

Preventing War and Providing the Peace? *International Organizations and the Management of Territorial Disputes**

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I explore whether international organizations (IOs) promote peaceful conflict management. Using territorial claims data, I find that organizations with interventionist capabilities encourage disputing members to attempt peaceful conflict resolution. Then, to more fully uncover the causal relationship between IOs and conflict management, I investigate the influence of IOs on bilateral dispute settlement separately from third party settlement. The analyses reveal that institutions do not promote bilateral negotiations between members, indicating that the socialization and trust-building capabilities of IOs are limited. However, institutions foster multilateral talks, demonstrating that IOs broker bargaining with third party diplomatic intervention.

KEY WORDS: bilateral conflict management; conflict management; conflict resolution; international organizations; territorial claims; third party conflict management

From 1998 to 2000, Ethiopia and Eritrea fought one of the bloodiest territorial conflicts in recent memory, with estimated casualties ranging from 75,000 to 100,000. At issue were 620 miles of land over which both countries claimed sovereignty after Eritrea seceded in 1993. In a war inflamed by “deep issues of mistrust and nationalistic passions,” one wonders how the two countries ever came to the negotiating table (New York Times, 2000). Yet in December 2000, both sides agreed to let a commission under the Permanent Court of Arbitration make a binding decision on the dispute, a decision delivered a year and a half later.

A number of international actors, not least among them institutions, took a variety of measures to induce negotiations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Although the conflict was long, bloody, and intractable, international organizations (IOs) helped

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engage the two sides in talks. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) brokered negotiations in 1998. Additionally, the OAU and United Nations sponsored a peace-keeping force to patrol the disputed border after the countries agreed to arbitration in 2000. While the peace agreement struck in 2000 was admittedly fragile, IOs used a number of methods to instill confidence and spark discussions between the combatants. Institutions employed confidence-building measures to persuade the rivals to attempt peaceful conflict management.

The involvement of institutions in the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea begs the question: do IOs encourage their members to negotiate their disputes? And if so, how? A number of IO charters specifically call for the peaceful settlement of disputes, but few empirical studies have asked if IOs increase the likelihood that their members pursue pacific conflict management. Recently, an exciting literature has developed on the ability of international institutions to procure peace among their members (Boehmer et al., 2004; Haftel, 2007; Russett and Oneal, 2001). Such studies find that common IO memberships decrease the probability that a pair of states will fight each other. What has not been fully uncovered, however, are the processes by which IOs build peace. A question that remains largely unaddressed is whether institutions encourage their members to use pacific mechanisms of conflict management. We have evidence that IOs decrease the probability of a dispute breaking out, but we do not know if IOs compel states to actively manage their grievances.

In this paper, I ask if international organizations promote peaceful conflict management. Using data on the management of territorial claims, I find that organizations with interventionist capabilities encourage disputing members to attempt peaceful conflict resolution. Then, to more fully illustrate the relationship between IOs and conflict management, I explore the influence of IOs on bilateral dispute settlement separately from their influence on third party settlement. Interestingly, the analyses reveal that IOs encourage third party settlement attempts, but do not motivate dyads to negotiate bilaterally. I theorize about why IO memberships lead to multilateral conflict management but not bilateral dispute resolution. Bilateral dispute settlement attempts reflect a mature, trusting relationship between territorial disputants. Because institutions do not increase the likelihood of bilateral negotiations between members, the analyses indicate that the trust-building and socialization capabilities of IOs are limited. Multilateral negotiations, on the other hand, do not require as much trust as bilateral talks, because a third party is available to reveal and even prevent malicious behavior. Institutions encourage their members to negotiate multilaterally, demonstrating that IOs facilitate dispute bargaining with third party intervention. The paper shows that institutions do more than prevent conflict – they encourage members to actively discuss and negotiate their grievances. While organizational influence is not so strong as to compel bilateral cooperation, it does promote conflict management via third parties.

International Institutions and Conflict

In the last decade, an exciting research agenda emerged on the relationship between international organizations and conflict. Russett et al. (1998) are largely responsible for launching the agenda, as their work is among the first to find that common IO

memberships reduce the likelihood of conflict. Russett and Oneal (2001) update this seminal piece, also demonstrating that shared institutional participation decreases the chance a dyad will become involved in conflict. Both studies conclude that IOs foster peace between countries. Since these influential studies, scholars have refined and improved our knowledge of the relationship between international organizations and peace. We can now generally conclude that the most intense and structured organizations best reduce the chance of conflict between members (Bearce and Omori, 2005; Bearce et al., 2006; Boehmer et al., 2004; Haftel, 2007; Mansfield and Pevehouse, 2000).

Yet while we can identify the types of organizations that mitigate the chance of conflict, we know less about the process by which IOs broker peace. One reason for this lack of knowledge is that previous research is somewhat limited by its reliance on the militarized interstate dispute data. Using the absence or presence of a dispute as a dependent variable masks some of the political processes by which IO members procure peace. Specifically, a dichotomous dispute variable does not tell us if members actively negotiate and find solutions to their grievances.

