Western states participated.

Figure 6: Average Number of Western and Non-Western Supporters by Time Period



On average, more than half of all active supporters since 2001 have been Western states. Given the more limited size of the pool of Western states, this means that more than two thirds of Western states are, on average, providing external support to conflicts in the post-9/11 period—a clear escalation of previous patterns of engagement. Yet, it is safe to say that external support is not an exclusively Western domain.[374]

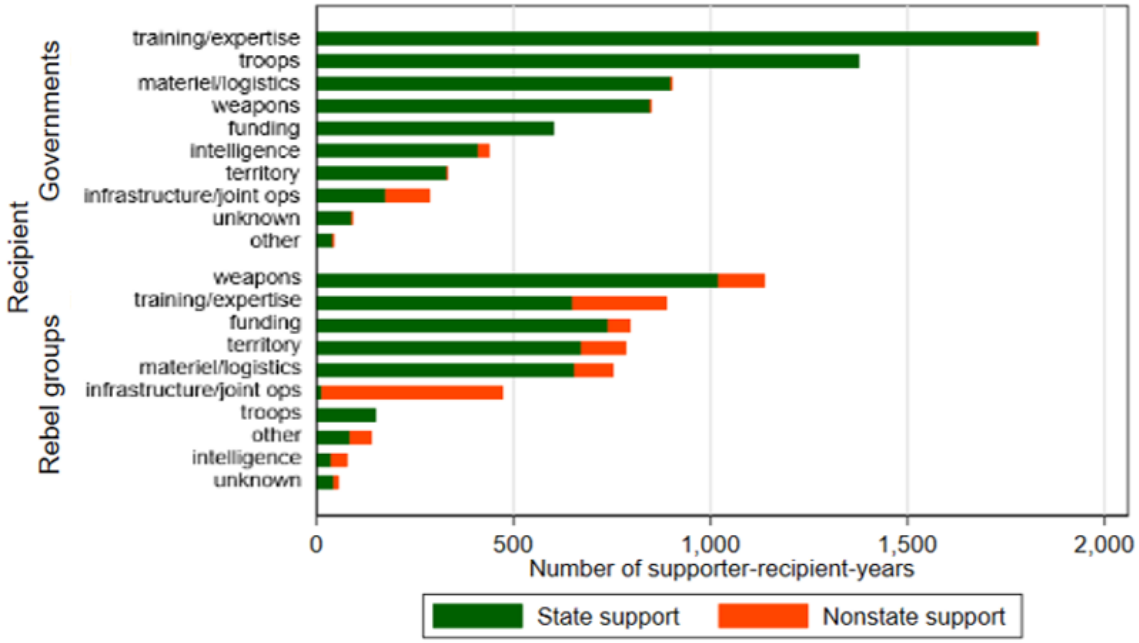
Type of Support

The ESD does not only provide insights on the providers of support but details the different types of support external supporters contribute. The most frequent type of support overall is the transfer of expertise or training, followed by weapons, troops, and matériel and logistics support (see Figure 14 and Figure 15, Appendix A).[375] Figure 7 depicts the number of dyad-years in which a certain type of support is provided by state and non-state supporters to

[374] See, for example,, Mordechai Chaziza and Ogen S. Goldman, 'What Factors Increase the Probability of Chinese Interventions in Intrastate Wars?', *Asian Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 1 (2016): 1–20.
[375] Note that according to the UCDP definition, troop support is limited to the provision of troops by state actors only. Hence, the number of non-state troop support to either type of recipient is zero. If non-state actors provide troops, it is coded as 'infrastructure/joint operations.' This category also includes strong alliances between rebel groups that include sharing of territory or resources and joint operations and is thus most comparable to troop support.

government or rebel forces, respectively.[376] It shows that this distribution is largely a function of state support (green) to foreign governments (top graph). The high prevalence of training, matériel, and weapons support—ranked first, third, and fourth most frequent for government recipients—underscores the importance of examining the effect of external military assistance in addition to frequently analysed levels of troop support (ranked second).

Figure 7: Frequency of Support Type by Type of Supporter and Recipient



Notable differences between support to government and rebel forces in a civil war are the greater ease with which government forces receive troop support, training, and intelligence material and the relative importance access to territory plays for rebel groups vis-à-vis their state counterparts that generally hold territory. It comes as no surprise that most non-state supporters direct their support toward fellow rebel groups. The most important contribution by non-state actors to government forces are the provision of personnel for joint operations and intelligence, which rebel groups are often uniquely positioned to provide. Overall, foreign state support outmatches the efforts of non-state supporters to exert influence over conflicts across the different

[376] Note that this graph, rather than depicting the number of dyad-years with support types aggregated, i.e. counting one observation if a dyad received a certain type of support in a year by one or several external supporters, includes one observation for each time an external supporter provides a type of support to a recipient in a given dyad-year.

support types. An important exception is the joining of forces on the ground on the rebel side where alliances with other rebel groups are the norm and states providing troops in support of rebels the exception.[377]

3.6.3 Trends in the Provision of External Military Assistance

From the above discussion, it has become obvious that the data collection effort that has resulted in the ESD surpasses the data necessary for the narrower research interest of this thesis. To provide a better overview of the data on external military assistance, this section elaborates on the operationalisation of external military assistance in the context of the ESD, presents general trends in its provision, illustrates the relevance of the phenomenon, and relates it to another prominent form of foreign involvement, namely troop support. Therefore, all visual representations are based on data including support by third-party governments to the government side in a civil war only.

External military assistance, or the provision of training and equipment from a state to the armed forces of a state in conflict, is not a clear-cut phenomenon (cf. Chapter 2) and its specific design will vary from case to case. While no dataset that specifically captures the variation in content and implementation of external military assistance exists, the ESD provides the necessary information to identify cases that fall within its scope. Consequently, external military assistance is operationalised as the provision of weapons, matériel and logistics or training and expertise support by state supporters to state recipients.

Although the provision of funding and intelligence material often forms part of more elaborate manifestations of external military assistance, the provision of either of these types of support on their own is insufficient to indicate the provision of external military assistance and was thus excluded from its operationalisation. Cases of alleged support or support provided by non-state or sub-state actors are not included. To guard against the risk of capturing the effect of troop

[377] Compare the number of 'troop' support for state combat support to the number of 'infrastructure/joint operations' for non-state combat support. See the coding sheet in Table 12, Appendix A.

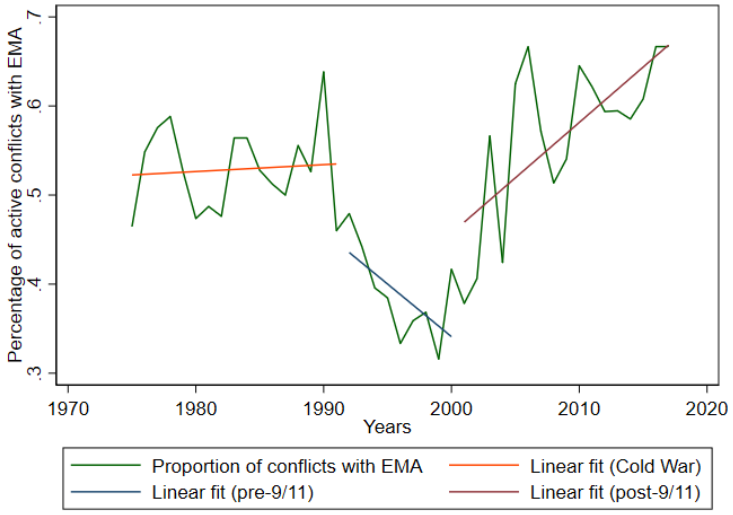
support instead of external military assistance, simultaneous troop support is controlled for in the models of the three papers (cf. Chapters 4-6). Where appropriate, I also coded cases of external military assistance with no simultaneous troop support separately to produce descriptive statistics.

As already discussed, external support is often thought of as a Cold War dynamic.[378] Therefore, it is worth examining whether external military assistance, as a specific type of external support, is a phenomenon to be reckoned with in a post-Cold War context. The left graph in Figure 9 presents the number of dyads with external military assistance (orange line) and troop support (blue line) compared to the total number of all active intrastate dyads (green line). Indeed, external military assistance (orange line) was comparably frequent in the 1970s and 1980s and the number of dyads with external military assistance peaked towards the end of the Cold War as well as during the conflicts that followed the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It then declined up until the end of the last century, reaching an all-time low in 1999. The drop in dyads with troop support (blue line) was more immediate with a renewed increase around the same time.

Yet, external military assistance has been on an upward trajectory since the turn of the century. As Figure 8 displaying the proportion of conflicts with external military assistance demonstrates, a larger percentage of conflicts received external military assistance in 2017 than they did in 1990.[379] Since 2002, external military assistance has consistently been provided in more than 40% of active conflicts every year. Since 2005, this number has increased to half of all active conflicts (cf. Figure 8). A fitted linear trend shows a clear upward trajectory for the post-9/11 period. This finding is reiterated when fitting a smooth curve based on local weighted regressions through a scatterplot of the same data (cf. Figure 13, Appendix A) which takes on a wide u-shaped form.

[378] S. Neil MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, Adelphi Papers, No. 350 (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2002).
[379] I choose the number of active conflicts rather than active dyads to enable a comparison with the development of the relative frequency of external support over time (cf. Figure 3).

Figure 8: Relative Frequency of Intrastate Conflicts with External Military Assistance over Time



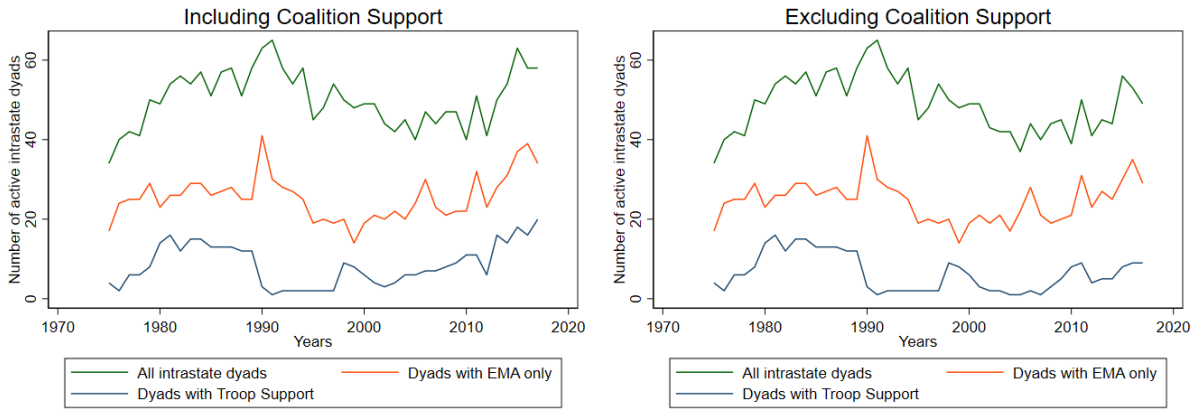
These findings suggest that while external military assistance was a consistently popular foreign policy tool in the late stages of the Cold War, its use rapidly declined throughout the 1990s with under a third of all conflicts experiencing this type of support at the end of the decade. However, there has been a drastic increase in the relative number of conflicts with external military assistance in the post-9/11 period with a clear upward trajectory exceeding the levels of external military assistance provided during the Cold War.[380] Judging from the developments of the last twenty years, external military assistance remains a popular foreign policy choice, possibly more so than alternative types of external support, and therefore commands academic scrutiny.

Of particular interest in this context is the relationship between external military assistance and more intrusive forms of external involvement, such as troop deployment. Is the increase in the provision of external military assistance simply a by-product of overall high intervention levels? Or do we see a move away from troop support towards less direct types of intervention? Across the entire observation period, the number of dyads in which the government receives external military assistance from one or several foreign governments (orange line) consistently exceeds the number of dyads where external troops are intervening in favour of government forces (blue line) as the

[380] This is in line with the general trend of external support provision when looking at external support by states to the government side in intrastate conflicts only rather than support by all actors to all recipients in all types of wars as Figure 3 does. Figure 17 in Appendix A presents the equivalent of the graph in Figure 8 for external support rather than external military assistance for state-to-state support only.

graphs in Figure 9 demonstrate.[381] This difference between external military assistance and troop support grows particularly large at the end of and just after the Cold War (1990-1994) and in the second half of the 2000s (2005-2008) where we see a larger than average gap between troop and non-warring support (cf. Figure 9).

Figure 9: Intrastate Dyads with Troop Support and External Military Assistance over Time



The left graph in Figure 9 shows a narrowing of this gap from 2012 onwards that would suggest an increasing importance of the provision of troops. The right graph quickly illustrates, however, that this increase in the relative frequency of troop support can be attributed to the support by large multilateral missions, such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, and Yemen that began in the first half of the 2010s. Table 10 gives an overview of the coalitions providing external support included in the ESD and the number of troop-contributing countries (TCCs) they involve. When considering bilateral troop support only, the gap in fact widens from 2012 on (cf. Figure 9, right graph). Hence, while external military assistance remains the by far more common outcome overall, we see a recent proliferation of troop support largely as a function of support by coalitions of states. As Table 10 illustrates, large multinational coalitions became a frequent occurrence after 2000.

[381] Dyads in which both troops and external military assistance were provided were counted as dyads with troop support to avoid conflating cases of external military assistance and troop support in the count of dyads with external military assistance.

Table 10: List of Multilateral Support in the UCDP ESD

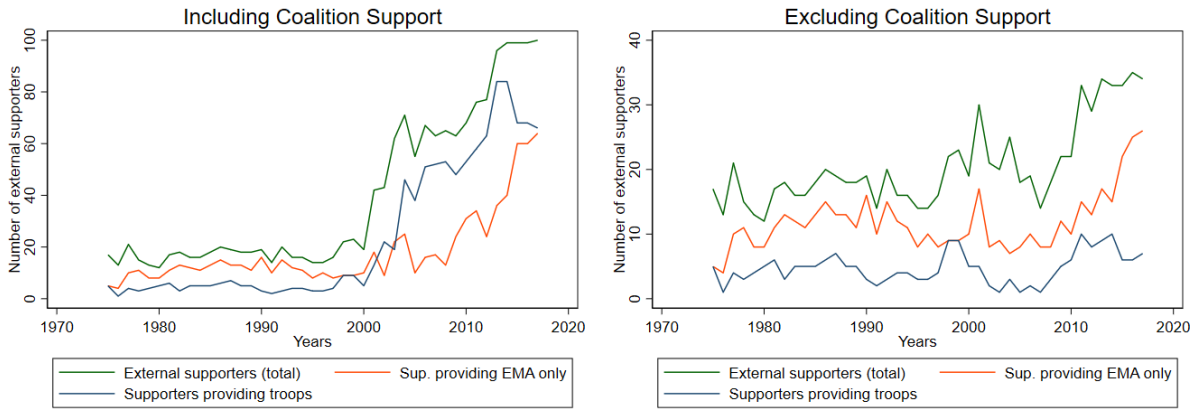
Abbreviation in ESD	Full Name	Location of conflict	TCCs	First in data	Last in data
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia	Somalia	8	2012	2017
Coalition forces	*ad hoc coalition*	Iraq	38	2004	2011
EUTM-Somalia	European Union Training Mission in Somalia	Somalia	14	2009	2017
EUTM-Mali	European Union Training Mission in Mali	Mali	17	2013	2017
G5 Sahel	*ad hoc coalition*	Chad, Niger	4	2013	2017
Global Coalition	Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL	Iraq	29	2014	2017
Gulf War Coalition	*ad hoc coalition*	Iraq	33	1990	1991
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	Afghanistan	50	2006	2014
KFOR	NATO Kosovo Force	North Macedonia	4	2001	2001
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	Mali	37	2013	2017
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force	Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	4	2014	2017
MONUSCO-FIB	United Nations Force Intervention Brigade	DR Congo, Rwanda, Uganda	4	2013	2017
Multinational Coalition	*ad hoc coalition*	Afghanistan	42	2002	2005
NATO	*ad hoc coalition*	Ukraine	19	2014	2017
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom	Afghanistan	19	2001	2001
RCI-LRA	Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army	Uganda	3	2011	2017
Saudi-led coalition	*ad hoc coalition*	Yemen	40	2015	2017
RS	Resolute Support Mission	Afghanistan	11	2015	2017
US-led coalition	*ad hoc coalition*	Iraq	45	2003	2003
War on Terror	*ad hoc coalition*	United States[382]	25	2001	2017

The effect of multilateral support is particularly noticeable when observing the number of external supporters active in each year (cf. Figure 10). In 2002, coinciding with the launch of the Multinational Coalition in Afghanistan and within the first year of the 'Global War on Terror,' the number of external supporters providing troops (and other support) exceeds the number of external supporters that limit their support to external military assistance (and other non-warring types of support) only for the first time (cf. Figure 10, left graph). The inclusion of support provided by coalitions of states quickly drives up the count of supporters after 2000, which in 2017

[382] Note that UCDP codes the 9/11 terrorist attacks on targets in the United States and the subsequent 'Global War on Terror' as an intrastate conflict between the United States and al-Qaida. Although the United States pursues al-Qaida around the globe, the location remains coded as the United States in the dataset.

reaches an all-time high of 100 external supporters backing governments around the globe. This is partly an artefact of the data generation process where coalition members are entered into the dataset one by one and each being counted as a unique external supporter rather than as one multilateral actor. But it also speaks to the role multilateral (combat) missions have played since the beginning of this century, where from the 'Global War on Terror' to the 'Global Coalition Against Daesh' uniting a large number of states behind an intervention has played an important role.[383]

Figure 10: Number of External Supporters by Support Type over Time



The right graph in Figure 10 shows that when excluding states that acted exclusively through multilateral coalitions, the number of supporters providing external military assistance and no troops is larger than (or equal to) the number of states providing troops during the entire observation period. Notably, there is a dip in states providing troops in the early-to-mid 2000s—a time when the "building partner capacity" doctrine that privileges indirect military support over the deployment of troops gained particular currency.[384] While the number of states providing external military assistance is on an upward trend from 2002 on, the difference to the number of troop supporters widens drastically in the last two years of the observation period. This suggests states increasingly prefer to provide external military assistance over sending troops unless troop support occurs as part of a multilateral coalition effort.

[383] U.S. Department of State, 'The Global War on Terrorism: The First 100 Days'; The Global Coalition Against Daesh, 'Mission'.
[384] Christopher Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), 1.

Which states provide external military assistance? While we have seen that external support overall is not a predominantly Western domain, the training and equipping of foreign militaries is likewise often associated with Western powers.[385] Train-and-equip programmes in Mali, Somalia, and Ukraine come to mind where mostly Western countries aim to develop the capacity of local militaries. Yet, as Figure 11 demonstrates, there are, as with external support in general, on average more non-Western states providing external military assistance than Western states in the Cold War, post-Cold War, and post-9/11 eras, respectively. Commenting on military assistance in the African context, Leboeuf, for example, points out that

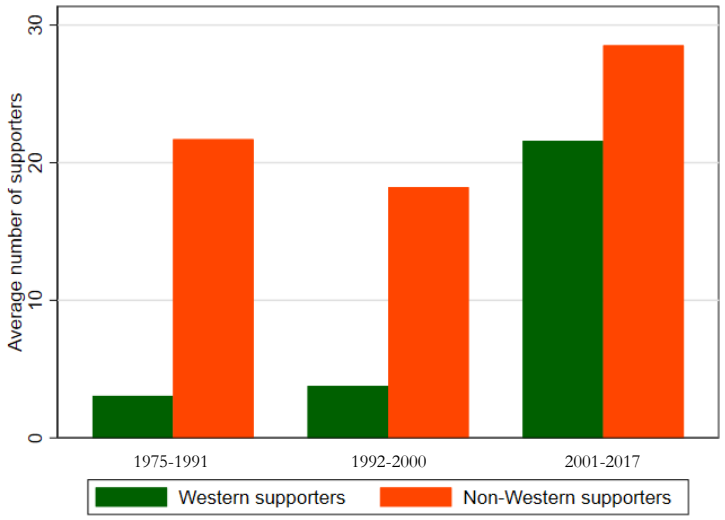
> China has positioned itself as an alternative partner, allowing some countries to obtain arms (especially drones) and providing training in cases where Western states have kept their distance or imposed embargos, as has been the case with Zimbabwe, Equatorial Guinea, and, more recently, Burundi.[386]

This assessment stresses the importance of non-Western sources of external military assistance.

Again, the average number of Western supporters is much higher after 2001 than in either of the two periods before, with more than half of Western states providing military assistance on average. Although non-Western states also provide external military assistance in significant numbers, it becomes obvious that after 9/11 external military assistance becomes a foreign policy tool of choice for Western states in particular.

[385] Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.
[386] Aline Leboeuf, 'Cooperating with African Armed Forces', Focus Stratégique No. 76 Bis, Ifri, Paris, 2018, 19.

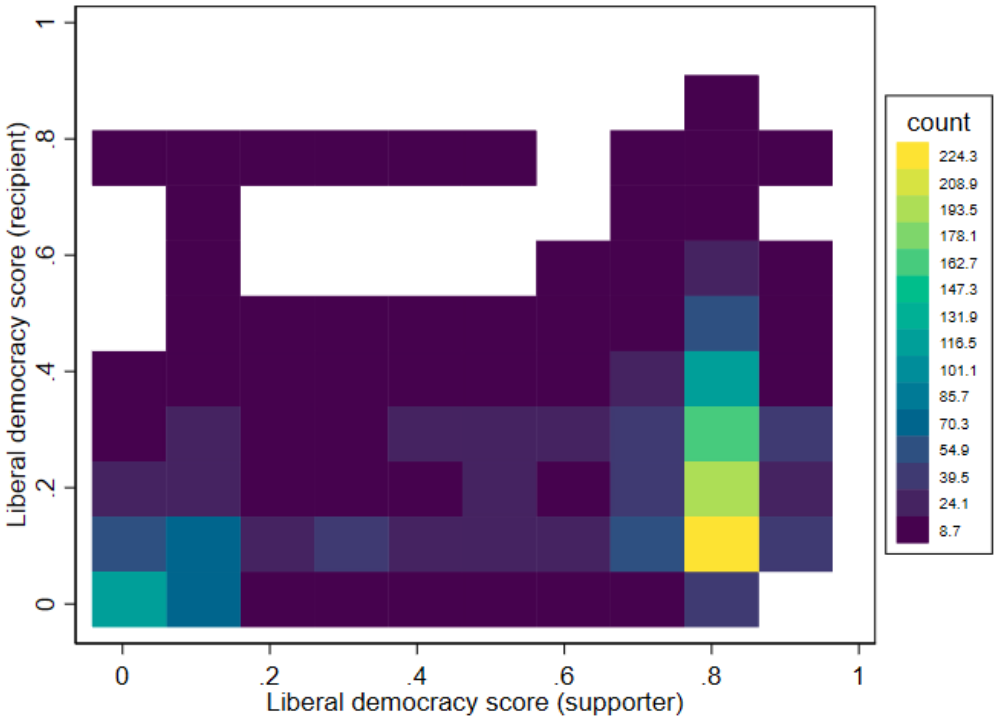
Figure 11: Average Number of Western and Non-Western Supporters Providing External Military Assistance by Time Period



The focus on state-to-state cooperation warrants a closer look at the regime type of both supporters and recipients of external military assistance. Figure 12 present a 'heat map' with values of V-Dem's liberal democracy index of the supporter on the x-axis and the same value for the recipient country on the y-axis.[387] The liberal democracy index measures how well a country aspires to the ideal of liberal democracy measured by the importance it ascribes to protecting civil liberties and placing limits on the exercise of power in addition to the presence of democratic institutions such as political parties and elections.[388] A higher score indicates more liberal regimes. In 2017, Norway, Sweden, and Estonia scored highest and Syria, Eritrea, and North Korea lowest on the index. The coloration of the ten-by-ten tiles indicates how often a given combination of regime type in supporter and recipient occurs in the data with lighter (yellow) tiles indicating more frequent and darker (purple) tiles less frequent combination-years.[389]

[387] The unit of analysis is the actor-recipient-year to avoid double counting of cases where a recipient receives support from the same supporter against more than one opponent in different dyads. Data stems from Michael Coppedge et al., 'V-Dem Codebook V8', 2018.
[388] Ibid., 40–41.
[389] Tiles are left blank (white) when combinations did not occur in the data at all.

Figure 12: Frequency of External Military Assistance by Regime Type of Supporter and Recipient



According to Figure 12, (highly) democratic states (>0.7) such as Denmark, Australia, and the United States provide the bulk of support-years to less democratic states. While most of the beneficiaries of this pattern fall somewhere between the democracy levels achieved by countries such as Somalia (0.11) and Colombia (0.48), democratic states occasionally offer their assistance to even more democratic states. At the same time, there is a cluster of cooperation between autocratic states, especially when it comes to the most autocratic on a level with North Korea (0.01), Saudi Arabia (0.04), and Yemen (0.04), that more democratic states are hesitant to support. Overall, recipients from most autocratic up until the level currently displayed by Israel (0.57) are fairly well represented as recipients of external support.

The cases of external military assistance become fewer for more democratic recipients, but some cases of cooperation between highly democratic states exist (top right corner).[390] The cluster of cases of external military assistance to recipients with a democracy score of between 0.7-0.8 can

[390] The observations in the top left corner are largely driven by support the United States receives in its fight against al-Qaida by a broad global coalition that combines states with various levels of democracy.

largely be attributed to support the United States is receiving in the 'Global War on Terror' as the same plot excluding the United states as recipient or supporter demonstrates (cf. Figure 18, Appendix A). Even when removing the United States as a supporter, however, the cluster of cases with supporters that score between 0.7 and 0.8 on the democracy scale remains. Hence, this is not solely a function of frequent US support but represents the efforts of a larger group of supporters with similar regime types. Many of the member states of the European Union fall into this category.

Overall, Figure 11 and Figure 12 demonstrate that external military assistance is neither an exclusively 'Western' domain, nor one predominantly driven by democracies for the benefit of the least democratic. Yet, the prominence of Western states is more noticeable when it comes to external military assistance than when looking at external support more broadly, suggesting that non-Western states might turn to other types of support more frequently.

In summary, the updated ESD confirms that external military assistance is neither limited to the Cold War period, nor does it necessarily covary with or appear negligible in comparison to more extreme forms of interventions, such as troop support. Rather, external military assistance is a phenomenon that has accelerated in the 21st century and frequently affects up to two thirds of all ongoing intrastate conflicts. Its relative prevalence alone warrants a more systematic analysis of the consequences of such foreign involvement on conflict dynamics. Therefore, the following three papers address the effects of external military assistance on levels of one-sided violence (Chapter 4), coup risk (Chapter 5), and use of terrorist tactics (Chapter 6) in turn.

3.7 Limitations and Opportunities for Extension

While arguably preferable to other available alternatives, this data comes with its own set of limitations. As with all observational, media-based datasets, concerns about the quality of the data, especially in conflict contexts, loom large.[391] The data collection process is susceptible to a

[391] Nils B. Weidmann, 'On the Accuracy of Media-Based Conflict Event Data', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 6 (2015): 1129–49.

number of biases that can introduce systematic error into the sample by prioritising the recording of certain outcomes over others.

When supporters and recipients suppress information on—sometimes illicit—external support, underreporting bias can occur. At the same time, overreporting bias can be an issue due to the difficulty of distinguishing between external support with the intent to assist in a conflict and regular arms transfers or security sector reforms. The reliance on newspaper reporting for many of the observations in the dataset can create an additional level of bias in favour of 'newsworthy' conflicts or support relationships (reporting bias).[392] For example, reporting is likely more diligent where support recipients are involved in particularly violent conflicts, where support violates an embargo or sanctions regime, or the external supporter is a great power or considered a "pariah" in the international community.[393]

Since the dataset was coded for years at a time, the varying time periods between the event and the coding of the event further affect data accessibility. For historical cases, more official records are declassified by now, whereas improved communication technologies increase the availability of information from unofficial sources in more recent conflicts introducing the potential for information bias.[394] Even when reports surface reliably, the degree of interpretation that is required when turning a report into an observation introduces the potential for measurement error. Although with only two coders working on the dataset of lesser concern, inter-coder reliability still poses an issue.[395]

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[392] Nils B. Weidmann, 'A Closer Look at Reporting Bias in Conflict Event Data', *American Journal of Political Science* 60, no. 1 (2016): 206–18.

[393] Collins, 'Dissuading State Support of Terrorism: Strikes or Sanctions? (An Analysis of Dissuasion Measures Employed Against Libya)', 12.

[394] Ann M. Clark and Kathryn Sikkink, 'Information Effects and Human Rights Data: Is the Good News about Increased Human Rights Information Bad News for Human Rights Measures?', *Human Rights Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2013): 539–68; Baekkwan Park, Kevin Greene, and Michael Colaresi, 'Human Rights Are (Increasingly) Plural: Learning the Changing Taxonomy of Human Rights from Large-Scale Text Reveals Information Effects', *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 3 (2020): 888–910.

[395] Inter-coder reliability refers to "the extent to which two or more independent coders agree on the coding of the content of interest with an application of the same coding scheme." When inter-coder reliability is low, the same description of events leads to different entries in the dataset depending on who coded the event. See Young Ik Cho, 'Intercoder Reliability', in *Encyclopedia of Survey Research Methods*, ed. Paul J. Lavrakas (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008).

Fortunately, some of these issues can be addressed with appropriate statistical tools such as split-population models, multiple systems estimation or by controlling for varying access to information with time interval dummies.[396] Others simply form an inevitable part of conducting research on conflict-affected countries and need to be kept in mind when evaluating results. Transparency about the coding process including access to coding rules, concrete examples, and sources allows researchers to make informed choices about the level of uncertainty the data contains.[397] Attempts to facilitate the integration of the various datasets on third-party involvement as have recently been made in other subfields could be a way ahead at least to cross-validate historical data for which several sources exist.[398]

A future version of this data could expand the time span by including information on inactive years between episodes of conflict in addition to updating observations until the present. Adding an ordinary variable on the quantity or strength of support would open up a whole new field of analysis. So far, quality or quantity of support can only be proxied by relying on military or economic characteristics of the supporter (cf. Chapter 5) or by limiting the analysis to US military assistance for which interval-level data is available.[399]

Many of the prominent cases of foreign intervention occur in the context of multilateral coalitions. While such examples from Afghanistan, DR Congo, Mali, Yemen, the US 'Global War on Terror,' and efforts against ISIL appear in the ESD, it includes only the support provided by frontline states at the expense of the assistance these states receive from coalition members to maintain their operations. Here, future data collection efforts could provide a more complete

[396] Sabine Otto, 'Coding One-Sided Violence from Media Reports', *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 4 (2013): 556–66; James A Piazza, 'Suicide Attacks and Hard Targets: An Empirical Examination', *Defence and Peace Economics* 31, no. 2 (2020): 142–59.
[397] Otto, 'Coding One-Sided Violence from Media Reports'.
[398] Karsten Donnay et al., 'Integrating Conflict Event Data', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 5 (2019): 1337–64.
[399] For an example, see Andrew Boutton, 'US Foreign Aid, Interstate Rivalry, and Incentives for Counterterrorism Cooperation', *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 6 (2014): 741–54; Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'. Regan et al. further provide information on the quantity of military and economic support where available, but inevitably end up with a large number of missing values.

picture of the external support that is channelled through multilateral coalitions and the division of labour that keeps them operating.

Lastly, this dataset, as most comparable datasets, focuses on efforts to prop up one warring party and ignores attempts to actively weaken the opposing side.[400] Including sanctions or restrictions on trade can capture deliberate attempts to exert influence that do not manifest as active support but can be powerful tools in exerting influence over conflict dynamics.

[400] For an exception, see Regan's data and respective updates. Regan, Frank, and Aydin, 'Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset'; Sousa, 'External Interventions in Post-Cold War Africa, 1989–2010'.

APPENDIX A

Table 11: List of UN Sanctions Committee Reports Screened[401]

Sanctions Committee	Est.	Type of Report	Years sighted[402]	No. of reports
Somalia Sanctions Committee	1992	Panel of Experts	2002-2018	22
ISIL (Da'esh) & Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee	1999	Monitoring Team	2008-2019	19
1518 Sanctions Committee (Iraq)	2003	Annual Reports	2004-2018	13
The Democratic Republic of the Congo Sanction Committee	2004	Panel of Experts	2010-2019	19
The Sudan Sanctions Committee	2005	Panel of Experts	2011-2019	9
Libya Sanctions Committee	2011	Panel of Experts	2012-2019	9
The Central African Republic Sanctions Committee	2013	Panel of Experts	2014	2
2140 Sanctions Committee (Yemen)	2014	Panel of Experts	2015-2019	8
South Sudan Sanctions Committee	2015	Panel of Experts	2015-2019	10
Mali Sanctions Committee	2017	Panel of Experts	2018-2019	2

[401] Information on all sanctions committees and their reports can be accessed at https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/information.

[402] The years sighted depend on when conflict was active in the sanction target or a third country it provided external support to.

Abb.	Description
S	external supporter
R	recipient of support (primary warring party)
O	opponent of R (primary warring party)
#	UCDP actor id
X	troop support
Y	access to infrastructure/joint operations
W	weapons
M	matériel/logistics
T	training/expertise
F	funding
I	intelligence
L	access to territory
O	other support
U	unknown support

External Supporter

	Description	Code
Includes	A party external to the country (for state S) or the conflict (for non-state S) providing external support.	
	- formally recognised governments or group in control of the capital	#
	- non-state armed group	#
	Substate actors operating without the consent of the government, e.g. rogue parts of the military, regional governments	New id
Excludes	IGOs where support can be attributed to individual states	Individual countries
	Coalitions of the willing, biased UN mandates	Individual countries
	Individuals, companies, lobby groups, political parties, criminal networks, diaspora groups	n/a
Notes	The external supporter needs to be listed in the UCDP Actor Database and needs to cross the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths in any conflict at any given point in time.	

Recipient of Support

	Description	Code
Includes	Primary warring parties as listed in the UCDP Dyadic dataset	#
Excludes	R during inactive conflict years	n/a

External Support

	Description	Code
Includes	R received at least one form of clearly established intentional external support from a known S in a given dyad-year	1
Excludes	Claims of external support by S to R that are unconfirmed/unconfirmable	Alleged
Notes	Always coded 0 if external_alleged is 1.	

Alleged Support

	Description	Code
Includes	Allegations of external support by S to R that are unconfirmed/unconfirmable	1
	Allegations where no evidence is presented or no source other than a warring party has investigated the claims	1
Excludes	Allegations of support with limited spread or extremely low credibility	n/a
	Confirmed external support of unclear type	U
	External support by unidentified S	n/a
	External support to unidentified R	n/a
	External support at unidentified time	n/a

Notes	If any type of external support is confirmed, variable always takes the value of 0.

Troops

	Description	**Code**
Includes	State combat troops (including special forces) sent to directly engage in military operations against O	X
	Expert personnel directly engaged in combat operations (e.g. tank drivers, aircraft pilots, operators of UAVs)	X
Excludes	Combat troops from a non-state actor *active in another conflict* sent to directly engage in military operations (R can be state or non-state)	Y
	Joint operations between state S and state R where S is *also in a conflict with O*	Y
	Joint coordination/planning of operations by non-state R and non-state S *active in another conflict*	Y
	State/non-state troops dispersed or integrated under R's command, e.g. 'air policing' by foreign troops in new uniforms intended to obscure	M, T
	Troops sent as technicians in support of (transferred/loaned) equipment	M, W
	Military trainers, military specialists, planners, experts	T
	Foreign fighters or private military corporations from S without S' approval	n/a
Notes	S does not need to meet the 25 battle-related deaths criteria to be included. Non-state supporters cannot be coded as providing X, coded as Y instead.	
	Corresponds to UCDP Dyadic secondary warring support	

Access to infrastructure/joint operations

	Description	**Code**
Includes	R allowed to use (part of) S' military or intelligence infrastructure as if integrated within S' chain of command for directly conflict-related activities	Y
	- access to intelligence gathering stations - treaties for joint intelligence operations - lease of bases on S' territory - use of bases of non-state actors *active in another conflict* for planning/operations	Y
	Combat troops from a non-state actor *active in another conflict* sent to directly engage in military operations (R can be state or non-state)	Y
	Joint operations between state S and state R where S is *also in a conflict with O*	Y
	Joint coordination/planning of operations by non-state R and non-state S *active in another conflict*	Y
	Alliances between non-state S and government R against O	Y
Excludes	S training R in S' bases	T

Weapons

	Description	**Code**
Includes	S provides R with (parts of) weapons or ammunition on conciliatory terms or through non-conventional channels	W
	- donation of weapons to be used in conflict - weapons bought on extremely conciliatory terms (credit without interest, symbolic price, offsets ~1000%) - transfers through non-conventional channels (e.g. sales to non-state actors) - transfers violating an embargo the supporter is bound by (e.g. UN embargo) - any sales of WMD	W
Excludes	Sales of weapons or ammunition between state S and state R in accordance with standard commercial terms (i.e. authorised trade) and the primarily economic motives, including leases	n/a
	Weapons or ammunition transferred from X to R, but financed by S	n/a (X) F (S)
	Weapons or ammunition produced by X and used by R, but without clear evidence of intentional provision	n/a
	Intentional intermediating of weapons transfers, e.g. granting access to transportation channels for illicit trades, changing labels to deceive origin	O
	Know-how to build weapons or technical assistance in doing so	T
	Technicians and operators of advanced weaponry	M, T

Matériel/Logistics Support

	Description	Code
Includes	Non-weaponry and non-ammunition supplies used in conjunction with military operations and serving a direct military purpose - vehicles, uniforms, tents, field hospitals - radars, night vision technology, construction bulldozers	M
	Repair and support facilities for advanced weaponry (aircraft, rocketry, tanks) and technicians or operators of such	M, T
	Logistics assistance, e.g. troop transports	M
	Medical support in military contexts, e.g. field hospitals	M
	Construction of facilities with a military purpose, e.g. training camps	M
	Mention of 'logistical support'	M
Excludes	Weapons and ammunition	W
	Expert personnel directly engaged in combat operations under S' command (e.g. tank drivers, aircraft pilots)	X
	Military trainers, military specialists, planners, experts	T

Training/Expertise

	Description	Code
Includes	Training in situ or on S' territory (including bases)	T
	Military trainers, military specialists, planners, experts present at HQ level not directly engaged in combat operations	T
	Know-how to build weapons or technical assistance in doing so	T
Excludes	Expert personnel directly engaged in combat operations under S' command (e.g. tank drivers, aircraft pilots)	X
	Troops sent as technicians in support of (transferred/loaned) equipment without training role	M
	Joint (yearly) training exercises between state troops without explicit link to a conflict	T

Funding

	Description	Code
Includes	Any form of economic aid destined to fund waging of the armed conflict	F
	- military loans/grants or military/defence aid if directly linked to the conflict and not converted into goods or services by S before provision - transfer of money or financial assets to non-state groups	F
	Weapons transferred from S to R, but financed by S2	F (S2)
	Intercession/support in front of multilateral financial institutions (World Bank, IMF) or lenders	F
Excludes	Humanitarian, development or balance of payments aid/loans, financing of peacekeeping operations	n/a
	Export loans forwarded by S to buy weapons/supplies from S	W, M
	Train-and-Equip-Funds if disbursed as training and equipment	T, W/M
	Security sector assistance without direct link to armed conflict, e.g. police reform	n/a

Intelligence

	Description	Code
Includes	Any form of intelligence material presented by S	I
	- maps of enemy positions, satellite imagery - codes, signals intelligence of any kind - information on troop capability, whereabouts of rebel leaders, etc.	I
	Information-sharing between rebel groups	I
Excludes	Access to S' intelligence infrastructure, e.g. use of satellite/intelligence organisation at discretion	Y
	Large-scale collaboration and integration of two intelligence organisations	Y

Access to Territory

	Description	Code
Includes	State S allows R access to S' territory	L
	- setting up of bases on S' territory - sanctuary which leaves pre-existing networks intact	L

	- cross-border military action	
	Use of bases of non-state actors *active in another conflict* for planning/operations	L
	Enabling of personnel and goods transfer through S territory (e.g. 'facilitation pipeline,' 'encouragement of transit')	L
Excludes	Unintentional access to territory, e.g. porous borders or low capacity to deny access	n/a
	Access to airspace	n/a
	Lease of bases or access to military infrastructure on bases	Y
	Accepting refugees/granting asylum or self-imposed exile by political leadership without evidence that operations are conducted from the territory	n/a

Other Support

	Description	**Code**
Includes	All types of support with direct bearing on the waging of the armed conflict that do not fit previous categories	O
	- recruitment opportunities - running, harbouring and/or funding a radio station belonging to a non-state actor - intermediating transfers of weaponry	O
Excludes	- political, moral, and ideological support, e.g. 'political advice'	n/a
Notes	The support should be substantial enough to have a bearing on the overall conflict/conflict outcome.	

