Terminating Civil Wars: The Cases of Tajikistan and Cambodia

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Introduction

Civil wars are a dominant form of conflict in contemporary world and a matter of major international concern for policymakers and analysts alike. Civil wars are ferocious and often said to be difficult to end. Parties to this type of conflict tend to be strongly and at times recklessly committed to annihilating the other(s), without contemplating the slightest possibility of living side by side in a newly formed structure of joint governance. Therefore, it is frequently the case that they initially resist facing one another at the negotiating table, and once they begin negotiations, they come to resist making compromises for the sake of a settlement. As a consequence, terminating civil wars short of a complete military victory by one side is hard to achieve and, in worst cases, could take forever.¹

The civil wars in Tajikistan and Cambodia, like other conflicts of this kind, saw deep-seated mutual antagonism and mistrust among the parties, who showed stubborn resistance toward political accommodation through compromise. Also as in other civil wars, the processes of bringing an end to these conflicts involved many external actors, ranging from neighboring and distant states to the United Nations (UN) and other intergovernmental organizations. And importantly, unlike many other internal conflicts, Tajikistan and Cambodia are known as rather successful cases of international involvement in settling civil wars.

This paper seeks to examine the involvement of the international community in the Tajik and Cambodian peace processes. Being juxtaposed to each other, these two cases indeed provide us with the intriguing opportunity for comparative analysis. They certainly differ markedly in some respects. The Tajik conflict is one of the post-Cold War civil wars that broke out in the territories of the former Soviet Union, while the conflict in Cambodia is intrinsically a form of a proxy war typical of East-West confrontation of the Cold War era. The Tajik war is characterized by its relatively short duration (less than 5 years), while the Cambodian conflict lasted for about 20 years. In spite of these differences, peace processes in the two conflicts exhibited substantial similarities: a considerable degree of international involvement with the UN’s central role, as well as the fact that they were recorded as relative success, albeit hard-earned. With these similarities and differences in mind, the paper analyzes the two peace processes along the following lines of inquiry: (1) ripeness at the internal and external levels; (2) the roles of the UN; (3) the problem of coordination among third-party stakeholders; (4) agreement on the formula and spoiler management; and (5) the dilemma of settlement and resolution. Through this multi-faceted examination from the comparative perspective, the paper is intended to provide insights into the shared nature of the two peace processes and also their

unique attributes, with the ultimate aim of enhancing our understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the international community in terminating civil wars.

1. External and Internal Ripeness

Internal conflicts, by definition and thus at the core, are internal problems which arise within the boundary of a single state, involving domestic political and social forces vying for power and resources. But in most cases, they are not purely intrastate affairs but tend to have significant international dimensions characterized by the involvement of outside actors. Thus analytically, it is important to recognize that there are two dimensions to internal conflicts; domestic dynamics centering around the direct parties to the conflict and external ones added by outside stakeholders.

It is equally essential to note that these two dimensions interact with each other in the life cycle of conflict. In waging their conflict, the conflicting parties often obtain support from foreign governments and other external sources diplomatically, economically, or militarily. Such outside support may influence and at times have a decisive impact on the course of the conflict. In trying to settle the conflict, the parties are then assisted by some external stakeholders acting as mediators in the initiation and facilitation of negotiations. Mediators often seek to have their interests reflected in the negotiated outcome and indeed play a significant role in deciding when and how the conflict actually comes to an end. Hence there exists interconnectedness between internal and external dimensions in both pursuing the conflict and trying to end it.

The key to moving a conflict from violent confrontation to political negotiations is to capture ripe moments in its evolution. Internally, when conflicting parties reach a “mutually hurting stalemate,” the conflict becomes “ripe for resolution” with greater chances of successful negotiations. Externally, outside actors, particularly the parties’ patrons and sympathizers might also perceive the situation as a hurting stalemate for themselves, move to withdraw support for their clients in continuing the conflict, and persuade them to seek a negotiated settlement of it. It is particularly in this context that external stakeholders could play an important role as a mediator, utilizing leverage that derives from their patronage over the parties.

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and delivering the side to which they are partial. Importantly, hurting stalemates at the levels of the parties to the conflict and of external stakeholders may well be interrelated and actually reinforce each other; with the conflict ripen both internally and externally, the real shift from violent conflict to political accommodation would be set into motion.

Peace processes in Tajikistan and Cambodia were no exception to the above line of thought and practice, as there were, in both of them, inextricable links between internal and external dimensions. And the notion of external and internal ripeness would enable us to understand the opportunities and obstacles that existed in the Tajik and Cambodian peace processes.

1.1 Tajikistan

As in most internal conflicts, there were both internal and external dimensions to the Tajik civil war. Internally, the Rakhmonov regime and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) were principal parties to the conflict competing for control of the country. The conflict was also subject to the recurring pattern of externalization of internal conflict; both parties relied on various kinds of assistance from neighboring states in the region. The government side was supported by Russia most intensively and also by other Central Asian states to a lesser extent. The opposition side, especially its predominant Islamic component, was aided by Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (particularly the Rabbani-Masud faction).

All these external actors took part as observers in the inter-Tajik negotiations that got under way in April 1994 and played various mediation roles at different junctures in the negotiation process. Bearing in mind that any attempt to dissect social processes in terms of stages and turning points is inevitably an elusive endeavor, the major turning point in the Tajik negotiation process was, roughly speaking, the end of 1995 or the beginning of 1996, when the apparent shift occurred from a confrontational and winning mode to an accommodating and resolving one. Arguably, it was all but the time when the conflict began to ripen, both internally and externally.

Prior to that point, both Tajik sides harbored strong mutual distrust and were indeed far from convinced of the desirability and inevitability of power-sharing, which was the key to the settlement of the conflict, although they took some steps for accommodation. Such lack of ripeness at the internal level was certainly linked to a similar situation at the external level. Most importantly, Russia then believed in the prospect for military solution and was not yet seriously seeking a negotiated solution to the conflict. Russia was adamant in continuing to support the

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7 An initial exploration of this argument can be found in Yuji Uesugi, “United Nations Peacekeeping and the Nexus between Conflict Settlement and Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Case Study of UN Peacekeeping in Cyprus and Cambodia,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kent (2003).
Rakhmonov regime and helped it to resist making compromises on the issue of power-sharing with the opposition. The Tajik parties engaged in negotiations only half-heartedly, as long as they were able to keep counting on support from their external patrons.

