Institutions-Based Influence: The Vatican's Mediations of International Conflicts

Mamy Wilson Daniel Randriamanantena

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INSTITUTIONS-BASED INFLUENCE:
THE VATICAN’S MEDIATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY

MAMY WILSON. D. RANDRIAMANANTENA

CHICAGO, IL

DECEMBER 2020
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<tr>
<td>CANF</td>
<td>Cuban American National Foundation</td>
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<td>CELAM</td>
<td>Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIAS</td>
<td>Centro de Investigacion y Accion Social</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>Catholic News Service</td>
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<td>CONAIE</td>
<td>Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador</td>
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<td>CRS</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENEC</td>
<td>Encuentro Nacional Eclesial Cubano</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<td>FARC</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia</td>
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<td>FMLN</td>
<td>Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCR</td>
<td>Higher Council of the Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICM</td>
<td>International Conflict Management</td>
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<td>ICMICA</td>
<td>International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs</td>
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<td>IMCS</td>
<td>International Movement of Catholic Students</td>
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<td>IYCW</td>
<td>International Young Christian Workers</td>
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<td>MNLF</td>
<td>Moro National Liberation Front</td>
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<td>MOMEPE</td>
<td>Military Observer Mission Ecuador-Peru</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCID</td>
<td>Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue</td>
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<td>PCJP</td>
<td>Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLN</td>
<td>Picton, Lennox and Nueva</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>URNG</td>
<td>Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca</td>
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<tr>
<td>USCCB</td>
<td>United States Conference of Catholic Bishops</td>
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<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines why the Vatican as a global religious organization and the smallest state in the world is able to successfully mediate some difficult and intractable conflicts while it fails to do so in other cases. Drawing from the New Liberalism theory in International Relations, the mediation theory and the literature on the Vatican as a player in world affairs, it suggests the important role of the Vatican’s institutions at both the global and local level, besides its spiritual and moral leverage. The method, which combines a longitudinal analysis, a process tracing procedure and a comparative analysis, is used to examine multiple cases (N-cases) as well as tests the hypotheses on three particular cases in which the Vatican intervened as an official mediator or not: (1) the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile solved in 1984; (2) the U.S. – Cuba long confrontation which resulted with a diplomatic deal in 2014, and (3) the Ecuador – Peru conflict which ended in 1998. The findings show in particular, (1) the crucial role of a third party in the mediation structure, (2) the importance of the religious factor, namely the Catholic identity expressed in the Church-State relationship which shapes the relationship between the mediator and the disputants, (3) the decisive role of the local church in the Vatican’s whole diplomatic structure, a fact not always recognized. By and large, the study contributes to explain the influence of transnational religious organizations such as the Vatican in international affairs through the lens of their foreign policy and diplomacy which are important areas that has received little attention from scholars.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE DISSERTATION

The Research Question

In December 2014, the U.S. and Cuba reached an agreement to end more than fifty years of simmering conflict which began with the emergence of communism on the island in the late 1950s. Accompanying this stunning diplomatic feat was the revelation that the breakthrough was achieved partly with the subtle mediation of the Vatican (Kornbluh and LeoGrande, 2015a; Kornbluh and LeoGrande, 2015b; Dwight 2015; Colonna-Cesari 2016). The media rapturously praised the event. As the title of one media outlet put it: “Pope Francis Bridged Gap Between U.S. and Cuba During Secret Talks.”¹ The U.S. – Cuba deal appears to be part of a longer history of the Vatican’s efforts in conflict resolution, at least since the late 19th century with Pope Leo XIII’s intervention to solve the conflict between Spain and Germany over the Carolina Islands in 1885 (Ticchi 2002: 61-115). The Vatican’s involvement in interstate mediation includes successful endeavors such as the long-lasting Beagle-Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile in 1984 (Princen 1992a; Lindsey 1987; Mirow 2004; Garrett 1985) and efforts such as Pope Paul VI’s failed attempt to stop the Vietnam War in the 1970s (Domenico 1994). These cases may spur some questions as to why a global religious organization and the smallest state in the world such as the Vatican is called upon to mediate – and sometimes lead

the successful outcome of protracted and difficult international conflicts such as the ones described above. The issue spurs some debate among theorists. For instance, one scholar argues that mediation efforts by states with significant power are more likely to be accepted than mediation efforts by medium or small states (Frei 1976). Some quantitative studies appear to go along the same direction. Bercovitch and Gartner (2009b), for instance, find that powerful international mediators (e.g. large states, the U.N.) that utilize active, intrusive strategies and marshal significant resources and leverage in support of their efforts are more effective at managing intense conflicts in comparison to lower profile mediators using a more passive strategy and utilizing fewer resources do better at managing less challenging and intractable conflicts. Another line of argument is put forward by other theorists who maintain that power is not a precursor to successful mediation but the relationship of the mediator with the disputants. Such a relationship may be related to trust that comes from a long-earn reputation as a “peacemaker.” Thus, for instance, not so powerful third parties such as some small European states (Norway, Sweden, New Zealand, Switzerland) are known to be successful in dealing with difficult conflicts (Hoglund and Svensson 2009; Melin 2013).

Manifestly, the Vatican would be included in the second category since its leverage on mediation is not based on tangible power derived from material factors such as the size of territory, the economy, military capability and technological prowess. However, while its leverage may share some characteristics with other entities such as those small states, it has surely other elements based on its religious identity and structure. The question this dissertation asks then is how a structured organization which is mostly of a religious nature is able to exercise a certain influence on the domain of the mediation of interstate conflicts? What explains the leverage the Vatican has on the parties? The purpose is to have an insight into the underlying
mechanism of such an influence in terms of its involvement as a mediator. It seeks to examine
the role of the Vatican in both the process and the outcomes of mediation. Here process refers to
what occurs at the mediation table while the outcome refers to what has been achieved (or not
achieved) because of mediation (Bercovitch 2011b: 94-95).

While "Vatican" in its technical sense refers to the official residence of the Pope in Rome or
the Vatican City State, the term is hereafter used to refer more generally to the papal
government, also called “Curia” which comprises the whole bureaucracy that pertains to
diplomacy and foreign policy (Noe 2015: 9-10; Reese 1996: 5-6). The question this dissertation
asks addresses intriguing and not so well-known facts such as the ability of small entities in the
international system, be they states or organizations, to exert influence which goes beyond their
physical size or material capabilities. Besides being a small state, indeed one of the smallest ones
in the world, the fundamental religious nature of the Vatican adds to its peculiarity and likely
affects the way it deals with various issues in global politics. An examination of how the Vatican
deals with global issues such as conflict mediation would shed light on the influence exercised
by large religious organizations which is an issue that puzzles scholars. The study of the
Vatican’s intervention as well as the way it exercises a leverage on the parties opens up to
broader questions such as when and under what conditions the Vatican is most effective in
conflict resolution. Some scholars point out how the Vatican as a player in international politics
has not been the subject of much study in mainstream scholarship (Barbato 2013: 29-31). Such a
deficiency is even more noticeable in the area of conflict mediation. This may be explained by
the long-standing tradition in international relations which seems to overlook the role of religion
in international relations (Fox 2001; Johnston and Sampson 1994).
Literature Review

In various ways, theorists attempt to address the question as to why a religious group such as the Vatican is sometimes successful in the mediation of complex interstate conflicts. Some authors consider the spiritual aspect of religion as the main point of leverage for religious groups in mediation. Analyzing faith-based actors’ mediation – which includes the Vatican – Bercovitch and Kaddayifici (2009) highlight the importance of the mediator’s identity. Their contention is that, contrary to states which utilize leverage based on power and financial resources, the religious organization’s influence derives mostly from spiritual and moral values. By and large, the legitimacy of these faith-based units is premised on spiritual force. What the authors want to point out is that religion can be a factor of peace, not always a source of conflict as manifested by religious-based terrorism and other violent facts worldwide. In that particular respect, the Vatican’s moral authority constitutes more or less its main leverage in mediation as perceived by some authors in the case of the Beagle Channel dispute mentioned above (Princen 1992a; Lindsay 1987; Mirow 2004). Essentially, their arguments point to the identity of the mediator as pivotal for the mediation’s outcome. Lindsay (1987), for instance, evokes three important factors which partly explained the successful mediation of this crisis, namely, (1) Catholicism in both countries where the Vatican enjoys substantial prestige and moral force, (2) the perception of the Vatican as a neutral third party and (3) the moral prestige of Pope John Paul II. In line with that argument, Dwight (2015) signals how the Catholic character of the Cuban population helped in the Vatican’s mediation of the U.S.- Cuba protracted conflict which resulted in the 2014 diplomatic deal between the two countries. Authors, however, differ on their emphasis on the religious and moral variables. For Princen (1992a), the key factors affecting a Pope’s ability to influence state leaders are not Catholicism and religious loyalties per se. The author highlights
factors such as the Vatican’s neutrality which derives from its moral authority, the Pope’s lack of conventional power resources, the legitimacy papal endorsement affords a state leader and the ability for secrecy. Of course, such arguments are not immune from flaws. For instance, the neutrality argument, which several authors consider as a necessary ingredient for a successful mediation, is not always warranted. Basing their analysis on several studies, Kydd (2003) and Svensson (2013), for instance, argue that, for some types of conflict, biased mediators are likely to be more successful in mediation than impartial ones. Due to some inherent mechanisms, some biased mediators are not only more likely to be successful in bringing about settlements, but also in some sense, produce “better agreements.” From a broader perspective, Brookmire and Sistrunk (1980) argue that effective mediation in international relations is more a matter of a mediator’s employment of resources and leverage commensurate with his or her position to enhance fairness than it is of impartiality.

Some authors take a different stand. Basing her analysis on a juridical perspective, McFarlane (2016) highlights the diplomatic clout of the Vatican as a basis of its leverage. Analyzing the Vatican diplomacy through its intervention in some conflicts in the Middle-East, the author contends that the Vatican functions under a platform of international law: the institution justifies its actions and preferences not under spiritual invocations, as some authors advocate, but rather with a diplomacy based on human rights and humanitarian law. For McFarlane, the Vatican’s leverage in conflict mediation derives from cultural diplomacy which is a course of actions grounded on the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture and identity. Other scholars take quite a different perspective, by emphasizing domestic and international factors to account for the successful outcome of a mediation, thus leaving only a peripheral role for the Vatican. In the case of the Beagle-Channel dispute, for instance, Gertner
(2014: 2016) uses the framework of foreign policy analysis to argue that the decision to avoid war was influenced by structural factors at both domestic and international levels. The author contends that the international sanctions for human rights violations affected both countries’ leverage as they created domestic problems. Both Argentina and Chile were thus keen to use mediation as a strategy to remove the human rights sanctions from the U.S. agenda.

While some of the authors reviewed above have spelled out the critical aspect of religion, the Catholic church in particular as an important element in mediations, they hardly explain how that fact translates into political and diplomatic leverage. In that regard, the manifestation and the extent of how the local church, for instance through the Bishops’ Conference, enters into the mediation process has not been well explored by theorists. What might be insightful in that respect is the failed attempt of mediation offered by the Vatican in the earlier years of the Vietnam War. According to Roy Domenico (1994), part of the reason why the U.S. establishment was not keen on the Vatican initiative was the Johnson administration’s lack of consideration toward the U.S. Catholic church which partly came from the church’s low visibility on domestic issues at that time. This situation was compounded by a lack of official diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the Vatican which prevented formal contacts during that time. To recall, the diplomatic relation between the two countries were disrupted in 1867 to be fully restored only in 1984.² Still on that case, the author spells out the lack of support from the South Vietnamese bishops on the Papal initiative who might have put pressure on the South-Vietnamese government. The fact is that the Vatican as an institution seems to be overlooked by

scholars although it has undergone a drastic transformation through the years, particularly since the end of World War II and the Second Vatican Council (1962—1965), the Catholic church’s turning point (Meurice 2010). The Vatican stands out by its specificity in terms of size and sovereignty. About the latter, the Vatican’s claim of sovereignty in the international system is based on its spiritual status (Cardinale 1976). In fact, the Vatican’s sovereignty distinguishes it as a religious organization, and its religious nature differentiates it from other global actors. Added to being the head of the largest and most centralized religious organization in the world, the Vatican is an intriguing entity in international relations because of its multiple features that complicate an easy classification according to conventional rules. While being a state – although the smallest and least populous state one with 842 “citizens” as of 2018 – it also shares some attributes of an intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Ferrari 2007: 33-34). Some authors observe how Vatican diplomacy has been at times closely associated with a personality (the Pope) which tends to overlook the whole Catholic system behind it (Graham 1994). While not denying the role of spiritual resources of the Catholic church as an international religious organization as well as the Papal moral authority which account for the Vatican’s influence, there seems to be not enough analysis on how these attributes translate into leverage. Worth noticing is the fact that while the existing literature recognizes the importance of the Vatican as a “long time significant actor in global politics” (Kurth 1993: 40), a thorough discussion of how its various institutions reflect the Catholic church’s peculiar structures is lacking.

The Theoretical Framework

This dissertation wants to fill in the gap by providing an alternative explanation of the source of influence of the Vatican in the mediation of international conflicts. It concentrates on the
institutional aspect of the mediator, which has received little attention from scholars. This dissertation makes its argument from a framework based partly on the New Liberalism of International Relations advocated by Moravscik, and partly on the literature of the Vatican as an international player in world politics along with some elements from the mediation theory.

The New Liberalism’s theory advocated by Moravscik, which focuses on the primacy of societal actors, argues that, global politics is made up of individuals and private social groups, and sub-state officials. Following that logic, societal ideas, interests, and institutions influence state behavior by shaping state preferences (Moravcsik 1997: 516-517). On the other hand, the literature of the Vatican as player in global politics stresses the specific structure of the Catholic church which allows it to engage on issues at various levels, namely international, national and local. The Vatican’s involvement in global politics leans on a complex institution with a unique system of vertical authority whose jurisdiction transcends international borders (Vallier 1971). Moreover, the three distinct levels of relationship which characterizes the Catholic church’s structure, namely (1) a center-periphery relationship, (2) a periphery-center relationship and (3) a periphery-periphery relationship, accentuates its operation on the world stage (Hehir 1987). The Vatican’s multiple institutions at both the higher and the lower levels perform a subsidiary and mutually reinforcing function which results in significant diplomatic leverage in world affairs (Ferrari 2007). The theoretical framework also includes elements from the mediation theory which highlights the pivotal role of a third party in managing conflict. Drawing on these various sources, the dissertation formulates hypotheses on the influence of the Vatican on both the global and local levels.

From a global perspective, the dissertation analyzes historical cases of conflict mediation in which the Vatican intervened, especially from 1965 onwards. It then proceeds to examine in
detail three contemporary cases, namely the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile, the U.S.-Cuban conflict, and the Ecuador and Peru conflict in which the Vatican was not involved as an official mediator, although it performed various activities of conflict management during the timeframe of mediation. By and large, the dissertation argues that, along with the moral and spiritual elements, institutions also account significantly in the Vatican’s source of leverage in mediation.

**The Research Methodology and Cases Selection**

The strategy of research consists of an observation of the variation of the influence of the Vatican in interstate mediation in terms of the degree of involvement of the Vatican’s units at the two levels of analysis, namely the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican with their respective sub-units. The method is composed of various protocols. It incorporates a process tracing procedure to uncover the activities and impacts of actors from both non-Vatican officials (state dignitaries) and Vatican officials at various levels of authority: Popes, Secretaries of State, Vatican envoys, nuncios, bishops, laypeople, etc. within the mediation timeframe. Another component of the methods is a longitudinal analysis which involves repeated observations of the same variables (e.g., people) over short or long periods of time (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell 2002: 267). It is hypothesized that such an influence varies in terms of the degree of intervention (units involved, and activities performed) of the Vatican’s institutions during the mediation timeframe. Finally, the method includes a cross-case procedure from a comparative perspective. This will serve to confirm or nuance the institutional argument of this dissertation.

The primary data used in this dissertation are from several sources: (1) In-depth interviews of key people composed of both Vatican and non-Vatican officials in Rome (Italy) and other places (Washington, DC., New York, Chicago); (2) Primary materials composed of official speeches,
memos, confidential reports from both Vatican and non-Vatican institutions; (3) Primary materials from the large data base of the Conference of U.S. Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in its headquarters in Washington, DC., which are composed of church news and church-related events all around dispatched to various Catholic agencies such as Catholic News Service, (4) Some highly confidential notes and memos about the Vatican’s correspondence culled from Wikileaks; (4) Various primary materials from news outlets, journals and reviews such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Economist, Los Angeles Times, Latin America Report, The Atlantic, etc.; (5) Accounts on specific historical events in books and book-chapters as well as scholarly articles. Secondary materials used in this study are composed of depiction of theories, analysis, historical narratives as well as comments of events found in books, book-chapters and scholarly journals.

**Conclusion**

This dissertation claims several findings. By and large, the argument that the Vatican’s institutions at both global and local levels have a significant influence in the mediation of states in dispute, besides the moral and spiritual factors, finds a confirmation in the three main case-study with some variation across cases. This type of influence deriving from its sophisticated network of institutions sets the Vatican apart from other mediators of the same caliber (small states). Another important finding is the pivotal role of the religious factor (Catholic identity) in shaping the relationship between the mediator and the disputants, allowing the former to have substantial leverage over the latter. Historically, most of the successful cases of conflict mediation dealt with by the Vatican from 1965 onwards have Catholicism as a common factor. Another significant finding is the important role taken by local church in the Vatican’s structure of foreign policy, a fact highlighted particularly by the U.S. – Cuba conflict which in a way,
confirms the pivotal role of domestic actors who shape state preference in global politics as suggested by the New Liberalism theory in international relations.

The six remaining chapters of this dissertation unpack the main points outlined above. The second chapter gives a summary of the dyad Vatican-conflict which is the main unit of analysis in terms of structure and ideological posture. It also discusses in detail the theoretical framework from which the arguments will be developed. The chapter, finally, includes a section on the methodology used to test the hypotheses. The third chapter makes an historical overview of mediation cases in which the Vatican has been involved from the late 19th Century until the present time. The following three chapters discusses the three empirical case studies, namely (1) the Beagle Channel conflict which opposed Argentina with Chile, (2) the 2014 Cuba-U.S. confrontation and (3) the Peru-Ecuador dispute which will serve as a counterargument to the first two cases. The final chapter provides a summary of the main findings and outlines their consequences in various areas such as the influence of large religious institutions on International Relations, the Vatican’s style of mediation, the Vatican’s diplomacy and foreign policy. It also includes a discussion of the dissertation’s implication for future research.
CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses the dissertation’s theoretical framework. As such, it lays out the basic conceptual tools related to the dyad of the Vatican-conflict as the main unit of analysis. This chapter is subdivided into three major sections. The first section summarizes some features of the Vatican as the governing institution of the global Catholic church in sociological, juridical and doctrinal terms as discussed by the literature. Such a discussion gives a global outlook of this not so well-known global institution with atypical features which is the Vatican. To paraphrase John Allen, a Vatican expert, this would serve as a sort of “Vatican Diplomacy 101” to introduce concepts and clarify issues in terms of how the Vatican exercises its foreign policy globally. Such a summary is instructive in several respects in that it highlights how ideas and institutions in the Catholic church have evolved over time, especially since the advent of the Second Vatican Council (1961-1965). The second section discusses the theoretical framework upon which are built the arguments regarding the Vatican’s mediation of interstate disputes. The third section discusses the methods, the case study selection and lays out the variables utilized in this dissertation.

The Vatican’s Structure and Principles of Diplomacy

During the discussion between Soviet Chairman Josef Stalin and French Foreign Minister Pierre Laval in 1935 in the Kremlin, Stalin was inquiring about the real power of the Vatican by asking this famous question: “how many divisions does the Pope have?” Pierre Laval is
purported to have said that the Vatican has a number of legions not always visible on parade
(Graham 1959: 25; Nichols 1981:21). Undoubtedly, Laval’s answer is correct as the Catholic church should not be considered from a military perspective related to a specific physical territory. While it is true that the Vatican has a symbolic territory that warrants it, the influence of this “legion not seen in parade” is rather subtle and elusive because of the complexity of its presence in global society. In terms of demography, the Catholic church is the biggest religious entity worldwide. Statistics show a steady growth of the worldwide Catholic population: from over 654 million in 1970, to 1.299 billion in 2016 according to the latest figures.¹ A conventional mistake for an unwarned observer is confusing the Catholic Church as solely the Vatican and vice-versa. As I show in the following paragraphs, the reality is more complex. In fact, the Vatican — which is part and parcel of the Catholic church — is a system of complex interdependent units. I will discuss three features, namely, (1) its juridical status on the global scene, (2) its moral status and (3) its global structural outlook.

**The Vatican’s Juridical Status**

The Vatican is subject to both Church law — also known as the Code of Canon Law² which is proper to the internal regulation of the Catholic church and the international law due to its status as a sovereign entity in the international system.³ In the current Code promulgated in 1983,

¹Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at https://cara.georgetown.edu/

² The Code of Canon law is the supreme Law of the Catholic church. It is the system of laws and legal principles made and enforced by the hierarchical authorities to regulate its internal organization and government and to order and direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the church (Della Rocca, 1959: 3). Composed of seven books subdivided into multiple parts and chapters, it codifies all aspects of the internal life of the church through laws and regulations.

³ International Relations scholar Stephen Krasner (1999) outlines four meaning of sovereignty: (1) domestic sovereignty, referring to the organization of public authority within a state and to the level of effective control exercised by those holding authority; (2) interdependence sovereignty, referring to the ability of public authorities to control trans-border movements; (3) international legal sovereignty, referring to the mutual recognition of states or
the Vatican as a global institution is included in the hierarchical Constitution of the Catholic church which comprises units such as the Pope, the papal curia\textsuperscript{4} and the Bishops’ Conferences (Canons 330-572 and Canons 368-374). There are clearly delineated characteristics of these various institutions, such as their purpose, power, attributes and domains of competency. Regarding its legal status at the global level, the Vatican city state has gained international recognition through the Lateran Treaty of February 11, 1929, signed between the Holy See and the Italian government.\textsuperscript{5} The international character of the recognition is stipulated in Article 2 of the treaty which declares that “Italy recognizes the sovereignty of the Holy See in the international field as an inherent attribute of its nature, in conformity with its tradition and the exigencies of its mission in the world.”\textsuperscript{6} One indicator of such an international recognition is the increasing number of countries having diplomatic relations with the Vatican which from 24 at the time of the Lateran Treaty climbed to 182 currently (see Table 1. below).

\begin{itemize}
\item other entities; and (4) Westphalian sovereignty, referring to the exclusion of external actors from domestic authority configurations. From that perspective, due to its specific status as a global religious organization and an atypical small state, the Vatican enjoys both international legal sovereignty and Westphalian sovereignty.
\item The Roman Curia is more or less equivalent to a national government, only that it functions as a universal government, through which the Pope normally conducts the affairs of his office, be they questions concerning the Catholic church throughout the world or touching on relations with states (Lajolo 2005: 6)
\item The Lateran Treaty (after the name of the Palace it was signed) is part of what are to be known as the Lateran Accords. Essentially, the agreements signed on February 11, 1929, between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy represented by the government Premier Benito Mussolini recognizes the Vatican City State as an independent state with full rights and privileges. The Lateran Treaty was recognized in the Constitution of Italy as regulating the relations between the state and the Catholic church (See http://www.vaticanstate.va/content/dam/vaticanstate/documenti/leggi-e-decreti/Normative-Penali-e-Amministrative/LateranTreaty.pdf)
\item Article 2, Lateran Treaty of 1929.
\end{itemize}
Table 1. Number of states that have diplomatic ties with the Vatican in specific historical periods (source: Vatican Secretariat of State)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>End of Papal states</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Lateran Treaty with Italy</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Eve of WWII</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Beginning of John Paul II’s tenure as Pope</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Beginning of Francis’s tenure as pope</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Vatican’s Moral Status

A second important component of the Vatican as a religious institution concerns the ethical and ideological principles upon which its actions and policies are premised. Its moral codes concerning social life are enshrined in Catholic social teaching which finds its ultimate meaning and purpose in the principles and values promoted by the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Langan 1998). This not so-well known voluminous corpus of documents is composed of papal encyclicals, letters and exhortations as well as conciliar texts of social nature.7 One scholar expert in Catholic social ethics states unequivocally that “Catholic social teaching constitute the core, inspiration, motivation as well as the identifying principles for Catholic social action. Dating back to the end of the 19th Century with Pope Leo XIII’s groundbreaking Encyclical Rerum Novarum (“On New Things”) issued in 1891, it lays out important ethical values that ground Catholic social action through successive historical periods.”8 Among the more important themes treated are the subsidiarity principle, economic and social justice, support for democracy and the protection of human dignity and rights. Pope Francis has recently added the theme of ecological concern

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7 The Catholic Social Teaching is sometimes referred to by some scholars as “our best kept secret” (see Edward P. DeBerri and J. Hug (eds.), Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret (Washington: Center for Concern, 2004)

8 David Hollenbach, SJ., Distinguished Research Professor in the Walsh School of Foreign Service and Senior Fellow of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs at Georgetown University (Interviewed in Washington, DC., on June 18, 2019).
through his Encyclical *Laudato Si* discussed below. Theorists such as Hanson (1984) consider Catholic social teaching as the “political ideology” of the Catholic Church in that it somewhat indicates a third way between the two extreme ideologies of socialism and capitalism. By extension in the domain of international affairs, Catholic social teaching constitutes the moral basis of the Vatican’s diplomacy as it frames the way it exercises the papal foreign policy mission (Tomasi 2017; Martino 2009). Such a vision based on intangible ethical principles helps explain why the Vatican is more involved in various domestic and international issues related to the global common good and human rights concerns such as care for refugees, the rights of minorities, democracy and development as well as conflict resolution, the focus of this dissertation.

**The Vatican’s Structures**

The third component of the Vatican is the way it is structured and through which it is able to institutionalize its moral principles, which are acted out in its diplomacy. Scholars have various ways of describing those structures (Vallier 1971; Ferrari 2007; Barbato 2013; Hervieu-Leger 1997; Hehir 1987). Sociologist Ivan Vallier (1971) sees the Catholic church as a complex institution with a unique system of vertical authority whose jurisdiction transcends international borders. It is not a monolithic bloc as the center coordinates and shapes the action of the subsidiary fields, each field unit in turn possesses a certain autonomy by making demands on the center, providing it with new ideas and key resources such as money, skills and above all

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9 The concept of “Vatican diplomacy” utilized in this dissertation does not pertain primarily to the rather codified area of international law. The term “Papal” or “Vatican diplomacy” refers to diplomacy as an institution. According to Graham (1959: 11-12), this is the system by which, through accredited actors, the Vatican carries on stable, formal, and reciprocal intercourse with states and the society within them. It is the instrumentality by which the supreme authority of the Catholic Church communicates within the framework of standard international practice, with the authorities of the states, in the transaction of current or special issues which arise on the part of either church or state.”
loyalties. Along these lines Bryan Hehir (1987:109-113) points out other features of the Catholic church’s structures in line with the theological impact brought about by the Second Vatican Council (discussed below). The author points out how theological and pastoral developments in the post-Second Vatican Council period which have transformed the Church’s structures, rendering it less “pyramidal” by giving more power to the “periphery.” The result has been a less centralized papacy and the rise of new centers of governance in the church (e.g., national conferences of bishops) and a more pluralistic model of authority. Hehir distinguishes three levels of activity in the Catholic church: (1) a center-periphery relationship, (2) a periphery-center relationship and (3) a periphery-periphery relationship. Each of these relationships adds a distinct dimension to the Catholic church’s activities on the world stage.

Other scholars concur in Hehir’s analysis by fleshing out other aspects of the church’s structures. Casanova (1997), for instance, spells out the increasing diplomatic clout of the Catholic church in a globalized world characterized by multiple channels of connection and access to state institutions. The increasing number of countries that have diplomatic ties with the Vatican, especially after the Second Vatican Council, testifies to its growing diplomatic relevance as no state can afford to ignore it. Hetzke (2010) pays special attention to the role of the laity as an important component of Catholic church’s structures in the post-Vatican II era. The Council has redefined the status of the laity by allowing it to engage in multiple institutions at both the higher and local levels. Stressing particularly the local level, Levine and Stoll (1997) consider that the emergence of decentralized networks within the overall structure of the church in the post-conciliar era came along with important innovations, a surge of organization and new forms of social and political action in which the laity became increasingly involved. Ferrari (2007:34-35) highlights the multiple characteristics of the Vatican which combines at once
elements of a “sovereign state,” an atypical International Governmental Organization (IGO) and an uncommon Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). The author contends that the Vatican’s multiple institutions at both the higher and the lower levels perform a subsidiary and mutually reinforcing function which results in increasing diplomatic clout in world affairs. Along the same line, Barbato (2010) maintains that the three characteristics of the Vatican as a state, a diplomat on the world stage and as a transnational actor with its multiple channels of connection allow the Holy See to have significant leverage on various issues on the world stage.

**Major Turning Points in the Vatican’s Diplomacy**

A good grasp of the Vatican’s diplomacy and the way the institution formulates and implements its foreign policy requires a discussion of some major turning points as seen by the literature. This offers crucial historical references and explains important concepts by the same token. One event that has shaped the Vatican’s diplomacy is the dismantlement of the temporal power of the papacy with the unity of Italy in 1870 (Araujo and Lucal 2010; Alvarez 1989). On September 20 of that year, Pope Pius IX gave himself up to the secular authorities upon the Piedmonts troops’ entry into Rome. One must wait until The Lateran Treaty (discussed above) to witness a new era for the entire Catholic church which lasts until the present time. The unification of Italy coupled with the loss of the Papal States\(^{10}\) – known as the “Roman question” – led to drastic upheaval in the organization of the Vatican curia, especially in diplomacy. The Vatican had to readjust to the new reality by renouncing to play the game of competition

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\(^{10}\) The Papal States were the temporal holdings of the papacy from the 8\(^{th}\) Century until 1870. They constituted the major states of Italy from the 8\(^{th}\) Century until the Piedmonts troops incorporated them by force into the Kingdom of Italy in 1870. These temporal holdings which were significant – they covered six modern regions of Italy – clearly showed the Papal earthly power as opposed to his ecclesiastical and moral authority (See Broderick. Robert (ed.), 1987, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Revised and updated Edition) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers).
between sovereign states (Graham 1989: 5). The Vatican gave up its earthly throne by endorsing new attires which give priority to diplomacy based on moral grounds. The speech given by Pope Paul VI at the United Nations on October 4, 1965, could not be more explicit in that regard: “The Holy See has a tiny and practically symbolic temporal sovereignty: the minimum needed in order to be free to exercise its spiritual mission and to assure those who deal with it that it is independent of any sovereignty of this world.”

A second turning point in the development of the Vatican’s diplomatic structures and practice is the end of the Second World War. The ensuing creation of the United Nations in 1948 brought major changes in the attitude and orientation of the Vatican towards international institutions. One noticeable fact is the friendly attitude of the Vatican towards large international organizations such as the United Nations, a tremendous shift from its erstwhile reluctance towards the League of Nations, the U.N.’s forerunner. The initial suspicion gradually gave rise to a full acceptance of the United Nations by succeeding popes, who saw in the organization the full and faultless expression of universal solidarity for peace and order (Gratsch 1996: 60-65). In 1964, after a period of increased presence and interest in the U.N., the Vatican was accorded the status of Permanent Observer, a status held by other States which also chose not to

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12 Multiple reasons are put forward to explain the Vatican’s reservation towards the League of Nations. Among these are (1) the Vatican’s little confidence in the capacity of the League to achieve its objectives, (2) the Vatican’s view of the League as largely the instrument of the victorious powers of World War I to safeguard their interests, (3) the Vatican’s fear of the negative reaction of the Italian government which believed that the Vatican might use the League to press its claim to the Papal States (de Riedmatten 1970; Araujo and Lucal 2004).

13 On the United Nations, the Vatican’s position is in stark contrast with the United States’. As Allen (2004: 376-377) argues, while the Vatican would understand the United Nations in terms of sovereignty, the U.S. would see it rather as a means of cooperation among individually sovereign states, each of which retains complete liberty of action.
be members. Historically, such standing enables a State Permanent Observer’s representative to receive invitations to meetings, take part in them via substantive interventions and other contributions, obtain relevant documents, mingle with delegates of Member States and, in general, become a member of the UN family (Araujo and Luca 2010: 67-68).

The Vatican’s status in the U.N. was elevated in July 2004 when the UN General Assembly voted unanimously to expand its participation in the institution. This means that the Vatican has all the rights of full membership except voting rights, submission of resolution proposals without co-sponsoring and putting forward candidates.¹⁴ Both secular observers as well as church officials see this change as an indicator of the increasing influence of the Vatican on the world stage.¹⁵ The Vatican became active within the framework of the UN by adhering to its multiple affiliated organizations. Throughout the years, the Holy See has been a member of seven U.N. organizations or agencies, an observer in eight others and a member or observer in five regional organizations (Parolin 2017: xiii).

The Vatican’s central bureaucracy was also the subject of transformation in the wake of World War II. One of the most affected units is the Secretariat of State characterized by an increasing bureaucratization of the administration and the professionalization of the diplomatic personnel (Alvarez 1989). The structural modernization of the Vatican’s diplomacy that has been imposed by the changing social environment at the global level, however, has not altered some

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¹⁵ As the former U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican Francis Rooney affirms “the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the U.N. was asked several times by successive U.N. General Secretary to apply for full membership which would have been granted easily. Yet, the Vatican politely refused such an offer arguing that full membership inevitably would compromise its impartiality, forcing it into political alliances and voting blocs. It would also force the Vatican to tacitly accept, for the sake of those alliances and blocs, positions it did not hold” (Rooney 2015: 206-207).
enduring attitudes, peculiarities and outlooks inherited from entrenched centuries-old customs and practices. Such is for instance the influence of so-called “Romanità” on the Vatican, or the sociological and cultural effect of the Vatican being immersed in the Roman and Italian environment in general. The long tradition has left indelible marks despite the effort to internationalize the Curia (Allen 2004:168-175; Reese 1996: 158-160).

The Second Vatican Council discussed earlier is another major turning point for the Vatican’s diplomacy. This watershed moment for the global Catholic church resulted in the creation of central institutions such as the “Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace” – recently renamed “Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Development” – which is the institutional answer to the church’s need to address issues of poverty and social justice (Etchegaray 2007: 156). More fundamentally, the Council has significantly enlarged the scope and meaning of the Vatican as an actor in world politics. One of the major areas affected by the Council is the Church –State relationship, a key concept in this dissertation. This issue has undergone a deep transformation through two groundbreaking conciliar texts, namely Gaudium et Spes (Joy and Hope) and Dignitatis Humanae (On Religious Liberty) both published on December 7, 1965, which signal a shift in the Catholic church’s teaching on human rights and democracy (Sigmund 1993; Hehir 1993). Abandoning the outdated “thesis — hypothesis” doctrine,¹⁶ the Catholic church has focused its concern on the dignity of the person upon which rights are based. On this

¹⁶ This traditional Catholic position on the question of religious liberty had come to be called the “thesis-hypothesis doctrine” which prevailed in the 19th Century. It held that the state in principle (thesis) was obliged to recognize the Catholic church as the true church and to worship God according to the rites of the Catholic church. This means that in principle (thesis), the state has the right and duty to suppress the public expression of “false religions,” although in practice (hypothesis), toleration of these is acceptable where legal and constitutional recognition of the true faith is not possible (See for instance: Hehir, Bryan, 1993, “The Social Role of the Church: Leo XIII, Vatican II and John Paul II,” in O.Williams and J. Houck (eds.), Catholic Social Thought and the New World Order, Building on One Hundred Years (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press); Joslyn Ogden, 2012, Religious Liberty, Vatican II, and John Courtney Murray (Duke University: Kenan Institute of Ethics).
point, one expert in Catholic social ethics affirms that “by grounding religious liberty on the
dignity of the person and not on the right of the so-called “true church” to exist, the Catholic
church has freed itself from an untenable perspective.” As Sigmund Paul (1993: 60) observes,
“the liberal democratic state necessarily entails religious freedom and it took until the 1960s for
the Vatican to accept its desirability on philosophical and theological grounds.” Obviously, such
a doctrinal shift has a tremendous impact on the Church’s principles of foreign policy which tend
to favor democracy and human rights worldwide.18

Another significant event is the famous Ostpolitik, the opening policy to the Eastern Bloc
which is the Vatican’s equivalent of the West’s “détente policy” (Lavopa 2014: 106; Ortmayer
1978: 234). This policy which departed from the rigid anti-communist stance of Pope Pius XII
(1939-1958) was first initiated by Pope John XXIII (1958-1963) and fully developed during
Pope Paul VI’s tenure from 1965 to 1978. Ostpolitik was a pragmatically diplomatic move
intended to ease the lives of millions of Christians behind the Iron Curtain. The rationale is that
survival may sometimes go through accommodation and even subservience to communist rule.
The Ostpolitik has paved the way for some challenging undertakings such as the failed attempt of
mediation of the Vietnam War (Graham 1994). More significantly, it partly explains the
Vatican’s openness to the Cuban regime manifested by its constant and systematic diplomatic
support for the lifting of the economic embargo towards the Island. As discussed in Chapter 5,

17 Fr. Drew Christiansen, SJ, former Director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of
International Justice and Peace, Expert in Catholic Social Teaching (Interviewed in Washington, DC on June 17,
2019).

18 In his concept of “Third Wave of democracy,” Samuel Huntington (1991: 29-30) highlights the central role of
Catholicism in the worldwide struggle for human rights and democracy in the 1970s and 1980s which originated
from the tremendous doctrinal change within the Catholic church in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.
the Vatican’s posture of openness has greatly facilitated its mediation of the U.S. - Cuba diplomatic deal.

**The Theoretical Framework**

This section reviews the literature that will frame the theoretical argument of this dissertation. It discusses the New Liberalism theory as advocated by Andrew Moravcsik, which is a strand of theory in International Relations. Next, it reviews the literature regarding the Vatican as a player in global politics which is closely tied with the Catholic church’s structures and ideology discussed in the previous section. This review points to international activities at both the global the local levels performed by various units. Along with this literature, some important elements highlighted by the mediation literature which are of significance for this study will be also examined. This discussion will help formulate the hypotheses.

**Moravcsik’s New Liberalism and the Vatican as a Player in World politics**

International relations scholars suggest theories to explain processes and outcomes in world politics from various perspectives which depend on specific philosophical inclinations (Checkel 2013). One particular strand of theory of interest in this study is the New Liberalism advocated by Andrew Moravcsik (1997; 2008). By and large, the New Liberalism which advocates a “bottom-up” or pluralist view of politics maintains that universal background of world politics is globalization. States are, and always have been embedded in a domestic and transnational society that decisively shapes and orients the basic purposes or interests that underlie its policies. The liberal international relations theory’s fundamental premise is that “state preferences derived from the domestic and transnational social pressures critically shapes state behavior (Moravcsik 2008: 236). In other words, societal pressures transmitted by representative institutions and practices alter “state preference” (Moravscik 1997: 519). Since domestic and transnational social
context in which states are embedded varies greatly across space, time and policy areas, so do states preferences. The effect on foreign policy is that choices emerge from the interaction of domestic actors operating within the institutions that determine how interests are aggregated and how coalitions form (Schultz 2013: 480). The importance of domestic societal actors in shaping state policy preference is, for instance, reflected in Putnam’s concept of the “two-level game” (Putnam 1998) in which he argues that when governments negotiate the terms of cooperation, they are playing a game simultaneously on the international and domestic levels: at the international level, the challenge is to find a deal that is acceptable to both countries; at the domestic level, the challenge is to find a deal that is acceptable to domestic constituents as well as to legislators. The contrast of New Liberalism with other theories such as neo-realism is particularly insightful in matters of foreign policy: while neo-realism considers state interests as “given,” independent of other actors’ actions, the former sees state interests as shaped by domestic factors which fluctuate depending on many factors. In essence, the Liberal theory as advocated by Moravcsik takes into consideration the role of individuals and societal groups, which according to one commentator “are the engines of global politics” (Simpson 2008).

I will argue that such a theory resonates in a significant manner with the “Vatican’s case,” as discussed in the previous section, at both philosophical and empirical levels. At a philosophical level, the core assumption of the Liberal theory which stipulates the relativization of the state vis-à-vis the society (the state is not separate from the society) basically coheres with the Catholic conception of state-society as stipulated in its social teaching. Basically, the Catholic social teaching stipulates the best form of social order is a positive but a limited form of government (“constitutional democracy”) in which the state is not an entity outside the society.
but included in the latter.\(^\text{19}\) At an empirical level, data provided by the literature on the Vatican as a player in world politics gives some confirmation to the New liberalism theory on several issues: they show how transnational and domestic pressures shape and sometimes change the way states behave. Several scholars point out the increasing role taken by the Vatican in the world stage, especially in the wake of the Second Vatican Council held in early 1960s. At a global level, the Vatican considered as a religious organization which is present at both global and local level influences states’ preferences at various levels. Among other issue-areas in which its various units intervene are international trade, migration and environment, population and development, arms-control and peace negotiations (Tomasi 2017; Hanson 1987; Hertzke 2009). One burning issue among several others which attracted the Vatican’s attention and efforts for years is the conflict in the Middle East in which various units have been involved for the quest of peace among communities (Colonna - Cesari 1992; 2015; Hehir 1987; Irani 1987; Ellis 1987). In these various issues with varying degree of involvement, the Vatican has tried with mixed results to shape the events towards reasonable and just attitudes towards the common good of the world community. One case of particular significance for the argument developed in this section is the Vatican participation in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) held in Helsinki in 1975. Some theorists consider it as a crucial turning point that contributed to a chain of events leading to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Herman 1996; Meurice 2010). The Helsinki Accords which were widely disseminated in

many countries, included in the former Soviet Union, became a propaganda tool that would eventually lead to the downfall of the Eastern Bloc. One of the main factors that brought about the change is the human rights provision in the Accord which was influenced to some degree by the active participation of the Vatican (Nichols 1981; Rouxel 1998; Meurice 2010). One procedure adopted by the Vatican to generate what one scholar describes as “influence engineering” was the enlisting of allies among Catholic small states such as Austria, Ireland, and Malta which were predisposed to its claim (Mosser 2010).

Moravscik’ New Liberalism theory which emphasizes the primacy of societal actors at the domestic level even more so coheres with the action of the Catholic church at the local level in shaping or altering state preferences. One particular point authors often point out is the way the Vatican holds significant influence in these involvement by sometimes orienting the direction of event. Data from the literature abound on how the activities of the Vatican’s units at local level (discussed fully below) contributed to shape or change state preferences on particular issue-areas. One case in point which manifests the influence of U.S. Catholic bishops (U.S.C.C.B) occurred in the wake of the massacre of the six Jesuits and their helpers in El Salvador at the height of civil war in November 1989. The U.S. Bishops took multiple actions towards governments both in the U.S. and in El Salvador to elucidate the murder and bring all responsible to justice (Reese 1992: 203-210). On one hand, the USCCB urged the Bush administration to take immediate measures to pressure the Salvadorian regime on the issue.20 On the other hand, the American Bishops, along with the Salvadorian Bishops, urged the Salvadorian authority to do the necessary investigation in the case of the slain Jesuits and their helpers as well as looking

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20 *Catholic News Service*, December 4, 1989
for ways to end the violence in this war-torn country.\textsuperscript{21} Various units in the U.S. Catholic church were also involved in this foreign policy issue. Among them were the U.S. Jesuits, whom in solidarity with their brothers in El Salvador, organized and coordinated rallies in some Jesuit universities to put pressure on both the American administration and the Salvadorian authorities to solve the murder and put the responsible of the massacre into justice.\textsuperscript{22} One form of pressure adopted by the USCCB regarding the Salvadorian case was the lobbying done in the Capitol in Washington. USCCB lobbyists working along with Catholic congressmen were able to put their weight to pass a bill which proposes a cut in half of the $ 85 million military aid to El Salvador for the 1991 fiscal year.\textsuperscript{23} The unusual rapidity of the process regarding the investigation of the murders of the Jesuits and their helpers combined with the partial reduction of the U.S. military aid to El Salvador show that the multiple pressures through various channels seem to have worked.

\textbf{The Importance of a Trusted Mediator}

Part of the argument developed in this section is linked to the mediation literature which discusses those elements that are most likely to affect the mediation outcomes, such as the identity of the mediators, the relationship between parties, the broader international context of the mediation, the type of disputes, etc. For instance, Harbottle (1979) and Kochan and Jick (1978) consider that the mediator’s characteristics are of little importance, what determines the outcomes is the nature of the dispute. This dissertation adheres to the argument of several theorists who highlight the importance of the identity of the mediator in affecting the outcome of

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Catholic News Service}, December 6, 1989
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\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Catholic News Service}, December 4, 1989.
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\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Catholic News Service}, June 29, 1990.
\end{flushleft}
the mediation. Maoz & Terris (2009), for instance, see the perception of the mediator’s credibility as affecting the likelihood of a mediator choosing to be involved in a dispute and their effectiveness in resolving the conflict. This idea coheres with that of Kydd (2003) who highlights the importance of the parties’ perception of truth in the mediator so as to elicit trust and confidence. Still on the same line, Bercovitch (1985: 749) maintains that mediators cannot function without the trust and co-operation of the adversaries: it would be difficult, if not impossible, for a single mediator, who was distrusted by one of the parties, to carry out any useful function. The mediator’s leverage is then premised on his legitimacy and credibility perceived by the disputants. To recall, theorists define “leverage” as the mediator’s capacity to put pressure on one or both of the disputing parties to accept a proposed settlement. One important characteristic of leverage is that it can modify positions, push either side to make concessions and generally engineer a movement toward a settlement (Kleibor 1996; Touval and Zartman, 1989). As argued by Beardsley (2011:7), “without leverage, third parties will be less able to move things forward in the short run, but when they do, the peace will be relatively more likely to endure.” An underlying assumption is then that the trust and credibility would be likely to set in the mediation of Catholic countries – or in settings in which the Catholic church holds a significant influence – because of the Catholic nature of the mediator which is supposed to elicit confidence among disputants. This fact finds indirect backing by other authors who highlight the effect of historical ties on the likelihood of occurrence of mediation by parties in both civil wars and interstate conflicts (Melin & Svenssson, 2009). Essentially, the authors suggest that the historical ties between the potential mediators and the parties in conflict have a very different effect on the likelihood of acceptance in civil wars compared to interstate conflicts: it decreases
the likelihood of civil war participants’ acceptance but increases the likelihood of acceptance in an interstate conflict.

The above discussion based on the combination of Moravscik’s New Liberalism theory in IR and the literature on both the mediation theory and the Vatican as an actor in world politics will help make the argument for the two main hypotheses of this dissertation. Arguably one can conjecture that the Vatican’s units at a higher level will be most likely to be influential among the states in dispute when the Catholic factor is significant and these units are extensively involved. This means that the Vatican’s units are likely to change or shape the preferences of the states in dispute, if there are increasing activities of Catholic units involved during the timeframe of the mediation because of the Catholic factor. A second hypothesis concerns the action of the Vatican at the local level which is more related to social units at domestic level. Following the same logic as the global Vatican, one can conjecture that the Vatican’s local units (clergy and laypeople) will be most likely to be influential among the states in dispute when the Catholic factor is highly significant and that these local units are extensively involved. In another words, the Vatican’s units at the local level are likely to change or shape the preferences of the states in dispute if their intervention increases over time in terms of actors involved and activity performed. Another step must be taken before formulating in a more formal manner these hypotheses, namely the discussion of the Vatican’s two levels of analysis.

The Vatican’s Two Levels of Analysis

Based on the apparently rigid hierarchy within the Catholic Church with its various layers of authority, conventional thinking may consider it as an institution run exclusively from top to bottom. It is, however, a rather loose decentralized operation which respects the subsidiarity principle, a key concept in Catholic social teaching (Allen 2002: 38). As discussed in the
previous section, in such a structure, every level of decision is given some degree of autonomy.

Fr. Thomas Reese, a Vatican expert observes that “structural and managerial constraints of various sorts make it more and more difficult for Vatican leaders to work it alone. Experience show that in some complex situations pertaining to foreign policy, they must rely on the very pluralistic and highly diversified church framework.” In this dissertation, what is designated as “Global Vatican” is the various units that are more or less related to diplomacy at various degrees. It includes the central government of the Catholic church (the Pope and the Curia), the various dicasteries (sort of supra ministries) and the units attached to international institutions.