Unknown Support

	Description	**Code**
Includes	External support confirmed by reliable sources, but type not specified	U
	Mention of 'military support,' efforts to 'build military capabilities' without details of the military support provided	U
Excludes	Alleged support	Alleged
	External support by an unknown S	n/a
	External support to an unknown R	n/a
	External support at unidentified time	n/a
Notes	Can appear in combination with known types of support	

Figure 13: Percentage of Active Conflicts with External Support over Time with LOWESS Smoothing

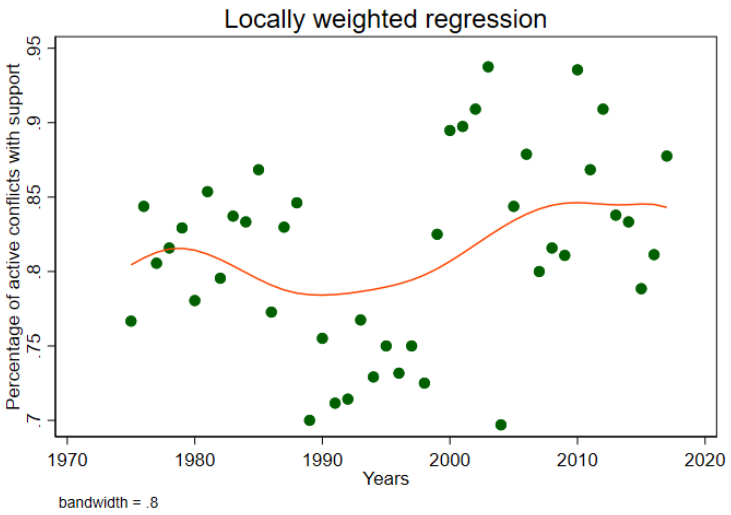


Figure 14: Frequency of External Support by Type of Support and Supporter (all recipients)

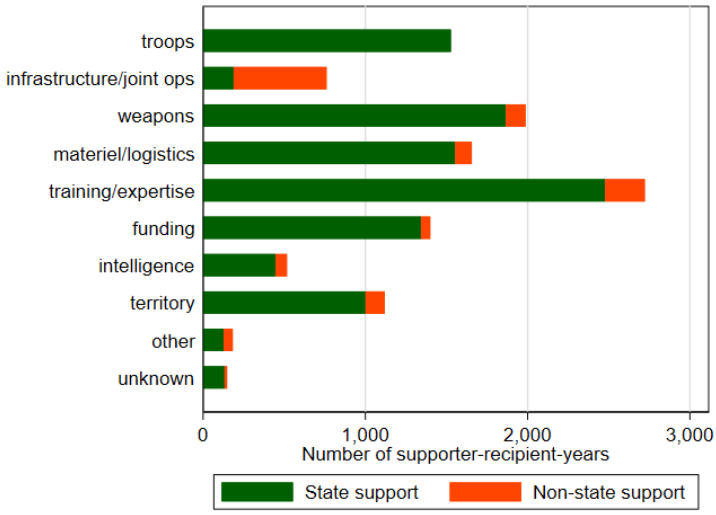


Figure 15: Frequency of External Support by Type of Support and Recipient (all supporters)

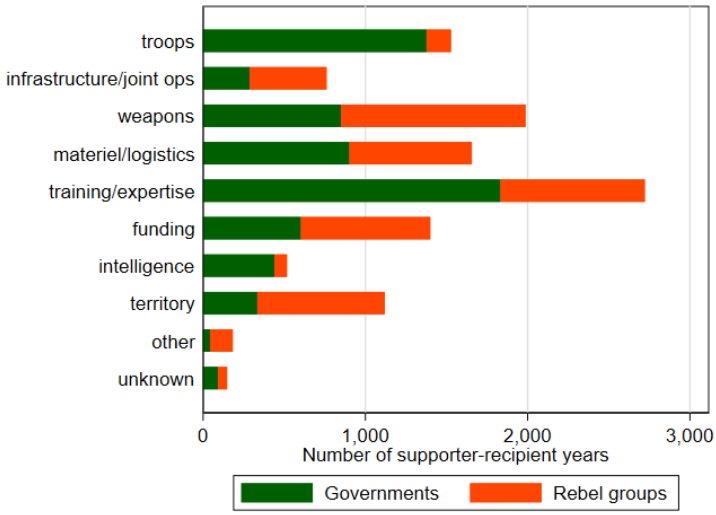


Table 13: List of Most Frequent State Supporters

Rank	External Supporter	No. of Conflicts	External Supporter	No. of Dyads	External Supporter	No. of Dyad-years
1	United States	83	United States	157	United States	790
2	Russia (Soviet Union)	50	Russia (Soviet Union)	83	Russia (Soviet Union)	362
3	France	46	France	82	China	245
4	China	33	Libya	66	France	209
5	Libya	33	China	56	Cuba	193
6	United Kingdom	29	United Kingdom	54	United Kingdom	184
7	Israel	22	Sudan	44	Iran	182
8	Germany	19	Iran	39	Pakistan	180
9	Pakistan	19	Egypt	36	Saudi Arabia	174
10	Sudan	19	Israel	36	Libya	148
11	Egypt	18	Chad	33	Sudan	132
12	Iran	18	Pakistan	32	Turkey	104
13	Saudi Arabia	18	Saudi Arabia	31	Israel	103
14	Turkey	18	Cuba	27	Syria	101
15	Cuba	17	Germany	25	DR Congo (Zaire)	86
16	Chad	15	Italy	25	Italy	86
17	Italy	14	Turkey	25	Chad	80
18	Belgium	13	DR Congo (Zaire)	23	Germany	79
19	Iraq	13	Ethiopia	23	East Germany	78
20	Jordan	13	Syria	22	Australia	77
21	Netherlands	13	Tanzania	22	Iraq	75
22	Syria	13	Belgium	21	India	71
23	East Germany	11	Jordan	21	Romania	69
24	Ethiopia	11	Lithuania	21	Portugal	66
25	Greece	11	Estonia	20	Estonia	64
26	India	11	Latvia	20	Lithuania	64
27	Niger	11	Netherlands	20	Netherlands	64
28	Nigeria	11	Portugal	20	Poland	64
29	Portugal	11	Romania	20	Egypt	63
30	Spain	11	Nigeria	19	Eritrea	62
31	United Arab Emirates	11	Poland	19	Ethiopia	62
32	Algeria	10	Spain	19	Belgium	61
33	Canada	10	Czech Republic	18	Denmark	61
34	DR Congo (Zaire)	10	India	18	Vietnam (North Vietnam)	60
35	Denmark	10	Norway	18	Spain	58
36	Hungary	10	Denmark	17	Hungary	57
37	Latvia	10	East Germany	17	Jordan	57
38	Lithuania	10	Greece	17	Latvia	57
39	Romania	10	Hungary	17	Thailand	56
40	South Africa	10	Iraq	17	Czech Republic	54
41	Australia	9	North Korea	17	Bulgaria	53
42	Bangladesh	9	Australia	16	United Arab Emirates	52
43	Benin	9	Bangladesh	16	Ireland	50
44	Burkina Faso	9	Bulgaria	16	Nigeria	50
45	Czech Republic	9	Niger	16	Norway	49
46	Estonia	9	South Africa	16	Greece	48
47	North Korea	9	United Arab Emirates	16	South Africa	48
48	Norway	9	Eritrea	15	Uganda	47

49	Poland	9	Uganda	15	Albania	46
50	Qatar	9	Albania	14	Finland	46
51	Albania	8	Benin	14	Sweden	46
52	Bulgaria	8	Burkina Faso	14	Canada	45
53	Eritrea	8	Guinea	14	Tanzania	45
54	Kenya	8	Slovenia	14	Armenia	44
55	Malaysia	8	Canada	13	Slovakia	43
56	Tanzania	8	Finland	13	Angola	42
57	Afghanistan	7	Georgia	13	Slovenia	42
58	Cameroon	7	Ireland	13	Georgia	41
59	Finland	7	Luxembourg	13	Qatar	41
60	Ireland	7	Qatar	13	Afghanistan	37
61	Luxembourg	7	Sweden	13	North Korea	37
62	Senegal	7	Yemen (North Yemen)	13	Azerbaijan	36
63	Slovenia	7	Angola	12	Guinea	34
64	South Yemen	7	Armenia	12	Kuwait	34
65	Sweden	7	El Salvador	12	Luxembourg	34
66	Yemen (North Yemen)	7	Kenya	12	Niger	33
67	Angola	6	Nepal	12	North Macedonia	33
68	Armenia	6	Rwanda	12	South Korea	32
69	Bahrain	6	Senegal	12	Ukraine	32
70	Burundi	6	Algeria	11	Algeria	31
71	El Salvador	6	Austria	11	Benin	31
72	Georgia	6	Bosnia-Herzegovina	11	Bosnia-Herzegovina	31
73	Guinea	6	Burundi	11	El Salvador	31
74	Kuwait	6	Croatia	11	Austria	30
75	Mauritania	6	Ghana	11	Bangladesh	30
76	Morocco	6	Liberia	11	Kenya	29
77	Somalia	6	Mauritania	11	Croatia	28
78	Thailand	6	Tunisia	11	Mongolia	27
79	Tunisia	6	Ivory Coast	10	Burkina Faso	25
80	Uganda	6	Sierra Leone	10	Burundi	25
81	Austria	5	Slovakia	10	New Zealand	25
82	Bhutan	5	Thailand	10	Malaysia	24
83	Bosnia-Herzegovina	5	Ukraine	10	Nicaragua	24
84	Croatia	5	Cameroon	9	Nepal	23
85	Ghana	5	Djibouti	9	Ghana	22
86	Indonesia	5	Guinea-Bissau	9	Liberia	22
87	Japan	5	Malaysia	9	Morocco	22
88	Liberia	5	Serbia (Yugoslavia)	9	Rwanda	22
89	Mali	5	South Yemen	9	Senegal	21
90	Myanmar	5	Tajikistan	9	Sierra Leone	21
91	Nepal	5	Togo	9	South Yemen	21
92	Rwanda	5	Afghanistan	8	Togo	21
93	Sierra Leone	5	Cambodia (Kampuchea)	8	Cameroon	20
94	Slovakia	5	Malawi	8	Iceland	19
95	Ukraine	5	South Korea	8	Mauritania	19
96	Zimbabwe	5	Azerbaijan	7	Tonga	19
97	Djibouti	4	Bhutan	7	Tunisia	19
98	Guinea-Bissau	4	Indonesia	7	Serbia (Yugoslavia)	18
99	Honduras	4	Kuwait	7	Taiwan	18

100	Ivory Coast	4	Mongolia	7	Uzbekistan	18
101	Malawi	4	Morocco	7	Yemen (North Yemen)	18
102	Nicaragua	4	Myanmar	7	Zambia	18
103	Oman	4	North Macedonia	7	Zimbabwe	18
104	Serbia (Yugoslavia)	4	Switzerland	7	Argentina	17
105	Singapore	4	Tonga	7	Ivory Coast	17
106	South Korea	4	Uzbekistan	7	Kazakhstan	17
107	Switzerland	4	Vietnam (North Vietnam)	7	Malawi	17
108	Tajikistan	4	Zimbabwe	7	Somalia	17
109	Togo	4	Argentina	6	Japan	16
110	Uzbekistan	4	Bahrain	6	Kyrgyzstan	16
111	Vietnam (North Vietnam)	4	Honduras	6	Montenegro	16
112	Zambia	4	Japan	6	Myanmar	16
113	Azerbaijan	3	Kazakhstan	6	Bhutan	15
114	Cambodia (Kampuchea)	3	Mali	6	Congo	15
115	Congo	3	Montenegro	6	Djibouti	15
116	Cyprus	3	Nicaragua	6	Guinea-Bissau	15
117	Dominican Republic	3	Philippines	6	Moldova	15
118	Gambia	3	Singapore	6	Tajikistan	15
119	Iceland	3	Somalia	6	Cambodia (Kampuchea)	14
120	Kazakhstan	3	Taiwan	6	Singapore	14
121	Kyrgyzstan	3	Congo	5	South Sudan	13
122	Laos	3	Dominican Republic	5	Switzerland	12
123	Mongolia	3	Gambia	5	Bahrain	11
124	Montenegro	3	South Sudan	5	Namibia	11
125	New Zealand	3	Iceland	4	Honduras	10
126	North Macedonia	3	Moldova	4	Indonesia	10
127	Philippines	3	New Zealand	4	Mali	10
128	Tonga	3	Oman	4	Mozambique	9
129	Argentina	2	Zambia	4	Gambia	8
130	Botswana	2	Cyprus	3	Oman	7
131	Lebanon	2	Kyrgyzstan	3	Bolivia	6
132	Madagascar	2	Laos	3	Brazil	6
133	Mozambique	2	Madagascar	3	Central African Republic	6
134	Namibia	2	Mozambique	3	Chile	6
135	South Sudan	2	Namibia	3	Laos	6
136	Sri Lanka	2	Sri Lanka	3	Paraguay	6
137	Taiwan	2	Venezuela	3	Philippines	6
138	Venezuela	2	Bolivia	2	Uruguay	6
139	Belarus	1	Botswana	2	Dominican Republic	5
140	Bolivia	1	Brazil	2	Madagascar	5
141	Brazil	1	Chile	2	Cyprus	4
142	Brunei	1	Lebanon	2	Malta	4
143	Central African Republic	1	Paraguay	2	Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	4
144	Chile	1	Uruguay	2	Sri Lanka	3
145	Colombia	1	Belarus	1	Venezuela	3
146	Costa Rica	1	Brunei	1	Botswana	2

147	Czechosolovakia	1	Central African Republic	1	Lebanon	2
148	Federated States of Micronesia	1	Colombia	1	Belarus	1
149	Malta	1	Costa Rica	1	Brunei	1
150	Marshall Islands	1	Czechosolovakia	1	Colombia	1
151	Moldova	1	Federated States of Micronesia	1	Costa Rica	1
152	Palau	1	Malta	1	Czechosolovakia	1
153	Panama	1	Marshall Islands	1	Federated States of Micronesia	1
154	Paraguay	1	Palau	1	Marshall Islands	1
155	Solomon Islands	1	Panama	1	Palau	1
156	Turkmenistan	1	Solomon Islands	1	Panama	1
157	Uruguay	1	Turkmenistan	1	Solomon Islands	1
158	Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	1	Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	1	Turkmenistan	1

Figure 16: Percentage of Active Dyads with External Military Assistance over Time with LOWESS Smoothing

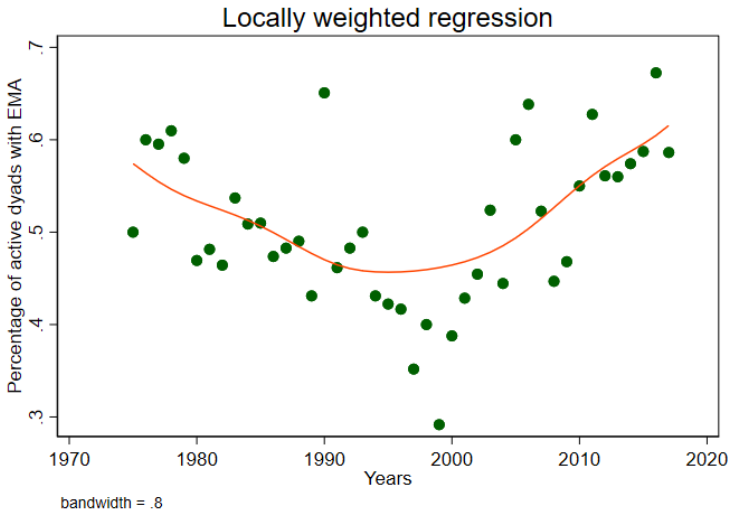


Figure 17: Relative Frequency of Intrastate Conflicts with External Support over Time (state-to-state support only)

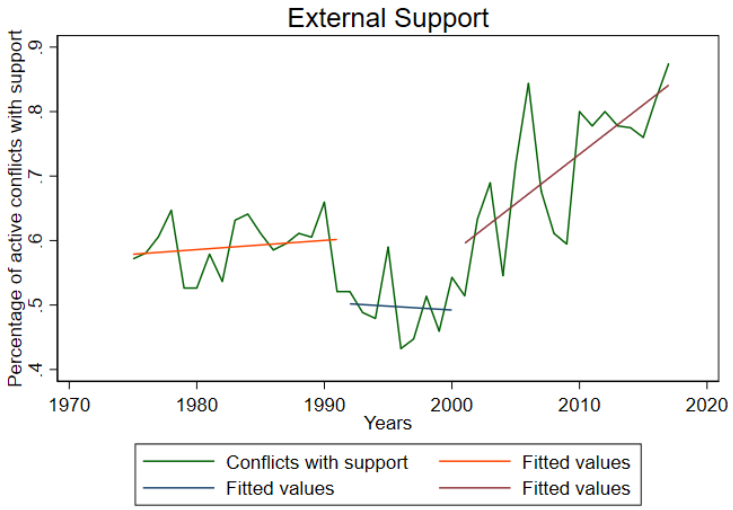
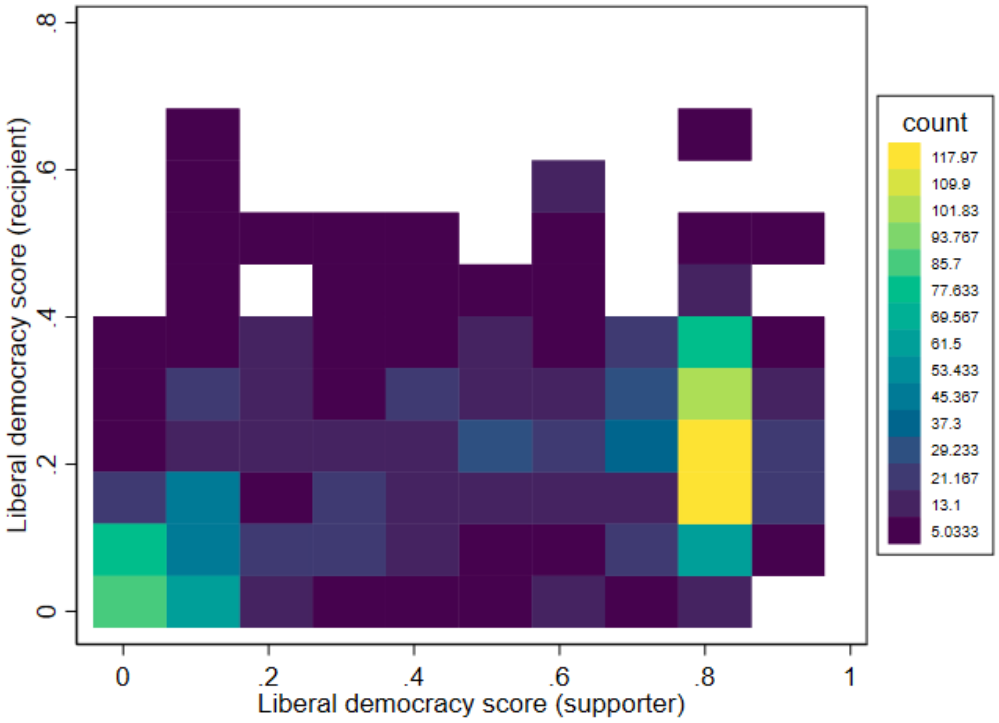


Figure 18: Frequency of External Military Assistance by Regime Type of Supporter and Recipient (no US)



CHAPTER 4: BUILDING CAPACITY OR EXACERBATING INSTABILITY? US MILITARY TRAINING, EXTERNAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND WAR-TIME COUP RISK

4.1 Introduction

In 2012, the decades-old pursuit of greater autonomy by Tuareg tribes in the North Malian region of Azawad led to the renewed flaring up of violence.[403] Joined by Islamist rebels aiming to introduce Sharia law throughout Mali, the insurgency quickly gained control of large sways of Malian territory.[404] On 21 March, dissatisfied with the handling of the Tuareg Rebellion by President Amadou Toumani Touré, soldiers from a nearby military camp staged a coup and ousted the president.[405] The successful coup made headlines around the world not only for the violent and irregular regime change months short of scheduled elections,[406] but also because of the discovered link between coup leader Amadou Sanogo and the US military: Sanogo had received military training from the US military on multiple occasions.[407] Similar connections between coup leaders and external supporters in other countries have spurred renewed interest in the role of external military assistance in general—and foreign military training in particular—in military-backed attempts to overthrow the sitting government.

These studies demonstrate that the Malian case is not an exception. On average, just short of every third coup attempt occurs in the context of a civil war.[408] Out of the 84 countries that experienced civil war between 1975-2017, 33 also saw at least one attempt at irregular regime change by coup d'état.[409] Departing from Thyne's definition of coup attempts as "illegal and overt

[403] Associated Press, 'Thousands Flee Mali amid Tuareg Rebellion', *The Guardian*, 5 February 2012.
[404] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Mali: Government', *UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia*, accessed 3 January 2021.
[405] Adam Nossiter, 'Soldiers Overthrow Mali Government', *The New York Times*, 22 March 2012.
[406] Mark Caldwell, 'Broad Condemnation of Mali Coup Ahead of Election', *Deutsche Welle*, 22 March 2012.
[407] Whitlock, 'Leader of Mali Military Coup Trained in U.S.'
[408] Curtis Bell and Jun Koga Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 7 (2017): 1432–55.
[409] Based on the UCDP definition of state-based conflict and calculated with data from the UCDP Dyadic dataset 18.1 and the Global Instances of Coup dataset, see Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions'; Therése Pettersson and Kristine Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017', *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 4 (2018): 535–47; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007'; Powell and Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset'.

attempts by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executive,"[410] I restrict the definition of *military-backed coup attempts* to any such attempts with direct involvement or clear backing by members of the armed forces.[411] In the vast majority of coup attempts, coup plotters had a military association or the support of (fractions of) the armed forces and hence qualify as military coups.

This paper examines the relationship between civil war, external support, and coup risk. It is interested in how the influx of resources shapes coup risk in a civil war environment, where the incumbent regime faces threats not only from regime insiders, but also from an armed opposition. Since existing work finds that civil war can be a trigger for coups, external military assistance, if effective in mitigating an insurgent threat, may curtail coup risk. Yet, foreign military training in particular holds the potential for trainees to acquire skills and status that allows them to stage a successful coup—especially if grievances run high during armed conflict.

To date, no systematic study of the relationship between external military assistance and coup risk in the context of civil war exists, at least not on a global scale. The few systematic analyses on the role of external support on coup risk focus on the military aid and training the United States provides as part of its foreign military assistance.[412] This restriction to US military aid presents potential challenges for inference and generalisability of results, however.

To address these challenges, this paper inquires how foreign military training by the United States and third parties other than the United States affect military coup risk during civil war, respectively. It offers a critique of the field's reliance on data on US military assistance by arguing that US military assistance presents an exceptional case of external support. Distinguishing between *technical* training and *professional* training, I show that the United States' focus on the latter leads to

[410] Powell and Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset', 252.
[411] In this I follow previous work, see Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'. Also see De Bruin, *How to Prev. Coups d'État*.
[412] Ruby and Gibler, 'US Professional Military Education and Democratization Abroad'; Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'; Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.

an increase in trainees' human capital and a reduced ability to punish coup plotters that in turn exacerbates coup risk. The same risk factors are not necessarily present when training is provided by countries other than the United States and focuses on the transfer of technical expertise.

In an additional step, this paper examines whether the focus on military training is warranted in the context of conflict-related coups by comparing it to the effects of external military assistance more generally. As understood here, external military assistance includes the provision of weapons, non-weaponry equipment, and logistical support in addition to the provision of training and expertise. Unlike more long-term and broader assistance with security sector reform, it is provided by a third-party government to the armed forces of a state involved in a civil war with the intent to support them in their fight against an insurgent threat. Since training is often provided in conjunction with equipment, it is worth exploring whether the observed effect is not in fact the result of broader train-and-equip programmes.

Newly updated data from the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) for the period 1975-2017 presents an opportunity to compare the coup risk associated with military training by the United States to that generated by the involvement of other third parties. Coding on other types of indirect military support, such as weapons and non-weaponry equipment in addition to military training allows me to identify the factors that drive the relationship between external support and coup risk during civil war. Through use of a matching strategy, this analysis further guards against the inferential risk of non-random assignment of the treatment—in this case the external support provided.

I find that, in the context of civil wars, US foreign military training is not a good predictor of military-backed coup risk. It is possible that the coup-exacerbating effect of such assistance is related primarily to more long-term and less conflict-related assistance provided to recipient states during peacetime. When comparing US military training to the training offered by other third parties during civil war, non-US training can in fact reduce coup risk. This lends support to the hypothesis that the support the United States provides is different in design and content from the

support other external supporters provide. As such, attempts to extrapolate the effect of external involvement in conflicts from empirical evidence of US support is problematic. A comparison to the effect of equipment and matériel support shows, however, that the focus on military training in the literature is appropriate and constitutes the driving force behind the negative association of external military assistance and military-backed coup risk if such support is provided by supporters other than the United States.

This paper proceeds by briefly discussing known determinants of coup risk before focusing on the role external involvement plays in manipulating incentive and reward structures for military actors on the ground. It then outlines the characteristics that make US military training different from military training provided by other third parties and derives hypotheses on its associated impact on coup risk. The ensuing section describes the research design to test these theoretical expectations. The subsequent presentation of findings is followed by a discussion of results offering some concluding remarks.

4.2 Determinants of Coup Risk

Coup literature predominantly studies the phenomenon from a rationalist perspective, applying insights from expected utility theory to the problem of decision-making under uncertainty that coup attempts necessarily pose.[413] Here, the decision to stage a coup is viewed as the result of a careful decision-making process by would-be plotters: Plotter capacity to conduct a coup and plotter disposition toward the status quo enter a cost-benefit analysis that weighs the benefits from a successful overthrow of the government against the risks associated with a failed attempt.[414]

[413] Risa A Brooks, 'Integrating the Civil–Military Relations Subfield', *Annual Review of Political Science* 22 (2019): 379–98.
[414] Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War', 1433–34.

Plotter capacity is determined by a number of factors including the size and budget of the armed forces,[415] plotters' position in the organisation,[416] and a country's institutional make-up.[417] Legitimacy in the eyes of the public is key and widespread discontent with the incumbent regime due to poor economic performance or an inability to rein in political instability can work in plotters' favour.[418] A permissive environment for a coup attempt alone does not explain variation in coup attempts, however. It is only when members of the armed forces have reason to turn against civilian leadership that coup risk increases. This might be the case when civilian leaders fail to meet the military's corporate interests leaving them dissatisfied with the level of defence spending, the autonomy granted, or their ability to maintain cohesiveness within the institution.[419] Actors then make a rational choice opting for the path that promises highest expected utility given perceived payoffs and probability of occurrence. Notably, while some of these studies control for the effect of ongoing armed conflict,[420] they do not theorise how a conflict context affects the assessment of risks and rewards.[421]

Increasingly, scholars have become interested in the international determinants of coup risk and the ability of third parties to exercise leverage over regime (in)stability.[422] A growing literature

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415 Augustine J. Kposowa and J. Craig Jenkins, 'The Structural Sources of Military Coups in Postcolonial Africa, 1957-1984', *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 1 (1993): 126–63; Jonathan M. Powell, 'Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 6 (2012): 1017–40.

416 Dorothy Ohl and Evgeny Finkel, 'Coups and Military Ranks', Paper Presented at the Comparative Politics Workshop, Washington, DC, November 15, 2013; Erica De Bruin, 'Preventing Coups d'État: How Counterbalancing Works', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 7 (2018): 1433–58.

417 Staffan I. Lindberg and John F. Clark, 'Does Democratization Reduce the Risk of Military Interventions in Politics in Africa?', *Democratisation* 15, no. 1 (2008): 86–105.

418 John B. Londregan and Keith T. Poole, 'Poverty, The Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power', *World Politics* 42, no. 2 (1990): 151–83; Paul Staniland, 'Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective', *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 322–62; Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War'.

419 William R Thompson, *The Grievances of Military Coup-Makers* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1973); Eric A Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977); Barbara Geddes, 'What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?', *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 115–44.

420 Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer, 'Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47, no. 5 (2003): 594–620; Martin Gassebner, Jerg Gutmann, and Stefan Voigt, 'When to Expect a Coup d'État? An Extreme Bounds Analysis of Coup Determinants', *Public Choice* 169, no. 3–4 (2016): 293–313.

421 Bell and Sudduth treat civil war as an explanatory variable in explaining coup risk, but do not examine civil war as a scope condition.

422 Ekim Arbatli and Cemal E. Arbatli, 'The International Determinants of Military Coup Behavior', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, ed. William R. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

demonstrates that third parties can have an impact on the likelihood of coups and democratisation trends more generally.[423] Such leverage can be the result of economic interdependence[424] or more proactive use of economic statecraft such as sanctions[425] or foreign aid[426] as well as diplomatic pressure.[427] Signals of hostility by third parties towards the incumbent regime, for example, can provide additional incentives for coup plotters to go through with their plans in the knowledge that they are unlikely to face external reprisals in the aftermath.[428] These findings are not specific to a civil war context, but refer to overall coup risk regardless of whether a country experiences ongoing armed conflict.

With regard to military instruments, early work has focused on the role of arms transfers. One study finds them to increase the risk of a coup in developing countries in the 1960s and 1970s, while another suggests the risk of attempted or successful coups declines in Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s and 1990s when arms are received.[429] More recent work has been similarly inconclusive. Here, the focus has shifted to the effect of training partner militaries. Ruby and Gibler find that larger numbers of officers trained in US Professional Military Education (PME) programmes reduce not only the risk of coups, but that in many cases these trainees have gone on to play active roles in their home countries' democratisation processes.[430] They argue that participation in the

[423] Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, 'International Linkage and Democratization', *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005): 20–34.
[424] Jonathan M. Powell and Mwita Chacha, 'Investing in Stability: Economic Interdependence, Coups d'État, and the Capitalist Peace', *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 4 (2016): 525–38; Daehee Bak and Chungshik Moon, 'Foreign Direct Investment and Authoritarian Stability', *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 14 (2016): 1998–2037; Andrey Tomashevskiy, 'Investing in Violence: Foreign Direct Investment and Coups in Authoritarian Regimes', *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 2 (2016): 409–23.
[425] Nikolay Marinov, 'Do Economic Sanctions Destabilize Country Leaders?', *American Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 3 (2005): 564–76; Abel Escribà-Folch and Joseph Wright, 'Dealing with Tyranny: International Sanctions and the Survival of Authoritarian Rulers', *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 335–59.
[426] Faisal Z. Ahmed, 'The Perils of Unearned Foreign Income: Aid, Remittances, and Government Survival', *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 1 (2012): 146–65.
[427] Jonathan M. Powell, Trace Lasley, and Rebecca Schiel, 'Combating Coups d'État in Africa, 1950–2014', *Studies in Comparative International Development* 51, no. 4 (2016): 482–502; Issaka K Souaré, 'The African Union as a Norm Entrepreneur on Military Coups d'État in Africa (1952-2012): An Empirical Assessment', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 52, no. 1 (2014): 69–94.
[428] Thyne, 'Supporter of Stability or Agent of Agitation? The Effect of US Foreign Policy on Coups in Latin America, 1960-99'.
[429] Talukder Maniruzzaman, 'Arms Transfers, Military Coups, and Military Rule in Developing States', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 4 (1992): 733–55; T. Y. Wang, 'Arms Transfers and Coups d'État: A Study on Sub-Saharan Africa', *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 6 (1998): 659–75.
[430] Ruby and Gibler, 'US Professional Military Education and Democratization Abroad'.

programme instils norms of professionalism and civilian control over the military that are believed to reduce officers' willingness to oust the government by violent means.

This view is challenged in a well-received study by Savage and Caverley, who find that exposure to US International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Countering Terrorism Fellowship (CTFP) programmes substantially increases the probability that trainees stage a coup upon returning to their home countries.[431] Savage and Caverley's argument is based on the increased "human capital" training imparts on (parts of) the military rather than processes of norm diffusion.[432]

According to the authors, the effect of US military training on coup risk is threefold. First, military training by the US armed forces increases the relative competence of trainees and with it that of the overall military. Second, military training reduces the likelihood of punishment by the domestic regime and the United States due to the resources already invested in the partnership. Third, military training imparts "soft power" on trainees that allow them to solve the "coup coordination game" more easily:[433] The leadership skills, prestige, and social networks training at a military institution imparts allows trainees to gain the trust and cooperation of their peers more easily.[434] This makes them suitable coup leaders that can plot a coup unnoticed, secure the support of sufficient portions of the military, and create facts on the ground that turn a coup attempt into a successful coup.[435]

The effect of the provision of weapons and equipment in addition to training is less clear-cut. Savage and Caverley argue that, in contrast to financial military aid, the human capital bestowed

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[431] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.
[432] Ibid., 545.
[433] Ibid.
[434] In this game theoretical model, all players gain from coordinating on the same outcome, i.e. coup (or no coup), but face (unequal) punishments for defecting from this strategy. See Naunihal Singh, *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 6; Brett A. Casper and Scott A. Tyson, 'Popular Protest and Elite Coordination in a Coup d'État', *Journal of Politics* 76, no. 2 (2014): 548–64.
[435] Edward Luttwak, *Coup d'État: A Practical Handbook* (London: Penguin Books, 1969); Singh, *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups*.

on trainees is valuable because it represents a resource that cannot be transformed into coup-proofing measures by the regime. Hence, they are not surprised to find that US military and economic aid does not exert an independent effect on coup risk.[436] Yet, a recent RAND report presents evidence linking US security sector assistance, i.e. military aid, to an increased coup risk, at least for a sub-sample of African states.[437]

These more recent studies are united in their focus exclusively on the role of US training and assistance. This poses potential challenges to the accuracy of results and their generalisability beyond a US context. For one, these studies conflate long-term security sector assistance to strengthen state capacity with the more immediate and partisan military assistance states receive when combatting an acute insurgent threat. Since the United States provides military assistance to states during periods of relative peace as well as active armed conflict, these studies fail to account for the specific threat environment that civil war presents and how this affects coup risk.

Focusing on the United States as the exclusive provider of external support further risks overlooking the considerable contributions other countries such as regional powers, middle powers, and neighbouring states make.[438] This can lead to mistaking years without US support for years without any support, posing potential problems for inference. Most importantly, basing our assessment of external support on empirical evidence from cases of US support only assumes that support by other third parties is fundamentally alike to that provided by the United States when results in fact reflect the particular context and design of US military aid. This assumption not only leads to inaccurate findings, but it also further perpetuates an undue bias towards analysing US foreign policy in International Relations research.[439]

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[436] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.
[437] Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*; Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: Technical Appendixes*.
[438] Pearson, 'Geographic Proximity and Foreign Military Intervention'; Harbom and Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict and Its International Dimensions, 1946-2004'; Kathman, 'Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions'; Kathman, 'Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention'.
[439] Colgan, 'American Perspectives and Blind Spots on World Politics'.

This study addresses this gap in the literature by broadening the focus to indirect external support by third parties other than the United States, while taking into account the nexus between external military assistance, coup risk, and civil war. Theorising civil war as a scope condition of third-party involvement, it models the effects of external military assistance on coup risk in the context of the demands of a conflict environment.

4.3 External Military Assistance, Coup Risk, and Civil War

4.3.1 Military Training and Coup Risk during Civil War

Civil war and coups frequently overlap.[440] This is no coincidence. Rather, coups and civil wars are distinct, but interconnected manifestations of political violence and share many of the same risk factors.[441] While there is some work on the exacerbating effect of different forms of societal contestation such as protests, riots, assassinations, purges, and overall political instability on coup risk,[442] most of the literature is concerned with how leaders' fear of coups can induce civil war. Roessler, for example, argues measures to exclude hostile elites from power to avoid internal takeover risks excluded elites organising in a rebellion. Fearful elites then end up "trading coups for civil war."[443] Although these works recognise the interrelation of coups and civil wars, they primarily view coup-proofing measures as a cause of civil wars.

In an attempt to rectify this, Bell and Sudduth present the first systematic study of the impact of armed conflict on coup risk. They find that coup attempts are not only more likely during civil war, but that more intense fighting and conflict closer to the capital increases the risk of a

[440] Cristina Bodea, Ibrahim Elbadawi, and Christian Houle, 'Do Civil Wars, Coups and Riots Have the Same Structural Determinants?', *International Interactions* 43, no. 3 (2017): 537–61.
[441] Clayton L. Thyne, 'The Impact of Coups d'État on Civil War Duration', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34, no. 3 (2017): 287–307; Bodea, Elbadawi, and Houle, 'Do Civil Wars, Coups and Riots Have the Same Structural Determinants?'
[442] Thyne, 'Supporter of Stability or Agent of Agitation? The Effect of US Foreign Policy on Coups in Latin America, 1960-99'; Powell, 'Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État'; Casper and Tyson, 'Popular Protest and Elite Coordination in a Coup d'État'; Jaclyn Johnson and Clayton L. Thyne, 'Squeaky Wheels and Troop Loyalty: How Domestic Protests Influence Coups d'État, 1951–2005', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 3 (2018): 597–625.
[443] Philip G Roessler, 'The Enemy within: Personal Rule, Coups, and Civil War in Africa', *World Politics* 63, no. 2 (2011): 300–346; Roessler, *Ethnic Politics and State Power in Africa: The Logic of the Coup-Civil War Trap*; Jonathan M. Powell, 'Trading Coups for Civil War', *African Security Review* 23, no. 4 (2014): 329–38.

military coup. They attribute the increased coup risk during civil war to the growing dissatisfaction of military elites with the status quo. As government victory becomes less likely, military elites fear for their status and privileges that are tied to the regime they protect staying in power. Bleak prospects of future welfare affect plotters' willingness to attempt coups that would have previously been considered too risky.[444] Military elites facing the pressure from a more immediate insurgent threat are therefore more likely to attempt to overthrow the sitting government—in a way, to beat the opposition forces to it. That this can be a rational course of action is demonstrated by recent work on the effect of coups on conflict duration: Thyne finds that coups during civil war eliminate the military-turned-government as a potential spoiler and thus can function as a "peace-inducing shock" to the civil war equilibrium that can bring about conflict termination.[445]

This line of reasoning shows how coup risk and threat from an insurgency interact during civil war. It is against this threat environment that the introduction of outside resources in the form of external military assistance, including military training, needs to be viewed. Civil war presents a scope condition of any provision of external support—defined as assistance in a conflict—with unique consequences for its effect on coup risk. Where previous studies found foreign military training to aggravate coup risk,[446] they did not consider how ongoing civil war already significantly increased the chances of a coup occurring.[447]

Rather than further exacerbating coup risk, the provision of training can mitigate the risk factor "civil war." The increased skill and expertise of trained forces can improve armed forces' combat proficiency. This in turn allows the military to fight the insurgency more effectively. Increased military effectiveness allows the armed forces to reign in the insurgent threat on the battlefield and reduces the risk of rebel victory. The considerable risks involved in staging a coup then become, once more, a risk the military elite is not willing to take when factoring in the now

444 Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War'.
445 Thyne, 'The Impact of Coups d'État on Civil War Duration'.
446 Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.
447 Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War'.

improved chances of emerging victorious from the armed conflict. This way, foreign military training during civil war can reduce the coup-inducing effect of armed conflict.

In addition to improved relative competence and ability to counter an insurgency, support from an outside power to regime forces further signals outside powers' deep involvement in the conflict and their unwillingness to accept opposition victory. Considering that providing military assistance is costly for external supporters, both in terms of the drain on resources and reputational costs, it signals commitment to recipient countries.[448] Third parties provide support to foreign militaries if they consider government victory a priority and recognise that this goal is untenable without their support.[449] This drastically changes the outlook of military elites, now assured of the support by an outside backer, and recalibrates their calculation of future benefits.

Therefore, the destabilising effect of military training should be less pronounced during civil war when compared to the effects of training during periods of both peace- and wartime. With regard to the effects of US military training, this leads to adjusted expectations: While US military training overall may indeed increase coup risk, this should not be the case where US forces train militaries involved in an active civil war. Here the increase in technical expertise and with that the ability to defeat an insurgency mitigates the incentives to stage a coup the insurgent threat creates in the first place. This leads to a first hypothesis:

H_1: US foreign military training does not exacerbate coup risk during civil war.

While this hypothesis challenges the previously established link between US foreign military training and coup risk,[450] the prediction is not specific to the United States but applies to third parties providing military training during armed conflict in general. The military training provided by any third party should, on average, increase recipient capacity to counter an insurgency and

[448] Thyne, 'Supporter of Stability or Agent of Agitation? The Effect of US Foreign Policy on Coups in Latin America, 1960-99'.
[449] Lemke and Regan, 'Intervention as Influence'.
[450] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.

hence at least not aggravate coup risk. The degree to which it succeeds in outright reducing coup risk depends on the effectiveness of the training in imparting new skills and expertise on trainees. This is likely to vary between external supporters. Nevertheless, it allows us to predict that effects of external military training are at least not harmful to regime stability.

4.3.2 US and Non-US Military Training during Civil War

Not only is the effect of increased competence on coup risk likely to vary between periods of relative peace and conflict, but the effect of foreign military training further depends on the content and design of such training. I argue that the coup-exacerbating effect of foreign military training previous research has found is primarily the result of trainees' increased human capital and a reduced likelihood of punishment coup plotters face rather than an increase in technical skill and expertise. More specifically, the argument about the adverse effect of foreign military training on coup risks, rests on i) the prestige of US military institutions that is then bestowed on trainees, ii) the design of training programmes that facilitates the building of social networks, and iii) the US military doctrine of "building partner capacity" that envisions long-term cooperation and aims to avoid direct military intervention. It is the combination of these factors that lead to US foreign military training increasing coup risk, rather than the transfer of technical expertise underlying this relationship.

Foreign military training can take on many different forms. They are characterised by the combination of two different components. *Technical training*, on the one hand, constitutes the transfer of technical knowledge and expertise, such as training in the use of weapons systems, maintenance of matériel, intelligence gathering as well as help with the planning of operations. *Professional training*, on the other hand, aims at imparting a broader set of norms, values, and standards that characterise a profession. In the military profession, these include training in international humanitarian law, civil-military relations, military doctrine, leadership skills, and

foreign languages to allow for interoperability with partner militaries.[451] United States foreign military training programmes are characterised by a strong commitment to the professionalisation of partner armed forces. It is mostly through this professional component that US training increases trainees' human capital and decreases the United States' and target government's ability to punish them.

United States foreign military training, and specifically the training conducted as part of the IMET-funded programmes is close to unique in the extent to which it generates human capital and an inability to punish coup plotters. The United States is the country with the highest military spending by far.[452] In terms of the number of armed personnel, it is outranked only by China and India with considerably larger populations.[453] As the world's most prosperous country[454] and given its historical and current role in world order, it presents as the dominant military power.[455] As such, receiving training at a United States institution is particularly prestigious. In fact, there are likely only a handful of countries with comparable military sophistication and international reputation that are likely to bestow the same prestige on trainees. It is the awe and trust elicited by participation in such world-renowned training that allows coup plotters to solve the coordination game inherent to coup attempts by taking on a leadership role and gaining the trust of their peers.[456]

Further, US foreign military training programmes funded through IMET include long-term professional training in the United States. As Atkinson points out, "there are several purposes of IMET to include technical training, but its primary focus is socialisation of foreign officers."[457] By

[451] Federation of American Scientists, 'International Military Education and Training (IMET)', accessed 29 December 2020.
[452] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Military Expenditure Database', accessed 12 December 2020.
[453] Ibid.
[454] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', accessed 15 September 2019.
[455] G. John Ikenberry, Jisi Wang, and Zhu Feng, *America, China, and the Struggle for World Order* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Hal Brands, *Making the Unipolar Moment: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).
[456] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.
[457] Carol Atkinson, 'Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972-2000', *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2006): 519.

design, these programmes tend to foster a spirit of communality among participants and are more suitable to building social networks based on mutual membership in a perceived elite.[458] The joint exposure to American culture and the English language creates further bonds between foreign participants.[459] This social capital can then be accessed when trying to overcome the coup coordination game.[460] This is not necessarily the case for more short-term training and hands-on transfer of technical skills in the recipient country. Here, trainees remain embedded in their regular work environments and are less likely to form strong social bonds with other trainees beyond those that already exist.

Lastly, the United States is committed to "building partner capacity" out of a desire to work "by, with, and through" allied forces.[461] This approach emphasises the building of capacity through foreign military aid, including training. The goal is for US forces to join on operations or partner militaries addressing US security concerns within their territory independently. This is particularly true in African countries, where the majority of civil wars occur, but the United States aims to keep a low profile.[462] It is this interest in future interoperability and the associated costs with preparing foreign militaries for this goal that makes it hard for the United States to punish successful military coupists it has already invested in—especially if direct military intervention in the conflict-country risks triggering terrorist backlash.[463]

Neighbouring states or regional powers, in contrast, often do not show a desire to cooperate with support recipients militarily in the long term because of legacies of rivalry and militarised interstate disputes. Others simply do not have the financial and human resources for such a commitment. Rather, they intervene selectively—and often on the side of the opposition—

458 Machain, 'Exporting Influence: U.S. Military Training as Soft Power', 318.
459 Federation of American Scientists, 'International Military Education and Training (IMET)'.
460 Tobias Böhmelt, Abel Escribà-Folch, and Ulrich Pilster, 'Pitfalls of Professionalism? Military Academies and Coup Risk', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 5 (2019): 1111–39.
461 Michael X. Garrett et al., 'The By-With-Through Approach: An Army Component Perspective', *Joint Force Quarterly* 89, no. 2 (2018): 48.
462 U.S. Africa Command, 'What We Do', accessed 20 August 2019.
463 Piazza and Choi, 'International Military Interventions and Transnational Terrorist Backlash'.

to influence a political crisis in their favour and to avoid negative externalities from conflict spill-over.[464] This makes it easier for them to punish coup plotters acting against their interests.

Taken together, foreign military training by the United States with its emphasis on professional training is particularly likely to contain those components of training that are linked to an increased coup risk. This is not necessarily the case for training provided by other third parties, however. As previously argued, more short-term technical training equips militaries involved in civil wars to fight insurgencies more effectively. When geared towards the challenges of the conflict environment and focused on the transfer of technical expertise to improve combat proficiency, external military training can reduce coup risk during civil war. In consequence, the effect of foreign military training is likely to vary depending on where such support stems from. This leads to a second hypothesis about the diverging effect of foreign military training by the United States vis-à-vis other third parties:

H_2: Foreign military training by non-US supporters reduces coup risk during civil war.

4.4 Data and Research Design

This research assesses coup risk during civil war. The unit of analysis is the active country-year, i.e. the country with one or several active intrastate conflicts on its territory in a given year. The dataset includes 1,173 observations on 84 countries with 110 active armed conflicts in the period 1975-2017. Data on active conflict-years stems from the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1. and includes all years with a stated incompatibility between the government and at least one armed group, where armed combat results in a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths.[465]

[464] Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz, 'Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes'; Kathman, 'Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions'; Kathman, 'Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention'.

[465] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions'. I further drop all dyads where governments are exclusively involved in interstate wars. In line with previous uses of this data, I drop information from the United States-Al-Qaida dyad since this is not usually seen as a civil war, but a transnational terrorist attack. See Thyne, 'The Impact of Coups d'État on Civil War Duration'.

This definition encompasses attempts to overthrow a sitting government in a coup where the associated fighting crosses the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths. Since civil war takes on an explanatory role in my theory, this is potentially problematic. Following Thyne, I thus distinguish between civil wars and coups.[466] For this purpose, I exclude 19 country-years where all observed armed conflict was directly and uniquely linked to coup attempts or successful coups. I consider as civil wars observations where a coup occurred after violence was already ongoing for another reason or where violence continued for purposes not directly linked to the coup afterwards.[467] This way, I include civil wars during which a coup occurred, but drop observations where the civil war *was* the coup from the universe of cases.

The left-truncation of the data, with observations where government and rebel forces jointly produce fewer than 25 battle-related deaths in a given year being omitted, has no immediate bearing on coup risk. Fatality levels above the threshold could be equally indicative of more capable government or rebel forces. Even if this threshold produced a bias in favour of relatively stronger rebels and hence increased coup risk,[468] the relatively low threshold at 25 battle-related deaths still assures insurgent threats posed by rebel groups with a range of capabilities are included.

