

CIVIL WARS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

BA Vertiefungsseminar, Winter Term 2021/22

Roman Krtsch

Monday, 10.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m., Room F429

December 1, 2022

1 Course description

After the end of the Cold War, civil wars have remained among the most pressing security-related issues in global politics. Accordingly, debates about the impact of policies aimed at managing intrastate armed conflicts have become increasingly salient among international actors, scholars, and the broader public. In this seminar, we will review the academic debate surrounding this development. In the first part, we will revisit theoretical explanations for the onset of civil wars and specifically discuss why some conflicts are more difficult to resolve than others. We will also familiarize with different instruments of international conflict management and assess empirical findings concerning the impact on civil war dynamics. The second part turns to the role of different actors: We will examine under which conditions actors, ranging from international and regional organizations over states to local and transnational groups intervene in violent conflicts. How do their roles and approaches differ, and when are certain actors particularly effective?

2 Learning objectives

Upon completion of the seminar, students shall (1) be enabled to conceptually locate and differentiate explanations on the emergence and outcomes of civil wars and conflict management, (2) be familiarized with the different approaches of conflict management across actor groups, and (3) be capable of applying the learned theoretical and methodological knowledge to concrete empirical cases and research projects.

3 Seminar format / Registration

- The seminar will take place in a presence format at the university campus, with only limited places available. **However, the first session will take place as a Zoom meeting in order to give all interested students the opportunity to participate ([link](#)).**
- Final course participants will be selected among all registered students. In order to be considered for the final selection, you need to **register for the course in ZEUS until 31 October!**
- The first week is open to all interested students. From week 2 on, only students that have been registered via ZEUS *and* admitted to the course can participate.

- If you have registered via ZEUS but were not admitted to the course, you cannot participate for now. However, you will be on the waiting list and can move up if a student that has been admitted to the course signs out. This means, if you have been admitted via ZEUS for the seminar but should decide you do not want to take the course, **please sign out via ZEUS as soon as possible in order to give your fellow students on the waiting list the chance to move up on the list!**

Course outline

Week	Date	Session topic
<i>Introduction: Civil wars and conflict management</i>		
1	25.10.2021	Introduction
	01.11.2021	No class (All Saints' Day)
2	08.11.2021	Civil war outbreak and termination
3	15.11.2021	International conflict management: Concepts and tools
4	22.11.2021	Measurement and empirical analysis of civil wars and conflict management
5	29.11.2021	The context of conflict management: Nature of the conflict and war dynamics
<i>Actors in conflict management</i>		
6	06.12.2021	Nation states
7	13.12.2021	International organizations
8	20.12.2021	Regional organizations
	24.12.2021—	Christmas break (no class)
	06.01.2022	
9	10.01.2022	Transnational actors and NGOs
10	17.01.2022	Local actors and civil society
<i>Student presentations / Conclusion</i>		
11	24.01.2022	Groups 1 and 2
12	31.01.2022	Groups 3 and 4
13	07.02.2022	Groups 5 and 6 (Wrap-up)

4 Course requirements

1. **Regular participation and preparation of the mandatory readings** (no grading, pass/fail): In order to complete the course, each participant needs to regularly participate in the seminar. The seminar will rely on classroom discussions. Therefore, a thorough preparation of the sessions' mandatory readings will be essential in order for the seminar to work.

2. **Group presentation of a research design** (30% of final grade): Each course member is required to participate in a group presentation on a topic related to the course content. In the presentation, students should outline the idea for an empirical research design. This means, it is not mandatory to present any actual results based on an empirical analysis. The focus should rather be on the question how a research problem *could* be addressed with available data/sources. The presentation can outline the idea for a qualitative or quantitative project, but it should contain at least the following: (1) Outline of the relevance and the research question, (2) theoretical argument backed by arguments/findings in the literature, (3) a description of the proposed methodological approach (What is the specific method you want to use? What is the sample/case and why do you use this sample/case in particular? Which data do you use? How do you operationalize your key variables?) The presentation should not be longer than **15 minutes**, and **slides must be sent to the lecturer in advance (at least Friday before presentation date)**.