But toward the end of 1995 or early 1996, the Tajik parties had started to lose confidence in a unilateral, military victory and to search slowly for a compromise, political solution, as both of them had exhausted their resources and become aware of the socio-economic plight of the country. The parties’ predicament was also compounded by the unsettling effects of the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan. With each side’s winning mentality and commitment worn down, they came to realize that they were in a mutually hurting stalemate. Again, the presence of internal ripeness was inextricably linked to that of external ripeness, especially on the part of the Russians. They eventually began to seek to resolve the conflict politically on the belief that a quick military victory was unlikely and a continuation of the war would prove very costly for them. Thus perceiving itself in a hurting stalemate, Moscow abandoned its policy aimed at winning the conflict and acted to push Rakhmonov for a settlement. Moreover, the takeover of Kabul by the Taliban in September 1996 convinced not only Russia but also Iran and the Central Asian states of the need to settle the Tajik conflict, which consolidated the broad perception of ripeness among the external stakeholders and thus galvanized their mediation efforts. Thus external and internal ripeness combined to produce a strong momentum for the negotiated settlement. Indeed, the Tajik parties had no viable policy alternative to becoming serious about pursuing a negotiated settlement, once their external patrons, especially Russia and Iran, moved to withdraw support for the unilateral policies on which they had been heavily dependent.

1.2 Cambodia

In the Cambodian peace process, its internal ripeness was inadequate in comparison to its external ripeness. Rapprochement between the United States and the Soviet Union, between the Soviet Union and China, and between China and Vietnam made it possible for the major external stakeholders to broker fundamental political deals over the Cambodian settlement. The

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end of the Cold War not only allowed the Soviets and the Americans to co-ordinate their policies on Indochina with their former enemies but also led the Soviets and Chinese to work together to withdraw their commitment in Indochina. This allowed all the permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5) to support the settlement of the Cambodian conflict.

Especially, the decision of China and Vietnam to terminate their support for their proxies had a significant effect on the conflict ripeness, both externally and internally. With the end of the Cold War and China’s determination to achieve rapid economic development, the Khmer Rouge began to appear to be an unwelcome burden.  

Seeking access to the world market, and appreciating the emergence of a less threatening and exhausted Vietnam, China was prepared to settle for peace. On the other hand, Vietnam, which played an important role both in the development and continuation of the Cambodian civil war, was faced with the significant decline of aid from its patron, the Soviet Union, upon the end of the Cold War. As a result, the Cambodian conflict became an obstacle to Vietnam’s economic development, a drain on Soviet supplied resources, and above all, a liability in Vietnam’s efforts to achieve better international standing and support. Thus, Vietnam was forced to reconsider its policy towards Cambodia and sought its way out from the Cambodian conflict. Seeking desperately to improve its international image that had been seriously damaged by its violent response at Tiananmen Square, China began to be increasingly interested in a political settlement of the Cambodian conflict in a way that would distance itself from the notorious Khmer Rouge. 

Likewise, other external stakeholders such as Thailand, the Soviet Union, and the United States began to recognize that the termination of the Cambodian conflict would serve their interests.

Faced with a cut in aid and increasing pressure to settle the conflict from their external stakeholders, the Cambodian factions signed the Paris Peace Accord in October 1991. Hence, the Cambodian peace process was a product of international pressure rather than national reconciliation. Although all factions realized that the existing coercive strategy was becoming less and less practical while a negotiated settlement was perceived to have become a more conceivable option, the two primary factions—Hun Sen’s State of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge—did not seem to seek seriously and honestly for the settlement of their conflict.

Despite the fact that Hun Sen lost a critical support from his biggest patron, Vietnam, he was still able to control most of the territory. In addition, the Cambodian state apparatus such as civil administration, military and police forces were all under his strict control.

On the other hand, the Khmer Rouge had a considerable armed element that was

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13 Ibid., 24.
strong enough to wreck the peace process. Although the Khmer Rouge had agreed with the cantonment and disarmament as stipulated in the Paris Peace Accord, participating in such activities without incurring a critical damage to the apparatus of Hun Sen’s State of Cambodia was framed as a concession to the other side. In fact, the Khmer Rouge accepted such terms in exchange for dismantling the State of Cambodia’s administrative structure that served as the source of Hun Sen’s power. However, for Hun Sen yielding control over its civil administration without disarming the Khmer Rouge guerrillas was perceived as a unilateral concession on its part. In other words, the Khmer Rouge regarded laying down its arms without dismantling Hun Sen’s State of Cambodia as defeat, while Hun Sen believed that handing over the crucial functions of its administration to UNTAC without disarming the Khmer Rouge forces was to endanger his dominance. As a result, the post-accord peace process faced a number of difficult challenges.

2. **The Roles of the UN**

In maintaining international peace and security, the UN has engaged in a wide range of efforts, which could be categorized into several kinds, based on their means and objectives, specific actors involved in those efforts, and their timing and sequence in the overall context of a peace process. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the former UN Secretary-General, has provided the authoritative categorization and definitions of each effort:

- **Preventive Diplomacy** is intended to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to curb the spread of conflicts once they occur.
- **Peacemaking** is aimed at bringing conflicting parties to agreement, mainly through peaceful means envisaged in Chapter VI of the UN Charter.
- **Peacekeeping** is designed to implement and monitor ceasefires, separation of forces, or other arrangements aimed at controlling conflicts and to protect the delivery of humanitarian aid.
- **Peace-enforcement** is action taken under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, including the use of force, to maintain or restore international peace and security when the Security Council decides that a certain situation constitutes a threat to or a breach of peace, or act of aggression.
- **Peacebuilding** is a range of post-conflict efforts at preventing recurrence of conflict by
solidifying peace and building trust among former adversaries.\textsuperscript{16}

More specifically, preventive diplomacy involves measures to reduce the potential for the outbreak of violent conflicts and enhance the chances of peaceful settlement, ranging from confidence-building and fact-finding to early warning and preventive deployment of UN-sanctioned military forces. Peacemaking is a diplomatic and political effort aimed at helping parties to reach agreement by means of negotiation and mediation. The positive outcome of peacemaking in the form of a settlement of the conflict or at minimum a ceasefire agreement would open the way to launching peacekeeping. In case of unsuccessful peacemaking, peace-enforcement may be pursued; it is a military activity by heavily armed forces to eliminate a threat to peace, to forestall a breach of peace or to end the acts of aggressions. Peacebuilding involves a wide range of socio-economic and humanitarian activities aimed at consolidating the foundations of durable peace, which are normally undertaken by the UN’s specialized agencies in collaboration with international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

While this categorization of UN peace efforts serves a useful conceptual purpose, the UN involvement in a conflict situation tends to vary considerably in practice from case to case, and at times it does not lend itself to sweeping generalization and clear-cut differentiation. Thus with such difficulty in mind, the following is an attempt to make a brief analysis of UN roles in the Tajik and Cambodian peace processes, using the above categorization as a referent.