Consider the territorial claim between Ethiopia and Eritrea. If we were to study the influence of IOs on the onset of militarized disputes, we might find that as Ethiopia's and Eritrea's shared institutional memberships increase, they experience fewer militarized disputes over issues like territory. But based on such an analysis, we do not know if IOs compel the two countries to behave peacefully, or if IOs make the countries complacent with the status quo. It might also be the case that IOs simply deter conflict, threatening to punish countries that behave badly. Now consider a study that explores the effect of IOs on peaceful conflict settlement attempts. If shared IO memberships lead countries like Ethiopia and Eritrea to manage their disputes, then we know that institutions encourage members to address distributional concerns that can potentially destabilize their relations (Gilady and Russett, 2002: 393). We know that IOs help broker a "positive" peace through mutual conflict resolution (Galtung, 1969).

So while scholars have progressively specified which institutions are best at minimizing conflict, we have not fully considered the range of behaviors that IOs promote. We know that some IOs prevent conflict onset, but have only begun to explore whether these same organizations help their members manage disputes (Kadera and Mitchell, 2006; Mitchell and Hensel, 2007). Scholars recognize that international organizations often act as mediators and arbitrators (Abbott and Snidal, 1998; Bercovitch and Schneider, 2000), and that a number of IOs call for peaceful conflict management in their charters. Yet we have not adequately explored whether institutional participation actually promotes the pacific settlement of disputes. By investigating the relationship between IOs and conflict management, we reveal the broader influence of institutions on their members' behavior.

International Organizations and Peaceful Conflict Management

Although the relationship between IO participation and conflict management has not been extensively investigated, in theory, we should observe a positive link between the two. International organizations, broadly speaking, are formed to encourage bargaining

between their members. Whether by providing information and lowering transaction costs (Keohane, 1984) or by socializing states (Risse-Kappen, 1996), IOs are designed to compel cooperation. Furthermore, most international organizations seek to provide collective goods such as nuclear non-proliferation, security, economic development, and environmental protection. When members are disputing, IOs find it more difficult to broker the cooperation necessary to produce collective goods. Because aggression jeopardizes the very collective action that IOs seek, organizations have a vested interest in helping members resolve disputes.

Not only are international organizations interested in brokering peace to better provide collective goods, a number of IOs are formed with the explicit purpose of helping countries peacefully manage their grievances. Many IOs mandate peaceful relations within their ranks and incorporate dispute settlement mechanisms into their charters. For example, the preamble to the Strasbourg Convention declares Council of Europe members “resolved to settle by peaceful means any disputes which may arise between them....” The convention then specifies judicial settlement, conciliation, and arbitration as viable means for managing disputes. Similarly, the Organization of American States (OAS) calls for peaceful procedures to settle disputes in Article 3 of its charter, and outlines third party conflict management mechanisms in Article 24. If organizations like the Council of Europe and the OAS operate as their charters intend, institutional pressure should persuade members to peacefully resolve conflicts.

Even though numerous IOs encourage and even mandate peaceful dispute management, we have little knowledge that organizations actually bring their members to the table. As a remedy, I explore in the following section if IO memberships are positively and significantly related to peaceful settlement attempts by territorial rivals. If organizations indeed promote bargaining and cooperation, I expect IO members to peacefully negotiate when issues such as territory are in dispute.

One interesting fact to note about IOs is that they advocate different mechanisms of conflict management. The Council of Europe and the Organization of American States specify bilateral forms of conflict management separately from third party dispute resolution, although the organizations list both bilateral and multilateral mechanisms as viable means of negotiating. Like the OAS and COE, many organizations that mandate peaceful conflict management encourage bilateral and third party (multilateral) mechanisms in their charters. Bilateral negotiations are those that only involve the disputants. Third party talks, on the other hand, involve an outside actor who facilitates negotiations between disputants. Although organizations promote both mechanisms, we do not know if IO members favor one type of management over the other. It is also possible that IOs equally encourage both types. To more fully explicate the relationship between IOs and conflict management, I separately investigate the different types of negotiations that states can pursue.

I expect that if international organizations promote cooperation and bargaining, their members should be more likely to peacefully settle disputes. In the next section, I explore if IOs encourage conflict management. Finding that IO memberships promote dispute resolution provides evidence against the realist argument that organizations have no independent influence on members’ behavior (Mearsheimer, 1995). I then investigate the different types of conflict management that IO members seek,

as the mechanisms for dispute resolution are not mutually exclusive. International organizations may encourage their members to negotiate bilaterally, but they may also promote and even provide third parties to facilitate talks. Investigating the relationship between IOs and peaceful settlement attempts helps us understand whether organizations do more than merely prevent conflict between members. Exploring the types of conflict management that IO members seek reveals the mechanisms by which organizations encourage dispute resolution.

Analyses of IO Membership and Peaceful Conflict Management Attempts

To uncover the influence of international organizations on conflict management, I look for cooperation among unlikely practitioners—territorial rivals. Territorial claims provide an opportunity to investigate if states with competing interests are compelled by organizations to peacefully consult over solutions to their grievances. Territorial claims are rarely negotiated, making them “tough cases” in which to find the influence of IOs (Walter, 2003). It is also normatively important to study how IOs affect the management of territorial claims, as territory is the issue that most frequently leads to military conflict (Vasquez, 1993).