Broader topic areas are listed below (alternative topics are welcome, but they need to be negotiated with the course instructor in advance):

- **Group 1:** Major power mediation in civil wars
- **Group 2:** Humanitarian military interventions
- **Group 3:** EU mediation in international conflicts
- **Group 4:** UN peacekeeping operations
- **Group 5:** 'Shaming' campaigns against war crimes
- **Group 6:** Traditional / local conflict resolution

3. **Seminar paper** (70% of final grade): The last course requirement consists of a written seminar paper that is due on **31 March 2022**). The paper *can* build on the presentation topic, but it must reflect each student's own, autonomous work (i.e. no co-authored papers). The paper can be a **research design paper**, should be around 3,500 – 5,000 words (incl. bibliography) and contain:

- Introduction (incl. research question and relevance)
- Literature review + theoretical argument
- Outline of research design
- Conclusion / Critical reflection

5 Reading list / Class topics

Session 1: Introduction

25.10.2021

Class topics:

- What is the content of the course?
- What are the course requirements?

No readings for the first session

Session 2: Civil war outbreak and termination

08.11.2021

Class topics:

- What are the determinants for the outbreak of civil wars?
- Which factors make it more/less likely that conflicts end?
- Why are some conflicts more difficult to resolve than others?

Mandatory readings:

Cederman, Lars-Erik and Manuel Vogt (2017). "Dynamics and Logics of Civil War". In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61.9, pp. 1992–2016.

Menninga, Elizabeth J and Alyssa K Prorok (2021). "Battles and Bargains: Escalation, Commitment, and Negotiations in Civil War". In: *International Studies Quarterly* 65.2, pp. 406–422.

Additional literature:

Cederman, Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch (2011). "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War. A Global Comparison". In: *American Political Science Review* 105.3, pp. 478–495.

Fearon, James D. (2004). "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?" In: *Journal of Peace Research* 41.3, pp. 275–301. JSTOR: 4149745.

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin (2003). "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War". In: *American Political Science Review* 97, pp. 75–90.

Kirschner, Shanna A. (2010). "Knowing Your Enemy. Information and Commitment Problems in Civil Wars". In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54.5, pp. 745–770.

Pettersson, Therése, Shawn Davies, Amber Deniz, Garoun Engström, Nanar Hawach, Stina Höglbladh, Margareta Sollenberg, and Magnus Öberg (2021). "Organized Violence 1989-2020, with a Special Emphasis on Syria". In: *Journal of Peace Research* Online First, pp. 1–17.

Session 3: International conflict management: Concepts and tools

15.11.2021

Class topics:

- What is international conflict management?

- How can we distinguish the term from related concepts such as *conflict resolution* or *peacebuilding*?
- What are common tools employed by international actors in order to *manage* armed intrastate conflicts?

Mandatory readings:

- Butler, Michael J. (2009). “Chapter 1: What Is International Conflict Management?” In: *International Conflict Management*. London/New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 13–26.
- Dixon, William J. (1996). “Third-Party Techniques for Preventing Conflict Escalation and Promoting Peaceful Settlement”. In: *International Organization* 50.4, pp. 653–681. JSTOR: 2704241.

Additional literature:

- Babbitt, Eileen F. (2009). “The Evolution of International Conflict Resolution: From Cold War to Peacebuilding”. In: *Negotiation Journal* 25.4, pp. 539–549.
- Blattman, Christopher and Edward Miguel (2010). “Civil War”. In: *Journal of Economic Literature* 48.1, pp. 3–57.
- Kriesberg, Louis (2007). “The Conflict Resolution Field. Origins, Growth, and Differentiation”. In: *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods & Techniques*. Ed. by I. William Zartman. Rev. ed. Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace, pp. 25–60.
- Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall (2005). “Chapter 1: Introduction to Conflict Resolution. Concepts and Definitions”. In: *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*. Cambridge/Malden, MA: Polity, pp. 3–31.
- Wallensteen, Peter and Isak Svensson (2014). “Talking Peace: International Mediation in Armed Conflicts”. In: *Journal of Peace Research* 51.2, pp. 315–327.
- Zartman, I. William, ed. (2007). *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods & Techniques*. Rev. ed. Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace.

Session 4: Measurement and empirical analysis of civil wars and international conflict management

22.11.2021

Class topics

- How do we measure central aspects of *civil wars* and *conflict management* such as the intensity of violence, involvement of third-party actors, or the settlement of conflicts?
- How can we assess the effectiveness of conflict management attempts?
- How can we set up an own research design in order to examine the impact of civil wars or conflict management strategies?