Table 2. Global Vatican Actors

| • The Pope as Head of the Catholic Church |
| • The Vatican Secretary of State (considered as the second-high ranking official in the Vatican after the Pope). The post is currently occupied by Cardinal Pietro Parolin. The Secretariat of States oversees various transnational organizations more or less related with diplomacy such as Sant Egidio. |
| • The Head of the Secretariat for Relations with other States (currently held by Mgr. Richard Gallagher) |
| • Heads of specific “Dicasteries” (sort of “super-ministers” combining various units) such as the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, that are more or less involved in foreign policy |
| • Papal envoys for specific missions in countries, mediating team. |
| • Vatican ambassadors or permanent observers in International Organizations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF, International Labor Office in Geneva, and so forth. |

At another level, what is designated as the Local Vatican is the set of actors which make up the Vatican’s diplomacy at the local level: The Apostolic nuncios or papal ambassadors, the bishops working individually or under the Bishops’ Conferences and other Catholic units operating at the local level (See Table 3 below).

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24 Thomas Reese, SJ, Jesuit Priest, columnist at the National Catholic Reporter, former editor in Chief of America, expert of U.S. Bishops and the Vatican (interviewed on September 21, 2018 in Washington, DC).
Table 3. Local Vatican Actors

- The local “Nuncio,” an Archbishop, is the head of the Vatican diplomatic mission in a country. In some traditional “Catholic countries” such as Spain, Portugal, Chile, and Argentina, the Nuncio ranks above other ambassadors in the diplomatic protocol (technically, he is the “dean of the ambassadors”. The Nuncio belongs both to the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican.
- The Bishop Conference which is constituted by all the Catholic bishops in a particular country. A bishop is the head of a diocese which is a religious-based territorial delimitation within a country. This institution is headed by the President of the Bishops Conference elected by the other bishops who may hold the rank of archbishop.25
- Local branch of Catholic organizations and other units: religious orders such as the Jesuits, various diocesan commissions, lay movements.

The Global Vatican’s Units

The Pope

The papacy being the “institutional core of Catholic transnationalism” (Casanova 1997), the pope takes a central stage in the diplomatic architecture of the Vatican. At least in the modern time, some Popes have been instrumental in giving shape and even trajectories to the Vatican’s diplomatic system. In both the internal business of the Catholic church and the domain pertaining to “foreign policy,” the Pope has several avenues to take positions and make his voice heard: statements, messages, teachings, addresses and other meetings. And since the coming of Paul VI at the helm of the Catholic Church in 1964, international trips have become a landmark of the papacy. Undoubtedly, these types of involvement are sources of influence for the papal institution. Four popes namely, John XXIII (1958- 1963), Paul VI (1965- 1978), John Paul II (1978 - 2005) and Francis (elected in 2013) have shaped the Vatican’s diplomacy significantly. Table 4 (below) shows a comparison between some contemporary popes which also indicates their individual style.

25 In the Catholic hierarchy, Archbishops are church titles not necessarily associated with decisional authority over other bishops. Basically, it is a ceremonial title given by the Pope to a bishop who supervises a group of ecclesiastical territories (dioceses) already headed by ordinary bishops.
Table 4. Diplomatic intervention and international trips made by some contemporary Popes
(source: The Vatican at http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html)

|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------
| Speeches, addresses, letters, messages, Encyclicals | 22                      | 511                  | 1240                        | 242                      | 172 (as of November 2019) |
| International trips                          | 0                       | 8                    | 104                         | 24                       | 32 (as of November 2019) |

John Paul II, for instance, sets himself apart other pontiffs in his use of intercontinental trips as a mean to advance his diplomatic agenda. Inaugurated by Pope Paul VI, these global trips were fully exploited by John Paul II and have since been a hallmark of the papacy. According to one scholar, “the pope occupies an office that allows him to function as both religious teacher and head of state, but he clearly intends to make use of both the religious and diplomatic capacities of his role” (Hehir 1991: 68). John Paul II’s many trips overseas have altered geopolitics at the global level. Observers concede that his several trips in his native Poland during his tenure significantly contributed to the erosion of communist legitimacy (Christiansen 2010; Weigel 2010). Besides his multiple intercontinental travels with considerable diplomatic significance, Pope John Paul II contributed significantly to the Catholic conception of world politics by bringing in new themes. He wrote two Cold-War era encyclicals of geopolitical import: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*(On Social Concern) published in 1988 and *Centisimus Annus*(One Hundred Years) published in 1991. In the former, the Pope highlights what he calls a “moral revisionism,” a posture on international relations which consists of advocating for a change in the structure of power in the world. This posture promotes both a reduction of superpower
tension and a creation of some space which middle powers and small nations can use to expand their choices and take hold of their destiny (Hehir 1990:1991:1993).

Francis, the first pontiff who is not from Europe begins to be known for his diplomacy of “prayer, compassion and dialogue” (Spadaro 2018). He exercises his diplomatic function not so much in words but in actions and prophetic gestures (Ivereigh 2014). By his Encyclical *Laudato Si*, he has definitely added environmental concern and climate change to Catholic social teaching, a crucial theme which is likely to have a tremendous import on world politics in the near future.26

**The Secretariat of State**

The Secretariat of State is another institution in the Global Vatican that has responsibility in the formulation and conduct of the Vatican’s diplomacy. According to the current structure, the Secretariat of State is composed of three branches: (1) the Section for General Affairs (headed by the “substitute”) which deals with matters proper to the governance of the worldwide Catholic Church, (2) the Section for Relations with States (headed by the Secretary for Relations with States) which deals with bilateral relations with foreign governments and (3) the Section for Diplomatic Staff headed by the Secretary for Diplomatic Staff.27 Being the Secretary of State is the equivalent of “number 2” in the Vatican hierarchy and in that function he is also very much involved in the area of foreign policy. Certain names are famous in shaping the trajectory of the

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26 *Laudato Si* (On Care for Our Common Home) published on May 2015 is the first encyclical of social nature ever written by Pope Francis in which he discusses burning issues such as consumerism, the current environmental degradation and global warming.

27 The “Third Section” of the Secretariat of State is a recent institution established by Pope Francis since November 2017. Its principal function is to oversee the Vatican’s diplomatic corps stationed all around the world (*Catholic News Agency*, August 15, 2018).
Vatican’s diplomacy as is the case of Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, who was the main architect of Ostpolitik (Stehle 1980; Lavopa 2014) and took a central role in the final part of the Beagle Channel mediation (discussed in Chapter 4).

The second section of the Secretariat of State called the Section in charge of the Relation with States is the secular equivalent of “foreign minister.” Technically, this unit oversees the diplomatic machinery that deals particularly with bilateral relations with other states. Some heads of the Secretariat for Relation with States have made headlines by their dealing with delicate matters. Such is, for instance, the skilled Cardinal Achille Silvestrini who participated in the difficult negotiation during the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe discussed earlier (Nichols 1981: 158). This function being a passage obligé for careerism to accede to higher level in the Vatican system, it is not surprising that many who have held the post of Secretary for Relations with States ended up being promoted full Secretary of State (Reese 1996: 228). The way the Secretariat for Relation with States is run shows the efficiency of the Vatican diplomacy. The section possesses all the structured units like in the secular equivalent minus its size in terms of personnel. As Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the current Secretary of State affirms, “an area which normally requires a staff of 50 is run only by a quarter of it: as a result, each staff member must occupy multiple functions which, paradoxically, renders the institution more efficient” (Parolin 2008: 55-56).

By their function, the heads of the two other sections of the Secretary of State may also be involved in diplomatic activities. The substitute, for instance, by his position as a head of the

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28 On this subject, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the current Vatican Secretary of State makes the point that in its everyday parlance, the Second Section never uses the adjective “foreign” to avoid the aspect of distance and “foreignness” which such term could imply. In fact, the Vatican is at home in every region and nation of the world (Parolin 2008: 49).
Section for General Affairs acts as a chief of staff for the Pope. To some degree, he controls whom the Pope meets and what documents he sees (Reese 1996: 181). One important area attached to the Secretariat of State which may be involved in foreign policy pertains to the multiple transnational Catholic units under the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life – formerly called Pontifical Council for the Laity until September 2016. They are composed of both lay and religious people (called “ecclesiastical assistants”) which are more or less related to the Vatican’s diplomacy. Such are for instance Caritas Internationalis (involved in humanitarian relief), International Confederation of Catholic Agencies and Pax Christi International which unite a variety of units that target specific social groups worldwide. Among the most well-known lay organization is the Sant’ Egidio community, one unit specially designed to tread in the domain of conflict negotiation. According to one Sant’ Egidio higher official, “although being a lay organization, which has its proper rules and methods, it is nonetheless connected to the overall Catholic system by its affiliation with the Vatican’s Secretariat of State.” Some Vatican high ranking officials confirm “how the methods and procedures initiated by Sant’ Egidio in their dealing with multiple cases worldwide have inspired Vatican diplomats in their approach to conflict negotiations.”

29 There are multiple Catholic organizations and movements as described by scholar Kevin Ahern (2015). These units which occupy a middle position between individual believers and institutional church structures are described by the author as “structures of grace” as they strive for social change in a world marked by suffering and injustice.


31 Anonymous Vatican Official # 1 (Interviewed in Rome on May 9, 2018), and Giani LaBella, Vice-president of Sant’ Egidio (Interviewed in Rome on March 19, 2018).
Heads of Some Dicasteries

Like in the secular world where the formulation and implementation of foreign policy is not confined to a specific circle of people but extends to other institutions. According to one Vatican high ranking official, “some dicasteries (sort of “super-ministers”) in the Global Vatican have a foreign policy component in which their heads assume some diplomatic role.” Among these are the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development – formerly known as the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace – and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Very often, the head of the former functions as a special envoy for difficult missions. For instance, French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace during Pope John Paul II’s tenure was among the first Global Vatican’s official to meet with Fidel Castro in 1985 (Colonna-Cesari 1992). As for the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID), while its primarily function is to promote and foster dialogue between communities with different creeds across the globe, it often has to step into the field of international politics which intersect with its mission. Such is, for instance, the dialogue with Orthodox, Muslims or Buddhists which cannot be separated from their political contexts. In an interview with a Vatican higher official, the current secretary of the, he affirms “how the PCID operates closely with other Vatican units such as the Secretariat with the Relations with States whenever it is necessary. Such combination of operations with a sharing of complex tasks often lead to a better efficiency and help achieve the goal.”

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32 Anonymous Vatican Official # 2 (interviewed in Rome on May 2, 2018).

Papal Envoys in International Organizations

Other actors in the Global Vatican are the papal envoys in international institutions.34 These include the Permanent Observer of the Vatican to the U.N. and the Vatican delegates in global institutions such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome and World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva.35 These institutions constitute a powerful forum to make the Vatican’s voice heard on a wide range of issues. The forms of presence and the intervention of the Vatican in these institutions are hardly noticeable although they constitute a significant source of influence for the Catholic Church on the world stage. For instance, in a time span of 12 years (2003 - 2015), the Permanent Observer of the Holy See in Geneva delivered 242 statements on a broad range of issues, including the rights of women and children, the freedom of conscience and intellectual property, the positive role of believers in public life to the impact of foreign debts on poor countries (Tomasi 2017). As spelled out earlier, one indicator of the Vatican’s influence on the world stage is the unanimous vote among the U.N. members in the extension of its rights as a Permanent Observer. One Vatican diplomat affirms that “while the demographic credibility of the 1.2 billion Catholics worldwide counts at the global level, another factor is the high level of social and cultural network established by units across nations combined with a lot of grassroot works.”36 A former high-ranking Vatican official goes in the

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34 Technically, in the Vatican protocol, both nuncios posted in various countries and nuncios operating in international institutions belong to the same category of Vatican ambassadors. In this dissertation, however, the second category of nuncios is included in the Global Vatican because of their character as operating in multilateral diplomacy.

35 Overall, the Vatican participates in 42 intergovernmental organizations and international programs among which are the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (See Tomasi 2017: 850-851).

36 Anonymous Vatican official # 3 (Interviewed in New York on October 16, 2018).
same line by spelling out the gradual shift in the procedure that took place in the Vatican representation at the U.N. He affirmed “how the patient and tireless work done at the level of the Vatican Permanent Observer in the United Nations has helped established a strong networking and cooperation among U.N. countries members over the years.”37

*The First Hypothesis*

The foregoing discussion help us to formulate the first hypothesis related to the Global Vatican.

**H1: The influence of the Vatican in the mediation of states in conflict is likely to be stronger if the Vatican’s institutions at the global level (i.e. in Rome and elsewhere) are extensively involved.**

As the cases being analyzed in this dissertation concern Catholic countries – and countries in which Catholicity, although not the dominant religion, hold significant influence – one has a few possible conjectures regarding the Vatican’s influence among the parties in dispute in the mediation. Four possible scenarios about the Vatican’s impact are hypothesized, which depends on the degree of involvement of the Vatican’s institutions and the extensity of the network of Vatican’s institutions. For instance, the first hypothesis of this dissertation is shown in cell # 2 in Figure 1 (below), it is hypothesized that the influence of the Vatican’s institutions would be highly significant if the various Catholic units at the global level are both extensive and extensively involved in the mediation of states in dispute. As for the other cells, as illustrated by cell #1, for instance, a minimal impact is to be expected where the Vatican’s institutions at the global level are not extensively involved, despite the existence of an extensive network of

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Catholic institutions at global level. Such is, for instance, the case of the Kosovo War which was partly mediated by Sant’ Egidio between 1993 and 1999. The intervention had a minimal impact partly because of the absence of a full support from the Vatican’s units at the global level (Della Rocca 2018: 195-224). A minimal impact would also be expected in the context of an absence of extensive network of Vatican’s units at the global level despite the extensive involvement of Catholic institutions at the global level.

Figure 1. Influence of the Global Vatican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catholic Institutions extensively involved at the global level?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extensive network of Catholic Institutions at the Global level?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
<td>High impact on conflict resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**The Local Vatican’s Units**

The discussion in the previous section has highlighted the emergence of actors from the Local Vatican as well as the clarification of their role in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Among the main units comprising the Local Vatican are the (1) Local Nuncios, (2) the Bishops working in groups or individually, and (3) other Catholic organizations.

**Local Nuncios**

The institution of the nuncios has a long history as it dates to 313 A.D. with the promulgation of Emperor Constantine of the famous Edict of Milan which officialized the Church’s existence (Lajolo 2005: 15-19). Papal envoys were sent to the multiple councils to settle doctrinal disputes
in these early periods of Christianity. As centuries went on, papal envoys became more numerous, more high level, more frequent and with increased authority to act in the name of the Pope, either before local bishops or before emperors and other political leaders. Progressively, the figure of what is known today as the Apostolic nuncio began to emerge. Pope Paul VI gave a final shape to the institution of nuncios, highlighting its double function: (1) as a Papal Ambassador invested with a diplomatic mission before the host state and (2) a religious mission before the Catholic Church in the host state.\(^\text{38}\)

The feature of the Apostolic nuncio as being central to the Local Vatican is given further saliency due to both the change in the church - state relationship and the increasing importance of the local church along the line of the Second Vatican Council. Besides representing the universal church, the Papal nuncio also belongs to the local church. Such a “double status” allows him the benefit of being in close touch with the situation and the problems of the country at the grass roots level (Collaco 2008:79-80). The subtleties of the nuncio’s diplomatic activities could not be better described by former Vatican nuncio Hyginus Cardinale (1976: 37): “the work of a nuncio is both a science and art: as a science, it is based upon solid theological and juridical principles which are drawn from the Teachings of the church; as an art, it implies the application of intelligence, experience and tact on the part of the papal envoy to the conduct of official relations between the Holy See and the different states and international organizations.” Added to this double status, the privileges of deanship among ambassadors accorded to the nuncio in

\(^{38}\) Apostolic letter of in the form of *Motu Proprio* (special message) of Pope Paul VI on June 29, 1969
http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19690624_sollicitudo-omnium-ecclesiarum.html.
some countries\textsuperscript{39} “may grant him further influence on some issues,” according to one Vatican official.\textsuperscript{40}

\textit{The Bishops’ Conference}

The second most important institution at the local level that may be involved in foreign policy are the local bishops either operating individually or under the aegis of the Bishops’ Conference (also known as Episcopal Conference). In technical terms, the Bishops’ Conference is the “periodic assembly of the bishops of a nation or a region for the purpose of addressing pastoral issues affecting those nations.”\textsuperscript{41} According to the Canon Law it is “composed of all individual bishops – who is the head of an ecclesiastical circumscription called “diocese” – of a particular country and constitutes the highest authority at the local level.\textsuperscript{42} Important to notice is the effect of the Second Vatican Council on this institution which granted it formal recognition and more power through the change of status of the local church in the Catholic system (Himes 2006). Pope Paul VI gave a final touch to its status through the papal document \textit{Ecclesiae Sanctae} published in 1966 in placing the Episcopal Conference in the hierarchy between the

\textsuperscript{39} Although the rank of the Apostolic nuncio is essentially the same to that of an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, in some traditional “Catholic countries” such as France, Belgium, Spain or Argentina, the papal ambassador often ranks above ambassadors in diplomatic protocols. A nuncio performs the same functions as an ambassador and has the same diplomatic privilege. The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations allows the host state to grant seniority of precedence to the nuncio over others of ambassadorial rank accredited to the same country and may grant the deanship of that country’s diplomatic corps to the nuncio regardless of seniority. See for instance Barberini (2003: 143-144).

\textsuperscript{40} Anonymous Vatican official # 1 interview.


\textsuperscript{42} Canon 450.
individual bishops of dioceses and the Apostolic See in Rome. The effect of all these changes is the lessening of the monarchical governing structure within the Catholic church by introducing the concept of community of responsible members. As one author put it “by sanctioning the creation of national conferences of bishops, the Second Vatican Council gave national bishops an unprecedented degree of autonomy from Rome in formulating national church policy (Libby 1983: 91). Responding to the call for a better involvement in the society following the Second Vatican’s principles, some conferences have been involved to a varying degree in the domestic politics of their respective countries. For instance, influential Episcopal Conferences, such as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), have been widely involved in both domestic politics and foreign policy on critical issues at the international level (Reese 1992; 1996).

**Various Local Institutions**

Local Vatican units also include local institutions which are more or less involved in diplomacy in various ways. Religious congregations working at the local level but having transnational ties are among those. The Argentinian Jesuits, for instance, run the CIAS (*Centro de Investigacion y Accion Social*), a center dedicated to social reflection and research which participated actively to the debate about the Beagle Channel conflict (discussed fully in Chapter 5). According to one Argentinian Jesuit, “the center’ strength lies in its extensive network at various levels of the Argentinian society that allows it to gather and analyze relevant data.”

Other units are composed of local branches of transnational lay organizations which have seen

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44 Anonymous Jesuit # 1 (skype-Interviewed on October 22, 2018).
their role enhanced since the Second Vatican Council. Among these are the multiple networks of specialized Catholic organizations such as the International Young Christian Workers (IYCW), International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS-Pax Romana), International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA- Pax Romana) (Ahern 2015: 68-70). Dubbed “structures of grace” by the author, these units sometimes are involved in activities of global justice which have implication in the domains of domestic politics and foreign policy. As it will be discussed in the three cases-study, some of those Catholic lay organizations were involved to some degrees and in various ways to the process of conflict resolutions.

**The Second Hypothesis**

A second hypothesis is drawn from the foregoing discussion which relates to the influence of the Vatican at the local level in the mediation of states in dispute.

**H2: The influence of the Vatican in the mediation of states in conflict is likely to be stronger if the Vatican’s institutions at the local level (i.e. nuncios, local bishops and other Catholic units) are both extensive and extensively involved.**

In a similar way as the previous discussion, in the matrix in Figure 2. (below), one could establish a few possible scenarios depending on the extensivity of involvement of Vatican’s units at local level (nuncios, bishops, religious congregations, lay organizations) as well as the extensity of the network of Vatican’s units. The second hypothesis of this dissertation is illustrated by cell #2: it is hypothesized that the influence of the Vatican’s institutions would be highly significant if the various units at the local level are both extensive and extensively involved in the mediation of states in dispute, especially in a setting where Catholicism is the dominant religious group. On the other hand, as shown for instance by cell # 1, the Local Vatican’s influence on mediation would be minimal if it is not extensively involved, although it
may constitute an extensive network of institutions. One example in that case is the separatist Muslims groups MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) in the Island of Mindanao in the Philippines, an Asian country overwhelmingly Catholic which has extensive Catholic units composed of religious and lay people.\footnote{\textit{The Origins of the Muslim Separatist Movement in the Philippines,} at \url{https://asiasociety.org/origins-muslim-separatist-movement-philippines}} These units were extensively involved during the toppling of the Marcos dictatorship, although they were hardly involved in the long peace negotiation between the government and the MNLF. A minimal impact is also expected in a case in which Catholic units are extensively involved in mediation in the context of absence of extensive Catholic institutions (cell #4). The underlying logic is that the absence of support from Catholic institutions debilitate the units involved in the mediation. There might be some cases in Africa or elsewhere in which some catholic units are extensively involved although there is no extensive network of Catholic institutions in those places that may support their work.

Figure 2. Influence of the Local Vatican Catholic Institutions extensively involved at the local level?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extensive network of C I at the local level?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Methodology

Strategy of Research and Cases Selection

Methodology is basically about the operationalization of the hypothesized relationship between an observed phenomenon and its purported explanations. This dissertation focuses on those Vatican units which are hypothesized to exert significant leverage in the mediation of states in conflict. It seeks to determine the institutional leverage that allows the Vatican to influence the parties so as to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome. The study examines the nature and the degree of such influence from the perspective of the mediation’s twofold aspects, namely the process and outcome. As discussed previously, the dissertation has two hypotheses related to the Vatican’s institutions at various levels. They already give the type of relationship expected between the variables.

The research consists of observing the variations of the influence of the Vatican in interstate mediation in terms of the degree of intervention of the Vatican’s units at both the global and local levels. That degree of intervention is considered in terms of units involved and actions performed by each unit over time. The observation will concentrate on various institutions such as the Pope, Secretary of State, Vatican high dignitaries, nuncios, bishops, etc. within the timeframe of the mediation. As such, the methodology relies on a longitudinal analysis which involves repeated observations of the same variables (the Vatican institutions) over short or long periods of time (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell 2002: 267). It is hypothesized that such an influence varies in terms of the degree of intervention of the Vatican’s institutions during the mediation timeframe. To uncover the activities performed by the Vatican units during the mediation timeframes, the analysis includes a process-tracing method. A process tracing is defined as “the examination of pieces of diagnostic evidence, commonly evaluated in a specific
temporal sequence, with the goal of supporting or overthrowing alternative explanatory hypotheses” (Collier, Brady, and Seawright 2010:201-202)

Such procedures are applied to each of the two cases in which the Vatican intervened and successfully mediated the conflicts and also on a third case in which the Vatican did not intervene as an official mediator (discussed below). The involvement of the Vatican as a third-party mediator in the Beagle-Channel dispute began in May 1979 at the request of both the Argentinians and the Chileans and ended in October 1984 with a formal accord between the parties in conflict. The Vatican’s involvement in the mediation of the U.S.-Cuban conflict is more complex. The Global Vatican’s official intervention in the process began in March 2014 after a conversation between Barack Obama and Pope Francis in Rome and ended with the diplomatic deal in December 2014 (Kornbluh and Leogrande, 2015b). Yet, as this dissertation argues, the 2014 diplomatic deal had been the formalization of a long process which started since the 1980s and involved various units of both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican in the U.S. and Cuba. The analysis also includes also a cross-case procedure from a comparative perspective in order to confirm or nuance the hypothesized explanatory factors.

In order to have a better observation of the variation across cases, a third case is discussed in the dissertation. Such a case regards the last episode (1995–1998) of a long border dispute between Ecuador and Peru which began in the 19th Century and was characterized by various levels of hostilities over the year. Facing the escalating hostilities between the two sister countries, the Vatican attempted to intervene but could not do so because of some constraining factors. A nearly full-scale war took place in January-February 1995 (also known as the

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46 The choice of the Ecuador-Peru conflict case is motivated by several factors. While the appropriate case would be the one in which the Vatican did not succeed in a context of Latin America Catholic countries, thus putting it in contrast with the two successful mediations of this dissertation, the research done towards that objective turned out
“Cenepa War”) which ended with an agreed ceasefire on February 17, 1995. Then followed three and a half years of negotiations under the mediation of the “Guarantor Countries” composed of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the U.S until the peaceful settlement of October 1998 (Palmer 1997; 2001). During both the “Cenepa conflict” and the ensuing mediation process, the Catholic church was not completely absent. While the Global Vatican was not invited – and thus not officially involved – the Local Vatican’s actors such as the Bishops’ Conferences in both countries performed some activities at various levels of responsibility in an attempt at reconciliation, especially during the Cenepa War. In Chapter 3 which pertains to the historical overview of the Vatican’s involvement in conflict resolution during a timeframe spanning from 1870 to the present time, there will be an analysis of the case outcomes in terms of the involvement of the Vatican’s units at the two levels of analysis (see Table 5. below). These cases pertain mostly to the period from 1965 (post-Vatican II). This allows one to observe development in the type of dispute attended to by the Vatican in its two levels of operation as well as some of the underlying causes of success or failure. Throughout the study, there will be an analysis of the Church-State relationship in each country involved in dispute which is an important factor to account for the mediation background, especially in Catholic settings such as Latin America.

Independent Variables and Measurement

According to the previous section, we have two hypothesized explanatory factors which account for the Vatican’s influence in the mediation. The first variable relates to the hypothesis to be negative. Key Vatican officials interviewed in Rome appear to be ignorant of any case in that regard. This is compounded by the non-opening of post-1939 materials in the Vatican Archives as a rule established by Vatican authorities. Another reason for the choice is the relative accessibility to primary materials on the role of the Vatican in the Ecuador-Peru conflict, thanks to Jesuits working in both Peru and Ecuador as well as the access to the data base of the Catholic News Service run by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, DC.
that the influence of the Vatican is likely to be stronger if there is an extensive involvement of
the Vatican at the higher level. This includes units such as the Pope, the Secretary of State,
special envoys, the mediating team, the Permanent Observer in the United Nations and other
Vatican officials in the mediation of states in dispute. The involvement of these various units is
measured within the timeframe of mediation as indicated above.

Indicators of the Vatican’s degree of involvement at the global level include the following:
(1) papal statements or exhortations, (2) involvement of Popes or their representatives – the
mediating team – through meeting with state officials of the countries in dispute, (3) active
participation through concrete proposals, (4) diverse activities of Vatican’s special envoys
towards officials in countries in dispute and (5) various activities such as lobbying and alliances
generated by Vatican diplomats in international forums with the objective of influencing the
countries in dispute. Measurement being defined as the “process of linking abstract concepts to
empirical indicants” (Carmines and Zeller 1979: 10), the measure adopted in this study is ordinal
according to the degree of involvement: high, medium and low. From that perspective, a high
degree of involvement is characterized by an extensive intervention in terms of units involved
and types of action performed. For instance, a “high degree” of intervention would imply the
involvement of a substantial number of units within the Global Vatican (Pope, Secretary of State,
Special envoys, etc.) who performed a significant number of tasks (meetings, letters, speeches,
etc.). This would serve as a benchmark to the two other levels: a “medium” degree of
intervention would then be characterized by an average level of units involved and activities
performed. Consequently, a low degree of intervention pertains to a small number of units which
perform a reduced activity. Of course, this is an approximate measurement because of the
difficulty to quantify the exact amount of some type of activities such as words uttered or
informal attitudes and gestures which are quite common in the Vatican’s standard of procedures. In this regard, one Vatican higher official familiar with Rome’s diplomatic procedures affirms that “the Vatican’s efficiency comes partly from practices based on an entrenched culture of discretion and informal processes that do not always conform with formal diplomatic standards of procedures.” It is thus expected that such diplomatic undertakings which include informal and symbolic activities may resist rigorous standard measurements.

The second independent variable relates to the hypothesis that the Vatican’s influence in mediation is likely to be stronger if its institutions at the local level are both extensive and extensively involved. This regards the involvement of the Vatican’s institutions at the local-national level (papal nuncios in the states in conflict, Bishops’ Conferences or individual bishop, other Church officials and lay organizations in the states in conflict) during the timeframe of the mediation. Indicators of the intervention of these units include the following:

(1) Involvement of nuncios (direct or not) in the mediation of countries in dispute through various means such as statements and meetings with secular officials (2) activities of Bishops in states in conflict which include official statements, alliance-generating and lobbying in state institutions, informal or formal meetings with government officials, direct or indirect participation of bishops (or their representatives) in the mediation process through proposals of solutions or other devices and (3) activities of local Catholic organizations such as the religious orders, network of laypeople which include peace rallies, lobbying activities, marching prayers, meetings with officials, etc.

47 Anonymous Vatican official # 4 (Interviewed in Rome on March 7, 2018).
Like in the case of the Global Vatican, the involvement at the Local Vatican’s units is measured ordinally according to its degree: high, medium and low. The same remarks about the measurement of the Global Vatican’s intervention apply also to the Local Vatican: a high degree of intervention taken as a benchmark pertains to an extensive involvement through a significant number of actors (nuncios, bishops, laypeople) who performed a substantial number of tasks. A medium degree of involvement would then relate to a medium-sized contribution, and a low degree pertains to a minimal intervention in terms of units involved and activities performed. Other factors in the cases-studies will also be examined in order to assess how they may have shaped the process and outcomes.

**Dependent Variable and Indicators Measurement**

The dependent variable in this dissertation is the influence the Vatican’s institutions at various levels may have in the mediation of states in dispute either in terms of success or failure. This influence reflects the leverage of the Vatican’s various institutions in the mediation in terms of the process and outcome of the mediation. Five different and specific indicators are used to measure the dependent variable, which are partly borrowed from the work of other scholars who dealt with the Vatican’s influence in some issues-area in global politics. They have the characteristic of encapsulating the twofold elements of a mediation, namely the process and outcome. To recall, process refers to what occurs at the mediation table while outcome refers to what has been achieved (or not achieved) as a result of mediation (Bercovitch 2011: 94-95). By and large, these indicators dovetail with the need of having both objective facts and subjective

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48 Shelledy, Robert, 2003, *Legions Not Always Visible on Parade: The Vatican’s Influence in World Politics*. University of Wisconsin—Madison (unpublished dissertation). The author uses the indicators to measure the Vatican’s influence in terms of secular resonance and unity on issues areas such as population policy, international debt relief, and religious freedom.
elements (perception of actors) in the discussion of the quality of both process and outcome of a mediation (Bercovitch 1992: 22-23; Bercovitch 2011: 28-29). Basically, the author maintains that subjective criteria refer to the parties or the mediator’s perception that the goals of mediation or the desired change has taken place.

(1) The distance between the Vatican’s antecedent preferences and actual outcome of the mediation; this distance might indicate an influence. Thus, the Vatican is unlikely to be influential if its preference is far away from the actual outcome.

(2) Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation process.

(3) Self-assessment of Vatican officials to the Vatican’s contribution on the processes and outcomes of mediation.

(4) Assessment of non-Vatican officials to the Vatican’s contribution on the processes and outcomes.

(5) The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify outcomes. For instance, the wording in the agreement between parties in conflict may reflect the Vatican’s influence.

Ordinal measurements are used to assess whether the Vatican was more or less successful in terms of the particular indicator. Thus, the Vatican’s influence will be measured in terms of success (+), failure (-) or non-existent (0) for each particular indicator.

Measurement is indeed tricky in social science, especially when dealing with thorny and slippery concepts such as influence in international relations. As admitted by the scholarly literature, there appears to be an unsatisfactory knowledge about this complex topic (Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Baldwin, 2013). There is thus no definite answer as to the nature of influence exercised by social groups and states in global politics. It would even be more challenging to make an adequate measurement without some degrees of errors. As Carmines and Zeller (1979:
point out, the measurement of any phenomenon always contains a certain amount of chance error.” Referring particularly to the subjective perception of actors involved in international mediation, one scholar argues, that “parties’ satisfaction with mediation is generally high, but its precise meaning, let alone its measurement, is often unclear” (Bercovitch 1992: 23). Although fraught with possible errors, the ones above have some degree of plausibility and accuracy in trying to account for the Vatican’s influence in mediation. For instance, various sources are utilized to ensure the validity of assessment of both Vatican and non-Vatican officials, and thus reduce the risk of bias. By and large, the indicators utilized make sense in the logic of the methods adopted. Besides, they adopt the logic of the mediation literature which highlights both subjective and objective criteria. The use of these measurement is somewhat a contribution towards shedding light on the nature of influence in IR from the perspective of interstate mediation.

**Case Outcomes in the Vatican’s Mediation**

In the discussion of the Vatican’s intervention in conflict management in the period post-1965 onwards (Chapter 3), the cases will be examined along the line of three categories of outcomes in function of the purported explanatory variables, namely (1) successful, (2) partially successful and (3) not successful (See Table 5 below). A “not successful” mediation includes, for instance, an offer rejected or a failure to achieve a positive result. On the other hand, a “partially successful” mediation would include a cease fire or a partial settlement whereas a successful mediation means a full settlement of the dispute (Bercovitch and Langley 1993).
Table 5. Cases outcomes of the Vatican’s mediation in the post-1965 period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Not Successful</th>
<th>Partially successful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Vatican</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Vatican</td>
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</table>

Other factors will be discussed throughout the cases that might have a bearing on the mediation outcomes. The mediation literature argues that the mediation outcomes are affected by several factors such as the nature of the mediator and its strategies, the nature of the dispute, the nature of the issues, the nature of the parties, and the nature of the relationships between the parties, the conflict context and environment (Bercovitch 1992: 21). For instance, the feeling of emergency due to certain international events that have taken place may affect the perceptions and attitudes of disputants towards a peaceful settlement irrespective of the mediators’ qualities (Zartman 1985). Moreover, theorists spell out some characteristics that have the potential of affecting the mediation success: personal factors, situational factors, interactional factors and motivational factors (Bercovitch 2011: 100-101). For instance, the parties’ genuine desire to submit and commit to mediation is most likely to affect the outcome. These elements will be discussed, in one way or another, throughout the cases to assess their plausibility of affecting the mediation outcomes, besides the characteristics of the mediator as hypothesized in this dissertation.

**Conclusion**

Several points emerge from this key chapter. First, the discussion on the Vatican sets the essential parameters that allows a better understanding of this important religious unit in the
international system, although often misunderstood if not neglected. The study indicates that the Vatican’s structures and motives make it a dynamic entity, not “frozen in history” by letting itself shaped by global events (WWII, Cold War, Second Vatican Council, post-Cold War, Globalization, etc.) and act accordingly on the global stage. A second point relates to the theoretical framework: Moravscik’s New Liberalism theory which concentrates on the crucial role of social units within states as determining actors in shaping state preferences, along with both the literature on the Vatican as a player in international politics and the mediation theory provides the materials on which are built the hypotheses. These relate to two sets of institutions, namely (1) the Global Vatican composed of various actors at the upper structure of the Vatican system and (2) the Local Vatican constituted by multiple actors at the local level. Due to the structure of the Catholic church, far from being monolithic, the Vatican’s diplomacy is characterized by a plurality of actors operating at different levels of the system. These units are hypothesized to be involved to a varying degree in the mediation of interstate conflicts with a varying degree of influence during the mediation timeframe.

Third, with an appropriate operationalization of the main concepts, the dissertation adopts various methodological protocols such as a longitudinal analysis (examination of variance over time) a process tracing procedure and a comparative analysis in order to test the hypotheses. The next chapter is an overview of the history of the Vatican’s intervention in conflict mediation in the modern era, an important domain of diplomacy in which it has made significant contribution. It gives a global picture on how the Vatican’s institutions at both global and local levels have been involved in a variety of cases across space and time (especially from 1965 onwards) as well as its procedures and motives.
CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE VATICAN’S MEDIATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

This chapter provides a historical overview of the Vatican’s involvement in the mediation of international conflict by focusing on the roles of various units within the Catholic church at global and local levels. It examines the import of empirical cases throughout history, especially in the contemporary era for a better understanding of the Vatican’s handling of the diplomacy of conflict management. The chapter is subdivided into five sections. The first section gives a brief account of the Vatican’s conflict management during the period prior to 1870, in which it still held territory. The second section focuses on the era from 1870 until the early 1920s which some scholars dub the “Age of Transition” (Araujo and Lucal 2004: 57-90). It begins with the loss of the papal states in 1870 until the end of Pope Benedict XV’s pontificate in 1922. This period can be considered as foundational for the modern understanding of the Vatican’s diplomacy of conflict management. The third section discusses the period from 1922 to the advent of the Second Vatican Council (1962 - 1965), which is a key reference for modern Catholicism. The fourth section examines the Vatican’s involvement in conflict mediation during the long post-Vatican II period, from 1965 to the present time. The last section analyzes the Vatican’s involvement in conflict mediation and assesses the role of the two units of analysis both the global and local level during the three periods under study. It will be shown through the chapter
how the Vatican’s intervention in international mediation has undergone a steady development in terms of nature and format over the years, a change accompanied by an increase of actors. It will show also how papal mediation is deeply ingrained in history as part of the Vatican’s diplomatic instruments. Each section of the chapter is structured according to the two levels of analysis derived from the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter 2. In each, I will examine the role of various units within both the Global and the Local. The focus on these variables allows for a better observation of the actors’ involvement in the mediations as well as the processes.

**The Vatican’s Involvement in Conflict Management Prior to 1870**

As this period spans several centuries, the discussion will focus on just a few historical cases which stand out in that long period according to the available data. As scholars observe, one of the most important involvements of the Vatican in the area of conflict management was the papal “appropriate” attribution of territories between rising nations - states in late medieval period in the wake of the “world discovery” in the late 15th Century (Rouxel 1998: 203). For instance, by the papal bull *Inter Coetera* of May 4, 1493, Pope Alexander VI attributed the discovered territories of India and the adjacent oceans to Spain and Portugal, thus preventing a violent war between the two rising world powers of the era. The figure of the Papal delegate, or Nuncio would gradually emerge as the representative of the Pope in international forums. Until the end of 17th Century, the Apostolic nuncio would take a prominent role as the Pope’s Legate by attending almost any European Peace Congress by virtue of representing the main neutral power, particularly during the Congress of Munster (1648), of Aachen (1668) and of Nijmegen (1678). The mission of the papal delegates was to establish peace between Catholic princes but also, to avoid any dealing with Protestant princes (Rouzel 1998: 204). In all the Vatican’s endeavors, the
the papacy to “all nations on earth.” For instance, in his offer of mediation in the wake of the war over the Spanish Succession (1701 – 1714), Pope Clement XI (1700 – 1721) wrote to both Leopold I, the Holy Roman Emperor and King Louis XIV of France, reminding them that his main concern was world peace and the good of Christian Europe.¹

It was during the Vienna Congress in 1815 that the Vatican realized it could no longer play the role of a neutral mediator due to its constant defensive posture based on its refusal to give up the “Papal States,” namely its territorial possessions (Rouxl 1998: 205). Manifestly, the issue of neutrality appears to be the Vatican’s main obstacle to its mission of conflict resolution since it was torn between conflicting loyalties due to its dual character as both a religious institution and a temporal power. As one scholar put it, “the Vatican’s neutrality had neither spiritual value on religious matters nor dissuasive value on temporal ones.”² In the case of a conflict of religious nature, the Holy See was exposed to unexpected effects on its temporal possessions. In case of territorial disputes, however, the use of force to impose the Vatican’s will would involve responding to violence by violence, a perspective which Rome abhorred. It was only by letting itself be rid of its temporal attributes that the Vatican would be able to be a trustful mediator as will be discussed in the following section.

From 1870 to the Early 1920s: The Vatican in the “Age of Transition.”

The Global Vatican: The Pope Diplomat

As discussed in the previous chapter, the year 1870 marks the loss of the Papal States and concomitantly, the reunification of Italy, a major turning point for the Vatican’s diplomacy. These events signal a transformation in the Vatican’s status, from a temporal and spiritual power to a mere moral power. This fact known as the “Roman question” – which will be only resolved by the Lateran Treaty in 1929 (discussed in the previous chapter) – significantly influenced the Vatican’s diplomacy during that period (Araujo and Lucal 2004:5-8). Paradoxically, this period witnesses a significant frequency of the Vatican’s intervention, be it from solicitation from states or from the Vatican’s own initiative pertaining to conflict management such as good offices (sort of “go between”), projects of arbitration and mediation.3

Multiple activities of good offices, mediation and arbitration have been attributed to Pope Leo XIII (1878 – 1903), known as the “diplomat Pope,” who was perhaps one of the pontiffs most well versed in Vatican diplomacy (Ward 1966). His intervention touched a variety of areas such as humanitarian issues, trade rivalries and territorial disputes (Ticchi 2002: 118-200). One case of humanitarian intervention concerns his successful plea to Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia for the release of Italian soldiers made prisoners during the Italian colonial campaign in Africa in 1896. In the domain of trade, it is worth noticing the intermediary role he took in December 1893 to prevent a trade war between France and Spain that involved tariff issues. Pope Leo

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3 A “good office” is a particular type of mediation designed to foster the disputants to negotiate. In this “low key” mediation, the role of the third party is confined to creating an appropriate environment for a negotiation (See Bercovitch, 1992). Arbitration is a process in which a dispute is submitted to a third party to render a decision which is binding by nature. There, the arbitrator’s is quasi-judicial in nature. In mediation, on the other hand, an impartial intervenor helps the parties reach a voluntary settlement (See Cooley, J, 1986, “Arbitration and Mediation: Explaining the Differences,” in *Judicature*, Vol. 69: 263-269.)
XIII’s representative in Paris was successful in harmonizing the diverging viewpoints despite the hostility of the French Parliament to the Vatican’s intervention.\footnote{The mediating role of the Vatican in this case went largely unknown due to the complete blackout from to the French media (see Ticchi 2002: 119).}

Mediation of territorial disputes is another area in which Pope Leo XIII intervened – or attempted to do so. The mediation over the dispute between Spain and Prussia in 1885 regarding the Carolinas Islands is a case in point because of its historical and diplomatic significance (Ticchi 2002: 62-115; Araujo and Lucal 2004: 67). This affair relates to the claim of the two states on their sovereign right to the possession of these tiny Islands in the South Pacific. In this colonial period which lacked any international rules and regulations, Spain vindicated its claim based on the “first arrived first served” principle. Prussia, on the other hand claimed that the island was up for grabs since it was left inhabited for years. To settle the issue, Pope Leo XIII made three straightforward proposals to which both sides agreed: (1) recognition of the historic rights and sovereignty of Spain, (2) the need for effective exercise of sovereignty, the absence of which had given plausibility to the German claim, and (3) the concession to Germany of significant privileges for commerce and navigation. The Carolinas was the first successful act of mediation by the Vatican since 1702 and has become as a reference point in the Vatican’s history of mediation (Araujo and Lucal 2004: 67). By this, the Holy See seems to have secured its posture as a player in international politics.

The international prestige gained from the Carolinas case seems to have sparked actual (or rumored) solicitation of intervention from the Vatican by states. Between 1889 and 1898, the good offices of Pope Leo XIII were solicited on ten occasions in various types of international conflict that involved no less than 17 states (Ticchi 2002: 117-118). Such is for instance the
commercial dispute between Portugal and France from February to March 1894, which was solved without the pope’s involvement (Ticchi 2002: 120-121). In a couple of instances from 1889 to 1891, Portugal solicited Leo XIII’s intervention in its dispute with both Great Britain and Belgium over colonial possessions in Africa, a conflict resulting from the 1883 Berlin Conference known which triggered the “scramble for Africa” (Ticchi 2002: 127-144). In both cases, the appeal to the Vatican was necessitated by the presence of Catholic missionaries in these territories. Although the Vatican’s role was not determinant in the outcome, its involvement in the conflict signaled an increasing role in the international scene.

The case of arbitration during that period is quite controversial since it would involve the recognition of the Vatican as a juridically legitimate player in international diplomacy. In that regard, the Italian state did whatever it could do to thwart any attempt of the Vatican to claim international legitimacy.⁵ Although there were many attempts (and rumored attempts) from states requesting the popes to arbitrate, the Vatican never performed an arbitration _per se_ in its juridical sense, which means a formal settling with a court decision to be upheld by the disputing states (Ticchi 2002: 12-13). Three factors limited the Vatican’s exercise of arbitration of international conflict: (1) the reluctance of disputing states which did not manifest a clear agreement on the role of the arbiter, (2) the scruple of the Vatican itself based on the difficulty of states to hold to the decision rendered, (3) the weight of the “Roman question” which harmed the Vatican’s ability to have full authority over an arbitration (Ticchi 1998). In any case, the Vatican’s

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⁵ The posture of the Italian government vis-à-vis- the Vatican from 1870 onwards was governed by three maxims: (1) a defense against the Vatican’s revendication, (2) a program of “liberation” of areas still under the Vatican’s influence, (3) an increase in the political prestige of Italy in Europe. The Italian government’s attitude regarding the Vatican’s intervention in the diplomatic arena proceeded from these three maxims (see Ticchi 2002:10).
intervention perceived as “arbitration” (actual or rumored) contributed to its international prestige since this juridical activity is only exercised by sovereign states (Rouxel 1998: 208).

In the footsteps of Leo XIII, succeeding popes such as Pius X (1904 – 1914) and Benedict XV (1914 – 1922) also tried to leave their mark, although in a less favorable context, in the diplomacy of mediation. Pope Benedict XV’s neutral posture did not prevent him from taking some decisive action in order to foster peace between belligerent nations during World War I. For instance, in 1915 he sent a special envoy to prevent Italy from entering the conflict (Ticchi 2002: 368-369). His major intervention might be his solemn message of peace addressed to the heads of all belligerent states dated August 1917. This type of letter based on the Vatican’s moral and spiritual authority appeared to have been adopted by successive popes as one form of their diplomacy of mediation (Ticchi 2002: 368-371). Paradoxically, although most of the time, the pope’s offer of peace seemed to have fallen on deaf ears, the Vatican came out of the conflict with an ever-increasing prestige. One indicator of such an interest is the number of diplomatic representations in the Vatican which from 14 in 1914 rose to 27 in 1922 (Ticchi 2002: 358).

**The Local Vatican: A Humble Beginning**

During this period, there were a few examples of the intervention of the Local Vatican (nuncio, the local bishops) which met various fates. One fruitful case, although not bereft of controversy, concerns the border conflict between Peru and Ecuador (fully discussed in Chapter 6) in which Mgr. Macchi, the Vatican’s Apostolic delegate, performed some sort of mediation on behalf of Pope Leo XIII in 1894 (Rouxel 2002: 144-146). The papal nuncio stepped in the dispute to mediate the escalating violence between the two parties following a divergence over
the Garcia-Herrera Treaty\textsuperscript{6} signed in 1890. While the initial instruction to Mgr. Macchi was only to suggest the good office of Pope Leo XIII, his personal knowledge of both the issue and the place prompted him to take a bold initiative by issuing concrete proposals of solutions which brought the parties back to the negotiating table. Another case worth mentioning was the one involving Mgr. Bovina, the Apostolic nuncio in Brazil who happened to have been given full power by both Brazil and Peru to arbitrate their border dispute in 1905. The unexpected success of this long and protracted conflict which lasted over 5 years (1905 -1910) is said to have cemented the Vatican’s reputation as a reliable intermediary (Ticchi 2002: 341-346). Concerning the involvement of local bishops, one case concerns the intervention of Bishop Benavente of San Juan de Cuyo of Argentina and Bishop Raimondo A. Jara of Ancud of Chile in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. Through their activities of peace propaganda in their respective countries, they were instrumental in making possible the arbitration of the dispute related to the Beagle Channel (fully discussed in the next chapter) by King Edward VII of England in 1902 (Eppstein 1935: 473).

This period which could be seen as “foundational” for the Vatican’s involvement in contemporary mediation is important in several respects. This period signals an implicit recognition of the sovereignty of the Vatican by sovereign states despite the “Roman question” (Ticchi 2002: 86). Actually, the loss of the Vatican’s earthly status due to the dispossession of the papal states unexpectedly appeared to have increased its status as a credible mediator in international disputes. The “material loss” seems to have been compensated by a “moral gain” which, in turn, contributed to the Vatican’s perception as an impartial third party. This struggle

\textsuperscript{6} The Garcia-Herrera Treaty signed by Peru and Ecuador in 1890 was a convention by which both parties agreed to submit their boundary question to the arbitration of the King of Spain but at the same time to endeavor to solve the pending problems bilaterally in whole or in part (Krieg 1986: 32).
for recognition on the international scene explains the importance taken by the Global Vatican in
the diplomacy of mediation which, deliberately or not, gives little room to other actors from the
local church. While some nuncios took some initiative, such as was the case in Latin America,
they did so in general on behalf of the Global Vatican. As shown by some cases, especially in
Latin America, the Vatican’s moral influence appeared to be key in the mediation between
Catholic countries in dispute. Undoubtedly, this period somewhat constitutes a sort of template
for succeeding periods in terms of the Vatican’s involvement in conflict management.

