Mathilda Lindgren

Peacemaking Up Close
Explaining Mediator Styles of International Mediators
Abstract

Scholarly work on international mediation suggests that how third parties mediate influences the resolution of armed conflicts. However, our understanding of what explains mediator style is limited. This dissertation addresses this gap by offering the first systematic study on explanations for mediator styles at the level of the individual. It explores the research question: what explains mediator styles of individuals mediating for peacemaking organizations in armed conflicts? Mediator style is studied as themes in goals and behaviors along two dimensions: directiveness and orientation. Directiveness covers a mediator's use of leverage and varies from non-directive to directive, while orientation covers a mediator's prioritized type of outcome and varies from relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented. The dissertation develops a theoretical framework on the effects of conflict context and mediator characteristics on mediator style. It formulates a set of theoretical expectations concerning how context in the form of conflict intensity, and characteristics such as the mediator's background profile and personality, influence mediator style. The framework is evaluated and developed based on the findings of a mixed-method design combining a survey experiment and 46 semi-structured in-depth interviews with a broad variety of IGO and NGO mediators. The results on context suggest that high-intensity conflicts make mediators on average more directive than low-intensity conflicts as a result of heightened humanitarian concerns. Furthermore, on characteristics, high-profile mediators are shown to be overall more settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators as a result of their views on conflict causes and mediator accountabilities. These findings are complemented with evidence for contingent relationships between conflict intensity, mediator personality and directiveness as well as conflict intensity, mediator profile and orientation. The study thus contributes with a refined understanding of the mediator styles of international mediators that both facilitates its further scholarly exploration and provides input to the practice of peacemaking.

Keywords: mediator, mediation, mediator style, negotiation, armed conflict, peace, IGO, NGO, survey experiment, interviews

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ISSN 0566-8808
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-300488 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=nbn:se:uu:diva-300488)
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Acknowledgements

Some of you may think that I am the sole creator of this dissertation. While I am indeed exclusively responsible for its content, it would not, however, have been possible without the generous input of many others. The book in front of you is really therefore the product of hundreds of individuals, and just like a beam of white light, it consists of a rainbow of colors. While this section highlights some of these beautiful colors, my love and gratitude goes out to each and every one who has, in any way, helped me during the entire process.

There are two particularly wise souls who have accompanied me the entire journey, guiding me through new waters with a commitment that has been out-of-this-world: my main supervisor Desirée Nilsson and my supporting supervisor Anders Themnér. You have together been the DNA of my academic persona and the “sand bags” to my hot air balloon of dashing idealism. You have both expanded my horizons with so many lessons and sprinkled my life with so many laughs. Without your sharp and caring input, this dissertation might not have existed. Alternatively, it would have been a five hundred page brick of side-tracks, research questions, long sentences and excuses. Desirée and Anders, I love and admire you both so much! Thank you for all the energy that you have invested in me and this dissertation.

To my fellow colleagues and friends at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, you have all helped advance and improve this dissertation immensely. The thorough and recurrent input from my fellow “Wednesday group” members has been particularly important. Thank you so much Johan, Ralph, Emma, Sara, Lisa, Angela, David, Annekatrin, Susanne, Florian, Stina and Desirée. In addition, the comprehensive and thought-provoking feedback from the manuscript conference has also been decisive in the development of this dissertation. I am so very grateful for this, Ralph Sundberg, Kristine Höglund and Isak Svensson. I have also received invaluable guidance from three excellent discussants at the Research Paper Seminar: thank you Erik Melander, Karen Brounéus and Mimmi Söderberg Kovacs. My most amazing media-tion mentors Isak Svensson and Peter Wallensteen, thank you for nurturing me with your knowledge, creativity and support, both well before and during my time as a PhD candidate. My advanced quantitative methods guru Allan Dafoe, thank you for opening my eyes to a new world of design-based inference. My brightest fellow PhDs and survey stars Sophia and Nina, thank you both for your wisdom, generosity and humor. And dearest Nina (and family), thank you for sharing the entire journey with me, not to mention the final weeks by our computers writing and in the forests running and swimming! Furthermore, the incredible Thomas Ohlson, Mats Hammarström and
Andreas Jarblad, thank you for blindly believing in my scholarly abilities and encouraging me to apply to the PhD program. Also, many thanks to Kristine Eck for coordinating the inspiring Speaker Series; Hanne Fjelde for being my constructive feedback idol; Niklas Karlén for constant encouragement (and fellow sneezing); Angela Muvumba Sellström for endless backing and kindness; and Jannie Lilja for motivating me to make my PhD into an adventure. Thanks also to all my fellow teachers. I am particularly indebted to my seminar partners Colin, Sophia and Susanne, and my B-course successor Stefan. Amazing Sara, Emma, Therése and Anna, thank you for all the love and perspective! Sayra and Vini, thank you for your loving cheers! Finally, thank you Magnus Öberg for your supportive leadership. You made my mobile nomad dream life possible.

