

November 13, 2023

Dear Kristy,

Thank you for revising and resubmitting your manuscript “Inefficient Concessions and Mediation” to the Quarterly Journal of Political Science. We have carefully read your memo and revision and based on our reading of the record and a consultation with a co-editor and a report by one of the original reviewer, we are happy to report that we have decided to accept your paper for publication in the QJPS, conditional on one last minor revision we describe below.

Your paper makes the case that concessions should be understood as a signaling device in the context of repeated interactions between belligerent to increase the credibility of collaboration being sustained over time and that inefficient concessions can actually favour information transmission, and we think that it will be a valuable contribution to the IR literature.

In your final revision, we would ask for a few remaining minor items to be addressed.

First, we would like you to be more precise in your discussion of Walter (1997) as per the referee’s concern, although we frame this consideration slightly differently. Walter’s (1997) main point is that disarmament constitutes a large shift in power away from the rebels, regardless of how their weapons are disposed of. The central issue isn’t inefficiencies arising from disarmament, but rather the commitment problem created when a government interacts with a rebel group that now lacks weapons; hence her emphasis on the importance of third-party mediation to mitigate the commitment problem. Other sources of inefficiency are secondary to this consideration. If you want to invoke Walter (1997), you should explain how inefficient concession can solve the commitment problem she identifies. Alternatively, you can look at other aspects of demobilization that are better understood as inefficient concession as the reviewer suggests.

Second, we would like you to label all theorems as propositions. Theorems are not for an applied theory paper.

We are attaching a copy of the QJPS Style Guidelines to this email. Please pay attention to our style requirements as you prepare your manuscript for the final submission.

NOW Publishers requires the sole or corresponding author to complete a License to Publish Agreement. Attached are two versions of the License to Publish form. The first is a plain .pdf that you can print, complete, scan and return to us via e-mail. The second is a fillable .pdf form that you can digitally sign and send back by clicking the submit button. This form must be completed before we can move into the copy edit phase.

Finally, all empirical work must be replicated by a QJPS Replication Assistant before it can be officially accepted for publication. What this means and requires is outlined in the QJPS Replication Guidelines that are also attached.

Thank you again for considering the QJPS for your best work and we look forward to seeing this paper in print!

Best,
Anthony, Jack, and Stephane

Reviewer's comment

I reviewed the new manuscript. I think improvements have been made. I think the authors do a better job explaining the results and positioning the paper in the context of public goods rather than just conflict. I recommend a "Conditional Accept," due to one lingering issue.

The lingering issue: the discussion of Walter (page 3) on disarming is somewhat off base. In Walter, it is less about the transfer of functioning weapons that create a power shift than about demobilizing/disarming leading to one side having a natural disadvantage. To this end, the "inefficient concession" of rebel groups giving the government disabled weaponry is off. There are many parts of demobilization and re-integration that could be inefficient: any sort of move from a political status quo to a new political system will have inefficiencies. I think this case could be improved by de-emphasizing the prospect of transferring disabled weapons and emphasizing other ways inefficient transfers could arise.