The start of the observation period in 1975 produces some potential issues with left-censoring of the data when measuring duration. When we first observe countries in 1975, we do not know if external military assistance was provided previously. I include a one-year lag to assess the effects of external military assistance from the previous year. I further use data on a country's coup history going back until 1950. Therefore, previous coups up to 25 years before the beginning

[466] Thyne, 'The Impact of Coups d'État on Civil War Duration'.
[467] For the period 1975-2009, I rely on a list of coups coded as civil wars in the UCDP data identified by Thyne (2017). I researched all coup attempts and successful coups that occurred during a year of active conflict in the period 2010-2017 and coded them looking for "instances where the perpetrators came from the state apparatus, the goal was to overthrow the chief executive and the conflict was brief" (Thyne, 2017, p.291). I mostly relied on conflict descriptions from the UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia. Note that in years with a dyad that represents a coup and another independent civil war-dyad, the civil war dyad remains and the occurrence of a coup is coded for that country-year.
[468] Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War'.

of the observation period are considered when assessing the role of previous coup history on future coup risk.

To assess the impact of external military assistance on the military's propensity to stage a coup, I construct the dependent variable *military-backed coup attempts*. The dummy variable is set to 1 for all country-years in which coup plotters with support from (parts of) the military attempted or succeeded in overthrowing the sitting government at least once. It is set to 0 otherwise. Since my theoretical expectations concern the effect of foreign backing on the choices of the military to utilise violence against other parts of the regime, I only include military-backed coups. This operationalisation ignores coups by non-military members of the elite or other civilians without significant involvement of the armed forces.[469]

Data stems from the Global Instances of Coups dataset and is available for the entire observation period.[470] It excludes plots that were never attempted and alleged coups that could not be verified. I combine coups that were attempted and did not succeed (coup attempts) and coups that were attempted and succeeded in overthrowing the sitting leader (coup success) into a joint measure of military-backed coup attempts since each successful coup was also first attempted. I limit the analysis to coup attempts because the theoretical expectations set out above hypothesise determinants of coup attempts rather than factors that make attempted coups more likely to succeed.

Data on external military assistance is complicated by two issues.[471] Firstly, interval-level data on military assistance exists only for the United States.[472] Hence, we know a lot about the

[469] I use data from Savage and Caverley on the occurrence of military-backed coups for the period 1989-2009. I update this data for the period 2010-2017 by consulting the Center for Systemic Peace's Coup d'État Events, 1946-2017 dataset and examining the military background of the 23 attempted or successful coups in that period. In 83% of the coups observed during that period, plotters had a military background. This represents a slight decrease from the 89% Savage and Caverley observe for the period 1970-2009. See Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'; Monty G. Marshall and Donna Ramsey Marshall, 'Coup d'État Events, 1946-2017 Codebook', 2018.
[470] Powell and Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset'.
[471] For a detailed description of available datasets and data limitations, see Chapter 3.
[472] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations'.

causes and consequences of US military aid, but very little about military aid more generally. Secondly, there is a rich qualitative literature documenting direct involvement of third parties in coups by providing funding, training, or logistical support to coup plotters or even clandestinely joining in on the operation.[473] The aim of this paper, however, is not to test whether third parties are successful in instigating coups, but rather whether an incumbent government allowing or even requesting additional resources to be provided to its military, renders itself vulnerable to a military challenge to power. Hence, it is the indirect rather than the direct effect of external military assistance that is of interest here.

To broaden the scope of the analysis beyond US support, I use data from the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) covering the period 1975-2017.[474] The dataset contains information on the provision of ten different types of external support by third parties worldwide. Besides information on external military training and transfer of expertise, it also provides information on the provision of weapons and ammunition, non-weaponry equipment and logistics support as well as foreign troop support. It is limited to support provided with the intent to support a warring party in an armed conflict and thus excludes instances of direct support to coups.[475]

The dummy variable *US training* captures all years in which the United States provides military training to the military of a government involved in civil war according to the UCDP ESD. This includes training in the conflict-country, in the United States, or in a third country conducted by US military personnel with the aim to assist warring parties in an ongoing conflict. While this may include some instances of training funded through the United States Professional Military Education (PME) programme[476] or the International Military Education and Training (IMET)

[473] For an overview, see Arbatli and Arbatli, 'The International Determinants of Military Coup Behavior', 7.
[474] Vanessa Meier et al., 'External Support in Civil Wars: Introducing the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) 1975-2017', Unpublished Manuscript (Uppsala, 2020).
[475] External support to coups is only included if the coup activity represents the armed conflict, but these instances are excluded from the dataset compiled for this analysis.
[476] Ruby and Gibler, 'US Professional Military Education and Democratization Abroad'.

programme,[477] it also includes conflict-related technical and strategic training in the recipient country. Although IMET training can include the dispatchment of small units called "Mobile Training Teams" to recipient states for up to six months, the focus lies on hosting "International Military Students" in educational institutions in the United States. Besides, the lack of comparable data for countries other than the United States renders data on these programmes unsuitable for the purposes of this study.

To facilitate a more direct comparison between foreign military training by the United States and other external supporters, I create the factor variable *training (all)* denoting no training (0), training by the United States (1), and training by other external supporters (2) in a given country-year. In the same fashion, variables capturing the effect of *weapons and matériel* only and lastly *external military assistance* consisting of weapons, equipment or training support are built. The dummy variable *any training* allows me to isolate the effect of weapons and matériel support by different external supporters by controlling for the simultaneous conduct of foreign training by any third party. I aggregate data from the supporter-recipient-dyad-year, i.e. the triad-year, to the country-year. From the same dataset, I include a measure of *external troop support* to control for foreign troop presence by any third party. I allow for a one-year time lag for all external support-related variables to guard against simultaneity bias.

States at risk of experiencing a coup d'état often take measures to coup-proof their regime against military takeover. The variable *coup-proofing* captures states' efforts to counterbalance the security forces and to keep any one segment of the armed forces from becoming too powerful. Based on Belkin and Schofer's pioneering work, counterbalancing is operationalised as an index comprising of the total number of military and paramilitary units and their respective troop strengths.[478] Pilster and Böhmelt have improved on this measure by including information on

[477] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.
[478] Belkin and Schofer, 'Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk'; Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer, 'Coup Risk, Counterbalancing, and International Conflict', *Security Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 140–77.

ground-based forces that are likely to act as rivals only.[479] Data on the number and strength of military units is retrieved from the Counterbalancing/Coup-Proofing Dataset that draws on annual reports on "The Military Balance" compiled by the International Institutes for Strategic Studies (IISS).[480]

Although the theoretical expectations apply to coup risk during any type of armed conflict, I include the dummy *intensity* to capture the degree to which armed conflict dominates life in a conflict-country. It denotes all conflicts with 1,000 or more battle-related deaths in the previous year.[481] In more intense conflicts, members of the armed forces are more likely to fear for their continued access to benefits.

Since the proposed theory is sensitive to the resources already available to the recipient state's military, I add controls for a country's per capita *GDP* and *military expenditure* normalised by the size of the armed forces.[482] The variable *military personnel* separately controls for the size of the armed forces. Data on military expenditure and military personnel is derived from the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database and annual reports on "The Military Balance" by IISS.[483] GDP data is retrieved from the World Bank Development Indicators.[484]

To capture the institutionalisation of civilian control over the military, I include two measures of regime type. The dummy variable *democracy* denotes all country-years with a Polity2 score of seven or higher.[485] Since previously used data to determine an incumbent military regime

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[479] Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Böhmelt, 'Coup-Proofing and Military Effectiveness in Interstate Wars, 1967-99', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 4 (2011): 331–50.
[480] Ibid.; Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Böhmelt, 'Do Democracies Engage Less in Coup-Proofing? On the Relationship between Regime Type and Civil-Military Relations', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 4 (2012): 355–72; International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 'The Military Balance'.
[481] Gleditsch et al., 'Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset'; Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'; Pettersson and Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017'.
[482] I log-transform GDP per capita.
[483] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Military Expenditure Database'; International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 'The Military Balance'.
[484] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators'.
[485] Monty G. Marshall and Ted R. Gurr, 'POLITY5 Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2018. Dataset Users' Manual', 2020.

only runs until 2014,[486] I create a new variable to denote a *military leader* in power. Data for this variable stems from V-Dem.[487] I further include *years since coup attempt* and associated cubic splines to account for a permissive environment resulting from a history of coups.[488]

It is possible that third parties take precautions to assure external military assistance does not foster regime instability and thus only provide it to countries with a low coup risk. This selection into settings with low coup risk could systematically bias results. This would leave us underestimating the potentially regime-destabilising effects of external military assistance on the ground.

To account for the possibility of non-random assignment of the treatment variable, external military assistance, I use a matching strategy to create a sample of more balanced observations.[489] Assuming that all relevant determinants of the provision of external military assistance are observable, this procedure allows for the comparison of observations that are alike on all characteristics deemed relevant to the provision of external military assistance. This way, it safeguards against the risk that any observed difference in average outcomes between cases with and without external military assistance is due to a factor that predicts the provision of external military assistance (*selection effect*) rather than the effect of such support.[490]

Observations are matched on a country's coup history before the start of a support relationship to avoid post-treatment bias[491] as well as characteristics previous work has linked to the provision of external military assistance.[492] These include overall state capacity (GDP), oil

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[486] Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, 'Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set', *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 (2014): 313–31.
[487] If chief executives are retired military officers, they are not considered to be military officers, see Coppedge et al., 'V-Dem Codebook V8', 258.
[488] I calculate years since last coup attempt including coups attempted by non-members of the military using Powell and Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset'.
[489] Daniel E. Ho et al., 'Matching as Nonparametric Preprocessing for Reducing Model Dependence in Parametric Causal Inference', *Political Analysis* 15, no. 3 (2007): 199–236.
[490] Gilligan and Sergenti, 'Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference'.
[491] I create a dummy indicating whether a country experienced an attempted or successful coup in the five years preceding the first provision of external military assistance and use the pre-treatment value of the variable for subsequent years. On post-treatment bias, see Ibid.
[492] Koga, 'Where Do Third Parties Intervene? Third Parties' Domestic Institutions and Military Interventions in Civil Conflicts'; Vincenzo Bove, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Petros G. Sekeris, '"Oil above Water": Economic

production, geographical distance (here to the United States), colonial links (here to European countries), refugee outflow, and whether the country is home to a group listed as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation by the US State Department.

A number of matching methods are available to pair observations and assign weights. I use Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM)[493] which has been shown to perform superiorly in comparison to a number of available alternatives.[494] Using propensity scores, for example, can inadvertently increase imbalance in the sample.[495] CEM matches observations that are as similar as possible on all covariates believed to influence whether a case receives treatment with and without treatment. In theory, since any two matched cases have the same likelihood of receiving treatment, any difference between treated and control group can be ascribed to the treatment effect, rather than a selection effect. In practice, exact matches with and without treatment rarely exist. The more detailed the information contained in the variable, the less likely are exact matches. CEM thus creates categories of continuous variables and looks for matches based on those categories. It then prunes the dataset of observations without matches, leading to a reduction in sample size.

To see how well a matching process does in approximating random treatment, the imbalance between variables is informative. Table 14 presents an overview of the difference between treated and untreated observations before (first row) and after matching (second row) for each variable that CEM is asked to match on.

Interdependence and Third-Party Intervention', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 7 (2016): 1251–77; Bove and Böhmelt, 'International Migration and Military Intervention in Civil War'.

493 Stefano M. Iacus, Gary King, and Giuseppe Porro, 'CEM: Coarsened Exact Matching Software', *Journal of Statistical Software* 30, no. 9 (2009): 1–27; Matthew Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata', *The Stata Journal* 9, no. 4 (2009): 524–46.

494 Stefano M. Iacus, Gary King, and Giuseppe Porro, 'Causal Inference without Balance Checking: Coarsened Exact Matching', *Political Analysis* 20, no. 1 (2012): 1–24.

495 Gary King and Richard Nielsen, 'Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used for Matching', *Political Analysis* 27, no. 4 (2019): 435–54.

Table 14: Overview of Imbalance in Treatment and Control Group before and after CEM

Variable	L1	Mean	Min	25%	50%	75%	Max
US terrorist listing	0.35	0.35	0	0	0	1	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Distance from US	0.31	-319.55	0	-651.00	-290.00	483.00	0
	0.03	9.32	0	0	0	682.00	0
GDP pc	0.25	2,687.9	-1.79	335.73	883.78	2,521.70	27,734.00
	0.14	96.07	-31.98	88.56	197.22	-161.97	.
Oil	0.18	0.18	0	0	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Refugee Outflow	0.14	57,762	0	-6,338	-36,990	-90,889	620,000
	0.06	-10,438	0	-6,980	-110,000	.	.
Former European Colony	0.12	-0.12	0	-1	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Coup history	0.02	0.02	0	0	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Global L1 before CEM	0.70						
Global L1 after CEM	0.47						

Before matching, the mean distance from the US was, on average, 320km shorter in cases that received treatment than in those that did not. After matching, it is, on average, 9km longer. While the variable is relatively balanced at means, it is less so in the quantiles of the two distributions, where the difference can be as large as 682km at the 75% percentile. Still, the measure of overall imbalance, L1, is reduced from 0.31 to 0.03 for the variable. While the imbalance is successfully reduced for all variables, close to complete balance is only achieved for the categorical variables *US terrorist listing*, *oil*, *former European colony,* and *coup history*. Altogether, the global L1 that indicates the overall balance across all variables drops from 0.70 to 0.47 after performing CEM. As Iacus et al. point out, the global L1 serves as a point of comparison between matching solutions, like the R^2-statistic for model fit, rather than a hard criterion.[496] As such the reduction of imbalance by 0.23 is considerable. Yet, it is obvious that the dataset is not entirely balanced and hence the experimental design can only be approximated.

The outcome of interest, military-backed coup attempts, is a binary indicator. Since military-backed coups constitute a rare event in the data, the use of rare events logistical regression was considered. Rare events logistical regressions are suitable for estimating binary dependent

[496] Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata', 531.

variables with few observed cases of the outcome of interest.[497] However, this procedure does not allow for the inclusion of factor variables with more than two outcomes as explanatory variables and is hence unsuitable for the analysis at hand. I rely on regular logistic regression estimations instead. Including fixed effects into the models lead to results being based on a very small number of countries (<10). Results from fixed-effects models are hence only presented in the Appendix (cf. Table 22, Appendix B). To account for potential within-country correlation in the main models, standard errors are clustered by conflict-country. The inclusion of years since last coup with associated cubic spline further addresses issues around temporal auto-correlation.[498] All models are run on the matched sample with results from the same analyses run on the full, unmatched sample available in Appendix B.

4.5 Results from the Empirical Analysis

To assess how prevalent coup activity is during armed conflict, I compare the information on coup activity compiled in the dataset with data on coups during peacetime.[499] During the observation period, a total of 245 coups were attempted in 59 countries. In 45% of the cases, these attempts were successful in seizing control of the state.[500] With four attempted coups in 1981, Togo saw the highest number of coup attempts in the same year recorded in the dataset during that period. Yet, only in Bangladesh (1975), Turkey (1980), Sri Lanka (1978), and Haiti (1988) did two coup attempts in the same year succeed.

[497] Gary King and Langche Zeng, 'Logistic Regression in Rare Events Data', *Journal of Statistical Software* 8, no. 2 (2003): 137–63.
[498] Nathanel Beck, Jonathan N. Katz, and Richard Tucker, 'Taking Time Seriously: Time-Series-Cross-Sectional Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable', *American Journal of Political Science* 42, no. 4 (1998): 1260–88.
[499] The data by Powell and Thyne includes all attempted and successful coups regardless of conflict status. I include cases where the coup activity constitutes the armed conflict registered in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset under peacetime since no armed conflict independent of the coup activity exists.
[500] According to Powell and Thyne, a coup is considered successful if "the perpetrators seize and hold power for at least seven days." Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset - Codebook', 2011, 252.

Table 15 presents the relative distribution of coup attempts and successful coups during peacetime and armed conflict.[501] Overall, there were both more coup attempts and successful coups in countries without armed conflict (170) than in countries at war (75), but that number does not reflect the relatively fewer country-years with active armed conflict. In fact, coup activity affected 33 out of the 84 countries with an armed conflict within its territory at least once excluding cases where coups constituted the armed conflict itself. Therefore, around 40% of all countries that experienced civil war between 1975 and 2017 also experienced an attempted or successful coup while the conflict was active. Given that coups are overall a relatively rare event, this number is astonishing and speaks to the link between conflict and coup risk.

Table 15: Distribution of Attempted and Successful Coups during Peacetime and Armed Conflict

	Peacetime	**Armed Conflict**	**Total**
Coup attempt	89	45	134
	(66%)	(34%)	(100%)
Coup success	81	30	111
	(73%)	(27%)	(100%)
Total	170	75	245
	(69%)	(31%)	(100%)

The vast majority of attempted or successful coups during civil war involve the military. While coup plotters can proceed without the direct support of (segments of) the military, this is comparatively rare. Table 16 presents the number of country-years with at least one coup attempt or successful coup and whether the military was involved.[502] Coup plotters had the support of (factions of) the military to overthrow the sitting government during 62 country-years when such attempts were made. In 26 country-years, these attempts allowed coup plotters to seize power. Taken together, the coup leader was a military officer or the military played a key role otherwise in 92% of all country-years with coup activity. Still, with only 5% of all observations experiencing the

[501] Note that the number of coup attempts does not include the coup attempts that turned into a successful coup. The total number of coup attempts is hence the number listed in the row "total" since each successful coup was first attempted. However, keeping with convention, I distinguish between coup attempts that were unsuccessful and successful coups. See Powell and Thyne, 'Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset'.
[502] The total number of coup attempts and successful coups is altogether higher since more than one coup can be attempted or successfully executed in the same year. Since the focus of this analysis lies on the probability of a coup attempt rather than the number of attempted coups, I present country-years with coup attempts and successful coups here.

outcome (cf. Table 17), military-backed coups constitute a rare event in the data. These numbers exclude the 19 country-years with coup activity during armed conflict where the coup activity constitutes the armed conflict, and no armed conflict exists independent of it.

Table 16: Distribution of Country-Years with Attempted and Successful Coups during Armed Conflict

	Military backing		
	No	Yes	Total
Coup attempt	3	39	42
	(7%)	(93%)	(100%)
Coup success	3	26	29
	(10%)	(90%)	(100%)
Total	6	62	68
	(9%)	(91%)	(100%)

The military received external military assistance in 61% of all country-years in the dataset. In 5% of the country-years with external military assistance, the military also backed a coup. Although the absolute number of country-years with coup activity is smaller when no external military assistance is provided, military-backed coups occur with the same relative frequency when the military has no external backing. A Pearson's Chi^2-test returns insignificant suggesting no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

Table 17: Cross Tabulation of Military-Backed Coups and External Military Assistance

		Was the military backing a coup in that year?		
		No	**Yes**	**Total**
Was the military receiving external assistance in that year?	**No**	95%	5%	100%
		(433)	(24)	(457)
	Yes	95%	5%	100%
		(678)	(38)	(716)
	Total	95%	5%	100%
		(1,111)	(62)	(1,173)
Pearson's Chi^2= 0.00; Pr=0.97				

In just over one third of all conflict-years in the dataset, the United States provides weapons, equipment, or training to the armed forces of a regime in conflict (cf. Table 18). In 22% of all conflict-years, the United States is the sole provider of external military assistance and in 14% it offers such assistance simultaneously with other external supporters. As the single most active sponsor US military assistance warrants special attention.

Basing analyses on support provided by the United States only, however, fails to take into consideration the interplay of external support when offered by multiple third parties. Even more problematic, it presents a potential challenge to inference when counting the quarter of observations where a country other than the United States provides external military assistance as though no support was provided. Strictly speaking, existing accounts of the effects of US military assistance then compare years with US support to years without any support as well as years with support by another third party.

Table 18: Distribution of External Military Assistance by Supporter

		Other External Military Assistance		
		No	**Yes**	**Total**
US External Military Assistance	**No**	39% (457)	25% (293)	64% (750)
	Yes	22% (262)	14% (161)	36% (423)
	Total	61% (719)	39% (454)	100% (1,173)

Turning to multivariate analysis, Table 19 presents the results of four logistic regressions on the risk of a military-backed coup attempt. Model 1 includes US training as its main independent variable, distinguishing between years with and without any external military training by the United States. The effect of US training is positive, as previous studies find,[503] but fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. This is an indicator that external military assistance may indeed differ in its effects from peacetime security assistance as stipulated by H_1.

Model 2 includes a more sophisticated measure of external military training. The factor variable distinguishes between training provided by the United States and that offered by other third parties and compares both to the referent category no external military training. While the effect of US training remains positive, but insignificant, external military training by foreign militaries other than the US armed forces significantly reduces the risk of a military-backed coup

[503] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.

attempt. The predicted probability of a military-backed coup attempt is 0.12 for years with US training compared to 0.09 for years without external military training. Training by other third parties, however, reduces the predicted probability of a coup attempt to 0.01. This finding is in line with the proposition that the coup-inducing characteristics of external military assistance are, to an extent, specific to the United States as the provider of such support (H_2).

Table 19: US Training, Non-US Training, External Military Assistance, and Military-backed Coup Attempts (matched sample)

	(1) Logit Training (US)	(2) Logit Training (All)	(3) Logit Weapons & Matériel	(4) Logit EMA
Military-backed Coup Attempts				
US Training (t-1)	0.716			
	(1.086)			
External Support by				
United States (t-1)		0.416	1.390	0.778
		(0.966)	(1.112)	(0.727)
Other (t-1)		-2.812*	-2.372	-2.458*
		(1.320)	(1.707)	(1.051)
Any training (t-1)			-0.843	
			(1.100)	
External Troop Support (t-1)	0.734	1.140	1.245+	1.054
	(0.821)	(0.734)	(0.732)	(0.743)
Military Expenditure (t-1)	-0.180**	-0.166*	-0.179*	-0.181+
(pc, in thousands)	(0.064)	(0.073)	(0.079)	(0.097)
Military Personnel (t-1)	-0.003	-0.008	-0.008	-0.007
(in thousands)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Coup-proofing (t-1)	1.423*	1.750**	2.043**	1.941**
	(0.584)	(0.616)	(0.729)	(0.644)
Intensity (t-1)	-0.302	0.311	0.451	0.372
	(0.514)	(0.685)	(0.725)	(0.622)
Democracy	-0.030	-0.111	-0.133+	-0.119
	(0.067)	(0.081)	(0.079)	(0.083)
Military Leader	0.037	-0.366	-0.282	-0.214
	(0.582)	(0.407)	(0.366)	(0.388)
GDP (pc)	-0.689	-0.730	-0.703	-0.780+
	(0.460)	(0.460)	(0.489)	(0.467)
Years since last coup	-0.230*	-0.176	-0.237+	-0.245*
	(0.094)	(0.125)	(0.128)	(0.107)
Years since last coup^2	0.010+	0.007	0.009	0.010
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Years since last coup^3	-0.000+	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	2.056	1.397	0.740	1.474
	(2.847)	(2.902)	(3.150)	(2.972)
Number of observations	357	357	357	357
Number of clusters	36	36	36	36

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Model 3 tests whether the effect holds for weapons, equipment, and logistics support. Controlling for the provision of external military assistance by any external supporter, weapons and matériel support does not significantly alter coup risk. In line with previous models, such support by the United States shows a positive association with coup risk while the same types of support provided by other third parties are negatively associated with coup risk. The effect for both categories of the factor variable is not notably different from zero, however. As is to be expected, the coup-increasing and -decreasing effects of external military training by the United States and other supporters cancel each other out so that the overall effect of external military training by any external supporter is negative but statistically insignificant. This remains the case when controlling for US military training instead of any foreign training or including the factor variable on foreign training from Model 2 to control for the effect of simultaneous foreign training efforts.

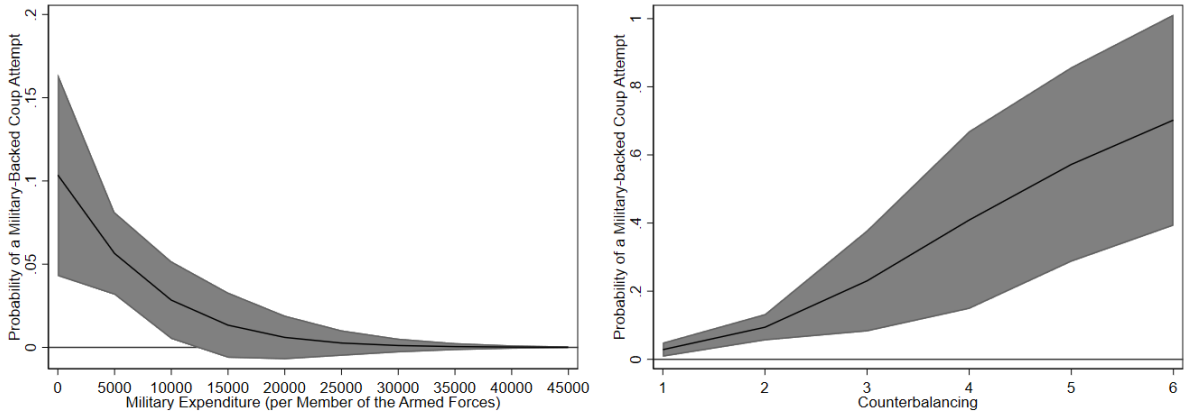
Model 4 combines weapons and matériel support with military training to test the effect of external military assistance as a whole. Again, outside support by third parties other than the United States is negatively and significantly linked to coup risk. The smaller coefficient of external military assistance (Model 4) indicates the higher predictive power of training (Model 2) vis-à-vis training paired with weapons and matériel support that have no independent effect on coup risk (cf. Model 3). Based on Model 4, the predicted probability of a military-backed coup attempt is 0.13 when the United States provides external military assistance compared to 0.09 when no military assistance is provided. External military assistance by third parties other than the United States reduces the risk of a military-backed coup attempt to 0.01, representing a slightly smaller reduction in predicted coup risk at the decimal level than in the predictions based on Model 2. These findings give credence to the notion that when it comes to coup risk, external military training is the determining factor. This reaffirms the importance ascribed to foreign training in recent work on coup risk.

Across all four models, external troop support by any third party is associated with an increased coup risk, but the effect is not statistically different from zero at conventional levels.

Greater military expenditure leads to, on average, lower risk of military-backed coup attempts. The left graph in Figure 19 presents the marginal effects of military expenditure per member of the armed forces based on Model 2. At its minimum, military expenditure corresponds to a coup risk of 0.1. This number decreases to 0.02 for spending per member of the armed forces up to USD13,000 before the effect becomes indistinguishable from zero for higher values of the variable.

Surprisingly, counterbalancing has a sizeable positive and significant association with coup risk. The right graph in Figure 19 presents the marginal effects of counterbalancing on the probability of a military-backed coup attempt based on Model 2. Moving from the lowest value of the counterbalancing index with all military personnel belonging to the same military unit to the maximum of the index recorded in the sample at 5.4 increases the predicted probability of a military-backed coup attempt from 0.3 to 0.7.

Figure 19: Predicted Probability of Military-backed Coup Attempts across the Range of Military Expenditure (left) and Counterbalancing (right) (Model 2, Table 19)



Conflict intensity is linked to higher coup risk in Model 2, 3, and 4, but shows a negative coefficient in Model 1 and fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance across all models. It appears that the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths in a year is not a meaningful demarcation to capture military elite's increasing dissatisfaction with the status quo. It is possible that lower levels of conflict may already suffice in unsettling military elites or that much higher body counts are required before this is the case.

As expected, democratic regimes and more economic prosperous countries are at lower risks of experiencing a coup attempt by the military. The effects are only significant in certain model specifications, however. There is some evidence that larger forces may find it more difficult to overcome coordination problems and are thus less likely to attempt a coup, but the effect of military personnel fails to reach statistical significance.

4.6 Discussion of Findings and Concluding Remarks

The results from the empirical analysis confirm the need to take a closer look at the provider of external support and speak to potential differences in the assistance they provide. While the effects of most explanatory factors follow expectations, the finding on the effect of attempts to counterbalance the security forces seems counterintuitive at first. Why would leaders take such debilitating measures, especially in the context of civil war where the efficacy of the armed forces is paramount, if the segregation of security forces increases coup risk?[504] While most research finds that coup-proofing measures are effective at reducing coup risk in the long run,[505] it recognises that the implementation of these measures can produce threats to leader survival in the short term and thus requires careful timing.[506] Entered into the models with a one-year lag, it is possible that the coefficient of coup-proofing picks up on the short- rather than the long-term effects of counterbalancing security forces.

Alternatively, the positive association between coup-proofing and coup risk could also be the result of selection effects that bias results. It is particularly leaders that face a high coup risk that will be most inclined to install coup-proofing measures such as counterbalancing. If this is the

[504] Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2015).
[505] Belkin and Schofer, 'Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk'; Powell, 'Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État'; Tobias Böhmelt and Ulrich Pilster, 'The Impact of Institutional Coup-Proofing on Coup Attempts and Coup Outcomes', *International Interactions* 41, no. 1 (2015): 158–82.
[506] Holger Albrecht, 'The Myth of Coup-Proofing: Risk and Instances of Military Coups d'État in the Middle East and North Africa, 1950-2013', *Armed Forces and Society* 41, no. 4 (2015): 659–87; Jun Koga Sudduth, 'Coup Risk, Coup-Proofing and Leader Survival', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 1 (2017): 3–15; Jun Koga Sudduth, 'Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships', *Comparative Political Studies* 50, no. 13 (2017): 1768–1801; Boutton, 'Coup-Proofing in the Shadow of Intervention: Alliances, Moral Hazard, and Violence in Authoritarian Regimes'.

case, countries with high numbers of paramilitary forces may in fact represent those cases that were already at a higher risk of coup due to factors omitted from the analysis. The effect of counterbalancing is then in fact the effect of those factors that make a leader more likely to turn to coup-proofing measures in the first place. Note that the matching strategy employed is designed to reduce the risk of non-random assignment of the treatment, external military assistance, not necessarily the other explanatory variables.

The mitigating effect of military training by external supporters other than the United States suggests US military training is unique in a way that makes trainees potentially more susceptible to staging a coup whereas military training by other third parties does not necessarily pose the same risk. Military training by third parties other than the United States even has the ability to significantly reduce the risk of members of the armed forces turning against the sitting government. As pointed out earlier, the factors previous research has identified as decisive in shaping an increased coup risk relate more closely to US military training. The soft power and networks to solve the "coup coordination game" are likely to be more pronounced where the external supporter is highly prestigious and training occurs abroad, over a longer period of time, akin to a study abroad programme.[507] The likelihood of coup attempts being punished by an external supporter is lower where training focuses specifically on building the capacity to conduct joint operations or to delegate operations to "partners" altogether.[508] These factors are more pronounced in the United States than in other external supporters. Therefore, any theory about the effects of the increased prestige and social cohesion associated with foreign military training is foremost a theory about US military training.

When it comes to the military assistance provided by external supporters other than the United States, other rules apply. The analysis presented here suggests that non-US military training that tends to be more short-term and technical in orientation can in fact reduce the risk of militaries

[507] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups', 545.
[508] Gates, 'Helping Others Defend Themselves: The Future of U. S. Security Assistance', 4.

intervening violently in civilian affairs. Through an improvement in combat proficiency, technical training—as opposed to professional training—can reduce the coup-inducing effects of armed conflict. That the provision of weapons and non-weaponry equipment by states other than the United States has no independent effect on coup risk reaffirms the notion that differences in training are decisive. Any matériel provided should uniformly improve technical capacity. Therefore, we would not expect for the effect to vary depending on the provider of such support.

The chosen research design and overall data availability impose some limitations on the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis. The findings on the effect of US military training during civil war is not directly comparable to the finding on the coup-exacerbating effect of US foreign military training due to slightly different observation periods (Savage and Caverley: 1970-2009, here: 1975-2017), different operationalisations of the independent variable (Savage and Caverley: number of students in and spending on IMET and CTFP programmes, here: UCDP ESD training measure) and inclusion of non-civil war years in the study conducted by Savage and Caverley.[509]

Therefore, it is not possible to determine conclusively whether the coup-exacerbating effect Savage and Caverley find is the result of military training conducted mainly during peacetime or the different types of training the two measures capture. Since the measure of external support used here is by definition linked to a civil war context, it is not possible to directly compare its effect during armed conflict and during times of relative peace. Either way, the military training the United States provides to the government side in civil wars is not linked to a higher risk of the military staging a coup.

The analyses presented here further run short of establishing a clear demarcation line between US military training and the military training provided by all other states. It is likely, that some external supporters provide training similar in kind and conditions of provision to those the

[509] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.

United States provides. The Australian Armed Forces, for example, surpass the United States in terms of military spending per member of the armed forces (cf. Chapter 5), similarly welcome members of foreign militaries to study at domestic military institutions, and conduct joint training exercises with the United States on a regular basis.[510] It is likely that the foreign military training provided by Australia has similar effects on coup risk as the training conducted by US armed forces. Additional research into further categorisation of different types of external supporters is therefore necessary. For the purposes of this analysis, the main focus rests on demonstrating the limitations in using data on US military assistance to test our assumptions about the consequences of external military assistance in civil wars.

In summary, the analyses performed above demonstrate that the effect of foreign military training and through it external military assistance varies depending on which third party provides such assistance. As such, they shed light on the limited use of data on United States security sector assistance in assessing the effect of external support on coup risk—particularly in the context of civil wars. These findings call for more attention to be paid to the differences between external supporters and the kind of support they provide. The data compiled in the ESD presents an opportunity to compare the effects of the same category of external support provided by different third parties—be it individual states as in this analysis, or categories of states such as more democratic (cf. Chapter 6) or more militarily sophisticated states (cf. Chapter 5). At the same time, it shows that the study of coups d'état is right to focus on the effects of military training out of the various manifestations of military assistance foreign governments and their militaries provide.

[510] Anthony Galloway and Eryk Bagshaw, 'Australia-US Looking to Ramp up Joint Military Exercises in South China Sea', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 July 2020.

APPENDIX B

Table 20: Summary Statistics of Variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dependent Variables					
Military-backed coup attempt	1,173	0.05	0.22	0	1
Unsuccessful coup attempt	1,173	0.03	0.18	0	1
Successful coup attempt	1,173	0.02	0.15	0	1
Independent Variables					
US Training	1,173	0.31	0.46	0	1
Training (all)	1,173	0.84	0.87	0	2
Weapons & Matériel (all)	1,173	0.87	0.88	0	2
External military assistance	1,173	0.61	0.49	0	1
External Military Assistance (all)	1,173	0.97	0.87	0	2
Training (any)	1,173	0.53	0.50	0	1
Control Variables					
External troop support (any)	1,173	0.16	0.37	0	1
Military expenditure (pc, in thousands)	1,007	12.70	18.24	0.18	223.00
Military personnel (in thousands)	1,160	286.34	463.77	0	3400.00
Coup-proofing	1,108	1.92	0.76	1.00	5.94
Intensity	1,173	0.29	0.46	0	1
Democracy	1,101	0.15	6.01	-10	10
Military Leader	1,155	0.30	0.46	0	1
GDP per capita (ln)	1,051	7.38	1.28	4.88	10.51
Years since last coup	1,173	24.25	17.00	0	67

Table 21: US Training, Non-US Training, External Military Assistance, and Military-backed Coup Attempts (unmatched sample)

	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) Logit	(4) Logit
	Training (US)	Training (All)	Weapons & Matériel	EMA
Military-backed Coup Attempts				
US Training (t-1)	0.511			
	(0.483)			
External Support by				
United States (t-1)		0.438	0.435	0.415
		(0.476)	(0.568)	(0.432)
Other (t-1)		-0.319	-0.383	-0.214
		(0.670)	(0.725)	(0.660)
Any training (t-1)			0.063	
			(0.550)	
External Troop Support (t-1)	-0.301	-0.246	-0.238	-0.274
	(0.956)	(0.999)	(0.987)	(0.973)
Military Expenditure (t-1)	-0.121+	-0.120+	-0.119+	-0.121+
(pc, in thousands)	(0.067)	(0.068)	(0.070)	(0.070)
Military Personnel (t-1)	-0.002*	-0.002*	-0.002*	-0.002*
(in thousands)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Coup-proofing (t-1)	0.393	0.393	0.414	0.412
	(0.253)	(0.259)	(0.258)	(0.262)
Intensity (t-1)	-0.195	-0.154	-0.180	-0.172
	(0.344)	(0.317)	(0.324)	(0.301)
Democracy	-0.066	-0.069	-0.075	-0.071
	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.059)
Military Leader	-0.254	-0.238	-0.207	-0.248
	(0.471)	(0.476)	(0.474)	(0.472)
GDP (pc)	0.102	0.092	0.106	0.105
	(0.250)	(0.252)	(0.250)	(0.250)
Years since last coup	-0.137+	-0.131+	-0.137+	-0.139+
	(0.080)	(0.078)	(0.077)	(0.076)
Years since last coup^2	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Years since last coup^3	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	-2.094	-2.023	-2.142	-2.111
	(1.886)	(1.929)	(1.897)	(1.939)
Number of observations	752	752	752	752
Number of clusters	55	55	55	55

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 22: US Training, Non-US Training, External Military Assistance, and Military-backed Coup Attempts (matched sample, fixed effects)

	(1) Logit Training (US)	(2) Logit Training (All)	(3) Logit Weapons & Matériel	(4) Logit EMA
Military-backed Coup Attempts				
US Training (t-1)	2.785*			
	(1.395)			
External Support by				
United States (t-1)		2.994+	1.016	1.009
		(1.621)	(0.947)	(1.064)
Other (t-1)		0.292	-0.672	-0.998
		(1.173)	(0.900)	(1.075)
Any training (t-1)			0.964	
			(1.222)	
External Troop Support (t-1)	-16.374	-16.397	-17.226	-16.961
	(1777.467)	(1730.013)	(1836.655)	(1387.575)
Military Expenditure (t-1)	0.016	0.018	-0.039	-0.017
(pc, in thousands)	(0.109)	(0.107)	(0.086)	(0.097)
Military Personnel (t-1)	-0.014	-0.014	-0.022	-0.019
(in thousands)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Coup-proofing (t-1)	0.391	0.387	0.304	0.391
	(0.695)	(0.697)	(0.702)	(0.702)
Intensity (t-1)	2.509+	2.504+	2.863+	2.829+
	(1.477)	(1.478)	(1.479)	(1.464)
Democracy	-0.218**	-0.219**	-0.232**	-0.218**
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.065)	(0.064)
Military Leader	-0.985+	-1.007+	-0.985+	-0.973+
	(0.571)	(0.581)	(0.596)	(0.580)
GDP (pc)	-8.119*	-8.040*	-9.267*	-9.709*
	(3.813)	(3.827)	(3.955)	(3.836)
Number of observations	166	166	166	166
Number of clusters	8	8	8	8

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 23: US Training, Non-US Training, External Military Assistance, and All Coup Attempts (matched sample)

	(1) Logit Training (US)	(2) Logit Training (All)	(3) Logit Weapons & Matériel	(4) Logit EMA
All Coup Attempts				
US Training $_{(t-1)}$	0.716			
	(1.086)			
External Support by				
United States $_{(t-1)}$		0.416	1.390	0.778
		(0.966)	(1.112)	(0.727)
Other $_{(t-1)}$		-2.812*	-2.372	-2.458*
		(1.320)	(1.707)	(1.051)
Any training $_{(t-1)}$			-0.843	
			(1.100)	
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	0.734	1.140	1.245+	1.054
	(0.821)	(0.734)	(0.732)	(0.743)
Military Expenditure $_{(t-1)}$	-0.180**	-0.166*	-0.179*	-0.181+
(pc, in thousands)	(0.064)	(0.073)	(0.079)	(0.097)
Military Personnel $_{(t-1)}$	-0.003	-0.008	-0.008	-0.007
(in thousands)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Coup-proofing $_{(t-1)}$	1.423*	1.750**	2.043**	1.941**
	(0.584)	(0.616)	(0.729)	(0.644)
Intensity $_{(t-1)}$	-0.302	0.311	0.451	0.372
	(0.514)	(0.685)	(0.725)	(0.622)
Democracy	-0.030	-0.111	-0.133+	-0.119
	(0.067)	(0.081)	(0.079)	(0.083)
Military Leader	0.037	-0.366	-0.282	-0.214
	(0.582)	(0.407)	(0.366)	(0.388)
GDP (pc)	-0.689	-0.730	-0.703	-0.780+
	(0.460)	(0.460)	(0.489)	(0.467)
Years since last coup	-0.230*	-0.176	-0.237+	-0.245*
	(0.094)	(0.125)	(0.128)	(0.107)
Years since last coup^2	0.010+	0.007	0.009	0.010
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Years since last coup^3	-0.000+	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	2.056	1.397	0.740	1.474
	(2.847)	(2.902)	(3.150)	(2.972)
Number of observations	357	357	357	357
Number of clusters	36	36	36	36

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

CHAPTER 5: 'TRAINED AND EQUIPPED' TO KILL CIVILIANS? QUALITY OF EXTERNAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND GOVERNMENT FORCES' TARGETING PROFILES IN CIVIL WARS

5.1 Introduction

In February 2019, the Trump administration temporarily cut military assistance to Cameroon over concerns of gross human rights violations. Cameroon had been a long-term partner of the United States in its fight against the Boko Haram and later Islamic State insurgency that began in neighbouring Nigeria. Since then, the Islamist insurgency has rapidly spread across the Lake Chad Basin to affect almost the entire Sahel region. In recent years, Cameroon has come to experience its own homegrown separatist struggle by an English-speaking minority in the South West of the country. Demands for an independent "Ambazonia" turned violent in 2017.[511]

Cameroon is an example of the United States' commitment to strengthen partner capacity for "Africans to address their security threats and reduce threats to U.S. interests."[512] As such, the relationship is part of a larger trend to avoid direct military intervention and to "train and equip" government forces facing an insurgent or terrorist threat instead.[513] Through the provision of weaponry, non-weaponry equipment, logistics support, training, and advice, governments worldwide aim to prop up struggling regimes and impact on civil war outcomes.[514]

While the United States is taking seriously its commitments under the Leahy Law, prohibiting the provision of military assistance to security forces committing human rights violations, the increase in government-committed one-sided violence only tells half of the story.[515] While the total number of civilians killed by government forces almost doubled from 2017 to 2018, the number of opposition combatants killed rose sevenfold during the same period.[516] The increase

[511] Searcey, Schmitt, and Gibbons-Neff, 'US Cuts Military Aid to Cameroon over Human Rights Concerns'.
[512] U.S. Africa Command, 'What We Do'.
[513] Welch and Bailey, 'In Pursuit of Good Ideas: The Syria Train-And-Equip Program', 1.
[514] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.
[515] Andrew M. Leonard, 'Getting the Leahy Law Right', *Foreign Affairs*, 29 June 2017.
[516] Stina Högbladh, 'UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset Codebook Version 19.1 Uppsala Conflict Data Program', 2019; Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'.

in one-sided violence appears to be linked to an overall increase in violence and represents a decrease in the share of civilian deaths.[517] Yet, it raises the question of how exactly US support and the use of one-sided violence by the Cameroonian government forces are linked, if at all.

The aim of this paper is to shed light on the nexus of external military assistance and actors' choice of tactics in civil wars. How does external military assistance affect the propensity of government forces to target civilians? Departing from existing research, this paper assumes that governments in a civil war face a choice between using their resources to target combatants or to commit one-sided violence to advance their goal of insurgent defeat. I argue that the level of one-sided violence is affected by the amount of resources available and the relative efficiency of these two strategies in transforming resources into output, i.e. government victory over an insurgent threat. External military assistance in general provides governments with additional resources and thus is expected to lead to an increase in any type of violence. This effect should be stronger where domestic investment in the military apparatus is low. High-quality military assistance—the advanced equipment and training provided by external supporters with highly sophisticated military apparatuses—however, provides governments with the kind of 'game-changing' expertise and equipment that increases the efficiency of targeting combatants vis-à-vis civilians. This enables security forces to shift their focus from targeting civilians to fighting the insurgency on the battlefield.

The theoretical argument is evaluated using a large-N dataset covering 824 actor-years in the period from 1989-2017. The focus on the post-Cold War period harnesses the natural break in the provision of external support after the demise of the Soviet Union (cf. Chapter 3). Thus, it excludes cases driven primarily by support patterns that follow a logic of superpower

[517] This is in no way to condone the actions of the Cameroonian government forces, or any armed forces, to intentionally target civilians as a strategy of war, a crime that is prohibited under International Humanitarian Law. See International Committee of the Red Cross, *Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949* (Geneva, 1949).

competition.[518] The more limited time span further allows to make use of detailed data on the perpetration of one-sided violence that is less likely to be hampered by information effects.[519] Data on external military assistance stems from a newly updated dataset on external support. To guard against the possibility that third parties provide external military assistance only to governments with a record of not harming civilians, I employ a matching strategy. Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) pairs observations with a similar likelihood of receiving external military assistance. This way, any observed effect is not simply an artefact of the non-random assignment of the treatment variable, external military assistance.