During my PhD I have had the honor and pleasure to both conduct and present my research in a number of different contexts. The visiting scholarship in 2014/15 at the Wilf Family Department of Politics at New York University would never have been possible had it not been for the generous support and guidance of Cyrus Samii and Bernd Beber. For this, I am forever grateful. Two additional bright minds made the New York experience particularly magical. Ada and Lisa, our hard-working days and our adventurous nights together meant the world to me. I am so very lucky to have you both in my life, flickor! The panel participants at the ISA, APSA and EPSA conferences have also contributed to sharpen and develop this dissertation, for which I am very grateful. Furthermore, the annual discussions within the Folke Bernadotte Foundation’s Conflict Prevention Working Group have been particularly helpful and inspiring. Thank you Christian Altpeter with colleagues for making this possible. The opportunity to conduct field work and attend conferences in the US, Ethiopia, Belgium, Austria and Sweden have been made possible through the generous financial support of scholarships from the Anna Maria Lundin Travel Grant (Smålands Nation), Lars Hiertas Minnesfond (The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), the Nordic Africa Institute Travel Scholarship, and the Forskraftstiftelsen Theodor Adelswärd's Minne. Thank you all for believing and investing in this research project.

This dissertation has relied on all those that have volunteered as survey respondents and interviewees across the world. I want you all to know that I am incredibly grateful and humbled by your generous and invaluable contributions. I am also overwhelmed by the kind assistance I have received from a great number of helping hands. Even though everyone cannot be named here, I would like to especially acknowledge UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and his colleagues, for believing in this study even in its early stages and supporting the first pilot survey in 2014; Julian Davies and Juan Ángel Juannot Arce at the UN’s Mediation Support Unit, for their untiring and excellent assistance with the recruitment of survey and interview participants; Kyoko Shiotani and her colleagues at the Office of the USG, for sharing the pilot survey with all DPA staff; Amy Scott Hill and her colleagues at the SLAC,
for invaluable guidance and help connecting me with senior UN staff; Marco Donati at DPKO/DFS Civil Affairs, for help and encouragement to engage UN Civil Affairs Officers in the study; and Chetan Kumar and Alex Shoebridge at UNDP for helping me invite some of the Peace and Development Advisors to the research. Likewise, thank you very much Mikaeli Langinvainio, Oskari Eronen and Mikko Patokallio at CMI, for devoting your time and energy into making this project possible; Yvette Ngandu-Kapinga, Guy Cyrille Tapoko and Simon Badza at the AU for guiding me to relevant interviewees while in Addis Ababa; Thomas Henning at the EU for helping me navigate the corridors in Brussels; Antje Herrberg at MediatEur, and Katia Papagianni and Elodie Convergne at HDC, for sharing my survey invitations within your networks; and last, but definitely not least, Erik Nilsson, Sofie Karlsson, Maja Jakobsson and Malin Andrén at FBA’s Conflict Prevention in Practice, for your constant practical and mental support throughout the years. Field work in Addis Ababa and Brussels was also made possible thanks to the excellent guidance of Helena Grusell, Angela Muvumba Sellström, Linnéa Gelot, Hannah Tsadik, Sebastian Cavegård, Govinda Clayton and many, many more. Furthermore, the incredibly pedagogical Dan-Martin Hellgren and Jonas Ortman at Action Dialog Partner, who have contributed with both survey software and expertise, and the efficient Chris Kleinman, who has helped proof-read this dissertation with careful precision: thank you!