\textbf{2.1 Tajikistan}

With regard to the Tajik conflict, the UN’s efforts at conflict prevention or preventive diplomacy were rather limited in scale and efficacy. After sending fact-finding missions to Tajikistan in late 1992, the UN established the UN Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) as a small political mission in January 1993. At this early stage, the UN rather confined itself to encouraging and supporting regional peace efforts made by Russia and Tajikistan’s Central Asian neighbors.\textsuperscript{17}

Past the peak of fighting in the spring of 1993, the UN began to play a more active and visible part in trying to bring about negotiations between the Tajik sides. Peacemaking efforts by the UN special envoys then involved making initial contacts with both sides, sounding them out


on the willingness to enter negotiation under UN auspices, and encouraging and securing their commitment to the talks.\textsuperscript{18} During the course of the inter-Tajik negotiations that lasted from April 1994 to June 1997 when the final peace agreement was signed, the successive special envoys and representatives continued to act as a principal facilitator, chairing the rounds of talks and providing good offices to the conflicting parties. The UN mediators also offered ideas about possible solutions to the conflict by drafting the initial texts of agreements for subsequent deliberations and modifications by the Tajik parties. Through the sponsorship of the negotiations, the UN assumed a lead role in coordinating the peace process.\textsuperscript{19} (The detailed discussion of the UN’s coordinator role will be provided in the following section.)

In the area of peacekeeping, the UN developed a division of labor with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It was largely in line with what Boutros Boutros-Ghali described in 1995 as a “new division of labor between the UN and regional organizations, under which the regional organization carries the main burden but a small UN operation supports it and verifies that it is functioning in a manner consistent with positions adopted by the Security Council.”\textsuperscript{20} This idea of the UN subcontracting peacekeeping to regional organizations was applied to Tajikistan, where a substantial part was played by the CIS Collective Peacekeeping Forces drawn from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, as well as by Russian border forces.\textsuperscript{21} And the UNMOT, composed of a much smaller number of military observers, was deployed alongside these forces and fulfilled a supporting role.\textsuperscript{22}

In terms of the aforementioned categorization of peace efforts, while the UNMOT was a traditional peacekeeping operation, the CIS’s “peacekeeping” activities were distinct from traditional UN peacekeeping especially in that their use of force was not limited to self-defense and what could be described as the “use of force of short of war.”\textsuperscript{23} Neither were the CIS peacekeeping forces a peace-enforcement operation as defined above, as they were not given an official mandate by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Indeed Russia, the main contributor of troops, lobbied in vain for such authorization in the hope that it would help to legitimize and finance the CIS’s activities.\textsuperscript{24} Despite some tensions and difficulties, the


\textsuperscript{19} For details on the UN involvement, see Goryayev, “Architecture of International Involvement”; and Elena Rigacci Hay, “Methodology of the Inter-Tajik Negotiation Process,” in Politics of Compromise, ed. Abdullaev and Barnes, 38–43. See also successive UNSG reports.


\textsuperscript{21} For details on the size and structure of these forces, see Lynch, Russian Peacekeeping Strategies, 154.

\textsuperscript{22} For basic information on UNMOT, see UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UNMOT Facts and Figures, at www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unmot/UnmotF.html.

\textsuperscript{23} Lynch, Russian Peacekeeping Strategies, 24–27; and Jonson, The Tajik War, 12–17.

UNMOT and the CIS/Russian forces, by and large, worked together effectively in order to maintain the ceasefire between the Tajik warring parties.\(^{25}\)

Tajikistan formally came into a post-conflict phase with the conclusion of the General Agreement in June 1997. To date it has been faced with a whole set of challenges typically associated with post-conflict peacebuilding: national reconstruction, economic recovery, poverty alleviation, good governance, the rule of law, civil society, and democratization, among others. The UN Tajikistan Office of Peace-Building (UNTOP) has been put in place to facilitate and coordinate the activities of UN specialized agencies and international financial institutions working in such a broad range of issue areas. The UNTOP has also tried to liaise and cooperate with donor countries, and development and humanitarian NGOs.\(^{26}\)

### 2.2 Cambodia

The UN played a major intermediary role in the Cambodian peace process. In particular, it assumed a significant role in implementing the externally expedient agreements by sending a multidimensional peacekeeping operation called the UN Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

For example, the UN supervised the overarching transition process from armed struggle to a conflict settlement. In the negotiation process, which resulted in the Paris Peace Accord, the UN Security Council played a pivotal role by providing a forum in which contradicting interests of major external stakeholders have been leveled. Judging from the successive resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council in 1992, the UN helped to maintain sufficient support from the international community and took appropriate actions.

In the implementation phase of the peace agreement, the UN sent its peacekeeping operation to assist the parties to implement the peace agreement. While the Supreme National Council (SNC) was set up by the representatives of the four factions to serve as the “unique legitimate body and source of authority in which, throughout the transitional period, the sovereignty, independence and unity of Cambodia are enshrined,” UNTAC was to run the country for a period of eighteen months through controlling and supervising crucial aspects of Cambodia’s civil administration.\(^{27}\) In fact, UNTAC was one of the first series of multidimensional peacekeeping, entrusted with multiple tasks required in transition from civil war to peace settlement. Besides having a large military component, UNTAC had six civilian components: (1) electoral; (2) repatriation; (3) rehabilitation and reconstruction; (4) human rights; (5) civilian police; and (6) government administrative supervision. By orchestrating a wide range of tasks related to transitional assistance, UNTAC served as an agent for not only

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\(^{26}\) On UNTOP, see http://www.untj.org.

\(^{27}\) UN Document (S/23613, 19 February 1992).
conflict settlement but also conflict resolution.