Mandatory readings:

- Gleditsch, Kristian Skrede, Nils W. Metternich, and Andrea Ruggeri (2014). “Data and Progress in Peace and Conflict Research”. In: *Journal of Peace Research* 51.2, pp. 301–3014.
- Melander, Erik, Frida Möller, and Magnus Öberg (2009). “Managing Intrastate Low-Intensity Armed Conflict 1993–2004: A New Dataset”. In: *International Interactions* 35.1, pp. 58–85.

Additional literature:

- Dembinski, Matthias, Thorsten Gromes, and Theresa Werner (2019). "Humanitarian Military Interventions: Conceptual Controversies and Their Consequences for Comparative Research". In: *International Peacekeeping* 26.5, pp. 605–629.
- DeRouen, Karl, Jacob Bercovitch, and Paulina Pospieszna (2011). "Introducing the Civil Wars Mediation (CWM) Dataset". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 48.5, pp. 663–672.
- Eck, Kristine (2012). "In Data We Trust? A Comparison of UCDP GED and ACLED Conflict Events Datasets". In: *Cooperation and Conflict* 47.1, pp. 124–141.
- Lundgren, Magnus (2016). "Conflict Management Capabilities of Peace-Brokering International Organizations, 1945–2010: A New Dataset". In: *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33.2, pp. 198–223.
- Sambanis, Nicholas (2004). "What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition". In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48.6, pp. 814–858.
- Weidmann, Nils B. (2016). "A Closer Look at Reporting Bias in Conflict Event Data". In: *American Journal of Political Science* 60.1, pp. 206–218.

Session 5: The context of conflict management. Nature and dynamics of the conflict

29.11.2021

Class topics

- Under which conditions is international mediation in civil wars particularly likely?
- Which factors related to the nature of the conflict are particularly salient?
- To which degree is the behavior and relationship of the belligerents important in order to understand why interventions sometimes occur, and sometimes not?

Mandatory readings:

- Hultquist, Philip (2013). "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 50.5, pp. 623–634.
- Melin, Molly M. and Isak Svensson (2009). "Incentives for Talking: Accepting Mediation in International and Civil Wars". In: *International Interactions* 35.3, pp. 249–271.

Additional literature:

- Clayton, Govinda (2013). "Relative Rebel Strength and the Onset and Outcome of Civil War Mediation". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 50.5, pp. 609–622.
- Greig, J. Michael (2015). "Nipping Them in the Bud: The Onset of Mediation in Low-intensity Civil Conflicts". In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59.2, pp. 336–361.
- Hinkkainen Elliott, Kaisa and Joakim Kreutz (2019). "Natural Resource Wars in the Shadow of the Future: Explaining Spatial Dynamics of Violence during Civil War". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 56.4, pp. 499–513.
- Keels, Eric and J Michael Greig (2019). "Reputation and the Occurrence and Success of Mediation in Civil Wars". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 56.3, pp. 410–424.
- Lundgren, Magnus and Isak Svensson (2020). "The Surprising Decline of International Mediation in Armed Conflicts". In: *Research and Politics*, pp. 1–7.

Ruhe, Constantin (2015). "Anticipating Mediated Talks: Predicting the Timing of Mediation with Disaggregated Conflict Dynamics". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 52.2, pp. 243–257.

Session 6: Nation states and conflict management

06.12.2021

Class topics

- Why do individual states intervene as third parties in civil wars?
- What forms of conflict management are states typically employing?
- Are there distinctive advantages and disadvantages of state interventions?

Mandatory readings:

Rost, Nicolas and J Michael Greig (2011). "Taking Matters into Their Own Hands: An Analysis of the Determinants of State-Conducted Peacekeeping in Civil Wars". In: *Journal of Peace Research* 48.2, pp. 171–184.

Svensson, Isak (2007). "Mediation with Muscles or Minds? Exploring Power Mediators and Pure Mediators in Civil Wars". In: *International Negotiation* 12, pp. 229–248.

Additional literature:

Favretto, Katja (2009). "Should Peacemakers Take Sides? Major Power Mediation, Coercion, and Bias". In: *The American Political Science Review* 103.2, pp. 248–263. JSTOR: 27798500.

Greig, Michael J. and Patrick M. Regan (2008). "When Do They Say Yes? An Analysis of the Willingness to Offer and Accept Mediation in Civil Wars". In: *International Studies Quarterly* 52.4, pp. 759–781.