Finally, I am deeply moved and thankful for the love, support and fun that all my friends and family have shared with me. Thank you all for bringing me so much joy! Joakim, thank you for your unwavering support during our partnership. I am still thrilled that we saw Despicable Me 2, with 3D glasses! Helen and Elin, my crazy sweeties, thank you for the many adventures and Kacksmos, not to mention your brilliant kids that bring so much light to my life. Mia, my sister, thank you for the road trips and the German vibes. You know I love Hjo! The Hugossons and the Costa-Uppsälls, I am so lucky to have such supportive friends and I cannot wait to get the chance to play more with you soon. A special shout out goes to my little spirit guides Salomon, Fabian and Stella—thank you for helping me stay young. Peter and Mathias, I would probably have died without the two of you. I love you both so much and am so privileged to know you and your amazing families! Peter, you are truly a treasure. Farmor Åsa, thank you for our energizing debates and comforting cuddles! You help me remember the important things in life. Oh, and Einstein, thank you. Finally, my best friends and closest family, mamma, pappa, Mandis and Nicko. You are everything to me, I admire you so much and have everything to thank you for. I am incredibly glad you wanted to be my family. Thanks to you, I am finally done “cherry-picking data”, ready to take on the world with a proud “b’oi huomenta”. Jag älskar er!

Mathilda Lindgren
1. Introduction

When the United Nations and the Arab League jointly appointed first Kofi Annan in February 2012 and later Lakhdar Brahimi in August 2012 as Special Envoys for Syria, assigned to help mediate the spreading civil war, both were handpicked as particularly suitable for the challenging task ahead (Gowan 2013; Hill 2015). It was as if the prominent peacemaking organizations expected Annan and Brahimi to mediate in a certain way based on their experiences and characteristics. Though both tailored their strategies and tactics to fit the unique expressions of the highly escalated conflict, certain recurrent themes can be discerned in their ways of mediating. Such themes in a mediator’s goals and behaviors are here understood as expressions of mediator style. In particular, Annan placed considerable energy on aligning all relevant incentives towards getting the conflict parties to negotiate an end to the violence, prioritizing a comprehensive orchestration of regional and international actors in the process. In doing this he also pushed the parties to commit to negotiate a ceasefire, both to stop the violence and to test the parties’ commitment to peace (Hill 2015). Brahimi continued the efforts of Annan, but refrained from setting deadlines, as well as publicly pushing and judging the parties. He also emphasized the role of the UN Security Council more exclusively than Annan (Troltzsch 2015). Seen through the lens of mediator styles, while both international mediators were overall directive and settlement-oriented, Annan was comparatively more directive than Brahimi, using his leverage to push and coercively incentivize the parties toward an end to violence. Furthermore, Annan was somewhat more settlement-oriented as he was exclusively focused on producing a ceasefire, whereas Brahimi also looked to improve relationships between the different layers of the conflict parties (Hinnenbusch et al. 2016).

We currently have limited knowledge about why we see different mediator styles among international mediators. This dissertation addresses this research gap by exploring the research question: What explains mediator styles of individuals mediating for peacemaking organizations in armed conflicts? In beginning to answer this question, the dissertation offers the first systematic study of some of the most prominent explanations for the mediator styles of individual, international mediators. It develops a theoretical framework for the effects of context and characteristics on mediator style along the dimensions of directiveness and orientation. This framework sheds further light on the often obscured how of mediation in armed conflicts, here understood as a process of assisting two or more organized, armed parties in addressing their behavior and resolving their grievances (see Beardsley 2011: 18; Beber 2012). The
study provides new and unique empirical data on international mediators of some of the most prominent IGO and NGO third-party actors. These include IGOs like the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as NGOs like Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) and MediatEur. The focus is on highly public mediators, such as Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi, as well as lesser-known mediators, such as their colleagues, Civil Affairs Officers of peacekeeping missions and others. In a mixed-method approach using both a survey experiment and 46 semi-structured in-depth interviews, the dissertation presents several findings of relevance to both direct and contingent effects of context and characteristics on mediator style. In doing this, the dissertation serves to highlight the centrality of the individual mediator in international mediation, realigning research with practice of international mediation.