Mediation From the 1930s to the Early 1960s

Papal Interventions

In contrast to the “Age of Transition,” in the period which encompasses major events such as
the inter-war, World War II and the Cold War, there are only a few cases related to the Vatican’s
mediation (actual or attempted) in international conflicts as far as the available scholarly
literature is concerned.\(^7\) This period is characterized by the attempts of both popes Pius XI (1922
– 1939) and Pius XII (1939 – 1958) to temper the escalation of hostilities in the pre-WWII
period and work to stop the war when it broke out. Due to the complexity of the reality which
involves historical, structural and personal causes with a systemic effect, such efforts were
generally unsuccessful. One reason lays partly on their ambiguous posture towards fascist
regimes in Nazi Germany and Italy (Coppa 2014). Pope Pius XI seemed to have a mixed posture
by making vocal criticism against fascism, on one hand, and kowtowing to the Italian regime, on
the other, in order to safeguard the interest of the church. For instance, despite his criticism of

\(^7\) The rarity of mediation in the inter-war period is partly explained by the fact that despite the improvement of the
relationship between the Vatican and Italy, no consensus was achieved towards granting the former the status of a
legitimate mediator. This situation is compounded by the non-membership of the Vatican to the League of Nations
which had the effect of excluding it from some burning international issues (see Rouxel 1998: 209)
Mussolini, he was known to have endorsed Italy’s colonial adventure in Ethiopia (Phayer 2008:4-5). Pius XII made unsuccessful efforts towards averting war and then, when it broke out, he tried his best to reduce the scale of the damage (Cardinale 1970: 86-92). Prior to war, he made desperate attempts to induce a settlement of the German-Polish differences, calling for moderation on each side, both directly and through his delegates abroad and the diplomats accredited to the Vatican. After the invasion of Poland in 1939, along with the Vatican’s Secretariat of State and his diplomatic representatives, he made untiring efforts to foster dialogue, bring the war to a halt, limit its scale, bring relief to the victims and give counsel and encouragement to the bishops and their flocks in the countries at war. Rome was spared even with Italy’s entry into war on June 10, 1940, because of Pius XII’s intervention (Rivera 2016: 110). Controversies abound on how his so-called “accommodation policy” with the Nazi regime for the sake of protecting the Catholic church might have hurt his appeal for peace (Cornwell 1999). His famous “Christmas radio-message” in 1942\(^8\) in which he put a veiled condemnation of anti-Semitism and the genocide is considered by some commentators as one evidence that he did his best to avert the Holocaust (Phayer 2008).

**Mediation of the Local Vatican**

One singular event almost unknown but highly significant for the Vatican diplomacy at the local level concerns the mediation performed by Mgr. Silvani, the nuncio in the Dominican Republic and Haiti during the conflict between these two countries in the pre-WWII period. To recall, in October 1937, Dominican military forces attacked and killed an estimated 25,000 Haitian peasants near the border between the two countries (Roorda, 1996). Complex diplomatic

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\(^8\) [http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/speeches/1942/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19421224_radiomessage-christmas.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/speeches/1942/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19421224_radiomessage-christmas.html)
maneuvering then ensued after these tragic events. In time, the dispute was taken up under two general inter-American treaties to which both states were parties. Atkins and Wilson (1972; 1988) argue that the success of the mediation was purportedly attributed to the skillful utilization of the Inter-American System’s structure for peace settlement, thus ignoring completely the role of the local nuncio who was key to the dispute settlement. The nuncio’s diplomatic move is explained in detail in a long letter from minister Henri Norweb, the U.S. government special envoy to the State Department.\(^9\) In his memo, the U.S. envoy indicates clearly the crucial role of the nuncio whom, along with Monsignor Richard Pittini, the Archbishop of Santo Domingo, drafted the final protocol of peace that was signed in Washington on January 31, 1938. Whether the nuncio’s diplomatic move was known by the Vatican was unclear. As explained in the U.S. envoy’s letter, the involvement of the nuncio in the settlement was due more to force of circumstances than to deliberate policy on the part of the Vatican. This case is a reminder of Mgr. Macchi’s bold initiative to mediate the Peru-Ecuador conflict in 1894 discussed earlier. This case is listed as one of the few cases of interstate conflict successfully mediated by the Vatican (Atkins 1997). What emerges from the foregoing discussion is the progressive raise of various actors within the Local Vatican (nuncios, local bishops, local clergy) to engage in the diplomacy of conflict mediation. This shift would even be remarkable in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965) to which we now turn.

**Mediation in the Post-Conciliar Era (1965 to the Present time)**

This long period is certainly the most prolific one in terms of cases and the diversity of actors involved in the Vatican’s mediation at the Global and Local levels. The choice of 1965 as the

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\(^9\) [https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1938v05/d183](https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1938v05/d183)
beginning of this period is determined by the advent of the Second Vatican Council (1962 –
1965) discussed in the previous chapter. This ecclesial event of “tectonic magnitude” has brought
tremendous of change in the way the Church sees itself and its role in the world (Hehir 1987:
111). One scholar affirms how the Council has clarified the role of the Vatican’s diplomacy in a
changing world by stressing its objective of establishing peace in a changing world (Dupuy
1980:12). The sociopolitical consequences of major world events such as the Cold War, the
creation of the U.N. in 1945 and the post-Cold War are, thus, seen through the lens of this major
Church event.

Mediation of the Global Vatican

Mediation of Popes

The diplomacy of the Global Vatican in the area of conflict mediation during this long period
was characterized by both voluntary offers of mediation and requests of mediation by parties in
conflicts. In several instances, Pope Paul VI (1965 – 1978) intervened unsuccessfully towards
stopping the Vietnam War. The Papal solicitude was such that he contacted all personalities from
various countries through both direct and confidential channels (Dupuy 1980: 91-98). He made
constant appeals for a negotiated peace settlement through various means such as public
addresses or special meetings with official dignitaries (Araujo and Lucal 2010: 120-121). In a
furtherance of his efforts, he made a New Year personal appeal in late 1965 to the five leaders of
the countries involved in the war, namely North Vietnam, South Vietnam, the U.S.S.R, the U.S.,
and China. In fact, the Vatican’s initiative to reach out to the communist world reveals a new
face of the Vatican’s diplomacy: for the first time since 1917, the Vatican made public and direct
contact to communist leaders to invite them to peace (Dupuy 1980: 92). During Christmastide
1967, he met with US President Johnson with whom he had a prolonged private discussion on
ending the conflict in Vietnam. In 1968, the Pope offered the facilities of the Vatican as a venue for peace negotiations. In 1966 alone, Pope Paul VI is said to have discussed publicly the Vietnam War on 34 different occasions (Domenico 1994: 217). The meetings of Popes with authorities from the disputing states – which has become a staple of the Vatican diplomacy in conflict resolution as will be highlighted in subsequent chapters – seems to have originated with the Vietnam War. Pope Paul VI met in private audience with most of the protagonists of this tragic conflict such as Presidents Johnson and Nixon, U.S. Secretaries of States, the leaders of South and North Vietnam (Dupuy 1980: 93). Other conflicts also saw the active offer of mediation from the Global Vatican. Such is the case of the war between India and Pakistan in early 1966, in which Paul VI exhorted the archbishops of Bombay and Karachi to appeal to their respective temporal sovereigns to explore in a sincere manner peace between those two nations (Araujo and Lucal 2010: 121).

**Mediations of Special Envoys**

The period examined has seen the emergence of a pattern of activity in the Vatican’s diplomacy in the wake of the Second Vatican Council: the increasing role of special envoys from the Global Vatican for mediation in both interstate and intrastate conflicts. One Vatican higher official affirms that “the greater responsibility given to special envoys to speak on behalf of the Pope is in fact based on the subsidiarity rule which is an important principle enshrined in Catholic social thought.”\(^{10}\) One difficult and controversial case concerns two instances of mediation attempts during the Vietnam War in which Pope Paul VI sent special envoys to South and North Vietnam (Dupuy 1980: 97; Domenico 1994: 209-213). One episode is about Mgr.

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\(^{10}\) Anonymous Vatican official # 4 (Interviewed in Rome on March 7, 2018).
Sergio Pignedoli, the Pope’s special envoy who met various South – Vietnamese authorities in Saigon in 1966, downplaying the potential role of both the local nuncio and South Vietnamese bishops. The lack of support from these institutions, especially the bishops who were subtly discarded because of what was perceived as their “fervid anti-communism hindered the negotiation process which failed miserably. The second episode concerns Giorgio La Pira, a former mayor of Florence and friend of Pope Paul VI who led unofficial secret talks with North Vietnamese authorities in late 1965. La Pira left Hanoi with what he thought was a peace plan from Ho Chi Minh which he delivered to President Johnson via America’s UN ambassador Arthur Goldberg. As it turned out, the badly mishandled affair ended in flat denials from Hanoi and Washington. According to one Vatican high ranking official, “the embarrassment created by cases such as the Vietnam War in which the Catholic church has been denied mediation seems to have reinforced the Global Vatican’s principle of intervening in mediation only at the request of the parties in dispute.”

The 1967 Biafra civil war in Nigeria is one example showing the utilization of resources of the Global Vatican for a specific end. The mediation took three forms, namely a papal pronouncement, the sending of envoys and the material support consisting of relief operations. First, Pope Paul VI made a formal appeal to both Yakubu Gowon and Odumegwu Ojukwu, respectively the head of the Nigerian government and leader of the secessionist movement in

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11 Anonymous Vatican Official # 5 (Interviewed in Rome on April 25, 2018).

12 The Nigerian Civil War, commonly known as the Biafran War (6 July 1967 – 15 January 1970), was a war fought between the government of Nigeria and the secessionist state of Biafra. Biafra represented nationalist aspirations of the Igbo people, whose leadership felt they could no longer coexist with the Northern-dominated federal government. The conflict resulted from political, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious tensions which preceded Britain’s formal decolonization of Nigeria from 1960 to 1963 (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigerian_Civil_War).
Biafra, expressing his concern for the war and a wish for a peaceful solution. The pope voiced again his concern for the Biafran case among other issues in his Apostolic Letter to Africa called *Africae Terrarum* issued in October 1967. “What are we to say when violence reaches such proportions that it becomes almost equivalent to genocide and pits tribe against tribe within the borders of a single nation?” asks the Pope. He then sent two papal envoys, Mgr. George Rochau of Caritas Internationalis, the Vatican’s relief agency and Mgr. Dominic Conway, rector of the Irish College in Rome, first to Lagos and later to Biafra (Wiseberg 1975: 309). The third form of the Vatican’s mediation of the Biafra, along with other Christian churches, is the action at the grassroots level of humanitarian aid through the help of local religious organizations such as the Holy Ghost Fathers in alleviating people’s suffering. While the Vatican intervention in the Biafra had little impact on the outcome of the conflict because of its complex nature in a fragile post-independence context, it has contributed to establishing its role in complex issues of international politics (Wisenberg 1975: 328-329). The Vatican’s involvement, along with the activities of other Christian churches such as the U.S. - based Quaker organization (Sampson 1994), leaves a blueprint for the type of mediation required in complex conflicts such as the case of Biafra.

Some career diplomats long versed in Vatican diplomacy were sent to different parts of the world as papal “itinerant ambassadors.” One of the most known is Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, who as a head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (1984 –1998) functioned as Pope John Paul II’s itinerant envoy in various parts of the world. He had the difficult mission of mediating, reconciling or bringing messages of peace to apparently intractable political factions.

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13 http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/fr/letters/1967/documents/hf_p-vi_let_19670701_capo-governo-nigeria.html

14 http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-vi_apl_19671029_africae-terrarum.html
Among other challenging tasks was his mission to the war-torn region of Croatia and Serbia as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina in the early 1990s to meet with churchmen and political authorities (Etchegaray 2007: 195-197). His trip in Cuba in 1988 to meet with Fidel Castro, the first to be done by a Vatican’s high dignitary after the Commandante’s takeover of the Island in 1959, paved the way for the betterment of the relation between the two states (Etchegaray 2007: 218-224). One former high-ranking Vatican official acknowledges “the pioneering work of late Cardinal Etchegaray who is considered by many as having contributed significantly to the improvement of church-state relations in Cuba.”  

Another important envoy is Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, the head of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace during the pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013). He was sent to the Ivory Coast to give consistency to the peace accord during the First Civil War (2002 – 2007) between Laurent Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro, the chief of the rebel groups who was appointed prime minister. As the two rival leaders are Catholics, the papal envoy was able to bring them together at the Cathedral to give consistency and solidity to the peace agreements. As it turned out, the peace accords appeared to be short lived since a second civil war flared up in 2010-2011. Undaunted and strengthened by his desire for peace, Pope Benedict XVI sent Cardinal Turkson, Martino’s successor in the PCJP (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace), to the Ivory Coast to look for ways for constructive dialogue and reconciliation among the various factions in dispute. During the pontificate of Pope Francis, Cardinal Turkson was also sent to the civil war-torn South Sudan to bring a

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15 Anonymous Vatican official # 6 (Interviewed in Rome on April 12, 2018).


message of peace between the rival factions. Following a typical pattern of mediation since Pope John XXIII, he brought a personal letter to the two protagonists of the civil war.\(^\text{18}\)

Accompanying the message of reconciliation is the care of the afflicted through the sending of humanitarian aid which has become one typical form of the Vatican’s mediation since the Biafran case.

*Meditation of Organizations Attached to the Global Vatican*

The community of Sant’ Egidio,\(^\text{19}\) briefly introduced in the previous chapter, has established itself as one of the most active Catholic units in intrastate conflict mediation. The mediation of the Mozambican civil war in early 1990s is certainly the best-known case performed by this community (Bartoli 1999; 2001; Serapiao 2004; Appleby 2008; Ahern 2015). To recall, the protracted conflict opposing the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and the Resistance National of Mozambique (RENAMO) which began in the mid-seventies finally ended in 1992 after over two years of long and arduous negotiation (July 1990 – October 1992) under the aegis of Sant’ Egidio which hosted and organized the negotiation. The Sant’ Egidio’s intervention follows a process typical to a Catholic transnational organization that uses all the network available to advance its cause: church-state linkages, church-society linkages, state-state-linkages. One Sant’ Egidio official who participated in the mediation argues that “the process was facilitated by few key factors, namely (1) the knowledge of language and culture,


\(^{19}\) The Community of Sant’ Egidio founded in 1968 by Andrea Riccardi is an ecclesial movement composed mostly of lay people. Headquartered in Rome, the movement gathers Christians from over seventy countries based in a common spirituality and the values of prayer, evangelization, friendship with the poor, ecumenism and dialogue (See Ahern 2015: 73)
(2) access to firsthand information, (3) political expertise, (4) long-term vision and (5) the religious element (Bartoli 2001: 367). These characteristics may help religious mediators to bridge the so-called “hermeneutical gap” that is frequently the most relevant obstacle to a peace process. Besides the Mozambican mediation, the Sant’ Egidio community was also involved to varying degrees in the following cases: the Algerian civil war in the 1990s, the Guatemalan conflict in the mid-1990s, the quest for peace in Burundi in the 1990s, the Milosevic-Rugova agreement in Kosovo from 1993 to 1999, the civil war and peace process in both Liberia and Ivory Coast and the democratic transition in Togo, Guinea and Niger (Della Rocca 2018). These cases yielded mixed results for the Sant’ Egidio organization.

**Mediation of the Local Vatican**

**Mediation of Local Nuncios**

The post-Conciliar era has seen a surge in the involvement of units in the Local Vatican in the mediation of conflicts, especially in the intrastate format in comparison with previous periods. This period is characterized by a mutation in the dynamics of international politics with the proliferation of internal conflicts, particularly in Africa. Some individual nuncios posted in several countries have been busy dealing with complex conflict mediation with varying degrees of success. Among the successful ones is the case of Monsignor Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, the nuncio posted in Honduras and Nicaragua between 1980 and 1986 who mediated some aspects of the conflict between both countries (Cremonesi 2004:32). Another fruitful case is the mediation performed by Mgr. Emanuele Clarizio, the nuncio in the Dominican Republic during the 1965 Civil War.\(^{(20)}\) The papal ambassador had played an important role in

\(^{(20)}\) For a summary of this war, see the Huffington Post’s blog article “The Dominican Civil War of 1965” at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/adst/the-dominican-civil-war-o_b_8478570.html
mediating between a political groups known as “Constitutionalists” and the “Loyalists,” who were supported by the United States to end the civil war.\textsuperscript{21} Visibly, nuncios in the Dominican Republic seem to have better luck at interstate mediation considering the case of Mgr. Silvani discussed earlier. Another successful mediation is the one performed by Archbishop Pablo Puente Buces, the Apostolic nuncio to Lebanon who played a significant role in contributing to the end of the 1975-1990 Lebanese Civil War. He took daring risks to build bridges with militia groups and some of the heads of Muslim political parties.\textsuperscript{22} Some of the nuncios were involved in the mediation of rival factions in local politics, sometimes at the risks of their own lives as is the case of Archbishop Fernando Filoni, the Vatican nuncio to Baghdad. He took a heroical stand by remaining in his post at the \textit{nunciatura} throughout the second Iraqi War.\textsuperscript{23} The case of Archbishop Michael Aidan Courtney, the papal nuncio to Burundi constitutes the worst scenario in the nuncios’ involvement in the mediation of intrastate disputes. On December 2003, the Irish born diplomat was killed in an ambush, thus paying the ultimate price by trying to reconcile the Hutu rebels with the governmental forces.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Mediation of the Bishops’ Conferences or Individual Bishops}

The action of Bishops’ Conferences, individual bishops as well as other religious dignitaries in the Local Vatican in the political arena constitutes one major mode of the Catholic church’s involvement in the social sphere in the post-Vatican II era. In that regard, both Latin America


\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Diplomat Magazine}, March 1, 2010 at https://diplomatmagazine.com/vatican-diplomacy/

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{The Catholic World Report}, May 9, 2011.

and Sub-Saharan Africa stand out in terms of the frequency and importance of involvement in mediation, particularly in intrastate conflicts of various natures. The Latin America bishops are known as a well-organized unit within the Catholic church, even before the Second Vatican Council with the establishment in 1955 of CELAM (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano). CELAM became an important Latin American Catholic church forum for debate and communication (Atkins 1997:219). By and large, the mediating role of the Latin American bishops in the post-Vatican II era have concentrated on intrastate civil wars and domestic disputes. A few cases will be explored according to the available data, namely, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico (Chiapas), Colombia, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. The cases reflect the significance of the Church-State relationship which constitutes the political background for the mediation. In El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico (Chiapas), and Colombia, the church’s mediating role was key for diminishing tensions and reaching a negotiated peace in internal civil wars. In Bolivia and the Dominican Republic, the church concentrated on domestic socio-political problems in which it sought to mediate between rival factions.

In El Salvador, the long bloody civil war (1979 - 1992) which claimed nearly 80,000 deaths, over half a million displaced and another half million fleeing the country, was solved thanks partly to the mediating role of the Salvadorian bishops and the local nuncio, especially in its initial phases (Klaiber 1998:175-192). The road to dialogue between the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the state turned out to be rocky and tortuous, full of false promises and unfulfilled expectations. In the whole process including multiple stages, the figure

25 The cases examined here are based on available data. They may constitute a sample of possible other cases in Latin America.
of Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas emerged as a skillful and patient mediator who was able to win over the mutual suspicion on both sides, leading them repeatedly to the negotiating table. While the final phase of the mediation was taken up by the United Nations that led to the peace settlement in 1992, the initial work of the bishops was essential as it allowed the dialogue to move forward.26 The same model of peace process applies to the long civil war in Guatemala (1954 - 1996). The local church came to be involved in the mediation between the governmental forces and the URNG (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatamalteca) (Klaiber 1998: 229-238). In the four phases of the 10-year peace process (1987 – 1996), Bishop Rodolfo Quesada Toruño played a key role as the main mediator with the title of conciliator. He was instrumental in paving the way for the last stage of negotiation that ended with the peace accord under the aegis of the United Nations in 1996. The local church’s hierarchy also played substantive mediating role in Nicaragua during the Sandinista era (1979 – 1990), especially in the final years of the government (Klaiber 1998: 193-215). In comparison with the Salvadorian and the Guatemalan case, things in Nicaragua there appear to be more complicated because of the existence of a polarized church and an overt hostility of the hierarchy (led by Cardinal Obando y Bravo) towards the Sandinista regime. This had led to a mutual distrust which hindered the emergence of an acceptable solution. Thanks to several factors such as the end of the Cold War and the shift in the church’s posture toward the Sandinista regime, the church-state tension progressively eased up, leading to a climate of dialogue which allowed the church to play its part in the reconciliation of conflicting factions in Nicaraguan society. In the post-Sandinista period, the

26 In his narrative of the event, Alvaro de Soto (1999), the U.N. chief mediator seems to overlook these initial important steps taking up by the local church that has facilitated the U.N. mediation.
church continued to play a high-profile role in the efforts to incorporate the Contras\textsuperscript{27} back into society while trying to obtain unsuccessfully a cease fire between the Sandinistas and the Contras.

In Chiapas, Mexico, the tireless mediating work of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, a retired Bishop of San Bartolomeo de las Casas who died in 2011, is quite well known (Klaiber 1998: 257-262; Christiansen 2001: 10-11). A charismatic figure and defender of indigenous rights in Chiapas state, he was later named mediator between the government and the Zapatista rebels. Bishop Ruiz’s mediation effort which drew sympathy worldwide testifies to the vibrant presence of the Catholic church despite the Mexican government endeavor to marginalize it.

The Catholic church in Colombia through the Bishops’ Conference has been a pivotal actor in mediating the conflict between the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), known by the Spanish acronym FARC and the governmental forces, especially since early 2000. Between 1964 and 2013, the long civil war has claimed more than 260,000 lives, 60,000 missing and 6.9 million displaced\textsuperscript{28}. Initially on the side of the conservative governments because of their fierce anti-communist stance, the bishops have progressively changed their posture and become more sympathetic to the claims of the leftist FARC, thanks to the change brought by the Second Vatican Council and the implementation of

\textsuperscript{27} Contra, member of a counterrevolutionary force that sought to overthrow Nicaragua’s left-wing Sandinista government. The original contras had been National Guardsmen during the regime of Anastasio Somoza. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency played a key role in training and funding the group. In 1984 the U.S. Congress banned military aid to the Contras; the efforts of the administration of U.S. president Ronald Reagan to circumvent the ban led to what was known as “the Iran-Contra Affair.” A general peace in the region was negotiated by Costa Rican president Oscar Arias Sánchez, and in 1990 Nicaraguan president Violeta Chamorro negotiated the contras’ demobilization (see Encyclopedia Britannica at https://www.britannica.com/topic/contra-Nicaraguan-counterrevolutionary)

\textsuperscript{28} Catholic News Service, July 20, 2017.
the “preferential option for the poor.” Listed among the few institutions that have a favorable image in public opinion, the Catholic church has been actively involved in the mediating process, particularly in creating a good negotiating environment for the parties and bringing humanitarian relief to the victims.

By contrast to the foregoing cases, the Catholic church’s mediation in the Dominican Republic in the 1980s and 1990s focused mainly on domestic issues. One form of mediation concerns the bishops’ initiative of hosting and organizing the meeting of various societal units (labor, business) in dispute with the government (Betances 2004: 354-356). Another form of mediation concerns the area of electoral politics in which the bishops took an active role reconciling political parties in dispute (Betances 2004: 356-362). The bishops’ mediation in Bolivia follows the same format as in the Dominican Republic by its concentration on domestic issues, a situation caused by the lack of credible institutions besides the Catholic church which can play a stabilizing role (Klaiber 1993). In 1968, the Bolivian church was thrust into the role of mediator to solve the impasse between the miners under the banner of the Confederation of Bolivian Workers (COB) and the government. The Bishops’ Conference along with the papal nuncio were able to negotiate a satisfactory outcome for both parties after months of conflict and tough negotiation (Klaiber 1998: 123-124).


30 According to a 2015 survey made on a sample of 1200 households in 58 cities across Colombia, the Catholic Church, the military forces and the Registry are the three institutions over which the majority of Colombians have a good image. The survey reveals that 73.1% of the respondents have a favorable opinion of the Catholic Church (in El Espectador, December 13, 2015 at https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/el-731-de-colombianos-tiene-una-imagen-favorable-de-igl-articulo-649675

31 La Croix, March 1, 2016 at https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Monde/L-Eglise-role-essentiel-dans-negociations-Colombie-2016-03-01-1200743508
Compared to Latin America, the intervention of Catholic bishops in Sub-Saharan Africa in the area of conflict mediation offers a different picture in several respects. The church’s real involvement in the political arena can be dated back to the “Third Wave of Democracy” in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Lado 2012: 165). This period saw a renewed role for the church in challenging oppressive dictatorship, especially in the former French colonies. One social phenomenon of this era is the so-called “national conference” established in several francophone countries which served as a platform for democratic transition (Schraeder 2004: 229). In countries such as Benin, Congo, Togo and Mali, the Bishops’ Conferences were solicited by various political forces to lead or mediate the difficult path to democracy (Boulaga 2009: 43). In Benin, Archbishop de Souza, the president of the Bishops’ Conference took center stage by being elected president of the Higher Council of the Republic (HCR) which was the legislative body during the political transition in the early 1990s. A skilled mediator, he was able to reconcile various interests which helped pave the way for new elections after years of a brutal socialist regime led by Mathieu Kerekou (Banegas 1997). Other African countries did not enjoy the same promising outcome, as was the case in Congo where Mgr. Kombo, who presided the Conference, was not skilled enough to impose a clear agenda to facilitate the transition process. Outsmarted by the former “big man” Denis Sassou N’Guesso, who played behind-the-scene cunny maneuvering, the Conference’s achievement was far below expectations (Quantin 1997).

These early cases of mediation in Sub-Saharan Africa differ from the more recent ones which touch various issues such as civil wars, electoral disputes and social strife. The bishops’ involvement has mixed results depending on the complexity of the cases. One may evoke the case of the Mozambican civil war’s ending in 1992 (mentioned earlier) which was mediated successfully by Sant’ Egidio (a branch associated with Vatican’ Secretariat of States) with the
help of the local church. The organization worked closely with the local Mozambican church through Mgr. Jaime Goncalves, the bishop of the diocese of Beira who functioned as the main mediator (Gianturco 2018). In Central African Republic, Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga took an active role by leading a successful mediation between the Seleka rebel alliance and government forces in early 2013 which ended with the signature of a peace agreement.\textsuperscript{32} The current situation characterized by instability and intensifying conflict, however, indicates the fragility of the accords which hardly stand the test of time. The case of the Democratic Republic of Congo gives somewhat a full picture of the problem: there subsists a complicated conflict fueled by many factors which defy any coordinated peace process. In this war-torn country, the Catholic church to which belongs 60\% of the population has become a fixture in the political landscape in the wake of the death of the former president Mobutu Sese Seko since the early 1990s (Tshitenge 2017). Like in the Central African Republic, the extreme volatility of the situation there renders the mediation of the bishops very challenging and frustrating. In August 2016, for instance, the mediation launched by Archbishop Marcel Utembi, the president of the Bishops’ Conference to disentangle the political conflict caused by the former president Kabila’s insistence to stay in power had to be suspended after weeks in operation.\textsuperscript{33} According to the analysis of one Vatican high ranking official, “the cause of the failure of mediation in Sub-Saharan Africa relative to what occurs in Latin America may be explained partly by some enduring factors, namely 1) the “big man syndrome” so peculiar to Africa, (2) the international

\textsuperscript{32} Catholic News Service, January 11, 2013.
\textsuperscript{33} Catholic News Service, October 6, 2016.
context, (3) some cultural elements and (4) the institutional fragility of the units involved in mediation including the Catholic church.”

**Coordinated Mediations**

During the period examined, two cases of mediation of different formats (intrastate and interstate conflict) illustrate the coordinated involvement of various units of the Vatican diplomacy at the two levels of analysis with varying fortunes, namely the Lebanese Civil War (1975 - 1992) and the 2003 Iraqi War.

*The Lebanese Civil War*

The Lebanese civil war displays a mobilization of various units from both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican with their multiple ramifications in their effort to mediate between multiple factions. The fundamental objective of the Vatican during the conflict was to save Lebanon as an independent state to protect the Christian presence not only in Lebanon but throughout the Middle East (Irani 1986: 157). Along with other international mediators, multiple sets of actors were involved, namely some units from the Global Vatican, the U.S. Bishops Conference and the local church composed of the Apostolic nuncio, the local bishops and other units. The mediation of the Lebanese war posed a real challenge for the Vatican’s diplomacy because of the multiplicity of feuds (inter-Christian, inter-Lebanese and Lebanese-Palestinian) and the plurality of actors involved (Irani 1994: 181). In the first 5 years of the war, the Vatican appeared to have followed a policy of direct involvement in the mediation. When it became clear that inter-Lebanese and inter-Maronite factionalisms were out of control, the Vatican preferred to

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34Anonymous Vatican official # 7 (Interviewed in Rome on May 25, 2018).

35 The long and protracted Lebanese war involved at least 25 sets of actors united under 8 large factions (see Irani 1986: 99-100).
act indirectly behind the scenes at the diplomatic level and directly to provide humanitarian relief, a hallmark of the Vatican’s intervention in world politics (Irani 1994: 188). On the side of the Global Vatican, there were four unsuccessful mediating attempts led by high dignitaries (Irani 1986: 158). Pope Paul VI sent twice Cardinal Paolo Bartoli, a veteran of Middle East diplomacy and expert in Islam. The third attempt was the sending of Mgr. Mario Brini who also had a deep knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs. The third high ranking Vatican envoy to be sent to Lebanon was Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the then Secretary of State. His mission was to counter the threats facing the Catholic community by trying to conciliate first the Maronites and then the Lebanese.

Most interestingly, the multi-formed U.S. Catholic hierarchy’s involvement gave a new dimension to the Vatican’s mediation in Lebanon (Irani 1986: 124-126). It shows the multiple channels through which the transnational Catholic church operates. Among the most active U.S bishops was the influential Cardinal Terrence Cook of New York, who by his function as the member of the board and executive committee of Catholic Relief Service (CRS), was able to provide humanitarian assistance which supported his informal mediation. Besides, he had some leverage on the U.S. administration through his knowledge of the intricacies of the Lebanese war. Both the State Department policy and that of the Congress regarding the Lebanese conflict are said to have been shaped to some extent by an unpublished report prepared by Cardinal Cook (Irani 1986: 125). In any case, the active involvement of the Catholic community in the U.S. may have had an impact on U.S. policy toward Lebanon.

**The 2003 Iraqi War**

The Vatican’s mediation in the U.S.–Iraqi conflict to avert the war follows a certain pattern in terms of form of intervention: declarations of condemnation by high dignitaries, meetings of
church officials with their secular counterparts in order to influence events, shuttle diplomacy to the countries in dispute, various activities of local bishops, individually or through the Bishops’ Conference, denouncing the looming war. Months ahead of the conflict and during the conflict, intense efforts were made by various units in the transnational Catholic church to prevent the war by making last effort mediation. When the war occurred, there were certain efforts at mitigating the conflict.

The first aspect of the mediation made by the Global Vatican was official denunciation of the looming war. For instance, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the papal diplomatic troubleshooter and German Cardinal Walter Kasper affirm that “there are neither motives nor tangible proof to justify a war” (Allen 2004: 318-319). For observers, such declaration indicates a shift in posture since the Vatican had been publicly sympathetic to the U.S.-led strikes against the Taliban in Afghanistan following September 11, 2001. This anti-war posture and appeal for negotiation intensified progressively up to early 2003 with declarations emphasizing the dire expected outcomes of the upcoming conflict. In that regard, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, the Pope’s representative to the United Nations in Geneva, argued that “a successful war against terrorism has to be focused on development and social justice” (Allen, 2004: 319). Archbishop Renato Martino, the president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, recalled the non-pacifist basic stand of the Catholic Church but stipulated that the moral case for full-scale war was


37 The Catholic Church upholds the moral stance based on the Just War tradition enshrined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Basically, it stipulates that: “All citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war. However, it sometimes becomes necessary to use force to obtain the end of justice. This is the right, and the duty, of those who have responsibilities for others, such as civil leaders and police forces. While individuals may renounce all violence those who must preserve justice may not do so, though it should be the last resort, once all peace efforts have failed.” [See. Catechism of the Catholic Church, # 2307; Vatican II, Gaudium et spes 79, 4]
groundless and that extreme action must always be taken in the framework of the United Nations.\textsuperscript{38}

The second move of the Global Vatican consists of meetings with secular officials in the Vatican to make a plea for peace, or squarely enlist allies for a coalition against the war. As discussed earlier, this diplomatic move was inaugurated by Pope Paul VI during the Vietnam War and has been since instituted by subsequent popes. Pope John Paul II met with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, one of the staunchest supporters of military action, and the Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar to discuss a way to prevent the war.\textsuperscript{39} The Pope also tried to enlist “allies” to his cause such as the Italian Premier and the Iranian Parliament leader Mahammad Khatami.\textsuperscript{40} Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Secretary in charge of the Relation with States convened all foreign ambassadors accredited to the Holy See in Rome to explain the Holy See’s posture regarding the Iraqi conflict\textsuperscript{41} and urging them to do all possible to convince their respective governments, especially those directly concerned, to avoid an overt war.\textsuperscript{42}

The third aspect of mediation taken up by the Global Vatican is shuttle diplomacy consisting of sending special envoys in both Baghdad and Washington to meet respectively with Saddam


\textsuperscript{39} Catholic News Service, February 24, 2003.

\textsuperscript{40} Catholic News Service, February 27, 2003.

\textsuperscript{41} On the Iraqi crisis, the Vatican’ position is summarized in four points: (1) that Iraq must comply with U.N. resolutions on disarmament; (2) that all nonmilitary channels must be attempted and exhausted before the use of force is allowed; (3) that the United Nations is the rightful body to make decision on the use of force in Iraq; (4) that “preventive” war – one triggered by a clear act of aggression – is not justifiable under Catholic teaching (Catholic News Service, February 10, 2003).

\textsuperscript{42} Catholic News Service, February 28, 2003
Hussein and George W. Bush while delivering special letters. On February 12, 2003, Cardinal Etchegaray met with the Iraqi leader who reiterated his denial of the possession of any weapon of mass destruction and his willingness for peace. Yet, he flatly rejected the objective of “regime change” promoted by the U.S that he saw as the logic behind the looming war (Etchegaray 2007: 269). Cardinal Pio Laghi, the other special emissary, was sent to Washington, D.C., to meet with President George W. Bush and the U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell in early March 2003.\textsuperscript{43} The choice of Pio Laghi was deliberate since he had personal ties with the Bush family when functioning as papal nuncio in Washington in late 80s.\textsuperscript{44} In a diplomatic manner, the Vatican prelate hardly hid his disappointment about the meeting’s outcome by affirming that “President Bush seems to have made already his mind to invade Iraq.”\textsuperscript{45}

Another diplomatic move by the Vatican is the intensive activities of local bishops working individually or communally through the Bishops’ Conference as well as other units at the local level. They did all their best to prevent the war or, at least, initiate a peace negotiation. For instance, in early January of 2003, Chaldean Auxiliary Bishop Shlemon Warduni of Baghdad made a moving plea to world leaders to do their best since the war would have a devastating effect on his already suffering country.\textsuperscript{46} Such an appeal is echoed by other bishops in various countries who emphasized the war’s devastating effects. Archbishop Lawrence Saldanha of Lahore (Pakistan) along with the general secretary of the National Council of Churches in

\textsuperscript{43} Catholic News Service, March 7, 2003


\textsuperscript{45} Catholic News Service, October 6, 2003.

\textsuperscript{46} Catholic News Service, January 10, 2003.
Pakistan warned of the possible global backlash resulting from the war.\(^{47}\) As the war was approaching, more and more Bishops’ conferences from Canada, Indonesia, France, Italy, Germany, Malaysia and the Philippines stepped in to make a joint statement warning against the incalculable outcome of the future conflict.\(^{48}\) Because of its weight and influence, the U.S. Bishop Conference (USCCB) appears to be the more active unit at the Local Vatican in trying to influence the U.S. public opinion through different means. At their request, an intensive campaign of fasting and prayers as well as mediatized anti-war rallies were held across the U.S.\(^{49}\)

Both the Lebanese and the Iraqi cases show the limitations of mediation while confronted with protracted and extremely complex conflicts. All the moral and institutional means the Vatican deployed did not prevent the wars from occurring. Both cases, especially the Iraqi war, confirm to some extent the mediation theory which stipulates that the success or failure of a mediation is related to the parties’ desire to commit to mediation: a mediation is likely to succeed when the parties in dispute agree together on the role of a third party (Bercovitch 2011: 101). Collective action from the Vatican in both cases seems to display a development: in the Lebanese case, the Vatican’s involvement is less coordinated compared to the Iraqi one in which many units from both the Vatican at global and local levels were put in motion. A former Vatican senior official affirms “how the strategy of joint mobilization in the 2003 Iraqi war is reminiscent of the Vatican’s participation in the 1994 World Conference on population and development in Cairo. There, all institutional resources of the universal Catholic Church were deployed to counter the United Nations’ draft document on population control which was

\(^{47}\) Catholic News Service, January 21, 2003


perceived by the Holy See as favorable to abortion.\footnote{Anonymous Vatican official # 4 (interviewed on March 7, 2018).} In another respect, both the Lebanese and Iraqi cases are two issue-areas which offer some variation in Moravscik’s New Liberalism theory used in this dissertation. In the first case, the example of multiple intervention of transnational and domestic social forces such as the Catholic units in the US, although unable to change the course of events, appears to indicate a relative success by shaping some of the U.S. policy towards Lebanon. The Iraqi case, on the other hand, could be considered as a “low point” in the impact of the intervention of those social forces in shaping or changing the preference of states. One can say that these cases indicate a development in the Vatican’s involvement on issue-areas in international politics.
Analysis of the Vatican’s Intervention in Conflict Resolution

Table 6. Recapitulating Chart of some Characteristics of the Vatican’s Intervention in Conflict Management from the Age of Transition up until the Present Time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>Global Vatican</td>
<td>Global Vatican</td>
<td>Global Vatican Local Vatican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Conflict Addressed</td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>Intrastate Interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms of conflict management</td>
<td>(Arbitration)</td>
<td>Good office Mediation</td>
<td>Good Office Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modes of Intervention</td>
<td>Humanitarian diplomacy, Papal Letters, Suggestion of Solution,</td>
<td>Papal Letters, Speeches, Special Messages</td>
<td>Papal or Episcopal letters, Humanitarian Action, Special Messages, Suggestion of Solution, Speeches, Meetings with officials, Networking, Shuttle Diplomacy, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Influence</td>
<td>Moral, Spiritual</td>
<td>Moral, Spiritual</td>
<td>Moral- Spiritual- Institutional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 above gives a recapitulation of some of the main points explored in this chapter, which pertain to the Vatican’s intervention at its two levels of analysis during the three periods under study. It also allows a comparison across time by identifying continuity and change.

Plurality and Diversity of Actors

Regarding the actors involved in the mediation, the foregoing discussion has identified a significant change in terms of the diversity of actors involved across the three periods. When the GV occupied center-stage during the first and second period, there was a gradual rise in
importance of the LV units in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Accompanying this multiplication of actors is the sophistication of the actors’ mission. On the side of the Global Vatican, for instance, worth mentioning is the emergence of “Papal Special Envoys” who played significant roles in some conflicts in troubled areas such as Africa. Regarding the LV, noteworthy is the increasing role taken by units such as the Catholic Bishops, working collectively or individually. The discussion has also pinpointed the various forms of conflict resolution carried out by the Vatican at its two levels which displays a continuity over the years. Standing out among these are good offices (a low-key mediation) and conflict mediation itself. As discussed in this chapter, the good office involving the Global Vatican is carried out in a special manner by “Special Envoys” such as Cardinals Etchegaray and Pio Laghi.

**Occurrences of Mediation**

A variation is also tangible regarding the number of cases dealt with by the Vatican, especially regarding the first and third period. While there is a divergence among scholars on the exact number of cases of international conflict management which involved the Vatican during the period from 1870 to 1922, common among them are the 13 cases mentioned in the above table. These include the successful case of Carolinas Islands, which is endowed with historical significance as established the Global Vatican as a player in global politics, as well as other cases of good offices discussed earlier in this chapter. The second period is apparently the lowest as this study has identified only 3 cases: two cases of the Global Vatican (Pope Pius XI and Pius

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51 Barberini (2003), Rouxel (1998), Catalano (1958) and d’Onorio (1997) contend that there were 13 interventions (or attempts of) in the forms of mediation and good offices which involved the Vatican. In a more comprehensive manner, Ticchi (2002) comes up with 22 cases which include both actual and rumored cases of mediation and good offices as well as projects of arbitration.
XII) regarding WWII and the single case of the Local Vatican in the conflict opposing Haiti and the Dominican Republic. As examined in this chapter, the post-Vatican II period is the more prolific in comparison with the two previous ones as the cases there amounted to an approximate 30. This estimated figure includes the intrastate conflicts dealt with by both the Global Vatican and Local Vatican units as well as the three case-study in this dissertation. In that respect, the data from the International Conflict Management (2000 Codebook) which lists only 11 cases from 1945 to 1995, clearly misses a number of other cases performed by the Local Vatican in Africa and Latin America. In fact, despite the potential data issue which hinders the chance of having a precise number, the cases discussed in this study are indicative of an unmistakable trend, namely the multiplication of cases taken care of by the Local Vatican units. Related to the occurrence of mediation is the type of conflict addressed by the Vatican by its two levels of analysis. A clear trend is emerging over the years, namely the gradual change from interstate disputes during the two periods from 1870 to 1965, to intrastate conflicts (civil wars, domestic disputes) in the current period.
The Vatican’s Intervention in Post-1965

Table 7. Cases of Conflicts mediated by the Vatican in the post-1965 era and their Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Not Successful</th>
<th>Partially successful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Vatican</td>
<td>Iraqi war, Vietnam War, Kosovo, Biafra (Nigeria), Burundi, Guinea</td>
<td>Lebanese Conflict</td>
<td>Mozambique, Beagle-Channel conflict, Peru-Ecuador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Vatican</td>
<td>Niger, Congo, DRC, Togo, Mali</td>
<td>Lebanese conflict, Ivory Coast, South-Sudan, Central African Republic, Colombia</td>
<td>Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico (Chiapas), Benin, Nicaragua, Bolivia, US. - Cuba, Peru-Ecuador, Honduras-Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of its particular significance for this study, the third period (1965 onwards) deserves a special attention as shown in Table 7 above. In fact, this period points to some important characteristics pertaining to the way the Vatican handles conflict mediation such as the type of conflicts (intrastate, interstate), the relations of the Vatican with the parties, the international factors that shape the mediation and so forth. By and large, there is a variation in outcomes based on criteria discussed in Chapter 2. As shown on the table, out of the estimated 30 cases or so in the post-Vatican II era, 12 have seen successful outcomes. The remaining ones fall in what could be categorized as “partially successful” and “not successful.” One striking fact is that most of the successful cases occurred in Latin America while only 2 or 3 cases only occurred in Africa (Mozambique, Benin, and to some extent the Central African Republic) during the same period. The comparison across space (Latin America, Africa) of these cases opens up to interesting
conclusions regarding some characteristics of conflict mediation, especially in terms of supply (mediation offered) and demand (mediation accepted). According to some results from the mediation literature, the relationship between the third party and the disputants has a stronger impact on mediation offers in civil conflicts than interstate ones (Melin & Svenssson 2009: 251). Basically, the authors argue that the historical ties between the potential mediators and the parties decreases the likelihood of civil war’s participant’s acceptance but increases the likelihood of acceptance in an interstate conflict. In a predominant Catholic setting such as Latin America, the relationship of the Vatican with the disputants in both intrastate and interstate disputes is likely to be shaped by the religious factor as revealed by the degree of the Church-State relationship. While details about the supply or demand of mediation regarding the Vatican in some of the cases in Latin America are not always clear, the mediation’s occurrence was likely to be shaped by the “Catholic ties.” In fact, the significance of the religious factor coheres with the Latinobarometer survey on the state of democracy in Latin America. For instance, a 2017 survey done in 18 Latin American countries shows that only the Catholic church and the armed forces, two powerful institutions before the advent of mass democracy, retain much respect and trust.\footnote{The Latinobarometro Survey: Dejected About Democracy, in The Economist, November 10, 2018.} Worth noticing is the fact that even the three African successful cases occurred in countries with a significant number of Catholics (Mozambique, Benin). On that register, one penetrating article argues that the high degree of legitimacy enjoyed by African third parties makes them more effective (Duursma 2020). That legitimacy comes from the strong conviction within the African society of states that African mediation is the most desirable type in conflicts there. From that perspective, one possible explanation of the Vatican’s failure in
some cases of mediation in the African context may be related to that weakness of legitimacy which may result from a “shallowness” of the Catholic church’s presence in these settings.

The mediation of the civil wars in both El Salvador and Guatemala evoked earlier offer some interesting clues regarding the Vatican’s posture vis-à-vis other international mediators. As discussed above, in the first case, the Local Vatican units (Bishops and nuncios) initiated the mediation process, leaving the final phase of peace settlement to the United Nations when all the major obstacles have been removed. In the second case, the local church mediated all phases of the process, leaving the United Nations as the guarantor of the final Peace Accord. Such cases point to the significant role of the Vatican in initiating the processes which were accepted by the disputants. The facilitation paved the way for a fruitful outcome. One might wonder if such a procedure works in different settings other than Catholic ones. The Venezuelan crisis, however, displays a different and complex picture in a high-stakes conflict occurring in a predominantly Catholic country: the Maduro regime requested the Vatican’s mediation to enhance its stature internationally while the opposition (backed by the local church hierarchy) rejected it on ground that it now enjoys an increasing international recognition.53

As hypothesized in this dissertation, such an outcome is related to the Vatican’s influence in the negotiation. As the discussion shows, besides the moral and spiritual aspects of that influence from which the Vatican bases its leverage on parties in dispute (which was predominant in the

53 “Maduro’s call for Vatican mediation rejected by Venezuelan cardinal” in The Catholic Register, February 8, 2019 at https://www.catholicregister.org/home/international/item/28947-maduro-s-call-for-vatican-mediation-rejected-by-venezuelan-cardinal
first period), there is also the institutional dimension which comes from the Catholic church’s structure as a transnational religious organization.

**Variation in Diplomatic Procedures**

The modes of intervention of both Global Vatican and Local Vatican have also seen a development over the years with the adoption of more sophisticated diplomatic procedures. The several cases in the post-Vatican II period display certain patterns of action such as the sending of Special Envoys, Pope’s statements through personal letters, special messages, the use of the so-called “humanitarian diplomacy” through various transnational organisms such as Caritas Internationalis or Catholic Relief Service, the establishment of units networking across countries, etc. The use of these diplomatic means varies in function of the type and importance of conflicts and yields various outcomes. When the stakes are high, like engaging world peace and the survival of the Catholic church, the Vatican is willing to deploy the maximum of resources to meet the challenge as shown by the Iraqi case, and to a lesser extent the Lebanese.

**Conclusion**

The historical survey of the Vatican’s dealing with conflict mediation in the modern time yields some significant findings from a historical and analytical perspective. One point which emerges is that the long tradition of conflict resolution carried out by the Vatican is deeply rooted in history as being part of its ecclesial mission which is the quest for peace between nations (Araujo and Lucal 2010; Dupuy 1980). A second point is that the steady development of this type of diplomacy closely follows the meander of important political, sociological and ecclesiological events of the late 19th Century to the 20th Century and beyond. Included in these events are WWI and WWII, the Cold War launched in 1947 and ended in late 1980s, the Second
Vatican Council and the “Third Wave of Democracy” from the late 80s. To some degrees, these events have shaped the way the Vatican handles the resolution of international conflicts.

A closer examination of the post-Vatican II period (1965 onwards) yields important findings in terms of how the Vatican deals with modern conflict mediation. This period is characterized by the development of the local Vatican units which coincides with the increase in intrastate conflicts (civil wars and domestic strife) in which the Vatican has been called upon to mediate. One striking fact is the development of the procedures adopted by the Vatican which becomes more sophisticated. In another respect, a variation is perceptible across space regarding mediation outcomes. Thus, both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican appear to perform better in dealing with cases in Catholic countries than in non-Catholic countries, especially with regard to Latin America and Africa. This points to the particular significance of the religious factor which shapes the relationship between mediator and disputants.