Dependent Variable

To explore the influence of IOs on attempts to peacefully manage disputes, I use the territorial claims data from the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project. Territorial claims emerge from disagreements over sovereignty of a certain piece of land. The data reflect explicit contentions between state governments over territory. To be considered a claim, a government official must verbally invoke sovereignty of her own state over a piece of land claimed by another state (Hensel, 2001). The spatial-temporal domain of the data is all international claims of territory in the Western Hemisphere and Europe from 1816–2000, and the unit of observation is the dyad-year.

The dependent variable is a dyad’s attempt to settle a territorial claim peacefully in a given year. In this first set of analyses, the attempt may be either bilateral or through a third party. I code the dependent variable 1 if a dyad attempted to manage the claim, 0 otherwise. The data reflect 1,117 dyad-years with a settlement attempt from 1816–2000.

Measuring International Organization Memberships

International organizations are not equally motivated or equipped to encourage dispute settlement. Only some organizations mandate the peaceful settlement of international disputes in their charters. Other organizations are purely functional, facilitating cooperation in a narrow issue area. To explore the influence of IOs on peaceful conflict management, it is important to discern which organizations encourage countries to settle international disputes, and then investigate if IOs change members’ behavior. Functional institutions are unlikely to compel the management of territorial disputes because they primarily deal with “low politics.” And even though many organizations call for peaceful dispute resolution, not all have the

resources or diplomatic leverage to pressure their members. Organizations that meet infrequently and lack a permanent secretariat do not induce repeated interaction or lower the transaction costs of cooperation. Only the most structured and equipped institutions are able to promote bargaining over salient conflicts.

So to appropriately test the relationship between IOs and peaceful conflict resolution, I select organizations according to two criteria: they must be highly institutionalized, and they must be likely to encourage their members to manage disputes. Using data obtained from Boehmer et al. (2004), I first choose organizations with security mandates, as they are more likely to compel members to peacefully settle than strictly economic or functional institutions. Among these security organizations, I include those that score the highest on a 3-point scale of institutionalization, since highly structured organizations have the most influence on member behavior (Koremenos et al., 2001). Then, to complete the list of relevant organizations, I consulted the Issue Correlates of War Project's Multilateral Treaties of Pacific Settlement (MTOPS) data (Hensel, 2003). I turn to this second source because Boehmer et al.'s data are not exhaustive, measuring the institutionalization and mandates of only a select group of IOs. Using the MTOPS data and their charters, I identify organizations that specifically call for peaceful settlement and have the ability to diplomatically intervene in members' disputes. I cross-reference the institutions with the Correlates of War Intergovernmental Organizations data to make sure that these are organizations with three or more members, permanent secretariats, and regular meetings (Pevehouse et al., 2004). The procedures narrow the universe of IOs to 27 institutions, listed in Appendix 1. I term the institutions *Peace Brokering Organizations*.

For the initial analyses of institutional participation and peaceful conflict management, I use the number of memberships a dyad shares in peace brokering organizations.¹ An IO is most likely to promote peaceful management of territorial claims if both disputants are members of the organization, so it is appropriate to explore shared memberships. I expect that as states join more IOs, they will experience more pressure to settle. The variable *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* ranges from 0 to 7, with a mean value of 1.15.

The data are time series, tracking settlement attempts over the life of a territorial claim. To account for potential temporal dependence, I include a variable that reflects the number of years since the last settlement attempt, as well three cubic spline terms (Beck et al., 1998). While international organizations arguably lead their members to peacefully settle disputes, it is possible that the causal arrow points in the other direction. In other words, it may be likely that as states continually pursue peaceful conflict management, they join international institutions to solidify their

¹ The COW IO membership data, from which the variable is partially constructed, are given yearly for all IOs from 1965 to 2000, but are only recorded in five year increments prior to 1965. For the sake of maintaining annual information on the dependent variable, it is important to use a yearly measure of IO memberships. I therefore filled in missing values with the first previously reported value of shared memberships. This was not necessary for the MTOPS data, where memberships are recorded yearly.

Table 1. Logistic Regression of Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships on All Settlement Attempts, 1816–2000

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Coefficient (SE)</i>	<i>Coefficient (SE)</i>
Joint peace brokering IO memberships	0.10* (0.043)	0.08* (0.04)
Territorial issue salience	–	0.13** (0.024)
Interest similarity	–	–0.08 (0.122)
Joint democracy	–	0.36* (0.14)
Power ratio	–	–0.75* (0.34)
US hegemony	–	–0.68 (0.60)
MIDs over territory	–	0.29** (0.07)
Unsuccessful settlement attempts	–	0.14* (0.06)
Years since last attempt	–0.79** (0.11)	–.71* (0.09)
Constant	–0.616** (0.123)	–1.02** (0.32)
Number of attempts	1026	1017
Total N	7286	7212
Wald Chi squared	220.39**	329.16**
Log likelihood	–2524.6	–2413.68

** = $p < .001$, * = $p < .05$. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors, clustered on dyad. Coefficients of cubic splines included in analyses are not reported.

relationships. To control for potential endogeneity, I lag *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* by five years.²

Results of Analyses of Joint IO Memberships and Settlement Attempts

The results of the logit analysis of *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* on settlement attempts are given in Table 1, first column. The analysis reveals a positive relationship between IO participation and conflict management, as the coefficient on *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* is statistically significant at the .05 level. As states join more organizations that promote peaceful conflict resolution, territorial disputants are more likely to attempt to peacefully settle their claims.