1.1 Rationales and Contributions

Why should we want to know more about why international mediators differ in mediator styles? More specifically, what can we learn by understanding international mediators’ directiveness and orientation in varying armed conflict contexts? Three larger rationales motivate this study. First, research on international mediation has shown that what state and organizational mediators do and how they mediate has an influence on whether, and if so how, conflicts are resolved (Bercovitch 2011: 47). This resonates with findings of the three main theoretical traditions in the fields of international mediation, namely realist bargaining, social-psychological and sociological perspectives. For example, realist bargaining theorists, leveraging large-N observational studies, have shown that more coercive mediation produces faster agreements and violence abatement, though at times and according to some studies, at the cost of the quality and durability of peace (Beardsley et al. 2006; Greig and Diehl 2006; Sisk 2009; Böhmelt 2010a; Beardsley 2011; Gartner 2012; Svensson 2014; Ruhe 2015). Similarly, social-psychological contributions, using large-N observational and experimental studies as well as some case studies, point to how more facilitative and non-coercive mediation initiatives lead to durable peace agreements, greater satisfaction among conflict parties and more comprehensive solutions (Bercovitch 1986; Lim and Carnevale 1990; Wilkenfeld et al. 2003; Curran et al. 2004; Bercovitch 2011). Finally, sociological perspectives, though relatively few, have through mainly case studies found that broader and comprehensive mediation approaches lead to transformative processes in armed conflict (Burton and Sandole 1986; Azar 1990; Nathan 1999).

The second rationale is that while these studies are both important and informative, they largely concern dynamics at the level of mediating states and organizations rather than the mediating individuals working within these third-
party peacemakers, with a few case study exceptions (see Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010; Beardsley 2011). With this second rationale in mind it is posited that the individual mediator is important to study for three main reasons. A first reason relates to how several theoretical assumptions in the literature on international mediation operate at the level of the individual mediator. Yet the empirics, particularly in large-N studies, seldom reflect this. Instead, where theories speak of the mediator’s use of leverage, perceived credibility or ability to empathize with the parties (Nathan 1999; Beardsley et al. 2006; Wall and Dunne 2012), the empirics of realist or social-psychological studies predominantly deal with mediators as states and organizations. This black boxes the agency of the individual mediator.

A second reason the individual mediator should be studied comes from the closely related research field on domestic mediation—mediation of interpersonal, community or business disputes. This research has shown that what the individual mediator does and how she/he mediates matters for if and how conflicts are resolved. In other words, domestic mediation research has produced results for the effects of mediator styles at the individual level that are similar to those identified in international mediation research at the level of the organization (see e.g. Kolb 1983; Tracy and Spradlin 1994; Kruk 1998; Wall et al. 2001: 535; Kressel et al. 2002; Herrman et al. 2003; Noce 2009; Wall and Chan-Serafin 2009; Kressel et al. 2012; Wall and Dunne 2012). This research has also given more attention to possible explanations for variations in mediator style at the level of the individual mediator. One of its main results is that the characteristics of the mediator, in the form of educational and professional background, sometimes matters more for explaining variations in mediator style than contextual factors related to, for example, time pressure and hostility among the conflict parties (Marlow 1987; Roberts 2005; Baitar et al. 2013). Scholars of international mediation have so far largely overlooked this research on mediator style presented in the closely related scholarly work on domestic mediation.

A third and final reason for why we should focus on the individual mediator regards the practice of international mediation. This places great importance on the individual mediator, whether in employment processes, professionalization efforts or the actual day-to-day implementation of mediation (Martin 2006; Herrberg and Varela 2015). In order for research on international mediation to better speak to and become directly useful for the policymakers and practitioners of the same, its theories need to match the everyday realities of the peacemaking third parties and mediating individuals. Improved integration between scholarly and practical understandings of international mediation will hopefully also serve to further advance the effective practice of conflict resolution overall (Zariski 2010).

The third rationale for this study concerns new opportunities to study the effects of mediator style. By explaining mediator styles at the level of the individual, we may in the future be better equipped to more comprehensively
and accurately evaluate the impact they have on armed conflicts and peace processes. In order to be able to make sound inferences on the effects of different mediator styles at the level of the individual mediator, we need to also take into account where these mediator styles originally come from. Indeed, any causal analysis benefits from controlling for existing endogenous relationships (Morgan and Winship 2007). Furthermore, this kind of awareness has already been incorporated in the literature on international mediation concerning mediation occurrence (Beardsley 2011). By explaining mediator style now, we may help future research navigate between when certain mediator styles are implemented as a result of a particular mediation context; the mediator’s characteristics, for which she/he may be employed in the first place; or a mix of both context and characteristics.