In a way, this chapter which can be considered as a “macro-perspective” of the Vatican’s involvement in international conflict mediation, sets the stage for a “micro-analysis” in specific cases in the next three chapters of this dissertation in which some of the elements identified in this chapter will be further explored. The focus on interstate mediation in the post-Vatican era will allow us to verify in a thorough manner our hypothesis about the “institutional” leverage premised on the atypical structure of the Catholic church. These cases will also further confirm some pattern of behaviors in the Vatican’s diplomacy of conflict resolution as discussed in this chapter.
“By the signature of this Treaty of Peace and Friendship, we hope that the long border conflict between two sister nations in the Austral zone has now become a thing of the past: we are witnessing a historic moment, unthinkable twenty or even ten years ago.” Such is part of the speech of Cardinal Casaroli, the Vatican Secretary of State, representing Pope John Paul II at the signing of the document which ended the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina on November 29, 1984.¹ The border contention concerns three tiny Islands called Picton, Lenox, and Nueva located in the southern cone of the American continent which Chile claims to be its own, but which lie south of Argentina’s territory, rather than Chile’s. Cardinal Casaroli’s words above could be no more accurate given the difficulty due to the length and the toughness of the negotiation process as acknowledged by the Chilean minister of foreign affairs during the same ceremony. By and large, the terms of the new deal which smacks of a quid-pro-quo between the parties enjoins the Argentinians to give up their pretension to both the Islands of contention and the limited facilities on Chilean soil. Chile, on the other hand, would sacrifice its rights to joint use of the vast Argentine maritime zone and settle for a relatively narrow territorial sea (Benavada 1989:48; Laudy 2001: 314). The apparent simplicity of formulation hardly conceals the extreme difficulty of reaching a consensus among the parties. It is true that this long and protracted conflict was one of the longest disputes in Latin America which spanned over one

¹ L’Osservatore Romano, December 1, 1984.
century (1881 – 1984). The complexity and variety of factors involved – geopolitical, historical, sociological, religious, psychological and cultural – surely contributed to making it one of the most difficult border conflicts of the 19th-20th century. What makes the Beagle Channel dispute peculiar is that it was at once the object of various types of conflict management such as arbitration, good office and mediation. Eventually, the latter prevailed.

This case-study chapter is subdivided in three sections. The first section gives a succinct historical background of the conflict. It gives useful historical references and outlines the various attempts to resolve the conflict. The second section begins by a short overview of the state of the Church - State relationship in both Argentina and Chile, which serves as background for the mediation. It then discusses the involvement of the Vatican’s institutions at both global and local level along the line of the three phases of the mediation’s timeframe. The third section makes an analysis of the Vatican’s influence in terms of its involvement as mediator according to the methods discussed in Chapter 2 and assesses the hypotheses in light of other intervening factors in the mediation.

**Historical Overview of the Beagle Channel Dispute**

**State of the Problem**

Since this study is not centered principally on the object of dispute, a territorial border issue which belongs to the juridical and legal realm, but on its mediation, the section is confined to the main points at stake along with some important historical references. Like many border disputes in Latin America, the controversy around the Beagle Channel dates back to the decolonization period in the early 19th century in which boundary delimitation was not clear at the end of Spanish rule (Domínguez, Jorge I., et al, 2003). Since 1854 when the Royal Geographical
Society of London determined that Cape Horn was the limitation between both the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, Argentina and Chile continually disputed the control of this highly strategic area\(^1\). The frontiers of Argentina and Chile were set by a boundary treaty established on July 23, 1881, which stipulates that the delimitation of the two countries would follow the Andes as far south as the 52 parallel and be defined by the highest summits which divides the waters (Laudy 2000: 295: Appolis 1989: 338-339). Accordingly, “all the Islands located within the Beagle Channel area up until Cape Horn and up to the western zone of the Terra Fuego belong to Chile.” An additional protocol intended to facilitate the work of the bipartisan committee in charge of the demarcation line was signed on May 1, 1893: while it did not bring anything new to the 1881 Treaty, it underlined one essential principle which is formulated in the following terms:

> Under the provisions of the said Treaty, the sovereignty of each state on its respective coastline is absolute, so that Chile cannot claim any points towards the Atlantic, just as the Argentine Republic cannot claim a point to the Pacific\(^2\).

Such is the so-called “bi-oceanic” principle which, by and large, stipulates that territory on the Atlantic is Argentina and territory on the Pacific is Chilean (Garrett 1985: 82). In fact, if the legal texts appeared to be clear, the area’s geography remained confusing. In particular, both the route and the outlet of the Beagle Channel, named after the British Admiralty’s gunship which discovered the area in April 1830, became quickly controversial as they were based on divergent indications provided by different maps. Clearly the stake was the possession of the three tiny major islands south of the Canal, respectively Picton, Lennox and Nueva (hereafter PLN) (See map below). In 1902, for the first time, Argentina issued a map integrating these islands into its


An entire Argentinian doctrine was then developed according to which: (1) the Beagle Channel does not lead to the North of PLN but to the South, (2) PLN are not located within the Channel but in its Atlantic façade, (3) they are not part of the islands allocated to Chile by the 1881 Treaty as by their position in the Atlantic, they entered Argentina territory in virtue of the 1893 Protocol establishing the bi-oceanic distribution (Appolis 1989: 339). In short, the whole dispute boils down to the delimitation of jurisdiction which aimed at the possession of the PLN.

Figure 3. Enlarged Map of the Beagle Channel Area (Source Google)

Negotiation Processes to Solve the Dispute

From that point onwards, the two countries entered a cycle of diplomatic and juridical procedures which extended through several decades. The arbitration Award of King Edward VII promulgated on November 20, 1902, about territorial borders did not include the Beagle Channel. This led to new rounds of negotiations until a consensus was reached on June 28, 1915
stipulating that the dispute should be brought to the arbitration of the King of England. Due to its non-binding character, however, it was never ratified by the parties.

The frequency of failed efforts to solve the conflict through juridical means indicates how deeply entrenched the dispute was. Between 1915 and 1964, there were five unsuccessful attempts to submit the Beagle Channel controversy to arbitration (Laudy 2000: 299). Multiple incidents involving the fleets of Argentina and Chile in the contested area led to an agreement on England’s arbitration which was signed on July 22, 1971. The solution appeared to satisfy the parties insofar as they could establish by themselves the arbitration court, the role of the queen being reduced to ratifying the sentence. The arbitral procedure should extend over several years with different phases such as the filing of official briefs simultaneously in 1973, 1974 and 1975 accompanied by frequent oral debates in Geneva. Besides the attribution of PNL, the arbitral court was given the task of tracing a clear demarcation line of the maritime borders between both Argentina and Chile in the area of the Beagle Channel. The arbitration decision issued on February 18, 1977 was ratified by Queen Elisabeth two months later. It essentially established a boundary running through the center of the Beagle Channel and extending to the east of the PNL group. In clear, all three of the disputed islands were awarded to Chile (Laudy 2000: 299).

Such a decision, which juridically consecrated the Chilean position was considered unjust by the Argentinians who refused to comply at least for two reasons. First, the arbitration court’s refusal to take into consideration the “bi-oceanic principle” included in the 1893 protocol reduced to nothing the Argentinian borders’ doctrine in the area. Second, it could have an

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3 To avoid any bias, the Argentinians imposed the principle that the court should be composed of international judges with the sole exception of the president who was a British citizen. This “precaution” is explained by the resurgence of the Anglo-Argentinian conflict over the Falklands Islands (see Appolis 1989: 340)
indirect impact on the maritime jurisdiction in the south of the contested zone and beyond Cape Horn in the southern region. In fact, the crux of the conflict appears to be there: the new maritime rights set up by the 3rd Conference of the United Nations recognizes to states the right to extend their jurisdiction in an exclusive economic zone area of 200-mile maritime territorial limit regarding their coastal waters for the purpose of exploiting various natural resources (Appolis 1989: 341). Besides, the zone in dispute presents a strategic character since the country ultimately controlling the Channel and the three islands can legally extend its sovereignty outward 200 miles into the Atlantic, thus effectively denying access to this region by other countries (Struthers 1985:7). Two adjacent factors had the potential of complicating the issue: (1) the consideration of the balance of power relationship in the region and (2) the role of nationalism which affected the respective outlooks of the protagonists (Struthers 1985: 7-10). Historical resentment resulting from various circumstances had contributed to the formation of a balance of power relationships between some South American countries. A small local dispute, such as the one in the Beagle Channel area, could thus expand into a conflict involving several countries which have geopolitical interest such as Brazil, Peru or Bolivia. Besides, the internal division of the military dictatorships coupled with the intensive arms race in the area increased the risk of confrontation.4 As for the second factor, history has shown that in every mediation by a third party, Chile had been awarded all of the disputed territories while Argentina had virtually received nothing. This could but spur an acute nationalism on the part of the Argentinians who felt they were being systematically taken advantage of. Argentinian nationalism was all the more challenged by the perception of Great Britain as partial in the arbitration process because of the

The Falkland issue, which from the Argentinian perspective might loom large here (Church 2008: 12).

All these elements explained the strong reticence of the Argentinians to accept the court decision. Feeling vindicated in their claims, the Chileans took immediate action to implement the arbitral decision without taking into consideration the nine-month timeframe stipulated by the Court. During Summer 1977, political discussions alternated with the beginning of a tug of war manifested by repeated violations of Chilean maritime and air space as well as some acts of sovereignty from the Argentinians on certain islands attributed to Chile. New contacts were attempted by both sides to solve the impasse, especially to deal with the issues not addressed by the decision such as the maritime delimitation in the southern region, freedom of navigation in the area of the Beagle Channel, and common exploitation of resources within a maritime zone of collective interest. These negotiations neither yielded any results nor defused the tension. Santiago stuck to the arbitration decision while the Argentinians made the inclusion of the “biosoceanic principle” a condition sine qua non to their adherence to the sentence.5 Despite the intervention of the U.S. State Department on January 1978 followed by an encounter of the leaders of both countries one week later, the Argentinian government announced officially their rejection of the arbitration decision on January 25, 1978, declaring it “null and void” (Laudy 2000: 300).

This refusal to accept the arbitral awards baffled the Chileans who considered it unprecedented in arbitration awards. For them, the Argentinians’ rebuttal of the ruling was unacceptable since it would deprive Chile of vast potential resources, let alone the strategic

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location of the island. On March 8, 1978, the arbitration court reasserted that the decision remained fully valid and legally binding, its implementation being left to the disputed nations to negotiate. The failure of the arbitration procedure led the disputed nations to return to diplomacy. On February 20, 1978, the two presidents signed an agreement (known as the Puerto Montt Accord) putting in place a committee which had the task of dealing with the whole issue in a 7-month timeframe. The following political negotiations, however, led to nowhere because of the ambiguity of the approach itself: the Chileans intended to carry out a complementary delimitation which respected the authority of res judicata while the Argentinians sought a global negotiation on the whole subject which implied calling into question the arbitration award in the contested zone (Appolis 1989: 343). Basing its vision on an uneven balance of power – Argentina’s military superiority over Chile – Buenos Aires hoped to impose a deal which served its interest. This explained why the Argentinians initially wanted a strictly bilateral diplomatic procedure which excluded the intervention of a third party (Appolis 1989 343; Schruter 1985:9). Several suggestions were rebuffed, such as the recourse to the International Court of Justice, the mediation of Juan Carlos, the King of Spain or that of the Organization of American States suggested by the U.S. The situation being totally blocked, a military confrontation appeared inevitable. Reservists were called up in Argentina which dispatched a naval squadron in the disputed area, while on their side, the Chilean fleet moved to Cape Horn. A military

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confrontation was nearly avoided thanks to a “providential” torrential storm in the southern area which prevented any military operation (Appolis 1989: 344). It is then at that critical time when the worst scenario appeared to be looming that the Vatican decided to step in.

The Vatican’s Mediation.

The Church-State Relationship in Argentina and Chile

A brief discussion of the state of the Church-State relationship in the two countries in dispute during the period of conflict is called for as it serves as a background for the Vatican’s mediation. Catholicity and military dictatorship were two factors shared by both countries. Regarding Catholicity, although Argentina and Chile are nominally “Catholic nations” with a percentage of 89% and 72% of their population respectively, the Catholic influence in each society differs, a fact explained by the history of the implantation and institutionalization of Catholicism (Klaiber 1998). One aspect of that difference is the separation of church and state in Chile which was negotiated with the Vatican and enshrined in the constitution since 1925. Such a separation is manifested by the nonexistence of a concordat or convention between Chile and the Vatican, which are specific agreements regulating the Church-State relationship. This explains the far greater independence of the Chilean Church from the state compared with Argentina which signed a concordat with the Vatican in 1966 and was ratified subsequently (Ruderer 2015:472). A second significant factor is the military dictatorship running the two countries with which the Catholic church dealt differently. In Chile, the relationship of the Catholic church with

9 Concordats and conventions are diplomatic instruments intended to establish a juridical regime which pertains to particular areas, such as the nomination of bishops by the Vatican, on which the Catholic church and governments affirm their prerogatives (d’Onorio 1989:195; Barberini 2003: 164). These bilateral conventions tend to shape the Church-State relationship depending on the scope of the areas covered by the agreements.
General Pinochet’s junta gradually changed from an attitude of cautious support to an overt defiance (Meacham 1987; Klaiber 1998:49-54; Lies and Malone 2007: 92; Ruderer 2015: 475). In the face of authoritarianism and the growing violation of human rights, the Catholic church became increasingly vocal and set itself as the “moral opposition” to the dictatorship, assisting and serving the opposition, especially with the creation of the Vicarià de la Solidaridad (Vicariate of Solidarity), a meeting point for opponents of the regime. In contrast to the Chilean Church, its Argentinian counterpart seemed to exhibit a more ambiguous stance towards the junta (Klaiber 1998). During the military takeover, the Argentinian bishops were known to be quite conservative and integralists in their majority, not very much influenced by the Second Vatican Council’s spirit and therefore more likely to align with the anti-leftist ideological stance of the military junta. There subsisted, however, a minority of progressive bishops who stood against the military brutality and tried to have their voice heard (Ruderer 2015).

These mixed attitudes of cooperation and defiance between the Catholic church (especially the hierarchies) and the state in both countries would determine in some ways the fate of the mediation. Thus, while General Pinochet might have a low consideration of the Catholic church domestically, he understood the influence of the Vatican on the international scene (Meacham 1987). This mixed perception might explain the regime’s early reluctance to appeal to the Vatican as a mediator as discussed below.

**How the Vatican Came to Intervene**

The choice of the Vatican as a third-party mediator by both Argentina and Chile did not come as naturally as one might think considering that both countries are Catholic nations. Facing the dilemma of the negotiations’ impasse, Chile initially wanted the intervention of the
International Court of Justice (ICJ) while Argentina persisted in promoting bilateral negotiations (Moncayo 2008: 3). Such reluctance on the part of the Chileans might be explained by the somewhat tense relationship of General Pinochet with the Chilean Catholic hierarchy. A complete deadlock in mid-December 1978 on who should mediate compelled the Chileans to make a proposal to submit the disagreement to the Vatican, an idea which was at first rejected by Argentina. However, in the face of an increasingly inextricable problem and an escalating tension, Argentina began to heed the idea that the Vatican should be involved in the mediation.

One overlooked although important aspect of the Beagle Channel’s mediation is that the idea of involving the Vatican appears to have begun at the Local Vatican’s level through the initiatives of both Episcopal Conferences which supported the negotiations of the two governments during the Summer of 1978 (Appolis 1989: 345). As far back as September 1978, individual bishops or groups of bishops from both countries already made repetitive exhortations in that regard. In Chile, Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez, the Archbishop of Santiago and president of the Bishops’ Conference of Chile was instrumental in requesting the intervention of the Vatican in the mediation. Cardinal Raul Silva and the Vatican nuncio were involved in initiating the process through a meeting with the Chilean authorities while sending request to the Vatican.”

In fact, the idea had the support of Pope John Paul I who passed away unexpectedly on September 1978, just a few weeks after his election. In a letter to the Episcopal Conferences of both countries, John Paul I encouraged the Christian communities in their efforts towards defusing the permanent and unbearable tension. As the Pope put it, “it is necessary to create a

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11 Anonymous Vatican official # 8 (interviewed in Rome on April 14, 2018).
generalized climate in which, after any bellicose attitude or animosity, the reasons for concord prevail over the forces of hatred or division, which only leave behind destructive traces.”

One advisor to the Argentinian mediating team observes that “being one of the few institutions capable of making controversial statements during those difficult times of military dictatorship, the church’s initiative was perceived as a sort of “psychological pressure” on the two military juntas to do everything towards a peace settlement.”

According to one scholar, the Catholic hierarchies in both countries made the unequivocal choice of supporting the “doves” rather than the “hawks” in each regime since doing so would benefit both the local churches and these nations (Appolis 1989: 345)

In the face of impending hostilities, Pope John Paul II, who was elected at the helm of the universal Catholic church on October 16, 1978, took a further step by directly addressing his concern to the leaders of the two countries. In a direct message to both the presidents of Chile and Argentina on December 12, 1978, the new Pope expressed his concern and hope for a peaceful settlement.

John Paul II explained further his initiatives of peace regarding the Beagle Channel dispute to the Sacred College of Cardinals and the Curia during a Christmas ceremony in the Vatican. In his speech, the Pope underlined the fact that the mediation was offered by the

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13 Anonymous church official # 1 (Skype-interviewed on October 22, 2018).


Vatican and was accepted in principle although in an informal way by the authorities in both countries.\textsuperscript{16} The formal accord came later. In fact, Pope John Paul II somewhat “forced” destiny by sending his special envoy, Cardinal Antonio Samore, on a mission of good office to bring the two parties together, make a thorough inquiry into the issues and collect as much information as possible. The preliminary good office of Cardinale Samore was far from an easy task as it faced strong opposition from factions within the military, especially on the Argentinian side.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{The Global Vatican’s Good Office}

Cardinal Samore, aged 73 years, was an expert of Latin America and occupied important functions such as a nuncio in Colombia in which he played an important role in the organization of the Latin American Episcopal Council or CELAM.\textsuperscript{18} Dubbed by \textit{Time Magazine} “the Vatican’s Kissinger,” he was the head of the Vatican’s secret archives at the time of his appointment.\textsuperscript{19} After an intensive shuttle diplomacy between Santiago and Buenos Aires, Cardinal Samore had his first diplomatic success on January 9, 1979, by having the two governments sign the Montevideo Accords which comprise two main agreements. The first agreement contained a formal request for mediation formulated by the two governments. They clearly asked the Pope to guide them in their negotiations and in the quest for an appropriate

\textsuperscript{16} There are some accounts which refer to the indirect role of the U.S. administration in persuading the Pope to intervene in the Beagle Channel dispute. In December 1978, President Carter’s representative at the Vatican, Richard Wagner, is said to have held meetings with the Vatican Secretary of State Agostino Casaroli in which he encouraged the Vatican to intervene (See Laudy 2001: 307-308).

\textsuperscript{17} Anonymous church official # 1 interview


\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Time}, January 22, 1979, at http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,920046,00.html
solution to the dispute. The second agreement stipulates that the two states will not resort to force in their mutual relations and both countries would gradually return to the existing military situation at the beginning of 1977 (Moncayo 2008: 4).

Various factors explained the possibility of the Montevideo agreement. One factor is the patient and tenacious behind-the-scenes work of Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez, the Archbishop of Santiago, to persuade the Chilean government to request the Vatican’s mediation.\(^{20}\) As discussed above, this initiative was backed by Mgr. Angelo Sodano, the Vatican nuncio in Chile who would later be appointed Secretary of State by Pope John Paul II. On the Argentinian side, the reshuffling within the Argentinian government constituted another factor that might have decided the fate of the mediation: on November 3, 1978, Admiral Montes, member of the Navy staff – the unit in charge of the Beagle Channel area – and minister of foreign affairs, known for his intransigence to any deal was replaced by General Carlos Pastor, President Videla’s own brother-in-law (Appolis 1989: 347). In any case, according to two church officials who contributed in the mediation, “the decision of Pope John Paul II to intervene surely proceeded after a mature weighing of all the factors involved and the likelihood of success.”\(^{21}\)

**The Global Vatican’s Mediation**

The Vatican’s mediation in the Beagle Channel dispute was a long and overdue process which spanned over five years. In the words of one Vatican official, it was “a painstaking

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\(^{21}\) Anonymous church official # 2 (interviewed in Rome on March 20, 2018); Anonymous church official #1 interview.
procedure filled with ups and downs, frustration and hope but finally rewarding.”

Another Vatican official concurs in underlining how “at times, the difficulty of the task and the impression of turning around due to some rigidity from the parties led the team of mediators to nearly giving up.”

The 5-year long mediation (May 1979 – November 1984) could be divided up roughly to three phases which serve as the basis of our longitudinal analysis: (1) the informational period, Pope John Paul II’s proposals (May 1979 – September 1982), (2) the reactivation of the negotiation (September 1982 – December 1983), (3) Cardinal Casaroli’s mediation and settlement (December 1983 – November 1984). There had been ups and downs in these stages. Progress alternated with periods of standstill. For instance, negotiations almost stopped for a few months after the assassination attempt on John Paul II on May 13, 1981. Events such as the Falklands War between Argentina and the U- K (April – June 1982) as well as the democratic transition in Argentina in late 1983 also impacted the negotiations. Besides, there was no strict dissimilarity between those phases in terms of process as some procedures used in one phase were maintained in ulterior phases. In any case, the mediating team did not lose track by doing its best in adjusting its work to the changing circumstances.

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22 Anonymous church official # 2 interview

23 Anonymous Vatican official # 8 interview.

24 These three phases are established according to specific historical events: the first phase begins from the initial informational period in May 1979 to the restart of the negotiation in September 1982 after the incident related to the denunciation of the 1972 pact in April 1982 was removed; the second starts from that time to the establishment of the new government in Argentina in December 1983; the final phase goes from that time to the final settlement in November 1984 under the aegis of Cardinal Agostino Casaroli.

25 Anonymous church official # 2 interview.
Two sets of actors composed the mediators during the whole mediation timeframe, namely,

(1) the mediating team led respectively by Cardinal Samore (May 1979 – February 1983) and Cardinal Casaroli (February 1983 – November 1984) and (2) Pope John Paul II himself, who, several times, did intervene in the process. Accessorily, the Vatican delegation in the United Nations also intervened indirectly during the final stages of the mediation. The Argentinian Ambassador to the Holy See speaks of the Cardinal Samore as a “methodical, prudent and tenacious. An iron hand within a velvet glove, he could be flexible but capable of sheer intransigence when necessary.”

Hernan Cubillos, the Chilean Foreign Minister who met with Cardinal Samore in late December 1978 during the latter’s shuttle diplomacy gives a picture of the Vatican special envoy this way:

He was a prince of the church; cardinals are princes of the church. There is a sense of royalty in the way they conduct themselves. They can appear to be very humble, but they have a very clear understanding of their authority, their rank, and all that goes with that. Samore was even more than that: he was very strong, and he had a sense that he could impose himself on people very easily.

Cardinal Antonio Samore conducted his part of the mediation with determination, patience and diplomacy, features that reveal his character. Cardinal Samore was given wide latitude in his dealing with the parties, while being accountable only to Pope John Paul II. The two other members of the Vatican’s team were Mgr. Gabriel Montalvo Higuera, a Colombian, and Mgr. Faustino Sainz Munoz, a Spaniard native both trained diplomats who worked at the Vatican’s Secretary for Relations with States (formerly Council for the Public Affairs of the Church) at the

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26 HE. Rogelio Francisco Pfirter, Argentinian ambassador to the Vatican (interviewed in Rome on March 16, 2018)

27 See Princen (1992) supra note 42 at p.145

28 Anonymous church official # 2 interview
time of their appointment (Rulli 1979: 475). Both would later be appointed full time nuncios. Upon the death of Cardinal Samore in October 1983, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the then Secretary of State took the mediation’s full rein. Known to be effective in dealing with delicate diplomatic matters, he was able to lead the final phase of the mediation to a satisfactory conclusion.

**Pope John Paul II’s Mediation**

While the Montevideo Agreement gave the Pope full rein to mediate the Beagle Channel conflict, his huge responsibilities to the Catholic Church prevented him from doing so, instead delegating this task to the mediating team. Since the mediation took place in the Vatican itself, the Pope did not refrain from intervening directly in the process through meetings with the delegates – or indirectly through special letters. The first direct intervention of the Pontiff was his meeting with the two delegations on September 27, 1979, which aimed at assessing the first months of negotiation dedicated to the collection of information.29 In a speech he delivered, he suggested a working procedure which highlights a few practical points: (1) to primarily seek points of convergence rather than begin with thorny and irreconcilable issues, (2) to reflect on the possibilities of the two nations to collaborate on a wide series of economic activities, both inside and outside the southern zone, (3) to establish and strengthen a climate of mutual trust between the parties which is fundamental for success and (4) to ensure that the means of social communication in the two disputing countries would support the efforts of both the negotiators and the mediator. It was clear for the Pope that a peaceful resolution of the dispute should

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29 Address of his Holiness John Paul II to the Delegations of the Governments of Argentina and Chile at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1979/september/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19790927_gov-argentino-cileno.html
involve the people in both countries, not only their governments. While discretion is required for
the mediation’s success, public opinion should be associated with the process. The Pope
intervened for the second time through a document issued on September 29, 1980, in which he
warned about the disastrous consequences that could engender a hardening of the position of the
parties in dispute (Moncayo 2008: 6). The third intervention took the form of an audience he
 accorded to the delegations on November 14, 1980, in which he successively heard the opinion
of each delegation regarding some lingering issues that needed to be debated and on which he
had to give his proposals for a solution.30

The fourth direct intervention he made on December 13, 1980, undoubtedly the most
remarkable one, was when he delivered the famous proposals – discussed at length below – as a
way of overcoming the stalemate.31 In an indirect manner, the Pope’s personal intervention in the
mediation went even beyond the strict confines of the official delegations. For instance, during
an audience to a group of official pupils of the Argentine marine, he expressed his wish that “all
Argentinian social groups put in practice the spiritual value of love.” The Pope urged them to
always strive to give life to their vocation, to collaborate in the construction of an active and total
peace, the result of respect for the fundamental rights of the person and of social coexistence.32

30 L’Osservatore Romano, November 15, 1980.

31 “Address of John Paul II to the Delegations of the Governments of Chile and Argentina” at

32 “Address of Pope John Paul II to a Group of Official Pupils of the Argentine Marine,” January 24, 1980 at
Another noticeable intervention was the long speech he gave to the Argentinian and Chilean delegations on April 23, 1982. After summarizing the paths that have been achieved since the beginning of the mediation three years back, Pope John Paul expressed his hope that a treaty would be achieved soon if the delegations were willing to make a real effort towards a quest for common ground. The Pontiff’s words sounded like an ultimatum as he requested the delegations to double down on their efforts to achieve peace. The Pope formulated his desire that the governments of the two nations – inseparably linked by nature – give the delegations the appropriate instructions to activate a profound and effective dialogue with the help of the mediators he designated. Seemingly making full of use of his authority, John Paul II’s speech appears to give injunction to the delegates to review their notes and concentrate on what is best for their countries. The Pope also made full use of the Catholic character of the delegates in his intervention in practicing what could be called a “diplomacy of prayer,” which may be perceived as a psychological conditioning of the delegates. Then, on several occasions, he invited the delegates to attend private mass with him or praying with him especially during the last phase of the mediation. Clearly, such a procedure is likely to have a significant impact on delegates from predominantly Catholic countries but may not work for other cases.

Undoubtedly, these various interventions indicate that John Paul II wanted to use as many tactics as possible to maximize the mediation’s chance of success. According to one advisor to the Vatican’s mediating team, “the Pope’s personal involvement in the process, especially during

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34 Appolis (1989: 355); Anonymous church official # 2 interview.
the first and last phases of the negotiation, appeared to be judiciously designed to have an impact on the delegates. 35 Visibly, he made full use of both the institutional and the moral aspect of the papacy to influence the mediation’s trajectory.

**Cardinal Samore’s Mediation (May 1979 – February 1983)**

According to the second clause of the Montevideo Accord, the mediator’s prerogative was designed to be as wide as possible. Thus, not only Argentina and Chile were bound to the obligation of a controlled negotiation, but they also agreed to a sort of a guided procedure which would lead to a mutually satisfactory solution (Brouillet 1979: 55-58; Appolis 1989: 347-349). Clearly, the mediation team appears to have taken advantage of that clause considering the procedures it adopted which include a variety of tactics to achieve particular ends. These were particularly used during the crucial initial months dedicated respectively to the collection of information and discussion which were key to the whole process. The negotiations were intense and laborious. For instance, after one year of proceeding, a joint statement dated May 18, 1980, reports that since the beginning of the mediation on May 1979, over 200 meetings were held (Moncayo 2008). By the end of the mediation in the Fall 1984, this figure would have climbed to 500 (Princen 1992b:157). One joint statement gave a specific meaning to the concept of mediation by highlighting its characteristics: “a mediation consists in intervening between the parties in such a way as to suggest, expose, propose, advise and indicate hypotheses that are worthy of consideration which can lead to an honorable and satisfactory solution to the problem.” 36 In this “assisted mediation,” besides dealing with both forms and substance of the

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35 Anonymous church official # 2 interview.

36 “Joint Statement of July 31, 1979,” in Brouillet (1979), supra notes 21 and 22 at p. 55
procedure, the mediator played a decisive psychological role. Heeding Pope John Paul II’s advice, one key principle was the valorization of convergences and the minimization of disagreements. The team did its best to relaunch the process several times when negotiations seemed to have reached stalemates.

One particular aspect of the procedure indicating the ecclesial identity of the mediator is the meetings’ format which looked like “confessions sessions.” Such a procedure, coined by one author “diplomacy of the confessional” might look unusual although somewhat understandable within the context of two Catholic countries in dispute (Appolis 1989: 349). According to the Vatican advisors to the mediating team, “the docility with which the delegates complied fully with the procedures by the Vatican team in Rome indicates the mediator’s influence on the delegates.”37 These sessions followed an invariable format: first, separate discussions between the mediating team and each national delegation were held in order to build transactional position from the information amassed. These then served to form the basis for discussion in joint sessions. This bottom-up procedure has a rationale derived from the Montevideo Agreement itself in that while the Vatican wanted to have the best information possible, it had to manage the sensitivities of all parties as a neutral mediator.

To avoid any ambiguity about its role as an impartial mediator, the Vatican team had to collect the information it needed only from the parties in dispute and not from other sources or from its own initiative through a private investigation.38 In fact, a mediator having a proper

37 Anonymous church official # 1 interview; Anonymous church official # 2 interview.

38 During a press interview during his trip to Buenos Aires, when asked by journalists whether he will go to the area of contention (the Beagle Channel), Cardinal Samore responded: “I will not go there since my mission has no technical component,” in Brouillet (1979), supra note 18 at p. 54.
source of information would give a juridical aspect to its mission, which the parties wanted to avoid. The Vatican’s procedure has more advantages than inconveniences in that the comparison of views would allow both the identification of missing elements and an adequate response to it from the parties. According an advisor to the Vatican’s mediating team, “that the information at the disposal of the mediator comes from the parties themselves could but reinforce the credibility of its proposals and generate trust.”

The mediators cautiously crafted their work based on the knowledge of unsuccessful past attempts to solve the dispute which might be related to a variety of complex factors not dealt with adequately. Through the process, they were also able to learn the art of dealing with complex interstate mediation whose steps are patiently built according to the context. This is an art to which the Vatican, as an official mediator, had never been exposed to before. This slow and methodical approach had a downside since it might have contributed to the unusual length of the mediation and the delay of its resolution (Princen 1992b: 153). Ideas were pondered and competing opinions carefully weighted to identify strengths and weaknesses. The repetitive and somewhat tedious procedure did not constitute a nuisance for the delegates who gradually came to appreciate it since it allowed them to extend their knowledge of the issue by identifying its various aspects.

One major task of the mediation team was to collect information from the parties which constitute the basic material for the “Vatican’s proposal” (Propuesta). Given the stakes, it was held secret even to the delegates for weeks in order to avoid potential conflict born out of

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39 Anonymous church official # 2 interview.  
40 Ibid.
misunderstanding. The major lines are the following: (1) implicit recognition of the bi-oceanic principle by plotting a demarcation line from East to Southwest, between Nueva Island and the Cape Horn meridian, which then serves as the boundary between the two national exclusive economic zones, up to 200 maritime miles (the Cape Horn meridian is geographically considered the watershed between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean); (2) confirmation of the British Award which allocates the contested three tiny Islands PNL to Chile by a sensible correction of the effects of these islands on the southern maritime delimitations: the demarcation line described above prohibiting any projection of Chilean sovereignty to the Atlantic Ocean constitutes a veritable “barrier” between the maritime spaces of the two states; (3) the creation of so-called “Sea of Peace” in either part of the demarcation line which is destined to be exploited economically by both countries.

Clearly, the proposals constituted an effort to integrate and accommodate each party’s claim. As one author put it, “the pope referred to his proposal as having been inspired by equity considerations, thus softening the hard profiles of a strictly legal approach. The essence of the papal proposal was its inclusion in a broader context, so integration and the future of the bilateral relations were considered” (Barboza 2014:176). Unexpectedly, the proposal was received differently in Argentina and Chile. The Chileans were more amenable since it essentially confirmed the British Award compared to the Argentinians who still felt taken advantage of

through a bad deal. At times, the reaction turned violent in Argentina. The following two subcases are unintended consequences of Pope John Paul II’s Propuesta.

Two instances of what could be described “mediations within a mediation” took place which were of some significance for the ensuing negotiations. The first is the conflict which erupted a few months following the Pope’s proposals. In late April 1981, Argentina closed its border with Chile after a series of imprisonments on both sides of the border of Argentinian and Chilean officers on the allegation that they were carrying out espionage activities.42 Taken aback by this unexpected turn of events that had the potential of derailing the whole negotiation, the mediating team in Rome undertook an intense negotiation with the delegates with the contribution of the two nuncios in Argentina and Chile which ended with the release of the detainees and the defusing of the tension as manifested by the reopening of the border in early May 1981. The two nuncios in both Argentina and Chile faced enormous difficulty convincing and appeasing both the Argentinian and Chilean authorities given the high intensity of nationalism on both sides.43

The second case in which the Vatican team had to step in to resolve was a thorny diplomatic and judicial issue. In January 22, 1982, Argentina denounced the Judicial Regulation of the differences between Argentina and Chile which was an agreement established in April 5, 1972, in which the two states gave jurisdiction to the ICJ to settle the disputes between them on the basis of a unilateral request of one of them. Such a denunciation would deprive Chile of a legal weapon in case of a failure in the negotiations by denying it the possibility of requesting the


43 Anonymous Vatican official # 8 interview.
Court for a judicial settlement that Buenos Aires would have difficulty to challenge (Moncayo 2008: 8; Benavida 1989: 4). Without being legally tied up to the Vatican’s mediation, which Argentina did not want to question directly, this episode within the mediation had the potential of jeopardizing the whole negotiation. Therefore, the Vatican team led an intensive negotiation towards an acceptable solution that would solve the problem. To this effect, Cardinal Samore and his team carried out a series of consultations with the parties which followed the bottom-up procedure adopted in “normal” mediation. The solution proposed by the Office of Mediation and accepted by the parties came short of an ultimatum: the Vatican requested both states to negotiate an agreement to extend the 1972 Convention on the settlement of disputes until the finalization of the mediation.44 The Chilean government, for its part, was called upon to commit to the mediator not to make use of his extended right to refer to the Court to the Hague “until the end of the six months following the date on which the Holy Father finds himself in the need to declare his mediatorial activity terminated.”45 An exchange of letters between the two governments concretized this arrangement on September 15, 1982, thus raising a serious procedural obstacle to the continuation of the Vatican’s peace efforts. According to one advisor

44 The Argentinians willingness to accept the Vatican’s proposal on the extension of the 1972 Treaty may be partly explained by the military Junta’s fragility regarding the revelation of the phenomenon of “Disappeared,” the hundreds of people who were secretly abducted and killed during the “Dirty War.” This created such turmoil in Europe, which led the Italian to request an international investigation into the matter. Several times, Popes Paul VI and John Paul II made reference to the serious problem of the “desaparecidos” (see Salvini 1982; Storni 1983).

to the mediating team, “it is the first time that the parties in dispute agreed on anything substantial that would pave the way for a more serene discussion.”\textsuperscript{46}

**Cardinal Casaroli’s Mediation (December 1983 – November 1984)**

The mediating team, under the aegis of Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican’s Secretary of State, accompanied the parties for the last phase of the mediation which began in December 1983 until the signature of the final Accord on November 29, 1984. The transition in the leadership of the Office of Mediation occurred after Cardinal Samore’s untimely death in February 3, 1983. Unwaveringly, he conducted meetings up to his hospital bedside (Princen 1992b: 157). While the process was evolutive in that each step tried to include the result of the previous step, especially in terms of the two formats consultation – separate meetings between the parties and joint ones – initiated by Cardinal Samore, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli instituted a slightly different approach more in tune with his function and experience as Secretary of State. On this point, one church official observes that “the main difference with Cardinal Samore was that Cardinal Casaroli brought to the negotiations his status as a Number 2 in the Vatican’s hierarchy, which seems to have given him more leverage. In particular, he was able to make direct communications with higher authorities in the countries in dispute without going through the normal channel of the delegates.”\textsuperscript{47}

Cardinal Casaroli almost “imposed” a drastic regimen considered to be determinant in the negotiations’ finalization. In January 1984, he invited the two delegations plus the foreign ministers of the two countries in a formal joint meeting, which is a departure from Cardinal

\textsuperscript{46} Anonymous church official # 2 interview; See also Appolis (1989: 355)

\textsuperscript{47} Anonymous church official # 2 interview.
Samore’s procedure of dealing mainly with the delegates. The Vatican Secretary of State asked them to carefully consider four attitudinal dispositions and practical advices required for the mediation’s success: (1) the need to nurture a strong and sustained hope for the resolution of the conflict, (2) the need to work in a constant climate of trust between the parties which warrants the knowledge and understanding of the parties’ fundamental positions, (3) the need of keeping from being influenced or conditioned by too much emotions which often lead to miscalculation; it is necessary that the real interests of the two countries are viewed calmly in a global and clearsighted perspective, (4) the necessity of some reserve regarding communication: while the public opinion should be rightly informed about the mediation process, diplomatic negotiations required some reserve so as to avoid irreparable damages. After the joint meeting, Cardinal Casaroli invited the parties to the signing of an agreement of Peace and Friendship which was supposed to reduce existing tensions and increase the likelihood of a peaceful settlement. Before the signing ceremony he made a remark loaded with some warning: “if this occasion should be missed, the difficulties of resolving the controversy could become more serious, perhaps insurmountable.”

The somewhat submissive attitude of the parties as reflected in the joint declarations of the foreign ministers of both countries give a hint of the mediator’s leverage on the parties. On behalf of their respective governments, the ministers solemnly

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confirmed their firm willingness to reach a satisfactory solution to their dispute under the enlightened guidance of the Holy See through its mediation.\textsuperscript{50}

In the months following the signature of the January 1984 agreement, Cardinal Casaroli put his full authority on the balance to put the negotiations on track, accelerate the process and come to a final settlement. In subsequent negotiations, the mediation team proceeded to structure the mediation’s format into an alternation of short briefings and a much longer time given to reflections in order to let ideas mature.\textsuperscript{51} The logic was to have the delegates meet only at the most adequate time and create a mechanism that allows the mediators to extract the maximum concessions out of each side. Cardinal Casaroli’s intervention showed some boldness in matters of decision making. He was smart enough to take advantage of what he saw as an opportunity to make extraordinary leaps forward. He thus took the informal accord reached by the representatives of the parties as a basis for negotiation which he proposed to the delegates on June 11, 1984. Basically, this accord constituted a quid-pro-quo on some modifications of the original Vatican’s \textit{Propuesta}. Casaroli’s determination to reach a deal after several attempts paid off when the delegates finally accepted the Vatican’s proposal which, by and large, pertains to maritime delimitation and economic compensation. In a statement dated on October 4, 1984, the Office of Mediation announced that a full agreement had been reached between the parties on the main points in dispute. By and large, a right balance seems to have been struck between two extreme poles, namely territorial advantages for Chile and maritime gains for Argentina (Appolis

\textsuperscript{50} Joint Declaration of the Foreign Ministers of Argentina and Chile,” Vatican City, January 23, 1984 in \textit{La Documentation Catholique}, No. 1870, March 18, 1984.

\textsuperscript{51} Anonymous church official # 2 interview
1989: 357). The acceptance of the final proposal by the two governments had the effect of facilitating the settlement of the other issues still in abeyance. In fact, the words of Cardinal Casaroli might have produced its effects as he sternly warned that a failure to heed to the Vatican’s ultimate suggestion would terminate its mediation’s effort (Princen 1992b: 160). On November 29, 1984, under the watch of Cardinal Casaroli, the Final Treaty was officially signed in the Vatican by a large delegation from both countries which definitively settled the long and complex dispute.\(^52\) On November 25, 1984, the Treaty was submitted to a referendum in Argentina which was massively approved by 77\%.\(^53\) In Chile, it took only the approval of the four chiefs of the army to have the deal secured.

**The Intervention of the Permanent Observer to the United Nations**

Although the mediation of the Beagle Channel was essentially performed by the mediating team in Rome, the last phase of the negotiation saw an additive contribution by the Permanent Observer of the Vatican to the United Nations in New York, Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, in March 1984. Unlike his predecessor who might have taken his time, Cardinal Casaroli thought the negotiation had dragged on too long and that the time had finally arrived to settle a satisfactory outcome for both parties. The chief mediator used all diplomatic means at his disposal to speed up the process and secure a fruitful deal. According to one former Vatican high ranking diplomat, “the Vatican Permanent Observer was tasked with two particular items, namely (1) to make a statement on the necessity of peaceful coexistence in interstate relations by

\(^{52}\) *L’Osservatore Romano*, December 1, 1984

underlining particularly the need for cooperation at both regional and international levels and (2) to meet with the ambassadors of Argentina and Chile for informal exchanges about the mediation process and the necessity of arriving at a satisfactory solution.\textsuperscript{54} The intervention of the Permanent Observer could be considered as an indirect pressure on the real decision makers in both Argentina and Chile given the symbolic global weight carried by an international venue such as the United Nations.

In summary, the Global Vatican’s institutional intervention displays some variation during the three phases of the mediation in terms of units involved and activities performed. The four units that were mainly involved during the five-year process, namely the pope and the mediating team with the support of the Vatican nuncios and the Permanent Observer in the United Nations were not uniformly present in each phase of the mediation. Some were more involved than others. Besides, the activities performed indicate some variation: the majority of the meetings led by the Vatican’s units took place in the first and the third phase, which indicate the particular significance of these periods in the mediation timeframe. Accordingly, following the criteria set in Chapter 2, the Global Vatican’s level of intervention could be specified as “high” in both the first phase (May 1979 – September 1982) and third one (December 1983 –November 1984). By contrast, the second phase presents a “low” level, a fact partly explained by some events such as the minimal activity of the Pope following the assassination attempt in May 1981 and the untimely death of Cardinal Samore in February 1983.

\textsuperscript{54} Anonymous Vatican official # 4 (interviewed in Rome on March 7, 2018).
The Local Vatican’s Intervention

The Intervention of Papal Nuncios

During the five-year mediation, the Holy See was represented respectively in the two countries in dispute by three nuncios, namely Mgrs. Pio Laghi (1974 –1980) and Ubaldo Calabresi (1981 – 2000) in Argentina and Angelo Sodano (1977 – 1988) in Chile. A controversial figure, Mgr. Pio Laghi was reported to have been complicit, – or at best having a blind eye – to the atrocities of the Videla military junta during the years of repression.55 Yet he is given credit for his essential contribution in the Beagle Channel mediation by suggesting the name of Cardinal Antonio Samore to Pope John Paul II as chief mediator.56 To his successor Mgr. Ubaldo Calabresi befell the delicate mission of smoothing the transition from the military junta to the civilian regime.57 In the context of the Beagle Channel dispute, Mgr. Calabresi’s contribution consisted partly in working with the local bishops to facilitate the Global Vatican mediation in some difficult issues.58 The same allegation of proximity to the military regime appears to apply also to Mgr. Angelo Sodano, the papal nuncio in Chile during the mediation period.59 However he was credited as “having unceasingly worked along with the Chilean


58 Anonymous Vatican official # 8 interview; Anonymous church official # 1 interview.

hierarchy and his counterpart in Argentina to have a concerted view on the how to support the mediation process through honest dialogue with the civil authorities in the countries in dispute. As already discussed earlier, both Mgrs. Sodano and Ubaldo Calabresi, his counterpart in Buenos Aires, participated in the negotiation for the release of the prisoners during the escalation of the conflict in April 1981, thus supporting the mediating team’s efforts in Rome.

**The Involvement of the Bishops’ Conferences**

The Bishops’ Conferences in both Argentina and Chile were also involved to some degree in the mediation. As discussed above, the Episcopal Conferences in the two countries were the first to initiate the Pope’s involvement in the mediation. One fact is that, although the two Episcopates differ regarding their relationship with the military junta which ran both countries as discussed earlier, their attitude to the Beagle Channel issue was essentially similar: (1) they suggested the idea of involving the Pope in the mediation, (2), and, once the mediation was launched, they fully supported it. Being aware of the stakes this dispute represented, which had the potential of tearing their respective countries apart, the bishops released several letters during the mediation timeframe. Generally, pastoral letters address various issues of social or ecclesial nature in which the bishops, individually or collectively, analyzes events, assess problems and sometimes suggest solutions. These letters are intended for larger audience which include the Catholic faithful and secular authorities. When carefully scheduled and targeting the right audience, pastoral letters have the potential of making some impact.

On the first anniversary of the official mediation in May 1980, a joint declaration from both Argentinian and Chilean bishops gave a concise and well-articulated summary of the events

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60 Anonymous Vatican official # 8 interview.
since the beginning of the Vatican’s mediation hoping for its successful outcome.\footnote{\textit{Joint Exhortation of the Episcopates of Chile and Argentina to the Faithful and to the people of both Nations,} May 3, 1980 by Mgr. Raul Francisco. Cardinal Primatesta, Archbishop of Cordoba, President of the Argentine Episcopal Conference and Mgr. Jose Manuel Santos Ascarza, Bishop of Valdivia, President of the Episcopal Conference of Chile.} There, the prelates pinpointed the responsibility of intellectuals, writers and the Armed forces, “who by their role and functions in the society at large should study the problems with a constant eye to the truth.” In a particular way, social communicators and media were urged to be architects of peace and reconciliation through an attitude of prudence and discretion in handling news about the conflict mediation. But a large portion of the letter was dedicated to giving instruction to the faithful on how to better accompany the mediation process through spiritual exercises, devotional endeavors and peace rallies. Communities and parishes were then encouraged to do spiritual exercises through individual and communal prayers and penance. For that pursuit, a special National Marian Congress would then be convened by the joint Episcopates respectively in Santiago, Chile and Mendoza, Argentina. The same exhortation to penance and prayer was reiterated in a special letter released by the Chilean bishops during the 11\textsuperscript{th} National Eucharistic Congress held in Santiago, Chile in November 1980, a message which exhorted the Chilean people to fasting and prayer for the accomplishment of peace between the two countries.\footnote{\textit{About the Eucharistic Congress,} November 26, 1980.} Another statement requested Christians to prepare for the reception of Pope John Paul II’s proposals to solve the dispute.\footnote{\textit{Exhortation on the Delivery of the Pope’s Proposition to Argentina and Chilean Governments,} December 11, 1980} The letter exhorted the faithful in Chile to prepare inwardly and accept in spirit what the Holy Father would suggest as a way to overcome the political deadlock.
As discussed earlier, Pope John Paul II put forward concrete proposals intended to push the mediation forward to avoid a stalemate. In a way, the letter could be read as a psychological preparation to defuse potential trouble borne out of disappointment which would have detrimental consequences on social peace. In that regard, the message issued by the Argentinian Episcopate in September 1981 deplored the unfortunate incidents that occurred in some parts of Argentina in which both the Pope and the Argentinian bishops were subject to virulent criticisms.\(^{64}\) Some voices of disapproval were heard from segments of Argentinian society, as was the case of extreme nationalists from the far-right. For instance, in a rally held before about 400 upper-class Argentines, Adm. Isaac Rojas, a former vice-president and one leader of the far-right, said the Pope “is fallible in worldly matters” and called the Argentine negotiators “incompetent.”\(^{65}\) The Bishops’ message shows how the Pope’s proposals, which were perceived by some as biased against Argentinian interests, did not always receive unanimous acceptance.