To ensure the robustness of a positive relationship between international organizations and settlement attempts, I conduct the logit analysis while controlling for a number of factors. It may be the case that IO memberships do not have an independent influence on peaceful settlement at all, but that states with similar interests are more likely to manage conflicts. I consequently include two measures of shared interests among territorial disputants. The first is *Territorial Issue Salience*. This index variable ranks the importance

² A multitude of work in political science warns of selection bias. Selection bias in these data may exist if the unobserved factors that lead a state to make a territorial claim are correlated with factors that influence peaceful settlement attempts. While nearly all analyses of international conflict emphasize militarized disputes, these data reflect verbal disputes over territory (although some do become militarized). I therefore have virtually no theoretical guidance for modeling the selection of verbal conflict. Mitchell (2006) finds no relationship between joint IO memberships and the onset of territorial claims, indicating that selection is not likely a problem for my analyses. Developing theories of territorial claim onset will allow me to test the relationship between onset and settlement attempts in the future.

of the claim as 0, 1, or 2 on six different indicators. If the territory is important by one indicator for only one disputant, it is coded 1; for both disputants, it is coded 2. All six scores are added, resulting in a 12 point index of salience (Hensel, 2001). The second measure of shared interests I include is Signorino and Ritter's (1999) unweighted global *S* score, which calculates the similarity of the dyad members' alliance portfolios. Increasing values of this variable, which I term *Interest Similarity*, indicate more similar foreign policy preferences between the disputants. Including both *Territorial Issue Salience* and *Interest Similarity* ensures that any observed influence of institutions is independent of the effect of shared preferences for conflict management.

Other potential influences on dispute settlement include regime type, as democracies have proven more likely to peacefully settle disputes (Dixon, 1993; Raymond, 1994). I include a dichotomous variable *Joint Democracy*, coded 1 if both parties score 6 or higher on the Polity IV democracy scale. The power ratio between territorial disputants should also influence their likelihood of settling. As two states become more disparate in their level of power, they should be less likely to peacefully settle, since the more powerful state can militarily impose its preferences on the weaker. I use the COW composite index of national capabilities (CINC) to construct the power ratio of the dyad members (Singer et al., 1972). As the value of *Power Ratio* increases, the disputants' levels of power become more disparate, making the dyad less likely to negotiate. I also account for the possibility of the United States using its hegemony to leverage settlement attempts by including the US's CINC score. This variable is labeled *U.S. Hegemony*.

Finally, events over the course of territorial claims may encourage settlement attempts. I include *MIDs Over Territory*, a variable that reflects the number of militarized interstate disputes over the claim in the five years prior. This captures the potential effect of a hurting stalemate, when combatants grow weary of conflict and increasingly favor diplomacy (Grieg, 2001). I also include the number of *Unsuccessful Settlement Attempts*, as rivals may be more prone to settle if they have previously attempted to negotiate (Hensel, 2001).

Results of the full model presented in Table 1, Column 2 demonstrate support for the expectation that IOs encourage conflict management. The coefficient on *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* is positive and significant ($p < .05$).³ The results are robust to controlling for shared interests, regime type, power, and territorial claim history. Increasing the number of joint memberships from its minimum value of 0 to its maximum value of 7 raises the predicted probability of a settlement attempt from .089 [0.08, 0.10] to .143 [0.106, 0.186], a 61% increase.⁴

³ I used two alternative measures of international organizations as a robustness check. I included the number of memberships a dyad shares in all institutions, according to COW. I also used the number of joint memberships in all peace promoting institutions and treaties, according to MTOPS. Both variables were lagged five years. Neither of the alternative measures had a statistically significant influence on peaceful settlement attempts.

⁴ Predicted probabilities were calculated using Clarify in Stata 8.0, holding all control variables at their mean (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). Figures in brackets are the upper and lower bound values of 95% confidence intervals. Roughly 52% of the dyad years have at least one shared membership in a peace brokering institution; over 30% have at least two shared memberships.

International Organizations, Bilateral, and Multilateral Conflict Management

To further refine our understanding of international organizations on conflict management, I analyze their effect on bilateral attempts separately from multilateral attempts. Bilateral settlement attempts include all efforts by a dyad to manage a territorial claim without the help of a third party. Multilateral settlement attempts include binding efforts (arbitration, adjudication, or peace conferences) and non-binding efforts (good offices, mediation, inquiry). According to the Issue Correlates of War data, territorial rivals made 782 bilateral settlement attempts and 298 multilateral attempts.

Allow me to make clear that the dependent variable employed to test the relationship between IOs and multilateral conflict management reflects attempts to settle disputes via all types of third parties. I do not narrow the analyses to settlement attempts where an IO served as the third party. International organizations can facilitate negotiations themselves, but they also frequently encourage other actors to serve as third parties. For instance, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon took their 1972 border dispute to the United Nations, but were persuaded to mediate first via the presidents of Congo and Zaire (Meyers, 1974). I therefore expect that institutional memberships promote conflict management via all types of third parties, including states, IGOs, NGOs, and individuals. As a pair of rivals shares more IO memberships, it will experience more institutional pressure to negotiate. It will also have a wider range of potential mediators to facilitate bargaining.