The results show that government forces that receive external military assistance are, on average, responsible for more civilian deaths compared to those without such support, especially where domestic military capabilities are low to begin with. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that the provision of external military assistance incentivises violence against civilians in states that have previously refrained from targeting their own citizens. As theorised, higher-quality support can significantly alter states' targeting profiles by shifting the focus from targeting civilians to targeting combatants of the opposition. The results remain robust when controlling for civil wars with foreign troop deployment and the regime type of the external supporter that gauges its overall commitment to human rights.

This paper makes a number of contributions to the literature on external support during civil wars. First, it shifts the focus from external troop support to external military assistance. Examining these two types of foreign interference into conflicts separately allows to distinguish between the effects of direct and more indirect forms of external support. Second, this paper broadens the analysis of external military assistance beyond assistance provided by the United

[518] Noel Anderson, 'Competitive Intervention, Protracted Conflict, and the Global Prevalence of Civil War', *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2019): 692–706.
[519] Information effects generally refer to the "variation in the availability and precision of country-specific information" due to a changed definition of or interest in the concept, or the advancement of communication technologies. See Clark and Sikkink, 'Information Effects and Human Rights Data: Is the Good News about Increased Human Rights Information Bad News for Human Rights Measures?', 540.

States. While the United States is the single most active sponsor and initiator of several *ad hoc* military coalitions, a focus on the United States neglects the considerable contributions by other states, especially to governments that the United States considers hostile, e.g. Iran in Syria, or between former colonial powers and formerly colonised countries, e.g. France in Mali. As such, this paper systematically compares the role of the military sophistication of external supporters. Third, I test these arguments against new original data on military support (cf. Chapter 3) extending the period of observation from 2009 to 2017 and thus capturing important variation from recent conflicts including in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.

5.2 One-Sided Violence and External Interference

In civil wars, civilians are disproportionately affected by violence. Violence between combatants may leave civilians starved, displaced, or caught in the crossfire.[520] Worse, government or rebel forces may choose to target civilians rather than combatants. This latter case is referred to as one-sided violence in the civil war literature, emphasising the unidirectional nature of this type of violence. For the purposes of this study, one-sided violence is defined as "the intentional and direct killing of civilians."[521]

The deliberate targeting of civilians makes one-sided violence distinct from unintentional deaths, including civilians caught in the crossfire, and deaths from indirect causes such as disease, famine, or environmental degradation in the context of conflict. Table 24 presents a typology of conflict-related civilian deaths in civil war.[522] It classifies violence against civilians according to the mode of violence and its intentionality. Besides through one-sided violence, as a direct and intentional form of violence against civilians, civilian deaths are incurred as accidental by-products of battle ('collateral damage') and through more indirect destruction of crucial infrastructure (logistical violence) and conflict-related worsening of living conditions (developmental violence).

[520] Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2008).
[521] Eck and Hultman, 'One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data'.
[522] The typology builds upon a typology presented by Eck and Hultman, see ibid., 235.

Table 24: Typology of Conflict-Related Civilian Deaths in Civil Wars

		Intentionality	
		Intentional	Unintentional
Mode	Direct	One-sided violence e.g. targeted assassinations	'Collateral damage' e.g. deaths from drone strikes
	Indirect	Logistical violence e.g. targeting of water reservoirs, agricultural land, cutting off supply routes	Developmental violence e.g. deaths from disease, famine, environmental degradation, conflict-related increase in domestic violence, etc.

In theory, government one-sided violence includes other forms of political violence such as genocide and government-sponsored mass killings.[523] By definition, the purpose of genocide is "group destruction."[524] Hence, genocidal violence fulfils a purpose of its own rather than serving as a substitute strategy to targeting insurgents. This is potentially problematic for this analysis that is interested in the role of violence against civilians as an alternative means to fighting an insurgency rather than an end in itself. However, since mass killings typically occur after victory and the focus here is on one-sided violence as a wartime strategy, they do not feature prominently in the analysis.[525]

On the rebel side, this definition includes fatalities from acts often described as 'terrorism' (cf. Chapter 6). Yet, whereas one-sided violence can encompass both acts of selective and indiscriminate violence,[526] terrorism is on purpose non-selective.[527] It is this arbitrary nature of violence that is conducive to the generation of wide-spread fear. The victims of one-sided violence, in contrast, are often the intended audience of attacks, e.g. when coercing civilians to end their

[523] Eck and Hultman, 'One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data'. See also Barbara Harff, 'No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955', *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 57–73; Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2004).
[524] Scott Straus, '"Destroy Them to Save Us": Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 4 (2012): 552.
[525] Matthew Krain, 'Democracy, Internal War, and State-Sponsored Mass Murder', *Human Rights Review* 1, no. 3 (2000): 40–48. To guard against the possibility that results are driven by instances of genocidal violence, I run the analyses on a sample excluding known cases of genocide as a robustness test, see robustness section.
[526] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.
[527] Virginia P. Fortna, Nicholas J. Lotito, and Michael A. Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars', *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (2018): 782–94.

support to insurgents.[528] With terrorist violence, immediate victims and intended audience usually diverge.[529]

Existing research explains governments' (and rebels') use of one-sided violence mainly in rationalist terms, ascribing a strategic logic to it.[530] Pioneering works stress the balance of power between warring parties[531] and the need to police civilian loyalty.[532] Others have focused on the constraints and opportunities imposed by organisational structure, armed group institutions, and acquired practices of armed actors.[533] Here, the focus has often been on rebel groups. Research by Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago, however, for example finds that more differentiated state security forces made up of larger numbers of independent units are less likely to engage in state-sponsored mass killings.[534] This points to the role characteristics of the organisation play in determining the behaviour of state actors as well. Often, the unique incentives and constraints of principal-agent relationships between commanders and soldiers or their external patrons are considered influential in explaining the extent of violence against civilians.[535]

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528 Benjamin A. Valentino, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay, '"Draining the Sea": Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare', *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (2004): 375–407.
529 Todd Sandler, 'New Frontiers of Terrorism Research: An Introduction', *Journal of Peace Resarch* 48, no. 3 (2011): 279–86.
530 Kalyvas, 'Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria'.
531 Lisa Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 2 (2007): 205–22; Jennifer J. Ziemke, 'From Battles to Massacres' (PhD Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, 2008); Gerald Schneider, Margit Bussmann, and Constantin Ruhe, 'The Dynamics of Mass Killings: Testing Time-Series Models of One-Sided Violence in the Bosnian Civil War', *International Interactions* 38, no. 4 (2012): 443–61; Hanne Fjelde and Lisa Hultman, 'Weakening the Enemy: A Disaggregated Study of Violence against Civilians in Africa', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 7 (2014): 1230–57; Wood, 'From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence'; Margit Bussmann, 'Dynamics of One-Sided Violence in the Civil War in Northern Uganda', *Civil Wars* 17, no. 4 (2015): 465–84.
532 Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, '"Draining the Sea": Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare'; Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*; Laia Balcells, 'Rivalry and Revenge: Violence against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars', *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 291–313.
533 Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein, 'Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War', *The American Political Science Review* 100, no. 3 (2006): 429–47; Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*; Bell, 'Military Culture and Restraint toward Civilians in War: Examining the Ugandan Civil Wars'; Terry and McQuinn, *The Roots of Restraint in War*; Amelia Hoover Green, 'Armed Group Institutions and Combatant Socialization: Evidence from El Salvador', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (2017): 687–700; Elisabeth J. Wood, 'Variation in Sexual Violence during War', *Politics and Society* 34, no. 3 (2006): 307–41; Elisabeth J. Wood, 'Rape as a Practice of War: Toward a Typology of Political Violence', *Politics and Society* 46, no. 4 (2018): 513–37.
534 Ulrich Pilster, Tobias Böhmelt, and Atsushi Tago, 'The Differentiation of Security Forces and the Onset of Genocidal Violence', *Armed Forces and Society* 42, no. 1 (2016): 26–50.
535 Amelia Hoover Green, *The Commander's Dilemma: Violence and Restraint in Wartime* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018); Hovil and Werker, 'Portrait of a Failed Rebellion: An Account of Rational, Sub-Optimal Violence in Western Uganda'.

Previous work on the effect of third-party involvement on civilian victimisation largely focuses on military interventions in the form of troop deployment. However, findings have proven contradictory. For example, during ongoing instances of genocidal violence, the presence of foreign troops directly challenging the government perpetrators or explicitly protecting the targeted group has proven effective in one study,[536] but counterproductive in another.[537] The presence of neutral peacekeepers has no immediate effect on the perpetration of one-sided violence by government forces,[538] but impartial intervention can decrease mass killings in the long-term.[539]

Wood, Kathman, and Gent find that troops deployed to support government forces in a civil war lead to lower levels of one-sided violence. They argue that as the balance of capabilities turns in their favour, warring parties can extract resources and deter defections more effectively by providing selective benefits and sanctions rather than targeting the civilian population indiscriminately.[540] External support short of troop deployment, however, has been shown to lead to more conflictual relations with the local population and increased one-sided violence—at least on the rebel side.[541] Distinguishing between leaders and perpetrators, DeMeritt holds that intervention in favour of the government can prevent the initiation of violence against civilians by the elite but proves counterproductive in constraining perpetrators once the killing is under way.[542] While these findings make important contributions, they are limited to the high threshold of foreign troop deployment. They therefore provide few insights into how external military assistance affects the strategic environment short of manipulating the balance of troops.

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536 Matthew Krain, 'International Intervention and the Severity of Genocides and Politicides', *International Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 3 (2005): 363–87.
537 Jacob D. Kathman and Reed M. Wood, 'Managing Threat, Cost, and Incentive to Kill', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, no. 5 (2011): 735–60.
538 Lisa Hultman, 'Keeping Peace or Spurring Violence? Unintended Effects of Peace Operations on Violence against Civilians', *Civil Wars* 12, no. 1–2 (2010): 29–46.
539 Kathman and Wood, 'Managing Threat, Cost, and Incentive to Kill'.
540 Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 'Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts'.
541 Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*; Bussmann, 'Dynamics of One-Sided Violence in the Civil War in Northern Uganda'.
542 Jacqueline H. R. DeMeritt, 'Delegating Death: Military Intervention and Government Killing', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 3 (2015): 428–54.

To date, no cross-country comparison of the impact of external military assistance by different supporters on one-sided violence exists. Yet, findings on the effect of other types of external interference, e.g. economic aid and arms sales, on the treatment of civilians and that of US military aid specifically on one-sided violence are informative in this context. Wood and Sullivan argue that humanitarian aid can have unintended consequences, creating incentives for rebel groups, and to a lesser degree government forces, to attack civilians.[543] Arms transfers have been shown to go hand in hand with increased levels of human rights abuses in developing countries and US military aid worldwide is associated with worse performance on physical integrity rights,[544] including freedom from political imprisonment, disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial killings.[545]

In her analysis of the effect of US military and economic aid, Jadoon argues that military aid, as opposed to economic aid, is associated with lower levels of violence against civilians. Although incentives and interest alignment play a role, Jadoon's argument is essentially about capacity stating that "military aid will help states overcome the capability deficiencies that previously may have necessitated the use of collective violence."[546] As such, Jadoon's argument is a logical extension of the extant proposition that one-sided violence is a tactic chosen from a position of weakness.[547] This paper builds on existing studies that focus on the mechanism of capacity, but expands it beyond an analysis of military aid by the United States to account for differences in the quality of external military assistance provided by various external supporters.

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[543] Reed M. Wood and Christopher Sullivan, 'Doing Harm by Doing Good? The Negative Externalities of Humanitarian Aid Provision during Civil Conflict', Working Paper No. 11, AidData, Williamsburg, VA, 2015.
[544] Shannon L. Blanton, 'Instruments of Security or Tools of Repression? Arms Imports and Human Rights Conditions in Developing Countries', *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 2 (1999): 233–44; Sandholtz, 'United States Military Assistance and Human Rights'.
[545] David L. Cingraneili and David L. Richards, 'Measuring the Level, Pattern, and Sequence of Government Respect for Physical Integrity Rights', *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (1999): 407–17.
[546] Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings', 6.
[547] Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War*; Reed M. Wood, 'Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians', *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 601–14; Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting'.

5.3 Determinants of State Actors' Targeting Profiles

Faced with an armed challenge to its survival or the integrity of its territory, a government under attack will allocate resources to combatting an insurgency. State actors have two targeting options when countering an insurgency with military force: Government forces can engage rebel combatants in combat and they can target civilians suspected of supporting opposition forces.[548]

Targeting the opposing faction is an obvious policy choice when aiming to defeat an insurgency militarily. Akin to interstate wars, civil war is defined as a violent contestation between combatants even if rebel combatants are often not in uniform. One way to measure military effectiveness in this context is with reference to the loss-exchange ratio, i.e. the ratio of opponent fatalities divided by own losses.[549] The goal is to inflict more casualties on an opponent than the opponent is able to inflict on one's own forces.

Of course, there are many arguments to be made to approach a rebellion other than with military force.[550] Higher losses on the side of the rebels will not necessarily translate into a quicker or more durable peace, but government victory in military terms is achieved when the opponent is defeated in battle or chooses to surrender for fear of such devastating losses. Hence, this strategy links directly to the government goal of regime survival.

Targeting civilians is less intuitively linked to the goal of government victory over a rebel group. In fact, much theoretical and empirical work has pointed to the centrality of winning the loyalties of the civilian population and the detrimental effect indiscriminate state violence has on insurgent mobilisation and thereby activity.[551] Yet, violence against civilians is a strategy that

[548] Of course a government can determine that a rebellion poses a low threat and choose to ignore it altogether or decide that non-violent forms of engagement, such as negotiations, provide a better avenue towards its stated goal. These actions, however, are beyond the scope of this paper, which is preoccupied with actor's choices within the context of an active civil war.
[549] Stephen Biddle and Stephen Long, 'Democracy and Military Effectiveness: A Deeper Look', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 4 (2004): 535.
[550] Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, and Beth Grill, *Victory Has a Thasund Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010).
[551] For a summary, see Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 146–72; Mao Tse-Tung, 'On Guerrilla Warfare', in *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*, ed. Richard K. Betts (London: Routledge, 2017), 475–85; Wood, 'Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians'.

continues to find application and there is enough evidence linking it to reductions in insurgent violence to at least assume that governments would consider it as an—albeit problematic—alternative to targeting combatants.[552]

Actors may rationally perceive of violence against civilians as a goal-oriented strategy in civil wars because it may weaken the enemy and manage civilian loyalties on both sides. On rebel-held territory, one-sided violence causes immediate disorder and may diminish the enemies' logistical capabilities. One-sided violence further signals resolve to continue to impose costs on the opponent even when heavy losses are incurred on the battlefield.[553] Perhaps more importantly, one-sided violence can discourage civilians supporting rebels in rebel-held territory and enforce civilian loyalty to the government in government-controlled territory. Here, targeting civilians sends a powerful signal that rebel groups are incapable of protecting them from violence and that only the government will bring safety. Selective violence against those supporting the insurgency cuts rebels off from their local support and deters civilians from supporting them in the future, thus weakening the insurgency.[554]

Not all armed actors rely on violence against civilians during armed conflict equally. Violence against civilians is often considered a "weapon of the weak."[555] Since civilians are usually unarmed and therefore comparatively defenceless,[556] they present an easy target with less risk of injury, imprisonment, or death on the side of the perpetrators. Targeting unarmed and unorganised civilians requires less sophisticated military equipment and strategies to attack. One-sided violence is particularly likely when combatants face a stronger adversary and has been shown to increase in

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[552] Alexander B. Downes, 'Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy', *Civil Wars* 9, no. 4 (2007): 420–44; Jason Lyall, 'Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (2009): 331–62.
[553] Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting'; Ziemke, 'From Battles to Massacres'; Wood, 'From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence'.
[554] Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, '"Draining the Sea": Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare'; Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.
[555] Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting', 218.
[556] The exception are civilians protected by or organised as civilian defence forces. See, for example, Govinda Clayton and Andrew Thomson, 'Civilianizing Civil Conflict: Civilian Defense Militias and the Logic of Violence in Intrastate Conflict', *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2016): 499–510; Estancona et al., 'Civilian Self-Defense Militias in Civil War'.

the immediate aftermath of battlefield losses.[557] This scenario typically applies to the weaker side in interstate wars as well as rebel groups facing the full might of a state military apparatus. Yet, a cursory look at data on troop ratios in civil wars reveals, that in conflicts in countries such as Afghanistan, Lebanon, Sierra Leone, Somalia or Tajikistan, state weakness and rebel sophistication can combine to create conditions in which government forces face a stronger adversary. Here, the same constraints power asymmetries impose on weaker actors elsewhere apply.[558] Downes identifies "the desperation to win and to save lives on one's own side induced by costly, protracted wars of attrition" as a key motivation for targeting civilians. But even if the balance of power is in their favour, government forces face two challenges that make them susceptible to a strategy of targeting civilians: the *targeting problem* and the *execution problem* in civil war.

Not only is one-sided violence a policy of desperation, it also reveals insufficient capacity to selectively target combatants.[559] Kalyvas and others highlight the difficulty to distinguish combatants from civilians as a leading motivation for the use of indiscriminate violence—violence that fails to distinguish between those deemed culpable of supporting the opponent and those merely present in a certain location.[560] In areas under rebel control, acquiring this information often proves illusive leading to increased indiscriminate attacks on civilians.[561] To mitigate this targeting problem, government forces need reliable intelligence on who the combatants are and the capacity to translate that knowledge into action, in this case the operational ability to target combatants while sparing the life of civilians.

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557 Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting'; Ziemke, 'From Battles to Massacres'; Wood, 'From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence'.
558 Data from Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.
559 Alexander B. Downes, 'Desperate Times, Desperate Measures: The Causes of Civilian Victimization in War', *International Security* 30, no. 4 (2006): 152–95.
560 Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, '"Draining the Sea": Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare'; Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*; Downes, 'Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy'; Lyall and Wilson, 'Rage against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars'.
561 Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*; Laia Balcells, 'Continuation of Politics by Two Means: Direct and Indirect Violence in Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, no. 3 (2011): 397–422.

Even if state actors, through their embeddedness in local communities and the maintenance of patronage networks, can distinguish combatants from civilians, the use of guerrilla tactics still makes it hard to act on this knowledge and engage combatants directly.[562] Rebels often hide in inaccessible parts of the country to emerge only for brief attacks against government installations or to spread fear among the civilian population, before retreating to terrain covered by dense forests, rugged mountains, or desert.[563] Alternatively, they hide amongst the civilian population in highly urban settings, using civilian populations as human shields. In Marawi, a city on the Philippine island of Mindanao, an Islamist insurgency has raged for decades. In 2017, Philippine armed forces were drawn into a five-months battle against local Islamic State affiliates upon trying to take back the city. The Philippine armed forces had neither the equipment nor the expertise to navigate the challenges of the highly urban battlefield.[564]

Therefore, even if government forces succeed in identifying combatants, they may not be able to pursue them effectively. Air surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities are needed to locate rebel hideouts, specialised equipment is required to detect and defuse improvised explosive devices (IEDs), air and maritime capabilities can provide crucial logistics support for successful counterinsurgency operations on the ground, and training in urban warfare allows armed forces to discriminate between combatants and civilians not only in principle, but also in practice.[565]

Governments facing insurgency frequently cite the lack of appropriate equipment and skills to use and maintain them as a major cause of operation failure. In Nigeria, for instance,

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[562] Roessler, *Ethnic Politics and State Power in Africa: The Logic of the Coup-Civil War Trap.*
[563] Halvard Buhaug, Scott Gates, and Päivi Lujala, 'Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 544–69.
[564] Postings, 'The Battle of Marawi: A Brief Summary'.
[565] NATO, *NATO Standard AJP-3.4.4 Allied Joint Doctrine for Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Edition A Version 1* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016). For literature on the role of technology on military effectiveness, see, for example, Stephen Biddle and Robert Zirkle, 'Technology, Civil-Military Relations, and Warfare in the Developing World', *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 19, no. 2 (1996): 171–212.

> "soldiers executing the war against Boko Haram at the tactical level were inadequately equipped for asymmetric warfare … critical military hardware such as T-72 tanks, mortar tubes, night vision goggles, and Shilka guns, among other, that should confer battle-space advantages on the military in a difficult terrain were in short supply."[566]

For this reason, governments around the world have opted to supply governments fighting insurgencies on their territory with weapons, equipment, and training.

Governments may pursue their goal of defeating an insurgency by targeting combatants or by relying on one-sided violence. It is assumed that if not for moral considerations, the fear of alienating local and international constituencies and the risk of incentivising insurgent backlash or foreign intervention makes targeting civilians the less preferred out of the two strategies.[567] Yet, due to the difficulty of identifying and engaging combatants, governments revert to strategies of one-sided violence if they believe them to be effective in achieving rebel defeat and regime survival at a lower cost.

5.4 External Military Assistance and Policy Substitutability

The choice between targeting combatants or targeting civilians can be modelled as a resource allocation problem. Departing from a basic notion of rationalist instrumentality, state actors are assumed to aim to maximise utility across a number of policy fields. Resources are finite and so a state actor has a limited amount of resources to allocate to the upholding of policies across policy fields. Within each policy field, several policies produce the same policy output. These policies are substitutes to one another, i.e. more of one policy can substitute for less of another. Others produce different policy outputs and policies are therefore complements.[568]

According to such a stylised version of reality, in the absence of external military assistance, government forces choose a combination of targeting combatants and civilians that maximises

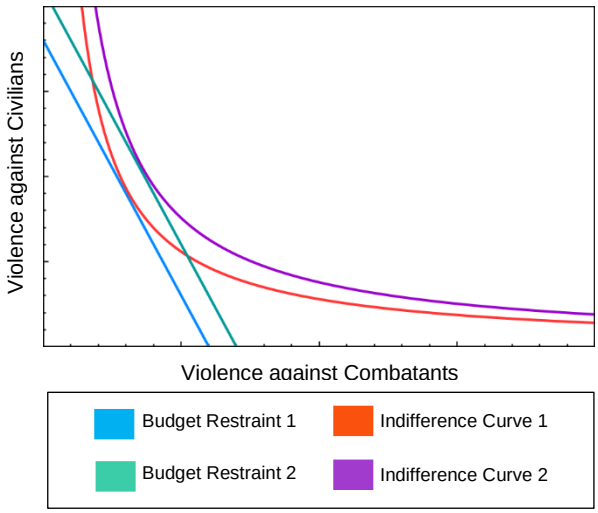
[566] Freedom C. Onuoha, Chikodiri Nwangwu, and Michael I. Ugwueze, 'Counterinsurgency Operations of the Nigerian Military and Boko Haram Insurgency: Expounding the Viscid Manacle', *Security Journal* 33, no. 3 (2020): 418.
[567] Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, '"Draining the Sea": Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare'.
[568] Glenn Palmer and T. Clifton Morgan, *A Theory of Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

their utility with regard to defeating the insurgency. At the same time, any decision on the targeting profile is constrained by the overall resources—human and material—available. The observed relative distribution of rebel and civilian deaths is hence a product of the resources available and their relative efficiency in translating input into the preferred outcome: government victory. Note that the discussion above suggests that the targeting of civilians is less directly linked to the goal of government victory. This suggests that the level of violence directed at combatants is the maximum that is feasible given existing constraints. This equilibrium, i.e. the combination of levels of one-sided and battle-related violence, will only change if i) the overall level of resources available to pursue these strategies changes, ii) the government's preference for one policy output, e.g. internal security, over another, e.g. external security, changes, or iii) one of the available policies becomes more efficient at translating available resources into outputs.[569]

The introduction of external military assistance in civil wars, can then impact on governments' chosen strategies in two ways. First, an increase in available resources allows for more resources to be allocated to all policies in the field that is benefiting from the resource inflow. In the case of military aid, this includes all defence-related matters. According to this logic, we would expect external military assistance to lead to an increase in both the level of violence against civilians and combatants. Figure 20 provides a schematic representation of the targeting equilibria of a state without (budget restraint 1) and with (budget restraint 2) external military assistance.

[569] Ibid.

Figure 20: Graphical Representation of the Combinations of Violence against Combatants and Civilians Given an Increase in Resources



It becomes clear that the tactics of targeting combatants and targeting civilians function as substitutes to one another but require different amounts of resources to achieve the same level of output (indifference curve), here progress in combatting an insurgency. The provision of military assistance introduces additional resources that can be allocated to pursuing both of these policies. When the resource restraint increases as we move from the blue to the green line, higher overall utility (indifference curve 2) is achieved. In the new equilibrium, one-sided violence (OSV) has increased and so have combatant deaths. This leads to a first hypotheses:

H_1: The provision of external military assistance leads to an increase in OSV (and rebel losses).

It is likely that this increase is not uniform across states with different military capabilities. In states with few resources and low military capability, the support from a third party may go a long way. It means the provision of relatively sophisticated equipment and training that otherwise would not be available at all. In relatively capable militaries, on the other hand, external military assistance still adds to the overall resources available but makes a less significant difference overall. This assistance represents an addition to existing training and equipment, rather than a fundamental change in the availability of such resources. Put formally, the marginal benefits of receiving external

military assistance are higher for states with lower indigenous capabilities. Therefore, H_1 should be conditioned in the following way:

H_2: The effect of external military assistance on OSV is stronger in militarily less capable states.

Secondly, external military assistance can make the production of internal security via one tactic, e.g. targeting combatants, more efficient than via another, e.g. targeting civilians. If the same amount of resources, e.g. funding or human capital, leads to a higher output than the same amount of resources invested in an alternative policy, governments will take resources away from the less efficient policy and focus on the more efficient one instead according to a model of rational utility maximisation.[570] Therefore, external military assistance with the ability to increase the efficiency with which combatants can be identified and eliminated, leads to more resources being directed towards battle-related violence and fewer left to commit violence against civilians. This way, external military assistance can reduce one-sided violence under certain conditions even though it goes along with an increase in the overall level of resources available.

Figure 21: Graphical Representation of Efficiency Increase

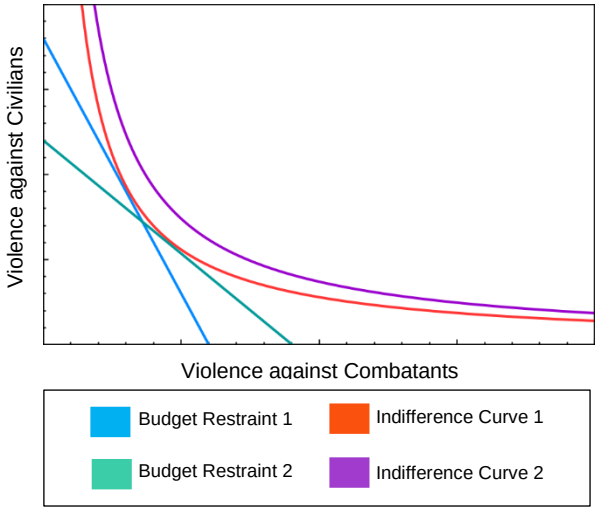


Figure 21 illustrates this change in efficiency. The resource restraints (blue and green lines) are no longer parallel. Whereas beforehand the same amount of resource could be used to target 1

[570] Ibid.

combatant or 3 civilians, now this ratio is 1 combatant for 1.33 civilians, hence the targeting of combatants has become relatively more efficient.[571] The equilibrium targeting ratio in the graph moves from about 9 civilians and 3 combatants (blue line) to about 6 civilians and 5 combatants (green line). Consequently, the level of one-sided violence against civilians decreases. Note that the new equilibrium targeting strategy delivers the same overall utility (indifference curve 1) in terms of fighting an insurgency.

External material assistance introduces additional resources to a conflict environment. Often, these are however limited to the provision of basic goods required to keep fighting an insurgency. Neighbouring countries send in equipment of a similar calibre as that already in circulation or provide much needed fuel, food, or field hospitals to compensate for conflict-related shortages.[572] While this certainly represents *more* resources available to channel into the alternative targeting tactics, these resources do not fundamentally alter the translation of resources into policy outputs. Hence, they perpetuate the existing equilibrium distribution between targeting combatants and civilians.

External military assistance only becomes a tactical 'game-changer' when the equipment, technology, and expertise provided allow to overcome the targeting and elimination problems described above more easily than was previously the case.[573] This requires sophisticated equipment that is not simply more, but also of higher quality than what was formerly available: training and advising that goes beyond the technicalities of operating weaponry and includes the planning of operations and sharing of intelligence with local armed forces; military equipment that allows for air surveillance and targeted attacks.[574] This type of high-quality external military assistance is more

[571] The numbers are arbitrary and chosen purely to serve visualisation purposes.
[572] Claire Mills, 'In Brief: International Military Forces in Mali', Research Briefing (London: House of Commons Library, 2013).
[573] Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'.
[574] NATO, *NATO Standard AJP-3.4.4 Allied Joint Doctrine for Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Edition A Version 1*.

likely to be provided by third parties with high military sophistication that possess the respective equipment and know-how. This leads to the third hypothesis:

H_3: Higher-quality external military assistance decreases OSV relative to battle-related violence.

Previous research has argued that the diverging effect of external support is a function of the variation in democratic values and humanitarian commitments of external supporters. Evoking a principal-agent dynamic, Salehyan, Siroky and Wood argue that external supporters can exert influence over rebel recipients by conditioning ongoing support on respect for human rights.[575] Indeed, anecdotally, this reading conforms with the suspension of US military assistance to Cameroon in 2019 described above. Yet, large-N studies on the responsiveness of economic and military aid to human rights violations are less than conclusive.[576] More often than not, and especially in the case of military aid, strategic interests and national security imperatives prevail.[577] To guard against the possibility that a reduction in one-sided violence is the result of compliance with the human rights commitments of an external supporter rather than the result of increased military sophistication that changes relative targeting efficiency, I test the following alternative hypothesis:

H_4: External military assistance from supporters with a strong commitment to human rights decreases OSV.

5.5 Data and Research Design

The unit of analysis is the active government-year, i.e. the state actor involved in one or several civil wars in a given year. It is the actor-year rather than the dyad-year since one-sided violence is coded by actor and cannot easily be assigned to a given dyad in years, where government forces were involved in more than one active dyad. Attempts to assign instances of one-sided

[575] Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.
[576] Gordon Crawford and Simonida Kacarska, 'Aid Sanctions and Political Conditionality: Continuity and Change', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 22, no. 1 (2017): 184–214; Haley J Swedlund, 'Can Foreign Aid Donors Credibly Threaten to Suspend Aid? Evidence from a Cross-National Survey of Donor Officials', *Review of International Political Economy* 24, no. 3 (2017): 454–96.
[577] Robert K. Fleck and Christopher Kilby, 'Changing Aid Regimes? U.S. Foreign Aid from the Cold War to the War on Terror', *Journal of Development Economics* 91, no. 2 (2010): 185–97.

violence to a dyad or conflict based on spatial proximity are under way, but so far not available for the entire observation period and geographical span.[578] As a consequence, some of the detail of the data available at the dyad-level, such as battle-related deaths, is lost in the process. The final dataset comprises information on 824 actor-years spread over 82 state actors involved in 99 civil wars globally covering the period between 1989-2017.

The focus on the post-Cold War period is for one determined by data availability. Data on one-sided violence, for example, is not available on a global scale for an earlier period. Limiting the observation period to the post-Cold War era has the additional benefit of excluding external support patterns largely driven by superpower competition during the Cold War that no longer apply.[579] While the United States remains a prominent supporter after the end of the Cold War, Russia only made a return to the ranks of the most frequent supporters over the last decade, with regional hegemons taking on more prominent roles since the 1990s (cf. Chapter 3). Given the fundamental shift in the international system that the dissolution of the Soviet Union ushered in, starting the observation period in the 1990s further reduces issues around left-censoring since many support relationships founded on that logic ceased to exist and new links were created instead.[580] As such, the end of the Cold War represents a natural break for numerous cases of external support.

Data on active conflict-years stems from the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 and includes all years with a stated incompatibility between the government and at least one armed group, where armed combat results in at least 25 battle-related deaths.[581] I only include government-years where the state actor is involved in at least one active conflict-dyad. I construct several dependent

[578] The UCDP GED Conflict Polygons Dataset currently only holds data on African states between 1989 and 2010. See Mihai Croicu and Ralph Sundberg, 'UCDP GED Conflict Polygons Dataset Codebook Version 1.1', 2011.
[579] Anderson, 'Competitive Intervention, Protracted Conflict, and the Global Prevalence of Civil War'.
[580] Left-censoring refers to cases that received the treatment, e.g. external military assistance, before the beginning of the observation period, but were not observed at that time.
[581] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions'. I further drop all dyads where governments are exclusively involved in interstate wars. Following Thyne (2017), I distinguish between civil wars and coups. Therefore, I excluded dyads where conflict was directly and uniquely linked to coup attempts or successful coups. I keep observations where a coup occurred after violence was already ongoing for another reason or where violence continued for purposes not directly linked to the coup afterwards. In line with previous uses of this data, I drop information from the United States-Al-Qaida dyad since this is not usually seen as a civil war, but a transnational terrorist attack. See Thyne, 'The Impact of Coups d'État on Civil War Duration'.

variables to gauge changes in targeting decisions. As a first dependent variable, I create a dummy denoting whether a state actor committed one-sided violence (*OSV*) in a given year. In addition, I use the count of civilian deaths as the result of one-sided violence by a given state actor to create the count variable *OSV count*.[582] For the hypotheses based on the relative distribution of civilian and combatant deaths, I construct the *proportion of civilian deaths*. The proportion is calculated as the number of civilian deaths resulting from one-sided violence out of the total number of government-inflicted deaths. These include all government-perpetrated rebel deaths in addition to deaths from one-sided violence committed by state forces in a given year.[583] Data on both is taken from the UCDP GED Dataset 19.1 that provides data on one-sided violence at the event-level for all actors that have been involved in an active armed conflict at some point.[584] Although other datasets on violence against civilians, some of which include additional information on non-lethal violence as well as perpetrator and mode of attack, exist, the UCDP GED was chosen for its extensive geographical and temporal coverage and its interoperability with other UCDP datasets.[585]

Unfortunately, interval-level data on military assistance exists only for the United States.[586] In order to broaden the scope of the analysis beyond US support, I use data from the UCDP External Support Dataset (1975-2017).[587] The dataset contains information on the provision of ten different types of external support coded by supporter-recipient-opponent triad. I create the dummy variable *external military assistance* denoting the supply of weapons and ammunition, non-

[582] I exclude observations from the Rwandan genocide in 1994 in all main models since this observation presents an extreme outlier. I then check for the robustness of results including this outlier, see robustness section.
[583] If a government is involved in more than one dyad or conflict in a given year, I sum the number of battle-related rebel deaths across all dyads/conflicts the government actor is involved in. I exclude deaths from one-sided violence by a state actor that was clearly committed outside a civil war context, e.g. Iraqi violence against civilians in Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
[584] Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'; Högbladh, 'UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset Codebook Version 19.1 Uppsala Conflict Data Program'.
[585] Clionadh Raleigh et al., 'Introducing ACLED: An Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset', *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 651–60; Gerald Schneider and Margit Bussmann, 'Accounting for the Dynamics of One-Sided Violence: Introducing KOSVED', *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 5 (2013): 635–44.
[586] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), 'U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations'.
[587] Meier et al., 'External Support in Civil Wars: Introducing the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) 1975-2017'.

weaponry equipment and logistics support, and/or training and expertise. I allow for a one-year time lag for all external support-related variables to avoid simultaneity bias.

To test whether the effect of external military assistance is dependent on the military resources already on the ground, I create the variable *military expenditure* per member of the armed forces of the conflict-country. Data on military expenditure is derived from the SIPRI Military Expenditure database and divided by the number of military personnel as recorded by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in their annual reports on "The Military Balance."[588]

In addition, I calculate the military expenditure per member of the armed forces of external supporters to proxy the quality of external military assistance. Haas and Ansorg use this measure to determine the quality of UN peacekeepers.[589] Standardised military expenditure is an imperfect measure of the quality of military assistance, not at the least because it uses an assessment of input (expenditure) to assess an output (quality of support). Yet, I concur with Haas and Ansorg that even if external supporters systematically select to send their least sophisticated equipment and least trained advisers, higher spending per soldier should still correlate with, on average, higher-quality support.[590] Therefore, the variable *quality of external military assistance* contains external supporters' military spending per member of the armed forces. If a state receives assistance from more than one external backer, I use the maximum level of military quality reached by any of the supporters. This seems reasonable since the argument is about differences in kind rather than quantity. The effect of the most sophisticated equipment made available by the highest-quality supporter is not in some way diminished by the presence of lower-quality equipment.

[588] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Military Expenditure Database'; International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), 'The Military Balance'.
[589] Haass and Ansorg, 'Better Peacekeepers, Better Protection? Troop Quality of United Nations Peace Operations and Violence against Civilians'.
[590] Ibid.

To test for the confounding effect of external military assistance by supporters with a strong human rights commitment, I follow Salehyan, Siroky and Wood in relying on a regime type measure.[591] At least within a state's territory this has proven to be a more accurate proxy for compliance with International Humanitarian Law than the ratification of international treaties to that effect.[592] I use the maximum value of V-Dem's liberal democracy indicator reached by any of the external supporters as a proxy to create the variable *democracy external supporter*.[593] This measure focuses on the value assigned to the protection of individual liberties and rights in a regime and thus speaks more directly to its commitment to human rights than other measures of regime type.

Table 29 in Appendix C contains an overview of military expenditure, military personnel, military spending per member of the armed forces, and the liberal democracy score of each external supporter in the dataset. It demonstrates that the quality of support as operationalised here does not simply equate to support by great powers, liberal democracies, or more economically developed states. Among the top ten external supporters with the highest spending per member of the armed forces are states as democratic as Sweden and as autocratic as Saudi Arabia. Global players such as the United States share these ranks with small powers such as Kuwait and the Netherlands. Economically less developed Iran ranks in the vicinity of much wealthier Malaysia, when comparing standardised investment in the military.

In the vast majority of cases, countries that deploy troops to support a government under siege also provide some form of military assistance. To isolate the effect of military assistance, I control for the provision of *external troop support* in all models.[594] Since the proposed theory is sensitive to the resources available to a recipient government, I add controls for a country's per

[591] Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.
[592] Margit Bussmann and Gerald Schneider, 'A Porous Humanitarian Shield: The Laws of War, the Red Cross, and the Killing of Civilians', *Review of International Organizations* 11, no. 3 (2016): 337–59.
[593] Coppedge et al., 'V-Dem Codebook V8'.
[594] UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1. See Pettersson and Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017'; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007'.

capita *GDP* and inflow of official *development aid*, both derived from the World Bank Development Indicators.[595]

Existing research has further pointed to the retributive nature of one-sided violence.[596] Hence, I include a control for the level of violence perpetrated by all rebel groups a government is fighting through inclusion of the count variable *rebel OSV*.[597] I also control for the total number of *battle-related deaths* from all conflict-dyads a government is involved in in a given year.[598] The UCDP GED 19.1 contains information on both.[599]

To account for the characteristics of the conflict-country, I include a number of control variables. Since government-perpetrated violence is less likely in democratic regimes where citizens can punish violence against civilians at the ballot box, I add the dummy variable *democracy* indicating whether a country receives a Polity2 score of seven or higher in a given year.[600] Countries that are more strongly embedded in the international system are likely to fear retribution for their actions by other states more, such as economic sanctions. International trade and economic integration have also been linked to domestic conflict.[601] The variable *trade openness* therefore denotes a country's volume of foreign trade as a percentage of its GDP. I further control for the size of conflict-countries' *population* that affects the number of potential targets. Data for both is retrieved from the World Bank.[602] Table 30 in Appendix C contains summary statistics for all variables of interest.

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595 World Bank, 'World Development Indicators'.
596 Schneider, Bussmann, and Ruhe, 'The Dynamics of Mass Killings: Testing Time-Series Models of One-Sided Violence in the Bosnian Civil War'.
597 Clionadh Raleigh and Hyun Jin Choi, 'Conflict Dynamics and Feedback: Explaining Change in Violence against Civilians within Conflicts', *International Interactions* 43, no. 5 (2017): 848–78. If government forces are active in more than one dyad/conflict, I sum the number of one-sided violence fatalities perpetrated by all rebel groups the government is in a conflict with.
598 Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'; Högbladh, 'UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset Codebook Version 19.1 Uppsala Conflict Data Program'.
599 Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'.
600 Marshall and Gurr, 'POLITY5 Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2018. Dataset Users' Manual'.
601 Margit Bussmann and Gerald Schneider, 'When Globalization Discontent Turns Violent: Foreign Economic Liberalization and Internal War', *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (2007): 79–97.
602 World Bank, 'World Development Indicators'.

A common problem with this type of research design is potential bias resulting from selection effects.[603] If third parties systematically offer support only to governments with a certain conduct towards civilians, this might bias results. However, given the strong international regime prohibiting the targeting of civilians, this is likely to lead to fewer rather than more cases of external support where governments fail to respect physical integrity rights.

Nevertheless, to account for the possibility of non-random assignment of the treatment variable, external military assistance, in the research design, I use a matching strategy.[604] Assuming that all relevant determinants of the provision of external military assistance are observable, this procedure allows for the comparison of observations that are alike on all characteristics deemed relevant to the provision of external military assistance. This way, matching observations safeguards against the risk that any observed difference in average outcomes between cases with and without external military assistance is due to a factor that predicts the provision of external military assistance (*selection effect*) rather than the effect of such support.

Observations are matched on the pre-treatment level of OSV in the conflict-country to avoid post-treatment bias[605] as well as characteristics identified in the literature as linked to the provision of external military assistance.[606] These include overall state capacity (GDP), oil production, geographical distance (here to the United States), colonial links (here to European countries), refugee outflow, and whether the country is home to a group listed as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation by the US State Department.

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603 Gilligan and Sergenti, 'Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference'.
604 Ho et al., 'Matching as Nonparametric Preprocessing for Reducing Model Dependence in Parametric Causal Inference'.
605 I use the average level of OSV over the three years preceding the first treatment. Where data on OSV for the previous three years is missing, I use the average over two years or the value from the preceding year, respectively. If military assistance is interrupted for three years or longer, I generate a new pre-treatment level from the levels of OSV that occurred during the gap in military assistance in the same fashion. On post-treatment bias, see Gilligan and Sergenti, 'Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference'.
606 Koga, 'Where Do Third Parties Intervene? Third Parties' Domestic Institutions and Military Interventions in Civil Conflicts'; Bove, Gleditsch, and Sekeris, '"Oil above Water": Economic Interdependence and Third-Party Intervention'; Bove and Böhmelt, 'International Migration and Military Intervention in Civil War'.

A number of matching methods are available to pair observations and assign weights. I use Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM)[607] which has been shown to perform superiorly compared to a number of available alternatives.[608] Using propensity scores, for example, can inadvertently increase imbalance in the sample.[609] CEM matches observations that are as similar as possible on all covariates believed to influence whether a case receives treatment with and without treatment. In theory, since any two matched cases have the same likelihood of receiving treatment, any difference between treated and control group can be ascribed to the treatment effect, rather than a selection effect. In practice, exact matches with and without treatment rarely exist. The more detailed the information contained in the variable, the less likely are exact matches. CEM thus creates categories of continuous variables and looks for matches based on those categories. The algorithm then prunes the dataset of observations without matches, leading to a reduction in sample size.

To see how well a matching process does in approximating random treatment, the imbalance between variables is informative. Table 25 presents an overview of the difference between treated and untreated observations before (first row) and after matching (second row) for each variable that CEM is asked to match on.

Table 25: Overview of Imbalance in Treatment and Control Group before and after CEM

Variable	L1	Mean	Min	25%	50%	75%	Max
OSV deaths	0.13	-59.51	0	0	-5.33	-40.00	-1,278.30
	0.05	-8.74	0	0	-5.33	-823.67	.
GDP pc	0.15	-356.20	61.23	336.75	493.21	871.73	-24,920.00
	0.13	95.34	-45.69	86.77	262.81	67.20	.
Oil	0.10	0.10	0	0	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Distance from US	0.30	-261.38	1,522.00	-520.00	-275.00	117.00	-1,840.00
	0.14	-22.23	707.00	-353.00	185.00	0	0
Former European Colony	0.06	0.06	0	0	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Refugee Outflow	0.08	-24,878	0	-5,672	-57,173	-71,597	-130,000
	0.09	-2,406	0	-1,227	-24,693	-67,544	.
US Terrorist Listing	0.43	0.43	0	0	1	1	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Global L1 before CEM	0.72						
Global L1 after CEM	0.61						

[607] Iacus, King, and Porro, 'CEM: Coarsened Exact Matching Software'; Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata'.
[608] Iacus, King, and Porro, 'Causal Inference without Balance Checking: Coarsened Exact Matching'.
[609] King and Nielsen, 'Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used for Matching'.