With a basis in the above-identified rationales and limitations, this dissertation makes three important contributions. First, it theorizes explanations for mediator style in international mediation in the form of both clarified concepts and specified expectations. It does this by combining research insights on both international and domestic mediation. More precisely, the dissertation develops a theoretical framework that explains mediator styles in terms of both direct and contingent effects of context—which has been identified in the literature on international mediation as important—and characteristics, which, in turn, has been proposed to be central by scholars of domestic mediation. Second, the dissertation studies mediator styles of individual international mediators working for some of the most prominent peacemaking IGO and NGO third parties of today. In this way, it presents new and unique individual-level material on the experiences and perceptions of a variety of mediating individuals, from special representatives to political officers. These new empirics serve to bridge the existing divide between the theory and practice of international mediation. Third, and finally, the study further refines our understanding of mediator styles by leveraging a mixed methods research design. In particular, by combining findings from a survey experiment and 46 semi-structured in-depth interviews, the dissertation offers a more comprehensive understanding of mediator style in terms of both general patterns and causal processes. Together, these three contributions help advance our understanding of international mediators’ mediator styles.

1.2 Theories and Methods

How do we best theorize definitions of and explanations for mediator style in armed conflicts? And in what way may we design a methodological approach

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1 Though a few argue differently, a large proportion of this research posits that mediation generally occurs in the “harder” cases, meaning those that are either more violent, complex in terms of issues or actors, or intractable (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001; Beardsley and Greig 2009; Böhmelt 2010b; Böhmelt 2016).
to further assess and develop such a theoretical framework? This dissertation addresses these two questions by, first, constructing a theoretical framework on the direct effects of context and characteristics on mediator style. To this end, it uses insights from scholarly writings on both international mediation and the closely related domestic mediation. Following this, it explores the relevance of the proposed theoretical framework and develops it in light of survey and interview empirics. More precisely, this study constructs a theoretical framework that explores the direct effects of context and characteristics on mediator style in the form of directiveness and orientation. In its initial form, the framework conceptualizes mediator style as a combined expression of how individuals mediate in terms of themes in goals and behaviors, varying along two particularly central dimensions: directiveness and orientation. Directiveness captures how much leverage the mediator both strives to use and actually uses towards the conflict parties, varying from non-directive to directive. Orientation concerns what type of outcome the mediator wants to emphasize and actually emphasizes in her/his engagement between the conflict parties, varying from being relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented.

The framework focuses on context in the form of conflict intensity and characteristics in the form of mediator profile and mediator personality. It suggests that mediators in contexts of high-intensity conflicts become on average both more directive and settlement-oriented than those in low-intensity conflicts. This may happen either through the pathway of humanitarian concerns for affected combatants or non-combatants, or through the pathway of the mediator’s own heightened reputational concerns from international expectations. Both of these potential processes are expected to spur the mediator to push for a settlement. The framework further suggests that high-profile mediators are inclined to be both more directive and settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators. The direct effect of profile, representing the mediators’ accumulated mediation experiences, is theorized to travel through the conflict views of the mediators, who may interpret armed conflict in either an overall realist, a psychological or a sociological frame. Finally, on personality as individual trait profiles (the Big Five), the framework expects that mediators with low Agreeableness and high Extraversion will on average be both more directive and settlement-oriented than those with high Agreeableness and low Extraversion. Three types of “personality processes”—cognitive, emotional and motivational—are suggested to channel the effects of the personality facets Agreeableness and Extraversion on directiveness and orientation.

To explore the traction of, further nuance and theorize the direct and potential new contingent expectations of the above theoretical framework, the study relies on a mixed-method research design combining a survey experiment with semi-structured in-depth interviews and engaging international mediators from four IGOs and three NGOs that represent some of the most active organizational peacemakers of today. The survey experiment and the interviews together help create an understanding of whether, and if so how, context
and characteristics affect directiveness and orientation by studying the general and quantitative patterns as well as the more specific and qualitative causal processes underlying these patterns.