3. Coordination among Third Parties

It has widely been observed in contemporary peace processes that a myriad of third-party actors of various kinds, including states, international and regional intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, are involved with different interests, roles and objectives. Such proliferation of third-party interveners tends to have had significant effects on the overall effectiveness of the peace processes, especially in the sense that the presence or absence of adequate coordination among them is often the key to the fate of international peace efforts.\(^\text{28}\)

Some hard lessons in this regard have been learned from post-Cold War conflicts such as the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Somalia, among others, where the weakness or lack of coordination among the multiple third parties involved worked to undermine peace processes.\(^\text{29}\)

Tajikistan and Cambodia, in contrast, stand out as a case of success—relative success at least—in ensuring coordinated third-party actions with a view to bringing an end to civil wars.

In both Tajik and Cambodian cases, the UN played a lead role in coordination. Indeed, some authors have underscored the importance of a major actor taking the initiative in coordinating third-party efforts. Drawing on experiences in Macedonia, the Congo, and Burundi, among others, Michael Lund argues that such coordination may well be strengthened by “the presence of an individual diplomat, other single player, or small, united group that, backed by a major power or organization, takes charge and orchestrates a unified…strategy.”\(^\text{30}\)

Bruce Jones presents a more concrete argument, maintaining that special representatives of the UN Secretary-General or other possible lead mediators could play a coordinator role effectively by utilizing “coordination mechanisms” such as “friends groups,” in which to bring together significant third-party stakeholders, harmonize their divergent interests and formulate a common strategy, and garner political support from them.\(^\text{31}\)

Why and how is it that relatively good coordination was seen in peace processes in Tajikistan and Cambodia? What roles did the UN play in ensuring such coordination? We shall


\(^{29}\) On the lessons from the Yugoslav and Rwandan conflicts, see, for example, Saadia Touval, *Mediation in the Yugoslav Wars: The Critical Years, 1990-95* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Press, 2002); and Bruce D. Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda: The Dynamics of Failure* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2001), respectively.


3.1 Tajikistan

In trying to settle the conflict in Tajikistan, many external actors were involved as mediators and demonstrated a remarkable degree of cooperation and coordination. Russia and Tajikistan’s four neighbors in Central Asia, as well as Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan participated as observers in the peace negotiations between the Tajik sides. The UN sponsored the negotiations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)—formerly the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)—took part in them in an observer capacity. And the unofficial dialogue that took place within the framework of the Dartmouth Conference (a US-Soviet/Russian dialogue at the citizen level that started during the Cold War) was not a direct participant in the official negotiations but was an important private actor in the wider peace process. These states, international and regional organizations, and the NGO interacted with each other rather cooperatively and jointly contributed to moving the parties toward the settlement.

It was indeed the UN that served as a “coordinator of the peace process,” the primary third-party actor designing international peacemaking efforts in Tajikistan. Entrusted with the unambiguous mandate from the Security Council, the UN was able to exercise leadership in the peace process by sponsoring the inter-Tajik negotiations. The centrality of the UN’s coordinator role was recognized not only by the parties to the conflict but also by all major external actors. In point of fact, the UN reached an informal agreement with the OSCE at the early stage of the peace process that it would take the lead in coordinating the negotiations. Such an arrangement between the two potential candidates for a lead international coordinator was of particular importance for the establishment of the UN as such. It helped the UN and OSCE to avoid a situation in which potential rivalry and misunderstanding between them might undercut the credibility and effectiveness of the overall peace process.  

The observer states accepted the UN’s leadership role, mainly because they attached great importance to the organization’s genuine impartiality and international legitimacy as well as the unique role that such distinctive characteristics would enable it to play in peacemaking efforts. The UN mediators, for their part, well recognized “the need for constructive integration of countries in the region into its peacemaking efforts” and created what Jones calls a “coordination mechanism” in order to formulate and pursue a coherent peacemaking strategy under changing conditions and enlist political support from other third parties. In so doing, the UN mediation team succeeded in nurturing a “sense of ownership” over the negotiation process.

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33 Ibid., 34.
among the observer states, which made them remain committed to the process especially in times of crises and held them responsible for its outcome.

Also, it is noteworthy that the success in securing the political backing of the Security Council led to the greater authority and efficacy of the UN as a lead coordinator of the peace process. By regularly reporting via the Secretary-General to the Security Council, his special envoys and representatives made efforts at keeping key member states informed of developments in the UN-sponsored negotiation process in Tajikistan and politically committed to its success.

In short, the well-established, effective role of the UN as a coordinator of the peace process prevented the multiplication of peacemaking efforts by different third parties and competition among them, and facilitated the relatively early conclusion of a peace agreement.

3.2 Cambodia

First of all, the UN was given “all powers necessary” to ensure the implementation of the Paris Peace Accords by a UN Security Council resolution. The P5 members—the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France and the UK—played a critical and proactive role in the discussions in the international arena, applying enormous international pressure to the parties in Cambodia to opt for peaceful settlement of the Cambodian civil war.

Furthermore, the UN Security Council members and other stakeholders formed a core group, which led policy coordination at the international level in the Cambodian peace process. The core group served as a back channel through which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General could communicate directly with the UN Security Council. It contributed to keeping the external players informed about the challenges with which UNTAC was faced and thereby helping them to provide timely and adequate support for UNTAC’s activities. It also enhanced the possibilities for coordination among the interested external players, ensuring that all were working for the same purposes and allowing them to pursue a division of labor that facilitated their concerted efforts.

While the core group provided a framework for international coordination, the UNTAC served as a platform for various inter-agency coordination efforts on the ground. UNTAC was expected to act not only as a conventional peacekeeping force but also as an

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36 For a fuller discussion of the problem of coordination in the Tajik peace process, see Tetsuro Iji, “Cooperation, Coordination and Complementarity in International Peacemaking: The Tajikistan Experience,” *International Peacekeeping* 12, no. 2 (summer 2005): 189–204.
38 Doyle, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia*, 81.
39 Ibid.
interface between peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General had authority over all components including the military component and was authorized to act as the overall coordinator of the peace process in Cambodia.\(^{40}\)

Following the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, the tasks and responsibility previously assumed by the UN Border Relief Operation, which had coordinated all humanitarian activities at the Thai-Cambodian border and through which most NGOs working for the refugee camps had been contracted, were transferred to UNHCR. The repatriation component of UNTAC was given a mandate to work with UNHCR in repatriation of the refugees and their resettlement, which allowed UNHCR to coordinate its effort more effectively with other organizations responsible for the election and demining. In particular, cooperation between UNHCR and UNTAC’s military and Civilian Police components helped to make repatriation a success.\(^{41}\) UNHCR’s activities were well coordinated with the overall objective of UNTAC’s mission; it served as an important link between UNTAC and other UN agencies working in Cambodia such as UNDP, UNICEF and WFP, as well as between UNTAC and NGOs working in the field.