Another statement issued by the Chilean bishops in April 1981 asked Chilean authorities for the release of Argentinian prisoners that were held momentarily by the Chileans during one phase of the conflict.\(^{66}\) As discussed earlier, the Global Vatican’s mediation team carried out a “mediation within a mediation” to have the captives released. Manifestly, the action of the Chilean bishops through the pastoral letter was intended to increase pressure. Along that spirit of

\(^{64}\) “The Conflict regarding the Beagle Channel: Declaration of the Episcopal Conference of Argentina,” in Documentation Catholique, September 6, 1981


\(^{66}\) Statement of Mgr. Bernardino Pinera and Mgr. Jose Manuel Santos Ascarza, respectively General Secretary of the Episcopal Conference of Chile and President of the Conference Episcopal of Chile.
mutual support between the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican, both Episcopates sent a letter to Pope John Paul II in October 1983 which renewed their support to the Pope’s patient contribution to the quest for the reconciliation of the two sister-nations. In particular, the bishops informed the Holy Father of some of the results of the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops of Latin America which focused on penance and the Church’s commitment to reconciliation. The Latin American bishops assured the Pope of their total support for the Vatican’s initiative of mediation which precisely aimed at reconciliation. In a letter to the Episcopal Conferences of both countries, Pope John Paul II highlighted the difficulty of the process and hoped for the acceptance of his proposals by the two respective governments of Chile and Argentina. According to one advisor to the Argentinian delegation, “the message conveyed by these letters fulfilled their role as the faithful in both countries were informed of the real stake of the dispute and obediently followed the bishops’ recommendations on various piety practices in order to avert a full scale conflict.”

In summary, the Local Vatican’s units (nuncios and local bishops) played some noticeable roles in the mediation. The activities of the nuncios – who are partly of the Global Vatican and the Local Church – consisted in supporting the effort of the Global Vatican in relating both to the civilian authorities and the local bishops in matters related to the mediation in Rome. As for the bishops, it consisted of two activities during the mediation timeframe: (1) the release of six major


68 Letter of John Paul II to the Episcopates of Argentina and Chile at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/letters/1983/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19831028_episcopati-argentina-cile.html

69 Anonymous church official # 1 interview
letters supporting the mediation effort in Rome and the release of prisoners during the brief
conflict in April 1981 and (2) exhortation to the faithful in the countries in dispute to various
spiritual exercises and peace rallies for the success of the mediation. Clearly, the first phase is the
subject of most of the intervention of the Local Vatican in terms of units involved and activities
performed. For instance, five out of six letters were issued during that period, while only one
during the third phase. According to the criteria set in Chapter 2, the level of intervention could
be considered as “high” in the first phase of the mediation while it is “low” in both the second
and third phase.

Assessment of the Vatican’s Intervention in the Beagle Channel

Analysis of the Global Vatican’s influence

To recall, the methods of this dissertation, as established in Chapter 2, are the determination
of the variation of the Vatican’s influence over the time frame of the mediation (1979 – 1984),
this timeframe being subdivided into three periods. We have also established five indicators to
measure the Vatican’s influence according to the types of intervention of the Vatican’s units in
the two levels of analysis.

(1) distance between the Vatican’s antecedent preferences and actual outcome of the
mediation.
(2) Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation process.
(3) Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the process and outcome.
(4) Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and
outcome.
(5) The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify outcomes. The influence will be
measured in terms of success (+), failure (-) or non-existent (0) for each particular
indicator.
The results of the Global Vatican’s influence are in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Influence of the Global Vatican

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<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Distance between the Vatican’s expectations and actual outcome of the mediation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the process and outcome</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and outcome</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify the outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall.</td>
<td>3(+) =3/5</td>
<td>1(+) =1/5</td>
<td>5(+) =5/5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Phase I (May 1979 – September 1982):

In this first phase of the mediation, the Global Vatican’s significant involvement in terms of institutions, resources and ideas during the process was only met with mitigated outcome. As shown in Table 4.1, the overall result is the following: 3 (+); 1(-);1 (0). On the first indicator, the rejection of the Pope’s initial proposal from the Argentinians meant that the Vatican’s expectation did not cohere with the outcome in this phase of the mediation. By contrast, the second indicator is positive as illustrated by the successful results of the two sub-mediations.
conducted by the Vatican team, along with the Local Vatican units. The first is the conflict on the Argentina-Chile border in April 1981 following the disagreement on the Pope’s proposal, while the second concerns the extension of the 1972 Convention on disputes. Concerning the third indicator, two church officials who participated in the mediation process highlight particularly the positive impact of the speeches and other interventions of Pope John Paul II on the delegates. As they affirmed, “the controversial character of the “first proposal” manifested by the failure to achieve a consensus, however, indicates that the mediating team could have done more in terms of output.”  

On the fourth indicator, high dignitaries from the two disputing countries underlined the peculiarity of the procedures employed by the mediating team which they said shaped the process that slowly led to a fruitful outcome. During their speech at the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship on November 29, 1984, the ministries of foreign affairs of Argentina and Chile pinpointed particularly the skill, patience, and determination with which Cardinal Samore and his team conducted their work as determining factors in the mediation.

**Phase II (September 1982 –December 1983):**

The second phase, which lasts over one year, begins with the restart of the negotiations after the interruption due to the controversies over the extension of the 1972 Convention. Visibly, this period is the lowest point of the Vatican’s intervention in terms of activities and actors involved, partly epitomized by the death of Cardinal Antonio Samore in February 1983. As shown in Table

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70 Anonymous church official # 2 interview; Anonymous Vatican official # 9 (interviewed in Rome on April 24, 2018).

8 above. the overall result on the indicators of influence is 1(+); 1 (+/-); 3 (0). For instance, on
the second indicator, despite the apparent lack of a tangible result during the phase, Vatican
officials affirm that the parties were eager to follow obediently all the procedures established for
the negotiations. Fr. Giovanni Rulli, the aide to the Vatican’s mediating team, for instance,
considers such a move “as a sign that the delegates took the role of the mediators seriously.”

The third indicator displays a mitigated result: for instance, facing an apparent impasse in early
1983, the Pope wanted things to move forward and suggested that the two countries sign a
declaration of peace and nonaggression. This would accomplish the most basic objective of the
mediation effort even if a comprehensive solution could not be reached at this stage. Argentina
flatly rejected the idea while Chile accepted it (Princen 1992b: 158).

Phase III (December 1983 – November 1984):

This final phase of the mediation is probably the most intensive one as negotiations which
involved various actors from the Global Vatican were led at a breakneck pace. As Table 8 shows,
the overall result is 5 (+). On the first indicator, in contrast to the first phase, the final agreement
reached by the parties on the amended papal proposal between the parties coheres with the
Vatican’s goal. In fact, the compromise between the parties is consonant with some of the key
themes of the Catholic Social Teaching regarding international relations such as peaceful
coexistence, economic collaboration and dialogue-based cooperation, as propounded for instance
by Pope John Paul at the tribune of the United Nations on October 2, 1979. An evidence of the

72 Anonymous church official interview.

second indicator is the unreserved acceptance of the parties to the Vatican’s proposal of having a joint declaration of Peace and Friendship signed on January 23, 1984, at the early stage of the mediation’s third phase. Considered as a tactical move intended to augment pressure on the delegates, it also facilitated the process towards a peaceful settlement. Regarding the third indicator, the church officials who advised the mediating team underlined “the compelling ascendency of Cardinal Casaroli to the delegates. Through various testimonies, the delegates praised the Cardinal’ s diplomatic skills imbued with by audacity and professionalism which generated an immediate trust.” The way the delegates complied “reverently” to his direction during his direction testifies to his authority. On the same register, one high ranking Vatican official underlines the usage made by the Cardinal Secretary of State of the sophisticated Holy See’s diplomatic apparatus upon which the relied to deal with complex issues such as the Beagle Channel dispute. As he put it, “whenever he can, Cardinal Casaroli made full use of multiple points of entry and pressure the system offered him to advance his agenda.” On the fourth indicator, the Argentinian ambassador to the Vatican argues forcefully that, “considering the peculiar nature of the conflict, the satisfactory outcome would have been quite unlikely had it been mediated by other entities other than the Holy See.” The mediator’s influence is quite tangible when viewed from the perspective of the referendum’s results on the Treaty which were held in the two countries after the official agreement. The positive outcome was a clear acknowledgement of the mediator’s contribution given the constant reluctance of Argentina on

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74 Anonymous church official # 1 interview; Anonymous church official # 2 interview.

75 Anonymous Vatican official # 5 interviewed.

76 HE. Rogelio Francisco Pfrirter interview
some aspects of the Vatican’s proposal. Further evidence of this is the signing in Rome of the ratification of the 1984 Treaty one year later on May 2, 1985, which signals how the parties adhered totally to their commitment.77

Concerning the fifth indicator, evidence of the Vatican’s rhetoric is found in the wording of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship itself. For example, the Preamble begins with the words “In the Name of Almighty God” which is quite unusual for a secular document. Still in the Preamble, the Pope’s action is clearly put in the limelight with the sentence “Expressing thanks to His Holiness Pope John Paul II for his enlightened efforts to achieve a settlement of the dispute and to strengthen friendship and understanding between the two nations.” Finally, article 12 refers specifically to the Pope’s proposal which uses the same wording: “the Parties resolve to establish a Binational Commission of a permanent character, with a view to enhancing economic co-operation and physical integration.” 78 In summary, in comparing the three phases of the negotiation, one distinguishes a variation in the Global Vatican’s influence in terms of its input in the intervention. Such a variation is mostly distinguishable in comparing both the first and third phases with the second one. From that perspective, one can infer that the more the Vatican’s intervention increases in terms of institutional pressure, resources and ideas, so is its leverage on the disputants.

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77 L’Attivita della Santa Sede nel 1985 (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986).

78 “Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between Argentina and Chile, October 18, 1984,” in La Documentation Catholique, January 20, 1985, No. 1888, p.94.
Analysis of the Local Vatican’s Influence

Table 9. Influence of the Local Vatican

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the Vatican’s expectations and actual outcome of the mediation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process:</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and outcome</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify outcomes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall; 2 (+) = 2/5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase I (May 1979 – September 1982):

This phase is certainly the only and most productive one regarding the intervention of the Local Vatican in terms of units involved and activities performed. It was at this stage that the bishops and the nuncios carried out most of their intervention as far as available data is concerned. As Table 9 shows, the overall result of influence is 2 (+); 3 (0). Concerning the second indicator, the successful sub-mediation led conjointly by both the Global Vatican and the Local Church to defuse the mounting tension between the two countries in April 1981 is a sign of influence. As for the fourth indicator, Santiago Benadava, a key member of the Chilean
delegation, underlines the key role played by church units in a social context largely influenced by Catholicism. As he affirms, “even though the two dictatorships did have poor relationships with the local Catholic church, they were not immune to public opinion in these two overwhelmingly Catholic countries. The bishops’ letters read in every church, the peace rallies, prayer vigils, pilgrimages and other spiritual exercises designed to build public support for the peace process surely had put some pressures on public authorities in the countries in dispute.” Julio Barboza, the Agent of Argentina in the Beagle Channel Arbitration before the International Court of Arbitration concurs by underlining the fact that “there is an essential difference between the arbitration and mediation of the Beagle Channel: while there was no pressure exercised on the parties or on the Court during the arbitration, such a pressure prevailed in the course of the mediation which was the moral authority of the Pope reinforced by the action of the national churches on each side” (Barboza 2014: 182).

**Phase II (Mai 1979 –September 1982) and Phase III (December 1983 –November 1984)**

As shown in Table 9, the indicators of influence display no values by the fact that most of the major activities of the local Vatican’s units (nuncios and bishops) regarding its involvement in the mediation were performed during the first phase, as mentioned above. As far as available data is concerned, there is no specific indication as to the existence of significant activities which may have a bearing on the process and outcome during these last periods of the mediation.

Overall, by contrast with the pre-mediation period in which the Local Vatican units (Bishops’ Conferences, Nuncios) took center stage by convincing the Pope to mediate the Beagle Channel dispute, as discussed earlier in this chapter, there seems to be no conclusive evidence as to

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whether the Local Vatican’s role was equally determinant in the actual mediation. While the
Global Vatican’s influence has varied during the three phases of the mediation timeframe in
function of the rate of involvement of its various units, especially from the middle phase to the
final phase, such a variation is absent in the Local Vatican’s case. By and large, it is safe to
argue that while the intervention of the units in Local Vatican was not directly determinant in the
final outcome, it was significant during the process by putting extra pressure on the officials.

Analysis of Other Factors

A discussion of other factors is important to determine causation. The mediation literature
identifies several elements that have a bearing on a mediation outcome. As discussed in Chapter
2, these elements include the nature of the mediator and its strategies, the nature of the dispute,
the nature of the issues, the nature of the parties, the nature of the relationships between the
parties and the context and environment in which the conflict takes place (Bercovitch 1992;
Bercovitch and Langley 1993). This dissertation has focused on the mediator and its strategies.
Structural factors such as global and regional geopolitics might have influenced the two
countries to settle their dispute. Gertner (2014; 2016), for instance, argues that the mediator
counted little in the equation as it was the conjunction of regional and international context that
favored the settlement of the dispute. For the author, he complicating effects of the South
Atlantic conflict and the relationships between each party and the United Kingdom, all bear
witness to the pronounced regional and international dimensions of the Beagle Channel crisis.
Domestic political factors may have also played a role as was the case in Argentina with the
coming to power of the democratically elected president Raul Alfonsin (Moncayo 2008). The
civilian government with a pressing agenda and facing daunting tasks such as the democratic
consolidation probably wanted to be rid of the thorny Beagle Channel issue by committing to secure an agreement as quickly as possible (Laudy 2001: 314). Another argument pertains to the length of negotiation which might have taken its toll on the delegates after five excruciating years of negotiations. This idea coheres with some analysis drawn from the mediation literature which argues that a successful outcome could take place at a specific time when the conflict is “ripe.” A conflict is considered as “ripe” for resolution if certain events have taken place that affect the perceptions and attitudes of disputants (Kleiboer 1996: 362-363).

All these factors might have a bearing on the final settlement in shaping the environment of the negotiation and thus should not be disregarded. This dissertation has, however, argued on the role of the Vatican which is revealed to be crucial as compared to other international actors (arbitrators) who did not succeed in their attempts to solve the dispute. The occurrence of the Beagle Channel mediation itself shows the specificity of the mediator. According to the mediation literature, the occurrence of a mediation depends on three conditions which are rarely met at once: (1) the disputants must agree to work with a mediator; (2) the disputants must find a mutually acceptable third party; and (3) the third party must be willing to become involved in the conflict (Beardsley 2011:18). The Beagle Channel case shows how all the three criteria were present. During the long process, the Vatican made the difference by its institutional leverage based on the mediator’s skills, the church’s structures, the religious factor and the moral weight of the Pope which helped build an environment of trust. The fact that the Award promulgated by the British crown through a legal arbitration was repeatedly rejected, while the mediation – in principle not binding to the parties– was wholly accepted could be considered as a sign of influence. As one scholar observes, “the Vatican’s moral authority afforded leverage, not so
much to compel a particular course of action, as to restrict the options of would-be belligerents” (Laudy 2000: 317). The difficulty of the task was reflected in Cardinal Antonio Samore’s words who affirmed that “the Beagle Channel mediation required him a bottle of wisdom, a barrel of caution and an ocean of patience.” In the words of the Argentinian ambassador to the Holy See, “the complex nature of this conflict which went unsolved for many decades gives credentials to the Vatican as the appropriate institution capable of pulling things out.”

Conclusion

In the Beagle Channel conflict, the Holy See undertook two types of intervention: the first was a crisis management from late December 1978 to January 1979 in the form of a good office performed by a Special Envoy who carried out a shuttle diplomacy between the two countries. This results in an agreement between the parties to have the Vatican’s mediation. The second was a full mediation in the Vatican premises which lasted from May 1979 to November 1984 with an agreement that was ratified by the states in dispute.

The discussion yields some important findings in terms of the hypotheses and the way the Vatican carried out its task in the mediation process. First, regarding the occurrence of the mediation, which could be an indicator to the successful outcome according to the mediation literature (Hopmann 1996), the process was first initiated at the Local Vatican level (local bishops, nuncios) who engaged discussion with local authorities on how to involve the Pope in mediating the imminent conflict. This part is somewhat overlooked by scholars who focused solely on the Global Vatican’s role. Second, the result of the Beagle Channel’s mediation

80 Letter of Archbishop Francois Bacqué (former aide to Cardinal Angelo Sodano while Apostolic nuncio in Chile) to HE. Rogelio Francisco Pfrirter, Argentinian Ambassador to the Holy See.

81 HE. Rogelio Francisco Pfrirter interview.
confirms to some degree Hypothesis 1 stating that the influence of the Vatican is likely to be stronger if the Vatican’s institutions at the Global level are both extensive and extensively involved. Most of the main units of Global Vatican (Pope, mediating team, nuncios, secretary of state, ambassador to the U.N.) were involved during the long process that led to the settlement. The finding is evidenced in the way the influence varies across time especially regarding the first and the third periods relative to the second period. Third, the findings show that the role of Local Vatican’s units (Bishops, nuncios, lay organizations) is mostly confined to the first phase in carrying out various activities to support the work of the mediating team. The Local Vatican’s action could be perceived as a “distant support” of the official mediation taking place in Rome. Such a fact has an institutional significance on how pressures by social actors at domestic level could affect international events. In that respect, the findings give some relative support to Moravschik’s theory on the role of domestic social units in shaping or changing state preferences.

Fourth, in terms of mediation style and strategies, the type of mediation displayed by the Vatican during the Beagle Channel dispute somewhat fit in two of the three categories of mediation suggested by the mediation literature which saw a mixture of “procedural” and “directive strategies.” (Bercovitch and Gartner 2009: 27-28). Procedural strategies enable a mediator to exert a more formal control over the process and the environment of the mediation (media, information distribution, etc.). By contrast, in “directive strategies’ which are the most powerful form of intervention, a mediator affects the content and substance of the bargaining process by providing incentives or issuing ultimatums. The discussion shows how the mediator used various stratagems and, at certain points, issued veiled or explicit ultimatums to overcome
deadlocks and push things forward. The way the disputants conform to the Vatican’s directives confirms further the mediator’s significant leverage in the mediation.

Finally, the findings confirm the significance of the religious factor discussed in the previous chapters as illustrated by the Church-State relationship in the two catholic countries. The religious element shaped in a significant way the relationship between the mediator and the parties at the higher level, and the countries’ governments and the local church at the lower level. In one way or another, it helped the mediators deal with some crucial aspects of the mediation. The next chapter, which focuses on the Vatican’s mediation of the U.S. – Cuba confrontation, highlights further the role of these elements in the 2014 diplomatic deal achieved between these countries.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE MEDIATION OF THE VATICAN IN THE U.S. – CUBA CONFRONTATION

In a sober communique on December 17, 2014, the Vatican’s Secretary of State announced that the Holy See helped achieve the reconciliation between the U.S. and Cuba. “The Holy See received Delegations of the two countries in the Vatican last October and provided its good offices to facilitate a constructive dialogue on delicate matters, resulting in solutions acceptable to both parties.”¹ Such a laconic message hardly conceals the long and tortuous process that led to that outcome. On October 28, 2014, both parties agreed to the terms of the agreement which they signed in the Vatican in the presence of four Vatican high dignitaries which included Cardinal Parolin, the Vatican Secretary of State and Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the Archbishop of Havana (Kornbluh and LeoGrande 2015b: 445-446). The agreement pertains to a few areas which have strained the relationship between the two countries some years ahead of the historic deal, such as the case of Alan Gross, the U.S. contractor imprisoned in Cuba and that of Cuban agents jailed in the U.S. By and large, the terms of the deal were the following: (1) the release by Cuba of Alan Gross, (2) the release by Cuba of 53 other political dissidents from a list provided by the U.S, (3) increased internet access to Cuban citizens, (4) access by the United Nations: Cuba will allow officials from the U.N. and the International Committee of the Red Cross to return to its territory (5) in return, the U.S. would free three Cuban agents jailed for spying on

¹ Communique of the Secretariat of State, December 17, 2014 at http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2014/12/17/0968/02096.html#
anti-Castro groups in Florida, (6) the two countries would restore diplomatic relations, (7) the Obama administration would take steps to relax travel, trade and commercial restrictions.¹

This deal is largely considered as a symbol of the relationship’s improvement after years of intense hostility. In fact, the conflict between Cuba and the United States can be described as one of the longest interstate confrontations in the post-WWII era. Beginning in January 3, 1961 with the suspension of the normal diplomatic relations between the two countries in the wake of the coming to power of the Cuban leader Fidel Castro Ruiz, the tension between both the U.S. and the Cuban regime went through ups and down which appeared to never end. The news of reconciliation then came as an unexpected surprise for many. The “Cuban case” seems to have always been a burden for successive U.S. administrations. As one author put it, “the refusal of the U.S. administration to recognize Cuba is longer than it took for the U.S. to recognize the Soviet Union, longer than the refusal to normalize relations with China, longer than it took to reconcile with postwar Vietnam (Perez Jr. 2003: 161). This chapter seeks to offer one explanation of the process that led to that event.

Following the same outline as the previous chapter, this chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I will make a succinct overview of the confrontation between the U.S and Cuba which spans over half a century according to the literature. I will discuss some phases in which attempts have been made to mend the relationship between these countries. As in the previous chapter, the second section begins with a discussion in broad strokes of the main

elements that characterize the church-state relationship in both U.S. and Cuba, which is a crucial factor for understanding the rapprochement. Then, I examine the involvement of the various institutions of the Vatican at both levels of analysis towards the US. – Cuba rapprochement over the period that spans over 30 years. These interventions will be analyzed in terms of their nature and frequency in the period between the mid-1980s which marks the beginning of the change in church-state relationship in Cuba, until the time of the diplomatic deal in 2014. Special attention will be paid to the role of Local Vatican units such as the Bishops’ Conferences of both Cuba and the U.S., and other lay organizations in gradually mending that relationship, a critical fact which appears to have been neglected by scholars. It will be demonstrated that the 2014 deal brokered with the Vatican’s mediation is the finalization of a long and tortuous process whose beginning could be traced back to the mid-1980s. As in the previous chapter, the third section is devoted to assessing the Vatican’s mediation of the U.S.- Cuba conflict by using the methodological tools discussed in chapter 2.

**Historical Overview of the U.S. – Cuba Conflict.**

**50 Years of Strained Relationships**

This historical narrative of the U.S. - Cuban confrontation will be focused on three main domains of conflict across successive U.S. administrations, namely (1) the socio-economic, (2) the national- ideological and (3) the political. In a way, these three areas capture what one scholar sees as the three main driving forces of the U.S. policy in Latin America by order of importance, namely (1) U.S. security, (2) its economy and (3) concern for U.S. domestic politics (Schoultz 2012). The logic of the U.S. – Cuba confrontation in each of these areas follows a pattern of action – reaction in which one action from one side is met with a strong reaction from
the other side with an increasing intensity, especially during the early years. After a heightened period, things came to a standstill before the next crisis. For a long time, the directing logic of U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba was to oust the Castro regime and remove the threat of communism just at its door (Dominguez 1997: 55). Knowing well that sentiment, the Cuban government, in turn, has been animated by the logic of survival, especially during the first 30 years of the revolution, which is manifested by various policies and specific behaviors.

The socio-economic area is one important component of the U.S.-Cuba conflict. From mid-May 1959 to the end of 1960, the Castro government started the expropriation of U.S. properties in Cuba (305,000 acres of sugar land, pasture and forests) without compensation, which triggered the deterioration of relations with the U.S. (Franklin 1997: 21-24). The properties’ seizure by the Cuban revolutionary regime coupled with its participation in the Cuban Missile Crisis in the Fall 1962 prompted the U.S. administration to retaliate with the imposition of an incremental series of embargos, or economic blockades, part of which has lasted until the present day (Smith 1998; 533; Perez 2003). The embargo was implemented and expanded by successive U.S. administrations according to changing domestic and international events. It was only eased by President Obama in the wake of the 2014 deal by permitting travel for family and cultural visits and allowing Americans to send more money to their relatives there.3 The embargo

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was initially followed by other South American governments which felt threatened by Castro’s vow “to turn the Andes into the Sierra Maestra of Latin America.” By the early 1970s, however, the failure of the Castro regime to export its armed struggle coupled with Moscow’s pressure on Havana to adopt tactics less likely to bring Moscow in direct confrontation with Washington led to a change of perception from some Latin American countries which reestablished their diplomatic ties with Cuba (Smith 1998: 534). Not only did the tightening of the economic embargo over the years trigger the intended social unrest but also produced unplanned political effects such as the increasing solidarity of the international community against the U.S. aggressive policy beginning in 1992 (Smith 1998: 536). The embargo even gives excuses to the Cuban regime for the failure of its policy.4 As one author argues, “the U.S. embargo policy is less a policy than an attitude of revenge fueled by a deep resentment which leads nowhere since Castro is turning the boycott to his advantage.”5

Another dimension of the U.S. – Cuban confrontation is the national – ideological domain. The long conflict has been fed by irreconcilable ideologies, especially during the first 30 years of the Cuban Revolution. Fidel Castro’s early refutation of communism changed rapidly into a full embrace of it when in December 1961, he announced his complete adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology (Domínguez 1989: 34). Then followed his proximity with the USSR in the wake of the visit of Anastase Mikoyan, a Soviet high-ranking official to Cuba who pledged a trade agreement

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of $100 million in credit (Leogrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 33). Such a close alliance would endure until the end of the Cold War in which the Soviets abruptly ended their support. One characteristic of the Cuban Revolution was its ideology of “internationalism – anti-imperialism,” at least from its early years until the early 1980s. One aspect of that internationalism was the attempt to export the Revolution to other countries in Latin America through channels of leftist guerrillas (Lievesley 2004: 87-90). Another form is the deployment of Cuban troops in Angola in the mid-1970s to stabilize the fledgling left leaning guerrilla group MPLA of Agostino Neto. The Angolan intervention was followed by the involvement of Cuban troops in the Horn of Africa in 1977 (Dominguez 1989:145). This adventurous foreign policy was partly designed to concretize the so-called “solidarity between Third World countries” but also to shore up the international legitimacy of the Cuban government in the face of the mounting U.S. hostility (Sobers 2012: 65).

Obviously, these foreign undertakings considered by the U.S. as “pure provocation” could but cause concern by justifying and giving impetus to its own ideology of national security. Such an ideology affiliated with the “Monroe doctrine” materialized over the years with various activities such as sabotage and covert operation, among which stands out the famous failed invasion of the Bay of Pigs in April 1961 (Dominguez 1997; 58; Perez 2003: 252-254). Another aspect of the ideological conflict between the two nations is the so-called “wave warfare” or “Radio Marti” launched during the Reagan administration (Skoug 1996: 16-24; Kornbluh and LeoGrande 2015b: 245-248). In the 1980s and 1990s, this radio station would become the most powerful domestic political voice on U.S. – Cuban relations, dominating the policy discourse. The U.S. move prompted Havana to retaliate with the cancelation of the migration agreement and cessation of Cuban American visits to the island. Another episode of the escalating ideological
warfare between the two countries was the U.S. designation of Cuba among the state-sponsored terrorist groups in 1982 after the State Department determined that “Fidel Castro was arming and supporting rebels in American allied countries and also providing safe haven for fugitives wanted in the U.S.” To recall, Cuba was removed from the list of terror sponsoring states by the Obama administration only in April 2015, a few months after the historic diplomatic deal between the two countries.

The third component of the confrontation between the two countries is the political domain which could be considered as a spillover effect of the socio-economic domain. One important aspect of it pertains to the mass emigration to the U.S, set in motion soon after the beginning of the Revolution, which approached 1 million Cubans by the end of 1980s (Perez 2003:253). The mass exodus, which took different phases over the years, has tended to exacerbate the hostilities because of its import on domestic politics in both countries (Dominguez 1997: Perez 2003). In the U.S. in particular, the Cuban presence has had far reaching effects in several areas such as the economy and local politics. On the economic side, it was estimated that in Dade County (Florida) alone, Cubans represented nearly $1 billion in the local economy (according to an estimation dated early 2000): they owned an estimated twenty thousand businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, factories, publication houses and media stations. On the political arena, Cubans emerged as a voting block of formidable proportions by the 1980s: –they

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6 “This is why Cuba was named a state sponsor of terrorism by US officials in the 1980s,” in Business Insider, April 16, 2015 at https://www.businessinsider.com/this-is-why-cuba-was-named-a-state-sponsor-of-terrorism-by-us-officials-2015-4

represented more than a quarter of the Dade County electorate (Perez 2003: 254-255). Such a massive presence obviously has an impact on the successive U.S. administration’s foreign policy towards Cuba. Thus, influential institutions such as the Miami-based Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) lead lobbying actions to prevent any normalization of the U.S. – Cuban relationship (Fernandez 2012: 334-337).

By and large, the policy of hostility and estrangement prevalent in the relationship between the two countries for over 50 years could be considered as a U.S. attempt to forcefully coerce the Cuban regime into compliance, a move rejected with equal vehemence on the Cuban side. According to some observers, “relations broke down 50 years ago because Washington was unwilling to countenance a Latin American client state escaping the orbit of the U.S. hegemony, and because Fidel Castro was determined to do just that.”

The length of the US-Cuba confrontation reveals how deep the roots of the conflict run since it has to do with ideas, norms and identity to varying degrees.

**Back Channel Negotiations**

As paradoxical as it might appear given the intensity of the conflict, there was no period when contacts between the two parties were totally absent. There was always a back-channel diplomacy operating, even during the fiercest anti-Castro administrations such as those of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. By and large, they involved various channels of contacts which are generally meant to address specific issues. Just months after the Bay of Pigs’ failed invasion, representatives from the Kennedy administration and Che Guevara met in Uruguay for

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talks in which the Cubans pleaded for diplomatic dialogue between the two states (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 44-47). That first informal contact was followed by a behind-the-scenes deal about the release of 2014 members of the exile brigade from the fateful Bay of Pigs in exchange for money and medicines (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 48). The back-channel diplomacy aiming at improving the relationship between both countries also involved private individuals who acted either on behalf of the U.S. government or the Castro regime. For instance, Lisa Howard, an ABC news correspondent, played a key role as a go-between both the Kennedy and the Johnson administrations and Fidel Castro. By her frequent interviews with the Lider Maximo, she was able to earn the latter’s trust and thus, became an informal channel of contact between both parties (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 67- 76; 84- 89; 93-96).

Despite the apparent tough stance of the Nixon administration towards Cuba, it was compelled to initiate cooperation and dialogue in the face of thorny problems such as recurrent plane hijackings which became a real issue in late 1960s-early 1970s (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 123-125). For instance, with a dozen hijackings to Cuba in the first two months of 1969 alone, the new Nixon administration secretly approached Cuba about returning the perpetrators to the U.S. Quietly, Cuba began to expel some hijackers to third countries and encourage others to leave. During the Carter era, there was the case of congressmen who officiated as private emissaries by visiting the island. While the U.S.-Cuba relationship deteriorated in the wake of Castro’s sending of troops to Africa, congressmen from the Democratic Party went to Cuba to discuss with Castro about the release of the five remaining CIA prisoners, the release of Cuban political prisoners and a drawdown of Cuban forces in Angola (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b:175-178). These few cases show how tough rhetoric and apparent uncompromising
postures did not prevent both sides from finding ways to cooperate. Pragmatic decisions easily trumped ideological and strategic postures which followed the turns of events. Pragmatic policies were seen as beneficial rather than a permanent stance of hostility.

**Failed Mediation Attempts**

Besides the back-channel negotiations which involved private or government officials, some attempts have also been made by potential third parties to mediate the U.S. – Cuba confrontation. Most of these were initiated during the years following the Revolution without tangible results. As early as January 1960, contacts were made to initiate a dialogue through the intercession of the Argentine ambassador to Cuba, an initiative which was rejected utterly by Fidel as he thought a lot of things should be settled before any negotiation would be possible (McKercher, 2015; Wylie, 2012; LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 29-34). North American and Latin American countries such as Canada, Mexico and Brazil also approached the U.S. to offer their good office, but Washington rejected all of them for various reasons: the Brazilians were considered “too enmeshed in their own domestic politics” to be an honest broker. As for the Mexicans, they were rebuffed on grounds that they identified too closely with Cuba in virtue of the “perceived” parallel between their revolution and that of Cuba (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 37). The Mexicans persevered since they relaunched their mediation initiative just days after President Reagan took office in early 1981. The idea did not last, however, as new events such as the deteriorating military situation in El Salvador pushed the Reagan administration to have a more hostile agenda on Cuba (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 226-228). Among the three countries, Canada virtually appears to be the most suited country to have some chance of success at mediating the conflict because of what scholars consider as its “more friendly attitude towards
the Cuban regime” (Klepak 2009; Wylie 2012; McKercher 2015). According to one scholar, “the Canadian authorities’ alignment with their powerful neighbor did not prevent them from having an independent position on issues as a middle power” (McKercher 2015: 34). While it once envisioned bringing the two sides to the negotiating table in the wake of the 1962 missile crisis, the rigid Cold War logic of the period thwarted the project, which prompted Canada to align with the rigid U.S. stance. At least, the best Canada could do was to discreetly facilitate the release of 1,100 prisoners from the Bay of Pigs event in exchange for $ 53 million worth of food and medicine (McKercher 2015: 32). This “more sympathetic” stance with the Castro regime may explain Canada’s special role during the 2014 Vatican mediation of the U.S. – Cuban conflict, by at least offering the venue for some parts of the negotiation. In summary, the U.S. – Cuba confrontation shows that when there appears to be a glimmer of hope in the resolution of this long conflict, international events or domestic factors have tended to thwart the effort by pushing the parties to the extreme. Each side has “legitimate” claims and grievances to the other. The difficulty of reconciliation is partly due to the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy of both countries, especially on the U.S. side. The result appears to be an endless up and down without a gleam of hope in the horizon.

The Vatican’s Mediation of the U.S. – Cuba Confrontation

The Mediation’s Timeframe

As argued in the following paragraphs, the timeframe of the Vatican’s mediation of the U.S. – Cuba confrontation which spans over 30 years, could be divided into three periods according to specific historical contexts. The first runs from February 1986 until John Paul II’s historical visit to Cuba in 1998. February 1986 is an historic date with the advent of ENEC (Encuentro Nacional
Eclesial Cubano) (discussed below), the first Catholic gathering ever organized in Cuba since the Revolution took place. It is considered by scholars as the beginning of the shift in Church-State relationship (Kirk 1989). The second phase starts from that period until the “power exchange” between the two Castros in February 2008. The coming to power of the younger Castro is largely seen as a watershed moment since he has reversed some of the hard policies of his elder brother by instituting a series of changes aimed at bringing the island out of chronic economic crisis without relinquishing its one-party socialist model.\(^9\) The last phase begins from that period until the 2014 historic deal described earlier. During these three phases, the mediation of both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican of the U.S. – Cuba conflict is comprised of two formats: a formal one characterized by the more traditional “on-the-table discussion” and an informal type of mediation composed of behind-the-scenes negotiations. Several higher officials interviewed for this study, both non-Vatican and Vatican ones, underline how “the Catholic church appears to be the only well positioned institution that could make the U.S – Cuba rapprochement possible.”\(^10\)

**Church-State Relationship**

**Church-State Relationship in Cuba**

An understanding of the Vatican’s involvement in the lengthy U.S. – Cuba confrontation requires an overview of the Church-State relationship which is a significant factor in both the process and outcome of the mediation. Cuba is nominally a Catholic country, but this

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\(^10\) Anonymous US government official # 1 (interviewed in Washington, DC, on October 23, 2018); Anonymous Vatican official # 6 (interviewed in Rome on April 12, 2018).
identification is weak compared to other Latin American countries. For instance, figures from 2001 show that there were 6,179,000 Catholics out of a population of 11,000,000 which makes them roughly 56.1% (Hagopian 2009: 7). This figure is down from the 72% of the pre-Revolution’s figures. The Cuban Catholic church was not as daunting a force in the society as the Latin American stereotype would imply. The reality is quite different. In fact, before 1959, considered as a turning point in the history of the island, a 1957 study found that while 72% of Cubans considered themselves Catholic, only 24% regularly attended mass (Castro 1998: 494). Some surveys taken in Cuba before the Revolution were quite pessimistic about the church’s impact on Cuban society. Thus, a 1957 survey of agricultural workers throughout the country found that 41% professed no religion and that 52% said they were Catholic (Domínguez 1989: 45). At the beginning of the Cuban Revolution, the Church-State relationship was quite cordial as the Catholic hierarchy had been sympathetic to the political change. Within three years into the Cuban revolution, however, the Church-State relationship turned sour as persecution and harassment set in. Hundreds of priests and religious were expelled, imprisoned or put into labor camps, seminaries and other training centers were closed, Catholic schools and colleges were nationalized, and atheism was imposed (Crahan 1985; Domínguez 1989: 48; Holbrook 2010: 264-275). All these actions seemed to seriously threaten the very existence of the Catholic church in Cuba. The years following the beginning of the Cuban Revolution had profoundly transformed the Cuban church thanks to several factors such as continuing persecution by the state combined with the change brought about by both the Second Vatican Council and the 1968 conference of Latin American bishops at Medellin which gave new emphasis and orientation to the church (Castro 1998). An indicator of that change is the tone and content of the Bishops’
pastoral letters: from a confrontational approach to the state in early 1960s, it became more conciliatory and increasingly concerned with the social realm in late 1960s – early 1970s. In the words of a scholar, “having tried confrontation in the early 1960s and having been nearly crushed, the Cuban Catholic church, with help from a succession of Papal nuncios, adopted a long-term strategy of a quiet diplomacy aimed at bridge building” (Castro 1998: 497).

The Church-State relationship began to undergo a drastic improvement in the mid-1980s thanks to several factors. On the side of the state, this time coincides with the release of Benito Frei’s famous book *Fidel Y La Religion* in 1985, the fruit of a long interview with the Cuban leader. In that book, Fidel outlines a more positive view about Christians, Catholics in particular, a drastic change given his previous negative posture (Kirk 1989: 161-162). For Cuban Catholics, this period coincided with the famous national gathering called ENEC (Encuentro Nacional Eclesial Cubano) on February 17-23, 1986, the most important church meeting since the revolutionary victory. For Catholics, the meeting was synonymous with a new start as it gave them the legitimacy they needed to operate within the Cuban society (Kirk 1989:145-171: Letrilliart 2005b: 216-221).

The Church-State relationship took a drastic turn for the better since the 1990s thanks to the collapse of the Soviet Union. An unmistakable indicator was the change in the Constitution in

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11 *Conferencia de Obispos Catolicos de Cuba, la Voz de la Iglesia en Cuba, 100 Documentos Episcopales* (Obra Nacional de la Buena Prensa: Mexico, D.F, 1995).

12 For scholars such as Kirk (1989: 145), three factors account for the rapid church-state dialogue in the mid-1980s, namely (1) the church as a whole has shown the revolutionary government that a new cooperative spirit now imbues church activities, (2) the government response, which has been generally supportive of the initiatives taken by the Christian sector and (3) the dramatic personal involvement of Fidel Castro, motivated by his personal interest in the religious question.
1992 in which all references to scientific materialism and official atheism were removed.\(^\text{13}\)

Another indicator is the restoration of the public celebration of Christmas just before John Paul II’s trip to Cuba in 1998, which was followed by the official authorization of outdoor religious processions and other religious events as well as occasional access of the church to state-run media.\(^\text{14}\)

As demonstrated below, the role of the Cuban church in the U.S.-Cuban rapprochement is intertwined with the state of the Church-State relationship. By contrast, the rapport between the Cuban authorities with the Global Vatican offers a slight difference. Despite the church’s persecution under the Castro regime, the Vatican and Cuba have maintained diplomatic relations although at a minimum level. There are important steps which progressively transformed the Global Vatican’s relationship with Cuba: Pope John Paul II’s trip to Cuba in 1998 and that of Benedict XVI in March 2012, which were preceded by the visit of special envoys such as Cardinal Roger Etchegaray in 1988, Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran in 1996, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone in 2008 and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti in 2010. Each in his own way contributed to the improvement of the Church-State relationship.

**Church-State Relationship in the U.S.**

The Church-State relationship in the U.S. exhibits a different picture. While the relationship of U.S. Catholic church and the government is governed by the principle of separation enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, the Catholic hierarchy in particular has been increasingly and actively involved in the national political process since the 1970s onwards. Such a phenomenon is partly


due to both the more positive perception of Catholics within American society in general and the
impetus given by the Second Vatican Council (Byrnes 1991). This shift in attitude contrasts with
previous periods when Catholics took a low profile because of the mistaken belief that their
church, and particularly their hierarchy, were a threat to the constitutional order. The rise in
prominence of the Catholic bishops in American society in general and in the political sphere in
particular is explained by several factors (Byrnes 1993: 500): (1) the American Catholic
hierarchy heads the largest single denomination in the U.S., whose members comprise more than
a fourth of the national electorate; (2) the bishops have virtually significant institutional
resources at their disposal as well as substantial organizational capabilities; (3) the bishops have
been part of various political efforts to derive partisan benefit from the deep religious strain that
runs through American culture. From these perspectives, two important shifts of attitudes and
strategies are worth mentioning: (1) the Bishops’ adoption of a less defensive, less parochial
approach to the political process and (2) the development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic
Bishops (USCCB) as a vehicle of collective political action in both domestic politics and foreign
policy (Byrnes 1993: 497). As discussed below, the U.S. bishops operating as a group under the
aegis of the USCCB, or individually, are able to generate influence and impact government
decision through a dense and sophisticated network.

The relationship between the U.S. administration and the Global Vatican generally follows
the same pattern of public attitudes towards the local Catholic church: from a strong suspicion to
a full acceptance. Due to widespread anti-Catholic sentiment and concern about the struggle for
Italian unification (discussed in Chapter 3), the diplomatic relations between the U.S.
government and the Vatican were broken in 1867.\textsuperscript{15} This resentment towards the Vatican was fueled by the long-held conventional view of it as a “foreign hostile power.” Since the time of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, U.S. presidents sent personal representatives to the Vatican, but attempts to upgrade the diplomatic contact had been systematically opposed. It was only on January 13, 1984, under the Reagan administration, that a U.S. ambassador had full status in the Vatican after the Senate’s confirmation of William Wilson.\textsuperscript{16} The combination of such factors as the increasingly active involvement of the Catholic church in the sociopolitical domain, the perception of its influence, especially in the domestic political process, and the improvement of the U.S. administration with the Global Vatican have granted the local church a prominent role by increasing its leverage on various issues (Mumford 1984).

**The Mediation of the Global Vatican in the U.S. – Cuba Confrontation**

**The Special Envoys’ Intervention**

During the mediation’s timeframe, three sets of actors from the Global Vatican were particularly involved in the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement: (1) the three popes, namely John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, (2) the Popes’ special envoys and (3) the Vatican Secretary of State. As acknowledged by several high-ranking Vatican officials, “what is called in “the Cuban case” (in the Vatican parlance) has always been a top priority for Vatican diplomacy.”\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} Anonymous Vatican official # 1 interview, Anonymous Vatican official # 6 interview; Anonymous Vatican official # 9 interview; Anonymous Vatican official # 10 (interviewed in Rome on April 3, 2018)
of the intervention of the Global Vatican towards the U.S.-Cuba reconciliation might be traced back to the time of openness in the mid-1980s as described above. Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, John Paul II’s special envoy, is considered by top Vatican officials interviewed for this study as a “pioneer in the improvement of the Vatican-Cuba relationships and, by extension, Cuba’s relationship with the world.”\(^{18}\) Cardinal Etchegaray met with the Cuban leader successively in December 1988, August 1992 and November 1994 in which, through a mixture of formal diplomacy, personal skill, informal approach and persuasive talks, he was able to break misunderstanding and significantly transform the way the Cuban leadership saw the Catholic church, the Vatican and the world. The special envoy’s mission during these multiple trips had two-fold objectives: (1) negotiation with Cuban authorities about giving a freer rein to the local church which would allow it, in particular, to operate in the humanitarian domain to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable, and (2) the Vatican’s offer of humanitarian support as a result of the intensification of the U.S. embargo coupled with the side effects of the USSR’s demise.\(^{19}\) One clear sign of the Cuban authorities’ willingness to cooperate was the release of 45 political prisoners during Cardinal Etchegaray’s visit. Besides, the Vatican’s envoy was able to enlarge his contact with high dignitaries within the communist party’s politburo which would facilitate future negotiations (Etchegaray 2007: 219-225). Another envoy, Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, then President of the Pontifical Commission for Central America, had a private meeting with Fidel Castro in the Vatican’s embassy in Cuba in June 1994. What makes this meeting special is that it

\(^{18}\) Anonymous Vatican officials # 1, # 6, # 9 interviews; Anonymous Vatican official # 11 (Interviewed in Washington, DC. on July 12, 2019).

\(^{19}\) Despite their importance, Cardinal Etchegaray’s multiple visits to Cuba and his meetings with Cuban authorities were not reported by *Granma*, the Cuban official newspaper (Etchegaray 2007: 222).
allowed the Cuban leader to meet and have a lengthy chat with Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the Archbishop of Havana who played an important role in the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement.\textsuperscript{20} In the words of one former Vatican top diplomat, “part of the task of special envoys during these crucial early years was to persuasively convince Cuban authorities to abandon a rigid confrontational attitude, replacing it by a responsible engagement.”\textsuperscript{21}

Cardinals Jean-Louis Tauran, Tarcisio Bertone, and Dominique Mamberti also made visits of significant importance to Cuba, respectively in 1996, 2008 and 2010. Tauran’s trip to the island in late October 1996 as the Vatican’ Secretary of the Relations with States (sort of foreign minister) was designed to improve the relationship with the Cuban state, but mostly to pave the way for Pope John Paul II’s 1998 historic visit to the island. As observers argue, the Fidel Castro was ready to overlook any area of divergence with the church as he perceived the Vatican as a valuable ally in his efforts to break the diplomatic isolation that the U.S. had imposed on Cuba.\textsuperscript{22}

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Pope Benedict XVI’s Secretary of State, was the first foreign dignitary to meet the new Cuban president Raul Castro on a February 20 to 26 trip to Cuba. By and large, Vatican diplomats consider the new Cuban leader to be “a pragmatic person open to dialogue and reconciliation.”\textsuperscript{23} In a confidential cable relating an exchange between the U.S.


\textsuperscript{21} Anonymous Vatican official # 1 interview.


\textsuperscript{23} Anonymous Vatican official # 1 interview.
Embassy in the Vatican and Cardinal Bertone, the latter suggested the U.S. should lift economic sanctions (which the Vatican refers to as an embargo) as a means to foster change in Cuba.\textsuperscript{24} Cardinal Dominique Mamberti’s visit in June 2010 for the celebration of the 75\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the diplomatic ties between Cuba and the Vatican allowed him to discuss several issues with the Cuban authorities which included the improvement of the political prisoners’ conditions.\textsuperscript{25} In any case, the special envoys’ activities during the 30-year timeframe contributed to varying degrees to the U.S.-Cuba reconciliation, particularly by urging the Cuban authorities to be more open to the outside world.

\textit{Pope John Paul II’s Intervention}

The contribution of John Paul II towards the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement can be related to both his meeting with the Cuban leader in the Vatican in 1996 and the memorable trip he made to the island on January 21-25, 1998, which, for some high ranking Vatican officials, “signaled a new era for both the Catholic church and Cuba.”\textsuperscript{26} Prior to the Cuban travel, two key meetings of President Fidel Castro with the Pope and other Vatican higher dignitaries in November 1996 in the Vatican allowed the two parties to discuss complex issues at bilateral and multilateral levels such as the existential condition of Catholics in Cuba, the possibility of clergy to fulfill their

\textsuperscript{24} WikiLeaks: Holy See Secretary of State Talks About Cuba. https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08VATICAN31_a.html


\textsuperscript{26} Anonymous Vatican officials # 1 and # 6 interviews.