The same independent variables used to analyze all settlement attempts in the previous analysis are included in the following analyses. Results of the logit analyses of the independent variables on bilateral attempts are given in the first two columns of Table 2.

The coefficient on *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* does not reach statistical significance at the .05 level in either the simple model of bilateral attempts (Column 1) or the full model (Column 2), although it is significant at the .10 level in the simple model. Because the relationship between shared IOs and bilateral attempts disappears when controlling for shared interests, regime type, and claim history, the analyses do not reveal much support for the expectation that IOs lead members to negotiate bilaterally.

Yet while memberships in peace brokering institutions do not promote bilateral settlement attempts, they do encourage settlement attempts through third parties, evidenced by the significant and positive coefficient ($p < .001$) on *Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships* in Columns 3 and 4. As dyads increase their participation in international organizations, they are more likely to use third parties as conflict managers.⁵ Figure 1 illustrates the influence of increasing shared IO memberships on the predicted probability of third party settlement.

Increasing the number of joint memberships from its minimum value of 0 to its maximum value of 7 raises the predicted probability of a third party settlement attempt from .014 [0.01, 0.019] to .058 [0.029, 0.099]. This is a 314% increase in the

⁵ *Peace Brokering IO Memberships* also significantly and positively predicted third party conflict management when included during the same year as a settlement attempt, and when lagged 1, 3, and 5 years.

Table 2. Logistic Regression of Joint Peace Brokering IO Memberships on Bilateral and Third Party Settlement Attempts, 1816–2000

Independent variable	Bilateral Attempts		Third Party Attempts	
	Coefficient (SE)	Coefficient (SE)	Coefficient (SE)	Coefficient (SE)
Joint peace brokering IO memberships	0.08 (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)	0.23** (0.06)	0.20** (0.05)
Territorial issue salience	–	0.11** (0.02)	–	0.18** (0.04)
Interest similarity	–	–0.03 (0.12)	–	–0.29 (0.20)
Joint democracy	–	0.51** (0.15)	–	–0.10 (0.22)
Power ratio	–	–0.30 (0.41)	–	–2.03* (0.73)
US hegemony	–	–0.97 (0.64)	–	1.93 (1.11)
MIDs over territory	–	0.12 (0.04)	–	0.33** (0.08)
Unsuccessful settlement attempts	–	0.95* (0.04)	–	0.22** (0.06)
Years since last attempt	–0.66** (0.08)	–.62** (0.08)	–0.35** (0.05)	–.28** (0.04)
Constant	–0.91** (0.12)	–1.46** (0.39)	–1.59** (0.17)	–1.94** (0.57)
Number of attempts	780	773	297	295
Total N	7286	7212	7286	7212
Wald Chi squared	204.12**	368.44**	147.59**	268.29**
Log likelihood	–2178.79	–2178.78	–1006.16	–918.21

** = $p < .001$, * = $p < .05$. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors, clustered on dyad. Coefficients of cubic splines included in analyses are not reported.

predicted probability of third party conflict management.⁶ Even after accounting for shared interests and claim history, the analyses reveal a strong relationship between IO membership and third party dispute resolution.

The control variables indicate that certain factors similarly influence both bilateral and multilateral settlement attempts. The positive and significant coefficients on *Issue Salience* ($p < .001$) in Columns 2 and 4 show that a dyad is more likely to attempt both settlement mechanisms as the salience of a claim increases. States that attempt to settle once are likely to try bilateral settlement ($p < .05$) and multilateral settlement ($p < .001$) again, evidenced by the coefficients on *Unsuccessful Settlement Attempts*. Finally, the negative coefficient on *Years Since Last Attempt* ($p < .001$) reveals that dyads that experience long durations in time since a settlement attempt are less likely to try either type of settlement again.

However, some factors influence bilateral and multilateral conflict resolution differently. Democratic dyads are more likely than mixed or non-democratic dyads to attempt bilateral resolution, as *Joint Democracy* ($p < .05$) is significant and positive. But a puzzling result is the insignificant coefficient on *Joint Democracy* in the

⁶ Neither the total number of IO memberships (COW) nor the number of memberships in peace-promoting institutions (MTOPS) significantly increased the likelihood of either type of settlement attempt.

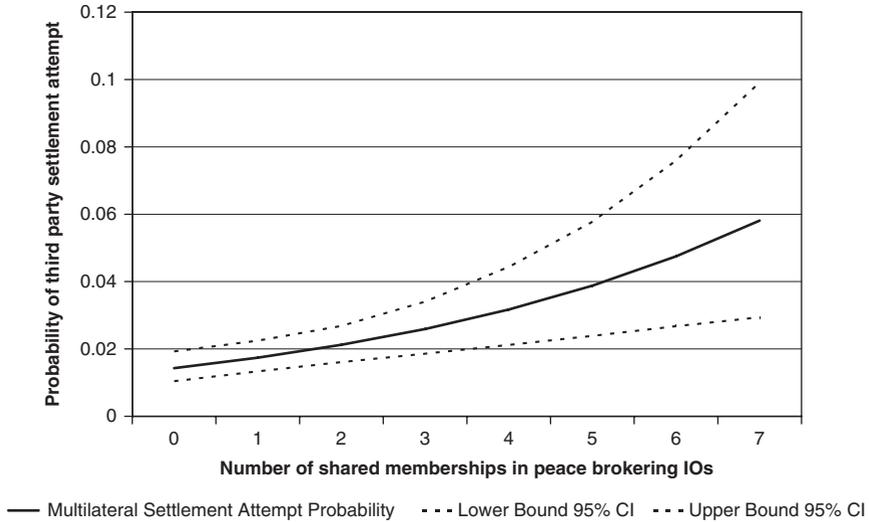


Figure 1. Increasing Memberships in Peace Brokering Institutions and the Predicted Probability of a Third Party Settlement Attempt