According to the Paris Peace Accords, tasks related to planning and coordinating various international efforts towards the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-torn countries were given to UNTAC.\(^{42}\) UNTAC coordinated bilateral aid activities of the donor countries by establishing the Donor Consultative Group (DCG), composed of UNTAC rehabilitation component staff, representatives of the international financial community, diplomats from the major donor countries, three NGO representatives and Cambodian representatives from the SNC.\(^{43}\) The DCG was held monthly in Phnom Penh for review of the general aid situation and their specific aid programs.\(^{44}\) In fact, UNTAC was expected to be responsible for coordinating the delivery of aid. Nevertheless, this function encountered a number of obstacles. As most of the rehabilitation and development activities were concentrated in areas around Phnom Penh (controlled by the State of Cambodia), the Khmer Rouge began to block the approval of rehabilitation projects in the SNC, which made donors circumvent the formal procedures, appealing directly to Sihanouk for project proposal.\(^{45}\) As a result, most of the multilateral and bilateral assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Cambodia was negotiated by donor agencies directly and exclusively with the State of Cambodia’s

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\(^{42}\) Ibid., 47.


\(^{44}\) Heininger, *Peacekeeping in Transition*, 57.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., 58.
administration, leaving out the other three factions and bypassing coordination of UNTAC.\textsuperscript{46}

\section*{4. Formula and Spoiler}

Peace processes eventually must lead to an agreement on a formula that shifts a conflict back to normal politics. The major element of intractability of internal conflicts, thus the central challenge of pursuing peace in their setting, lies in the inherent need for former adversaries to establish a new structure of political coexistence. The key task of negotiators and mediators is to search for a formula that would satisfy such a need in a way acceptable to both sides.\textsuperscript{47} This is often hard to accomplish because of the parties’ commitment to winning their conflicts at the expense of the others and their reluctance to make compromises for the sake of a settlement.

Not only does the formula for settlement need to be accepted by the parties to a conflict, but it also needs to be endorsed by important external stakeholders, particularly their patrons. The formula ought to be designed so that it could accommodate the patron’s core interests and justify their past intervention in the conflict. In sum, a workable formula must meet these dual requirements arising from internal and external dynamics of conflict.

While some parties come to agreement on a specific formula for power-sharing from which they believe they could obtain benefits, some others may become left out of the formula or relegated to the sidelines of it with their interests slighted or unheeded.\textsuperscript{48} And externally, some mediators become actively involved in finding and endorsing the formula—a formula favorable to their own interests, some other outside actors get marginalized in or excluded from the mediation process and are eventually left with no choice but to accept the undesirable outcome. Inclusion and exclusion (or marginalization) is inherently part of politics surrounding the search for the formula.

There is a possibility that the excluded or marginalized parties might act as “spoilers,” obstructing or discrediting the negotiation process.\textsuperscript{49} Similarly, some disgruntled external parties may become “spoiler-mediators,” getting in the way of mediation efforts geared toward a specific outcome.\textsuperscript{50} The building and broadening of a coalition of negotiating and mediating parties can serve to isolate these potential spoilers in the peace process and could prevent them from creating disincentives to the settlement process.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 59.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{51} Chester A. Crocker, “Peacemaking in Southern Africa: The Namibia-Angola Settlement of 1988,” in...
Indeed, ending the conflict in a way that would satisfy major warring parties and external stakeholders while managing possible spoilers was a major hurdle in Tajikistan and Cambodia. Below are discussions of why and how it became possible to overcome that in both cases.

4.1 Tajikistan

In the Tajik conflict, where the UTO initially sought to replace the Kulyabi-dominated government, not only the Tajik sides themselves but also major third parties ultimately came to accept power-sharing between the two sides as a legitimate form of governance to be reconstructed in the country, that is, the formula for settlement of the conflict.

Russia was initially intent on consolidating the Rakhmonov regime and eliminating the opposition militarily but eventually began to seek to settle the conflict politically as a result of the reassessment of policy priorities in view of the changed local situation. \(^5^2\) Iran, for its part, never went too far in supporting the Islamic opposition based on realistic policy calculations and instead tried to act as a peacemaker from the relatively early stage. \(^5^3\) It turned out that these two chief patrons of the parties to the conflict found themselves engaged in joint mediation aimed at promoting the power-sharing formula between the two sides.

Other concerned states also supported the mediation process for geopolitical, ethnic and religious interests that were rather disparate though partly overlapped. Proximate powers in Central Asia shared concern over the destabilizing effects of the Tajik conflict on their own regimes and societies and hoped for its termination. The need for stabilization in Tajikistan was equally felt by the Rabbani-Masud faction in Afghanistan whose existence was at risk and by Pakistan that was also preoccupied with the fluid situation in that country. All these states were generally supportive of the settlement based on the Kulyabi-UTO formula, although Uzbekistan apparently remained disgruntled over it. \(^5^4\)

And in setting its mandate as mediating between the two major conflicting parties, the UN promoted and legitimized the same terms of settlement, which other interveners such as the OSCE, CIS, and the unofficial dialogue never challenged seriously. Given such a general consensus on the terms of settlement, the UN was able to effectively exercise its coordinating functions as discussed in the preceding section.

Here the role of Uzbekistan warrants special attention. Although Uzbekistan was certainly part of the consensus on the need to end the conflict, it had reservations about setting as a negotiated outcome the power-sharing formula between the Kulyabis and UTO at the

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\(^{52}\) On the Russian policy change toward the Tajik conflict, Jonson, *The Tajik War*.

\(^{53}\) See, for example, Akiner, *Tajikistan*, 49.

\(^{54}\) Mesbahi, “Tajikistan, Iran, and the International Politics of the ‘Islamic Factor’,” 146; and Abdullaev and Barnes, *Politics of Compromise*, 92–93.
expense of the Leninabadis. Indeed, Uzbekistan apparently found it uncomfortable to be “herded” or “coordinated” by UN mediators at several junctures in the negotiation process. Then why didn’t Uzbekistan try to seriously undermine the Kulyabi-UTO formula and derail the peace process? What kept this potentially important but rather dissatisfied actor from turning itself into a spoiler-mediator?