According to one scholar, “negotiations that smacked of a quid pro quo were held which included Castro’s request to the Vatican to use its influence to “de-isolate” Cuba on the international scene which would then be reciprocated by the Cuban authorities through granting the local Catholic church more freedom to operate in Cuban society” \cite{Letrillart2005b:248-255}.\footnote{Welcome Ceremony Address of Pope John Paul II, January 21, 1998 at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/january/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980121_lahavana-arrival.html}

The papal trip in Cuba itself was globally perceived as a success from both the Vatican and Cuba. Among the most famous papal speeches was the one delivered at the airport during the welcoming ceremony in which John Paul II enjoined Cuba “to open itself up to the world and the world open itself up to Cuba.”\footnote{Farewell Ceremony Address by John Paul II, January 25, 1998 at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/january/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980125_lahavana-departure.html} The denunciation of the U.S. embargo desperately needed by the Castro regime was subtly expressed by the Pope during the farewell speech at the airport: “In our day, no nation can live in isolation. The Cuban people therefore cannot be denied the contacts with other people necessary for economic, social and cultural development, especially when the imposed isolation strikes the population indiscriminately, making it ever more difficult for the weakest to enjoy the bare essentials of decent living, things such as food, health and education.”\footnote{Senior Vatican diplomats and scholars concede that both Fidel Castro’s meetings in the Vatican and John Paul II’s landmark trip in Cuba in 1998 signaled a new era, not only in...}
Church-State relationship at both global and local level, but also in Cuba’s openness to the world.³⁰

**Pope Benedict XVI’s Intervention**

The most noticeable intervention of Pope Benedict XVI towards the U.S.- Cuba rapprochement is through the official trip he made to the island on March 26-28, 2012. His intervention took two forms, namely speeches to various audiences and meetings with Cuban authorities. Taking up John Paul II’s famous words uttered in 1998, Pope Benedict XVI urged Cubans “to build a renewed and open society, a better society, one more worthy of humanity and which reflects the goodness of God.”³¹ Perhaps to accommodate the authorities, the Pope tried hard to avoid controversies by making subtle statements on the necessity of freedom and respect for human rights. In contrast to Pope Francis (discussed below), he did not address sensitive cases such as that of the dissidents and the U.S. citizen Alan Gross.³² Besides, Pope Benedict turned down a request of audience by the *Damas de Blanco*, the wives of Cuban dissidents.³³ At least, his double meeting with Raul Castro and Fidel resulted in having Good Friday declared a

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³⁰ Anonymous Vatican officials # 1 and # 6 interviews; Letrillart (2005b: 257).


legal national holiday. Observers concede, however, that one of the main objectives of the Pope’s trip was the backing of the local church and its hierarchy in their efforts towards visibility: in the same manner as John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI wanted to give the Cuban church “a gentle breath of fresh air which would grant it new strength.” According to a former Vatican top diplomat, “the Pontiff’s visit could be considered as a spiritual, diplomatic and institutional support to its hierarchy, especially Cardinal Ortega as the church strives to be more involved in the Cuban society.” One indirect fallout of Benedict XVI’s trip to Cuba was the pressure put by the U.S. Catholic bishops on the U.S. State Department to alleviate the embargo on Cuba (discussed below).

**Pope Francis’ Intervention**

Among the three popes, Francis is certainly the most involved in the formal mediation format of the U.S.–Cuba confrontation through his personal stamp on the 2014 deal. The Argentinian Pope, elected in March 2013, had been quite involved in the process since his historic meeting with President Obama on March 27, 2014, which could be considered as key in the Global Vatican’s mediation. Several accounts converge on the initial hesitancy of President Obama of requesting the Vatican’s involvement in the mediation. Part of the initial reluctance of the U.S.

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36 Anonymous Vatican official # 1 interview.

President to involve the Pope in the mediation could be related to the State Department’s inclusion of the Vatican in its list of potential “money launderers” through the Vatican Bank, especially during the term of Pope Benedict XVI.\(^38\) Two senior State Department officials in the Obama administration affirm that “President Obama gradually changed his mind and agreed after being convinced by his close aides on the credibility of the Catholic church as an institution for both American and Cuban people and the long involvement of the Catholic church in both countries towards the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement.”\(^39\) In the unusually lengthy discussion of 52 minutes between Pope Francis and Obama, the burning issues that typify the U.S. – Cuba confrontation were all evoked: U.S. embargo, freeing and exchange of Cuban prisoners detained in the U.S. and vice versa which includes Alan Gross, a U.S. government subcontractor who had been imprisoned in Cuba for five years, the withdrawal of Cuba on the list of state-sponsored terrorists, the Guantanamo base.\(^40\)

Pope Francis requested that the U.S. president make a drastic change of posture with regard to the Cuban situation, particularly on the embargo issue (Vallely 2015: 391-392). He is purported to have said to the US president: “Now it is not the Pope who talks with you but the Latin American man. The U.S wanted to isolate Cuba, yet your country is running the risk of


\(^{39}\) Anonymous US government official # 1 interview; Anonymous US government official # 2 (interviewed in Washington, DC, on October 9, 2018); their accounts cohere with that of Ben Rhodes (2018:283), the other U.S. negotiator during the U.S.- Cuba negotiation.

\(^{40}\) Confidential conversation between Cardinal Jaime Ortega and Jean Mendelson, the French Ambassador to Cuba in Colonna-Cesari (2016: 127-128).
being isolated itself if you do not do something.”\textsuperscript{41} The Pope seemed surprised to see how Obama appeared to have acquiesced to his critiques regarding the counterproductive character of the embargo, although the president told him that it is up to Congress to decide on the issue.\textsuperscript{42} During the meeting, Pope Francis told Obama how a gesture of clemency towards the detained Cubans in U.S. prisons would certainly be reciprocated by the Cuban authorities with regard to the U.S. prisoner Alan Gross (Ortega 2017: 109). President Obama then told the Pope that his administration had something in the offing about Cuba since June 2013 and asked if he could play a role in it.\textsuperscript{43} The Pope made clear the availability of the Vatican if it could help to solve the dispute in any ways. Such an initiative was not surprising given Pope Francis’ personality, an atypical pontiff known to be close to people who, according to one Vatican official close to Pope Francis “has manifestly staked his papacy on dialogue and reconciliation between intractable parties.”\textsuperscript{44} Such an account reflects the fact that, as in the Beagle Channel dispute, the Vatican’s intervention was requested by the U.S. By and large, that fact typifies one characteristic of the Global Vatican intervention in mediation in which its formal involvement depends on the parties’ requests.

\textsuperscript{41} Confidential conversation between Cardinal Jaime Ortega and Jean Mendelson, the French Ambassador to Cuba in Colonna-Cesari (2016: 127-128).


\textsuperscript{43} “Obama Aides Discuss Vatican Role in Warming Relations with Cuba,” in Los Angeles Times, April 10,2015 at https://www.latimes.com/world/mexico-americas/la-fg-obama-cuba-20150410-story.html

\textsuperscript{44} Anonymous Vatican official # 10 interview.
The second significant intervention of Pope Francis in the mediation of the US-Cuba conflict relates to the letters he sent to both Presidents Obama and Raul Castro months after his meeting with Obama, when the negotiations between the parties were about to break down over the exchange of prisoners. The pope wrote personal letters to the two presidents urging them to take the risk and swap (Vallely 2015: 392). Several Vatican officials close to Pope Francis underlined the importance of formal letters sent to heads of states which are generally considered “a sensitive matter in Vatican diplomacy and thus, are handled with extreme care.” The content of the letters is the same although written in both English and Spanish. By and large, Pope Francis pleaded for a de-escalation in the reciprocal bellicose rhetoric and attitudes between the two countries so as to facilitate the path for the restoration of the diplomatic relations broken since the early 1960s. He urged the two countries to look into humanitarian questions of common interest, including the situation of prisoners so as to initiate a new phase in relations. Finally, the Pope’s plea was accompanied by a personal declaration of support for the rapprochement (Colonna-Cesari 2016: 131; Rhodes 2018: 286). Given the importance of these letters, the way they were conveyed to their recipients followed complicated routes and involved various actors as described below. The letters themselves may weigh differently according to their addressees: for President Obama, it might have been just a simple reminder of what was decided in their March 2014 meeting at the Vatican. The one addressed to Raul Castro, however, appears to have been taken seriously by the Cuban leadership since it reminded him of the changing international

45 Anonymous Vatican officials # 2 and # 6 interviews.
context and its possible economic fallouts on Cuba. Through a subtle diplomatic language, the Pope seemed to have gently reminded the Cuban leadership that the time is propitious for a change in that the Venezuelan regime would not indefinitely subsidize the Cuban regime through cheap oil after the death of Hugo Chavez. In that regard, one former Vatican top diplomat affirms bluntly that “an economic cooperation with the U.S would be advisable as a way of preventing the system’s collapse.” Raul Castro’s verbal acceptation to the pope’s invitation constitutes, thus, a great leap forward in the rapprochement project.

**Secretary of State Pietro Parolin’s Intervention**

Besides Pope Francis, the Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin is considered as key-actor in the December 2014 historical deal. Along with Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the Archbishop of Havana (whose role will be discussed further below), Parolin participated as a mediator in the key meetings held in the Vatican which negotiated the final agreements leading to the signing of the deal. The meetings in the Vatican were the final ones among the nine secret encounters between the delegations, starting from summer 2013 to December 2014. Two important facts seem to have enhanced the Global Vatican’s intervention. First, while Canada hosted several meetings during the 18-months U.S- Cuban negotiations, in Toronto or in Ottawa, it never

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47 Anonymous Vatican official # 2 interview.


49 On the Cuban side, Alejandro Castro, the Cuban president’s son led the delegation while the U.S. delegates were composed of Ben Rhodes (chief negotiator), the deputy national security advisor to President Barack Obama, and Ricardo Zuniga, a senior director for Western Hemisphere affairs at the National Security Council (Rhodes 2018: 300-303).
participated in the talks as a third party. The choice of Canada appears to be linked to its infructuous attempt at mediating the dispute as discussed in the previous section. The second relates to the key role taken by the Vatican in the negotiations. While the Vatican’s involvement was initially designed to grant a moral assurance to the accord between the two parties “which hardly trust each other” (Rhodes 2018: 283), its role went beyond a mere guarantor of the deal. According to a former high ranking U.S. official, “the mediators composed of Cardinal Parolin, along with the Cuban Cardinal Jaime Ortega, were actively involved during the two crucial sessions held in the Vatican in October 2014 in which the discussion centered on the finalization of not just the prisoner exchange but the wider normalization of relations.” In a way somewhat similar to the procedure adopted by the Vatican team in the mediation of the Beagle Channel dispute, the Vatican prelates worked intensively to move the delegates toward a final agreement, meeting with each side separately and then with the two sides together to work through the details of the final accord (LeoGrande and Kornbluh 2015b: 446). At some point in the negotiations, the Vatican’s contribution was considered crucial. As affirmed by one U.S. high ranking official who participated in the negotiations, “when the Cubans put to the table a variety of grievances such as the end of American programs promoting democracy, the closure of the


U.S. naval station at Guantanamo Bay and the end to their nation’s designation by the U.S. as a “state sponsor of terrorism,” the mediators, Cardinal Ortega, in particular, urged the Cubans to go along with the prisoner swap as it was the only viable solution for the time being.\textsuperscript{53} The mediators’ intervention also comprised an examination of the various contentious issues previously discussed by the parties. This reflects the Vatican’s procedure with the Beagle Channel conflict which comprised a step-by-step process, beginning with the feasible on which a common ground of agreement is possible.

\textit{The Permanent Observer in the United Nations’ Intervention}

The Vatican Permanent Observers in the United Nations also contributed to the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement through various avenues. The intervention at this level takes the form of general statements delivered in the U.N. General Assembly (or in other venues) on issues that are more or less related to the Cuba – U.S confrontation. Such is for instance the statement of Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the 60\textsuperscript{th} Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights on April 1, 2004. He might have Cuba in mind when he underlined the importance of freedom of conscience and expression of religious belief as fundamental human rights (Tomasi 2017: 128-133). Another example is the statement on the need for peaceful coexistence between nations in a globalized world which is increasingly interdependent.\textsuperscript{54} According to one former Vatican senior diplomat, “one particular area of concern is the U.S. embargo on Cuba which the Global Vatican has systematically condemned

\textsuperscript{53} Anonymous US government official # 1 interview.

\textsuperscript{54} Statement by Archbishop Francis Chullikat, Permanent Observer of the Holy See before the Second Committee of the 66\textsuperscript{th} Session of the UN General Assembly on “Globalization and Interdependence”, New York, October 19, 2011 at https://holyseemission.org/contents//statements/55e34d35cfc2e3.89310654.php
through its participation in the voting of U.N. resolutions.” 55 Another Vatican official confides that “repeated statements on specific issues made by the Vatican at the level of the U.N. sometimes have ripple effects among the delegates, especially when these resonate with states preferences.” 56 In that respect, the Vatican Secretariat of State released strong statements condemning some U.S postures towards Cuba such as its inconsistency on human rights characterized by double standards. In a letter sent by a Vatican higher official, Mgr. Angelo Accatino, to the U.S. Embassy in the Vatican, the former pointed out the inconsistency of the U.S.’s rigid approach towards Cuba on grounds that the Caribbean island has a poor record on human rights. The same issue is, however, overlooked when it comes to China. In another respect, the Vatican official appeared to be concerned with the Cuban American lobby’s influence over U.S. policy towards Cuba and suggested that the U.S. administration should no longer be held hostage to it. 57

Recapitulation of the Global Vatican’s Involvement

The foregoing discussion exhibits varying degrees of intervention of the Global Vatican’s units during the three phases of the mediation’s timeframe. To recall, this dissertation measures the institutional involvement in terms of the number of intervening units involved and the activities performed by these units which are categorized in three levels: high, medium and low. As shown by the data above, the first phase (1985 – 1998) of the 30-year long mediation shows

55 Anonymous Vatican official # 2 interview.

56 Anonymous Vatican official # 4 interview.

four major actors being involved (Pope, special envoys, Secretary of State, nuncios in international institutions) who performed a certain number of activities such as meetings and negotiations with state authorities, speeches and support of resolutions on Cuba at the U.N. regarding the elimination of the embargo. By and large, the degree of involvement of the Global Vatican in this phase could be estimated as somewhat a “medium level,” when viewed in comparison with the second (January 1998 – February 2008) and the third phase. While the degree of involvement appears to be minimal in the second phase, the third phase (February 2008 – December 2014) certainly constitutes the highest. As the data shows, at least seven various units of Global Vatican were involved during the process: two Popes, three special envoys, one Secretary of State who led the final round of the mediation. Moreover, included in the activities performed by these units are those related directly to the ultimate round of negotiations which led to the final outcome.

The Global Vatican’s role in the U.S- Cuba deal is incontestably undisputed as shown by the previous discussion. An over concentration on the Global Vatican’s role, however, tends to overlook the crucial part played by the units at the local level as it was already alluded to earlier. Scholars who have delved into the subject such as Kornbluh and Leogrande (2015a; 2015b) have failed to assess the significance of these units’ role in the mediation’s long process that led to the December 2014 deal. I will demonstrate in the following paragraphs how the Local Vatican’s units in both countries had been increasingly involved over a lengthy period of time, beginning in the mid-1980s, which signals the change in the Church-State relationship in Cuba.
The Mediation of the Local Vatican in the U.S. – Cuba Confrontation

The Local Nuncios’ Intervention in Cuba and the U.S.

In contrast to the Beagle Channel dispute where the Nuncios played only marginal role as a subsidiary support to the Global Vatican, some Papal ambassadors in Cuba contributed significantly to the normalization of the U.S. – Cuba relationship. Several non-Vatican and Vatican officials underline “the tirelessly effort of succeeding nuncios in Cuba at improving the Church-State relationship and convincing the Cuban authority about the need of breaking Cuba’s isolation and “opening up to the world” according to Pope John Paul II’s famous injunction.”

According to one Vatican diplomat, “by and large, the nuncios’ interventions followed the Vatican diplomatic protocol which includes direct meetings with Cuban officials to discuss particular points related to church-state issues in which the church’s interest is discussed.”

The snowballing effect of these interventions over the years has likely contributed to the change in Cuba’s posture on particular domains, especially in the area of interstate relations. Archbishop Cesare Zacchi who was the Vatican’s chargé d’Affaires to Cuba from 1962 to 1974 and then a full Apostolic nuncio from 1974 to 1975 (Kirk 1989: 117-119) was a pioneer in the normalization of Church-State relationship in Cuba. Following the Second Vatican Council, he fully embraced Ostpolitik – the Vatican’s policy of openness towards communist countries. His posture of accommodation with the Cuban communist regime put him at loggerheads with some conservative Catholics and part of the hierarchy who felt deeply betrayed. Yet, his gifts of

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58 Anonymous Vatican official # 9 interview; Anonymous US government official # 1 interview; Anonymous US government official # 4 (interviewed in Chicago on April 17, 2019).

59 Anonymous Vatican official # 11 interview.
patience and diplomacy were responsible not only for the continuing good relationship between the Cuban government and the Vatican, but also for the process of growth and maturity in the Cuban hierarchy as a whole.

Following in Zacchi’s footsteps, some nuncios worked tirelessly towards convincing Cuban authorities for more openness in foreign policy, particularly regarding the relations with the U.S. Among these stand out Archbishop Faustin Munoz, papal ambassador from 1988 to 1991, who achieved significant work in improving Church-State relationship in Cuba. According to one Vatican diplomat, “Archbishop Munoz’s past experience in the mediating team during the Beagle Channel dispute might have helped him for that.” 60 Other important figures are Archbishop Beniamino Stella, nuncio from 1992 to 1999, and Archbishop Angelo Bacciu, nuncio from 2009 to 2011, to whom can be added Mgr. Antoine Camilleri, who worked in the Vatican embassy in Cuba (2005 – 2006) and later was named the Vatican’s under Secretary with Relations with States. 61 According to a U.S. government official, the last three nuncios entertained good relations with the Cuban authorities and had regular access to Pope Francis. 62 As observers point out, the U.S.- Cuba historic deal was achieved thanks to the patient behind-the-scenes diplomatic work of people such as Archbishop Angelo Becciu whom, while nuncio in

60 Anonymous Vatican official # 11 interview.


62 Anonymous US. government official # 1 interview.
Cuba, organized Pope Benedict’s trip there. Angelo Becciu was also instrumental in the diplomatic approach to the Cuban authorities in convincing them on the need for a foreign policy change towards the U.S. Mgr. Bruno Musaro, nuncio in Cuba from 2011 to 2014, however, strayed from the diplomatic path of reconciliation. The indelicate ambassador severely criticized the Castro regime on its records on human rights while on vacation in Italy. Reported by local newspapers, the nuncio’s undiplomatic statement did not go unnoticed by Cuban authorities who promptly requested the departure of the papal envoy as a “persona non grata” (Colonna-Cesari 2016:129).

In the U.S. among the most active nuncios in supporting the U.S. bishop’s reconciling stance regarding the U.S. – Cuba confrontation was Archbishop Pietro Sambi (2005 – 2011). Dubbed “super nuncio” by many admirers, he personified the best of the Vatican’s diplomatic corps, combining pastoral sensitivity with an in-depth expertise in high stakes negotiations. Since part of the work of a nuncio is to search for a suitable candidate to be proposed to the Pope as a bishop, his contribution to the improvement of U.S.- Cuba relationship, although indirect, may lay in the selection of U.S. bishops some of whom were favorable to the rapprochement. According to an advisor to the U.S. Bishops, “while there are bishops who oppose the U.S. –

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64 Testimony of Dr. Przemyslaw Hauser, the Representant of the Order of Malta (A Catholic Organization) in Cuba in Colonna-Cesari (2016: 132).


Cuba rapprochement, a majority of them hold a positive view of it, which is in line with the Global Vatican’s posture.”

**The Intervention of the Cuban Bishops**

Beginning in the mid-1980s, there has been a drastic development in the Church-State relationship in terms of the Cuban authorities’ posture to both the Global Vatican and the local church, as discussed earlier. Regarding the Cuban church, the turning point was the ENEC (Encuentro Nacional Eclesial Cubano) in February 1986 which gradually began to shape its relationship with the state in the 1990s onwards. Concomitantly, the Cuban bishops began to be active in urging the authorities for policy change at both domestic and international levels. The bishops’ intervention during the 30-year timeframe could be summarized in three headings: (1) letters and messages-exhortations, (2) work of reconciliation among Cubans, (3) negotiation-like meetings with civil authorities. One form of intervention are statements and messages through pastoral letters or other means. The Cuban bishops were particularly prolific, as from 1986 to 1994, 47 messages were released in the form of declarations, letters or homilies. While a significant number of them are of a pastoral and spiritual nature, some address issues that have social or political import. One of the most critical is the letter entitled “Love Hopes All Things,” released on September 8, 1993, in which the bishops excoriated the authoritarian nature of the state that was leading to many abuses such as the discrimination and imprisonment of dissenters.

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67 Anonymous USCCB official # 1 (interviewed in Washington, DC on June 20, 2019).

68 As Letrillart (2005a) argues, “devoid of any material power and the possibility of providing verifiable popular support, the Catholic church makes full use of the resources of speech, symbol or even self-persuasion to try to extract herself from the social periphery in which it has been confined by the Revolution.”

69 100 Documentos de la Iglesia de Cuba.
The prelates called for a true dialogue at both the national and international levels to overcome some of the most pressing problems. While condemning the U.S. embargo which aggravates people’s lives, the bishops pledged to help promote positive steps to resolve the problems between the governments of the U.S. and Cuba. Another letter issued in 1994 tackles the burning issue of boat people in early 1990s in which the bishops implored both the U.S. and Cuban governments together to examine the ultimate causes of this disgrace and scandal. But the most explicit message sent by the Cuban bishops about the urgency of an improvement of the relationship between both countries is the letter released on October 3, 2013, marking the 20th anniversary of the “Love Hopes All Things.” In it, the bishops urged the Cuban government to initiate the restoration of ties between the two countries given that a great many Cubans and their descendants live in the U.S. The Cuban prelates pointed out how “the geographical closeness and the family ties uniting the two nations should favor an inclusive politics that, while respecting the differences, would allow the lessening of tensions and of the sufferings that many people and family experience.”

The result of these pastoral messages was generally mixed. Some specific letters, such as the 1993 “Hope all Things” enraged the Cuban authorities who employed different strategies such as harsh criticisms of the bishops through the media, or other subtle means of intimidation. From the viewpoint of a local church official, “these letters constitute somewhat a sort of window

through which the authorities knew the reality at the grassroot level.”73 For an observer of Cuban politics, “the bishops’ letters were taken seriously by the authorities since the coming to power of Raul Castro, especially regarding messages related to the need for openness and dialogue.”74

A second form of intervention towards the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement is the work of reconciliation between Cubans in Cuba and Cubans in the U.S in line with the Cuban bishops’ 2001 - 2005 pastoral plan which is intended to “heal the different wounds that exist in the Cuban social fabric.”75 Such an endeavor is realized through regular visits of the Cuban clergy in the U.S. in collaboration with the U.S. bishops. Within five years since Pope John Paul II’s visit in Cuba in 1998, no less than a dozen meetings of clergy and laity from both Cuba and Cuban communities in the U.S were held to foster dialogue and mutual understanding. The church’s effort is mostly positive among younger generations who want peaceful transformation in line with church views on reconciliation. According to Archbishop John C. Favalora of Miami, these encounters have produced “a mutual respect and love that has bridged a gap that only political ideologies alone can create.” Cuban-born auxiliary bishop Augustin Roman of Miami underlines the fact that “while for many years, the predominant view among Cubans in Miami was that any solution begins with a war against the authoritarian government, gaining ground is now the view that nonviolence is the way, reconciliation is the way.76 According to an advisor to the US.

73 Anonymous church official # 3 (interviewed in Rome on March 30, 2018)
74 Anonymous church official # 4 (interviewed in Rome on April 10, 2010).
Bishops, “such a contact between the bishops of the two countries seems to have taken a life of its own and increased significantly over the years.”

A third form of intervention, an important one, is the meetings with civil authorities to advance their agenda or negotiate human rights issues pertaining to the global frame of reconciliation. One important encounter in that regard took place in May-June 2010, between Havana Cardinal Jaime Ortega, along with Archbishop Dionisio Garcia Ibanez of Santiago, president of the Cuban bishops’ conference, and President Raul Castro. Various topics were discussed but high on the agenda was the negotiation towards the release of political dissidents as a form of reconciliation among Cubans. Successive meetings of church leaders, along with representatives from Spain, with the Cuban authorities would result with the progressive release of 75 political prisoners from July 2010 to February 2011, most of whom were flown to Spain. A related case pertains to the Damas de Blanco (Ladies in White), the wives of the Cuban prisoners, whose silent marches were organized regularly to protest against the detention of their relatives and were banned by the authorities. Mediation talks led by Cardinal Jaime Ortega along

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77 Anonymous USCCB official # 2 (interviewed in Washington, DC, on June 19, 2019).


79 These political prisoners were members of a group called Christian Liberation Movement (CLM) created in 1988 in the wake of the 1986 ENEC (discussed earlier). Their objective is to advocate for free speech, freedom of association, more private property rights and the right to have a voice in government decisions through elections in Cuba. Calling for a national referendum on these freedoms, in an effort known as the Varela Project, in honor of a 19th-century Cuban-born priest, Father Felix Varela, the CLM gathered more than 25,000 signatures and presented them to the Cuban National Assembly in 2002 and 2003. As a result, most of the movement’s leaders were jailed in 2003 on the accusation of being “mercenaries” on behalf of the U.S.” (see “Seven Released Cubans Arrive in Spain After Church-brokered Deal,” in Catholic News Service, July 13, 2010; “Cuban Government Vows to Release 52 Prisoners,” in The New York Times, July 7, 2010 at https://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/08/world/americas/08cuba.html?searchResultPosition=1

Uncontestably, Cardinal Jaime Ortega Y Alamino, the Archbishop of Havana, was a key person among the Cuban bishops who played a pivotal role in the mediation of the US-Cuba confrontation. An apparently controversial figure, he has deeply fashioned the Cuban church in the past 30 years.\footnote{For some Cuban-Americans, Cardinal Jaime Ortega made too many concessions to the regime while, for those who knew him very well, such as Miami Archbishop Thomas Wenski, the Cardinal was “a dedicated man of the church and an exemplary Cuban.” See “Cardinal Jaime Ortega: A Product of Two Castros, Three Popes, One Discreet US Hand,” in National Catholic Register, August 21, 2019 at http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/cardinal-jaime-ortega-a-product-of-two-castros-three-popes-one-discreet-us-} Not only did he intervene alongside with Vatican officials at global level but more so at the local level in the U.S- Cuba rapprochement. His special relationship with Pope Francis is certainly key in that regard. Both had known and respected one another for decades (Vallely 2015: 392; Ortega 2017: 21-26). Besides his key-intervention in the negotiation with the Cuban authorities that led to the release of political prisoners,\footnote{In fact, the mediation of Cardinal Jaime Ortega along with the Cuban bishops about the Cuban political prisoners as well as the “Lady in Whites’ lasted several months, beginning in February 23, 2010 with the death from hunger strike of a political prisoner until the release of the last prisoner in November 2010. See the detailed chronological account of these crucial months of mediation at http://espaciolaical.net/?s=CRONOLOG%C3%8DA+DE+LA+MEDIANCI%C3%93DEL+DE+LA+RELEA%2C+ARZOBISPO+DE+LA+HABANA&submit=Search} he also traveled three times to the U.S. in 2010 (June, August and October) and also in May 2011 to meet with some high officials in the Obama administration such as the National Security Adviser, Jim Jones, and Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Arturo Valenzuela.\footnote{Manuel Alberto Ramy, “Cardinal Ortega: A Trip Not Advertised,” Progresso Weekly, June 30, 2010; “Cuba: Discrète Tournée Diplomatique du Cardinal Ortega,” La Croix, in Gayte (2013), supra notes # 65 and # 66 at p. 56.} Undoubtedly, these
successive visits of the Cuban prelate were related to the political prisoners issue and the improvement of the U.S.-Cuba ties, since a few months after the meetings, the Obama administration lifted restrictions on travel for academic, religious and cultural groups.  

Cardinal Ortega played also an instrumental role in the delicate mission of conveying personally Pope Francis’s letter to both President Obama and Raul Castro and then reporting what each president wanted to say to the other (Ortega 2017: 116-130). In a conference he gave on September 16, 2017, in New York, in which he outlined his role in the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement, Cardinal Ortega pointed out how not only did he deliver the Papal letters to their addressees but also, at the same time, explained to them the thoughts of the Pope live voce. As discussed earlier, he was center stage on the final negotiations in the Vatican which concluded with the signature of the U.S.-Cuba deal on October 28, 2014. Less well-known, however, was his contribution during the crucial parts of the negotiations in Canada. Within a few months before the December 2014 deal, he embarked on a secret mission to help mediate the two parties during some part of their 7-round negotiations in Canada as the talks stumbled over the prisoner exchange. The delegations and the mediators shuttled back and forth to Toronto and Ottawa where most of the clandestine meetings took place (Vallely 2015: 392).


86 Cardinal Ortega omits this account about his role during this part of the deal in his book Encuentro, Dialogo y Acuerdo.

87 Cardinal Ortega’s presence in Canada during the crucial negotiations between the U.S. and Cuban delegations was under the official cover of “Pope’s special envoy to the celebrations of the 350th anniversary of the foundation of the
As discussed earlier, the 1986 ENEG was a beginning of the reemergence of the Cuban Catholic church, in which the laypeople made a major contribution. Despite the rigid communist system which prevents the flourishing of non-state institutions, there exists two projects run by laypeople which contributed more or less to the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement. This is so because of the transnational ties of these projects which aimed at dialogue and reconciliation between communities: (1) Caritas-Cuba, founded in 1991 and operating in the humanitarian domain, and (2) the “Varela Institute” created in 1993, which is a voluntary citizen organization center dedicated to culture and development promotion. From its foundation by the Bishops in the early 1990s, which coincides with the demise of the Soviet Union, Caritas-Cuba has continually strengthened its presence, thanks to a special privilege granted by the Cuban authorities (Letrillart 2005b: 305-307). By the mid-2000, it employed 15,000 dispatched into the 11 dioceses in the country, it helped 30,000 people daily among whom are 5,000 children and 6,000 elders. According to a CRS official interviewed for this study, “what is essential for Caritas is not to pinpoint the failure of the Cuban system but offer an alternative path.” For some observers, the possibility of an active operation of this Catholic institution on the Cuban soil could be seen as a sign of the “permeability of the island to the global development of international relations as it is even possible for a transnational network such as Caritas to operate


Anonymous CRS official (Skype-interviewed on August 11, 2019).
at the heart of a Marxist country.\textsuperscript{89} One indicator of the Caritas’ s influence is that it enjoyed a reasonable degree of freedom to work in the Cuban society. A confidential memo between U.S. officials in the State Department mentions how “the Cuban government never questioned the Caritas’ involvement in the Cuban society.”\textsuperscript{90} As for the Varela Institute, by its vocation, it seeks to be a bridge between different communities in line with its motto which is “to strengthen an active and environmentally responsible citizenship, participant in the development and transformation in community areas of Cuban society, from an ethical, humanistic and social equity perspective.”\textsuperscript{91} Besides these two institutions, other lay-based civic centers also are operating which contribute to the reconciliation and dialogue: the Center Fray Bartholomew of Casas in Havana and the Center for Religious and Civic Education located in the Pinar del Rio diocese (Letrillart 2005b: 307-312).

\textit{The U.S. Bishops’ Intervention}

The U.S. bishops, both individually and as a group under the aegis of the USCCB, are certainly the most active actors at the Local Vatican level in the mediation of the U.S. – Cuba confrontation. Despite their importance, however, their real role remains underappreciated by observers and scholars. The intervention of the U.S. Bishops takes several forms during the three phases of the mediation timeframe of this study: (1) regular visits in Cuba which include meetings with Cuban authorities, (2) cooperation with the Cuban church on various issues,

\textsuperscript{89} Pierre de Charentenay, SJ, political scientist expert on Latin America and former writer at the Jesuit-run Civilt\textit{a} Cattolica (email interviewed on June 10, 2019); See also Letrillart (2005a: 13).

\textsuperscript{90} Wikileaks: Caritas International on Cuba- Cautious Optimism. https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/01VATICAN1436_a.html

\textsuperscript{91} http://www.cfv.org.cu/
including funding of various projects, (3) humanitarian assistance to Cuba through organisms such as Catholic Relief Service, (4) statements and advocacy about policy change addressed to both Cuban and U.S. authorities, (5) lobbying activities in the U.S. Congress towards a change of policy regarding Cuba. The U.S. bishops’ visit to the island has become a fixture in the relationship between the two churches since 1981 when Archbishop Edward McCarthy of Miami made the trip to Cuba for the installation of Archbishop Jaime Ortega as Archbishop of Havana. This has been reciprocated as more and more members of the Cuban clergy also make regular visits to the U.S. According to a high ranking official within the USCCB, “the frequency of these visits, which amounted to 40-50 in the period extending from 2000 to 2015 – thus 3 visits per year on average – indicates a high degree of interaction.” These visits take various forms, namely informational, pastoral, educational, humanitarian and sometimes political. For instance, in late June 2010, the president of the USCCB Cardinal Francis E. George along with Mgr. David Malloy, the USCCB General Secretary had the opportunity of meeting the Cuban higher authorities while making a pastoral visit to the Cuban church.

Another area of cooperation with the Cuban bishops that had the potential of bringing the two nations closer was the funding of projects in Cuba. Such is for instance the first new Catholic seminary building in 50 years inaugurated in November 2010 by president Raul Castro.

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92 “The Church and Cuba’s International Ties,” in America, April 8, 2002 at https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/368/article/church-and-cubas-international-ties

93 Anonymous USCCB official # 3 (telephone-interviewed on October 13, 2018).

himself along with other dignitaries.\textsuperscript{95} The infrastructure benefited from the funds given by the USCCB and the Miami diocese which was represented by its leader Archbishop Thomas Wenski. Another imposing infrastructure which benefited from the U.S. bishops’ support is the Felix Varela Institute (discussed above), a center run by Cuban laypeople, which according to an advisor to the US. Bishops is “called to take increasingly a significant role in shaping the civil society in Cuba.”\textsuperscript{96} In any case, the general impression within the US. Bishops is that these activities have progressively contributed to build trust and confidence of the church from the side of Cuban authorities.\textsuperscript{97}

One area somewhat overlooked despite its significance for the U.S.- Cuba rapprochement is the humanitarian aid to which the USCCB has long been a major contributor. This domain, not always recognized, bears a significant weight on the Cuban authorities’ decision to open up to the outside world, the U.S. especially. This is done through the U.S. transnational charitable unit Catholic Relief Services (CRS). From 1993 to 1997 alone, during the time of food scarcity following the drastic cut in aid from the former Soviet Union, CRS sank more than $10 million into parish distribution centers for medicine which had been channeled through Caritas-Cuba as discussed above.\textsuperscript{98} The support provided by the U.S. bishops has never been interrupted and

\textsuperscript{95} “Roman Catholic Seminary Opens in Cuba,” in Americas Quarterly, November 4, 2010 at https://www.americasquarterly.org/node/1978

\textsuperscript{96} Anonymous USCCB official # 1 interview.

\textsuperscript{97} Anonymous USCCB official # 3 interview.

remains steady over the years. On the same register, the Order of Malta, another important transnational Catholic organization, also has contributed significantly to the humanitarian operation in Cuba through its dense network of hospitals, care facilities and more than 80 soup-kitchens for the most vulnerable. According to a former top official of the Order of Malta, his organization practices what could be labelled as “humanitarian diplomacy” which has peace and reconciliation as objectives. However, he underlines the apolitical nature of the humanitarian aid provided by his order. While the exact amount of the combined humanitarian supply could not be determined over the years, it appears to be significant enough to trigger a mechanism that would compel the Cuban authorities to abandon their defiant attitude and adopt compromise and reconciliation.

The fourth area of intervention of the U.S. bishops is the release of statements asking for policy change addressed to both the U.S. and the Cuban authorities. For instance, in April 2003, Bishop John H. Richard, the chairman of the USCCB’ s Commission for International Justice and Peace, along with the Cuban bishops and Amnesty International, issued a statement asking the Cuban government to release the score of dissidents arrested during the March 2003 crackdown discussed above. Perhaps, the area that received the most attention from the U.S.

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99 Anonymous CRS official interview.

100 Oscar de Rojas, former Ambassador of the Order of Malta to the United Nations (telephone-interviewed on July 17, 2019).

101 The Officials from both CRS and the Order of Malta declined to give details about the exact amount of aid for ethical reason, although they recognize that it is quite significant.

bishops is the economic embargo in which the prelates requested suppression on grounds of human rights and the dignity of the person. For instance, in July 2000, while the Bishops welcomed the move made by the Congress to end part of the embargo against Cuba, they exhorted the U.S government to do more to “relieve the unjust shortages of food and medicines for the average Cuban, especially the poorest.” One of the most noticeable statements is the one addressed to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton one month after Pope Benedict XVI’s visit on March 26-28, 2012. In it the U.S. bishops encouraged the engagement between the U.S and Cuba and urged the authorities to lift the embargo which cannot but hurt the most vulnerable.

The letter ends with these solemn notes: “We hope and pray for prompt and appropriate measures to establish full diplomatic relations and to withdraw all restrictions on travel to Cuba as well as offer greater people-to-people assistance to the Cuban people.” As affirmed by one former top advisor to the US. Bishops, “all in all, the U.S. Catholic bishops, both as a group or acting individually, have issued over 50 statements during the past two decades over the Cuba case which include letters to Congress members and Senators either praising or regretting positions taken.” The high frequency of declarations, which indicates the importance given by

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105 Anonymous USCCB official #2 interview.
the bishops to the Caribbean island, reinforces the basic thrust towards U.S. policy on Cuba, namely that engagement is preferable to a comprehensive sanctions-based approach.\textsuperscript{106}

The fifth form of the U.S. Bishops’ intervention is an important one since it indicates one aspect of the U.S. Catholic church’s leverage on politics: the patient and systematic lobbying in the Congress and Senate towards a change of the U.S. policy towards Cuba, in particular for the suppression of the embargo policy, partly or in whole.\textsuperscript{107} According to a former high-ranking U.S. diplomat, “a change in the embargo policy would aim at the rapprochement between the two countries symbolized by the restoration of the diplomatic relationship.”\textsuperscript{108} The lobbying mechanism operates through an Office of Government Liaison (OGL), a team of specialists who maintain contact with members of Congress on multiple issues, including Cuba policy. All statements by the bishops were thus vetted through the OGL, as well as the Legal Department and the General Secretariat.\textsuperscript{109} In this lobbying procedure, being a Catholic lawmaker may be a significant factor, especially when the number of Catholics in both Houses are quite significant.\textsuperscript{110} Based on that fact, the USCCB inevitably lobbied with a focus on certain Catholics, but just as often aimed at members who were key to certain committees. As affirmed

\textsuperscript{106} Anonymous USCCB official # 5 (interviewed on June 24, 2019 in Washington, DC).

\textsuperscript{107} In fact, the U.S. bishops already requested the lifting of the embargo as far back as 1972 (Anonymous USCCB #2 interview).

\textsuperscript{108} Anonymous US government official # 5 (interviewed in Washington, DC, on October 1, 2018).

\textsuperscript{109} Anonymous USCCB official # 4 (interviewed in Washington, DC, on October 3, 2018).

\textsuperscript{110} According to Pew Research Center, the religious composition of the 114th Congress of the U.S. (January 3, 2015 – January 3, 2017) lists 138 Catholic House members (31.7\%) and 26 Catholic Senators (26\%), a number significantly higher than the percentage of Catholics in the U.S. population which is 21\% as of 2014. See. https://www.pewforum.org/2015/01/05/faith-on-the-hill/
by USCCB lobbyists, “institutional leverage may have a bearing, especially in districts which have many Catholic institutions operating such as soup-kitchen, hospitals, auspices, education centers, etc. While many groups use the lobbying system to press on some issues, what makes Catholic lobbying special is a mixture of several key ingredients such as (1) a sound public policy, (2) grassroot support, (3) moral suasion, and (4) coalition building.” On the Cuban case, according to a former USCCB high-ranking official, “Catholic Senators such as Pat Leahy and Dick Durbin made frequent interventions in tune with that of the USCCB’ s posture which favored reconciliation and dialogue in U.S. - Cuba relationship.” One example of lobbying by the U.S. bishops concerns the bill introduced in both the Senate and the House in 1997 - 1998 to allow the U.S. government to sell foods and medicines to Cuba. According to one USCCB official, “given the importance of that bill which has the potential of easing the suffering of the poor and paving the way for reconciliation, the U.S. Bishops put their full weight on the balance.” Another example is the bill introduced in the House and Senate with bipartisan support on travel to Cuba. For instance, during a press conference held on April 2, 2009, Republican and Democrats members of the House were joined by Cuban immigrants, including

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111 Anonymous USCCB officials #3 and # 4 interviews.

112 Anonymous USCCB official # 2 interview.


114 Anonymous USCCB official # 5 interview.
Miami Auxiliary Bishop Felipe J. Estevez, in calling for passage of the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act, H.R. 874 and S. 428, in its Senate version.115

Most often, Congress is particularly attentive to the bishops’ posture on foreign policy issues, especially those which concern Latin America. According to advisors to the US. Bishops, “the U.S. bishops have had a significant influence over the Cuba issue in the Congress precisely because of their ties with the Cuban bishops. The Church in Cuba, having gone through genuine persecution and having emerged as the principal Cuban organization not tied to their government and genuinely trusted by foreign actors, - including the U.S., lent a certain authority to positions taken by the U.S. bishops.”116 Apart from the contribution of lay Catholic lawmakers on Capitol Hill through the lobbying of the U.S. bishops, some prominent Catholic laypeople also played a significant role in the 2014 U.S. – Cuba deal as described below.

Besides the intervention of the USCCB as an institution, some individual U.S. bishops also made their mark on the US- Cuba rapprochement during the larger timeframe of the mediation. One example is the case of baseball games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team on March 28, 1999117 which, according to one former USCCB official, “was made possible thanks to the intensive lobbying to the Clinton administration by the late Cardinal William Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, along with the Orioles owner Peter Angelos.”118


116 Anonymous USCCB officials #2, # 3, and #4 interviews.


118 Anonymous USCCB official # 2 interview.
terms of firm posture taken by individual bishops on behalf of Cuba, both Cardinal Bernard Law, former Archbishop of Boston, and John O’Connor, former Archbishop of New York, stood out. A prelate known for his social activism, Cardinal Law made a breakthrough trip to Cuba in 1985 and, by that, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for John Paul II’s historical visit to Cuba in 1998.119 Among other interventions, he met with Fidel Castro on several occasions and arranged aid from the Archdiocese of Boston for the Cuban church. As for the late Cardinal John O’Connor, he was heading an influential and wealthy archdiocese which counted 850,000 Hispanic Roman Catholics among its 1.8 million worshippers and was particularly known to be an outspoken critique of the U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America.120 Like Cardinal Law, he made several trips to Cuba, monitored large funds for various social projects and met with Fidel Castro who promised to release hundreds of dissidents.121

Two U.S. prelates very close to the Obama administration were, one way or another, involved in the 2014 deal, namely Cardinal Sean O’Malley, the Boston Archbishop, and Cardinal McCarrick, the former Archbishop of Washington, DC. According to one high-ranking official during the Obama administration, “O’Malley, one of the closest advisers to Pope Francis, was approached by influent Catholic laypeople such as Senators Patrick Leahy and Dick Durbin, Congressman Jim McGovern and Denis McDonough, Obama’s chief of staff, to communicate to


the Pope about the Obama administration’s desire for a foreign policy change towards Cuba.”

Cardinal McCarrick, a prelate familiar to the White House – now defrocked by the Vatican in the wake of the recent sexual abuse in the U.S Catholic church – was a very influential prelate in both Washington and in Rome. Well versed in foreign policy, he accomplished several overseas missions at the behest of the Vatican and occasionally, of the Obama administration. For instance, in April 2014, he traveled to Central Africa to promote peace and reconciliation on behalf of the State Department. His involvement in the U.S. – Cuba deal pertained to the mission of conveying Pope’s Francis letter to President Obama (Kornbluh and LeoGrande 2015a; Ortega 2017: 121-123). In early August 2014, he traveled to Cuba carrying a note from Obama which requested Cardinal Ortega to entrust him with delivering the Pope’s letter to the White House. While Ortega did not comply with the request on ground that he should deliver the letter himself, according to Pope Francis’ own instructions, McCarrick then arranged a meeting of Ortega with Obama in the White House, which followed a convoluted route to avoid any leaks that would jeopardize the whole process.

122 Anonymous US government official # 1 interview; LeoGrande and Kornbluh (2015b: 442)


125 Because of the sensitive character of the process, the Pope deemed to send the two letters via the Havana Nunciature from which they will be dispatched to both Obama and Raul Castro (Anonymous US government official # 1 interview).

126 To justify Ortega’s presence in DC, Cardinal Mc Carrick would arrange an event at Georgetown University in which the Cuban prelate was supposed to deliver a talk on August 11, 2014. He was then discreetly ushered to the White House (see Colonna-Cesari 2016: 130-131; Rhodes 2018: 286)
Recapitulation of the Local Vatican’s Intervention

The foregoing discussion shows an explicit involvement of the Local Vatican in the long process of the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement, and to some extent, to the final outcome manifested by the 2014 deal. During the three phases of the 30-year long process (1986 –1998; 1998 –2008; 2008 –2014), the Local Vatican’s intervention had been progressively on the increase in terms of units involved and activities performed. Regarding the units, nuncios, Bishops’ conferences (or individual bishops) and laypeople of various categories in both the U.S and Cuba were involved, directly or not, to varying degrees in the long process of mediation. What makes the involvement most interesting is the interaction of these diverse units across both countries, which contrasts with the Global Vatican. As discussed earlier, the interaction becomes more sophisticated over time. This reflects well the complex structure of the Catholic church with the interaction of units across borders. The three units were involved in 5 broad types of activities, namely (1) release of letters or statements, (2) close contacts and cooperation between Bishops from both countries, (3) work of reconciliation among communities, (4) meetings with official authorities, advocacy or lobbying activities towards governments and (5) humanitarian assistance and support. The data (available) shows that while a few types of activities remain invariable across time (i.e. the activities of Cuban laypeople in Caritas), most of them follow a progressive line from a minimal to a high degree which appears to follow closely the historical vagaries and the sociopolitical contexts. Thus, activities such as the meetings with authorities on both side of the Florida straits are increasingly frequent during the third phase of the mediation, which coincides with both Raul Castro and Obama’s coming to the helm of their respective countries.
Assessment of the Vatican’s Mediation of the U.S. – Cuba Confrontation

Analysis of the Global Vatican’s Influence

Table 10. Influence of the Global Vatican

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the Vatican’s expectations and actual outcome of the mediation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process:</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify the outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall;</td>
<td>1(+) = 1/5</td>
<td>1(+) = 1/5</td>
<td>5(+) = 5/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As shown by Table 10 above, the overall result of influence is: 1 (+). This phase is characterized mostly by the change in the Church-State relationship in Cuba, a process coinciding with the intensive diplomatic move by the Global Vatican which was intended to convince Cuban authorities to open up internationally and undertake change domestically. The multiple pioneering trips in Cuba of special envoys such as Cardinals Etchegaray and Gantin
from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s (discussed above) resulted in some achievements such as
the release of dozens of political prisoners upon request and the paving of the way for future
discussion through an enlargement of contact with Cuban decision makers. The prisoners’
release appears to be a staple in mediation as shown in successive negotiations with the Castro
regime in both the Global and Local Vatican.

**Phase II (January 1998 – February 2008):**

The overall result is similar to the previous phase: 1(+). On the second indicator of influence,
there are two facts resulting from Pope John Paul II’s visit to the island in late January 1998. The
first was the release of more than 300 prisoners three weeks after the visit, a sign indicating
Castro’s willingness to cooperate.¹²⁷ But perhaps more significant was the regional impact of the
Pope’s trip, as within months after the Pontiff’s historic visit, several Latin American countries
wanted to improve their relationship with the island.¹²⁸ To recall, the Pope made a strong appeal
towards ending the Caribbean island’s isolation by asking Cuba “to open to the outside world
and the outside world to Cuba.” In late April 1998, for instance, only two Latin American
countries backed, in the U.N. Human Rights Commission, the ritual U.S. – sponsored
condemnation of Cuba’s record. The Pope’s call seems to have given momentum to a posture
among Latin American countries beginning in mid-1990s, which favored an improvement of
their relationship with the Caribbean island. What may make this event noteworthy from the
global perspective of the U.S.- Cuba mediation is that it functions as a catalyst for a global

¹²⁷ “1998: Pope Calls for Reform in Cuba,” in *BBC. On This Day*, January 25 at

change of posture vis-a-vis Cuba. Most significantly, this indicates the Global Vatican’s influence in the larger context of a Catholic Latin America.

**Phase III (February 2008 – December 2014):**

Compared to the two previous phases, it is the most fruitful in terms of both process and outcome: the overall indicators of influence are 5 (+) as shown by Table 5.1. The first indicator of influence (also shared with the Local Vatican discussed below) shows a positive result. The overall outcome of the final deal as laid out in the agreement (discussed earlier) essentially coincides with the Vatican’s expectations. On the embargo issue, while a complete lifting was the ultimate goal, the GV adjusted its expectations to the reality when explained that such a decision depends on Congress.\(^{129}\) On the crucial prisoners’ deal, which was subject to long and difficult negotiations, a secret cable dated in December 2010 between the US embassy in the Vatican and Mgr. Angelo Accatino, a high official at the Vatican Secretariat of State, reveals how the latter was favorable to a swap between the five Cuban spies held in the U.S. and the U.S. prisoners in Cuba. The exchange between the two officials reveals that the Vatican’s suggestion was met initially with strong reluctance by the U.S side.\(^{130}\) The eventual acceptance of the idea on the U.S side could then be considered as a sign of the mediator’s influence. On that point in hindsight, the fulfillment of almost all the terms of the 2014 deal between the two countries, which was completed by October 2016, gives credentials to the mediator who was the guarantor of the agreement to which the parties adhered. Regarding the third indicator, Cardinal

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Ortega underscores the role of Pope Francis (while seemingly minimizing his own merit in the deal), especially regarding the issue of letters sent to both Obama and Raul Castro (Ortega 2017: 11-115).