Before matching, the mean number of deaths from one-sided violence was, on average, 60 deaths lower in cases that received treatment than in those that did not, suggesting that third parties may indeed consider a government's treatment of civilians when deciding on providing external support. After matching, this difference is reduced to 9 deaths. While the variable is relatively balanced at means, it is less so in the quantiles of the two distributions, where the discrepancy can be as large as 824 deaths at the 75% percentile. Note that although this signifies an increase in imbalance at the 75% percentile, this is due to the inclusion of observations with missing values that are treated as the new maximum value.[610] Taken together, the measure of overall imbalance, L1, is reduced from 0.13 to 0.05 for the variable.

While the imbalance is successfully reduced for all variables except refugee outflows, close to complete balance is only achieved for the categorical variables *oil, former European colony,* and *US terrorist listing*. Altogether, the global L1 that indicates the overall balance across all variables drops from 0.72 to 0.61 after performing CEM. As Iacus et al. point out, the global L1 serves as a point of comparison between matching solutions, similar to the R^2-statistic for model fit, rather than a hard criterion.[611] As such the reduction of imbalance by 0.11 represents an improvement. Yet, it is obvious that the dataset is not entirely balanced and hence the experimental design can only be approximated.

I use different estimators to model the use of one-sided violence by state actors (H_1), the number of deaths from government one-sided violence (H_1, H_2), and the proportion of civilian targets of all government-inflicted deaths (H_3, H_4). Logit models are used to assess the probability of state actors relying on one-sided violence. To model the number of deaths from one-sided violence, I use count models. The distribution of the dependent variable is not normally distributed,

[610] Since the variable codes the level of one-sided violence before the treatment, external military assistance, cases with missing values are cases where external military assistance was provided from the first observation on. Here, it is not possible to determine the pre-treatment level of one-sided violence. Since these values are not missing at random, including these cases in the matching procedure is informative. It allows to compare cases with and without external military assistance where states received such support before and are in that way alike.
[611] Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata', 531.

but highly right-skewed (cf. Figure 28, Appendix C). The variance being larger than the mean further suggests overdispersion.[612] The likelihood ratio test of a negative binomial regression model (NBREG) is significant indicating that a Poisson model is inappropriate. Therefore, estimations are based on negative binomial regression models. Standard errors are clustered by state actor to account for within-group correlation. The results from estimations of these dependent variables including fixed-effects are also reported. Fixed-effects models (FE) draw only on the variation within panels (here state actors) over time rather than across them which effectively controls for any differences in the unobservable independent variables across panels.

To probe how external military assistance can affect governments' relative targeting preferences, I turn to fractional response models. I use the regression for proportions estimator proposed by Papke and Wooldridge, i.e. a generalised linear model (GLM) with a logistic link, to model the proportion of civilian deaths out of all government-inflicted deaths.[613] Standard errors are again clustered by state actor. I rely on population-average models (PA) to model the time series. All models are run on the matched sample with results from the same analyses run on the full, unmatched sample available in Appendix C.

The observations for Rwanda in 1994 present an extreme outlier on the number of civilian deaths, more than 1,400 standard deviations away from the mean of 91 deaths and 86 times bigger than the second largest number of civilian deaths in a year with 5,801 deaths. Since Rwanda received external military assistance from France in that year, including the 1994 Rwandan genocide risks that a positive association between external military assistance and one-sided violence is driven by this extreme case. The observations for Rwanda in 1994 are thus excluded in the main models and in the visualisation of the data but later included for robustness (cf. robustness section).

[612] Mean 90.98, Variance 125,375.40

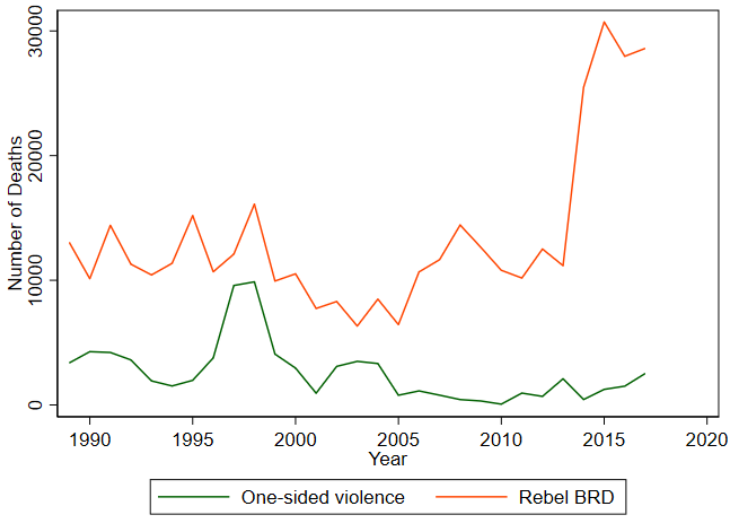
[613] Leslie E. Papke and Jeffrey M. Wooldridge, 'Econometric Methods for Fractional Response Variables With an Application to 401 (K) Plan Participation Rates', *Journal of Applied Econometrics* 11, no. 6 (1996): 619–32.

5.6 Results from the Empirical Analysis

A first glance at the data provides an overview of the prevalence of government-perpetrated one-sided violence in civil wars. During the observation period 1989-2017, 50 (61%) out of the 82 state actors involved in civil wars commit one-sided violence at least once. On average, a state actor kills 914 civilians over the course of its involvement in armed conflict. Together, the state actors in the dataset are responsible for the deaths of 74,966 civilians during the observation period. This number rises to 574,966 when including violence against civilians by the Rwandan government in 1994 that represents an extreme outlier. On the battlefield, state forces perpetrate, on average, 4,748 rebel deaths during the observation period. In total, 389,346 members of rebel groups died while battling a state opponent between 1989-2017.

Figure 22 displays the total number of civilians killed at the hands of government forces each year (green line) and the total number of rebel combatants killed by government forces in battle (orange line). Although the number of battle-related deaths on the rebel side consistently surpasses the number of civilian deaths from government one-sided violence, this gap is particularly narrow in the second half of the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s. Since 2005, the gap is widening with governments responsible for increasing numbers of opponent battle-related deaths, while one-sided violence remains at comparably low levels since the turn of the century.

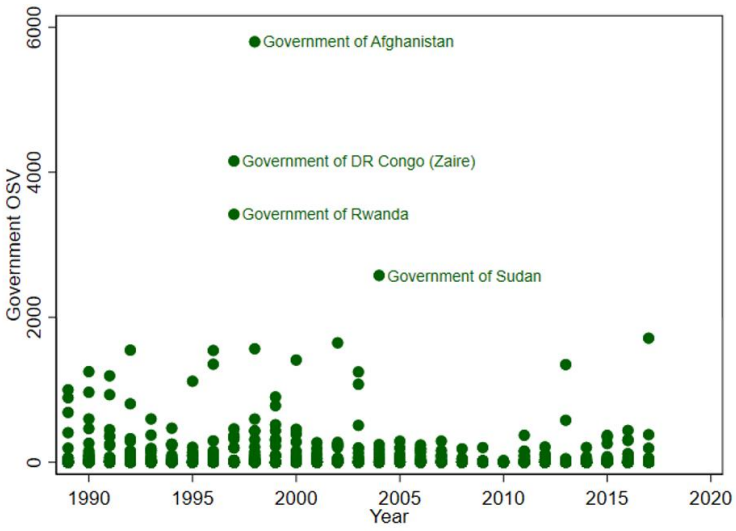
Figure 22: Total Civilian Deaths from Government One-Sided Violence and Rebel Battle-Related Deaths over Time (Rwanda 1994 excluded)[614]



While government forces are responsible for the deaths of, on average, 91 civilians each year, in almost half of the actor-years (46%), one-sided violence is foregone altogether (cf. Table 26). Figure 23 shows the number of civilian deaths produced by each government involved in a conflict over time. In half of the observations, government violence produces no more than one intentional civilian death per year and in 95% of the cases, the civilian death toll is less than 400. However, a few particularly violent governments, such as Afghanistan under Taleban rule, the DR Congo, Rwanda, and Sudan kill civilians by the thousands in a single year even when excluding genocidal violence on a scale as seen in Rwanda in 1994.

[614] Rwanda is excluded for presentation purposes as the high number of casualties of the Rwandan genocide (up to 500,000 civilians in one year) extends the scale to a degree that makes it difficult to discern observations with lower numbers of casualties.

Figure 23: Count of Civilian Deaths from One-Sided Violence per State Actor over Time, 1989-2017 (Rwanda 1994 excluded)[615]



Over the course of the observation period, the government side in a conflict received external military assistance from a third party in 60% of all actor-years. Overall, one-sided violence occurs slightly more often in actor-years that see external assistance (54%) than in those without (53%) as Table 26 demonstrates. A Pearson's Chi^2-test returns insignificant, however, suggesting no significant difference between years with and without external military assistance and the onset of one-sided violence. In the following, the relationship between external military assistance and the level of one-sided violence as well as states' relative targeting preferences will be examined in greater detail.

Table 26: Cross Tabulation of Government One-Sided Violence and External Military Assistance

		Was the government perpetrating one-sided violence in that year?		
		No	**Yes**	**Total**
Was the government receiving military assistance in that year?	**No**	47% (154)	53% (177)	100% (331)
	Yes	46% (227)	54% (266)	100% (493)
	Total	46% (381)	54% (443)	100% (824)
Pearson's Chi^2=0.02; Pr=0.90				

[615] Ibid.

Turning to multivariate analysis, Table 27 presents the results of the estimation of government one-sided violence and the count of civilian deaths from one-sided violence on external military assistance controlling for confounding factors. Across all four models, the provision of one-sided violence is associated with an on average higher probability for state actors to commit one-sided violence and to kill larger numbers of civilians. However, the effect of external military assistance on the propensity to commit one-sided violence is not statistically significant at conventional levels, suggesting that the difference between states with and without external military assistance may in fact be zero. The positive association between the number of civilians killed by state forces and the provision of external military assistance is significant in the fixed-effects specification that draws on within-case variation (Model 4). Exponentiating the coefficient of external military assistance yields an incidence rate ratio of 1.73 suggesting that governments receiving external military assistance kill civilians at a rate close to two times higher than governments without such support.[616]

External troop support is also associated with a higher probability of committing one-sided violence, but the effect does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, either. Foreign troops are however linked to significantly lower numbers of civilians killed in the fixed-effects specification (Model 4). The incidence rate ratio of 0.38 suggests that government forces with foreign troop support kill civilians at a rate almost two thirds lower than their counterparts without such foreign backing. Economic aid has a negative association with the probability of using one-sided violence (Model 1 and 2), but the effect is not significant. Economic aid significantly reduces the number of civilians killed (Model 4), however. This is at odds with the assumption that additional resources lead to more violence in general.

[616] The incidence rate ratio is the ratio of the risk of Y for a given X compared with the risk of Y given ~X. See Joseph M. Hilbe, *Negative Binomial Regression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). The incidence rate ratio can be calculated by exponentiating the coefficient.

Table 27: Government One-Sided Violence, Civilian Deaths, and External Military Assistance (H_1) (matched sample)

	OSV Dummy		OSV Count	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
Government OSV				
External Military Ass. (t-1)	0.494	0.429	0.342	0.546**
	(0.407)	(0.823)	(0.405)	(0.189)
External Troop Support (t-1)	0.389	1.324	-0.056	-0.957**
	(0.686)	(1.627)	(0.574)	(0.238)
Development Aid (pc) (t-1)	-0.120	-0.197	0.411	-0.265*
	(0.339)	(0.710)	(0.406)	(0.122)
Rebel OSV (t-1)	0.085	0.046	0.153**	0.069**
	(0.069)	(0.118)	(0.034)	(0.008)
Battle-Related Deaths (t-1)	-0.054	-0.537	-0.337**	0.186*
	(0.188)	(0.330)	(0.121)	(0.076)
Military Expenditure (t-1)	-0.060	-0.036	-0.106+	-0.012
(pc, in thousands)	(0.053)	(0.093)	(0.055)	(0.026)
Democracy	0.078	-0.006	-0.065	-0.019
	(0.062)	(0.149)	(0.051)	(0.019)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	-0.023**	-0.014	-0.045**	-0.003
	(0.009)	(0.018)	(0.008)	(0.005)
GDP (pc)	-0.312	-2.912	0.396	-1.403**
	(0.365)	(2.130)	(0.298)	(0.353)
Population	-0.246	-4.048	-0.076	0.819**
	(0.362)	(3.281)	(0.338)	(0.161)
Constant	8.353		4.424	-4.981*
	(8.116)		(6.560)	(2.064)
Number of observations	214	96	214	130
Number of clusters	32	9	32	13

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

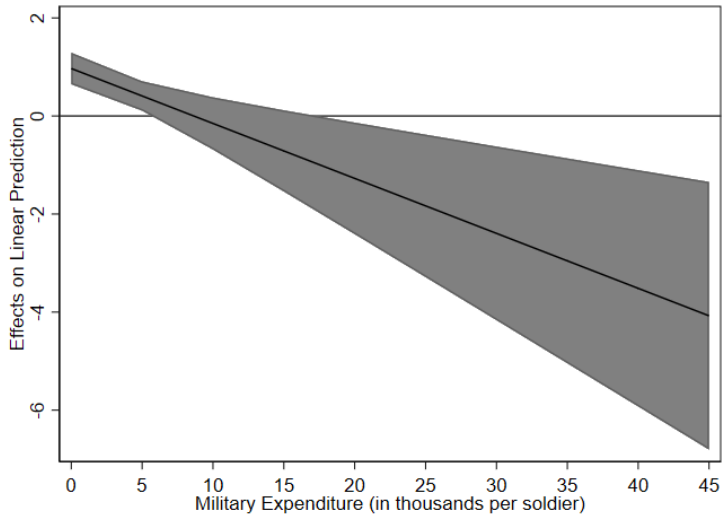
As expected, rebels' previous use of one-sided violence is reciprocated and is thus associated with higher numbers of government killings. The effect of overall conflict intensity is less clear with the coefficient indicating a negative association in Model 1, 2, and 3, but turning positive in Model 4. If anything, higher domestic spending per member of the armed forces reduces the occurrence and lethality of one-sided violence. Openness to foreign trade significantly decreases both the risk that governments turn to one-sided violence and the extent of the one-sided violence they commit in Model 1 and 3. Government forces in more prosperous countries equally tend to kill, on average, fewer civilians with the effect turning significant in Model 4. Where the effect is significant, it suggests that larger populations see more civilian casualties as would be expected. Surprisingly, the mostly negative effect of democracy on one-sided violence is not significant in either of the models.

According to the theoretical expectations, the availability of external military assistance should increase all types of government-inflicted violence. Besides violence against civilians, this includes battle-related violence that leads to rebel deaths. Table 32 in Appendix C presents the results of the effect of external military assistance on the count of rebel losses. The coefficients are positive in all models, however, the effect turns significant only in the fixed-effects specification run on the unmatched sample. While this does not contradict the predictions of the first hypothesis, these findings do not provide strong evidence in favour of the escalation of all types of government-inflicted violence, either.

Taken together, these findings confirm the results from the cross tabulation, suggesting that there is no independent effect of external military assistance on government forces' propensity to use one-sided violence. There is, however, evidence to suggest that when state forces that already commit one-sided violence receive external military assistance, their attacks on civilians and possibly rebels become more deadly. This is in line with the predictions about the availability of additional resources and the escalation of one-sided violence (H_1). Although the focus lies on levels of one-sided violence, this does lend credence to the assertion that more military resources lead to more violence of all kinds, including against civilians and opponent combatants.

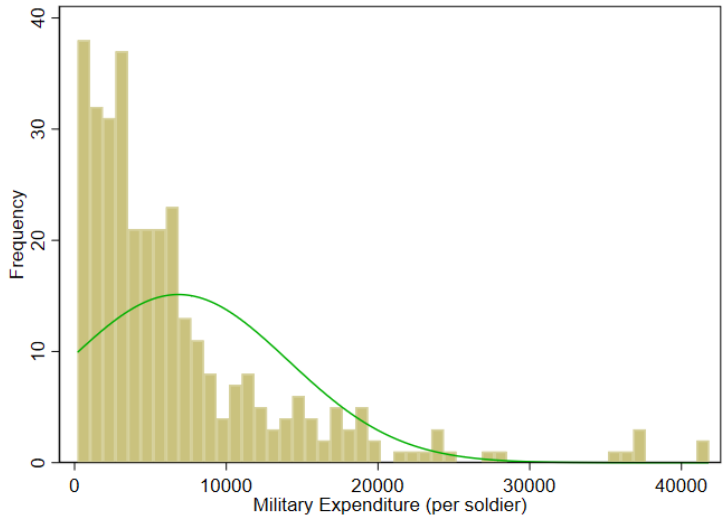
It is possible that the effect of external military assistance varies depending on levels of recipient states' military capability (H_2). To evaluate this relationship, Table 33 in Appendix C presents the same models on the level of one-sided violence with an interaction term. The interaction of external military assistance and local troop quality is negative and significant in the fixed-effects specification. Figure 24 presents the marginal effects of external military assistance for varying levels of domestic military capacity based on Model 4, Table 33. Up to a military spending of USD10,000 per member of the armed forces in the conflict-country, the provision of external military assistance is associated with higher numbers of civilians killed before the effect turns negative for higher values of domestic military spending.

Figure 24: Marginal Effects of External Military Assistance Conditional on Expenditure per Member of the Armed Forces (conflict-country) (Model 4, Table 33)



This is not negligible since in 63% of observations in the sample, spending per soldier is less than USD10.000 a year as Figure 25 illustrates. This lends support to the proposition that an increase in overall resources, such as external military assistance, increases the use of one-sided violence by recipient states where domestic military capability is weak to begin with (H_2). Again, troops deployed have a negative effect on the level of one-sided violence, whereas economic aid significantly decreases violence against civilians in the fixed-effects specification. The direction and significance of the effects of the control variables stays the same as in the previous models on the count of civilian deaths.

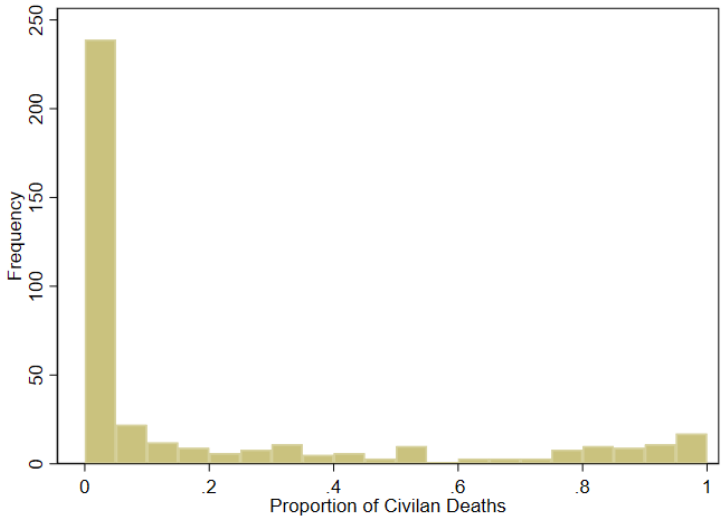
Figure 25: Distribution of Expenditure per Member of the Armed Forces in Matched Sample (conflict-country)



Having compared observations with and without external military assistance, I will now turn to differences in the provision of external military assistance, specifically the quality of such assistance. This necessarily implies restricting the sample to cases with external military assistance only. To examine whether any increase in one-sided violence is the result of a shift towards targeting more civilians respective to combatants or simply the result of overall increased violence, I further focus on the proportion of government-sponsored civilian killings out of all government-perpetrated deaths.

Figure 26 provides an overview of the frequency of different targeting profiles, i.e. combinations of the relative proportion of civilian and opponent combatant deaths. On average, government forces target 19 civilians for every 81 combatants, or close to 1:5. This means civilians make up 19% of all government-inflicted fatalities.[617] For 75% of all observations, the ratio of civilian deaths is 1:4 or less. In 3% of the sample state forces target civilians exclusively, however.[618] Perpetrators belonging to this group include government forces of Chad, Ethiopia, and Iraq during the 1990s and 2000s.

Figure 26: Frequency Distribution of Targeting Profiles in Matched Sample



[617] This does not include the number of civilians killed in the crossfire, by indirect means, or the deaths of individuals that could not be identified as civilians or combatants.
[618] In these cases, rebel losses exceed 25 battle-related deaths for the conflict to continue to be coded as active.

Table 28 presents the results from the estimation of the proportion of civilian deaths out of all government-inflicted deaths on the quality of external military assistance. In both the GLM (Model 1) and the PA model (Model 2), the quality of external military assistance, as measured by the troop quality of the most sophisticated external supporter, shows a significant negative association with the proportion of civilians targeted. This effect is robust to the inclusion of foreign troops and economic aid which seem to exhibit no independent effect on the relative share of civilians targeted. Trade openness is again a significant predictor of relatively less violence against civilians. More surprisingly, rebel one-sided violence and overall battle intensity are also associated with overall lower shares of civilian casualties. Government forces might interpret this as rebel weakness allowing them to engage rebels on the battlefield in greater numbers.

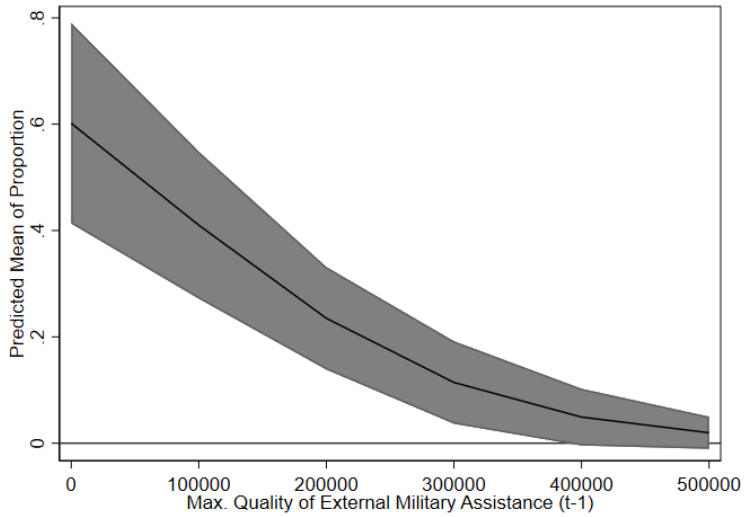
Table 28: Proportion of Civilian Deaths, Quality of External Military Assistance, and Regime Type of Supporter (H_3 and H_4) (matched sample)

	(1) GLM	(2) PA	(3) GLM	(4) PA
Civilian Deaths as Proportion of all Government-Inflicted Deaths				
Quality Ext. Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	-0.007*	-0.008**	-0.007	-0.009**
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.002)
Democracy Ext Sup. $_{(t-1)}$			-0.285	1.026
			(1.864)	(1.732)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	0.887	0.158	0.866	0.072
	(0.996)	(0.670)	(1.055)	(0.695)
Development Aid (pc) $_{(t-1)}$	0.214	0.139	0.225	0.095
	(0.535)	(0.477)	(0.544)	(0.509)
Rebel OSV $_{(t-1)}$	-0.123	-0.126*	-0.128+	-0.101+
	(0.078)	(0.057)	(0.073)	(0.060)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	-0.709	-0.477**	-0.722+	-0.436**
	(0.449)	(0.141)	(0.425)	(0.136)
Military Expenditure $_{(t-1)}$	-0.146*	-0.001	-0.147+	0.013
(pc, in thousands)	(0.075)	(0.055)	(0.076)	(0.048)
Democracy	0.027	0.051	0.028	0.056+
	(0.065)	(0.035)	(0.069)	(0.031)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	-0.025*	-0.028*	-0.025*	-0.029*
	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.012)
GDP (pc)	-0.311	-0.689	-0.310	-0.651
	(0.545)	(0.493)	(0.543)	(0.513)
Population	0.132	0.622+	0.137	0.621+
	(0.375)	(0.321)	(0.373)	(0.326)
Constant	1.413	-4.282	1.451	-4.900
	(7.481)	(5.296)	(7.478)	(5.264)
Number of observations	104	104	104	104
Number of clusters	24	20	24	20

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

To assess the substantive effect of the quality of external military assistance, Figure 27 shows the predicted mean of the share of one-sided violence amongst all government-inflicted fatalities across the full range of military sophistication based on Model 4. External military assistance of average quality (USD231,000/personnel) is associated with a 19% share of civilian deaths among all government-perpetrated deaths. Moving from lowest-quality to highest-quality military assistance decreases the share from 59% to 2%. Hence, even though external military assistance, on average, is associated with higher levels of one-sided violence (H_1), among those cases that receive external military assistance the proportion of civilian targets out of all government-inflicted casualties decreases the higher the quality of assistance provided (H_3). Put simply, external military assistance overall leads to more civilian deaths, but high-quality military assistance can induce a shift towards more combatant targets.

Figure 27: Predicted Proportion of Civilian Deaths Across Quality of External Military Assistance (Model 4, Table 28)



Notably, this effect of the quality of external military assistance appears to be distinct from the human rights commitments and democratic values of the external supporters (H_4). Controlling for the regime type of the external supporter in Model 3 and 4, the quality of external military assistance stays the same in direction and magnitude. The quality of external military assistance does, however, lose significance in the GLM specification. The regime type of the external supporter shows no independent effect on the relative share of civilian targets. Hence, states

supported by more democratic supporters do not display a targeting profile with a significantly lower share of civilians than their counterparts that receive external military assistance from less democratic regimes (H_4). Taken together, these findings can be interpreted as further evidence in favour of hypothesis H_3 and as a contradiction of the alternative hypothesis H_4.

Robustness of Results

Although the estimations run on a matched sample including possible confounders already present a hard test for the theoretical predictions, a number of additional robustness and sensitivity checks were conducted. The inclusion of a time-invariant variable measuring ethnic fractionalisation[619] in all models does not change results but is excluded in the main models since its lack of variation over time leads to omission in the fixed-effect specifications. To guard against the logic of genocidal violence driving results rather than one-sided violence representing a tactical choice, I run all models on a sample without the 213 actor-years across 31 conflicts during the observation period in which one-sided violence was classified as a genocide by the Political Instability Task Force (PTIF).[620] The effect of external military assistance and the quality of such assistance is robust to excluding cases of genocide, with the effect on the count of civilian deaths even more sizeable. As expected, results are robust to the inclusion of the outlier of the Rwandan one-sided violence in 1994 in the models that already include other cases characterised as genocide. The results from the estimations of the proportion of civilian deaths are further robust to replacing the missing values where no government-inflicted deaths were recorded with zeros.

5.7 Discussion of Findings

The empirical evidence suggests that state actors with external military assistance escalate the violence they inflict on civilians. External military assistance hence contributes to the overall violence-inducing effect of introducing additional resources to a conflict environment.

[619] Alberto Alesina et al., 'Fractionalization', *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, no. 2 (2003): 155–94.
[620] Monty G. Marshall, Ted R. Gurr, and Barbara Harff, 'PITF - State Failure Problem Set: Internal Wars and Failures of Governance, 1955-2018 - Dataset and Coding Guidelines', 2019.

Importantly, however, this effect is not uniform across recipients and supporters. We see an escalation in violence particularly where militaries are poorly funded to begin with. This suggests that the marginal conflict-inducing effect of additional resources decreases the more sophisticated the domestic military apparatus. Providing external military assistance to states already investing a certain amount of resources into their military strength proves less problematic when the aim is to protect civilians rather than providing such assistance to countries with less developed military capabilities. A crucial threshold appears to lie around military expenditure of USD10,000 per member of the armed forces. This includes countries such as Senegal, Jordan, and Thailand as potentially suitable support recipients, while it would caution against supporting countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia, and Somalia militarily. However, the latter group of countries are often particularly dependent on outside resources in countering an insurgent threat.

This poses the question whether external military assistance can ever be provided without increasing the risk of civilian victimisation. Focusing international efforts on high-quality military assistance poses a potential solution. Findings suggest that high-quality military assistance can affect the relative efficiency with which government forces target combatants. Thanks to improved equipment and training, they can focus their activities more directly on the armed opposition, foregoing attacks on civilians that serve as a substitute strategy to quell an insurgency. Yet, the provision of high-quality military assistance can still lead to an increase in the absolute numbers of civilians killed, even if their relative proportion decreases. This dynamic needs to be carefully weighed against the potential risk the prolongation of armed conflict poses for civilians. As the discussion earlier pointed out, civilians do not only fall victim to direct, targeted attacks by government forces during civil war, but also face indirect and sometimes unintentional threats to live and livelihood in a conflict environment.

These findings further underline the need to systematically analyse the effect of external military assistance beyond the provision of such support by the United States. The United States, the only country for which detailed expenditure reports on military aid are available, happens to be

what would be qualified as a provider of high-quality military assistance in this context. It is topped only by Australia, which spends the most per soldier, although the United States has the largest military expenditure overall (cf. Table 29, Appendix C). If anything, the above analysis demonstrates that a data-driven focus exclusively on US military aid can lead to overconfidence in the ability of external military assistance to bring about a reduction in the targeting of civilians more generally. As Biddle et al. argue, the instrument's popularity is by no means limited to the United States. Regional powers and neighbouring states in all regions of the world provide such assistance.[621] Here, the provision of external military assistance can have vastly different effects on civilian victimisation.

This analysis cannot guard against the possibility that effects on violence against civilians are driven by the quantity rather than the quality of military assistance. Previous studies have linked larger amounts of military aid by the same external supporter to a decrease in one-sided violence.[622] There is a possibility that more militarily sophisticated external supporters do not provide better, but simply more external support of equally low quality. It seems likely, however, that some of this ambiguity is inherent to measures of expenditure as well. Larger investments in external military aid can provide both more and better equipment and training. Much more detailed information on the type of external military assistance provided would be necessary. Until then, using data from the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) and leveraging various characteristics of external supporters appears to be the most feasible way to broaden analysis beyond US foreign aid. Recent work on the importance of the quality in contrast to the mere size of deployments in peacekeeping operations can be seen as a further indication that quality plays a role when it comes to the effects outside resources have on conflict dynamics.[623]

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[621] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.

[622] Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'.

[623] On the role of the size of peacekeeping deployments, see Lisa Hultman, Jacob D. Kathman, and Megan Shannon, 'United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War', *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (2013): 875–91; Lisa Hultman, Jacob D. Kathman, and Megan Shannon, 'Beyond Keeping Peace: United Nations

These findings further shed doubt on the previously identified importance of the regime type of the external supporter and the commitment to human rights that is associated with it.[624] One possibility is that the regime type measure is simply not a good proxy for human rights commitments of external supporters. It is difficult, however, to discern stated goals and true objectives of external support as third-party interference is often at least nominally linked to a desire to improve human rights conditions. Regime type, therefore, appears to be a better proxy than alternatives available for a time-series-cross-country comparison. That it has been used to measure human rights commitments of external supporters backing rebel groups yields further credence to this operationalisation.[625] Overall, these findings suggest that some doubt is in order with regard to the ability of Western liberal democracies to influence partner countries through mechanisms of conditionality and socialisation.[626] Rather, the transfer of technological advancements and expertise might be more productive in enabling government forces to refrain from targeting civilians.

Upon first sight, the negative effect of external troop support, economic aid, and military expenditure is at odds with an interpretation in terms of resource availability. In fact, it seems to be specifically the influx of weapons, equipment, and training that aggravates one-sided violence. One possible explanation is that troops and economic aid do not free up resources for the military in the same way as external military assistance does. Foreign troops, by definition, stay under the

Effectiveness in the Midst of Fighting', *The American Political Science Review* 108, no. 4 (2014): 737–53. On the quality of peacekeeping missions, see Lisa Hultman, Jacob D. Kathman, and Megan Shannon, 'United Nations Peacekeeping Dynamics and the Duration of Post-Civil Conflict Peace', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33, no. 3 (2016): 231–49; Haass and Ansorg, 'Better Peacekeepers, Better Protection? Troop Quality of United Nations Peace Operations and Violence against Civilians'.

624 Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.

625 Ibid.

626 David A Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Walter C. Ladwig, 'Influencing Clients in Counterinsurgency: U.S. Involvement in El Salvador's Civil War, 1979–92', *International Security* 41, no. 1 (2016): 99–146; Bell, 'Military Culture and Restraint toward Civilians in War: Examining the Ugandan Civil Wars'; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 'External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities'.

command and control of third parties with independent sources of funding and likely fulfil an additional monitoring function with a view to the treatment of civilians.

Economic aid is often ear-marked for specific non-military purposes. Especially in the context of low- and middle-income countries where the majority of internal armed conflict occurs, these resources fall short of covering the resource demands of the non-military sector. Hence, it is unlikely that a greater portion of domestic resources is available for the military to spend even when the budget is supplemented in this way. The negative effect of military expenditure per member of the armed forces is more puzzling. It is conceivable that financial resources allocated domestically are primarily directed at compensating soldiers and do not translate into the greater availability of equipment and technology that would facilitate heightened levels of violence against civilians.

5.8 Conclusion

Third parties make considerable resources available to build military capacity in foreign regimes including through the provision of external military assistance. The introduction of foreign-sourced weapons, equipment, and training into a conflict context, however, can have adverse effects on the protection of civilians from undue harm. Existing research has so far failed to examine the effect of external military assistance by a range of external supporters in varying domestic contexts. In a time of increasing calls for states to fight their own wars and a growing reluctance to put one's own troops at risk, it is pertinent to further explore the consequences of more indirect forms of external support such as military assistance.[627]

This paper contributes to this endeavour by first lowering the threshold of foreign intervention to the provision of external military assistance while at the same time controlling for the effect of more invasive troop deployments. Second, it broadens the analysis beyond military aid provided by the United States to include a range of other states with different military

[627] Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*; Knowles and Abigail Watson, *Remote Warfare: Lessons Learned from Contemporary Theatres*.

capabilities. Third, the empirical analysis tests theoretical propositions against newly collected data on the provision of external military assistance by actors across the globe for the period 2010-2017, considerably extending the previous observation period. As such, this research speaks to broader debates in the literature and among policymakers. In the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, where limited forms of intervention have gained increasing popularity in defence discourses, the need to develop a better understanding of the effectiveness and possible unintended consequences of external military assistance is acutely felt and new research on these topics is rapidly emerging.[628]

Perceiving of the relative target preferences of government forces as a resource allocation problem, this analysis has shown that an overall increase in resources can lead to more civilians dying at the hand of government forces. Especially in conflict-countries with low local military capability, marginal returns on additional resources from abroad are initially great and can lead to increased levels of violence overall. However, where states receive high-quality military equipment, training, and logistical support, armed forces are more likely to shift their targeting strategies from one-sided violence to engaging opponent combatants in battle. While such a stylised representation of targeting choices cannot depict the full reality of actors' motivations and constraints, it can highlight the indirect and often unintended consequences of external support in civil wars. In this case, a stylised model helps explore how external military assistance that seeks to increase counterinsurgency capacity can inadvertently increase violence against civilians. It also shows how a shift in the relative efficiency of policy instruments can mitigate this very effect.

Nonetheless, this paper should not be misconstrued as a plea for the provision of more external military assistance. After all, total numbers of civilian deaths may increase even though the

[628] Gates, 'Helping Others Defend Themselves: The Future of U. S. Security Assistance'; Michael J. McNerney et al., *Assessing Security Cooperation as a Preventive Tool* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014); Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*; Stephen Watts, *Identifying and Mitigating Risks in Security Sector Assistance for Africa's Fragile States* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015); Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*; Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.

relative frequency of civilian targets decreases. Rather, the findings suggest that if external military assistance is provided, its quality (and quantity for that matter) should be sufficient to increase local capacity in ways that allows actors to engage combatants more effectively, thereby decreasing the need to revert to targeting civilians instead. The fact that foreign troop presence outside peacekeeping operations can have a positive impact on the fate of civilians presents further food for thought. If this is the case, the recent turn away from 'boots on the ground' towards more indirect forms of interfering in civil wars may jeopardise the protection of civilians.

APPENDIX C

Table 29: List of Countries Ranked by Military Expenditure per Member of the Armed Forces in 2017

Rank	Country	Military Personnel	Military Expenditure (in current USD)	Spending per Soldier (in current USD)	Lib. Dem. Score
1	Australia	68,000	27,690,000,000	477,433	0.89
2	United States	2,240,000	711,000,000,000	467,732	0.90
3	United Kingdom	318,000	65,990,000,000	412,413	0.91
4	Sweden	63,200	6,556,000,000	405,512	0.91
5	United Arab Emirates	63,000	23,560,000,000	376,113	0.10
6	Saudi Arabia	252,000	87,190,000,000	346,664	0.05
7	Norway	47,000	7,392,000,000	335,312	0.89
8	Canada	72,000	21,390,000,000	325,627	0.82
9	Kuwait	25,000	6,765,000,000	285,254	0.29
10	Netherlands	60,000	12,370,000,000	280,316	0.85
11	Denmark	30,000	4,788,000,000	274,686	0.90
12	New Zealand	9,673	2,328,000,000	267,547	0.86
13	Germany	308,400	48,140,000,000	258,134	0.89
14	Switzerland	23,000	4,628,000,000	221,768	0.88
15	Japan	272,000	54,660,000,000	209,905	0.78
16	France	554,000	66,880,000,000	203,661	0.87
17	Luxembourg	2,000	357,700,000	189,187	0.77
18	Belgium	106,000	6,296,000,000	168,371	0.86
19	Finland	32,000	4,161,000,000	166,446	0.85
20	Ireland	10,500	1,583,000,000	158,289	0.83
21	Austria	40,000	3,747,000,000	149,446	0.83
22	Singapore	147,600	10,200,000,000	125,873	0.34
23	Latvia	17,000	581,800,000	116,351	0.80
24	Czech Republic	28,521	2,919,000,000	108,100	0.85
25	Italy	506,000	36,840,000,000	104,162	0.80
26	Israel	190,000	18,490,000,000	100,194	0.65
27	Spain	251,200	22,230,000,000	99,676	0.84
28	Estonia	8,100	537,400,000	89,573	0.86
29	China	4,135,000	228,000,000,000	84,601	0.07
30	Slovakia	30,900	1,412,000,000	83,042	0.81
31	Poland	228,000	10,350,000,000	80,097	0.86
32	East Germany	545,000	42,320,000,000	77,649	0.26
33	Bahrain	21,200	1,506,000,000	77,366	0.04
34	Greece	181,600	10,640,000,000	74,448	0.82
35	Portugal	93,000	4,950,000,000	70,125	0.88

36	Russia (Soviet Union)	1,900,000	88,350,000,000	70,121	0.33
37	Slovenia	15,000	829,400,000	69,115	0.82
38	Myanmar	513,250	32,950,000,000	68,228	0.21
39	Qatar	22,000	784,600,000	63,275	0.10
40	South Korea	696,000	37,550,000,000	59,371	0.76
41	Croatia	31,000	1,296,000,000	58,907	0.73
42	South Africa	276,900	4,118,000,000	53,379	0.63
43	Hungary	78,000	1,868,000,000	50,483	0.78
44	Oman	47,800	2,231,000,000	49,571	0.11
45	Iraq	1,390,000	9,604,000,000	45,953	0.34
46	Brunei	8,000	346,700,000	43,338	N/A
47	Azerbaijan	82,000	3,427,000,000	41,820	0.08
48	Congo	15,000	501,800,000	41,818	0.26
49	Cyprus	16,000	479,700,000	37,626	0.75
50	Iran	868,000	19,730,000,000	37,372	0.18
51	Malaysia	140,300	4,919,000,000	36,821	0.25
52	Ukraine	419,800	4,811,000,000	36,103	0.45
53	Kenya	29,120	1,015,000,000	35,013	0.38
54	Turkey	841,200	18,660,000,000	34,871	0.56
55	Georgia	33,000	1,090,000,000	33,035	0.56
56	Algeria	334,200	10,410,000,000	32,827	0.16
57	Serbia (Yugoslavia)	32,000	913,400,000	32,446	0.36
58	Romania	179,100	3,622,000,000	28,747	0.60
59	Malta	2,130	58,728,950	27,611	0.58
60	Bulgaria	111,300	1,038,000,000	26,587	0.68
61	Bosnia-Herzegovina	12,000	242,500,000	25,921	0.46
62	Mali	18,000	458,700,000	25,484	0.44
63	Sudan	264,300	3,228,000,000	25,417	0.08
64	Ivory Coast	27,000	602,500,000	24,102	0.38
65	Lithuania	34,000	812,100,000	23,886	0.80
66	Libya	86,000	1,444,000,000	22,040	0.05
67	Tanzania	28,400	611,200,000	21,829	0.45
68	Ghana	16,000	337,300,000	21,759	0.63
69	India	3,047,000	64,560,000,000	21,300	0.58
70	Albania	22,500	255,700,000	21,178	0.50
71	Chad	39,850	726,500,000	20,845	0.11
72	Tunisia	58,000	987,700,000	20,664	0.69
73	Philippines	165,500	3,377,000,000	20,405	0.45
74	Niger	10,700	200,200,000	20,018	0.52
75	North Macedonia	20,400	172,700,000	19,840	0.52

76	Botswana	9,500	181,100,000	19,058	0.62
77	Kazakhstan	101,000	1,541,000,000	19,022	0.15
78	Guinea	19,300	221,400,000	18,001	0.20
79	Gambia	1,000	14,288,132	17,860	0.29
80	Burkina Faso	11,450	191,100,000	17,370	0.56
81	Cameroon	24,000	408,200,000	17,307	0.16
82	Jordan	116,000	1,940,000,000	16,722	0.24
83	Senegal	19,000	305,400,000	16,385	0.60
84	Central African Republic	8,150	51,585,275	16,376	0.18
85	Bangladesh	221,000	3,594,000,000	16,262	0.20
86	Nigeria	215,000	2,419,000,000	14,931	0.46
87	Syria	408,000	2,977,000,000	14,016	0.05
88	Thailand	474,550	5,901,000,000	13,011	0.47
89	Pakistan	947,800	11,460,000,000	12,245	0.35
90	Indonesia	676,000	8,178,000,000	12,098	0.55
91	Yemen (North Yemen)	138,000	1,649,000,000	11,956	0.18
92	Namibia	15,000	105,800,000	11,623	0.55
93	Benin	12,000	116,100,000	9,840	0.61
94	Armenia	55,544	457,800,000	9,428	0.24
95	Malawi	15,000	62,925,520	9,254	0.47
96	Zimbabwe	61,800	416,300,000	9,251	0.23
97	Togo	10,000	88,414,115	8,933	0.27
98	El Salvador	42,000	260,900,000	8,533	0.51
99	Angola	145,500	1,067,000,000	8,365	0.10
100	Liberia	2,050	15,334,000	7,667	0.49
101	Uganda	46,800	351,800,000	7,538	0.30
102	South Sudan	210,000	1,302,000,000	7,035	0.12
103	Mauritania	21,000	144,800,000	6,947	0.23
104	Mongolia	18,000	113,600,000	6,606	0.59
105	Egypt	836,000	5,475,000,000	6,554	0.16
106	Montenegro	13,084	79,376,664	6,517	0.41
107	Tajikistan	23,500	104,300,000	6,398	0.10
108	Kyrgyzstan	21,000	128,000,000	6,273	0.36
109	Turkmenistan	18,000	106,200,000	5,899	0.03
110	Sri Lanka	317,000	1,867,000,000	5,888	0.47
111	Sierra Leone	10,500	48,810,631	5,742	0.34
112	Belarus	158,000	756,300,000	4,787	0.10
113	Afghanistan	340,350	325,800,000	4,634	0.26
114	Moldova	10,000	36,845,651	4,606	0.40
115	Uzbekistan	100,000	86,929,825	4,346	0.07