The key to the management of potential spoilers in the Tajik case was consensus building and establishment of a coalition among mediators. The building of a broad consensus among the majority of relevant mediators around ending a conflict according to a certain formula legitimizes that formula, discourages dissent, and isolates and marginalizes disgruntled actors. In the Tajik mediation, a large mediating coalition was formed in support of the Kulyabi-UTO formula, with Russia and Iran, the major leverage-holders in relation with the Tajik warring parties, and the UN, a lead coordinator, constituting the core of the international consensus. This legitimized that formula as a negotiated outcome and effectively contained the objections of Uzbekistan and its Tajik client, the Leninabadis. It is in this context that the notion of ripeness discussed earlier comes into play. The perception of external ripeness sharpened by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan consolidated the consensus on the need to settle the Tajik conflict and also on the formula, which in turn contributed to spoiler management. And no less important, the Taliban factor also worked on Uzbekistan, a potential spoiler itself.

4.2 Cambodia

In the case of the Cambodian peace process, three complementary formulas—the Paris Peace Accords, the SNC, and UNTAC—maintained such a complex process. The P5 began a series of high-level consultations in New York and Paris, and produced a document that set out the principles for working to resolve the Cambodian conflict.\(^{55}\) This resulted in a breakthrough agreement on a framework for a comprehensive political settlement in which the responsibility of the UN in supervising and controlling the activities of the existing administrative structure during a transitional period was stipulated as a way to overcome the two primary stumbling blocks in the peacemaking process: power-sharing arrangement and the treatment of the Khmer Rouge.\(^{56}\) As for the power-sharing arrangement among the four Cambodian factions, envisaged in the P5 framework was the creation of the SNC that would embody the sovereignty of Cambodia during the transitional period. The Khmer Rouge was granted a formal standing in the SNC and its fate in an interim government was to be decided through UN-managed elections. This four-party power-sharing formula negotiated amongst the P5 served as a basis for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, namely, the Paris Peace Accord.\(^{57}\) The creation of the

\(^{55}\) UN Document (S/21087, 18 January 1990).


SNC facilitated the peace process as it provided a doable formula (medium for face-to-face negotiation) in which the Cambodian factions negotiate the terms of agreement among themselves before the transitional period. All Cambodian parties agreed on the terms of a ceasefire, the disarming of the factions, maintenance of law and order, the repatriation of refugees, and the supervision and control of certain aspects of the administrative machinery by a UN body (that is, UNTAC).

UNTAC was established to supervise the implementation of the Paris Peace Accords.

While Hun Sen, Vietnam and the United States had the irresistible temptation to eliminate the internationally notorious Khmer Rouge from the “legitimate” peace process, the drafters of the Paris Peace Accords arrived at a conclusion that unless the Khmer Rouge was included in the peace process as a legitimate party, it would act as a spoiler. It was understood that the Khmer Rouge was too militarily powerful to be left out. In other words, the four-party formula brought a halt to a protracted civil war in Cambodia and launched the peace process.

The leaders of the Khmer Rouge perceived that the UN-supervised settlement was the best option available for them to dismantle the Hun Sen regime and to replace it with an administration made up of all four factions, thus returning a share of state power and legitimacy back to them. By putting itself under the Paris Peace Accords, the Khmer Rouge sought to gain international recognition and support, which would otherwise have been impossible to get due to the “genocide” which was committed during the Pol Pot regime. On the other hand, Hun Sen, who was then perceived as possessing much of the control over the country, found that the UN-supervised settlement would provide them with international recognition, allow the flow of international aid, and marginalize the Khmer Rouge legitimately. Thus, the Khmer Rouge turned into a spoiler when it realized that the UN-supervised settlement would not dismantle the Hun Sen regime. Also, Hun Sen’s State of Cambodia became a spoiler as soon as it found that the result of the UN-supervised election did not bring international recognition, but rather it damaged the foundation of its domestic legitimacy. Not only did the Khmer Rouge drop out from the electoral process, but it also fired on UNTAC helicopters, detained UNTAC personnel, and even ambushed a convoy of UNTAC resulting in casualties among UNTAC personnel. Faced with such resistance from the Khmer Rouge, UNTAC realized that it could not incorporate the Khmer Rouge into the election, and thus what became an issue of major concern was now how to prevent the election from being wrecked by the threats and attacks from the Khmer Rouge.

Despite the fact that the Khmer Rouge and the State of Cambodia acted as spoilers, several factors contributed to saving the peace process. First, the strong determination of Prince

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58 Doyle, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia*, 25.
61 Ashley, “Between War and Peace,” 20.
Ranariddh (the Head of the FUNCINPEC party), Son Sann (the Head of the KPNLF party) and Prince Sihanouk to carry out the election prevented the peace process from collapsing in the face of harassment by the Khmer Rouge and Hun Sen. Second, the fact that the State of Cambodia, while acting partially as a spoiler, did not deny the electoral process itself as the mechanism by which to carry out the power struggle also prevented it from falling apart completely.

5. Settlement or Resolution

With regard to theoretical and practical approaches to the issues of conflict and peace, scholars and practitioners have often been divided between the two broad orientations: conflict settlement (or management) and conflict resolution (or transformation). Stated most simply, conflict settlement is an approach aimed at the reduction of major violence through negotiation and compromise over specific contentious issues, while conflict resolution refers to efforts at transforming the parties’ relationship and eliminating the underlining causes of conflict through mutual understanding and problem-solving.⁶²

What are pros and cons of each approach? The primary value of the conflict settlement approach lies in that it can provide an effective and immediate solution to violent conflicts by mitigating or terminating them. But it has been subject to the criticism that this approach seeks to only deal with the parties’ superficial interests and positions and their manifest behaviors, without adequately addressing their underling needs and adversarial relationships. Thus opponents of the settlement approach argue that its superficiality is most likely to lead to temporary efficacy.⁶³ Indeed, overt hostilities between the adversaries may be put under control with a ceasefire agreement and a peacekeeping force in place (according to the settlement approach), but it does not mean that the conflict moves closer to a fundamental solution or resolution. Rather, the conflict becomes more intractable.⁶⁴

The conflict resolution approach, in contrast, puts an emphasis on a search for a durable and self-sustaining solution by addressing the fundamental causes of violent conflict and establishing cooperative and peaceful relationships. From the perspective of the proponents of the conflict settlement approach, such claims are often seen as too optimistic and impractical.