Survey experiments, incorporating a randomized component, have increasingly been used in studies of, for example, elite-level politics to investigate elements of complex processes in a relatively focused and effective manner (Gerber and Green 2012; Druckman 2011). Studies of international mediation have hitherto, and to the best of my knowledge, not leveraged the benefits of survey experiments. Therefore, this study’s survey—with a randomized armed conflict scenario and questions on mediator style—represents a first experimental contribution engaging international IGO and NGO mediators. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews, guided by a pre-set structure and set of questions, are particularly suitable for exploring causal relationships as well as capturing not-yet theorized, new relationships in the form of causal processes and contingencies. While interviews have previously been used in several studies of international mediation (see Wall et al. 2011), few also collect the experiences of mediating individuals without formal and official lead mediator roles. Consequently, the interviews offer a particularly useful opportunity for eliciting the experiences and perceptions of not only the well-known high-level special representatives but also their less-public colleagues. The analysis of the survey material relies primarily on statistical graphics and non-parametric randomization inference methods, whereas the interview material makes use of a tailored and structured thematic comparison within and across interviews.

1.3 Findings

The dissertation presents a refined conceptualization of and several direct and contingent explanations for mediator style at the level of the individual mediator. It shows that international mediators vary in their mediator styles along the dimensions of both directiveness and orientation, which gives credence to approaching mediator style as a two-dimensional phenomenon. These variations in mediator style are explained with reference to both the context and characteristics of the international mediator. In particular, two of the eight theorized direct effects and two new and exploratory contingent effects recur in both the survey experiment and in-depth interviews. Context in the form of conflict intensity is shown to impact directiveness so that high-intensity conflicts make mediators on average more directive than low-intensity contexts. This is proposed to be explained by heightened humanitarian concerns emanating from crises like high-intensity fighting. Characteristics in the form of mediator profile are shown to affect orientation so that high-profile mediators are overall more settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators. This pattern seems to be explained by the mediators’ views filtering the way they interpret conflicts and their mediator roles.
The analysis also points to conditional, contingent effects on mediator style between context and characteristics. First, the effect of conflict intensity on directiveness is shown to vary for mediators of different personalities. The analysis suggests that mediators with high Extraversion become more directive in high-intensity contexts. A possible explanation for this is the heightened humanitarian concerns, encouraging in particular confident, high-Extraversion mediators to push forward. The analysis also indicates that high-Agreeableness mediators are more likely to be directive toward all and not just some parties in high-intensity contexts. This may be explained by their altruistic motivations, which contribute to a particular sensitivity to humanitarian concerns in high-intensity contexts. Second, the effect of mediator profile on orientation appears to be amplified by conflict contexts of different intensities. The analysis proposes that high-profile mediators already inclined to be settlement-oriented become even more settlement-oriented, while low-profile mediators already inclined to be relationship-oriented become even more relationship-oriented in high-intensity contexts. This contingency may be explained by the general urgencies of high-intensity contexts triggering embedded conflict views and autopilots colored by the mediator’s past experiences.

1.4 Layout of the Dissertation

The dissertation is structured into seven chapters. Chapter 2 reviews previous research, clarifies the concept of mediator style and constructs a theoretical framework on context, characteristics and mediator style. Thereafter, Chapter 3 introduces the overall research design of the dissertation, motivating and discussing its two main components—survey experiments and semi-structured interviews—as well as presenting the mediators and analysis procedures. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 analyze the empirical material and present the main results. Chapter 4 reports the survey experiment results and Chapter 5 provides further nuances from the interview material. Chapter 6 summarizes and synthesizes findings from both the survey and the interviews, reshapes these into updated theoretical reasonings and critically reflects on the limitations of the study. The concluding Chapter 7 outlines some of the main contributions and implications of the study for the research and practice of international mediation. Several illustrative appendices accompany the dissertation, covering the details of the survey questions and additional analyses, as well as the interview questions and interviewees.
2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter elaborates on a general framework for defining and explaining mediator style in three steps. First, it reviews past research on international mediation and identifies an overall gap in definitions of and explanations for mediator style at the level of the individual mediator. Leveraging insights from related research on domestic mediation, this review specifies challenges and opportunities for advancing our understanding of mediator style. Second, the chapter presents a refined, two-dimensional definition of mediator style as incorporating both directiveness and orientation. Third, and finally, it constructs a general framework on the roles of both context and characteristics for explaining mediator style in armed conflict. This framework centers around the contextual factor of conflict intensity and the mediator characteristics of profile and personality. It also discusses some of the pathways through which these variables may affect directiveness and orientation.