116	Dominican Republic	39,000	152,900,000	3,920	0.38
117	Guinea-Bissau	6,450	21,710,793	3,829	0.33
118	DR Congo (Zaire)	159,000	491,300,000	3,659	0.16
119	Ethiopia	325,500	703,700,000	3,646	0.13
120	Nepal	158,600	404,700,000	3,613	0.51
121	Morocco	240,500	859,200,000	3,572	0.21
122	Djibouti	13,100	41,763,776	3,395	0.14
123	Honduras	20,000	60,561,787	3,028	0.34
124	Rwanda	35,000	103,600,000	2,959	0.19
125	Madagascar	21,600	59,394,996	2,750	0.29
126	Cambodia (Kampuchea)	191,300	463,800,000	2,428	0.13
127	Somalia	19,800	46,614,000	2,354	0.13
128	Nicaragua	14,000	32,628,065	2,331	0.44
129	Burundi	51,050	66,462,843	2,062	0.17
130	Eritrea	202,000	181,600,000	899	0.02
131	Vietnam (North Vietnam)	1,250,000	512,000,000	488	0.07
132	North Korea	1,200,000	N/A	N/A	0.01
133	Cuba	297,000	N/A	N/A	0.04
134	Iceland	250	N/A	N/A	0.83
135	Bhutan	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.50
136	Tonga	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 30: Summary Statistics of Variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dependent Variables					
Government OSV (dummy)	824	0.54	0.50	0	1
Deaths from government OSV	824	90.98	354.08	0	5,801
Rebel battle-related deaths	817	476.56	1,217.82	0	15,995
Proportion of civilian deaths	798	0.20	0.33	0	1
Independent Variables					
External military assistance	824	0.60	0.49	0	1
Quality of external military assistance (pc)	479	232,939.30	169,260.50	487.59	477,433.00
Democracy external supporter	493	0.67	0.28	0.03	0.91
Military expenditure (pc)	704	12,577.08	17,391.96	182.13	169,111.40
Control Variables					
External troop support	824	0.16	0.37	0	1
Development aid (pc, ln)	757	2.94	1.39	-6.13	6.71
Deaths from rebel OSV	824	148.42	1,107.91	0	30,110
Battle-related deaths	801	847.39	2,556.45	0	48,845
Democracy	771	0.86	5.52	-9	10
Trade openness (%/GDP, ln)	713	56.82	29.62	0.02	181.52
GDP per capita (ln)	756	7.33	1.24	5.09	10.42
Population (ln)	824	17.09	1.35	12.90	21.02
Ethnic fractionalisation	824	0.56	0.23	0	0.93

Figure 28: Frequency Distribution of Count of Civilian Deaths from Government OSV, All Observations (left) and Observations with Fewer than 600 Deaths Only (right)

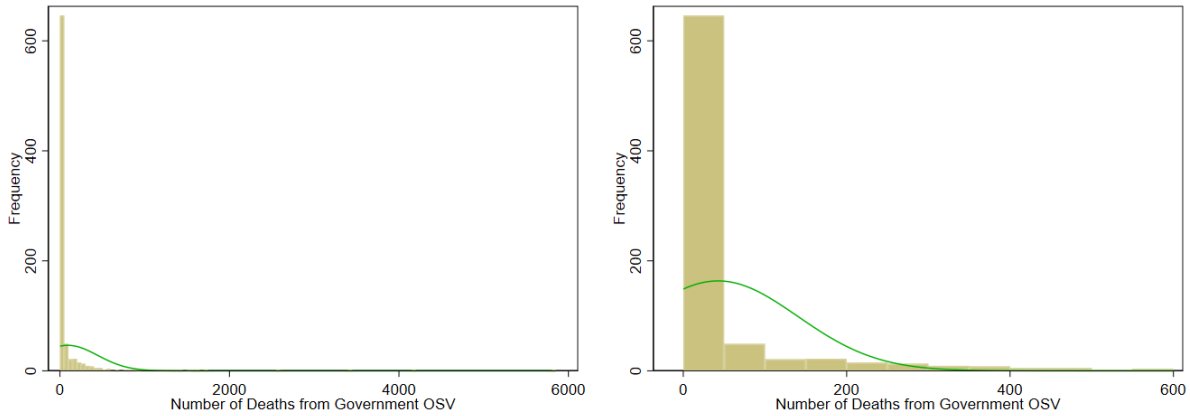


Table 31: Government One-Sided Violence, Civilian Deaths, and External Military Assistance (H_1) (unmatched sample)

	OSV Dummy		OSV Count	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
Government OSV				
External Military Ass. (t-1)	0.076	0.972*	-0.115	0.224
	(0.329)	(0.388)	(0.337)	(0.147)
External Troop Support (t-1)	0.236	0.895	0.291	-0.218
	(0.434)	(0.689)	(0.463)	(0.233)
Development Aid (pc) (t-1)	0.008	-0.239	0.362*	-0.246**
	(0.158)	(0.272)	(0.160)	(0.085)
Rebel OSV (t-1)	0.050	0.124+	0.099**	0.028*
	(0.034)	(0.072)	(0.029)	(0.012)
Battle-Related Deaths (t-1)	0.022	0.099	-0.062	0.095+
	(0.072)	(0.148)	(0.115)	(0.054)
Military Expenditure (t-1)	0.023	0.014	-0.028+	0.008
(pc, in thousands)	(0.018)	(0.035)	(0.016)	(0.008)
Democracy	0.060	0.050	-0.061	-0.020
	(0.042)	(0.051)	(0.043)	(0.017)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	-0.013	-0.020+	-0.038**	-0.009*
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.003)
GDP (pc)	-0.662**	-0.794	-0.237	-0.048
	(0.244)	(1.020)	(0.252)	(0.104)
Population	-0.084	-2.266	0.068	-0.063
	(0.196)	(1.414)	(0.232)	(0.082)
Constant	6.499+		5.488	1.009
	(3.894)		(4.606)	(1.631)
Number of observations	492	324	492	354
Number of clusters	61	28	61	33

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 32: Rebel Deaths and External Military Assistance (H_1)

	Unmatched		Matched	
	(1) NBREG	**(2) FE**	**(3) NBREG**	**(4) FE**
Rebel Deaths				
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	0.180	0.259*	0.163	0.046
	(0.206)	(0.101)	(0.193)	(0.152)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	0.068	0.105	-0.596*	0.014
	(0.369)	(0.159)	(0.283)	(0.220)
Development Aid (pc) $_{(t-1)}$	-0.062	-0.168**	-0.036	0.098
	(0.110)	(0.046)	(0.155)	(0.107)
Rebel OSV $_{(t-1)}$	0.156**	0.047**	0.112	0.047**
	(0.060)	(0.006)	(0.080)	(0.008)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.459**	0.030**	0.629**	0.218**
	(0.173)	(0.008)	(0.124)	(0.041)
Military Expenditure $_{(t-1)}$	-0.014+	0.003	-0.029	0.003
(pc, in hundreds)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.024)	(0.010)
Democracy	0.034	0.022*	0.033	-0.004
	(0.032)	(0.011)	(0.035)	(0.016)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	0.085	0.006	0.167	0.261
	(0.149)	(0.060)	(0.180)	(0.179)
GDP (pc)	0.047	0.001	-0.002	0.080
	(0.117)	(0.060)	(0.156)	(0.125)
Population	3.755	-0.412	4.128	-4.098*
	(2.358)	(1.163)	(3.261)	(1.976)
Number of observations	495	489	226	195
Number of clusters	51	45	32	21

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 33: Government One-Sided Violence, External Military Assistance, and Domestic Military Capacity (H_2)

	Unmatched Sample		Matched Sample	
	(1) NBREG	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
Government OSV				
External Military Ass. (t-1)	-0.454	0.199	0.542	0.822**
	(0.367)	(0.193)	(0.335)	(0.219)
Military expenditure (t-1) (pc, in hundreds)	-0.082+	0.004	-0.080	0.037
	(0.043)	(0.022)	(0.096)	(0.032)
External Military Ass.#Military Expenditure (pc, in hundreds) (t-1)	0.055	0.005	-0.034	-0.079*
	(0.041)	(0.023)	(0.078)	(0.040)
External Troop Support (t-1)	0.206	-0.216	-0.104	-0.966**
	(0.441)	(0.233)	(0.620)	(0.222)
Development Aid (pc) (t-1)	0.334*	-0.244**	0.387	-0.291*
	(0.156)	(0.085)	(0.420)	(0.114)
Rebel OSV (t-1)	0.096**	0.028*	0.150**	0.075**
	(0.028)	(0.012)	(0.039)	(0.008)
Battle-Related Deaths (t-1)	-0.063	0.094+	-0.322*	0.235**
	(0.112)	(0.054)	(0.126)	(0.073)
Democracy	-0.067	-0.021	-0.065	-0.014
	(0.044)	(0.017)	(0.050)	(0.018)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	-0.038**	-0.009*	-0.045**	-0.002
	(0.008)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.004)
GDP (pc)	-0.183	-0.045	0.353	-1.617**
	(0.259)	(0.106)	(0.339)	(0.358)
Population	0.066	-0.060	-0.099	0.887**
	(0.224)	(0.083)	(0.352)	(0.170)
Constant	5.483	0.949	5.032	-4.939*
	(4.493)	(1.656)	(7.061)	(2.094)
Number of observations	492	354	214	130
Number of clusters	61	33	32	13

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 34: Proportion of Civilian Deaths, Quality of External Military Assistance, and Regime Type of Supporter (H_3 and H_4) (unmatched sample)

	(1) GLM	(2) PA	(3) GLM	(4) PA
Civilian Deaths as Proportion of all Government-Inflicted Deaths				
Quality Ext. Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.006**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Democracy Ext Sup. $_{(t-1)}$			-0.118	-0.038
			(1.119)	(1.145)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.205	-0.300	-0.207	-0.301
	(0.658)	(0.688)	(0.657)	(0.687)
Development Aid (pc) $_{(t-1)}$	0.188	0.117	0.190	0.117
	(0.179)	(0.174)	(0.181)	(0.175)
Rebel OSV $_{(t-1)}$	-0.188	-0.220	-0.187	-0.220
	(0.194)	(0.219)	(0.198)	(0.224)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	-0.779*	-0.691**	-0.782*	-0.692**
	(0.337)	(0.255)	(0.317)	(0.242)
Military Expenditure $_{(t-1)}$	-0.003	-0.001	-0.003	-0.001
(pc, in hundreds)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.013)
Democracy	-0.027	-0.013	-0.026	-0.013
	(0.046)	(0.043)	(0.049)	(0.045)
Trade Openness (%/GDP)	-0.026**	-0.027**	-0.026**	-0.027**
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
GDP (pc)	-0.508*	-0.541*	-0.510*	-0.542*
	(0.245)	(0.257)	(0.249)	(0.259)
Population	-0.017	-0.049	-0.021	-0.050
	(0.291)	(0.282)	(0.307)	(0.297)
Constant	4.623	5.572	4.743	5.617
	(5.617)	(5.279)	(6.186)	(5.817)
Number of observations	264	264	264	264
Number of clusters	38	38	38	38

Standard errors clustered by recipient; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

CHAPTER 6: TRADING ONE PROBLEM FOR ANOTHER? EXTERNAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND REBELS' USE OF TERRORIST TACTICS IN CIVIL WARS

6.1 Introduction

Why do some rebel groups employ terrorist tactics while others do not? What explains the target choices of those rebel groups that resort to terrorist tactics in a civil war? Existing research has stressed the role external support to rebels has on their propensity to use violence on the battlefield,[629] against civilians,[630] and in terrorist attacks.[631] Receiving resources from an outside party can increase indiscipline within the armed group[632] and reduces its reliance on the local population,[633] leading to more violent behaviour. These studies, however, fail to include a crucial dimension of external support into their analyses: how external military assistance to the state armed forces shapes the behaviour of rebel groups.

The provision of external military assistance, including weapons, military equipment, training, and advice, has become a popular alternative to more intrusive and costly forms of military intervention including ground or air power such as seen on a large scale in the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and recently Syria and Yemen.[634] Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the provision of external military assistance is increasingly tied to an explicit counterterrorism context. The fear of terrorism 'hitting home' has spurned the United States and allies to embark on a 'Global War on Terror' that is soon to hit the two-decade mark.[635]

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[629] Heger and Salehyan, 'Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict'.
[630] Wood, 'Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War'.
[631] Fortna, Lotito, and Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars'.
[632] Humphreys and Weinstein, 'Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War'; Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.
[633] Sara M. T. Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice', *Journal of Peace Research* 57, no. 2 (2020): 235–50.
[634] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance'.
[635] Khusrav Gaibulloev and Todd Sandler, 'What We Have Learned about Terrorism since 9/11', *Journal of Economic Literature* 57, no. 2 (2019): 275–328.

The great interest to address the perceived terrorist threat entailed changes to foreign aid regimes,[636] including in the budget and allocation of military aid.[637] Through the provision of equipment and training, third parties aim to strengthen the military power and skill of local militaries, putting them in a better position to quell insurgencies, and counter terrorism within their territory. This way, third parties hope not only to pacify war-torn societies, but to reduce the risk of transnational terrorism aimed at their own citizens and assets.[638]

The provision of external military assistance has long been suspected of producing unintended consequences on the ground. Here, reports of human rights violations committed by externally backed militaries and threats to regime stability emanating from such newly empowered actors cast doubts on the usefulness of external military assistance as a foreign policy tool.[639] With regard to the prevalence of terrorist violence, existing research suggests terrorism becomes a preferred course of action in highly asymmetric conflicts. Since external military assistance is designed to enhance the armed forces' capability, the risk that rebel groups adapt their tactics to this new strategic environment and rely increasingly on terrorist tactics is non-negligible. This paper aims to shed light on the potential of such adverse effects occurring by inquiring: Does the provision of external military assistance to government forces affect rebels' use of terrorist tactics?

I argue that the effect of external military assistance on rebels' choice of strategy is threefold: First, it consolidates government forces' position of power not only through an excess of troops, but the increased access to equipment, technology, and skill to effectively counter an insurgency. As a consequence, rebels facing externally-backed state forces increasingly turn to terrorist tactics to register their opposition to the state. Second, the fortification of military installations and official state targets that the provision of external military assistance allows for,

[636] Following convention, I use the term "foreign aid" to refer to economic and military aid jointly.
[637] Fleck and Kilby, 'Changing Aid Regimes? U.S. Foreign Aid from the Cold War to the War on Terror'.
[638] Neumayer and Plümper, 'Foreign Terror on Americans'.
[639] Jadoon, 'Persuasion and Predation: The Effects of U.S. Military Aid and International Development Aid on Civilian Killings'; Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.

renders them less suitable targets for such attacks with the possible exception of suicide attacks designed to penetrate targets in hardened security environments. Hence, amongst those groups that already use terrorist tactics, the relative frequency of civilian targeting in terrorist attacks increases when governments receive external military assistance. Third, the unintended consequences of external military assistance should be particularly pronounced where government forces are backed by democratic third parties. Perceived of as more sensitive to the costs inflicted by terrorism, democracies are more likely to be coerced to withdraw their support in this way.

I test these theoretical expectations against a sample of all rebel groups active in civil wars in the period 1975-2017.[640] Examining the use of terrorist tactics in a civil war context provides natural variation in the use of terrorism across groups that share many organisational characteristics and face similar external restraints as set by the civil war environment.[641] Data on external military assistance stems from a newly updated dataset on external support. The possibility that external supporters direct military aid primarily to conflicts with high levels of terrorist violence poses a potential challenge to inference due to the non-random assignment of the treatment. To mitigate against this risk, I employ a matching strategy—Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM)—to pair observations with a similar likelihood of receiving external support.

Results from the statistical analysis suggest that rebel groups that already utilise terrorist tactics attack more frequently when facing government forces with external military assistance. However, the presence of external backing does not necessarily encourage those actors without a record of terrorist violence to switch to using terrorist tactics. Those rebel groups using terrorist tactics shift towards attacking an even larger proportion of civilian targets where governments receive external military assistance. While this effect is stronger when considering shifts in the

[640] The observation period is largely determined by data availability, but the starting point in 1975 ensures that the observation period includes observations from both the Cold-War and post-9/11 periods, see Chapter 3.
[641] Studies that compare actors using terrorism only include Jessica A Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War', *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 4 (2013): 1009–22; Virginia P. Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes', *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (2015): 519–56; Luis De La Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, 'How Armed Groups Fight: Territorial Control and Violent Tactics', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 38, no. 10 (2015): 795–813.

targets of conventional terrorist attacks only, there is no systematic evidence that suicide terrorism becomes a preferred strategy to continue the assault on military targets in the context of a hardened security environment. The observed escalation in terrorist violence is largely a function of the external military assistance democratic states provide and among those conflicts with external military assistance, rebel groups attack on average more frequently the more democratic the external supporter.

The paper makes the following three contributions to the literature. First, building upon the pioneering work by Findley and Young, Stanton, and Polo and Gleditsch, this research contributes to our understanding of the links between terrorism and civil wars by examining how civil war actors come to rely on terrorist tactics and calibrate their targeting profiles.[642] Second, this paper explicitly theorises the indirect and potentially unintended effects of external military assistance by examining the effect military-to-military cooperation has on non-state armed groups' behaviour in civil wars. Existing studies on external support tend to focus on its effects on recipient behaviour neglecting its impact on the strategic calculus of opposing parties. Third, the analysis moves beyond the focus on US foreign policy, including military aid, that dominates the literature. To that end, it employs data on external military assistance by foreign states worldwide that allows for a comparison between different types of supporters, such as more and less democratic states.

The paper proceeds as follows: The next section provides a definition of terrorism that underlies the analyses in this paper and situates it in a civil war context. I then present existing findings from the literature examining the effects of external involvement on the use and extent of terrorism. The following section expands on the concept of a balance of power between warring parties by introducing skill and equipment into the equation and links the provision of external military assistance to the phenomenon of target hardening. I then derive hypotheses about the effect of external military assistance on relevant terrorism-related outcomes. Subsequently, the

[642] Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, 'More Combatant Groups, More Terror?: Empirical Tests of an Outbidding Logic', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 5 (2012): 706–21; Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War'; Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.

research design for the empirical analysis is briefly described, followed by a presentation of results. The paper then offers a discussion of results before it finishes with a brief conclusion.

6.2 Terrorism as a Tactic during Civil War

Civil war is characterised by armed conflict of a certain intensity between government and non-state forces over an incompatibility concerning control over the government or a part of the country's territory.[643] Conventional tactics in civil wars are generally aimed at the armed personnel of the opposing forces and the intended audience of an attack is typically the victims or the organisation they are associated with. Yet, not all rebel groups confine themselves to conventional tactics.[644] Instead, they resort to terrorist or other irregular types of warfare to supplement their activity on the battlefield.[645] Recent studies have thus sought to integrate the study of terrorism and the study of civil wars under a joint analytical framework.[646]

Terrorism, like many concepts in political science, defies a clear-cut definition. Yet, certain common features can be identified. In his definition of terrorism as "the premediated use or threat to use violence by individuals or subnational groups to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of the immediate victims," Sandler identifies three core defining features: i) the threatened or actual use of force, ii) the non-state character of the perpetrator, and iii) an intended audience that surpasses the group of immediate victims.[647] This is an action-based approach to conceptualising terrorism that defines actors according to the actions

[643] Sambanis, 'What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition'.
[644] Laia Balcells and Stathis N. Kalyvas, 'Does Warfare Matter? Severity, Duration, and Outcomes of Civil Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 8 (2014): 1390–1418.
[645] Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.
[646] Nicholas Sambanis, 'Terrorism and Civil War', in *Terrorism, Economic Development, and Political Openness*, ed. Philip Keefer and Norman Loayza (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 174–206; Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, 'Terrorism and Civil War: A Spatial and Temporal Approach to a Conceptual Problem', *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (2012): 285–305; Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War'; Jakana Thomas, 'Rewarding Bad Behavior: How Governments Respond to Terrorism in Civil War', *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 4 (2014): 804–18; Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes'; Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'; Fortna, Lotito, and Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars'; Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'.
[647] Sandler, 'New Frontiers of Terrorism Research: An Introduction', 280. This definition also forms the core of the definition of terrorism used in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD).

they engage in. A terrorist group, hence, is any group that conducts terrorist attacks. An actor-based approach, in contrast, stresses the role of actors' territorial control. Here, violence produced by actors without territorial control is considered.[648]

For the purposes of this study, I utilise an action-based approach, counting terrorism 'when we see it.' While this approach presents the risk of over-counting terrorist events and conflating them with 'regular' rebel violence (overrepresentation bias), it avoids the pitfall of classifying rebel groups as incapable of producing terrorist violence *a priori*.[649] Indeed, an empirical comparison of both approaches concludes that while there are costs to either operationalisation, "an actor-based approach would undercount terrorist events far more than an action-based approach would overcount."[650]

Importantly, this definition of terrorism does not impose restrictions on the type of target.[651] While some scholars limit their focus to violence against civilians or civilian installations,[652] the definition used here includes instances of violence against official targets, such as government or military personnel not actively part of military operations that fulfil the criteria outlined above.[653] This way, it is conceptually different from the closely related phenomenon of one-sided violence that is limited to "the intentional and direct killing of civilians … in intrastate armed conflict" by both government and rebel forces (cf. Chapter 5).[654] In addition, one-sided violence often occurs with the aim to coerce civilians into compliance making them immediate victim *and* intended

[648] Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca and Luis de la Calle, 'Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence', *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 31–49.
[649] Note that all precautions are taken to separate acts of terrorist violence from acts permitted under the laws of war in the operationalisation of terrorist attacks, see the section on research design.
[650] Victor Asal et al., 'Killing Civilians or Holding Territory? How to Think about Terrorism', *International Studies Review* 14, no. 3 (2012): 494.
[651] Ibid., 478.
[652] For examples of works limiting terrorism to the targeting of civilians, see, for example, Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War'; Thomas, 'Rewarding Bad Behavior: How Governments Respond to Terrorism in Civil War'; Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes'.
[653] For authors that include both attacks against civilian and military targets, see, for example, Seung-Whan Choi and James A. Piazza, 'Foreign Military Interventions and Suicide Attacks', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 2 (2017): 271–97.
[654] One-sided violence can be perpetrated by both state and non-state actors and is limited to the context of civil wars. It does not include damage done to civilian installations or property. Eck and Hultman, 'One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data', 233.

audience at the same time.[655] As Fortna points out, violence needs to be "deliberately indiscriminate" to qualify as a terrorist attack, however.[656] In contrast to one-sided violence, not all terrorist attacks demand human lives, either. Terrorist attacks that inflict damage to property and infrastructure without causing fatalities equally exist. Therefore, the use of terrorist tactics during civil war is conceptually different from one-sided violence and warrants independent inquiry.

6.3 External Involvement and Domestic Terrorism

Most research on the role of third-party involvement and terrorism has focused on its transnational dimension, be it on the side of the perpetrators, the victims, or the location of the attack.[657] In general, arms transfers, alliances, and military intervention all increase levels of transnational terrorism albeit differently defined.[658] The effect of economic aid is mixed, with most studies finding aid effective in reducing the number of transnational terrorist attacks originating from recipient states.[659] Yet, others find an increase in the frequency and lethality of transnational terrorist events emanating from aid recipients.[660]

US foreign aid, including both economic and military aid, also tends to increase transnational terrorism,[661] especially when aid is provided to personalist regimes[662] and those

[655] Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes', 522–23.
[656] Fortna, Lotito, and Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars', 783.
[657] Various definitions for transnational terrorism exist. Broadly speaking, an attack is considered transnational when either the individuals involved in an attack hold two or more different nationalities or perpetrators and victims are geographically spread over more than one country. See Sandler, 'New Frontiers of Terrorism Research: An Introduction'.
[658] Jean Paul Azam and Véronique Thelen, 'Foreign Aid versus Military Intervention in the War on Terror', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 2 (2010): 237–61; Neumayer and Plümper, 'Foreign Terror on Americans'; Eugen Dimant, Tim Krieger, 'Negative Returns: U.S. Military Policy and Anti-American Terrorism'; Piazza and Choi, 'International Military Interventions and Transnational Terrorist Backlash'.
[659] Jean Paul Azam and Alexandra Delacroix, 'Aid and the Delegated Fight against Terrorism', *Review of Development Economics* 10, no. 2 (2006): 330–44; Jean Paul Azam and Véronique Thelen, 'The Roles of Foreign Aid and Education in the War on Terror', *Public Choice* 135, no. 3–4 (2008): 375–97; Azam and Thelen, 'Foreign Aid versus Military Intervention in the War on Terror'; Joseph K. Young and Michael G. Findley, 'Can Peace Be Purchased? A Sectoral-Level Analysis of Aid's Influence on Transnational Terrorism' 149, no. 4 (2011): 365–81.
[660] Eric Neumayer and Thomas Plümper, 'International Terrorism and the Clash of Civilizations', *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (2009): 711–34.
[661] Eugen Dimant, Tim Krieger, 'Negative Returns: U.S. Military Policy and Anti-American Terrorism'.
[662] Boutton, 'Of Terrorism and Revenue: Why Foreign Aid Exacerbates Terrorism in Personalist Regimes'.

involved in a strategic rivalry.[663] The effect is exacerbated when US troops are deployed.[664] Only when coinciding with an active peacekeeping mission on the ground, does US military assistance decrease levels of transnational terrorism.[665] Due to increased border security in the Global North following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the locus of such transnational terrorist attacks has moved away from North America and Europe to Asia and the Middle East.[666]

Results are less robust when examining the effects of foreign involvement on domestic terrorism that is of particular interest when it comes to rebels' use of terrorist tactics during civil wars.[667] Here, economic aid and military intervention have been shown to lead to a drastic short-term increase in domestic terrorist incidents. Although levels of terrorist violence decrease demonstrably over time, they do not necessary reach pre-intervention levels.[668] Rather, the authors concede, "it could take decades before terror incidents and fatalities return to levels that existed prior to the intervention."[669] At its most extreme, a foreign troop presence in the form of foreign occupation can lead to an increase in suicide terrorism in the occupied country.[670] US drone strikes, in contrast, can produce a short-term reduction in terrorist attacks after an initial backlash effect, but have not been shown to affect the level of terrorist violence in the long run.[671]

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663 Boutton, 'US Foreign Aid, Interstate Rivalry, and Incentives for Counterterrorism Cooperation'.
664 Azam and Thelen, 'Foreign Aid versus Military Intervention in the War on Terror'; Eugen Dimant, Tim Krieger, 'Negative Returns: U.S. Military Policy and Anti-American Terrorism'.
665 Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: An Evaluation of U.S. Security Sector Assistance in Africa from the Cold War to the Present*.
666 Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, 'Distribution of Transnational Terrorism among Countries by Income Class and Geography after 9/11', *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (2006): 367–93.
667 For an overview of the literature on domestic terrorism, see Luis De la Calle, 'Compliance vs. Constraints: A Theory of Rebel Targeting in Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 3 (2017): 427–41.
668 Orlandrew E. Danzell, Emizet F. Kisangani, and Jeffrey Pickering, 'Aid, Intervention, and Terror: The Impact of Foreign Aid and Foreign Military Intervention on Terror Events and Severity', *Social Science Quarterly* 100, no. 3 (2019): 951–64.
669 Ibid., 962.
670 Robert A Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism', *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (2003): 343–61; Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York, NY: Random House, 2005); Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?'
671 David A. Jaeger and Zahra Siddique, 'Are Drone Strikes Effective in Afghanistan and Pakistan? On the Dynamics of Violence between the United States and the Taliban', *CESifo Economic Studies* 64, no. 4 (2018): 667–97; Patrick B. Johnston and Anoop K. Sarbahi, 'The Impact of US Drone Strikes on Terrorism in Pakistan', *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2016): 203–19.

The findings on the effect of external military assistance on domestic terrorism are even less conclusive. Boutton finds that US foreign aid, on average, increases terrorist group survival in regimes involved in a rivalry but is linked to shorter group duration in personalist regimes. Yet, attacks against non-US (including local) targets increase while groups are still active.[672] According to Bapat, the receipt of US military aid creates moral hazard problems, whereby aid recipients have few incentives to work towards the demise of terrorist groups that justify the aid allocation. At the same time, it presents disincentives for governments to negotiate with terrorist groups and to make concessions.[673] With the help of an instrumental variable approach, Dube and Naidu find that the provision of US military assistance to the Colombian armed forces does not affect the level of rebel attacks or assassinations that would be indicative of an increased use of terrorist tactics.[674] A RAND report even provides some tentative evidence that the provision of US security sector assistance is linked to lower levels of domestic terrorism in African states, but results are only robust for the Cold War period.[675]

Unfortunately, none of these studies examines the effect of external military assistance by a range of third parties on actors operating in civil wars worldwide. Existing research either relies on measures of economic aid and foreign military intervention including troop deployment or is limited to the effects of US foreign aid (including economic and military aid) only. This is a common occurrence in the study of the effects of foreign involvement on conflict dynamics and makes an examination of external military assistance—defined as the provision of training and equipment short of combat support—all the more necessary.

Altogether, these findings provide mixed credentials for the usefulness of foreign involvement in combatting domestic terrorism. It should be noted, however, that they might still prove beneficial in securing regime survival against an insurgent challenge. It is this trade-off

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672 Boutton, 'US Foreign Aid, Interstate Rivalry, and Incentives for Counterterrorism Cooperation'; Boutton, 'Of Terrorism and Revenue: Why Foreign Aid Exacerbates Terrorism in Personalist Regimes'.
673 Bapat, 'Transnational Terrorism, US Military Aid, and the Incentive to Misrepresent'.
674 Dube and Naidu, 'Bases, Bullets and Ballots: The Effect of U.S. Military Aid on Political Conflict in Colombia'.
675 Watts et al., *Building Security in Africa: Technical Appendixes*.

between the demands of a civil war environment and the looming risk of rebels' increased reliance on terrorist tactics that this paper explores in greater detail.

6.4 Tactics and Targeting Choices during Civil War

Existing research largely agrees that parties in a civil war are rational actors, that their targeting choices fulfil strategic purposes, and that commanders exert a certain level of control over soldiers' actions.[676] It is thus reasonable to assume that the distribution of actors' use of tactics and types of targets is the result of a deliberate choice that opens itself up to theoretical inquiry.

Use of Terrorist Tactics

Terrorism is often referred to as a "weapon of the weak."[677] Its use becomes particularly likely when actors find themselves involved in highly asymmetric conflicts: when the military power of the opponent is so overwhelming that engaging the opponent directly on the battlefield holds little hope of success.[678] Existing studies show that rebels, as well as government forces, turn to targeting civilians when incurring losses on the battlefield.[679] This strategy of attrition promises a more cost-effective and resource-light path to inflicting costs on the opponent.[680] As such, terrorism can present as a rational choice to coerce the government into concessions[681] or an external intervener to retreat,[682] although there is considerable doubt whether such strategies actually prove effective.[683] Nevertheless, Polo and Gleditsch find that weaker rebel groups, on

676 See, for example, Kalyvas, 'Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria'; Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; Amelia Hoover Green, 'The Commander's Dilemma: Creating and Controlling Armed Group Violence', *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 5 (2016): 619–32.
677 Martha Crenshaw, 'The Causes of Terrorism', *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–99.
678 Cullen S. Hendrix and Joseph K. Young, 'State Capacity and Terrorism: A Two-Dimensional Approach', *Security Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 329–63.
679 Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting'; Wood, 'From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence'.
680 Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'.
681 Thomas, 'Rewarding Bad Behavior: How Governments Respond to Terrorism in Civil War'.
682 Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*; Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?'
683 Max Abrahms, 'The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited', *Comparative Political Studies* 45, no. 3 (2012): 366–93; Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes'.

average, are more likely to rely on terrorist tactics in civil wars than their relatively stronger equivalents.[684]

While most of the literature has focused on the distribution of relative troop strength between government and rebel forces in this regard, it has so far neglected the role equipment, expertise, and technology play in creating conditions of asymmetry.[685] While the balance of human capital commonly favours government forces, the armed forces of the state show great variation with regard to the sophistication of their equipment and training and as such their ability to effectively wage counterinsurgency warfare.[686] Government armed forces are often poorly equipped for the challenges posed by insurgent warfare: Rough terrain, urban settings or the difficulty to distinguish combatants from non-combatants require sophisticated equipment, technical expertise, and specialised skills to successfully counter an insurgent group (cf. Chapter 5).[687] In low- and middle-income countries, the human capital, financial means, and technical sophistication required often surpasses local capacity. This imposes constraints on their ability to effectively retaliate against armed non-state actors.

External military assistance is a crucial element in establishing material and technological superiority. The provision of surveillance equipment, precision weaponry, and help with strategic planning, can combine to tip the balance of power in favour of government forces—even in conditions where superiority in troop numbers is of limited advantage. This renders it, on average, more difficult for non-state actors to engage the armed forces of the state in conventional attacks. Instead, rebels divert their resources to terrorist attacks where their material and technological inferiority presents less of a handicap and the anticipated chances of success are higher. This leads to a first hypothesis on the nexus between external military assistance and the use of terrorist tactics.

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[684] Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.
[685] Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 'Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts'; Wood, 'Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War'.
[686] NATO, *NATO Standard AJP-3.4.4 Allied Joint Doctrine for Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Edition A Version 1*; Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thasund Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency*.
[687] Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism', 61–62.

H1: Rebel groups in civil wars where the government receives external military assistance are more likely to commit terrorist violence.

Type of Target

Not only does this reasoning suggest that the provision of external military assistance affects the likelihood of non-state actors using terrorist tactics, but it also further allows for predictions on the targets of such terrorist attacks. Whether groups primarily target hard official targets or aim their attacks at soft civilian targets instead, is determined by a number of factors. Rebel groups that rely on broad public support, on average, choose targets that produce fewer civilian casualties to minimise public backlash.[688] Yet, not all groups with local sources of support refrain from targeting civilians: Where deep-running societal divides lead to high out-group antagonism, civilians from the 'other' side can be targeted without incurring domestic legitimacy costs.[689] Here, group ideology has been hypothesised as playing a role in determining not only the size of a group's potential civilian constituency, but also how clearly those that do not fall within that pool can be identified and hence targeted discriminately.[690]

Yet, Polo argues that group ideology does not explain the variation in targeting strategies of groups with similar ideological commitments, e.g. Islamist groups in the Syrian conflict, nor changes in targeting profiles of the same groups over time.[691] In certain situations, the targeting of civilians can even generate rewards for rebel groups: When facing indiscriminate state repression, the targeting of out-group civilians vis-à-vis hard official targets benefits rebel groups by radicalising local constituents and facilitating recruitment.[692]

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[688] Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War'; Fortna, Lotito, and Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars'.
[689] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'; Virginia P. Fortna and Lise Morjé Howard, 'Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature', *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 283–301.
[690] Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.
[691] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice', 240.
[692] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'.

These accounts of rebel targeting choice have in common that they theorise the decision about the target of terrorist attacks as independent of the relative ease with which different types of targets can be attacked. The availability of external military assistance, however, leads to the "hardening" of military targets:[693] Additional equipment and expertise allows for the military to better protect its assets, which in turn renders them harder to attack.[694] In a landmark study, Landes demonstrates this mechanism by showing how the installation of metal detectors in US airports is effective in reducing US plane hijackings.[695] The defensive technological advancements external military assistance provides can thus contribute to protecting certain types of targets, such as military installations, from attack.

However, as subsequent studies show, the relative success of defensive measures can lead armed groups to shift their focus to less protected targets.[696] The result is transference, or "an unintended policy-induced change in terrorist behaviour, which includes displacement of the mode or venue of attack owing to target hardening."[697] Aware of the increased difficulty to penetrate hardened targets, rebels deflect their energies towards attacking softer, i.e. civilian targets, that lack such extra layers of defensive protection.[698] These include government and police targets that would not directly benefit from equipment and knowledge transfer to the military as well as a range of organisations and individuals without an official role in the state security apparatus, such as transportation, telecommunication, and utilities providers, private businesses, educational or religious institutions, the media, and private citizens and their property.[699]

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693 Choi and Piazza, 'Foreign Military Interventions and Suicide Attacks', 276.
694 Eli Berman and David D. Laitin, 'Religion, Terrorism and Public Goods: Testing the Club Model', *Journal of Public Economics* 92, no. 10–11 (2008): 1942–67; Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?'
695 William M Landes, 'An Economic Study of U. S. Aircraft Hijacking, 1961-1976', *The Journal of Law and Economics* 21, no. 1 (1978): 1–31.
696 Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, 'What Do We Know about the Substitution Effect in Transnational Terrorism?', in *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievements and Failures*, ed. Andrew Silke (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 119–37.
697 Todd Sandler, 'The Analytical Study of Terrorism: Taking Stock', *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (2013): 262.
698 Sandler, 'New Frontiers of Terrorism Research: An Introduction'.
699 Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.

Attacks on these softer targets typically produce a higher casualty count.[700] Here, armed actors use their "power to hurt" to demonstrate their ability to inflict costs on the opponent—even in light of a hardened security environment—until demands are met.[701] As a result, the provision of external military assistance does not only lead to an escalation in the use of terrorist violence, but among those groups using terrorist tactics to a shift towards 'soft' civilian and away from 'hard' military targets. This leads to a second hypothesis:

H_2: Rebel groups in civil wars where the government receives external military assistance use terrorist tactics to target a lower proportion of military targets than groups facing government forces without such assistance.

Type of Attack

A potential exception is the use of suicide terrorism, a terrorist tactic, where perpetrators do not expect to escape from the attack alive.[702] Due to the discounted costs of losses in suicide attacks compared to conventional terrorist attacks, they remain a rational course of action even in the face of a hardened security environment.[703] As Collard-Wexler et al. point out, "[t]he relative protection of military targets increases the appeal of suicide attacks compared to other tactics,"[704] i.e. non-suicide terrorist attacks on military targets. Piazza finds that in general suicide attacks are both more often leveraged against hard targets and more likely to be successful.[705] Together with Choi, he argues that it is through this mechanism of target hardening that pro-government foreign interventions are associated with a rise in suicide attacks.[706] One would therefore expect rebel groups attacking hardened military installations to opt for suicide attacks rather than non-suicide terrorist tactics more often than comparable groups where the lack of external support leaves

[700] Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*, Cambridge Core (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[701] Lisa Hultman, 'The Power to Hurt in Civil War: The Strategic Aim of RENAMO Violence', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 4 (2009): 821; Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'.
[702] Global Terrorism Database, 'Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables', 2019, 27.
[703] Berman and Laitin, 'Religion, Terrorism and Public Goods: Testing the Club Model'.
[704] Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?', 632.
[705] Piazza, 'Suicide Attacks and Hard Targets: An Empirical Examination'.
[706] Choi and Piazza, 'Foreign Military Interventions and Suicide Attacks'.

military targets altogether 'softer.' This leads to a third hypothesis regarding the mode of attack employed:

H_3: Rebel groups in civil wars where the government receives external military assistance are more likely to target military targets using suicide terrorist tactics than groups facing government forces without such assistance.

Type of Supporter

Non-state actors use terrorist tactics not only to inflict costs on the opponent that is seen as incapable of protecting its citizens, it can also serve as an opportunity to convey a message to an international audience.[707] The study of suicide terrorism finds that non-state actors use this specific method of terrorism to coerce an external intervener to withdraw.[708] Boyle, for example, attributes the high levels of violence against civilians by al-Qaeda and other non-state actors in Iraq following the US military intervention to "a desire to weaken the Iraqi government and drive the Coalition into retreat."[709] Here, the message the groups using terrorist tactics hope to convey extends beyond the primary goal of signalling resolve to the state opponent.[710] By attacking civilian and military targets off the battlefield, non-state actors aim to register their opposition to the intervening third party and, where applicable, the incumbent government's collaboration with the third party.

The question arises, whether the same applies for external support short of military intervention. The main difference between foreign occupation, i.e. military intervention including ground forces, and the provision of external military assistance in this regard is that in case of the former, the third party usually has a considerable number of personnel on the ground whereas external military assistance can, but does not have to, include personnel such as trainers or maintenance staff. Hence, military interventions provide a, on average, more visible and in many

[707] Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes'.
[708] Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*; Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Michael J. Boyle, 'Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004-2007', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 2 (2009): 261–87; Alex Braithwaite, 'Transnational Terrorism as an Unintended Consequence of a Military Footprint', *Security Studies* 24, no. 2 (2015): 349–75.
[709] Boyle, 'Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004-2007', 278.
[710] Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'.

cases more oppressive foreign presence. This presents more opportunities to attack nationals of the intervening country directly in terrorist attacks.[711]

However, existing findings are not based on suicide attacks on nationals of the intervening country, but on civilians in general.[712] Therefore, it does not seem to be the case that attacks need to be directed against targets directly associated with the intervening power to convey a message of denial and resolve to third parties.[713] In fact, terrorism is chosen exactly because it allows to signal to an audience other than the immediate victims of the attack, in this case external supporters. It is therefore conceivable that terrorist attacks are viewed as an effective instrument to convey disapproval to an external supporter who is backing a government short of sending troops by rebel groups.

For this route to promise success, however, the external supporter needs to be sensitive to the costs imposed by terrorism. Existing research has argued that democracies are particularly sensitive to the costs generated by attacks on civilians and civilian installations: Citizens in democracies typically place high value on the protection of individual rights and showcase a low tolerance for this type of costs. They can also more easily hold democratic governments accountable for lives lost via established mechanisms to register grievances.[714] These findings are based on attacks on civilians in the same country, however.

Even though international norms codified in international humanitarian law demand the protection of civilians during war,[715] there is a lack of conclusive research on public attitudes

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[711] Neumayer and Plümper, 'Foreign Terror on Americans'.
[712] Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?'
[713] Gibbs, for example, connects attacks against national police forces to a strategy of denial against a foreign military presence, see Jennifer C Gibbs, 'Terrorist Attacks Targeting the Police: The Connection to Foreign Military Presence', *Police Practice and Research* 19, no. 3 (2018): 222–40. See also Boyle, 'Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004-2007'; Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'.
[714] Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*; Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'; Lisa Hultman, 'Attacks on Civilians in Civil War: Targeting the Achilles Heel of Democratic Governments', *International Interactions* 38, no. 2 (2012): 164–81; Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War'.
[715] Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977).

towards civilian suffering abroad and to what degree it motivates citizens to exert pressure on their home governments.[716] While most existing research focuses on military rather than civilian casualties and emphasises instrumental motives, recent survey experiments suggest that moral considerations play a role when forming opinions about humanitarian interventions aimed at reducing civilian suffering and that such efforts can boost public support.[717] Either way, it is important to note, that for the argument proposed here, it only matters if rebel groups perceive terrorist attacks to be an effective strategy to coerce democratic supporters to withdraw their assistance to government forces. In fact, most research concludes that terrorism is not linked to a higher chance of achieving political objectives, but still it finds application.[718] This leads to a first hypothesis on the effect of external military assistance by democratic supporters:

H_{4a}: The effect of external military assistance on rebels' use of terrorist violence is stronger where democratic third parties provide such assistance.

This is only likely to extend to the citizens of a foreign country the government is providing support to if the conflict receives wide-spread attention and members of the public of the external supporter are aware of the government's involvement in the conflict. Here, a comparatively free press in democratic societies increases the chances that information on terrorist attacks in a conflict the government is involved in as a third party, is openly reported and not suppressed by the regime.[719] Existing research further shows that media coverage is higher for more violent conflicts and increases when external actors are involved.[720] Therefore, terrorist tactics should find application particularly where democratic external supporters prop up governments in conflicts

[716] For a discussion of the literature on public opinion on civilian deaths in war, see, for example, Janina Dill and Livia Schubiger, 'Attitudes towards the Use of Force: Instrumental Imperatives, Moral Principles and International Law', *American Journal of Political Science*, 2020, 3–8. For an overview of the discussion on public opinion and foreign aid, see, for example, Helen V. Milner and Dustin Tingley, 'Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay', *International Interactions* 39, no. 3 (2013): 389–401.
[717] Kreps and Maxey, 'Mechanisms of Morality: Sources of Support for Humanitarian Intervention'; Wallace, 'Supplying Protection: The United Nations and Public Support for Humanitarian Intervention'.
[718] Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes'.
[719] Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism', 62.
[720] Peter V. Jakobsen, 'Focus on the CNN Effect Misses the Point: The Real Media Impact on Conflict Management Is Invisible and Indirect', *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 2 (2000): 131–43; Sam R. Bell, Richard Frank, and Paul Macharia, 'Passenger or Driver? A Cross-National Examination of Media Coverage and Civil War Interventions', *International Interactions* 39, no. 5 (2013): 646–71.

with high levels of violence and thus increased international scrutiny. This leads to a second conditioning hypothesis on the interaction of the regime type of external supporters and conflict intensity:

H_{4b}: The effect of external military assistance by democratic third parties on rebels' use of terrorist violence is stronger in more intense civil wars.