Karlén, Niklas (2020). "Escalate to De-Escalate? External State Support and Governments' Willingness to Negotiate". In: *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, pp. 1–22.

Melin, Molly M. (2013). "When States Mediate". In: *Penn State Journal of Law and International Affairs* 2, p. 78.

Parlar Dal, Emel (2018). "Rising Powers in International Conflict Management: An Introduction". In: *Third World Quarterly* 39.12, pp. 2207–2221.

Svensson, Isak (2013). "Research on Bias in Mediation. Policy Implications". In: *Penn State Journal of Law and International Affairs* 2.1, pp. 17–26.

Session 7: International Organizations

13.12.2021

Class topics:

- Why do states decide to conduct conflict management through international organizations?
- What is the range of measures available to international organizations in order to intervene in civil wars? How effective are coercive measures such as sanctions or peacekeeping operations?
- What are distinctive advantages of IO mediation as opposed to mediation attempts led by individual nation states?

Mandatory readings:

- Abbott, Kenneth W. and Duncan Snidal (1998). "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations". In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42.1, pp. 3–32.
- Lundgren, Magnus (2017). "Which Type of International Organizations Can Settle Civil Wars?" In: *The Review of International Organizations* 12.4, pp. 613–641.

Additional literature:

- Clayton, Govinda and Han Dorussen (2021). "The Effectiveness of Mediation and Peacekeeping for Ending Conflict". In: *Journal of Peace Research*, p. 0022343321990076.
- Eriksson, Mikael and Peter Wallensteen (2015). "Targeted Sanctions and Ending Armed Conflicts. First Steps towards a New Research Agenda". In: *International Affairs* 91.6, pp. 1387–1398.
- Hatto, Ronald (2013). "From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding: The Evolution of the Role of the United Nations in Peace Operations". In: *International Review of the Red Cross* 95.891-892, pp. 495–515.
- Karlsrud, John (2015). "The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace-Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali". In: *Third World Quarterly* 36.1, pp. 40–54.
- Karreth, Johannes and Jaroslav Tir (2012). "International Institutions and Civil War Prevention". In: *Journal of Politics* 75.1, pp. 96–109.
- Lundgren, Magnus (2019). "Causal Mechanisms in Civil War Mediation: Evidence from Syria". In: *European Journal of International Relations*.
- Peck, Connie (2009). "United Nations Mediation Experience. Practical Lessons for Conflict Resolution". In: *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution*. Ed. by Jacob Bercovitch, Victor Kremenyuk, and I. William Zartman. London / Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 413–434.

Session 8: Regional Organizations

20.12.2021

Class topics:

- In which ways do regional organizations such as ECOWAS, the Arab League, or ASEAN intervene in civil wars?
- What are their specific roles? How are their actions embedded in conflict management strategies of global IOs?
- What are the advantages of interventions by *regional* as opposed to global *international* organizations – and what are possible problems?

Mandatory readings:

- Gartner, Scott Sigmund (2011). "Signs of Trouble: Regional Organization Mediation and Civil War Agreement Durability". In: *The Journal of Politics* 73.2, pp. 380–390.
- Sabrow, Sophia (2017). "Local Perceptions of the Legitimacy of Peace Operations by the UN, Regional Organizations and Individual States – a Case Study of the Mali Conflict". In: *International Peacekeeping* 24.1, pp. 159–186.

Additional literature:

- Barqueiro, Carla, Kate Seaman, and Katherine Teresa Towey (2016). "Regional Organizations and Responsibility to Protect: Normative Reframing or Normative Change?" In: *Politics and Governance* 4.3 (3), pp. 37–49.
- Brown, Davis (1997). "The Role of Regional Organizations in Stopping Civil Wars". In: *Air Force Law Review* 41, pp. 235–282.
- Cha, Kiho (2002). "Humanitarian Intervention by Regional Organizations under the Charter of the United Nations". In: *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 3.2, pp. 134–146.
- Elgstrom, Ole, Jacob Bercovitch, and Carl Skau (2003). "Regional Organisations and International Mediation: The Effectiveness of Insider Mediators". In: *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 3.1, pp. 11–27.
- Enuka, Chuka and Samuel Nwagbo (2016). "Regional International Organizations as Conflict Managers: The Limits and Capabilities". In: *African Research Review* 10.2 (2), pp. 16–30.
- Paliwal, Suyash (2010–2011). "The Primacy of Regional Organizations in International Peacekeeping: The African Example Note". In: *Virginia Journal of International Law* 51.1, pp. 185–230.