multilateral settlement attempts model, indicating that democratic dyads are no more or less likely to consult third parties than other dyads. This result contradicts previous research demonstrating that democracies are more amenable to third party conflict management (Dixon, 1993; Raymond, 1994), although it coheres with more recent findings from the ICOW data (Mitchell et al., 2008). The disparity between these results and previous studies warrants investigation in the future.

The coefficient on *MIDs Over Territory* indicates that militarized conflict provokes third party management ($p < .001$) but not bilateral negotiations. It seems outside actors are notified and attracted to the source of territorial violence, intervening to quell grievances between the states. Military disputes do not similarly propel bilateral talks. The negative coefficient on *Power Ratio* illustrates that dyad members with disproportionate levels of power are less likely to attempt third party settlement ($p < .05$). This shows that as one state has more power over its territorial rival, it is less likely to seek a third party to determine the outcome of a claim—arguably because the more powerful state prefers to leverage a settlement without outside interference.

Overall, the analyses reveal an interesting dynamic between IOs and conflict management. International organizations compel members to negotiate through a third party, but have little to no influence on their propensity to settle bilaterally. While many IOs specify direct negotiations in their charters as a viable mechanism for settling disputes, it seems members avoid such negotiations in favor of multi-lateral conflict management. Although the first set of analyses presented in Table

1 indicated that IOs promote all types of conflict resolution, upon further exploration, it becomes clear that this finding is primarily driven by the strong relationship between IOs and third party dispute management.

Alternative Measures of IO Memberships

To ensure that international organizations indeed have an influence on third party conflict management, I investigated several alternative measures of IO participation. First, I explored if IOs have a stronger effect on multilateral conflict management within dyads or between dyads. The influence of organizations may be a function of within-dyad differences, or it may be a function of differences across dyads. Arguably, a positive within-dyad effect reveals a stronger influence of organizations than a between-dyad effect, because it shows that the same pair of states becomes more likely to seek a third party as its IO memberships increase over time. To capture the between- and within-dyad effects of IOs, I use a method recommended by Zorn (2001). I include the average number of shared IO memberships to capture between-dyad effects; a positive coefficient on *Average IO Memberships* indicates that dyads with higher levels of memberships are more likely to attempt multilateral conflict management. I also include a dyad's deviation from its average value of IO memberships to capture within-dyad effects. A positive coefficient on *Deviation of IO Memberships* demonstrates that a dyad is more likely to seek a third party as it increases its IO participation over time.

Column 1 of Table 3 presents the analysis of between- and within-dyad effects, using the simple model of third party attempts.⁷ The coefficient on *Average IO Memberships* is not statistically significant in either model, but the coefficient on *Deviation of IO Memberships* is positive and statistically significant ($p < .001$) in both models. According to these analyses, within-dyad variation accounts for the relationship between IO participation and multilateral dispute resolution, while between-dyad variation does not. As a dyad increases its memberships in IOs over time, it becomes more likely to seek third party conflict management. This indicates a strong influence of IOs on their members' propensity to attempt multilateral conflict resolution.

Column 2 of Table 3 presents a second alternative measure to joint memberships—the monadic number of peace brokering IO memberships, lagged 5 years. ICOW distinguishes the challenger in a territorial claim from the target, where the challenger is the state that initiated the claim. I separated the challenger's number of peace brokering IO memberships from the target's number, and included both as variables in the simple model of third party settlement attempts. The analysis reveals an interesting effect of monadic IO memberships. The challenger's memberships have no significant influence on third party settlement attempts, but the target's memberships have a positive and significant effect on third party conflict management ($p < .001$). The result indicates that a target of a territorial claim is more compelled by international organizations to seek third party conflict management

⁷ In the interest of brevity, I did not include the results of the full models using the alternative measures of IO memberships in Table 3. The coefficients and significance of the variables of interest did not change when the control variables were included in the analyses.

Table 3. Logistic Regression of Alternative Measures of IO Memberships on Third Party Settlement Attempts, 1816–2000

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Coefficient (SE)</i>	<i>Coefficient (SE)</i>
Average peace brokering IO memberships	0.08 (0.12)	–
Deviation of peace brokering IO memberships	0.47** (0.11)	–
Peace brokering IO memberships of challenger	–	–0.03 (0.04)
Peace brokering IO memberships of target	–	0.17** (0.05)
Years since last attempt	–0.05** (0.01)	–0.35** (0.04)
Constant	–2.32** (0.19)	–1.49** (0.17)
Number of attempts	296	270
Total N	7278	6819
Wald Chi squared	55.51**	236.46**
Log likelihood	–1077.01	–883.65

** = $p < .001$, * = $p < .05$. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors, clustered on dyad. Coefficients of cubic splines included in analyses are not reported.

than the challenger in a claim. Several factors may explain this result. First, the target may simply feel threatened and is therefore more likely to seek aid and assistance from a third party than the challenger. Second, the target may believe it has a more legitimate claim to the territory than the challenger and is therefore less fearful of bringing in a third party to facilitate negotiations. In both instances, the target may be encouraged by its network of IOs to seek multilateral conflict management.