6.5 Data and Research Design

The unit of analysis is the active rebel-dyad-year, i.e. a rebel group active in a given conflict-dyad in a given year. The dataset includes 2,067 observations on 425 unique government-rebel group dyads involved in 176 civil wars globally in the period 1975-2017.[721] The context of civil wars allows for the comparison of groups with similar grievances in comparable strategic environments out of which some choose to use terrorist tactics while other do not. Data on active conflict-years stems from the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 and includes all years with a stated incompatibility between the government and at least one armed group, where armed combat results in a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths.[722]

This left-truncation of the data, with terrorist violence committed by actors involved in conflict dyads that produce fewer than 25 battle fatalities not entering the dataset, might systematically affect results. Since rebel groups that are involved in the production of battle fatalities are likely better organised and stronger than insurgent groups that are involved in conflict dyads below this threshold, this should lead to the underestimation of rebels' reliance on terrorist violence, if anything. This is less problematic for the proposed analyses. The goal of this research

[721] The start of the observation period in 1975 introduces some potential issues with left-censoring of the data, i.e. that external military assistance was already provided prior to the beginning of the observation period. Out of the 34 conflict-dyads active in 1975, 22 were active in the previous year and might have received external military assistance already. Since a one-year lag is allowed for all variables on external military assistance, the effect of external military assistance in 1975 is examined in 1976 resolving this issue. It would be more difficult to make statements concerning the duration of external military assistance, but this paper does not attempt to do so.

[722] Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Definitions'. I further drop all dyads where governments are exclusively involved in interstate wars. In line with previous uses of this data, I drop information from the United States-Al-Qaida dyad since this is not usually seen as a civil war, but a transnational terrorist attack.

is further not to assess why non-state actors rely on terrorist tactics, but why rebel groups with the proven ability to engage in regular armed conflict might rely on terrorist violence nonetheless.

To assess the impact of external military assistance on rebels' use of terrorist violence, several dependent variables are constructed. The variable *terrorist tactics* is a dummy indicating whether a rebel group conducted domestic terrorist attacks as part of their portfolio of violence in a given dyad-year. *Terrorist attacks* is a count variable that yields information on the total number of domestic terrorist attacks ascribed to a given rebel group in a given dyad-year. The variable *military targets* is a dummy denoting whether a rebel group conducted terrorist attacks on military personnel or installations in a given dyad-year.

The variable *proportion military targets* reports the proportion of terrorist attacks on military targets out of all domestic terrorist attacks by a rebel group in a given dyad-year. These include terrorist attacks directed at targets related to government, police, education, infrastructure, such as airports, ports, communication, and utilities, the press, religious institutions, NGOs, private businesses as well as private citizens and their property in addition to military targets.[723] I also create the same variable considering the proportion of non-suicide attacks on military targets out of all *non-suicide attacks* only. In both cases, a larger value denotes a higher proportion of attacks aimed at military targets. Lastly, the dummy variable *suicide tactics* was coded to denote all dyad-years in which a rebel group commits attacks where the perpetrator does not expect to escape from the attack alive.

Data stems from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and includes all cases where non-state actors intentionally use or threaten to use violence to attain socio-political goals with an intention to convey a message to a larger audience.[724] While the GTD, as all open-source terrorism

[723] I exclude attacks on violent political parties, other armed non-state actors, abortion-related targets, and unknown targets from the count of attacks on non-military targets since they are expected to follow a different underlying logic.
[724] Global Terrorism Database, 'Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables', 10–11.

databases, is an imperfect representation of reality, it is the most suitable out of the available alternatives due to its focus on domestic terrorist events and the extensive time period it covers.[725]

Broad in its initial inclusion of events, it allows to filter events according to research interest.[726] I employ a conservative strategy and exclude all cases that fall within the scope of legitimate warfare activities to safeguard against overestimating the number of terrorist attacks. I further exclude attacks that are aimed at other armed groups or where the target is unknown.[727] In order to link UCDP and GTD data, I rely on the ACD2GTD crosswalk that matches non-state actors from both databases by name and update this information for the year 2017.[728] I include exact matches based on the first perpetrator listed only.[729] Where one GTD actor corresponds to more than one UCDP actor in a given year, e.g. when UCDP codes different factions separately, I combine them into one aggregate actor and assign all terrorist events to that actor. UCDP groups for which no GTD match is identified in a given year are coded as not having committed terrorist violence in that year.[730]

In order to broaden the scope of the analysis beyond US support, I use data from the updated UCDP External Support Dataset (1975-2017) for the main independent variable, *external military assistance*.[731] The dataset contains information on the provision of ten different types of external support coded by supporter-recipient-opponent triad. I create a dummy variable denoting

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[725] On the challenges associated with open-source terrorist event data, see, for example, Suat Cubukcu and Brian Forst, 'Measuring Terrorism', *Homicide Studies* 22, no. 1 (2018): 94–116. Popular alternatives to GTD data are the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) dataset, the RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents, and the Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS) dataset. ITERATE records international terrorist events only, RAND only includes domestic terrorist events from 1998 on and until 2009, and WITS from 2005-2012 only.

[726] Asal et al., 'Killing Civilians or Holding Territory? How to Think about Terrorism', 478.

[727] I exclude all events where it is doubtful whether the event qualifies as a terrorist attack because i) perpetrators acted primarily for financial or other criminal reasons, ii) the event concerned intra- or inter-group conflict rather than conflict with the state, iii) state actors were (allegedly) involved in the attacks, or iv) the intent of the attackers is unclear. Events where the primary target is abortion-related, where the perpetrator is unknown or alleged are also excluded.

[728] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'; Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'.

[729] Alternatively, there is an option to match based on generic descriptors, e.g. "Muslim separatists" and conflict-country. For some attacks, several perpetrator groups are listed. Here, I assign all events to the first perpetrator listed to avoid duplications of events in the data.

[730] See the section on robustness of results for an alternative approach to the problem of unmatched groups.

[731] Meier et al., 'External Support in Civil Wars: Introducing the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) 1975-2017'.

the supply of weapons and ammunition, non-weaponry equipment and logistics support, and/or training and expertise by any supporter. I use a state's *military expenditure* to control for the resources already available to the military. Data stems from the SIPRI Military Expenditure database.[732]

Often, countries that deploy troops to support a government under siege also provide some form of military assistance. In order to separate the effect of military assistance from the effects of biased military intervention, I control for the provision of *external troop support* in all models.[733] Other types of support may also be present but are overall much less frequent (cf. Chapter 3) and not theorised to impact on rebels' choice of terrorist tactics in the same way. I allow for a one-year time lag for all external support-related variables to avoid simultaneity bias.

To assess the impact of democratic external supporters, I create the categorical variable *regime type external supporters* that distinguishes between no external military assistance (0), external military assistance by one or several non-democratic supporters (1), and external military assistance by at least one democratic supporter (2). I use V-Dem's liberal democracy indicator instead of Polity2 scores to assign external supporters to the different categories. Its focus on the protection of individual liberties and rights in addition to traditional democratic institutions such as elections and parties is more likely to capture the dimensions of democratic regimes the argument refers to.[734] A country needs to reach a score of 0.7 or higher on V-Dem's liberal democracy indicator to qualify as a democratic supporter. Where more than one supporter provides assistance, the score of the supporter with the highest democracy score is decisive.

While this measure is imperfect in that it only allows us to compare cases with democratic supporters to the reference category, no support, it allows to run the analysis on the entire sample including on cases where no external support was provided. Alternatively, the variable *democracy external supporter* assigns a continuous measure of the liberal democracy indicator to external

[732] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'SIPRI Military Expenditure Database'.
[733] UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1. See Pettersson and Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017'; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007'.
[734] Coppedge et al., 'V-Dem Codebook V8'.

supporters to allow for a more nuanced assessment of the effects of relative democracy on a subsample of cases with external military assistance (cf. Table 47, Appendix D).[735]

Existing research on the determinants of terrorism has emphasised the strategic environment of non-state actors as shaped by their relationship to other actors. Rebel groups that do not rely on the support of the local population are believed to be more prone to using violence indiscriminately against civilians including in terrorist attacks.[736] The variable *external support rebels* thus controls for the effect of the rebels receiving some form of external support.[737] The *number of rebel groups* derived from the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 informs about intergroup competition in multi-party conflicts.[738] The variable *relative rebel strength* captures the ratio of rebel to government forces. Data stems from Wood (1989-2009), updated by Polo and Gleditsch (2011), and extrapolated from there to cover the remainder of the observation period.[739] I also control for the overall intensity of the conflict by including the total *battle-related deaths* committed in the previous year. The dummy *intensity* denotes all conflicts with 1,000 or more battle-related deaths in the previous year.[740]

To account for the country-specific context, I include several control variables: Since terrorist attacks are particularly likely in democratic regimes, I include the dummy variable *democracy* indicating whether a country receives a Polity2 score of seven or higher in a given year.[741] Following Polo, I create a categorical variable ranging from 1 to 5 from the average of US State Department

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[735] Values are automatically missing in cases where no external support was provided. They are not replaced with a value of zero since zero is a meaningful value on the scale of democracy from zero to one and a zero because of a lack of democratic institutions is different from a zero because no external supporter was registered.
[736] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*; Fortna, Lotito, and Rubin, 'Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars'.
[737] UCDP External Support Dataset (forthcoming)
[738] Pettersson and Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017'; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 'Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007'.
[739] Wood, 'Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians'; Polo and Gleditsch, 'Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War'. Since data on rebel capability is usually not available on a yearly basis, the data is already extrapolated for years without information on rebel capability. It thus seems reasonable to extrapolate values from the last recorded observation for the remainder of the observation period.
[740] Gleditsch et al., 'Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset'; Sundberg and Melander, 'Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset'; Pettersson and Eck, 'Organized Violence, 1989-2017'.
[741] Marshall and Gurr, 'POLITY5 Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2018. Dataset Users' Manual'.

and Amnesty International scores as reported in the Political Terror Scale to generate a measure of the overall level of state *repression* that might provide additional incentives to escalate violence.[742] Lastly, I include measures of *population* size and per capita *GDP* of the conflict-country to account for the effect of differences in a society's size and level of economic development.[743] Table 40 in Appendix D contains summary statistics for all variables of interest.

To account for the possibility of non-random assignment of the treatment variable, external military assistance, I use a matching strategy to create a sample of more balanced observations.[744] Assuming that all relevant determinants of the provision of external military assistance are observable, this procedure allows for the comparison of observations that are alike on all characteristics deemed relevant to the provision of external military assistance. This way, it safeguards against the risk that any observed difference in average outcomes between cases with and without external military assistance is due to a factor that predicts the provision of external military assistance (*selection effect*) rather than the effect of such support.[745]

Observations are matched on the pre-treatment level of terrorist fatalities in the conflict-country to avoid post-treatment bias[746] as well as characteristics previous work has linked to the provision of external military assistance.[747] These include overall state capacity (GDP), oil production, geographical distance (here to the United States), colonial links (here to European countries), refugee outflow, and whether the country is home to a group listed as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation by the US State Department.

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[742] Mark Gibney et al., 'The Political Terror Scale 1976-2019', 2020.
[743] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators'.
[744] Ho et al., 'Matching as Nonparametric Preprocessing for Reducing Model Dependence in Parametric Causal Inference'.
[745] Gilligan and Sergenti, 'Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference'.
[746] I use the average level of terrorist attacks over the three years preceding the first treatment. Where data on terrorist attacks for the previous three years is missing, I use the average over two years or the value from the preceding year, respectively. On post-treatment bias, see Ibid.
[747] Koga, 'Where Do Third Parties Intervene? Third Parties' Domestic Institutions and Military Interventions in Civil Conflicts'; Bove and Böhmelt, 'International Migration and Military Intervention in Civil War'.

A number of matching methods are available to pair observations and assign weights. I use Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM)[748] which has been shown to perform superiorly in comparison to a number of available alternatives.[749] Using propensity scores, for example, can inadvertently increase imbalance in the sample.[750] CEM matches observations that are as similar as possible on all covariates believed to influence whether a case receives treatment with and without treatment. In theory, since any two matched cases have the same likelihood of receiving treatment, any difference between treated and control group can be ascribed to the treatment effect, rather than a selection effect. In practice, exact matches with and without treatment rarely exist. The more detailed the information contained in the variable, the less likely are exact matches. CEM thus creates categories of continuous variables and looks for matches based on those categories. It then prunes the dataset of observations without matches, leading to a reduction in sample size.

Table 35: Overview of Imbalance in Treatment and Control Group before and after CEM

Variable	L1	Mean	Min	25%	50%	75%	Max
Distance from US	0.44	-384.27	707.00	-1,206.00	-947.00	1,297.00	0.00
	0.09	-54.50	707.00	-798.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
US terrorist listing	0.33	0.00	0	0	0	1	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
GDP pc	0.20	2,510.20	-1.79	237.05	558.19	2,505.30	-483.64
	0.08	66.71	-32.00	103.82	-33.40	-154.23	.
Terrorist Fatalities	0.13	5.74	0	0	0	-2.67	171.67
	0.07	-0.36	0	0	0	0	.
Refugee Outflow	0.09	82,147	9	-8,145	-22,697	-47,318	1,600,000
	0.04	-3,714	9	-7,510	-86,421	.	.
Oil	0.05	0.05	0	1	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Former European Colony	0.04	-0.04	0	0	0	0	0
	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Global L1 before CEM	0.74						
Global L1 after CEM	0.53						

To see how well a matching process does in approximating random treatment, the imbalance between variables is informative. Table 35 presents an overview of the difference between treated and untreated observations before (first row) and after matching (second row) for each variable that CEM is asked to match on. Before matching, the mean distance from the US

[748] Iacus, King, and Porro, 'CEM: Coarsened Exact Matching Software'; Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata'.
[749] Iacus, King, and Porro, 'Causal Inference without Balance Checking: Coarsened Exact Matching'.
[750] King and Nielsen, 'Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used for Matching'.

was, on average, 384km shorter in cases that received treatment than in those that did not. After matching, this is reduced to 55km. While the variable is relatively balanced at means, it is less so in the quantiles of the two distributions, where the difference can be as large as 1,297km at the 75% percentile. Still, the measure of overall imbalance, L1, is reduced from 0.44 to 0.09 for the variable. While the imbalance is successfully reduced for all variables, close to complete balance is only achieved for the categorical variables *US terrorist listing*, *oil*, and *former European colony*. Altogether, the global L1 that indicates the overall balance across all variables drops from 0.74 to 0.53 after performing CEM. As Iacus et al. point out, the global L1 serves as a point of comparison between matching solutions, similar to the R^2-statistic for model fit, rather than a hard criterion.[751] As such the reduction of imbalance by 0.21 is considerable. Yet, it is obvious that the dataset is not entirely balanced and hence the experimental design can only be approximated.

I use different estimators to model the use of terrorist tactics (H_1, H_4), the number of terrorist attacks (H_1, H_4), the proportion of military targets (H_2), and the occurrence of attacks on military targets (H_3). Logit models are used to assess the probability of terrorist tactics being used and attacks on military targets occurring. To model the number of terrorist attacks, count models are used. The distribution of terrorist attacks is not normally distributed, but highly right-skewed. The variance being larger than the mean further suggests over-dispersion.[752] The likelihood ratio test of a negative binomial regression model (NBREG) is significant suggesting that a Poisson model is inappropriate. Therefore, estimations are based on negative binomial regression models. Standard errors are clustered by rebel group to account for within-group correlation. The results from estimations of these dependent variables including fixed-effects are also reported. Fixed-effects models (FE) draw only on the variation within panels (here dyads) over time rather than across them which effectively controls for any differences in the unobservable independent variables across panels.

[751] Blackwell et al., 'Cem: Coarsened Exact Matching in Stata', 531.
[752] Mean 18.79, Variance 4647.26

To probe how external military assistance on the government side can affect rebels' targeting strategies, I turn to fractional response models. I use the regression for proportions estimator proposed by Papke and Wooldridge, i.e. a generalised linear model (GLM) with a logistic link, to model the proportion of military targets out of all targets for both all types of attacks and suicide attacks only.[753] Standard errors are again clustered by rebel group. I rely on population-averaged models (PA) to model the time series. All models are run on the matched sample with results from the same analyses run on the full, unmatched sample available in Appendix D.

6.6 Results from the Empirical Analysis

A cursory look at the data confirms the prevalence of terrorist tactics during civil war. Out of the 393 rebel groups involved in armed conflict in the period 1975-2017, 209 (53%) make use of terrorist tactics at least once.[754] On average, rebel groups stage 25 attacks per conflict-year, accumulating to an average of 221 attacks over a conflict. Suicide terrorism is a relatively rare phenomenon. Only in 6% of attacks does the perpetrator not intend to escape from the attack alive. However, almost every fourth attack against military targets is conducted using suicide terrorism.

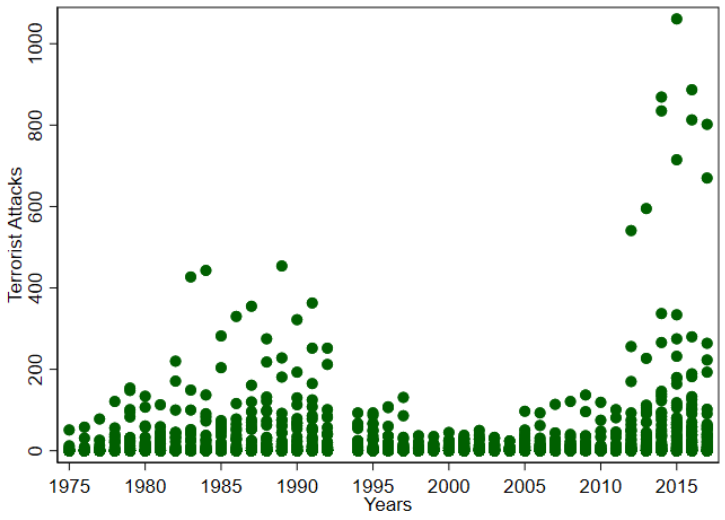
In a typical conflict-year, terrorist violence kills 68 people and injures an additional 76 people. Taken together, the rebel groups in the dataset are responsible for the deaths of just under 107,000 victims of terrorist violence and close to an additional 120,000 people injured in terrorist attacks in the period 1975-2017. Although this number is relatively small in comparison to battlefield fatalities and the violence inflicted on civilians to coerce, control, or outright eliminate them (cf. Chapter 5), it should be noted that the goal of terrorist attacks is to spread fear and intimidate beyond the immediate circle of victims. With this in mind, on average just over two

[753] Papke and Wooldridge, 'Econometric Methods for Fractional Response Variables With an Application to 401 (K) Plan Participation Rates'.
[754] For 55 of the groups listed in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1, an unambiguous match with a GTD group is not possible, hence the GTD variables are coded as missing to avoid assigning terrorist events incorrectly. The true extent of the use of terrorist tactics by rebel groups may therefore be even larger.

attacks a month in a given conflict—even with relatively small casualty counts compared to other types of political violence—are likely to succeed in creating large-scale insecurity.

Figure 29 presents the number of terrorist attacks per conflict-dyad over time.[755] During the 1980s and since 2010, a few dyad-years with exceptionally high numbers of attacks stand out. These include attacks by the Taleban in Afghanistan and ISIL in Iraq committing the highest number of terrorist attacks in a dyad-year followed by Shining Path in Peru and Boko Haram in Nigeria. In half of all dyad-years, however, no more than one attack occurs, and the vast majority of dyad-years (95%) experiences less than 100 attacks.

Figure 29: Number of Terrorist Attacks per Dyad over Time, 1975-2017



The crosstabulation in Table 36 allows for an initial assessment of the relationship between the use of terrorist tactics and the presence of external military assistance (H_1). Third parties provide external military assistance to the government side in a civil war in 56% of all dyad-years in the sample. When the state military received external assistance, rebel groups facing the propped-up militaries relied on the use of terrorist tactics in 54% of the cases. Where governments did not receive such external support only 48% of dyad-years saw rebels rely on terrorist tactics. The results

[755] Note that there is no GTD data on terrorist attacks for the year 1993.

of a Pearson's Chi^2-test suggest that this 6%-difference in the reliance on terrorist tactics is significantly different from zero.

Table 36: Cross Tabulation of Rebel's Use of Terrorist Tactics and External Military Assistance

		Was the opposing rebel group using terrorist tactics in that year?		
		No	**Yes**	**Total**
Was the government receiving military assistance in that year?	**No**	52% (475)	48% (435)	100% (910)
	Yes	46% (536)	54% (621)	100% (1,157)
	Total	49% (1,011)	51% (1,056)	100% (2,067)
Pearson's Chi^2= 6.34; Pr=0.01				

Turning to multivariate analysis, Table 37 presents the results of the estimations of the use of terrorist tactics (Models 1 and 2) and the number of terrorist attacks (Models 3 and 4) from the matched sample. The relationship of external military assistance and the use of terrorist tactics is positive. The coefficient on the provision of external military assistance in Model 1 corresponds to a 1.16 increase in the odds of the use of terrorist tactics.[756] Keeping all other variables at their means, the predicted probability of rebel groups using terrorist tactics is, on average, 0.03 greater when states receive external military assistance. However, this effect fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance in both the regular logit (Model 1) and fixed-effects specification (Model 2).

[756] The odds of an event are the probability of an event occurring over the probability of an event not occurring. See Hilbe, *Negative Binomial Regression*. The odds ratio can be calculated by exponentiating the coefficient.

Table 37: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, and External Military Assistance (H_1) (matched sample)

	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	0.152	0.381	0.606*	0.146
	(0.362)	(0.501)	(0.279)	(0.156)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.830+	-4.888**	-0.106	-1.079**
	(0.464)	(1.284)	(0.470)	(0.344)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	0.460	-0.306	0.033	0.099
	(0.398)	(0.511)	(0.276)	(0.135)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.002	-0.163	-0.168	0.028
	(0.168)	(0.249)	(0.119)	(0.069)
Relative Rebel Strength	-0.299	-0.221	-0.217	-0.021
	(0.397)	(0.336)	(0.197)	(0.209)
Military Expenditure	-0.000	-0.006	0.001	0.001
(in hundred million)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.002)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.028	-0.012	0.023	0.032
(in thousands)	(0.050)	(0.098)	(0.046)	(0.026)
Democracy	1.729*	-0.679	0.964*	0.586**
	(0.684)	(1.040)	(0.379)	(0.198)
Repression	0.728**	0.383	1.129**	0.516**
	(0.200)	(0.313)	(0.165)	(0.123)
Population	-0.414	6.209**	-0.336+	-0.438**
	(0.308)	(1.907)	(0.183)	(0.142)
GDP (pc)	1.070**	-1.082	0.872**	0.326*
	(0.276)	(0.992)	(0.160)	(0.130)
Constant	-2.874		-2.987	2.594
	(5.320)		(3.477)	(2.579)
Number of Observations	573	368	573	541
Number of Clusters	97	39	97	56

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

External military assistance is, however, linked to a significant increase in the number of terrorist attacks (Model 3). The incidence rate of terrorist attacks for a rebel group facing state forces with external military assistance is 1.83 times that of a group operating in an environment without such external support.[757] This can be interpreted as groups facing externally-backed state forces are likely to conduct terrorist attacks at a rate of almost two times that of groups facing state opponents without such assistance. Keeping all other variables at their means, the predicted number of terrorist attacks is 9 in conflicts with external military assistance as opposed to 5 in conflicts without. This effect remains positive but loses significance in the fixed-effects specification (Model 4) that draws on within-group variation.

[757] The incidence rate ratio is the ratio of the risk of Y for a given X compared with the risk of Y given ~X. See Ibid. The incidence rate ratio can be calculated by exponentiating the coefficient.

Notably, troop support has a significant negative association with both the use of terrorist tactics by rebel groups and their frequency. Keeping all other variables at their means, the predicted probability of rebels using terrorist tactics is 0.19 lower when foreign troops are present based on Model 1. The incidence rate of terrorist attacks is further reduced to a third of that of a group operating in a country without foreign troop presence based on the coefficient presented in Model 4. Keeping all other variables at their means, rebel groups are predicted to conduct, on average, one less terrorist attack if foreign troops are present based on Model 4. This effect reaches conventional levels of statistical significance in the fixed-effects specification only.

The models provide no evidence of a significant association between terrorist violence and most rebel group characteristics. Whether rebel groups receive external support, how much competition they have from other groups, and how strong they are compared to the government is not shown to have a significant effect on the use of terrorist tactics or the frequency of attacks. Military expenditure does not have an independent effect, either. However, more intense civil wars with more battle-related deaths experience, on average, a higher number of terrorist attacks.

In all three models, where the effect is significant, democracy has a sizeable positive association with both the use of terrorist tactics and the frequency of attacks (Model 1, 2, 4). Keeping all other variables at their means, a rebel group operating in a democracy has a predicted probability of using terrorist attacks 0.29 higher than a group fighting a non-democratic state based on Model 1. The predicted probability of attacks increases by 9 from a predicted count of 6 to 15 when rebel groups challenge democratic regimes, keeping all other variables at their means (Model 3). State repression and GDP per capita have similar exacerbating effects on the occurrence and level of terrorist violence. Figure 34 and Figure 35 in Appendix D present the predicted values of the probability of the use of terrorist violence and the number of attacks at representative values. The effect of population is less clear. More populous countries seem to be more likely to experience terrorism but experience fewer attacks.

Overall, these results provide some support for the hypothesised increase in the prevalence of terrorism in the presence of external military assistance (H_1), but this effect is more noticeable with regard to the frequency of attacks rather than the use of terrorist tactics in the first place. External troop support is the only factor that significantly reduces the incidence and extent of terrorist violence. Regime type, state repression, and economic development show the most consistent positive effect on its use and escalation.

Table 38 presents the results of the estimations of the proportion of military targets among both all attacks (Model 1 and 2) and non-suicide attacks only (Model 3 and 4). Across all four models, the provision of external military assistance to state armed forces is associated with a lower proportion of military targets out of all targets. Figure 30 displays the predicted mean of the proportion for dyad-years with and without external military assistance, keeping all other variables at their means, based on the estimations presented in Model 1. When no external military assistance is provided, rebel groups that use terrorist violence, target, on average, 6 military targets per 100 attacks. This number reduces to 2 when external military assistance is provided. In turn, this means the relative share of attacks on civilians increases from 0.94 to 0.98 upon the introduction of external support. This effect is significant in the GLM specifications (Models 1 and 3). As expected, the effect is more sizeable when excluding suicide attacks from the proportion with the average number of military targets dropping to 1 per 100 attacks. This suggests that the use of suicide tactics may indeed be less curtailed by target hardening than conventional terrorist tactics (H_3).[758]

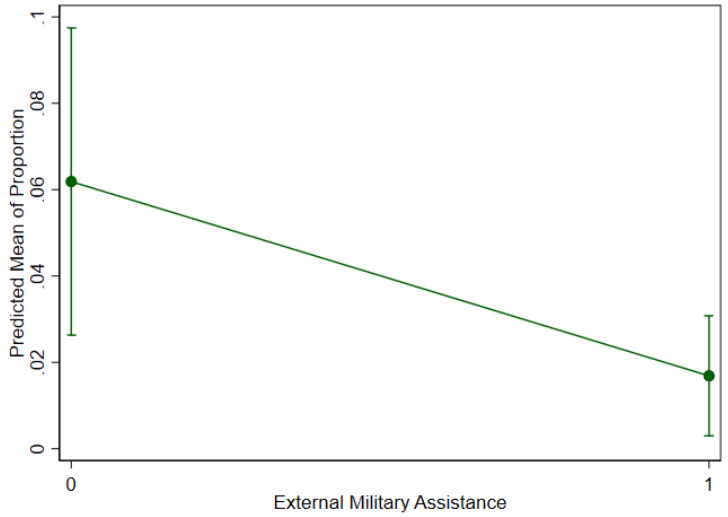
[758] The two coefficients are comparable since both models are run on the same sample.

Table 38: Proportion of Military Targets and External Military Assistance (H_2) (matched sample)

	All Types of Attacks		Non-Suicide Attacks	
	(1) GLM	(2) PA	(3) GLM	(4) PA
Proportion of Military Targets				
External Military Assistance (t-1)	-1.346**	-0.551	-1.495**	-0.734
	(0.489)	(0.536)	(0.446)	(0.473)
External Troop Support (t-1)	-1.673*	-1.006+	-1.564+	-1.035*
	(0.797)	(0.589)	(0.861)	(0.421)
External Support Rebels (t-1)	-2.018**	-1.184**	-2.019**	-1.112**
	(0.579)	(0.430)	(0.603)	(0.416)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.102	0.107	0.139	0.130
	(0.245)	(0.153)	(0.242)	(0.152)
Relative Rebel Strength	1.034**	0.753+	1.046**	0.779*
	(0.374)	(0.446)	(0.351)	(0.368)
Military Expenditure	0.001	-0.005	0.001	-0.005
(in hundred million)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Battle-Related Deaths (t-1)	0.183*	0.175**	0.124	0.110+
(in thousands)	(0.080)	(0.051)	(0.109)	(0.062)
Democracy	0.415	0.676	0.436	0.648
	(0.633)	(0.664)	(0.646)	(0.663)
Repression	-0.568+	-0.391	-0.604+	-0.480
	(0.345)	(0.444)	(0.353)	(0.450)
Population	-0.012	0.219	-0.077	0.170
	(0.404)	(0.366)	(0.400)	(0.349)
GDP (pc)	1.291**	0.998**	1.248**	0.957**
	(0.296)	(0.319)	(0.303)	(0.299)
Constant	-8.994	-12.215	-7.385	-10.617
	(8.663)	(9.098)	(8.461)	(8.521)
Number of Observations	332	361	332	357
Number of Clusters	60	62	60	61

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

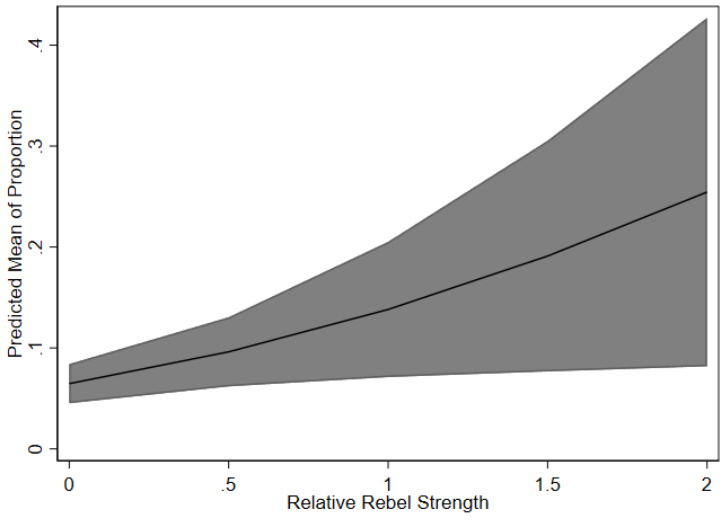
Figure 30: Adjusted Predictions for External Military Assistance with 95%-Confidence Intervals (H_2)



The presence of foreign troops significantly reduces the share of military targets from 0.03 to 0.01 of all attacks based on Model 1, keeping all other variables at their means. This negative effect is significant across all model specifications. Rebel groups with external support are also significantly more likely to target civilian rather than military targets in their attacks. Keeping all other variables at their means, the predicted share of military targets decreases by 0.07 when rebels receive external backing.

As expected, relatively stronger rebels can focus more of their attacks on military rather than civilian targets. Figure 31 presents the adjusted predictions of the mean of the proportion of military targets for different levels of rebel strength. Rebels that are half as strong as the government are predicted to focus, on average, 10% of their attacks on military targets. For rebel groups that are equally as strong as the government, this number rises to 14%. Where rebels are twice as strong as government forces, we would expect a quarter of all attacks to be directed at military targets.

Figure 31: Adjusted Predictions for Rebel Strength with 95%-Confidence Intervals



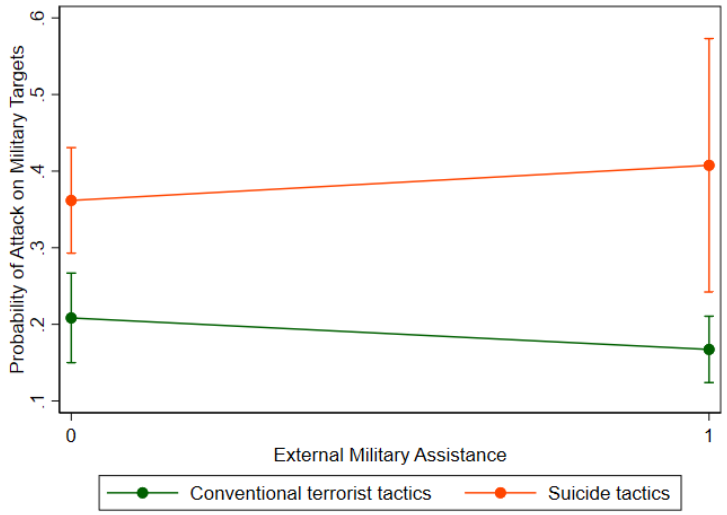
When conflict on the battle-field is more intense, rebels tend to target higher proportions of military targets, however this effect seems to be largely driven by the use of suicide terrorism as the effect is only weakly significant for the proportion of military targets attacked using non-suicide tactics (Model 3 and 4). Although terrorist violence is significantly more likely in democratic states (cf. Table 37), the regime type of the conflict-country has no independent effect on rebel groups'

targeting profile. State repression, however, is a significant predictor of relatively more frequent attacks on civilians. In wealthier countries, a higher portion of attacks is aimed at military targets. How much of this wealth is invested in the military has no significant impact on levels of terrorist violence, however. Neither does the number of rebel groups or the population size of the conflict-country. Overall, these findings are in line with the hypothesised relationship between the presence of external military assistance and rebel groups' relative preference for civilian targets in light of a hardened security environment (H_2).

To further probe the role of suicide terrorism in attacks on military targets, a separate logistic regression that models the probability of attacks on military targets as a function of the presence of external military assistance and the use of suicide tactics is conducted (cf. Table 44, Appendix D). It shows that the use of suicide tactics is systematically linked to a higher probability of attacks on military targets, but this effect does not depend on the provision of external military assistance.

Figure 32 presents the marginal effects of the interaction between the presence of external military assistance and an actors' use of suicide tactics based on Model 3, Table 44 in Appendix D. The probability of attacks on military targets is significantly higher for rebel groups using suicide tactics (orange line) than those using conventional terrorist tactics only (green line). Although the predicted probability of attacks on military targets is slightly larger when external military assistance is provided, the 90%-confidence intervals of the point estimates for rebel groups using suicide terrorism overlap when external military assistance is present and when it is not. Therefore, while the use of suicide tactics and the probability of attacks on military targets are positively related, the strength of the effect does not depend on whether external military assistance is provided or not.

Figure 32: Predictive Margins of Interaction between External Military Assistance and Suicide Attacks on Military Targets with 90%-Confidence Intervals (H_3) (Model 3, Table 44)



These findings run short of presenting clear evidence on the theoretical proposition that suicide terrorism replaces conventional terrorist attacks against military targets when external military assistance is provided (H_3).[759] However, the findings on the effect of external military assistance on the proportion of military targets are robust to the inclusion of suicide attacks, strengthening our confidence in an overall shift away from military towards civilian targets (H_2).

Taking a closer look at the role of the regime type of the external supporter in patterns of terrorist violence, Table 39 presents the same models introduced in Table 37 with an ordinal measure of the regime type of the external supporter. The results suggest that there is no systematic difference between the provision of external military assistance by any type of external supporter and the use of terrorist tactics. However, the result shows that the increase in the number of attacks is driven by the support democratic regimes provide. Based on Model 3, when a democratic external supporter provides external military assistance, the predicted number of terrorist attacks is 12, compared to a predicted 5 attacks when no external military assistance is provided at all and 4 if non-democracies provide military assistance, keeping all other variables at their means.

[759] To fully explore the connection between external military assistance, suicide terrorism, and attacks on military targets, a more detailed analysis with the event as the unit of analysis is necessary. However, this is beyond the scope of this paper. See Piazza, 'Suicide Attacks and Hard Targets: An Empirical Examination'.

The significant negative association of external military assistance by non-democratic supporters in Model 4 suggests that its provision can reduce terrorist attacks vis-à-vis cases where no such assistance is provided. External troop support to the government is again associated with a reduction in terrorist violence in the fixed-effects models and the remaining control variables have similar effects as in the previous models. These results are in line with the theoretical proposition that rebel groups escalate terrorist violence in order to coerce democratic supporters to withdraw their support (H_{4a}).

Table 39: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, and Regime Type of Supporter (H_{4a}) (matched sample)

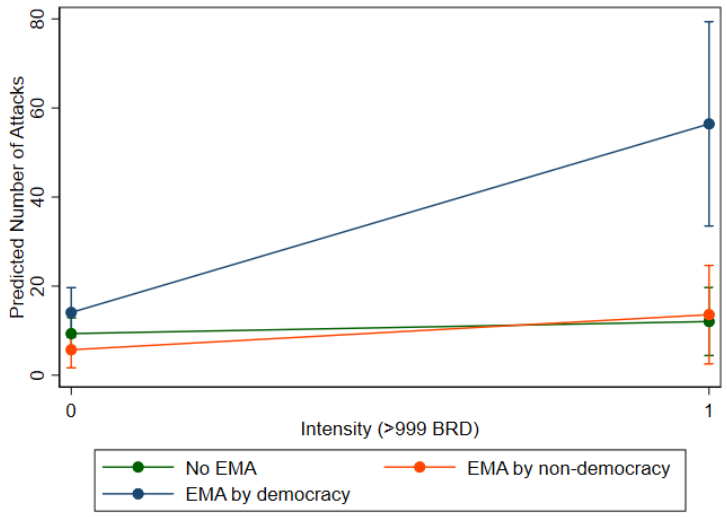
	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$				
from Non-Democracy	-0.385	-0.466	-0.235	-0.499+
	(0.496)	(0.775)	(0.393)	(0.289)
from Democracy	0.455	0.951	0.870**	0.356*
	(0.398)	(0.690)	(0.289)	(0.170)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.759	-6.883**	0.074	-1.152**
	(0.495)	(1.591)	(0.412)	(0.347)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	0.467	-0.431	-0.046	0.095
	(0.394)	(0.562)	(0.270)	(0.137)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.001	-0.105	-0.109	0.017
	(0.168)	(0.258)	(0.110)	(0.069)
Relative Rebel Strength	-0.261	-0.351	-0.213	-0.051
	(0.305)	(0.367)	(0.191)	(0.207)
Military Expenditure	0.002	-0.005	0.003	0.002
(in hundred million)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.002)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.016	-0.057	0.006	0.039
(in thousands)	(0.048)	(0.110)	(0.048)	(0.025)
Democracy	1.725*	-1.099	0.792*	0.594**
	(0.689)	(1.099)	(0.364)	(0.196)
Repression	0.705**	0.135	1.029**	0.562**
	(0.187)	(0.375)	(0.180)	(0.123)
Population	-0.484	9.603**	-0.422*	-0.456**
	(0.319)	(2.450)	(0.181)	(0.141)
GDP (pc)	0.982**	-1.157	0.786**	0.196
	(0.279)	(1.040)	(0.159)	(0.136)
Constant	-1.026		-0.543	3.579
	(5.610)		(3.577)	(2.607)
Number of Observations	573	354	573	541
Number of Clusters	97	38	97	56

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

I expect the effect of regime type of the external supporter to be conditional on a foreign public's awareness of a given conflict the external supporter provides external military assistance to (H_{4b}). Figure 33 presents the marginal effects of an interaction between regime type of the

supporter and conflict intensity based on Model 3, Table 46 in Appendix D. It shows that the predicted number of terrorist attacks when democracies provide external military assistance is significantly higher in high-intensity conflicts than in low-intensity conflicts (blue line). The prediction for states that receive democratic backing during high-intensity conflicts (blue point estimate) is further significantly different from the expected number of attacks in high-intensity conflicts with no external military assistance at all (green point estimate) or external military assistance by a non-democratic supporter (orange point estimate). At the same time, there is no statistically significant difference between the predicted number of attacks when conflict intensity is low.

Figure 33: Predictive Margins of Interaction between Conflict Intensity and Regime Type of Supporter with 90%-Confidence Intervals (H_{4b}) (Model 3, Table 46)



Overall, this suggests that it is particularly in high-intensity conflicts with increased international scrutiny that an escalation in terrorist violence may be considered an effective strategy by rebel groups that face state forces with backing by a liberal democracy. These findings are compatible with the prediction on the conditioning effect of conflict intensity on the provision of external military assistance by a democracy (H_{4b}).

Robustness of Results

Although the matching of observations and the inclusion of the most important potential confounders in the models increase confidence in the results, a number of robustness and sensitivity checks were conducted. The inclusion of a time-invariant variable measuring ethnic fractionalisation[760] in all models does not change results but is excluded in the main models due to its lack of variation over time that leads to omission in the fixed-effects models. The effect of external military assistance stays the same in direction using same-year values for all variables, with the effect being just as or more strongly significant. In this specification, a positive relationship between external military assistance and terrorist tactics turns significant in the logit and fixed-effects specification. While the matching strategy tackles some of the issues around endogeneity, it does not alleviate concerns about the simultaneity of events, however. Results are further robust to using a score of 0.7 or higher on V-Dem's liberal democracy indicator instead of Polity2 to measure a conflict-country's regime type.

The results presented here are based on a compiled dataset that treats cases where no clear match for a given UCDP group among the GTD groups active in that country can be identified as evidence of that UCDP group not engaging in terrorist violence, i.e. relevant terrorism measures are coded as zero. This potentially underestimates the use of terrorist tactics by rebel groups since the non-observance of the outcome of interest could be due to a failure to match groups rather than a true representation of the use of terrorism. The coefficients of the key independent variables show the same direction and level of significance when run on a sample that codes all terrorism-related variables as missing for groups that produce no match with a GTD group at any point rather than as zero. The results from the estimations of the proportion of military targets are further robust to replacing the missing values where zero attacks occurred with zeros (Table 43, Appendix D).

[760] Alesina et al., 'Fractionalization'.

6.7 Discussion of Findings

There is evidence to suggest that when facing an externally supported military, rebel groups escalate terrorist violence. However, the results also suggest that while terrorist attacks by rebel groups become more frequent when governments receive external military assistance, it does not affect rebels' decision to use terrorist tactics in the first place. Rather, groups that already use terrorist tactics in a given year escalate terrorist violence.

This reading is in line with recent suggestions that targeting civilians is more costly for some non-state actors than for others.[761] For groups that heavily rely on public support and have few opportunities to distinguish between their constituents and other civilians they could target at a lower cost because of high out-group antagonism towards that group, switching to the use of terrorist tactics might simply not be an option. Groups with a support structure that already allows for the targeting of certain parts of the population without serious repercussions, for example where resources are drawn from a specific ethnic group only, can accelerate their use of terrorist tactics to exert pressure on the government.

This logic also explains why external support to rebels has no independent effect on rebels' use of terrorist tactics but is linked to relatively more frequent attacks on civilian rather than military targets for groups that use terrorist tactics to begin with: Receiving backing from an external supporter, rebel groups already committing terrorist violence are even less dependent on the civilian population and more at liberty to aim their attacks at civilian targets involving fewer risks and costs. This is only possible, however, if certain parts of the population can be targeted with few repercussions. It should be noted that support to rebels is diverse (cf. Chapter 3) and further research is necessary to examine which types of external support are causing this effect.

The role external troop support can play in reducing the use of terrorist tactics and its frequency is also notable. At first glance, this finding is at odds with the argument that terrorism is

[761] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'.

a response to conditions of asymmetry. If this is the case, additional troops should improve the government's position, making terrorism more rather than less likely. There are several possible explanations for this finding: First, the deployment of foreign troops does not provide reliable information on the balance of power as this measure does not specify the number of troops deployed or the size of the troop contingent already on the ground. It is possible that troops are primarily deployed where conditions of asymmetry are already favouring the rebel side. Hence the balance of power theory would still hold.

Second, the finding on the negative effect of troop support is compatible with the notion that the relative distribution of troops is not necessarily decisive in creating conditions of asymmetry in civil wars that are not primarily conducted on the battlefield. Rather than the balance of troops, the balance of those capabilities that are relevant when facing an insurgent threat are of import. The null finding on the relative rebel strength captured by the troop ratio further speaks to this reading. Therefore, it is not the relative distribution of troops, but access to necessary equipment and expertise that gives state armed forces an edge over rebel groups employing irregular warfare.

Third, it may simply be the case that external troops are effective at protecting civilian and military installations from terrorist attacks. This suggestion is in stark contrast to much of the literature that views the presence of foreign troops as a main catalyst for terrorist violence.[762] It is of note here that while foreign troops are linked to lower levels of terrorist violence, the relative share of civilian targets in terrorist attacks is larger when foreign troops are present. Since most studies on the consequences of foreign troop presence focus on terrorist violence against civilians, it is possible that the previously detected effect represents this shift towards targeting civilians in larger numbers.

[762] Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*; Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith, 'Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?'