In real conflict situations fraught with a great deal of complexity and contradictions, the conflict resolution approach is difficult to adopt and frequently fails to produce results.65 Against a backdrop of such a dichotomy, there repeatedly occurs a dilemma between these two in actual peace processes; giving priority to settling the conflict by firmly establishing a ceasefire so as to avoid the further loss of human lives and other sacrifices, on the one hand, and aiming to resolve the conflict, however time-consuming it may be, and create a political and social system that would be stable enough to preclude the recurrence of conflict, on the other. In the words of Saadia Touval, it is an “ethical dilemma” between “order and justice” which mediators often face in international peacemaking efforts.66 Of course, this is not a straight choice between two opposing alternatives. The international community ought to make utmost efforts at assisting parties to violent conflict in achieving these dual goals.67

As is often the case with most peace processes, reconciling the two approaches has been a great challenge in Tajikistan and Cambodia for the conflicting parties and mediators alike. The subsequent discussions will focus on the question of how such a challenge was met in both cases.

5.1 Tajikistan

The dilemma of this kind actually arose in the Tajik peace process. Vladimir Goryayev, a senior UN official who was deeply involved in the process, has made statements to this effect, with specific reference to the power-sharing arrangements. While acknowledging there were ambiguities and flaws in the agreement on the allocation of government posts to the UTO, Goryayev maintains that what was contained in it represented the “maximum compromise” that was attainable at the time of negotiation. Trying to clarify the further details, as he put it, may have undercut the dynamics of the negotiation process in view of political uncertainties prevailing at that time, including the Taliban factor in Afghanistan.68 Moreover, with regard to the exclusion of the Leninabadis, Goryayev says that an attempt to include them in the negotiations and have their interests reflected in the agreement “could have delayed the restoration of peace.” Indeed, he justifies the disregard of Leninabad by emphasizing that the UN mandate was to mediate between the two warring parties, namely, the Tajik government and the UTO, and thereby terminate the war—that is, to achieve “settlement.”69

In a similar vein, the report published by Conciliation Resources, a London-based international NGO, has offered the observation that the peace process in Tajikistan was designed

65 Bloomfield, *Peacemaking Strategies in Northern Ireland*, 75.
67 For a detailed discussion of this issue, see, for example, Uesugi, *United Nations Peacekeeping and the Nexus between Conflict Settlement and Resolution*.
69 Ibid.
to end the major armed conflict and restore stability, which was indeed achieved by excluding some interest groups and “privileging those with access to the gun.” It was not intended to ensure broad public participation in the future political system and bring about a full transition to democracy. In fact, the principle of non-violence in political life has not been firmly established. The report further maintained that the agreements reached were the “minimum point of consensus” between the negotiating parties when they were negotiated.70 Regarding “omissions” in the agreements as a “central dilemma for many peace processes,” Barnes and Abdullaev note in the report:

Many Tajikistanis would argue that life without armed conflict in the present is preferable to the risk of prolonging the war so as to make a more inclusive peace process or to reach a more ‘perfect’ agreement – even if the exclusion or agreements reached might contain the seeds of future conflict. Their history of war and violence has led many to prefer a government capable of sustaining a ‘negative peace’ based on life without war at the price of not enjoying their full range of personal rights and liberties.71

As a result of a settlement through a compromise, not an unattainable resolution, the civil war that claimed more than 50,000 lives came to an end, leading Tajikistan into the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. Undoubtedly, this by itself is the positive outcome of the peace process. However, there still remain many problems and contradictions to date in the country’s political, economic and social structures plagued by deep-seated regionalism because of the imperfections in the power-sharing arrangements and other aspects of the peace agreement.

5.2 Cambodia
In Cambodia, the Paris Peace Accords brought an end to a protracted civil war there. Nevertheless, because the two largest antagonists in Cambodia (the Khmer Rouge and the State of Cambodia) signed the accords mainly under heavy pressure from their big-power patrons and did not cooperate fully with the UN, the peace process suffered from various setbacks in the implementation of the accords. For example, when UNTAC failed to convince the Khmer Rouge to remain in the electoral process, it had to abandon the mandate of disarmament and demobilization of the four Cambodian factions, which was considered to be a critical step towards “ensuring a neutral political environment conducive to free and fair general

71 Ibid.
After the election was conducted, another major setback arose over its outcome. As soon as the election results became clear, the State of Cambodia did not hesitate to refuse them. In fact, it initiated a series of crafty maneuvers to overturn the election results. As a result, Prince Ranariddh whose party (FUNCINPEC) received 58 out of 120 seats in the election agreed that the election had produced no winners and no losers, and accepted parity with Hun Sen’s Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) in the provisional administration. Hence, in the negotiation following the election, FUNCINPEC, which had the largest number of votes in the election, was asked to exercise self-restraint, whereas the CPP was offered attractive concessions. Through the post-election negotiations, an interim coalition government or “provisional national government” emerged in which both Ranariddh and Hun Sen were serving as co-prime ministers and Sihanouk returned to the throne to re-create the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Despite the fact that the Cambodian peace process suffered such setbacks, it can be said that it was relatively successful in transforming Cambodia from a war-torn society into a more sustainable one. Although local aspects of the conflict remained intractable, the Paris Peace Accords represented an end of the ideological struggle. Moreover, under the supervision of UNTAC, the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia was completed successfully. Over 365,000 Cambodian refugees and internally displaced persons on the Thai-Cambodia border have been repatriated as a result of the UNTAC operation. China was given a face-saving way to terminate its material support to the Khmer Rouge. This divorce allowed China to withdraw its commitment to the continuation of the Cambodian conflict. The new government has effectively marginalized remaining radicals in the former Khmer Rouge, and it appears that Cambodia has consolidated a stable foundation for sustainable peace.

However, some critical root causes of the Cambodian civil war have not been addressed and the violent nature of its political struggle does not seem to have been transformed into a non-violent one. For example, UNTAC depended too much on the cooperation of the State of Cambodia for its operational success. Hence when it was revealed that UNTAC was unable to fulfill the task of controlling crucial aspects of the civil administration in general and provision of security in particular, the Khmer Rouge began to perceive that UNTAC was merely helping the Hun Sen regime.