While the monadic finding is an interesting avenue for future research, the results should be taken with a grain of salt. Conflict management is a process that ultimately must be undertaken by both disputants. Even if one disputant is seemingly more encouraged by IOs to attempt negotiations, both rivals must come to the table for conflict resolution to occur. Also, the monadic memberships of the target and challenger are highly correlated ($r = .85$) as are the shared and monadic relationships of the challenger ($r = .86$) and target ($r = .82$). Given these dynamics, it is difficult to sort out if shared or monadic IO memberships are more influential in promoting third party attempts. Yet overall, the findings show that IOs are a strong force in facilitating multilateral conflict management.

Parsing Out the Relationship between IOs and Conflict Management

The analyses initially established that international organizations encourage their members to peacefully manage disputes. But further exploration revealed that IOs have a much stronger influence on third party conflict resolution than bilateral conflict management. Yet, the organizations included in the analyses advocate both bilateral and multilateral mechanisms of conflict resolution in their charters. The findings are puzzling—why do IOs encourage only one type of conflict management if organizations specify both types as viable mechanisms?

I suspect that the reason international organizations do not promote bilateral conflict management is because such negotiations entail a great deal of trust, and IOs simply have not fostered the mature and trusting relationships that bilateral talks require. A number of scholars argue that IOs socialize their members and build the trust necessary for peacefully resolving disputes (Abbott and Snidal, 1998; Bull, 1977; Deutsch et al., 1957; Kydd, 2001; Risse-Kappan, 1996). If this is true, we should observe a positive relationship between IOs and bilateral conflict management, for reasons I discuss below. But in fact, the analyses do not show that IOs encourage bilateral negotiations, indicating that the trust-building and socialization capabilities of IOs are limited. Instead, IOs play a more active role in negotiations by encouraging and sponsoring the use of third parties.

To assess why IOs encourage multilateral over bilateral conflict negotiations, let me first discuss the decision calculus of disputants undergoing conflict management. In general, states prefer bilateral to third party talks because bilateral management allows greater autonomy over the timing and terms of negotiations (Allee and Huth, 2006). As evidence, consider the frequency with which territorial rivals seek bilateral over multilateral settlements. According to the ICOW data, rivals attempted bilateral management 782 times, but multilateral management only 298 times. Disputants prefer bilateral negotiations because they can misrepresent the minimum amount of concessions they are willing to accept in order to strike a more attractive bargain (Hopmann, 2001).⁸ They can also bluff about their resolution to fight. So to achieve a better outcome from bargaining, states frequently seek bilateral rather than multilateral talks. Because combatants are inclined to misrepresent their resolve and the minimum terms they are willing to accept, they prefer to negotiate without the intrusion of a third party.

However, while bilateral negotiations are more flexible and potentially allow states to fare better in bargaining, they require more trust from disputants than do multilateral talks.⁹ States that submit to bilateral negotiations must have faith that the cooperation they offer will not be exploited, particularly because a third party is not necessary to prevent exploitation. Under bilateral talks, states believe that communications from their opponents are credible, because a third party is not available to verify information. They also have confidence that opponents will comply with the terms of a settlement without third party enforcement. In short, disputants believe that bargaining leverage granted to their opponents during

⁸ This also explains why pacific conflict management often fails to produce an agreement. Combatants have an incentive to misrepresent their preferences. Should their opponent stand firm in the face of inflated demands, the deceitful party will not back down, as doing so would garner it an untrustworthy reputation. Because neither side is willing to yield, negotiations often do not lead to agreements (Hopmann, 2001).

⁹ Trust is the belief that the cooperation a state extends to its opponent in bargaining will be reciprocated (Kydd, 2001).

bilateral negotiations will not be used maliciously.¹⁰ They share enough trust to negotiate while leaving a third party on the sidelines.

On the other hand, disputants do not need as much trust for multilateral conflict management because third parties mitigate the deleterious effects of mistrust. Outside actors verify whether communication from the disputants is credible (Kydd, 2003).¹¹ A third party also provides information about the disputants' true bargaining preferences and level of resolve (Hopmann, 2001; Kydd, 2003). And finally, third parties monitor compliance with agreements and enforce the terms (Hensel and Mitchell, 2007; Walter, 2002). So even if disputants fear exploitation during the process of negotiations, their fears can be somewhat assuaged by the diplomatic involvement of a third party.

Consequently, if international organizations are to encourage bilateral conflict management, they must help build trust between members. Bilateral negotiations indicate that organizations foster the belief that cooperation extended will be reciprocated. If members are confident that their cooperative efforts will not be exploited, they should be more likely to negotiate without a third party. A number of organizational theories imply that IOs manufacture the trust necessary for bilateral dispute resolution. Theories of security communities explain that members of organizations perceive their own security as inextricably linked to others. Members are socialized into developing trust and favoring peaceful means of dispute management (Deutsch et al., 1957: 5). For example, the community-building functions of the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE) include promoting bilateral agreements and building mutual trust (Adler, 1998: 132). Organizations may also build trust by making it less likely that states will renege on agreements (Mitchell and Hensel, 2007).