In addition, most studies in this context examine foreign occupation—an extreme form of foreign troop support that, importantly, usually occurs without the consent of the incumbent or predecessor government—and do not limit their analyses to rebel groups employing such violence but include any non-state actors. In some cases, the focus is further on transnational terrorist attacks or domestic attacks against foreign nationals rather than attacks by domestic actors against mostly domestic targets.[763] Further research is necessary to accurately assess the role of different types of foreign troop involvement on the prevalence of domestic terrorism specifically.

The escalation of violence where democratic third parties provide external military assistance raises questions about the effectiveness of military cooperation in countering a terrorist or insurgent threat. This finding is compatible with a "logic of denial" that addresses foreign audiences to achieve the withdrawal of support.[764] Further work is required to test whether the proposed causal mechanism drives this relationship. It is also possible that democratic states are providing, on average, superior equipment and are hence enforcing conditions of asymmetry on relevant dimensions more strongly than non-democratic supporters, suggesting that the balance of power is still the dominant logic at play. However, high military spending that might indicate sophisticated training and equipment does not always correlate with more democratic regime types and the protection of civil liberties (cf. Chapter 5).

The violence-reducing effect of external military assistance by non-democratic supporters suggests that external military assistance has the potential to help build effective counterterrorism capabilities. It might, however, generate unique incentives to escalate terrorist violence when external supporters are highly democratic states. Given that the presence of external military assistance by a democratic supporter increases the frequency of attacks but does not encourage the initial shift towards utilising terrorist tactics, democratic supporters might be well-advised to avoid

[763] Azam and Thelen, 'Foreign Aid versus Military Intervention in the War on Terror'; Neumayer and Plümper, 'Foreign Terror on Americans'.
[764] Boyle, 'Bargaining, Fear, and Denial: Explaining Violence Against Civilians in Iraq 2004-2007', 278.

counterterrorism cooperation where insurgents already employ terrorist tactics and focus their efforts on providing support to countries without ongoing terrorist violence.

Lastly, the strong relationship between both democracy and economic development in the conflict-country and terrorist violence is in line with the notion that actors rely on terrorism primarily to coerce democratic states.[765] Actors included in the UCDP Dyadic dataset as rebel groups in highly democratic states are often more commonly thought of as terrorist groups rather than insurgents. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland and the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Spain are cases in point. Yet, in contrast to the provision of troops or external military assistance, these factors are neither easily impacted upon by third parties, nor does it seem desirable to curtail the democratic and economic development of countries to limit terrorist violence. The adverse effects of state repression on terrorist violence, both on overall levels and the increased targeting of civilians, however, suggests that keeping repressive regimes in place in the name of stability can backfire and impact civilians disproportionately.

6.8 Conclusion

Increasingly, external involvement in civil conflicts is framed in a counterterrorism context. Wary of committing "boots on the ground,"[766] foreign states opt to "build partner capacity"[767] to help friendly regimes help themselves. The provision of manpower in the form of troops is thus frequently replaced by the provision of external military assistance comprised of weapons, equipment, training, and advice. Yet, existing research has to date provided little systematic evidence of the effects of training and equipping foreign regimes on the use of terrorist tactics by non-state armed actors.

[765] For an overview, see, for example, Erica Chenoweth, 'Terrorism and Democracy', *Annual Review of Political Science* 16 (2013): 355–78.
[766] Luján, 'Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention', 10.
[767] Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?*, 1.

This research models the use of terrorist tactics as a tactical choice in internationalised civil war environments. As such, it contributes to the ongoing effort to integrate the study of civil wars and terrorism. It is the first study to systematically analyse the effects the provision of external military assistance by a variety of external supporters has on rebels' reliance on terrorist tactics. It shows that attempts to build counterterrorism capacity may backfire. This is the case, for example, when rebel groups already employing terrorist tactics increase terrorist attacks to mitigate the disadvantageous effects of external military assistance on their relative standing vis-à-vis government forces. Target hardening—intended by and often achieved through the assistance foreign backers provide—can further encourage more frequent attacks against civilian targets. In particular, highly democratic third parties considering intervening in high-intensity conflicts should be mindful of the opportunities to coerce that the use of terrorist tactics offers rebel groups facing externally supported government forces.

While these findings are in line with theories that stress the importance of the balance of power between warring parties in their explanations on the occurrence and extent of different forms of political violence, they add important nuance to the study of terrorism, civil wars, and third-party involvement. This paper challenges the notion that the relative distribution of troops is a key determinant in identifying conditions of asymmetry and stress the role of equipment and know-how in this context.

These findings also suggest that the transition from non-terrorist to terrorist tactics may be less fluid than previously suspected. The reason for this, however, is not necessarily rebel groups' relative control over territory that keeps them from relying on terrorist tactics, as actor-based approaches suggest, but the absence of a group of civilians with salient characteristics that can be targeted at relatively low costs. This is only the case when the targeting of civilians can be justified

to constituents with reference to their constructed membership in an out-group or when popular support is neglectable altogether due to the influx of resources from outside.[768]

Lastly, these findings corroborate the idea that military intervention involving troop deployments and external military assistance affect conflict dynamics differently and warrant independent study. The presence of foreign troops might not be as detrimental as it is currently made out to be, at least with regard to rebel groups' propensity to escalate terrorist attacks and to target civilians. In fact, troop deployment is the only factor within foreign policymakers' immediate control found to reduce terrorist violence in a conflict-country.

While this is not a call to undo all efforts to strengthen foreign security apparatuses through capacity building, it is a reminder that the benefits of the provision of external military assistance need to be carefully weighed against possible unintended consequences. This is particularly true in conflict environments where actors have a variety of violent strategies at their disposal and will choose the path that promises greatest rewards in a given strategic environment.

Additional research is necessary to explore the more long-term consequences of the provision of external military assistance on conflict outcomes, however. If terrorism is correctly thought of as a weapon of the weak, an increase in terrorist attacks and shift towards civilian targets can be signs of an overall declining insurgent threat. This would suggest the long-term effectiveness of external military assistance in reducing rebel violence even if terrorist violence spikes in the short- to medium-term.

[768] Polo, 'The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice'.

APPENDIX D

Table 40: Summary Statistics of Variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dependent Variables					
Terrorist tactics	2,067	0.51	0.50	0	1
Terrorist attacks	2,067	18.79	68.17	0	1,061
Terrorist fatalities	2,067	51.78	250.72	0	4,893
Proportion of military targets	1,051	0.06	0.15	0	1
All attacks on military targes	2,067	0.91	4.86	0	109
All attacks on civilian targets	2,067	17.33	61.60	0	968
Non-suicide attacks on military targets	2,067	0.71	3.34	0	45
Non-suicide attacks on civilian targets	2,067	16.43	57.00	0	896
Suicide attacks on military targets	2,067	0.21	4.39	0	76
Suicide attacks on civilian targets	2,067	0.89	6.54	0	151
Military targets	2,067	0.17	0.37	0	1
Independent Variables					
External military assistance	2,067	0.56	0.50	0	1
Regime type external supporter	2,067	0.91	0.89	0	2
Democracy external supporter	1,157	0.58	0.34	0.02	0.91
Intensity	2,067	0.20	0.40	0	1
Suicide tactics	2,067	0.09	0.28	0	1
Control Variables					
External troop support	2,067	0.17	0.37	0	1
External support rebels	2,067	0.57	0.49	0	1
Number of rebel groups	2,067	2.71	1.84	1	9
Relative rebel strength	1,691	0.18	0.45	0.00	7.50
Military expenditure (in hundred millions)	1,720	50.70	102.73	0.01	883.53
Battle-related deaths (in thousands)	2,043	3.15	9.84	0.03	80
Democracy	1,878	0.25	0.43	0	1
Repression	1,999	4.17	0.81	1	5
Population (ln)	2,067	17.25	1.45	12.86	21.02
GDP per capita (ln)	1,777	7.24	1.30	4.88	10.51
Ethnic fractionalisation	2,067	0.55	0.22	0.00	0.93

Table 41: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, and External Military Assistance (H_1) (unmatched sample)

	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	0.394	0.689*	0.229	-0.068
	(0.286)	(0.341)	(0.250)	(0.100)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.017	-2.607**	0.770	-0.256
	(0.401)	(0.745)	(0.495)	(0.198)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	-0.152	0.233	-0.214	0.151+
	(0.254)	(0.310)	(0.237)	(0.091)
Number of Rebel Groups	-0.129	-0.015	-0.324**	0.064+
	(0.083)	(0.125)	(0.076)	(0.033)
Relative Rebel Strength	0.008	-0.163	-0.267	0.025
	(0.235)	(0.328)	(0.187)	(0.175)
Military Expenditure	0.001	-0.005+	0.000	0.001
(in hundred million)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.015	0.041	0.170*	0.015
(in thousands)	(0.034)	(0.062)	(0.082)	(0.016)
Democracy	2.046**	0.181	1.519**	0.336*
	(0.485)	(0.522)	(0.301)	(0.133)
Repression	0.533**	0.311	0.702**	0.336**
	(0.151)	(0.197)	(0.141)	(0.062)
Population	-0.098	3.395**	0.136	-0.036
	(0.179)	(1.141)	(0.147)	(0.071)
GDP (pc)	0.375**	-0.332	0.551**	0.107+
	(0.144)	(0.594)	(0.111)	(0.064)
Constant	-2.921		-6.768*	-2.230
	(3.566)		(2.822)	(1.496)
Number of Observations	982	613	982	876
Number of Clusters	129	58	129	85

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Figure 34: Predicted Probability of Terrorist Tactics Across the Range of State Repression (left) and GDP (right) (Model 1, Table 37)

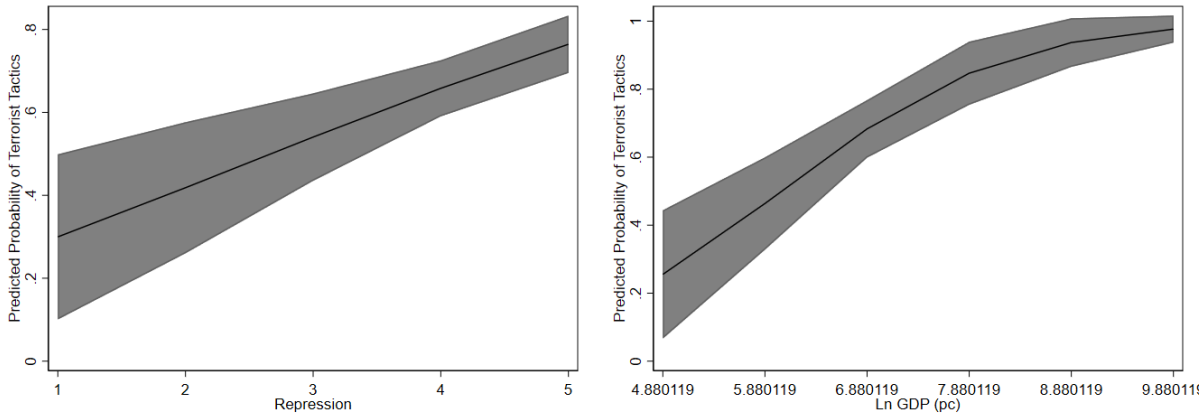


Figure 35: Predicted Count of Terrorist Attacks Across the Range of State Repression (left) and GDP (right) (Model 3, Table 37)

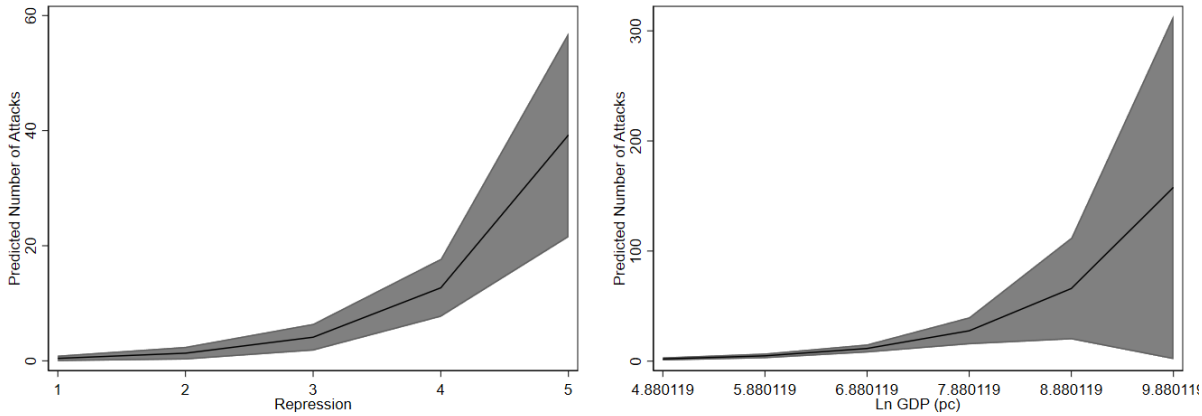


Table 42: Proportion of Military Targets and External Military Assistance (H_2) (unmatched sample)

	All Types of Attacks		Non-Suicide Attacks	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	GLM	PA	GLM	PA
Proportion of Military Targets				
External Military Assistance (t-1)	0.144	0.118	0.114	0.071
	(0.383)	(0.377)	(0.400)	(0.388)
External Troop Support (t-1)	-0.929*	-0.722*	-0.931*	-0.696*
	(0.427)	(0.342)	(0.433)	(0.350)
External Support Rebels (t-1)	-0.668*	-0.793*	-0.595*	-0.728*
	(0.301)	(0.311)	(0.298)	(0.312)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.122	0.137+	0.118	0.132+
	(0.080)	(0.075)	(0.082)	(0.076)
Relative Rebel Strength	-0.139	0.312	0.126	0.412
	(2.675)	(1.256)	(1.969)	(0.873)
Military Expenditure	-0.003+	-0.003*	-0.003	-0.003+
(in hundred million)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Battle-Related Deaths (t-1)	0.092+	0.089*	0.048	0.043
(in thousands)	(0.053)	(0.044)	(0.047)	(0.041)
Democracy	-0.428	-0.296	-0.397	-0.260
	(0.401)	(0.420)	(0.412)	(0.431)
Repression	-0.057	-0.171	-0.063	-0.180
	(0.195)	(0.200)	(0.195)	(0.201)
Population	0.379	0.346	0.355	0.307
	(0.328)	(0.316)	(0.330)	(0.316)
GDP (pc)	0.594+	0.597+	0.576+	0.563+
	(0.321)	(0.309)	(0.322)	(0.309)
Constant	-13.686	-12.698	-13.148	-11.727
	(8.480)	(8.092)	(8.471)	(8.031)
Number of Observations	628	628	628	628
Number of Clusters	95	95	95	95

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 43: Proportion of Military Targets and External Military Assistance (H_2) (alternative specification of dependent variable, matched sample)

	All Types of Attacks		Non-Suicide Attacks	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	GLM	PA	GLM	PA
Proportion of Military Targets				
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	-1.447**	-0.639	-1.567**	-0.892*
	(0.411)	(0.515)	(0.369)	(0.439)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-1.546*	-0.560	-1.487+	-0.695
	(0.734)	(0.511)	(0.796)	(0.447)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	-2.018**	-1.117*	-2.013**	-1.193*
	(0.563)	(0.534)	(0.576)	(0.508)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.032	0.077	0.056	0.099
	(0.192)	(0.163)	(0.183)	(0.160)
Relative Rebel Strength	0.980*	0.585	1.022**	0.704*
	(0.395)	(0.430)	(0.345)	(0.324)
Military Expenditure	0.003	-0.001	0.003	-0.002
(in hundred million)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.171*	0.089	0.114	0.003
(in thousands)	(0.070)	(0.056)	(0.094)	(0.082)
Democracy	0.960	1.618*	0.925	1.556*
	(0.598)	(0.738)	(0.605)	(0.753)
Repression	-0.429	-0.089	-0.463	-0.153
	(0.284)	(0.443)	(0.287)	(0.452)
Population	-0.239	-0.315	-0.248	-0.253
	(0.333)	(0.360)	(0.334)	(0.348)
GDP (pc)	1.560**	1.227**	1.515**	1.140**
	(0.233)	(0.409)	(0.239)	(0.379)
Constant	-7.971	-6.587	-7.294	-6.602
	(7.016)	(8.110)	(7.091)	(8.123)
Number of Observations	590	635	590	649
Number of Clusters	97	94	97	95

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 44: Military Targets, External Military Assistance, and Suicide Tactics (H_3)

	Unmatched Sample		Matched Sample	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	FE	Logit	FE
Military Targets				
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$	0.064	0.043	-0.411	-0.972
	(0.339)	(0.412)	(0.391)	(0.753)
Suicide Tactics	2.365**	2.190**	1.287**	1.552
	(0.556)	(0.738)	(0.472)	(1.049)
Ext. Mil. Assistance#Suicide	1.110+	-0.328	0.760	-1.080
Tactics $_{(t-1)}$	(0.663)	(0.845)	(0.839)	(1.418)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.130	-1.931+	-2.579**	-2.373+
	(0.649)	(1.008)	(0.955)	(1.341)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	-0.993**	-0.563+	-1.076**	-0.098
	(0.271)	(0.338)	(0.392)	(0.632)
Number of Rebel Groups	-0.026	0.170	0.008	0.199
	(0.085)	(0.144)	(0.219)	(0.313)
Relative Rebel Strength	0.775**	3.199	1.349**	7.089
	(0.245)	(3.569)	(0.332)	(5.801)
Military Expenditure	-0.003	-0.005	0.011*	-0.017
(in hundred million)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.012)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.056	0.106	0.037	0.146
(in thousands)	(0.042)	(0.103)	(0.062)	(0.143)
Democracy	1.357**	0.657	1.819*	0.674
	(0.364)	(0.518)	(0.724)	(0.872)
Repression	0.254+	0.408+	0.860**	0.955*
	(0.154)	(0.228)	(0.290)	(0.446)
Population	0.183	3.010*	-0.584+	3.571
	(0.198)	(1.398)	(0.303)	(2.715)
GDP (pc)	0.670**	2.813*	1.687**	5.472*
	(0.166)	(1.292)	(0.428)	(2.514)
Constant	-11.150*		-7.383	
	(4.392)		(5.751)	
Number of Observations	982	500	573	301
Number of Groups	129	37	97	24

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 45: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, and Regime Type of Supporter (H_{4a}) (unmatched sample)

	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1) Logit	(2) FE	(3) NBREG	(4) FE
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$				
from Non-Democracy	0.176	0.415	-0.567+	-0.193
	(0.317)	(0.439)	(0.313)	(0.159)
from Democracy	0.509	0.984*	0.459+	-0.018
	(0.352)	(0.458)	(0.271)	(0.112)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	0.001	-2.758**	0.841*	-0.247
	(0.409)	(0.772)	(0.426)	(0.198)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	-0.140	0.231	-0.254	0.155+
	(0.254)	(0.310)	(0.231)	(0.091)
Number of Rebel Groups	-0.119	-0.016	-0.295**	0.066+
	(0.082)	(0.126)	(0.074)	(0.034)
Relative Rebel Strength	0.019	-0.178	-0.236	0.039
	(0.241)	(0.333)	(0.179)	(0.169)
Military Expenditure	0.001	-0.005	0.001	0.001+
(in hundred million)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	0.015	0.040	0.154*	0.015
(in thousands)	(0.033)	(0.062)	(0.077)	(0.015)
Democracy	2.014**	0.098	1.425**	0.324*
	(0.490)	(0.525)	(0.292)	(0.133)
Repression	0.536**	0.341+	0.642**	0.335**
	(0.150)	(0.199)	(0.137)	(0.062)
Population	-0.104	3.419**	0.108	-0.041
	(0.180)	(1.153)	(0.146)	(0.071)
GDP (pc)	0.347*	-0.248	0.473**	0.090
	(0.152)	(0.599)	(0.113)	(0.067)
Constant	-2.685		-5.520+	-2.051
	(3.585)		(2.849)	(1.507)
Number of Observations	982	613	982	876
Number of Groups	129	58	129	85

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 46: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, Regime Type of Supporter, and Conflict Intensity (H_{4b}) (matched sample)

	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	FE	NBREG	FE
External Military Assistance $_{(t-1)}$				
from Autocratic Supporter	-0.664	-0.775	-0.491	-0.400
	(0.606)	(0.794)	(0.451)	(0.324)
from Democratic Supporter	0.280	0.846	0.411	0.189
	(0.439)	(0.720)	(0.281)	(0.184)
Intensity $_{(t-1)}$	0.313	-0.448	0.255	0.341+
	(0.476)	(1.226)	(0.324)	(0.200)
EMA Non-Democracy#	0.654	2.325	0.612	-0.372
Intensity $_{(t-1)}$	(0.910)	(1.861)	(0.722)	(0.573)
EMA Democracy#Intensity $_{(t-1)}$	0.740	3.084	1.133**	0.100
	(0.688)	(3.238)	(0.433)	(0.235)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	-0.874*	-6.990**	-0.348	-1.391**
	(0.431)	(1.560)	(0.297)	(0.357)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	0.390	-0.644	-0.151	0.102
	(0.404)	(0.592)	(0.254)	(0.129)
Number of Rebel Groups	0.028	-0.145	-0.006	0.031
	(0.161)	(0.256)	(0.112)	(0.068)
Relative Rebel Strength	-0.259	-0.373	-0.060	0.037
	(0.340)	(0.364)	(0.158)	(0.184)
Military Expenditure	0.004	-0.005	0.002	0.002
(in hundred million)	(0.004)	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.002)
Democracy	1.802**	-1.097	0.697+	0.735**
	(0.699)	(1.087)	(0.363)	(0.195)
Repression	0.622**	0.150	0.871**	0.473**
	(0.190)	(0.388)	(0.169)	(0.114)
Population	-0.518+	9.666**	-0.375*	-0.635**
	(0.307)	(2.415)	(0.160)	(0.135)
GDP (pc)	0.968**	-1.031	0.830**	0.261*
	(0.267)	(1.046)	(0.132)	(0.129)
Constant	-0.043		-1.180	6.653**
	(5.374)		(3.140)	(2.549)
Number of Observations	574	355	574	544
Number of Clusters	97	38	97	57

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 47: Terrorist Tactics, Terrorist Attacks, and Level of Democracy in Supporters (H_{4a}) (unmatched subsample of cases with EMA)

	Terrorist Tactics		Terrorist Attacks	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	NBREG	FE	NBREG	FE
Democracy External Supporter $_{(t-1)}$	0.699	1.164	1.739**	1.470**
	(0.593)	(1.098)	(0.595)	(0.401)
External Troop Support $_{(t-1)}$	0.104	-1.805*	1.396*	0.050
	(0.507)	(0.876)	(0.548)	(0.225)
External Support Rebels $_{(t-1)}$	0.555+	0.457	0.057	0.282*
	(0.313)	(0.478)	(0.333)	(0.126)
Number of Rebel Groups	-0.105	0.196	-0.235+	0.150**
	(0.132)	(0.209)	(0.120)	(0.050)
Relative Rebel Strength	-0.004	3.028	-1.258*	0.536
	(0.421)	(2.465)	(0.594)	(0.545)
Military Expenditure	-0.001	-0.003	-0.001	0.001
(in hundred million)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Battle-Related Deaths $_{(t-1)}$	-0.014	0.009	0.029	-0.029+
(in thousands)	(0.035)	(0.060)	(0.069)	(0.017)
Democracy	1.504**	0.321	1.166**	0.235
	(0.568)	(0.650)	(0.375)	(0.161)
Repression	0.695**	-0.028	1.065**	0.321**
	(0.191)	(0.297)	(0.187)	(0.089)
Population	0.073	2.337	-0.074	-0.225+
	(0.292)	(1.809)	(0.259)	(0.124)
GDP (pc)	0.392*	-0.648	0.250	-0.232*
	(0.198)	(1.190)	(0.157)	(0.104)
Constant	-6.955		-3.340	2.448
	(5.728)		(4.954)	(2.682)
Number of Observations	521	299	521	450
Number of Groups	80	32	80	49

Standard errors clustered by rebel group; ** p<0.01 * p<0.05, + p<0.1

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on US civilian and military targets heralded in a new era of external interference in intrastate conflicts. Since 2001, the proportion of conflicts in which foreign states provide training and equipment to the armed forces of a country at war has risen from 37% to 66%, surpassing levels of military-to-military cooperation seen at the end of the Cold War (cf. Chapter 3). Apart from the decision to join large multinational coalitions, this trend is indicative of the increasing importance of more indirect forms of intervention vis-à-vis troop support. Hesitant to commit to the financial, reputational, and human costs associated with biased military intervention, policymakers increasingly opt to build the capacity of foreign militaries—"helping others defend themselves."[769]

This thesis set out to examine how external military assistance—or the provision of weaponry, matériel, and training with a military purpose—affects actors' participation in violent activities in civil war contexts. Existing literature on external support is unable to answer these questions in full (cf. Chapter 2). Previous studies conflate the effects of the provision of troop support with those of more indirect types of support such as external military assistance. Data limitations have led to a preoccupation with the consequences of US military assistance at the expense of the assistance provided by other external supporters. With regard to theory, most work on external support prioritises how external support affects the behaviour of rebel groups rather than state actors. Methodologically, the study of external support is often plagued by selection effects that limit its potential for casual inference.

As this thesis has shown, training and equipping foreign militaries is not without consequences for conflict dynamics on the ground. External military assistance affects the risk of military-backed coups (Chapter 3), government-perpetrated violence against civilians (Chapter 4),

[769] Gates, 'Helping Others Defend Themselves: The Future of U. S. Security Assistance'.

and rebels' reliance on terrorist tactics (Chapter 5). The effects vary between US and non-US supporters, for supporters with higher and lower levels of military sophistication, and between more and less democratic states.

In the following, I first briefly reiterate the main findings from all three papers. I then discuss the conclusions they offer jointly on the relationship between external military assistance and the balance of power. Subsequently, I present three more general take-aways from the research conducted as part of this thesis. After re-stating the main contributions this thesis makes to the field, I also highlight persisting limitations as well as avenues for further research. Last, I derive several policy implications that follow from the findings of this thesis.

7.2 Summary of Main Findings

The first paper, "Building Capacity or Exacerbating Instability: US Military Training, External Military Assistance, and War-Time Coup Risk" focused on the role of external military assistance in shaping the risk of a military coup in countries facing an insurgent threat. While previous studies have examined coup risk as a consequence of US military training, it constitutes the first systematic analysis of the effects of external military assistance by a range of actors. In the paper, I argued that a focus on US military training is potentially misleading as it privileges the effects of professional over technical training, includes observations from outside a civil war context, and does not account for the unique position the United States occupies as the world's leading military power. Logistic regressions were run on a matched sample of civil war countries in the period 1975-2017. Comparing the effects of external military assistance by the United States and non-US supporters, I found that not only does United States military training not appear to increase coup risk during civil wars, but non-US training can in fact reduce the risk of military coups. The same holds for the provision of external military assistance, although this effect seems to largely be driven by the role of foreign military training. The results reiterate the importance of collecting and analysing data from third parties other than the United States.

In the second paper, "'Trained and Equipped' to Kill Civilians? Quality of External Military Assistance and Government Forces' Targeting Profiles in Civil Wars," I examined the relationship between external military assistance and government's propensity to kill civilians. I argued that with the introduction of additional resources, government forces can inflict greater damage, including violence committed against civilians. The provision of high-quality military assistance, however, increases government forces' capability to engage combatants and thus eases the pressure on civilians. To test these theoretical expectations, I ran statistical analyses on a matched sample of government actors in the period 1989-2017. While the provision of external military assistance does not lead to more governments committing one-sided violence, those governments that already do tend to target civilians in greater numbers. This effect is particularly strong where local military capacity is low to begin with. The proportion of civilians targeted is smaller, the higher the quality of external military assistance. These findings show that first, third-party support affects dynamics of civilian victimisation and second, that the type of external military assistance provided matters.

The third paper, "Trading One Problem for Another? External Military Assistance and Rebels' Use of Terrorist Tactics in Civil Wars" shifted the focus to the combat strategies rebels choose in response to externally-backed government forces. I argued that external military assistance affects the relative balance of capabilities between warring parties and leads to the hardening of military targets. This incentivises rebel groups to not only rely on terrorist tactics more often, but to shift the focus to civilian rather than military targets in these attacks. I used various statistical models to estimate the effects of external military assistance from a matched sample of rebel actors in the period 1975-2017. While rebel groups that face externally-backed state forces do not turn to terrorism more often, those rebel groups that already commit terrorist violence escalate the number of attacks, especially if external military assistance to the government side stems from a democratic supporter. Rebel groups also target higher numbers of civilians and their property in these attacks. These results highlight the adverse consequences of external military

assistance and question the effectiveness of external military assistance as a counterterrorism tool, especially by democratic third parties.

External Military Assistance and the Balance of Capabilities

The findings from the three empirical analyses allow to draw more general conclusions about the relationship between external military assistance and the role of military capabilities in civil wars. Existing research stresses the role of the distribution of military capabilities for a range of conflict dynamics including violence against non-military targets by state and rebel forces (cf. Chapter 2). Most scholars suggest that militarily weaker actors are more likely to commit atrocities. Hence, this research has focused on the role of external support in manipulating the balance of power between warring parties.

The escalation of terrorist violence by rebel groups in response to externally-backed government forces fits well within this narrative (cf. Chapter 6). It points to the indirect impact of the provision of external military assistance on rebel violence through its effect on the balance of capabilities. Yet, results also stress that not all external support is equally as important for boosting government capabilities to fight an insurgency. Here, the impact of suitable equipment and expertise to fight an insurgency can be more decisive than the deployment of foreign troops to support government forces and, in turn, cause greater rebel weakness. Therefore, the balance of power between warring parties needs to be viewed not primarily in terms of the distribution of troops, but the availability of capabilities and resources relevant for a particular type of warfare, such as irregular warfare.

The arguments and empirical evidence put forward with regard to government-sponsored violence against civilians (cf. Chapter 5) further show that the impact of externally-provided resources on this balance is more complex than previously acknowledged. The violence-inducing effect of external military assistance varies for different levels of local military capacity. It can have

alarming effects where militaries are poorly-financed and -equipped in the first place, but next to no negative repercussions where military capability is already high.

As such, these findings are also compatible with the theory of violence against civilians as a "weapon of the weak." Normally, we would expect the influx of additional resources, such as external military assistance, to decrease rather than increase violence against civilians according to this theory. Yet, the countries with extremely low military capacity, where this relationship holds, may remain in a position of relative weakness even if external backing is provided.

The analysis further shows that external military assistance can effectively strengthen state armed forces and relegate violence against civilians to a weapon only the inferior opponent would use. This is only the case, however, if the quality of the assistance provided is sufficiently high. The ability of external military assistance to effectively alter the balance of power hence not only depends on the mere presence of external backing, but also characteristics of the support provided. If this is the case, simple net calculations of the presence or absence of external support on either side,[770] the number of supporters, [771] or even the quantity of support (e.g. number of troops) provided[772] can run short of offering reliable results on the effect of external support on the balance of power between warring parties.

The overall rare occurrence of coups presents its own puzzle from a balance of power perspective. Given the military power of the armed forces, what keeps the military from using it against the civilian component of the regime that does not command such resources? This "guardianship dilemma" has occupied generations of scholars.[773] The findings from this research speak to this debate in two ways.

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[770] Heger and Salehyan, 'Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict'.
[771] Aydin and Regan, 'Networks of Third-Party Interveners and Civil War Duration'.
[772] Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 'Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts'.
[773] McMahon and Slantchev, 'The Guardianship Dilemma: Regime Security through and from the Armed Forces', 297. See, for example, Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957); Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1968); Feaver, 'Civil-Military Relations'; Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson, *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil-Military Relations* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006).

The professionalisation of the armed forces and the strengthening of norms of civilian control over the military have largely eliminated the risk of military coup in most societies. For would-be coup plotters, the challenge is not achieving military superiority, but coordinating on a given outcome, i.e. replacing the leadership in a coup. While the provision of external military assistance may further reinforce the material power asymmetry that characterises relations between the military and the civilian regime, it is the increase in human capital and difficulty to punish trainees that increases coup risk. As findings on the difference between US and non-US support show, this is particularly the case where support is provided by prestigious militaries in long-term professional training. This points to the importance of viewing the intra-regime balance of power not solely in terms of material capabilities. For coup plotters, it is not access to material resources that restrains their ability to stage a coup, but the inability to coordinate on this outcome with a sufficient number of supporters. Here, external support such as certain types of military training can be decisive.

A second conclusion can be drawn with regard to the role the balance of power between warring parties plays for coup risk. Not only does the distribution of relative capabilities impact on the choice of violent strategies of warring parties, but it also shapes militaries' propensity to conduct a coup. Militarily inferior armed forces fighting a losing battle against an armed opposition are more likely to risk attempting a coup.[774] In this regard, staging a coup also presents a "weapon of the weak," albeit not with a view to the balance of power between the military and the civilian regime, but that between the military and the armed opposition. Hence, the balance of power between one set of actors (military and opposition) can impact on conflictive relations between another set of actors (military and civilian government). Technical training with the aim to alter the balance of power between warring parties is of particular note for this relationship.

[774] Bell and Sudduth, 'The Causes and Outcomes of Coup during Civil War'.

Besides these more immediate conclusions on the implications of external military assistance on the balance of capabilities and its implications for the occurrence of coups d'état, one-sided violence, and domestic terrorism, findings in this thesis allow for three broader take-aways:

Limited generalisability of United States Military Assistance. The United States is the most frequent external supporter, but by far not the only one. Yet, research on the consequences of external military assistance has disproportionately focused on the assistance the United States provides. The analysis on the determinants of coup risk has shown how this can lead to misleading assessments of the role of external military assistance on regime stability (cf. Chapter 4). Moreover, the empirical analyses of the causes of one-sided violence (cf. Chapter 5) and domestic terrorism (cf. Chapter 6) demonstrate that different groups of external supporters, such as more or less democratic or militarily sophisticated states, can impact on actors' adoption of violent strategies differently. Newly available data disaggregated to the individual supporter allows to test for this variation in the effects of external military assistance by different supporters.

Underestimated role of troop support. Previous work on external military assistance often neglects to control for the effect of simultaneous troop deployments. This does not only pose potential problems for inference, but it also misses out on an opportunity to compare the effects of external military assistance and troop support. Throughout the analyses conducted in this thesis, external troop support either reduces the potential for violence, e.g. one-sided violence and domestic terrorism (Chapters 5-6), or it has no discernible effect on actors' choice of violent strategies, e.g. coup attempts (Chapter 4). This suggests that the pivot towards more indirect forms of intervention not only produces unintended consequences on the ground, but that direct troop support might be able to avoid some of the pitfalls associated with it. The results from a recent RAND report support this conclusion finding that "even small numbers of troops can make a meaningful difference in conflict outcomes" without producing many of the side effects other types of interventions, such as air strikes or military assistance, entail, for example for conflict intensity,

duration, and recurrence.[775] Hence, the ability of foreign troop support to curtail violence against civilians and safeguard regime stability should not be dismissed too soon. Distinguishing between different types of troop support, such as small- and large-scale operations, special forces operations, or deployments of trainers might help shed further light on this connection.

Interconnectedness of violent strategies. Research on political violence is organised around different violent events, including interstate war, civil war, terrorism, coups, and riots. The empirical analyses in this thesis demonstrate how interlinked these phenomena are: Civil wars can trigger coups, government-perpetrated one-sided violence is referred to as state terror, and guerrilla warfare and terrorism can be almost indistinguishable from one another. In many cases, civil war presents the context during which other forms of political violence occur. Different manifestations of political violence can further present alternative violent strategies at actors' disposal. The decision to target opposition combatants or civilians presents as such a choice. This interconnectedness of violent behaviour requires to not only study the effect of external interference on the absolute levels of violence, but to consider any shifts in the relative distribution of different types of political violence. It also requires consideration being given to the scope conditions of these events.

The research presented in this thesis contributes to our understanding of external involvement in civil wars in several ways. Conceptually, I introduced external military assistance as a distinct form of external support and delineated it from other closely related forms of foreign interference such as security sector reform, arms trade, and biased military intervention. This conceptual work allowed me to then demonstrate the diverging effects of direct and indirect types of external support in three empirical applications.

The three papers further contribute to theories about the balance of capabilities in important ways. They do so mainly by demonstrating that the impact of external support on local

[775] Watts et al., *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations*, 124.

capabilities is more complex than previously acknowledged. I show how the impact of external military assistance depends on which capabilities already exist on the ground, and how meaningful the addition of external resources is in that context. Hypothesising the role of characteristics of the external supporter and the support they offer, I begin to disentangle the diverging effects of external military assistance where previous research has largely treated them as uniform.

The extensive data collection effort conducted as part of this thesis provides novel data on external support in the period 2010-2017 and a significant improvement of previously available data for the period 1975-2009. Taken together, this data presents the most up-to-date, fine-grained, and global dataset on external support currently available. The extension of the data allows to study the effects of military-to-military cooperation by actors worldwide during sizeable intervals of the Cold-War, post-Cold War, and post-9/11 period and hence a shift away from the preoccupation with Cold War dynamics.[776]

7.3 Limitations and Further Research

Although active civil war presents an important scope condition for the theoretical expectations of this thesis, it limits the generalisability of results beyond the context of a conflict environment. Coups, violence against civilians, and terrorist attacks occur both during periods of violence and relative peace. Bringing together the study of military assistance and these forms of violence during peace- and wartime presents unique conceptual and empirical challenges, however. Outside a conflict context, military support can take on even more different shapes and increases the demand for data on potential supporters and recipients drastically.

The inferences that can be drawn from this research are further limited by the availability and quality of data and the lack of directly observable counterfactuals. The reliance on hand-coded, largely news-based observational data introduces risk of systematic biases into the data. Here

[776] Grauer and Tierney, 'The Arsenal of Insurrection: Explaining Rising Support for Rebels'; Anderson, 'Competitive Intervention, Protracted Conflict, and the Global Prevalence of Civil War'.

utmost care has been taken to increase the transparency of the data-generation process and identify the direction of possible biases in the data. Although measures such as including time lags, matching observations, and correcting for trends in the data within panels or over time were taken to increase our confidence in the causal links of the discovered associations, the research design can only approximate the conditions of an experimental design.

The attempt to ensure the robustness of results independent of sample, model, and variable specification did not always produce clear-cut results. It should be noted, however, that set up as cross-country comparisons, the focus of the empirical analyses lies in explaining the occurrence of rare events such as coups, one-sided violence, and terrorist attacks, in the already comparably rare event of civil war. Looking for suitable matches of observations to allow for greater causal inference further prunes the sample size. This poses strong demands on the remaining data and makes it less likely to find spuriously significant relationships purely by virtue of a large sample size.[777] Any significant relationship that does emerge is hence worthy of our greater confidence.

Besides the thesis' valuable contribution to the study of external support and research on civil wars more broadly, it also highlights several issues that require further research. A number of promising research avenues open up when widening the types of supporters under consideration. For example, how does external military assistance by foreign states vary from the assistance provided by non-state supporters? Important advances have been made into studying support by non-state actors, however mostly with a focus on rebel-to-rebel cooperation.[778] When we look at the Syrian Civil War (2011-present), for example, we see the important role non-state actors such as Hezbollah take on in propping up state forces.[779] In addition, the support provided multilaterally,

[777] On the sensitivity of p-values in large sample sizes, see, for example, Deborah G. Mayo and Aris Spanos, 'Error Statistics', in *Philosophy of Statistics*, ed. Prasanta S. Bandyopadhyay and Malcolm R. Forster (Oxford: Elsevier, 2011), 153–98.
[778] Petrova, 'What Matters Is Who Supports You: Diaspora and Foreign States as External Supporters and Militants' Adoption of Nonviolence'; Moghadam and Wyss, 'The Political Power of Proxies'.
[779] Sahar Atrache, 'How Hezbollah Is Changing the War in Syria - and Vice Versa', *International Crisis Group*, 6 June 2014.

such as in EU training missions, warrants separate attention, as does the number of supporters and relations among them.[780]

Given the mitigating effect of troop support on different types of violence, future research is necessary to examine the relationship between external military assistance and troop support in greater detail. This includes both questions on how they interact on the ground, but also how frequently they occur together in the first place and what determines the provision of one over the other. As the literature review of this thesis (cf. Chapter 2) finds, research on policymakers' relative preference for different types of external support is still at the outset. This kind of research would not only contribute valuable insights into the perceived comparable advantages of different forms of intervention, but it would also improve the study of its consequences by exposing further potential selection effects.

Data limitations continue to present a major challenge to scientific enquiry in the field. Systematic and reliable data on external military assistance during periods of low conflict activity and data on the quantity of support would make the most notable change to the kinds of questions we can feasibly pose. Scholars have begun to create indicators for the anticipation of external support.[781] Fine-tuning them to capture different types of support may provide a solution to the limitations imposed by data. Identifying suitable instrumental variables may present another.[782] Recent attempts at automatically integrating conflict event data serve as an example of how the multitude of datasets on external support (cf. Chapter 3) could be leveraged to cross-check observations and make the uncertainty contained in the datasets more tangible.[783]

It is not only data on external support that is lacking, though. One of the major challenges for this research project was the lack of up-to-date, time-varying data on relative capabilities in

[780] Skeppström, Hull Wiklund, and Jonsson, 'European Union Training Missions: Security Sector Reform or Counter-Insurgency by Proxy?'; Gent, 'Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Interventions'.
[781] Cunningham, 'Preventing Civil War: How the Potential for International Intervention Can Deter Conflict Onset'; Jackson, San-Akca, and Maoz, 'International Support Networks and the Calculus of Uprising'.
[782] Dube and Naidu, 'Bases, Bullets and Ballots: The Effect of U.S. Military Aid on Political Conflict in Colombia'.
[783] Donnay et al., 'Integrating Conflict Event Data'.

conflicts involving non-state actors. Here, using multiple imputation to deal with missing values in control variables such as relative troop strength might present a way forward.[784] Currently, the combination of a lack of data on the quantities of external military assistance provided and the distribution of capabilities on the ground makes it difficult to fully assess the role of external support on the balance of power.

7.4 Policy Implications

Knowledge of the potentially unintended consequences of external military assistance is paramount for policymakers to assess its usefulness as a foreign policy tool. Therefore, implications from this research are of direct relevance to decisionmakers. These suggest that third parties with an interest in the stability of the regimes they support and the safety of civilians in countries affected by conflict, would be well-advised to focus their efforts on short-term, in-country technical training rather than more long-term, out-of-country professional training. While the former risks trainees building the human capital to successfully lead a coup, the latter equips local armed forces with the capabilities to target combatants rather than the civilian populations they suspect of collaborating with the opposition.

In addition, policymakers need to factor in conditions on the ground in any decision to provide external resources. In countries with very low military capability to begin with, and those where government and rebel forces already launch attacks at civilians—either in the form of one-sided violence or terrorist attacks—the adverse effects of external military assistance will be felt more strongly. In fact, prohibiting the provision of military assistance to countries where warring parties already commit one-sided violence or terrorism seems reasonable at first sight, considering these findings. Of course, this might in turn have the unintended consequence of incentivising rebels to commit terrorist violence to limit support to state forces. Further, curtailing support to

[784] Savage and Caverley, 'When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups'.

regimes with low military capacity and where rebels commit terrorist violence leaves those regimes that arguably need military support the most with least of it.

Findings on the diverging effects of external military assistance depending on the external supporter provide a possible solution to this dilemma: If external military assistance is provided to regimes with a record of violence against civilians, more high-quality assistance will at least provide higher chances of a shift away from civilians towards the battlefield. Where rebels use terrorist tactics, democratic states need to be careful about providing external military assistance to avoid further terrorist backlash against the civilian population. In these situations, encouraging states with less democratic regimes to provide external military assistance to conflict-countries may in fact make it more difficult for rebel groups to successfully leverage "the power to hurt."[785] This advantage needs to be carefully weighed against the possible negative consequences of autocracies' greater influence in civil wars, however. In states with the least developed military capacity, it might be more prudent to dispatch troops than to provide more hands-off military assistance.

All of that being said, the potential for external military assistance to do damage is still considerable. Even when taking into account that states potentially select into more violent conflicts where their help is most needed, the effect of external military assistance, on average, is still averse to the security of civilians and may contribute to autocratic leaders' grip on power. Any decision to provide external military assistance should thus not be taken lightly. Evaluations of the usefulness of such measures need to consider their implications for civil-military relations and the protection of civilians besides more immediate assessments of military effectiveness. Here, special attention needs to be paid to substitution effects between different types of violence and how they might distort the impact of external military assistance.

[785] Hultman, 'The Power to Hurt in Civil War: The Strategic Aim of RENAMO Violence', 821.

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