Session 9: Transnational actors and (I)NGOs

10.01.2022

Class topics:

- Which role do transnationally operating non-state actors like INGOs play in the context of conflict management?
- Which tools and strategies are at these actors' disposal in order to influence conflict dynamics?
- What are common challenges and problems related to the work of INGOs in conflict contexts?

Mandatory readings:

- Bell, Sam R., Amanda Murdie, Patricia Blocksome, and Kevin Brown (2013). "'Force Multipliers': Conditional Effectiveness of Military and INGO Human Security Interventions". In: *Journal of Human Rights* 12.4, pp. 397–422.
- Okumu, Wafula (2003). "Humanitarian International NGOs and African Conflicts". In: *International Peacekeeping* 10.1, pp. 120–137.

Additional literature:

- Abiew, Francis Kofi (2012). "Humanitarian Action under Fire: Reflections on the Role of NGOs in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations". In: *International Peacekeeping* 19.2, pp. 203–216.
- Bartoli, Andrea (2009). "NGOs and Conflict Resolution". In: *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution*. Ed. by Jacob Bercovitch, Victor Kremenyuk, and I. William Zartman. London / Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 392–412.
- Bell, Sam R., Patricia Blocksome, Kevin P. Brown, and Amanda Murdie (2019). "Help or Hindrance? The Role of Humanitarian Military Interventions in Human Security NGO Operations". In: *International Political Science Review* 40.2, pp. 263–278.
- Burgoon, Brian, Andrea Ruggeri, Willem Schudel, and Ram Manikkalingam (2015). "From Media Attention to Negotiated Peace: Human Rights Reporting and Civil War Duration". In: *International Interactions* 41.2, pp. 226–255.

- Murdie, Amanda (2014). "Scrambling for Contact: The Determinants of Inter-NGO Cooperation in Non-Western Countries". In: *The Review of International Organizations* 9.3, pp. 309–331.
- Schloms, Michael (2003). "Humanitarian NGOs in Peace Processes". In: *International Peacekeeping* 10.1, pp. 40–55.

Session 10: Local actors and civil society

17.01.2022

Class topics:

- In which way do local communities and civil society actors intervene in civil war dynamics?
- What are 'traditional' forms of conflict management employed by local actors?
- Under which conditions are local conflict management activities particularly effective?

Mandatory readings:

- Kaplan, Oliver (2017). "Chapter 5. How Civilian Organizations Affect Civil War Violence". In: *Resisting War. How Communities Protect Themselves*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 110–154.
- Menkhaus, Ken (2000). "Traditional Conflict Management in Contemporary Somalia". In: *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict "Medicine"*. Ed. by I. William Zartman. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, pp. 183–200.

Additional literature:

- De Juan, Alexander, Jan H. Pierskalla, and Johannes Vüllers (2015). "The Pacifying Effects of Local Religious Institutions: An Analysis of Communal Violence in Indonesia". In: *Political Research Quarterly* 68.2, pp. 211–224.
- Grubb, Amy E. (2019). "The Impact of Civil Action on Levels of Violence. Comparing Two Communities during Northern Ireland's Troubles". In: *Civil Action and the Dynamics of Violence*. Ed. by Deborah D. Avant, Marie E. Berry, Erica Chenoweth, Rachel A. Epstein, Cullen S. Hendrix, Oliver Ross Kaplan, and Timothy D. Sisk. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 123–146.
- Leventoglu, Bahar and Nils W. Metternich (2018). "Born Weak, Growing Strong. Anti-Government Protests as a Signal of Rebel Strength in the Context of Civil Wars". In: *American Journal of Political Science* 62.3, pp. 581–596.
- Vüllers, Johannes (2019). "Mobilization for Peace: Analyzing Religious Peace Activism". In: *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, p. 073889421987513.
- Zartman, I. William, ed. (2000). *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts. African Conflict 'Medicine'*. Boulder, CO / London: Lynne Rienner.
- Zürcher, Christoph (2019). "Nonviolent Communal Strategies in Insurgencies. Case Study on Afghanistan". In: *Civil Action and the Dynamics of Violence*. Ed. by Deborah D. Avant, Marie E. Berry, Erica Chenoweth, Rachel A. Epstein, Cullen S. Hendrix, Oliver Ross Kaplan, and Timothy D. Sisk. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 203–228.