While the theoretical arguments regarding the trust-building capabilities of IOs are persuasive, the analyses here do not support the expectation that IOs build enough trust for bilateral dispute negotiations. I find that IOs are unable to broker bilateral cooperation outside the organization. This is not to say that IOs do not socialize their members at all, as a number of studies convincingly illustrate the socializing effects of organizations (Bearce and Bondanella, 2007; Finnemore, 1993; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). What the analyses indicate is that IO socialization has not fostered enough trust for members to bilaterally negotiate territorial claims.

However, organizations may build lower levels of trust between members to facilitate negotiations through third parties. If we think of trust as a continuum underlying the process of conflict management, then disputants involved in bilateral talks need more shared trust than disputants undergoing third party negotiations. But disputants

¹⁰ This is not to say that a state which engages in bilateral negotiations does not itself harbor intentions to act maliciously. In fact, a state can come to the table specifically to exploit its opponent. However, that state must also believe it will not be tricked or exploited by its rival. To negotiate, it must have faith that the opponent is trustworthy, even if it does not have so noble a purpose itself.

¹¹ As Kydd (2003) explains, this is especially likely under biased mediation.

must also share a lower level of trust to negotiate even with a third party present. While a third party provides information, it cannot fully reveal the extent to which disputants are misrepresenting resolve and the bargains they are willing to accept. The third party may also have limited ability to consistently monitor compliance with agreements and continually enforce the terms. Disputants must have some trust that they will not be exploited during the process of third party conflict management, although not as much trust as is required for bilateral negotiations.

The positive relationship between IO membership and third party attempts indicates that, rather than building high levels of trust, organizations broker conflict management by becoming actively involved in bargaining. Consider the active versus passive distinction of IOs recently offered by Mitchell and Hensel (2007). International organizations *passively* encourage conflict management by aligning members' preferences, inducing repeated interactions, and lengthening the shadow of the future. Organizations *actively* promote conflict resolution by involving themselves in dispute bargaining (Mitchell and Hensel, 2007). While Mitchell and Hensel find evidence of both passive and active effects, I find support primarily for the active influence of IOs. Because IOs promote third party conflict management, it appears that organizations systematically offer to mediate, arbitrate, and adjudicate disputes. Fellow members of organizations also make themselves available to diplomatically intervene in conflicts. The analyses show that IOs actively broker dispute bargaining rather than passively socializing and building trust among members.

In some ways, the findings are not surprising. Because institutions have a vested interest in their members' affairs, and because their charters specifically mandate conflict resolution, we would expect IOs to get involved when members are disputing. On the other hand, the findings are somewhat counterintuitive, given the large amount of research illustrating the socializing and trust-building capacities of organizations.

The analyses shed light on the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea discussed in the opening section. Ethiopia's and Eritrea's institutional involvement did not propel them to settle bilaterally, but it did encourage international mediation by institutions and other third parties. The two rivals agreed to binding arbitration by the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and an agreement was handed down in 2002. However, the current situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea does not fully cohere with recent research, which finds that disputants are likely to comply with IO brokered binding agreements (Mitchell and Hensel, 2007). Ethiopia rejected the binding decision in 2003, primarily because the border town of Badme was awarded to Eritrea. Yet IOs are taking measures to return the combatants to negotiations. In March 2006, both countries agreed to resume talks to draw the border after meeting with UN mediators. The Security Council also threatened economic sanctions in December 2005 to scale back Ethiopian and Eritrean military forces in the border region. And UN peacekeepers remain in the area, although 160 western peacekeepers were withdrawn last December. Although the situation remains tense, a binding agreement and institutional involvement should eventually end the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Mitchell and Hensel, 2007).

Conclusion

Although a number of international institutions mandate the peaceful settlement of disputes, few studies investigate whether organizations are actually effective in bringing members to the table. I conclude that IOs are indeed effective in brokering negotiations between members, but primarily with the assistance of third parties. Despite the fact that a number of IOs call for direct negotiations between members in their charters, they do not broker bilateral cooperation over territorial disputes. However, peace brokering institutions do play a role in the conflict management process by advocating third party diplomatic intervention. Organizations do not make members more cooperative outside the institutional confines, but are valuable for encouraging active international involvement in members' conflicts.

Appendix 1. Peace Brokering International Organizations

Peace Brokering Organizational Memberships of Territorial Disputants in the Western Hemisphere and Europe

Andean Community
Caribbean Commission
Council of Europe
European Union
German Confederation
International Central American Tribunal
League of Nations
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Organization of African Unity
Organization of American States
Organization of the Islamic Conference
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Permanent Court of Arbitration
Permanent Court of International Justice Optional Clause
United Nations
Western European Union

Other Peace Brokering International Organizations

African Union
Arab League
Arab Maghreb Union
Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Commonwealth of Independent States Charter
Economic Community of Central African States
Economic Community of West African States
Nordic Council of Ministers

Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
Southern African Development Community
Warsaw Treaty Organization

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