Conclusions: Comparative Analysis

One important shared feature of the Tajik and Cambodian civil wars is that there were significant international dimensions surrounding them, which made their settlement contingent upon the policies of external stakeholders to a considerable extent. In the Tajik conflict, one of the violent conflicts that occurred in the traditional Russian sphere of influence, Moscow’s intention (along with the Afghan situation) was clearly a major factor that determined the fate of the peace process there. In Cambodia, a typical proxy conflict fought in the context of the Cold War confrontation, it were not only the two superpowers but also China and Vietnam that played a substantial role in ending the conflict. In terms of ripeness, external ripeness caused by the policy changes on the part of these external actors was equally essential for the settlement of both conflicts. But in Tajikistan, external and internal elements of ripeness roughly went hand in hand, while external ripeness worked to offset the weakness of internal ripeness in Cambodia.

In both conflicts, the UN served as a lead coordinator or principal catalyst in promoting peace processes characterized by the involvement of many external actors, and it may well be justifiable to say that it did succeed in this light in these two cases, given the frequent difficulty encountered by the organization in other conflict situations. On closer look, however, behind such a major similarity lay some important differences, especially with regard to the question of how the UN played such a coordinating role. Indeed, there was a marked contrast between Tajikistan and Cambodia on how principal UN institutions operating in the area of peace and security—the Security Council, special representatives of the Secretary-General, peacekeeping missions (and specialized agencies)—played a role and interacted with one another within the context of broader relationships involving the conflicting parties, concerned states, regional organizations and NGOs as well.

In the Cambodian conflict, which was literally a global proxy war involving great powers, the Security Council (where they sit as the P5) served as a framework for international policy coordination. Acting as the “core group,” the Security Council also provided political support and guidance for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General who was in charge of leading and supervising UNTAC. In that capacity, the Special Representative was responsible for communicating with Cambodian factions comprising the SNC and also liaising with other UN agencies and NGOs working on the ground. Therefore, there were arguably two interconnected layers of “coordination mechanisms” operating simultaneously in Cambodia—the Security Council for intergovernmental coordination and the UNTAC for field-level coordination.

On the other hand, in the Tajik conflict, which was in a sense a local conflict in the former Soviet space and as such attracted less international attention, the Security Council in itself was not so much an arena for policy coordination as a source of political backing,
guidance and endorsement for the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, who coordinated and facilitated peace negotiations held under the UN auspices. Thus in Tajikistan, actual policy coordination centered around the Special Representative working with the group of interested states taking part in those negotiations as observers, namely, Russia and other regional stakeholders. These actors formed the focal point of coordination, or what can be termed as a coordination mechanism.

Of course, a related, important difference resided in the size and nature of peacekeeping missions. UNTAC was one of the largest operations in the UN history and was deployed in the post-conflict implementation phase. As such, it was truly multidimensional with an extensive range of mandates relating to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. UNMOT, in contrast, was a relatively small, traditional peacekeeping presence, which operated alongside the more robust forces supplied by Russia and other states belonging to the regional organization active in that part of the world (that is, the CIS). It was primarily responsible for the maintenance of the ceasefire (prior to the signing of a general peace agreement).

Equally important, it has turned out that to establish the formula and manage potential challenges to it by actual and possible spoilers was the key to the successful settlement of the conflicts in Tajikistan and Cambodia, as in other internal conflicts. In both conflicts, the core element of the formula was how to ensure that the conflicting parties can share power in an emerging new political system, and the conflicting parties encountered great difficulties in coming up with the workable and durable formula. Through difficult negotiations, power-sharing was eventually agreed upon by the major parties in both conflicts; the Kulyabi-dominated government and the UTO in Tajikistan, and the State of Cambodia and three opposing factions in Cambodia.

Spoiler management was certainly a thorny task in both conflicts for negotiators and mediators alike. A candidate for a spoiler (or a spoiler-mediator) in the Tajik peace process was apparently Uzbekistan, who was discontent with the Kulyabi-UTO power-sharing formula. However, it was kept from actually becoming a serious spoiler, faced with a broad international consensus on that formula backed by Russia, Iran, and other external stakeholders (and also the UN). And no less important, the broadly shared perception of the Taliban threat emanating from neighboring Afghanistan was a contributing factor to spoiler management in Tajikistan.

The Cambodian peace process was endangered at its critical juncture, when the Khmer Rouge and the State of Cambodia moved to act as spoilers (partially in the latter case) out of their respective cost-benefit calculations about the UN-supervised settlement premised on the agreed power-sharing formula. But it was eventually saved by the strong commitment on the part of the other factions to moving forward to the elections and also by the fact that the very elections were beginning to serve as a new way of pursuing power struggle.

The analyses of the formula and spoilers in the two cases have illuminated some
interesting points of similarity and contrast. The danger of potential spoilers in Tajikistan arose from the objections to the exclusion of some internal parties (mainly the Leninabadis) from the power-sharing formula. In Cambodia, in contrast, some parties included in the power-sharing formula posed such a danger. And in both cases, not only internal but also external dimensions seemed to have worked in favor of spoiler management; the broad international consensus backed by external ripeness was the driving force behind the progress and maintenance of the peace processes.

Indeed, such difficulty with the formula-making and spoiler management reflects the overall nature of the peace processes in Tajikistan and Cambodia. They both achieved settlement through subtle compromise rather than resolution through fundamental problem-solving; they brought major violent confrontations to an end through arrangements on power-sharing and coalition governments, ushering in the post-conflict phase. Nonetheless, these arrangements were precarious, incomplete, and even superficial. In Tajikistan, the coalition government was in effect the continuation of the existing Rakhmonov government with the limited incorporation of UTO elements with the exclusion of the Leninabadis. In Cambodia, the coalition government itself was a product of compromise reached as a result of post-election bargaining, with the Khmer Rouge left at large. Indeed, these were exactly the great challenges and dilemmas that the UN, a lead coordinator of peace processes, and other major mediators needed to muddle through.

For all their obstacles and limitations, the peace processes in both countries succeeded at least in ending violent conflicts where the issue at stake was the survival of the existing regime or a complete takeover by opponents. They certainly left key stepping stones to resolution and political coexistence, which the conflicting parties were expected to capitalize on in the subsequent, long-term process of national reconciliation.