On the fourth indicator, President Raul Castro’s declaration could be no clearer in his praise of Pope Francis’s mediation which resulted in the deal. During a visit in the Vatican one year after the historical agreement concluded between the two countries, the Cuban leader was so enthusiastic as to make a bold personal statement: “I read all the speeches of this Pope, his commentaries, and, if he continues this way, I will go back to praying and go back to the church. I’m not joking.” One of the two top officials leading the U.S. delegation during the rounds of negotiation acknowledges the important work of the mediators. As he affirmed, “despite insurmountable difficulties such as the prisoner swap issues, the mediating team, notably Cardinal Jaime Ortega, was able to bring in helpful input thanks to its knowledge of the case.”

On the fifth indicator, the essential points of agreement (discussed above) that were signed by the parties on October 2014 capture the Global Vatican’s traditional diplomatic posture on the U.S – Cuba issue. For instance, the softening of the embargo on Cuba as well as Cuban citizens’ access to the Internet reflecting basic human rights, are part of the Vatican’s rhetoric in recent years. In that regard, for instance, in his welcoming speech to the new Cuban ambassador, Pope Benedict


132 Anonymous US government official # 1 interview.
XVI urged Cuba towards greater religious freedom, while criticizing the U.S. embargo.\footnote{Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to HE Mr. Eduardo Delgado Bermudez, New Ambassador of Cuba to the Holy See, December 10, 2009. At http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2009/december/documents/hf_benedict-xvi_spe_20091210_ambassador-cuba.html}

Moreover, the restoration of diplomatic relations between countries enters into the Global Vatican’s rhetoric as manifestation of a peaceful coexistence of nations. For instance, in his speech to the ambassadors in the Vatican, Pope Francis underlines how dialogue can help build bridges between nations.\footnote{Audience of Pope Francis with the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See, March 22, 2013 at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130322_corpo-diplomatico.html}

**Analysis of the Local Vatican’s Influence**

Table 11. Influence of the Local Vatican

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<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process:</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify outcomes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall;</td>
<td>1(+) = 1/5</td>
<td>2(+) = 2/5</td>
<td>5(+) = 5/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5.2. above, the overall result in this phase is 1(+). This phase is characterized by some objective facts showing a nascent influence from the Bishops’ Conference of both Cuba and the U.S over their respective governments, which would grow over the years. One such fact is the beginning of a dialogue between Fidel Castro and the Cuban bishops, a process largely facilitated by the visit of U.S. bishops in January 1985, who requested, with success, that the Cuban bishops should be present whenever they meet with Fidel Castro. This is something which never happened before. As one observer affirms, “the red-carpet treatment given to the U.S. bishops by Fidel Castro as well the five hours he spent discussing with them were meant to signal a very different interest in Church-State relationship and international diplomatic affairs than has traditionally been the case” (Kirk 1989: 159).

A second tangible fact, still involving the U.S. bishops, was the release of hundreds of political prisoners following the visit of Cardinal John O’Connor, the Archbishop of New York, in Cuba in April 1988. What enhances this case was the significant number of prisoners released compared with past cases in which the Cuban president appeared to be “less generous.” One might read into Castro’s largesse as pure propaganda, which also gave him the opportunity to “throw out” what he thought as “undesirable people” (Perez 2003: 252-253). In any case, the decision could be perceived as a strong signal sent to the U.S. government that the Cuban authorities were open for cooperation.


Phase II (January 1998 – February 2008):

The overall indicators of influence show a result of 2 (+). Regarding the second indicator (objective facts), besides the release of “political prisoners” by the Cuban regime in the wake of major trips done by US Bishops, there is the leveraging effect of the humanitarian aid provided by Caritas-Cuba on the Cuban government. For instance, one CRS officer who has steered aid to the Cuban Church affirms that “while the aid money is primarily devoid of any hidden agenda, the possibility of political impact of such an operation could not be discarded.”137 The perception of the apolitical nature of the aid seems to have generated an attitude of trust on the part of Cuban authorities. In that regard, one observer affirms that the decision of the Cuban president in 1991 about changing the nature of the Cuban state from “an atheist” to a “secular” state was partly dictated by necessity on the Cuban side given the influence of those Catholic humanitarian organizations.138 On the third indicator, one high-ranking church official highlights the effect of the Cuban bishops’ statements on Cuban authorities. He affirms that private discussion among high ranking officials revealed how concerned the Cuban authorities were about the long-term effects of the Cuban bishops’ declarations.139 While at times the latter stirred an attitude of defiance, the Cuban leadership could not ignore their potential political impact.

The fourth indicator (assessment of non-Vatican officials) shows a mitigated result; it is partly a success because of the Clinton administration’s decision to ease travel and trade,

137 Anonymous CRS official interview.


139 Anonymous church official # 3 interview.
especially on specific items such as food and medicines.\textsuperscript{140} As discussed above, such decisions may be partly related to the actions of the U.S. bishops through various means such as lobbying on the House of Representatives and the Senate, statements on particular policies, intensive meetings with officials, etc. Cubans authorities, however, displayed their displeasure with the U.S. decision which they saw as anything but a further tightening of the U.S. – Cuban policy. While leading a mass protest in Havana, the Cuban government defiantly affirmed it would buy nothing from the U.S.\textsuperscript{141} These two diverging postures could be interpreted as an indirect assessment of the mediator’s work.

**Phase III (February 2008 – December 2014):**

The overall result of influence indicators in this phase is $+ (5)$. Like in the Global Vatican’s case, this third phase of the mediation related to the Local Vatican is the most fruitful. The first indicator of influence displays a success in the sense that all the agreements achieved between the parties coincided with the Local Vatican’s expectations in this mediation. As discussed above, not only was Cardinal Ortega, the Havana Archbishop, an active player in the final negotiations in the Vatican, along with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, but he also took part in some of the negotiations in Canada. Standing out among objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation process during this phase is the release of political prisoners in 2010 through the


\textsuperscript{141} “CUBA: BILL ALTERING EMBARGO ON FOOD & MEDICINE SALES TO CUBA BECOMES LAW, BUT CUBA IS NOT BUYING.” The Free Library. 2000 Latin American Data Base/Latin American Institute 26 Oct. 2019 https://www.thefreelibrary.com/CUBA%3a+BILL+ALTERING+EMBARGO+ON+FOOD+%26+MEDICINE+SALES+TO+CUBA+BECOMES...-a067050046
mediation of the Cuban bishops, notably Cardinal Jaime Ortega. One former advisor to the USCCB affirms how “this event had contributed tremendously to the speedy progress of the U.S.- Cuba rapprochement.” On the USCCB side, worth mentioning is the partial relaxation of the U.S. embargo on Cuba which may be partly linked to the intensive lobbying actions of the U.S. bishops. For instance, in a letter dated January 15, 2011, the U.S. bishops welcome President Obama’s Executive Order permitting and broadening purposeful and people-to-people travel to Cuba and allowing all Americans to send financial support to the Cuban people.

On the third indicator of influence, Pope Francis himself underlines the central role of Cardinal Ortega in the U.S.- Cuba rapprochement during a press conference on the plane bringing him back from a Latin American trip in July 2015. Somewhat shrugging off his own contribution to the deal, he invoked the divine inspiration of the mediation’s successful outcome by affirming: “what could I do with these two who have been going on like this for more than 50 years? Then the Lord made me think of a Cardinal and he went there and spoke.” Archbishop Giorgio Lingua, the Apostolic Nuncio to Cuba, goes in the same line by spelling out how extensively the Cuban local church facilitated the U.S. – Cuba rapprochement as the only real independent actor in civil society in Cuba. Several accounts from non-Vatican officials affirm

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142 Anonymous USCCB official # 2 interview.


145 Committee on International Justice and Peace (USCCB): Pastoral Solidarity Visit to the Church in Cuba (June 18-24, 2017).
unequivocally that the U.S. – Cuba agreement and prisoner exchange would not have been possible without Cardinal Ortega’s decades long cultivation of trust with the Cuban ruling regime.146 Such a statement coheres with some accounts which underline how President Raul Castro sees the church as the only noncommunist entity he can trust to help him in his attempt to reform the Cuban system without challenging his rule.147 In the same line, one can mention president Obama’s visit to Cuba in March 2016. He wanted to meet personally with Cardinal Ortega to thank him for his pivotal role in the U.S. - Cuba rapprochement.148 As for the fifth indicator, the suppression, or at least, the lessening of the embargo, is a staple of the U.S. bishops’ rhetoric, a posture similar to that of the Global Vatican as mentioned above. For instance, in one statement released on July 12, 2000, the American bishops welcome the easing of the embargo through the relaxation of the policies on foods and medicines while criticizing the U.S. administration for failing to include the sanction reform provision in its version of the Agriculture Appropriations Bill.149

**Analysis of Other Factors in the Mediation**

Using the framework provided by the mediation literature as in the previous chapter, this paragraph discusses other factors that may have a bearing on the mediation’s outcome. Such

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factors include the nature of the dispute, the nature of the issues, the nature of the parties and the mediator, the relationships between the parties and the latter with the mediator, the context and environment in which the conflict takes place. Several elements are to be considered for an explanation of the 2014 outcome. This dissertation just provides an explanation based on the mediator’s characteristics and its strategies as well as its institutions which are hypothesized to have made the difference. The discussion underlines the relationship between the disputants and the parties which by virtue of being tied up with the religious factor underwent some variation over time. The other factors likely to affect the outcome to some degree pertain to the levels of individual, domestic politics and geopolitics. At the individual level, one plausible explanation was the change brought by personalities with peculiar inclinations. On that point, one U.S. diplomat affirms that “the simultaneous convergence on the political playing field of Obama, Pope Francis and Raul Castro at a particular point of time might have weighed on the balance.” Pope Francis, in particular, made it clear in his first address to the Vatican diplomatic corps just days after his election that “building bridges” would be one of its main goals during his pontificate. U.S. domestic politics also enters into the equation in a significant manner. One former U.S. diplomat observes that “for the Obama administration, for obvious political calculus, the best period to proceed with the deal would be the second term (2012 - 2016) which was devoid of the excruciating challenge of a presidential election.”

150 Anonymous US government official # 5 interview.


152 Anonymous US government official # 1 interview.
different perspective, some observers highlight the role of biology and technology in changing the overall political calculus. It is then argued that the aging of the Castro brothers and the emergence of succession politics in Cuba are considered to have contributed to a shift in the regime’s calculations. Along the same line, the graying of the Cuban exile population in the U.S. also might have created more favorable conditions for the deal between the U.S. and Cuba. In fact, this line of argument finds some statistical support: one 2009 polls indicates a strong Cuban American support for Obama among those younger than 65. Another line of argument pertains to the economy at regional level: it is argued that Venezuela’s economic collapse – due partly to the global drop in oil prices – and the institutional chaos taking place there in the wake of Chavez’s death, important factors in motivating the Cuban regime to look for alternatives to Caracas’s largesse. Added to these factors are new technologies such as fracking in the U.S, which have battered countries like Venezuela that are dependent on revenue from oil exports. In the same way that Cuba replaced the Soviet Union with Venezuela after the collapse of the former, Cuba is hoping to replace the Bolivarian Republic with remittances, tourism and investments from the U.S. its longtime nemesis. In fact, part of such an analysis coheres with what was suggested by the Apostolic Nuncio in Cuba to the Cuban authorities (discussed above)


154 “Poll Shows Strong Cuban American Support for Obama,” in Reuters, April 21, 2009 at https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-usa-cuba-poll/poll-shows-strong-cuban-american-support-for-obama-idUKTRE53K5CS20090421

on the necessity of the Cuban authorities to reconcile with their powerful northern neighbor for their own survival as the global geopolitics was shifting. In any case, there appears to always be the subtle omnipresence of the Catholic church in the background which scholars easily dismiss.

**Conclusion**

The mediation of the U.S. – Cuba conflict by the Vatican could be rightly described as “special” due to its duration and format: it includes long informal processes and a formal one, both occurring often under the radar screen. This can but reflect the peculiar nature of the long conflict which mix near-war hostilities with behind-the-scenes cold dialogue, mutual ignorance with some desire to reach out to the other. While the Vatican’s mediation might appear to be technically categorized as a “partially successful” because of some lingering issues still in abeyance (the complete lifting of the embargo), at least all the issues discussed between the parties under the Vatican’s watch found a mutually satisfactory outcome. Several key findings stand out in this chapter.

A first finding relates to the occurrence of the Vatican’s mediation in this complex case which has sparked some debates among observers on who initiated the process.\(^{156}\) The discussion shows that the mediation of the Global Vatican was requested by both parties and accepted. Such an acceptance by the Global Vatican was partly related to the long and patient work established by Local Vatican’s units in both the U.S. and Cuba. As pointed out by the mediation theory, the occurrence of a mediation itself may be an indicator of a fruitful outcome as it manifests both the

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disputants’ willingness to end an untenable stalemate and their trust in the mediator. Such a characteristic is even clearer from the perspective of supply/demand of mediation which illustrates the failure of a host of potential mediators (Canada, Mexico, etc.) to intervene in the two countries’ long confrontation. Manifestly, in this case, the Vatican appears to have the best chance of pulling things out.

A second major finding is the significant role taken by the Local Vatican – the nuncios, Bishops’ Conferences and laypeople in both the U.S. and Cuba through a direct or convoluted way. This gives a substantial support to Hypothesis 2. While the Global Vatican did specific activities at a higher level, mostly helping mediate the final negotiations that led to the 2014 deal, it was the Local Vatican that paved the ground through a 30-year process of rapprochement, mostly through behind-the-scenes work or distantly related activities. Such findings are in contrast with the Beagle Channel which confirms Hypothesis 1: in that case the Global Vatican took the lead and the Local Vatican only worked at the peripheral level and at a particular point of time. In fact, the process could be considered as a locus of complementary activity between the two institutions as one reinforces the action of the other. The Global Vatican lends moral and diplomatic support to the activities of the Local Vatican at the grassroots level. As one Vatican official describes it, “activities performed at a higher level were intended to give diplomatic backing to institutions at the lower level of decision making, according to the subsidiary principle, one important theme of the Catholic Social Teaching as applied in the diplomatic field.”

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157 Anonymous Vatican official # 5 interview.
A third significant finding is what could be described as “institutional access” enjoyed by the Vatican’s units which was helped by the sophisticated structure of the Catholic church. The multiple levels of official and non-official networking allowed the various units to “penetrate” the government of both the US. and Cuba by exerting innumerable subtle pressures. In a way, this might explain the failed attempt of other potential mediators because of a lack of the kind of sophisticated institutional penetration the Catholic church enjoys. In light of what has been discussed, one could affirm with some degree of assurance how the deal might have been a distant reality had the local churches in both U.S and Cuba not been on board preparing the groundwork. The fourth point closely connected to the two previous ones pertains to Moravschik’s argument on the role of domestic actors in shaping or orienting state preferences in global politics. In fact, the author’s New Liberalism theory finds a substantial confirmation through the way the various units in the Local Vatican in both Cuba and the US. intervened through various channels and procedures to alter long-held agenda or shape policies regarding both regional and international politics.

A fifth finding is the significance of the religious factor manifested by the church-state relationship which plays out differently in comparison with the Beagle Channel dispute. In Cuba, the status of the Church-state relationship appears to follow exactly the meander of the brokering of US- Cuba ties: the drastic change which took place from the mid-1980s in the Church-State relationship in Cuba had supported, if not triggered, the long process of normalization of the U.S. – Cuba relationship. In the U.S., that relationship is manifested in sophisticated ways and in different formats. For the Cuban case in particular, the increasing influence of the Catholic church, which, according to some accounts is the first and only alternative institution to the
Cuban revolution, makes it an unavoidable player in the U.S. – Cuba relationship. While President Trump’s current change of policy aiming at unraveling some elements the 2014 deal may raise some alarm in the Cuban church according to a confidential memo of the USCCB, the change brought about by the 2014 deal appears to be more difficult to reverse. As affirmed by the Cuban foreign minister, “there have been levels of communication and mutual knowledge between both people that are irreversible.” The next chapter about the Ecuador-Peru conflict in which the Vatican did not mediate as an official third party although carrying out behind-the-scenes activities of conflict management may give further confirmation or bring some nuance to the various arguments of this study.

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158 “God and profits: How the Catholic Church is Making A Comeback in Cuba,” at http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2095599,00.html

159 Committee on International Justice and Peace (USCCB): Pastoral Solidarity Visit to the Church in Cuba (June 18-24, 2017).

CHAPTER SIX

THE VATICAN’S INTERVENTION IN THE ECUADOR-PERU BORDER CONFLICT


On October 26, 1998, a Peace Treaty was signed between Peru and Ecuador which definitively ended the long border conflict that plagued the relationship between the two Latin American Catholic nations for decades since both countries achieved their independence in the 19th century. In fact, the Treaty sealed a thorny three- and-a half-year period of negotiations under the mediation of four “guarantor countries” (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the U.S) following the four-week militarized confrontation known as the “Cenepa War” (January 26 - February 17, 1995), which almost escalated into a permanent war. The Treaty was essentially an agreed upon deal which concerns a disputed 78 kilometers of common border (equal to 5 percent of the total borders between the two states) alongside with a tiny territory in the Amazon basin which Peru claimed as part of its territory according to a Protocol signed in 1942. Such a posture had been repeatedly and vehemently contested by Ecuador which maintained that the Protocol was inapplicable because the border did not correspond to the actual topography as later surveyed. By and large, the deal achieved between the parties was composed of the following points: (1) the Peruvian position was broadly confirmed, (2) in compensation, Peru grants Ecuador the ownership of a hotly contested location called Tiwintza, as private untransferable property, but does not grant its sovereignty, (3) the disputed area is to be cushioned with what amounts to a “demilitarized zone” whose administration would be coordinated between both
governments. To these fundamental points are added other treaties pertaining to trade and navigation.¹

The settlement seems to have been widely accepted as shown by its ratification by the two legislatures one year later. One striking fact during the signature ceremony was the massive presence of church dignitaries from both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican, along with the representatives of the four guarantor countries, which is somewhat intriguing given the fact that the Vatican was not involved in any way in the formal mediation.² In fact, one of the parties, namely Peru, denied any Vatican mediation during the three and a half-year negotiation. This unsurmountable political and juridical hurdle did not prevent the Vatican from engaging in behind-the-scenes diplomacy of conflict resolution to which Pope John Paul alluded in his telegram congratulating both Presidents of Peru and Ecuador for the achievement of the deal:

I am also thinking of the Catholic communities in both countries, who, under the guidance of their pastors, have been able with appropriate initiatives – e.g. the days of prayer for peace and other activities – to encourage an authentic pedagogy of peace.³

Methodologically, this chapter in which the Vatican did not intervene as an official mediator is set in contrast with the two other cases from a comparative perspective in order to strengthen or nuance the argument of this dissertation: how do the hypothesized variables account for the mediation outcome? Like in the two previous cases, it examines the characteristics of the


mediation in order to assess the Vatican’s intervention units which operate from the perspective of a non-official third party. This chapter is subdivided into four sections. The first section gives a summary of the conflict, its causes as well as the factors that contributed to its settlement. The second examines the various modes of intervention of both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican from the “Cenepa War” in January-February 1995 to the 1998 final settlement. It will be demonstrated how the two institutions had been engaged in some sort of “parallel” conflict management through their activities. The third section assesses the Vatican’s influence at both levels of analysis in terms of its intervention as a non-official mediator. The last section makes an analysis of the three cases from a comparative perspective.

**Historical Overview of the Ecuador-Peru Conflict and Its Mediation**

**Nature and Phases of the Conflict**

Figure 4. Map of the Contested Area on the Ecuador-Peru Border (Source Google)

While almost all borders have been disputed in Latin America at certain points in time, the Ecuador-Peru conflict might be considered the longest to have found a solution (Simmons 1999:
4). It was also one of the most violent border conflicts in Latin America, as from 1910 to 1998, it produced 33 military confrontations (Mares and Palmer 2012: 147). Like the Beagle Channel dispute (Chap. 2), the conflict can be traced back to the birth of both Republics as independent nations from Spanish colonial rules (Mares and Palmer 2012: 43-46). In most of the cases, the exact location of borders that were situated in remote areas did not matter much for the colonizers who mostly resided in cities. As expected, when the independence of the two nations came at various times in the 19th century, the ill-defined boundaries that were left unaddressed became the subject of an increasing contention depending on several factors which includes domestic politics and international economics. New resources such as rubber, medicinal plants and exotic woods had become important commodities in international markets, which made the need to establish any definitive demarcation of national boundaries all the more necessary (Palmer 1997: 117).

At various points in time throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries, the governments of both Ecuador and Peru attempted to solve their dispute through some forms of outside mediation or arbitration of third parties. The U.S. and Spain were the countries which clearly expressed their willingness to assist, probably for geopolitical and historical reasons. On at least five times prior to 1941, the U.S. failed to settle the dispute in response to the request of one or the other party: in 1827, 1910, 1924, 1934 and 1936-38 (Krieg 1986: 43-76). The successive fiascoes of the various forms of conflict resolution led to a four-month military confrontation on the border in July - October 1941 in which both sides accused the other of initiating the action (Krieg 1986: ________________

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4 Some scholars even trace the hostility between Ecuador and Peru as far back as the 16th Century with the division of the Inca Empire by Huayna Capac between his sons Huascar and Atahualpa, who fought a bitter civil war for sole dominion in 1530-32 (Krieg 1986: 1)
During the conflict known as the “Zarumilla campaign,” the poorly trained and ill-equipped Ecuadorian forces were no match with the Peruvians who were able to seize a large chunk of Ecuadorian territory. Peru went as far as to threaten to occupy the entire territory it had seized until Ecuador recognized Peruvian claims in the Amazon. Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States, thus, stepped in to offer their good offices which were accepted by Ecuador but not Peru. After months of tumultuous negotiation, the two sides signed in early 1942 what would be known as the “Rio Protocol,” the first mutually ratified treaty in more than a hundred years to attempt to establish a boundary, the four countries precited acting as the guarantors of the Agreement (Simmons 1999: 10-11). In broad strokes, the provision of Rio Protocol gives a delimitation to the border of the two countries which stands as a compromise on the claim of each party. For instance, the Protocol requires Peruvian troops to withdraw from the territory it seized on the Cenepa area. Both troops would remain in their new positions until the boundary was completed. The document also gives prerogatives to the four Guarantor countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the U.S.) to implement the details of the Protocol (Krieg 1986: 116-117).

The tension did not end there, as, by 1946, Ecuador contested the demarcation process based on what it considered as new geographical information which disclosed that the “Cenepa River” watershed was far more extensive than that implied by the Rio Protocol (See Map above). As a result, in 1961, the Ecuadorian government declared officially the Rio Protocol null and void (Marcella 1995). From that time onwards, the border was the site of varying degrees of tension which alternated with some forms of cooperation on the use of binational river basins and the passage of individuals and vehicles (Simmons 1991: 11). Raising hostility partly borne out of domestic politics resulted in a military confrontation in 1981 known as the “Paquisha Incident.”
in which Ecuadorian forces tried to take over three Peruvian military posts in the Cordillera del Condor area (Mares and Palmer 2012: 36-37). Border skirmishes had been sporadic from the Paquisha incident until early 1990. By one count, sporadic armed confrontations between the two forces were recurrent in thirteen of the past eighteen years since the Paquisha incident.\(^5\) Despite Peru’s proposals to complete the 78 - km demarcation of the border, no agreement had been possible as long as Ecuador rejected the Rio Protocol and Peru insisted that it was the only framework for a decent settlement. Things then improved in early 1990s with the coming to power of President Fujimori who displayed a clear eagerness to solve the issue as shown by his state visit in Ecuador in 1991. That same year, Ecuador proposed to submit the dispute to the mediation of Pope John Paul II, a proposal flatly rejected by President Fujimori\(^6\) (fully discussed below). Meanwhile, seeing an opening to overcome the quandary, Bolivia, Colombia and Venezuela offered their mediation within the framework of the Andean Pact. All these initiatives, however, met a firm refusal from the Peruvians who did not want to renegotiate the Rio Protocol (Simmons 1999: 11). All these diplomatic impasses and failed promises had led inexorably to what comes to be known as the “Cenepa War.”

**The 1995 Cenepa War and the Ensuing Negotiations**

The escalating border skirmishes between both countries in the disputed territory east of the Cordillera del Condor along the Cenepa River turned into an overt conflict by late January 1995. While each side was accusing the other of triggering the conflict, the precipitant factor responsible for the hostilities’ outbreak was Ecuador’s gradual redeployment of military units in

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the contested zone (Palmer 1997: 119). The once vulnerable and underequipped Ecuadorian forces of the past turned out to be strong enough to crush the ill-prepared and outgunned Peruvians who suffered casualties and, thus, were forced to withdraw from their held position in late January 1995. Over the course of the next three weeks of the military confrontation, 100 to 300 casualties were inflicted and both governments expended an estimated $500 million between them. Ecuador appeared to be firmly in control of the territory it regained while Peru suffered a significant disadvantage. Unable to win militarily or to force a military stalemate, Peru went on the diplomatic offensive to remove Ecuador’s forces through the Rio Protocol (Mares and Palmer 2012: 39). With the help of the guarantors of the Rio Protocol (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the U.S.), attempts were made to have a ceasefire accepted by both parties through the Itaramaty Peace Declaration on February 17, 1995. The Itaramaty Agreement provides the framework for the peacekeeping process – under the guidance of the MOMEIP (Military Observer Mission Ecuador-Peru – as well as the diplomatic negotiations under the aegis of the four guarantor countries towards reaching a final settlement. The problem the mediators tried to solve boiled down to two irreconcilable claims: on one hand, Peru insisted that the boundary be defined along the watershed of the Cordillera del Condor as set out by the Rio Protocol. On the other hand, Ecuador maintained that the only acceptable solution would include “free and sovereign access to the Amazon.” Moreover, these claims were based on two different logics: an idealistic Ecuador stressed colonial heritage and historical and legal rights while Peru nurtured more materialistic stakes, stressing the evidence of physical presence and the need to increase its

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7 “Counting the Costs of Going to War,” in Latin American Regional Reports, March 9, 1995.

penetration into Upper Amazonas (Nordquist 2001: 34). Slowly, the mediators came up with four separate issues to be dealt with in various phases and in different locations: (1) border integration and external financing, (2) Treaty on Commerce and Navigation, (3) confidence building measures and (4) the border demarcation (Palmer 2001; 37).

The negotiations were not an easy process as they were punctuated by ups and downs depending mostly on the state of domestic politics in both countries. Both presidents Fujimori and Duran-Ballen faced unsurmountable pressure. Each side was reluctant to make concessions, especially at the early stages of the negotiations, for fear that such a decision would be perceived as a form of weakness and, thus, would spell troubles domestically as both constituencies became increasingly nationalistic and intolerant. Only after troop mobilization in August 1998 produced another war crisis were the two sides ready to make the necessary concessions for resolution (Mares and Palmer 2012: 41).

Factors Explaining the Conflict and its Settlement

Multiple factors are put forward to explain this complex conflict as well as its final settlement. The territorial dispute and its escalation were partly attributed to the breakdown in diplomatic recourse between nations in dealing with the looming crisis (Dominguez 2003). The conflict shows the fragility of regional and continental alliances: neither the OAS (Organizations of American States) nor the neighboring nations under the Andean Pact succeeded to deliver a satisfactory mechanism that would avoid an emerging conflict or prevent the risk of escalation once it broke. Other arguments stressed how the resort to war was due to a clear choice made by rational actors who had differing sets of interest (Mares 2001: 160-189). The war showed that the conventional thinking stipulating that democracies cannot fight does not hold even when decisionmakers are not military dictators. For other theorists, the territorial dispute was due to
geopolitics (Child 1985), geography of identities politics (Radcliffe 1998) or simply nationalism (Simmons 1999). The Ecuador-Peru dispute has clear linkages to both regional and continental geopolitics. Ecuador, for instance, has a permanent objective which is access to the Amazon area: the territory at issue may be unpopulated but it lies near Ecuador’s oil-producing area (Child 1985: 92-98). In contrast to the geopolitical posture, another line of argument stipulates that Ecuador’s claim on the Amazon territory is tied with issues of sovereignty since the indigenous populations, the Shuar-Achuar, living in locations in the contested area of Tiwintza have a shared identity with large segments of the Ecuadorian population (Radcliffe 1998: 289). For other authors, the conflict’s explaining factor was simply the escalating nationalism on both sides which pushed decision makers to intractable postures (Simmons 1999). As shown through the above discussion on the conflict’s characteristics, these competing arguments all have something to bear on its causes.

Diverse factors were also put forward to explain the conflict’s resolution in October 1998: (1) the commitment of individual actors and decision makers, (2) the role of diplomacy, (3) the role of domestic public diplomacy, (4) the acceptance of the Rio Protocol as a framework for conflict resolution. The disposition of both presidents has been suggested as having a large bearing on the final outcome. The coming to power of President Jamil Mahuad in Ecuador in August 1998 appears to have accelerated the process because of his willingness to end the stalemate. Just days after his election, he invited President Fujimori for a personal talk over a lunch, which turned out to be a success (Palmer 2001: 40). Another factor was international diplomacy through the key work of the four guarantor countries. In this role, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the U.S. brought an international presence to the problem, thus adding stature to a conflict often seen as trivial outside the immediate region (Palmer 2001: 34-35). Standing out among the diplomats who
played a major role was Ambassador Luigi Einaudi, the Guarantor Representative of the U.S. who was entirely dedicated to his job, in contrast with the other representatives who were only there on a part time assignment (Palmer 2001; Kilroy 2009). He led shuttle diplomacy between Lima and Quito as well as Brasilia, Buenos Aires, Santiago and Washington, DC, in an effort to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive multiparty peace resolution to the conflict. The third factor is domestic diplomacy, which shaped public opinion in both countries, especially over the negotiation’s outcome. Much depended on how the governments were able to win popular support given the way nationalism ran high in both countries. Observers consider that there was considerable change of popular attitude towards the border dispute thanks to government policies and public campaigns as compared to what things were 20 years before the dispute. In Ecuador, for instance, the diplomatic process included regular consultation with key elites, including congress, the military, business and the media, at each step of their discussions with Peru. The result was the relative acceptance of the concessions despite the fact that Ecuador had much to lose in the process (Palmer 2001: 42). According to surveys, by 1995, 58 percent of the Peruvian population and 71 percent of the Ecuadorian public would accept the settling of their territorial dispute with mutual territorial concessions (Simmons 1999: 18). The fourth factor explaining the positive outcome was the somewhat faithfulness of the parties to work within the parameters established by the 1942 Rio Protocol, especially on the Ecuadorian side, which constantly rejected this binding framework. Only after President Duran Ballen of Ecuador renewed Ecuador’s acceptance of the Rio Protocol purview and asked the Guarantors to assist in ending the 1995 outbreak of hostilities could the instrument be used as the basis for finding a definitive solution (Palmer 2001: 33-34). To these factors could be added a subsidiary one related to economics which worked as an incentive for the parties. The news that the international financial
community was willing to provide up to three billion dollars to finance border integration projects such as construction of roads, airports, health centers, canals stimulated public interest in both countries for an overall settlement (Palmer 2001: 38).

One striking fact about these various explanations is the quasi absence of any analysis of the Catholic church’s role if any, directly or not, in the whole conflict despite the fact that these two countries are overwhelmingly Catholic. For instance, in one single sentence, Palmer (2001: 29) simply alludes to a vague intervention of the Pope, along with the Spanish Crown and President of the U.S., in the form of an arbitration in the 19th Century without further details. Moreover, there is no single discussion of what might have been the possible Vatican intervention during the Cenepa War and the ensuing negotiations (1995 – 1998). As discussed in the following paragraphs, facing an escalating conflict with a potential spillover effect on the region, both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican intervened in various ways with possible impact on the outcome, although operating outside any official mediation framework.

**The Vatican’s Intervention in the Conflict**

**Church-State Relationship in Ecuador and Peru**

A good understanding of the Vatican’s intervention through its two units requires a discussion of the Church-State relationship at both the global and local level. As one scholar affirms, much of the impact of religious institutions depends on their leaders, on the problems they see, the roles they assume, their characteristic styles of action and the constraints and imperatives they shape their action to fit (Levine 1981: 99). Ecuador and Peru are considered predominantly Catholic nations as Catholics constitute respectively 95% and 81% of the total population (Schraeder 2016: 300). An indicator of that “Catholicity” is the discontinuous good
diplomatic relations both countries enjoy with the Global Vatican which dates back to 1877.9 Added to this is the existence of special bonds in the form of an agreement (Concordat) with the Global Vatican on matters specific to the local church such as state financial assistance to Church-sponsored community organizations, the establishment of military vicariate which offer religious assistance to Catholic members of the armed forces, the right of the church to operate educational institutions (Beltran 2016: 174). By and large, the local Catholic church enjoys a higher confidence according to regular surveys. For instance, in Ecuador, the result of a survey in early 1999 revealed that three entities, namely the church, the military, and the CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) were, by order of importance, the only institutions Ecuadorians trusted the most (Lucero 2001: 64). Another common feature of these countries is that they were consolidating democracies at the time of the most dramatic phase of the border conflict (1995 - 1998), which contrasts to the cases of Argentina and Chile which were run by military dictatorships during the Beagle Channel dispute.

The Church-State relationship in Ecuador during that phase of the conflict was relatively peaceful, although not deprived of controversies. The powerful conservative- leaning Conference of bishops composed of 43 archbishops, bishops and vicars apostolic was quite influential over Ecuadorian society (Kleiber 2016: 226). One indicator is the Ecuador’s government decision to punish child rapists with castration following the Catholic church’s strong opposition to reinstating capital punishment in the country.10 The local bishops did not miss any opportunity to

9 Diplomatic Relations with the Holy See at https://holyseemission.org/contents/mission/diplomatic-relations-of-the-holy-see.php

challenge the government on issues they think harmful to the most vulnerable groups. For instance, in the face of the acute financial crisis in mid-1990s, the Bishops’ Conference warned that the country’s troubles would continue unless major reforms towards better social justice were implemented.\textsuperscript{11} The Catholic church, however, did not only point its finger to social illnesses but also offered concrete solutions. For instance, in early 1990s, it bought $28 million of the nation’s foreign debt to help Indian groups buy land they claim as their own. The debt would be converted into local currency and used to finance low-interest credits to allow the Indians to buy their own lands.\textsuperscript{12}

Peru exhibits a different picture. The period during which the Cenepa Conflict took place (1995–1998) was dominated by the tumultuous relationship between the Peruvian bishops and President Alberto Fujimori who came to power in June 1990. There seemed to be a “love-hate” relationship between the ruling regime and the Catholic prelates, which contrasted with the previous peaceful term of President Alan Garcia Perez (1985 – 1990). The “love affair” was shown by cases in which President Fujimori displayed closeness to the church’s views. For instance, the Catholic church’s offer of mediation between the rebels of the Maoist organization “Shining Path” and the Fujimori administration was accepted by the latter.\textsuperscript{13} Despite the apparently courteous relationship, the “hate affair” prevailed. In retrospective, the Catholic hierarchy’s unease with President Fujimori began during the time of his candidacy to the presidency in early 1990, in which he was purported to have traded the political support of the


\textsuperscript{12} “Ecuadorian Church to Buy Debt to Help Indians,” in \textit{Catholic News Service}, November 16, 1990

evangelical population in exchange for the removal of obligatory religious education in Peruvian schools. As a result, Cardinal Augusto Vargas Alzamora, the powerful Archbishop of Lima, squarely exhorted the electorate to vote for Mr. Mario Vargas Llosa, Fujimori’s opponent, who was agnostic. The conflict festered when the newly elected president clashed with the church’s hierarchy over the sensitive issue of birth control which Fujimori wanted to provide to millions of Peruvians as a way of fighting poverty. For Cardinal Alzamora, the president’s attitude was nothing less than a “declaration of war” on the church. This domestic issue was brought further to the global stage when Fujimori defended his birth control policy at the United Nations Women’s Conference in Beijing in September 1995, which resulted with the widening of the gulf between him and the Catholic hierarchy. That strained relationship with the ruling regime, however, paled with the Catholic church’s widespread popularity for its action in the Peruvian society. For instance, on November 3, 1990, the Peruvian Congress awarded Archbishop Ricardo Durand Florez of Callao, the founder of Caritas-Peru, the country’s highest honor, for his work towards alleviating the suffering of the poor by creating over 500 soup kitchens and founding several training centers that helped give job skills to more than 70,000 people. As discussed in the following lines, the chaotic relationship between the Peruvian leadership and the Catholic


17 “Fujimori Takes on Church Hierarchy,” in Latin American Regional Reports, October 12, 1995.

18 “Fujimori Clashes with Church Leaders,” in Latin American Weekly Report, September 1995

hierarchy was a significant factor which accounted for the Global Vatican’s unsuccessful attempt to intervene officially in the mediation of the Peru- Ecuador conflict.

**The Global Vatican’s Involvement in the Conflict Resolution**

While the Global Vatican respected the 1942 Rio Protocol which established the four guarantors as official mediators, it was highly concerned with the rapid escalation of hostilities and thus, offered its contribution to solve the conflict, particularly during the four-week military clash of January-February 1995. But realizing that such an initiative was unfruitful, as explained below, it then undertook various action to promote peace and reconciliation. In the words of one Vatican high dignitary, “the rationale for its quest for involvement was based on solid arguments: (1) the apprehension for the human cost of the war which appeared to spiral out of control, (2) the concern for two sister Catholic countries sharing a lot in common, (3) the fear of a contagion effect in other countries that have border issues and share common features, (4) the certain expertise acquired by the Global Vatican from its involvement in the Beagle Channel mediation.”

The Global Vatican undertook various action in its effort to stamp out the escalating conflict through various ways: (1) using diplomatic channels, (2) shuttling a special envoy, (3) channeling its message through the regional bishops or CELAM (Conference of Latin American Bishops) and the Synod of Bishops of Latin America convened in Rome in November-December 1997, (4) meetings with government officials at the Vatican. As far back as 1991, ahead of the Cenepa conflict, the Vatican already formulated its intention of mediating the rising tension about the 78-kilometer border’s contention between the two countries. While Ecuador

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20 Anonymous Vatican official # 9 (interviewed in Rome on April 24, 2018).
accepted the offer, Peru flatly refused it, saying it wanted to limit the intervention of the Vatican to “an expertise on the border.”

During the militarized conflict of January-February 1995, Pope John Paul II sent a telegram expressing his deep concern and urging for an immediate halt to all acts of hostility. The Pope’s concern was amplified by Archbishop Renato Martino Rafaele, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations in New York through a statement addressed to the General Secretary, who asked the belligerent nations for an immediate ceasefire and a commencement of peace talks.

A few days after the negotiated ceasefire of February 17, 1995, the Global Vatican decided to undertake a further step by sending a special envoy to both Quito and Lima to discuss with authorities. In typical Cardinal Samore-style which recalls the mediation of the Beagle Channel conflict (Chapter 4), the Vatican’s special envoy Cardinal Carlo Furno was sent for a diplomatic shuttle to both Quito and Lima to talk with the authorities on the cessation of hostilities and, by the same token, offering the belligerent nations the Vatican’s support for the peace negotiation. The statement of the Nuncio in Peru gave more details about the mission of the Global Vatican’s envoy: (1) to express the Pope’s strong preoccupation about the hostilities between two-sister nations, (2) to invite the parties to respect the ceasefire according to the Peace Declaration of Itamarty signed on February 17, 1995, (3) to support the action of the four guarantor countries


23 Anonymous Vatican official # 4 interview.

according to the Rio Protocol, (4) to stimulate a serious discussion towards a definitive solution to the border issue and (5) to offer the availability of the Catholic church in any help towards the peace process.\textsuperscript{25}

Another approach taken by the Global Vatican was the exhortation to peace through joint statements with Local Vatican units. In the concluding message at the end of the Synod of Bishops convened in Rome in late December 1997, Pope John Paul II along with the Bishops of Latin America urged the two Latin American countries to achieve a consensus on the border dispute which required concessions from all sides.\textsuperscript{26} While it would be presumptuous to overstate the impact of the Vatican’s declaration on the official negotiation process, the renewal of the discussion between the parties in January 1998 which stalled since May 1997 may not be a pure coincidence. The two protagonists showed signs of renewed commitment to tackle the remaining difficulties towards a deal. One indicator of that willingness was the omission of Ecuador’s Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the reference of “sovereign access to the Amazon” in his official speech in January 1998 (Mares and Palmer 2012: 46). In fact, such a procedure of uniting forces with other units is typical to the Global Vatican’s procedure in order to increase the impact of its message as was the case of its failed attempt of preventing the Iraqi War in 2003 (discussed in Chapter 3).

A fourth form of the Global Vatican’s approach to the conflict is the meeting of high-ranking officials which served to convey the Global Vatican’s message to exhort the belligerent nations to find all solutions according to the previous existing agreements. In his audience to the new


\textsuperscript{26} “Messaggio dell’Assemblea Speciale per l’America del Sinodo dei Vescovo,” in \textit{L’Osservatore Romano}, December 12, 1997.
ambassador of Ecuador in February 1995, Pope John Paul II praised the cease-fire agreement reached on February 17 by the two countries and urged continued dialogue to resolve the conflict. The Pope by the same token offered the Holy See’s availability to help in the peace process if need be.\textsuperscript{27} A few years later, amid persisting conflict, Pope John Paul II reiterated to the new ambassadors of Peru and Ecuador to the Holy See that peace is achieved through mutual consensus for the sake of the greater good and that any diplomatic initiatives should be based on a pedagogy of peace.\textsuperscript{28} Another instance is the meeting of President Fujimori with Global Vatican officials in Rome, including Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Sodano, the Vatican’s Secretary of State in June 1997. The issues discussed ranged from national reconciliation to international collaboration to reconciliation between Peru and neighboring countries. The Vatican authorities reiterated their desire to help achieve a durable peace.\textsuperscript{29}

In fact, the obstacles to the Vatican’s intervention as an official mediator along with the other four guarantors are of a legal and political nature. In the legal domain, according to Archbishop Francesco Canalini, the Apostolic Nuncio in Peru, the Vatican could not intervene on its own initiative because Ecuador was the only one of the disputing states which clearly asked the Pope to arbitrate the conflict. Moreover, the Vatican recognized the border pact the two countries


\textsuperscript{28} Address of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to HE. Mr. Alfredo Luna Tobar, Ambassador of Ecuador to the Holy See, June 26, 1997 at http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1997/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19970626_ambassador-equador.html


agreed on the 1942 Rio Protocol and signed by the four countries guarantors of the agreement.30 Yet such a legal hurdle can be overcome in a critical situation. According to one high-ranking Vatican official, “legal difficulties of that sort could easily be dealt with on the request of the parties who, in the face of a drastic situation are deemed obliged to find a new procedure.”31 In the political domain, there was the persistent objection of Peru to the intervention of the Vatican which appears to reside in the tumultuous relationship of President Fujimori with the Catholic hierarchy. In a context characterized by an overwhelming influence of the church in Peruvian society, Fujimori’s negative reaction might be puzzling. In fact, such a conundrum finds its explanation in two crucial factors. The first relates to the fact that Peruvian Catholics were not necessarily in tune with their hierarchy regarding the birth control issue championed by President Fujimori. Surveys done in the 1990s, for instance, showed that more than 70% of those polled disagreed with the church’s strictures against contraceptives.32 The second reason was the solid backing of Fujimori by the military which overwhelmingly supported his birth control policy.33 Having both military and a large proportion of people backing him thus might be enough to comfort Fujimori in his defiant attitude. One Ecuadorian church official observes that “Fujimori’s refusal may be based to an unreasonable fear of a possible Vatican’s bias towards the Ecuadorian claim. Due to the long-soured conflict between the Peruvian president and the


31 Anonymous Vatican official # 5 interview.


33 Ibid.
Catholic church, he surmised the Vatican would be lenient to the Ecuadorean claim had it entered the mediation framework.”

The Local Vatican’s Involvement in the Conflict Resolution

The units of the Local Vatican in both countries were quite concerned about the Ecuador-Peru conflict for obvious reasons. As already discussed in Chapter 3, Mgr. Macchi, the Papal Apostolic delegate in Ecuador set a historical precedent through a controversial action: he was not officially mandated by the Pope to mediate the mounting violence between the two countries in 1894 following a divergent interpretation of a signed treaty in 1890. His successful intervention made possible the return of the parties to the negotiating table (Ticchi 2002: 144-147). By their dual status as the Global Vatican’s representatives and members of the local church, the nuncios led multiple actions, at times along with the local bishops, at other times intervening on behalf of the Pope during the 1995 - 1998 conflict. For instance, at the beginning of the militarized conflict in January-February 1995, Archbishop Fortunato Baldelli and Archbishop Francesco Canalini, respectively nuncios in Peru and Ecuador, echoed Pope John Paul II’s apprehension about the escalation of hostilities by urging both sides for an urgent negotiated settlement. The nuncios also contributed to the peace process. According to a Vatican official expert of Latin America, “during the lengthy three and a half-year peace negotiation, the nuncios stationed in both Peru and Ecuador amplified the bishops’ activities for

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34 Anonymous church official # 5 (skype-interviewed on July 22, 2019).

the quest for peace, or met with the respective government to reiterate the Vatican’s message for a negotiated agreement.”

The Episcopal Conferences in both Peru and Ecuador were quite involved regarding the conflict. Like the Global Vatican, the Bishops Conferences were not officially involved in the mediation process during the 1995 – 1998, although they worked indirectly quite intensively, at times openly, at other times under the radar screen towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The bishops’ intervention was intensive during the four-weeks of armed conflict in January-February 1995: statements and other religious activities aiming at the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of dialogue were high on their agenda. For instance, on February 5, 1995, when the war was at its height, mass and recitation of the rosary were held at the Ecuador-Peru border. One witness (interviewed for this study) described “the surrealistic scene of thousands of people from both sides of the border under the leadership of their bishops marching and reciting loudly their rosary next to the military with their weapons before proceeding to a big mass for peace.” Moreover, joint or separate statements were released by both Bishops’ Conferences asking public authorities to avert the escalation of hostilities which do not serve the common good. Manifestly, the aim of such a combined procedure was to increase pressure on both governments. For instance, the message released on January 30, 1995, doubled down on earlier papal statements by expressing the bishops’ desire for an honest dialogue. Taking an emotional plea, the bishops drew the decision makers’ attention to the necessity of investing

36 Anonymous Vatican official # 9 interview.


38 Anonymous church official # 6 (interviewed in Chicago on June 3, 2019).
resources in favor of those in need instead of wasting money on weapons aiming for mutual
destruction. The intervention of both Episcopal conferences received further muscle from the
transnational church when other bishops from the American continent added their voice to the
plea for peace. For instance, at the height of the militarized conflict in early February 1995, 25
bishops from the U.S., Canada and other Latin America countries issued a strong statement for
an immediate ceasefire during their 24th inter-American bishops’ meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

When the ceasefire was achieved on February 17, 1995, the bishops expressed their pleasure and
urged the citizens of both South American nations to work hard for a final peace settlement.

From the ceasefire agreement in February 17, 1995, until the signature of the deal in October
1998, the bishops’ interventions were more diffuse although taking various forms. They
undertook awareness - raising activities as well as exhortation for peace through various
activities such as peace rallies, campaigns of education for peace, prayer gatherings, youth
pilgrimages and work for reconciliation. Some forms of intervention which could be labeled
“diplomacy of prayers” recalls the Beagle Channel dispute discussed in Chapter 4. For instance,
the two Episcopal Conferences organized a binational “Day of Peace” in both countries which
aimed to kindle anew the desire of both countries for peace. They stated forcefully that a
recourse to war as a solution to the present conflict is “morally untenable.”

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clearly to encourage the negotiation process in the wake of the ceasefire achieved between the two countries. The two Episcopal conferences also used the larger forum of the Synod of Bishops of America held in Rome in November-December 1997 (discussed above) to make plea for peace and reconciliation.43

The critical situation pushed the bishops on both sides to take a particular posture on the issue. One Ecuadorian church official affirms “how in a setting deeply embedded in Catholic culture such as the Ecuadorian society, the bishops’ stance on the demarcation issue could be key because the country had much to lose would the deal turn out to be in its disadvantage regarding its claim on the Amazon basin.”44 In fact, against the prevalent idea in many circles in Ecuador, the Catholic church, along with the main media, adopted a challenging posture affirming that peace was more important than national dignity. In a statement made in July 1998, Bishop Alberto Luna, the Ecuadorian bishops’ spokesperson affirmed unambiguously that “peace is more important than national pride which is worth some concessions.”45 In fact, this posture was the one adopted by the two Episcopal Conferences which stated that a partial renunciation of the claims of each country is worth the peace.46 Such a stance, however, was not always appreciated as shown by the Ecuadorian military which questioned the representation of the church and the media in the society at large. It insinuated that “the general population, the deep Ecuador,


44 Anonymous church official # 5 interview.


46 Easter Message for Peru and Ecuador, April 12, 1998, by Cardinal Augusto Vargas Alzamora and Archbishop Jose Mario Ruiz Navas, respectively President of the Episcopal Conference of Peru and President of the Episcopal Conference of Ecuador.
preferred peace with dignity” (Espinosa 1999: 132). The way the Ecuador-Peru agreement was generally accepted without the “apocalyptic scenario” predicted by some pessimists showed how the church’s stance was vindicated. In Peru, amid the perception that the country might have lost face on the deal, some protestation and violent rioting took place in areas such as the Amazon city of Iquitos (Palmer 2001: 41-42). The bishops there undertook some work of awareness raising to abate the fear and prevent uncontrolled attitudes out of desperation. For instance, days before the final settlement which took place in Argentina in September 1998, Bishop Luis Bambaren, Secretary General of the Peruvian Bishops Conference, asked Peruvians to accept without hesitation the terms of the peace agreement. In the words of the bishop “even if some terms of the agreement have something that we do not like, let us say yes to it wholeheartedly because peace is the supreme good.”

**Assessment of the Vatican’s Intervention**

The foregoing discussion shows how the intensity of the intervention of both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican appeared to be similar in terms of units involved and actions performed during the two phases of their non-official conflict resolution: it could be characterized as “highly active” during the militarized conflict (January 26, 1995 – February 17, 1995) and “moderately active” during the negotiated peace settlement (February 17, 1995 – October 26, 1998). Both the Global Vatican and Local Vatican worked at times each in its own way, at other times jointly, and made numerous moves during the three-weeks intensive war of January-February 1995 as a way of stopping the hostilities or preventing its escalation. Their actions, then, were somewhat diffuse during the three and a half-year’s intensive peace

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negotiation. Assessing the role played by the Catholic church units during the Ecuador-Peru conflict, one high-ranking Vatican official affirms unambiguously that “the Vatican and the local church worked as though they were on an unofficial parallel mediation.”48 As described above, the Global Vatican put all its available units at the higher level (Pope, special envoys, Apostolic nuncios, the Permanent Observer to the U.N.) in the field through various activities intended to influence the events towards a peaceful resolution. Similarly, the action of the Local Vatican was equally significant at the grassroot level. The bishops in both countries worked in tandem with other Bishops Conferences to increase the impact of their messages. In parallel, there was also the network of Catholic lay organizations not always seen on the radar screen but quite active at the grassroots in their work of empowerment and consciousness awareness.

**Analysis of the Global Vatican’s Influence**

What could be the effects of such a “parallel intervention” in terms of objective facts and recognized facts acknowledged by Vatican actors and non-Vatican ones alike? The use of the same framework as in the two first cases to assess the influence of the Global Vatican in a context of “non-official mediation” yields the following result.49

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48 Anonymous Vatican official # 5 interview.

49 These results are based on available data composed of interviews and Church documents.
Table 12. Influence of the Global Vatican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the Vatican’s expectations and actual outcome of the mediation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process:</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role in the process and outcome</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role in the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify the outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Results</td>
<td>2 (+) = 2/5</td>
<td>2 (+) = 2/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One objective fact in which the intensive intervention of the GV (and the LV as well) was certainly key is the ceasefire achieved on February 17, 1998 during the Cenepa War. While it is difficult to quantify the Catholic church’s exact contribution to that ceasefire, it is fair to say that their repetitive and cumulative action had certainly some bearing on the result. As a matter of fact, the contribution of both the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican to the ceasefire was alluded to by the Bishops of both countries during a press conference held in Florida to announce plans to celebrate the February 1995 Peace Accord. They reconfirmed the willingness of the
Catholic church to do all it could to overcome the temptation to war and promote peace in the two Catholic countries.\textsuperscript{50}

Regarding the first indicator of influence during the three-and-a half- years of official peace negotiation, one could affirm that the Global Vatican’s general posture on the whole issue may have had an indirect impact on the process. The outcome reached by the parties, barring some details, basically conforms the 1942 Rio Protocol to which the Vatican had always adhered as a general policy. The Peruvian ambassador to the Holy See affirms that “the Vatican’s abiding by this basic framework may have indirectly given it further legitimacy.”\textsuperscript{51} Such a statement coheres with that of a Vatican high ranking official who maintains that “the combination of voices from the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican worked as an indirect pressure that might have influenced the way the decision makers came up with the final agreement.” According to him, “long rosary marches, pilgrimages and rallies for peace done in an overwhelming Catholic setting does not have the same impact as in a non-Catholic one.”\textsuperscript{52}


\textsuperscript{51} HE, Mrs. Elvira Velasquez, Peruvian Ambassador to the Holy See (interviewed in Rome on April 6, 2018).

\textsuperscript{52} Anonymous Vatican official # 9 interview.
Analysis of the Local Vatican’s Influence

Table 13. Influence of the Local Vatican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the Vatican’s expectations and actual outcome of the mediation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective facts justifying the quality of the mediation’s process:</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role in the process and outcome</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of non-Vatican officials on the Vatican’s role on the process and outcome</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of the Vatican’s rhetoric to justify outcomes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall.</td>
<td>2(+) = 2/5</td>
<td>2(+) = 2/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Local Vatican’s structure of influence displays a similar result as that of the Global Vatican although with some slight difference to the causes. In the same manner as with the Global Vatican, the first and second indicators of influence during Phase I (January 26 – February 17, 1995) are both positive. Actually, both institutions contributed equally to the ceasefire. Regarding Phase II, some Vatican and non-Vatican officials alike recognized the Local Vatican’s intervention as contributing to the peaceful acceptance of the deal. The Peruvian ambassador to the Vatican, for instance, highlighted “the educative role of the Catholic church towards peace as being a contributing factor to how the Peru-Ecuador agreement was received
and processed in Peru.” Important Catholic Social Teaching principles such as just war theory and peace were widely discussed in small groups and workshops in many parishes and diocesan circles throughout the country. Another testimony sheds light on the way the church’s posture about “peace over dignity” may have influenced the decision makers in the negotiation process. According to one Ecuadorian church official, “while it is difficult to determine the extent to which the religious conviction of the political actors shaped the way they led the negotiations, the common posture of the bishops in both countries in supporting the deal might have accounted to some degree for their final decision.” The unambiguous posture of the two Episcopates regarding the demarcation issue, despite strong opposition in some quarters, had a bearing on the outcome. In an interview, the former President of the Bishops’ Conference of Ecuador affirms how “he was quite confident that the church did its best to prevent a situation on the verge of catastrophe. While not directly involved in the official talks and without interfering in any way in the mediation process as it repeatedly made clear, the church’s ministry of reconciliation through various means may have indirectly fashioned the way these negotiations were led.”

According to the methods of this dissertation, the Ecuador-Peru conflict works as counterargument to the two previous ones from the perspective of the Vatican not being officially involved in a mediation. Despite the significant place taken by the church in the two Catholic countries, one would expect a somewhat “low” impact of the Vatican’s intervention in its two levels of analysis, which derive from a limited capacity of leveraging on the parties. The

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53 HE. Mrs. Elvira Velasquez interview.

54 Anonymous church official # 5 interview.

55 Anonymous church official # 5 interview.
similarity of result between the two institutions in terms of influence (2/5) points to an equal amount of involvement. The “behind-the-scenes-like” activities of conflict resolution to which the Vatican in its two levels of institutions were dedicated patiently exhibit a somewhat low influence during the two phases of conflict resolution. The comparison across the three cases (discussed below) would help highlight other characteristics of the mediation.

**Comparison Across Cases**

Table 14. Some Characteristics of the Vatican’s Intervention in the Three Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Argentina - Chile</th>
<th>U.S. - Cuba</th>
<th>Ecuador - Peru</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Cases**           | **GV:** The Pope, Special Envoys, secretary of state, Mediating Team, Permanent Observer in the United Nations  
                    | **LV:** Bishops’ Conferences, Nuncios, lay organizations                          | **GV:** The Pope, special envoys, Secretary of State, Mediating Team, Permanent Observer in the United Nations  
                    | **LV:** Bishops’ Conferences, Nuncios, lay organizations                          | **GV:** The Pope, Special Envoys, Secretary of State, the Permanent Observer in the United Nations  
                    |                                                                                | **LV:** Bishops’ Conferences, Nuncios, lay organizations                          | **LV:** Bishops’ Conferences, Bishops of CELAM and North America, Nuncios, lay organizations |
| **Actors**          | **GV:** mediation between parties, meeting with officials, statements, conflict resolution  
                    | **LV:** peace rallies, campaign of prayers, meetings with officials, statements | **GV:** mediation between parties, meetings with officials, humanitarian diplomacy, statements.  
                    | **LV:** meetings with officials, lobbying, humanitarian diplomacy, conflict resolution, statements. | **GV:** meetings with officials, statements.  
                    |                                                                                | **LV:** peace rallies, campaign of prayers, statements, meetings with officials, work of awareness raising. |                                                                                |
| **Forms of intervention** | **GV:** mediation between parties, meeting with officials, statements, conflict resolution  
                      | **LV:** peace rallies, campaign of prayers, meetings with officials, statements | **GV:** mediation between parties, meetings with officials, humanitarian diplomacy, statements.  
                      | **LV:** meetings with officials, lobbying, humanitarian diplomacy, conflict resolution, statements. | **GV:** meetings with officials, statements.  
                      |                                                                                | **LV:** peace rallies, campaign of prayers, statements, meetings with officials, work of awareness raising. |                                                                                |
| **Impacts of Intervention** | **GV:** high  
                      | **LV:** low | **GV:** high  
                      | **LV:** high | **GV:** low  
                      | **LV:** low |
| **Sources of Influence** | Spiritual, moral, institutional | Spiritual, moral, institutional | Spiritual, moral, institutional |
| **Church-State Relationship** | Argentina: strong  
                      | Chile: moderate | U.S: strong  
                      | Cuba: moderate | Ecuador: strong  
                      | Peru: weak |

This recapitulative section highlights five major points across the three cases regarding the way the Vatican handles the diplomacy of mediation as shown in Table 14 above. Some
patterned activities and behavior of the Vatican’s two levels of institutions highlight the significant role of institutions in the Vatican diplomatic architecture.

(1) The comparison across cases shows a certain uniformity of the type of actors involved: regarding the Global Vatican for instance, units such as the Pope, the Secretary of State, the Special Envoy and the Permanent Observer in the United Nations were constant fixtures. While Popes John Paul II and Francis intervened at a certain point of the process in these cases, they left the main task to special envoys such as Cardinal Antonio Samore and his team for the Beagle Channel mediation, Cardinal Ortega, and to some extent Cardinal Parolin, the Vatican Secretary of State, for the U.S.- Cuba mediation, Cardinal Carlo Furno for the Vatican’s non-official intervention in the Ecuador-Peru conflict. In all three cases, the active role of the Permanent Observer to the United Nations ensured the international amplification of the Vatican’s message in order to have the maximum impact. One Vatican former diplomat stresses “the penultimate importance given by the Vatican to international institutions such as the U.N.”56 As some scholars observe, “the diplomacy-as-sermonizing” that typifies the Vatican’s intervention in the UN’s pulpit is intended to provide moral clarity to the society of sovereign states regardless of the latter’s preferences (Chong and Troy 2011: 342). As discussed in Chapter 3, this patterned coordination of actors along the line of the Vatican’s structures occur in such important historical cases as the 2003 Second Iraqi War and the Lebanese Civil War.

(2) A similitude exists regarding the forms of intervention for each unit of analysis. Both the Global Vatican and Local Vatican, for instance, perform the same type of activities across the three cases such as meetings with officials and the release of official statements. In that regard,

56 Anonymous vatican official # 4 interview.
one high-ranking Vatican official observes that “when it comes to sensitive issues, an unwritten rule in the Vatican’s diplomacy is to have as many of variety and number of actors as possible to push the agenda so as to have a satisfactory outcome.” There are, however, some types of activity proper to each institution: official mediations performed by mediating teams were assigned to the Global Vatican as in the Beagle Channel and the US-Cuba confrontation. On the other hand, “grassroot activities” such as prayer marches, peace rallies and awareness raising, are the provinces of the Local Vatican as seen in the Beagle Channel dispute and the Ecuador-Peru conflict. About the latter, the use of this strategy by the Local Vatican in the two cases shows its significance in a Catholic setting such as Latin America. As one scholar observes, knowing its influence in Latin America, the Catholic church makes abundant use of symbols and symbolic gestures to condemn or approve political actions (Klaiber 1998: 8). Another peculiarity of the Local Vatican’s intervention is what could be described as “a transnational coalition of forces” from other units such as the Latin American bishops through CELAM, the Canadian bishops and the U.S. bishops (USCCB) to amplify the message of peace and reconciliation. Such a coalition of force was present in both the U.S.-Cuba case and the Ecuador-Peru conflict.

(3) These multiple interventions of the Vatican at both levels of analysis impacted to varying degrees the mediation as demonstrated in the two first cases and in an indirect way, the third case. As shown in Table. 6. 1, for each unit of analysis, there is a variation in the way both institutions influenced the mediation. In the two cases in which the Global Vatican mediated officially the negotiations, these units command a significant leverage on the parties. This contrasts with the third case, which for reason of being outside the mediation structure, the

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57 Anonymous Vatican official # 12 (interviewed in Rome on March 27, 2018).
Global Vatican has only an indirect impact on the negotiations. The low impact of the Local Vatican’s intervention regarding the first and third case comforts the sort of “supporting role” taken by this institution in the Vatican’s diplomatic structures with the notable exception of the Cuba – U.S. case. The discussion in Chapter 5 show how the activities of these units significantly affected the mediation process.

(4) The comparison across cases highlights the various sources of the Vatican’s influence, notably the spiritual, the moral and the institutional. While it is difficult to disaggregate these components in practice, the discussion has particularly enhanced the latter. Such an institutional influence is perceived through the various skills, procedures and approaches displayed by the mediators, the multiple channels of contact across units and access to state institutions. Worth mentioning, in particular, is the effect of what could be called “humanitarian diplomacy” which provided an unintended leverage on the part of the Local Vatican to the Cuban regime as examined in the US – Cuba confrontation. The discussion highlights how the humanitarian help provided in part by the U.S. bishops through Caritas-Cuba during the 1990s contributed to enhancing the role of the local Catholic church as a trustful interlocutor to the Cuban regime and, by the same token, indirectly pressuring President Fidel Castro towards adopting a more open foreign policy. The humanitarian activity which dates to Pope Paul VI during the Biafra War in the late 1960s (discussed in Chapter 3) appears to have some political consequences, although it was not designed purposively to be a political tool.

(5) Finally, regarding the Church-State relationship, the comparison across cases presents some variation with surprising facts. For instance, for the case of U.S. – Cuba confrontation, the US is not a Catholic country (Catholics represent only 25% of the whole population) and Cuba, although a Latin America nation is barely considered “Catholic” because of the vagaries of
history as discussed in Chapter 5. However, the somewhat “good” state of the Church-State relationship in these countries during some particular phases of their long confrontation may account for the successful outcome of the Vatican mediation. By contrast, the case of the Ecuador-Peru conflict represents a different picture: these are two countries with an overwhelming Catholic presence and yet the poor state of the Church-State relationship in Peru resulted in the Vatican’s absence as an official mediator. The Ecuador-Peru case and, to some extent, that of Argentina and Chile (President Pinochet had execrable relationships with the Catholic hierarchy) reveal that the Catholic character of a country does not warrant a smooth relationship between the Church and the State.

**Conclusion**

This chapter yields some noteworthy findings. First, although the case does not reflect much variation in the Vatican’s impact on the mediation, the comparison with the two other cases basically gives significant support to the institutional argument of this dissertation by highlighting some patterned procedures in the way the Vatican intervenes in mediations. The “minimal” impact of the Vatican’s units relative to the two first cases reflects the character of the Peru-Ecuador conflict as being a conflict management outside the purview of an official mediation framework. In terms of supply/demand of mediators, such a peculiar configuration which includes a plurality of mediators (official and non-official) has an obvious effect on how the Vatican at the two levels of analysis proceeded. Alongside this finding, the minimal involvement of the Local Vatican’s units signifies a low degree of involvement of domestic actors in shaping/changing state preferences in terms of Moravscik’s New Liberalism theory. The limited intervention of the church’s actors reduces their capacity to affect states policy in a significant manner.
Second, despite this legal obstacle, the Vatican’s two levels of institutions took significant initiatives towards the conflict resolution, a role not always duly recognized by the literature. From a broader perspective, the comparison across cases illuminates the Vatican’s modes of diplomatic intervention and reveals the complementary activities of these two units as they work, at times in tandem, at other times alone. While the Global Vatican works at the upper level influencing decision makers, the Local Vatican is active among the grassroots trying to operate within the parameters and principles mostly appropriate to them. Third, the impact of the Vatican’s intervention is often subtle and indirect, sometimes perceived through public opinion, at other times channeled through the activities of Catholic decision makers. Such a convoluted influence eludes scholars such as Mares and Palmer (2012) who downplay the church’s role in the resolution of the Ecuador-Peru conflict through public diplomacy.

Fourth, the non-intervention of the Vatican as an official mediator points to some issues in domestic politics and international relations. The Vatican’s offer of help comes from a genuine concern for a possible failure of the parties to reach an agreement and, therefore, might spark an endless cycle of violence with an unpredictable outcome for two Catholic nations. Moreover, the Peruvian leadership’s “denial of entry” to the Vatican in a Catholic country raises important issues such as the conflict of loyalty vis-à-vis a plurality of authorities within a state. From the perspective in international relations, the case sets the limits for a transnational religious organization such as the Vatican in dealing with a secular state.

Finally, in terms of the mediation theory discussed in this dissertation, the Peru-Ecuador conflict may represent a “low level” of trust and confidence in terms of relationship between mediators and disputants, a fact which does not bode well for the outcome. One may wonder as to what effect the contribution of the Vatican might have had on the process had it intervened in
the negotiations along with the four guarantors. One Ecuadorian church official observes that “such a hypothetic involvement would have given substantial pressure on the parties and therefore, might have reduced the negotiations’ duration.” But it might also bring about a “conflict within a conflict” given the animosity nurtured by President Fujimori towards the Catholic hierarchy.”58 The viewpoint of the Peruvian ambassador to the Holy See, however, seems to nuance such a view by stressing how “the inner mechanism of the negotiations itself would work in such a way as to allow the parties to eventually reach an acceptable consensus.”59 In any case, while it is difficult to overstate the role of the Vatican in this conflict given its reduced visibility, the behind-the-scenes multiple intervention of its two level of institutions had a bearing on its resolution and the peaceful acceptance of the final agreement.

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58 Anonymous church official # 5 interview.

59 HE. Mrs. Elvira Velasquez interview.
CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL CONCLUSION: THE DISSERTATION FINDINGS AND CONSEQUENCES

What has this dissertation accomplished? This chapter reviews and discusses the basic findings in this study as well as their consequences. According to the research question, the dissertation asks why a religious organization such as the Vatican as a third-party mediator was able to settle difficult and protracted disputes between intractable parties such as the Beagle Channel dispute and the long U.S.-Cuba confrontation. What kind of influence does it have as manifested by its leverage on the parties? What is so specific in the Vatican that set it apart in comparison with other entities in engaging in difficult mediation? Then subsidiary questions arise as to the format of the Vatican’s intervention in mediation as well as its underlying motives attached to its foreign policy. Aside from other explanations brought by the literature, this dissertation suggests an institutional argument based on several sources such as the New Liberalism theory along with the literature on the Vatican as an actor in world politics as well as elements of the mediation theory. It is hypothesized that the Vatican’s activities through its transnational units, namely the Global Vatican and the Local Vatican partly explain the mediation’s successful outcome and that the Catholic factor accounts significantly to that result. The subsequent sections recapitulate and discuss the main findings of this dissertation as well as their consequences in terms of their contribution to the scholarship under four headings: (1) The Institutions-based Influence of the Vatican, (2) The Vatican’s Style of Mediation: Strength and
Weakness, (3) The Vatican’s Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, (4) Implications for Further Research.

The Vatican’s Institutional Influence in Mediation

Figure 5. Influence of the Global Vatican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extensive network of C.I at the Global Level?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution Peru-Ecuador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Influence of the Local Vatican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extensive network of C.I at the Local Level?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<tr>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution Beagle Channel Conflict Peru-Ecuador Conflict</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Minimal impact on conflict resolution</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The first major area in which this dissertation has shed some light is the Vatican’s institutional influence from which emerge some findings. By and large, the dissertation’s institutional argument is supported by evidence. Regarding Hypothesis 1 which relates to the
Global Vatican, the Beagle Channel conflict, and to a certain extent the Cuba-US confrontation cohere with the hypothesis as shown by cell #2 in the matrix in Figure 5. The evidence shows that the Global Vatican with its various units have a high impact on the mediation through the extensive involvement of its various units in virtue of its status as official (or unofficial) mediator of two Catholic countries. On the other hand, the Global Vatican had a low impact on the mediation of the Peru-Ecuador conflict because of its obvious minimum involvement, despite the existence of an extensive number of Global Vatican’s units (cell #1 in the matrix in Fig. 5).

Regarding Hypothesis 2 which relates to the Local Vatican, the Cuba-US confrontation coheres with the hypothesis as shown by cell #2 in Figure 6. The evidence reflects the extensive involvement of all the units in both the U.S. and Cuba. In that case, the Global Vatican may have achieved the official deal in 2014, but facts show that it was actually the Local Vatican that made the agreement possible, in particular by paving the way all the way up to the final negotiation. In contrast with the Beagle Channel case in which the Local Vatican was at the margin of the mediation process, playing only peripheral role, the U.S. – Cuba mediation saw these two units at front and center. By comparison, as shown in cell #1, the impact of the Local Vatican is minimal in both the Beagle Channel dispute and the Peru-Ecuador conflict which saw a minimal involvement of these units.

The findings thus display some variation both within each case and across cases in terms of how the Vatican’s institutions at both levels of analysis intervened in the three mediations. Moreover, the findings highlight the religious factor (the Catholic identity) which constitutes the background of the mediation. Some variation is also perceptible across cases which depends on the status of the Church-State relationship. The case of the U.S. and Cuba is indicative in this regard: in the former, Catholics are numerically a minority although holding a substantial
influence in the society while the latter can be barely called a “Catholic nation” because of the vagaries of history. In this case, however, the religious element plays a significant role during a large part of the mediation processes. By contrast, the Ecuador-Peru case presents an anomaly: these are two overwhelming Catholic nations, but for reasons of domestic politics, Peru denied the Vatican any entry into a formal mediation despite a mounting pressure. In terms of international relations, the interest of this case lays in the limits of a transnational religious organizations such as the Vatican in encroaching on state interests. From a broader perspective, the discussion of worldwide cases involving the Vatican (in Chapter 3) highlights the importance of the religious factor as shaping the mediation outcome.

Concomitantly, as discussed in each case, the findings also vindicate to some degrees Moravschik’s New Liberalism theory which, by and large, pertains to the capacity of domestic units to shape/change state preferences in matter of global politics. As discussed in Chapter 2, the underlying logic of this theory is that state interests are not given once and for all as some sort of an atemporal element “out there” (as claimed by neo-realists) but shaped/modified by domestic actors. As such it is hypothesized to vary across time, space and policy areas. As shown in Figure 7. below, the findings show that state preferences in the U.S.-Cuba case were shaped significantly by the Vatican’s units at the local level through subtle pressures from various channels. By contrast, both the Beagle-Channel and the Ecuador-Peru conflicts display a different figure in which such activities were minimal.

Figure 7. Degree of Pressures of Domestic Actors (Local Vatican units) on States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beagle Channel Conflict</th>
<th>US. - Cuba Conflict</th>
<th>Ecuador-Peru Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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</table>
Finally, the finding contributes in some ways to shedding light on the source of influence of large religious groups with global outreach in international relations. Some theorists lament the unsatisfactory knowledge about the nature of influence exercised by large social groups and states (Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Baldwin, 2013). This dissertation has provided an answer along those lines by showing how the Vatican’s institutions themselves generate influence which has significant resonance in secular matter. Such moral and institutional credentials are often backed by the worldwide omnipresence of the Catholic church with its 1.2 billion members and countless networks of institutions. As one high-ranking Vatican diplomat observes, “the consequence of the Catholic church’s large and diffuse body of the faithful is such that the church warrants attention and sometimes careful treatment, even from those states that do not regard the Catholic church as a friend like China.”¹ In any case, this perceived influence means that the Holy See’s requests will be heard, even when they are not fully heeded. Added to those dimensions is the feature of the Vatican as a state. Although the tiniest one in the international system, it weighs on the balance. In the wake of the 1994 U.N. Conferences on Population and Development in which the Vatican took a tough stand on the abortion issue, some commentators questioned the state character of the Vatican, which allows it to have an amplified voice on the world stage (Abdullah 1996). In fact, such a status has never been revoked by the UN, which even extended the Vatican’s prerogatives as discussed in Chapter 2. The Beagle Channel dispute and, to some extent, the US – Cuba conflict, show how such perceived multidimensional influence allows the Vatican to subtly change states preferences. Of course, may fluctuate over time depending of several factors. In that regard, according to one church official, “the current

¹ Anonymous Vatican official # 3 interview.
sexual abuse scandal which has engulfed the U.S. Catholic church for some years is likely to have dented its influence on society at large although the extent of the damage is yet to be determined.”

In fact, the identification of the sources of influence sheds light on structured religious organizations such as the Vatican which the existing literature seem to have overlooked. At least since the late 19th Century onwards from which the Vatican has acquired its current status, the sources of the Vatican’s influence have become more sophisticated by its various components such as spiritual, moral, cultural, psychological and institutional. For instance, Pope John Paul II used the so-called “diplomacy of prayer” to advance the mediation agenda in the Beagle Channel dispute by inviting the parties to pray together when facing a crucial stalemate. As some scholars put it “the strength of papal diplomacy lies in its spiritual force, transfigured into temporal quasi-governmental power that virtually enlarges its impact.” (Chong and Troy 2011: 338). There was also the perception of the Vatican as a highly trusted mediator, which was pivotal in the negotiations, especially when parties barely trust each other like in the U.S- Cuba mediation. Most of the time, such a trust is acquired from a perceived impartiality and neutrality based on an intangible moral stance (Kreutz 1990: 7).

The Vatican’s Style of Mediation: Strength and Weakness

A second major area in which this dissertation may contribute to the literature is the Vatican’ style of mediation. The discussion yields some significant findings. This dissertation has focused on the mediator’s characteristics (credibility, strategy, identity, etc.) hypothesized as the principal factor explaining outcomes. By and large, the findings support the importance of the

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2 Anonymous church official # 7 (Interviewed in Washington, DC on June 23, 2019).
mediator in shaping or orienting outcomes. One important point in this regard is the occurrence of mediation which may portend the final outcome. The two successful cases show how the mediation was offered by the disputants and accepted by the Vatican, although it was far from assured that such an occurrence warrants a smooth process and fruitful outcome. As shown by the discussion of both cases, at some point of the processes occurred serious risks of failures if the mediators could not bring things back on track. Another substantive point is the ability of the Vatican’s units to utilize a variety of diplomatic formats and approaches that seem to make the difference in comparison with other mediators in similar cases. In both the Beagle Channel conflict and the US.- Cuba confrontation in which the Vatican was center-stage as the main mediator, it adopted the whole panoply of strategies available as suggested by the literature, from the “inoffensive” to the more “invasive” one: (1) communication-facilitation strategy, (2) procedural-formulative strategy, (3) directive-manipulative strategy (Beardsley 2006; Bercovitch and Gartner 2009; 27-28). The Vatican’s units acted consecutively from a position of facilitators-communicators, formulators of proposals to finally ending up directing the agenda to avoid stalemates. One clear evidence of that effort is that some of the crucial elements that were part of deals in the two successful cases are, in one way or another, subtly but “firmly” put forward by the mediators to overtake a potential deadlock. In the third case (Peru-Ecuador conflict), although not part of the official negotiation, the Vatican’s full support of the controversial agreed-upon deal mediated by the four countries (the US, Argentina, Brazil, Chile) resulted in its peaceful acceptation by a versatile public opinion.

Another important finding pertains to the Vatican’s leverage in mediation. This is partly generated by trust from the disputants which highlights the crucial role of relationship as spelled out by the mediation literature. The three case studies added to other cases discussed in chapter 3
shows that the relationship between the Vatican and the disputants is based on the religious factor (“Catholic identity”) which weighed significantly on the balance. While the relationship with disputants that accounts for successful outcomes is a characteristic shared with small countries engaging in mediation such as Sweden, Switzerland and Norway, what appears to make the difference is the Vatican’s capacity to make full use of its structures at both the global and local levels which other entities do not have. Manifestly, the other features of the Vatican as “state, “diplomat” and “religious organization” (Barbato 2013) also enter into the equation, thus providing it a significant leverage other transnational unit such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) do not have. Regarding that last point, one author observes how the status of the Vatican as a state allows it to relate to sovereign states as their diplomatic and legal peer. This means that the Vatican has action channels available that are critical in international relations and are characteristic of states but not of NGOs (Ferrari 2007: 47).

The Vatican’s success in both the Beagle Channel conflict and the US - Cuba confrontation hardly conceals the fact that not all conflicts negotiated under its watch yielded positive results as shown by several unsuccessful cases in Chapter 3. The reasons for the Vatican’s failure are multiple, namely the lack of support to the Vatican’s initiative by the local church coupled with geopolitical factors (the Vietnam War, the Biafra Civil War), the extreme complexity of the conflict (the Lebanese Civil War), the characteristics of the conflict which appear to make any mediation difficult, if not impossible, as illustrated by the 2003 Iraqi War. From a comparative perspective across space, especially regarding Catholic Latin America in comparison with several African cases in which the Vatican meet mixed results, serious questions subsist as to the appropriate way to handle the mediation processes. In the many settings in which the Catholic church does not hold a significant influence, attention must be paid to other elements such as the
socio-cultural factors which favor the creation of a sustainable environment that favors mediation. On that respect, the mediation literature underlines the importance of culture in mediation by spelling out how it can either hinder or favor it. For instance, Bercovitch and Elgstrom (2011) argue from a quantitative analysis that cultural differences between parties in conflict reduce the likelihood of a successful mediation outcome. The Vatican may thus be invited to work along those lines by smoothing the differences between disputants from different cultural background and ethnicities. After all, this responds to its strategic objectives of dialogue promotion. Another line of thought towards a better outcome for a Vatican-led mediation is the coalition with other local forces such as the civil society to increase the likelihood of success in difficult cases (civil wars, post-electoral domestic disputes) in Africa or elsewhere. In fact, such a joint mediation with local third party goes along the line of one scholar’s argument about the effectivity of African mediators which is based on legitimacy (Duursma 2020). As a matter of fact, the Sant’ Egidio community, a lay branch attached to the Vatican’s Secretariat of State was doing such a model of joint mediation in some places (Kosovo, Burundi and Guatemala) although with mixed results (Della Rocca 2018).

A fourth finding pertains to the “strategic motivation” of the Vatican on which this dissertation has shed some light. As some authors argue, like disputants, mediators act rationally in a mediation along the line of a cost/benefit analysis (Touval and Zartman 1989). The logic behind the intervention of any actor is not totally altruistic and moral (the quest for peace) but mixed with some degree of self-interest. In state-led mediation, for instance, states carefully consider when and where they mediate and often consider the strategic benefits such as establishing a reputation as a peacemaker or enhancing states’ influence (Melin 2013: 80). By its atypical nature as a small state and global religious organization with transnational components,
the Vatican has also strategic motives which may not always coincide with secular ones. The discussion highlighted the Vatican’s traditional preoccupation about Cuba and its Catholic population which has led to a cautious but engaging posture. According to one higher Vatican dignitary, “because of the sensitivity of the Cuban case, the Holy See is always wary of stepping on the toes of national Bishops’ Conferences in matters concerning Cuba. For the sake of the universal church’s interest, it rarely engaged directly, thus leaving the local church to be more active on the ground.” As examined in Chapter 5, one side-objective behind the Vatican’s favoring the U.S. – Cuba reconciliation was to thwart in some ways the rise in prominence of Chavez in Venezuela, who was considered a “second Fidel Castro” harmful to the Church’s interest. Moreover, the Vatican’s resolute quest to intervene in the Ecuador-Peru conflict, among other considerations, was primarily determined by the Catholic church’s interest.

The Vatican’s Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

A third major domain on which this dissertation has shed some light and therefore, may enrich the literature pertains to the Vatican’s foreign policy which includes the area of diplomacy. As alluded to in the early chapters, there exists only a few pieces of literature on the Vatican as an actor in global politics, let alone in specific domains such as diplomacy. Here, the term diplomacy refers to that complex set of tools and processes through which foreign policy is conducted and implemented (Jonsson 2002). A few remarks could be made regarding some features of the Vatican’s diplomacy as an enactment of what might be considered as its “foreign policy” on which this dissertation has brought further clarifications. First, like most of its peers in secular states, at least in democratic nations, the Vatican’s diplomacy is formulated and

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carried out by a plurality of actors. The findings confirm further what was discussed in Chapter 2. It is true that there still persists a long-held traditional view of the Catholic church as an institution run according to a rigid top-down structure. As a result, the Vatican’s foreign policy apparatus is perceived (wrongly) as centralized in Rome and conducted by the Pope. Such a view still holds among some scholars and in the media as shown by some newspapers outlets which seem to conflate the Vatican and the Catholic church with the Pope in their report of the mediation about the U.S- Cuba confrontation. ⁴ Facts on the ground display a different picture. In the several cases examined in this study, various actors from the two levels of analysis perform distinctive or complementary works to achieve a common goal (for instance conflict resolution). For instance, as the US- Cuba case illustrates, the Global Vatican gives a behind-the-scenes diplomatic support to the action of the Cuban church in its dealing with the regime. By and large, this sort of “democratization of foreign policy” in the Vatican reflects the drastic transformation with the Catholic church since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) which favored the emergence of new actors who operate through complex channels. One diplomatic structure that escapes the radar screen which this study has uncovered is the formation of informal diplomatic linkages between actors in dealing with complex issues. For example, the U.S. – Cuba confrontation (Chapter 5) displays at least three such linkages between states and non-states actors: USCCB – U.S. government, USCCB – Cuban government, USCCB – Cuban bishops.

Second, this dissertation has also identified the multiple ways through which the Vatican in its two levels of analysis formulates and implements its foreign policy, which escapes any rigid categorization. The Vatican’s diplomacy is a multi-formed one composed of both formal and informal procedures which reflect its manifold nature. These include prayers, “confessional diplomacy” (such as in the Beagle Channel), humanitarian diplomacy, repetitive formal or informal meetings with state authorities, peace rallies, appeals to the heart, etc. Some scholars describe the Vatican’s intervention in international forums (United Nations, etc.) as “diplomacy-as-sermonizing” because of its form and its underlying objective which tend to influence and shape public opinion (Chong and Troy 2011). According to one Vatican diplomat, “the Vatican’s diplomacy is peculiar in that it tries to harmonize the cold logic of the bureaucratic machinery as a modern institution with its spiritual nature. But primarily, it tries to reach out to the mind, heart and spirit of people.”\(^5\) These characteristics may set the Vatican’s diplomacy apart from its secular counterpart. In fact, these diverse ways of conducting diplomacy encompass what theorists describe as “Track One” and “Track Two diplomacy” in the field of conflict resolution (Davidson and Montville 1982; Mc Donald 1991; Johnston and Cox 2003). By and large, “Track One diplomacy” is a formal even rigid government – to – government interaction between representatives of sovereign states. “Track Two diplomacy,” on the other hand, is a form of conflict resolution that is non-governmental, informal and unofficial. It is an interaction between private citizens or groups of people within a country or between different people or groups from different countries who are outside the formal governmental power structure. For instance, the active interaction of the U.S. bishops and the Cuban bishops in their attempt to mend the

relationship between their respective countries is one example of Track 2 diplomacy. So is the intervention of the community of Sant’ Egidio, an independent group of Catholic laypeople which led successful intrastate mediation between rival groups in Africa and other places (discussed in Chapter 3). One high-ranking Vatican diplomat underlines the importance of both flexibility and adaptability in the Vatican’s dealing with states regarding sensitive matters such as Church-State relationships. He affirms how “years of experience on the ground have brought enough sophistication to the Vatican diplomatic apparatus so as to render it flexible enough to adjust to challenging situations.” The quasi non reference by the literature of the Vatican’s contribution to the Ecuador-Peru conflict shows that, very often, religious actors tend to be easily dismissed, or at best misunderstood by both academia and state practitioners. Symptomatic in that regard, for instance, was the arrogant attitude of Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. Secretary of State towards the Vatican during the Second Iraqi War. Displaying a typical realist-leaning posture, she made it clear to Cardinal Pio Laghi, Pope John Paul II’s special envoy, that the U.S. government had no interest whatsoever in the points of view of the Pope concerning the immorality of a military offensive. From a broader perspective, this dissertation has underlined the significance of religious actors on the global stage and the potential influence of their ideas and postures in the international system as already claimed by various scholars (Johnston and Sampson 1994; Philpott 2001; Johnston and Cox 2003; Appleby 2008). In fact, the success of faith-based diplomacy in many cases all around the world exposes the limitations of states’

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6 Anonymous Vatican official # 3 interview.

realpolitik and brings a nuance on the so-called superiority of the rational-actor model of decision-making (Johnston and B. Cox 2003: xi).

Third, perhaps at a more fundamental level, this dissertation has brought some light to what could be called the “Vatican’s interests” in international relations from which derives its foreign policy (partly discussed above). As one scholar describes it, the Vatican’s interest is mainly religious in nature but has political impacts (Barberini 2003). Undoubtedly, such a “religious interest” differs significantly from that of secular states which are more in tune with a realist-bent materialistic interest such as power and state prestige. Other theorists admit that the Vatican’s interest is primarily grounded on moral and religious ideology (Kreutz 1990:7). The moral dimension based on Catholic Social Teaching is reflected in the Vatican’s posture in international relations such as the promotion of peace between nations, denial of any recourse to armed conflicts and wars, the quest for durable peace that is based on the respect of human rights, the promotion of trust, dialogue and solidarity in international relations. The religious ideology, on the other hand, pertains to the survival and integrity of the Catholic church worldwide. The cases discussed in this dissertation clearly reflects, in one way or another, these two bedrocks of the Vatican’s interests in global politics. On that respect, according to one church official, “the current Vatican policy of engagement with the Chinese government regarding the case of Chinese Catholics has to be put into the larger frame of the Vatican’s concern for the well-being of Catholics worldwide.”

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8 Fr. Salvini GianPaolo, SJ., former director of the Jesuit magazine *Civitla Catholica* (Interviewed in Rome on April 3, 2018).
Implications for Future Research

Besides the above discussion, this dissertation has also touched some areas of knowledge related to history and methodology. Regarding the latter, the dissertation has identified hardly – known – types of diplomatic activities carried out by the Vatican and attempted to measure their impact on actors. Such a knowledge would help clarify how Catholic Social Teaching’s key concepts such as participation, social justice, dialogue and subsidiarity are acted out in diplomatic practice. From the historical perspective, this dissertation has underlined the emerging role of the Local Vatican as an active actor playing in the diplomatic domain in ways perhaps even ignored by the Global Vatican. It does not claim to have covered the whole issue of the Vatican’s intervention in conflict mediation as some areas need further exploration. The discussion in the preceding section indicates some ways as to how the Vatican could expand and improve its activities in reaching to other local actors in order to be efficient in conflict mediation.

For instance, one important domain that needs additional exploration in light of the major findings of this dissertation is the Vatican’s involvement in intrastate conflicts in its two levels of institutions. This topic which has just been sketched in Chapter 3 has not received much attention from scholars despite its importance in the area of IR and comparative politics. In fact, the emergence of new church actors in the political arena such as the Bishops’ Conferences, religious congregations and lay organizations in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965) coincided with the gradual shift in the nature of conflict which tended to concentrate on intrastate conflicts such as the proliferation of civil wars. For instance, according to some studies, from 1945 to 1999, there were 25 interstate wars, which is to be put in contrast with 127 internal civil wars in the same period (Fearon and Laitin 2003: 75). Chapter 3 has examined just
a few cases related to this type of conflict which involved units of both the Global Vatican and Local Vatican according to the available data. A more systematic research based on both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Vatican’s involvement over the years in this domain is certainly needed for practical and scholarly purposes. Regarding the Local Vatican’s units, further studies would be welcomed on the particular role of papal nuncios regarding issues of conflict management. This dissertation has just sketched some related cases. As admitted by one high-ranking Vatican official, “very little study has been done on the nuncios’ activities in the field despite their key position in the church and society in which they are assigned.”

Further study in that direction would shed light in many domains related to domestic politics and foreign policy. Obviously, such a study may depend to a larger extent on the cooperation of the Vatican itself which is quite challenging as illustrated by the quasi-impossibility of consulting post-1939 documents in the Vatican archives.

A second domain that needs further exploration is related to the peculiar structure of the Vatican with its numerous international networks of connection. As the cases have shown, the Vatican’s units at the two levels of analysis operate across countries to advance the church’s foreign policy goals, particularly by virtue of its access to state’s institutions. This international networking may lend itself to comparison with institutions which share the same characteristics such as the U.N. and some religious organizations of global reach (Anglican and Protestant churches). Scholars such as Chong and Troy (2011), for instance, have made a comparison between the Vatican and the United Nations by focusing on the similarity and difference in their approach to global issues according to each institution’s mission. One example of research topics

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9 Cardinale Michael Czerny, SJ., Secretary of the Section for Refugees and Migrants in the Vatican Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development (interviewed in Rome on May 18, 2018).
would be the way both institutions deal with the issue of intrastate conflict resolution across cases along the line of their various networks.

A third domain that may beg for further research regards the Church-State relationship to which this dissertation has dedicated a lengthy discussion because of its significance in the Vatican’s mediation. Mirroring two different domains, namely the religious and secular one, the Church-State relationship has as a philosophical background the interaction of two contrasting realms with the common goal of claiming people’s loyalty (Casanova 1997). The analysis across cases suggests that the Vatican’s possibility of intervention as well as the quality of its mediation regarding the twofold elements (process and outcome) depended to some degree on the status of such a relationship. The religious factor discussed in this study applies to a Catholic country or semi-Catholic countries, mostly in Latin America. The principle of generality, however, may beg the analysis to be extended to the Vatican’s intervention in settings in which Catholicity, although not a dominant religion, may hold a significant influence within the society such as some places in Africa, the Middle East or Asia. In such study, the Church-Society relationship may be a more adequate category which responds better to current situation. In fact, the shift from a Church-State to Church-Society reflects the logic of the change brought about by the Second Vatican Council: it involves placing less emphasis on the church’s traditional role of legitimating civil power and more stress on the need to shape the societal conditions that determine how that power will be used (Hehir 1987: 111). Through a comparative analysis, such a study might investigate the causes of the Catholic church’s difficulties in mediating intrastate conflicts in settings such as Africa, problems which might be partly related to the quality of the church’s relationship with the society at large.
APPENDIX A

LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED DURING THE COURSE OF THIS RESEARCH,

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER
Anonymous Catholic Relief Service (CRS) official (Skype-interviewed on August 11, 2019).

Anonymous Church official # 1 (Skype-interviewed on October 22, 2018).

Anonymous Church official # 2 (interviewed on March 20, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Church official # 3 (interviewed on March 30, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Church official # 4 (interviewed on April 10, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Church official # 5 (Skype-interviewed on July 22, 2019)

Anonymous Church official # 6 (interviewed on June 3, 2019 in Chicago).

Anonymous Church official # 7 (interviewed on June 23, 2019 in Washington, DC)

Anonymous USCCB official # 1 (interviewed on June 20, 2019 in Washington, DC.).

Anonymous USCCB official # 2 (interviewed on June 19, 2019 in Washington, DC.).

Anonymous USCCB official # 3 (interviewed on October 13, 2018 in Washington, DC.).

Anonymous USCCB official # 4 (interviewed on October 3, 2018 in Washington, DC.).

Anonymous USCCB official # 5 (interviewed on June 24, 2019 in Washington, DC.).

Anonymous US Government official # 1 (Skype-interviewed on June 1, 2017).

Anonymous US Government official # 2 (interviewed on October 9, 2018 in Washington, DC.).


Anonymous US Government official # 5 (interviewed on October 1, 2018 in Washington, DC).

Anonymous Vatican official # 1 (interviewed on May 9, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Vatican official # 2 (interviewed on May 2, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Vatican official # 3 (interviewed in New York on October 16, 2018).

Anonymous Vatican official # 4 (interviewed on March 7, 2018 in Rome).

Anonymous Vatican official # 5 (interviewed on April 25, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 6 (interviewed on April 12, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 7 (interviewed on May 25, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 8 (interviewed on April 14, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 9 (interviewed on April 24, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 10 (interviewed on April 3, 2018 in Rome).
Anonymous Vatican official # 11 (interviewed on July 12, 2019 in Washington, DC.).
Anonymous Vatican official # 12 (interviewed in Rome on March 27, 2018).

Bartoli Andrea, Dean of the School of Diplomacy and IR at Seton Hall University. An international conflict resolution expert, he has served as a permanent representative of the community of Sant’Egidio to the United Nations and the United States since 1992. He has been involved in many successful diplomatic activities (Skype-interviewed on September 25, 2018).

Christiansen Drew, S.J., Jesuit Priest, Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Global Human Development in the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, has served as director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of International Justice and Peace. He is an expert in the Social Teaching of the Church (interviewed on June 17, 2019 in Washington, DC.).

Czerny, Michael, S.J: Cardinal, Secretary of the Section for Refugees and Migrants in the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development (the new name of the erstwhile Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace) (interviewed on May 18, 2018 in Rome).

De Charentenay, Pierre, S.J, Jesuit priest, political scientist expert on Latin American politics; former writer at Civiltà Cattolica, the Jesuit magazine overseen by Vatican authorities (email interviewed on June 10, 2019).

De Rojas, Oscar, former Ambassador to the Order of Malta to the United Nations (Skype-interviewed on July 17, 2019).

Gualtieri, Paolo Rocco: Archbishop, Apostolic Nuncio in Madagascar (interviewed on July 15, 2018 in Antananarivo, Madagascar).


Hollenbach David, S.J., Jesuit Priest, Distinguished Research Professor in the Walsh School of Foreign Service and Senior Fellow of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs at Georgetown University. Expert in the Social Teaching of the Church (interviewed on June 18, 2019 in Washington, DC).
LaBella, Gianni: vice-president of Sant’Egidio, the Italian-based Catholic lay organization dedicated to worldwide conflict mediation (interviewed on March 19, 2018 in Rome).

Pfirter, Rogelio Francisco Emilio: Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina to the Holy See (interviewed on March 16, 2018 in Rome).

Reese, Thomas, SJ, Jesuit Priest, columnist at the National Catholic Reporter, former editor in Chief of America, expert of U.S. Bishops and the Vatican (interviewed on September 21, 2018 in Washington, DC).

Salvini, GianPaolo, SJ: a Jesuit priest, former director of the Jesuit magazine Civitá Cattolica (interviewed on April 3, 2018 in Rome)

Velasquez, Elvira: Peruvian Ambassador to the Holy See (interviewed on April 6, 2018 in Rome).
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VITA

Dr. Randriamanantena was born and raised in Madagascar. Being part of the Jesuit Order, he did graduate studies in Philosophy, Theology, Political Science and Communication Studies in several places such as Antananarivo (Madagascar), Nairobi (Kenya), Cambridge (MA-US), Chicago (IL-US) and Milwaukee (WI-US) from which he earned Bachelor and Master’s degrees. Before moving to Loyola University Chicago in 2014 to complete a PhD in political science, he was assigned by his religious superiors for a variety of apostolic works which include the editorship of the Jesuit-run weekly journal *La Croix de Madagascar*, teaching of social sciences and ethics of communication at the Jesuit-run Magis University in Madagascar. He also worked for some years as a chaplain of the MCCP (*Mouvement Catholique des Cadres et Professionels*), a Catholic movement of lay professionals. Upon receiving his PhD in International Relations in 2020, Dr. Randriamanantena went back to his native country to work at the Magis University as a teacher and staff member, while being the Coordinator of the Social Apostolate of the Malagasy Jesuit Province.