2.1 Previous Research

In what way has previous research defined and explained the how of mediation and what insights can this dissertation build on? A review of the accumulated research on international mediation reveals contradictory as well as limited understandings of how mediators mediate in terms of both definitions and explanations. These limitations are further exacerbated when compared to some of the recent progress in related mediator style research on domestic mediation. Together, international and domestic mediation research present certain fruitful opportunities for progressing our understanding of mediator style in armed conflicts.

2.1.1 The How of International Mediation

Most scholars studying international mediation have understood how mediators mediate in terms of larger “strategies” at the level of the organization, be it a state, a group of states, an IGO or an NGO that mediates. Whether referred to as strategies (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001; Wall et al. 2001; Beardsley 2011), methods (Touval and Zartman 1985b), or, in some rare occasions, style (Wilkenfeld et al. 2003; Beardsley et al. 2006), these studies mainly build on realist bargaining as well as social-psychological theories, and use large-N
quantitative methods (see Beardsley et al. 2006; Gartner and Bercovitch 2006; Beardsley 2011; Bercovitch 2011).

Mediation strategies have commonly been theorized and measured as three larger categories capturing the “method” of mediation, as per the terminology of Touval and Zartman (1985b). These mediation methods serve to illuminate the extent and expressions of power a mediator exerts on the parties. The framework of Touval and Zartman (1985b) differentiates between three categories of increasingly directive ways of mediating from (1) communication/facilitation, to (2) formulation, to (3) manipulation. According to Touval and Zartman (1985b), mediators relying on communication “serve as a telephone wire” between the parties, carrying and holding concessions, proposals or agreements in a relatively passive and straightforward manner. Mediators using formulation are more active and focused on redefining issues and finding formulas “from the pieces of the conflict itself” (Touval and Zartman 1985b: 12). This is done to identify a potential resolution, which is seen to be “hidden in the morass of bad relationships” (Touval and Zartman 1985b: 12). Finally, mediators using manipulation use their leverage—“resources of power, influence, and persuasion”—to more forcefully move the parties toward agreement. Such leverage may come from the parties’ need for help, the interests and positions of the parties vis-à-vis the mediator, or a stalemate. It may take the form of sticks (coerced costs), or carrots (induced benefits) (Touval and Zartman 1985b; Beardsley et al. 2006).²

More recently, however, scholars combining large-N research with case studies, or exclusively relying on the latter, have come to explicitly adopt mediation or mediator style as preferred terminology. Style is then either roughly reflecting the original strategy framework (Beardsley 2011), or presenting different and more multidimensional understandings (Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensten 2010). One such contribution differentiates between “light” and “heavy” mediation style, reflecting realist bargaining theories of mediation and the strategy framework of Touval and Zartman (1985b) (Beardsley 2011). A light mediation style is signified by the mediator using the “existing incentives” of the parties of a conflict in order to coordinate them in finding an agreement. This is done by sharing information and mitigating image concerns (Beardsley 2011: 31). Light mediation styles map on to the two less directive mediation strategies of facilitation and formulation. Heavy mediation style, in turn, uses leverage so that it “maximizes the cost of non-agreement”, changing the parties’ incentives through sanctions or inducements. This is done by, for example, offering security guarantees for the implementation of an agreement (Beardsley 2011: 31). Heavy mediation style is equivalent to the third and most directive strategy category of manipula-

² The framework of Kressel (1972) is very close to that of Touval and Zartman (1985b) and differentiates between “non-directive”, “reflexive” and “directive”. It has been criticized for too unclear boundaries between the non-directive and reflexive categories (Bercovitch and Wells 1993).
tion. Other, multidimensional understandings of style have been introduced in case studies devoted to the investigation of certain individual mediators (Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010). Mediation style has in this context been defined as “the [mediator’s] overall priorities in the process of mediation” (Svensson and Wallensteen 2010: xi). The understanding is multidimensional as the case studies differentiate between styles along the dimensions of, for example, the mediator’s overall role, party inclusivity, ways of relating to the parties and their audiences, and mediation goals/objectives (Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010). Thus, while these latter definitions encourage broader understandings of style, most scholarly work on international mediation has focused on the mediating organizations’ coercive behavior in relation to producing a settlement (Bercovitch 1992: 16f; Bercovitch 2011: 27). Furthermore, most of these studies research the effects of mediation methods, strategies or styles, not their causes.

Although there has been an increased interest in the effects of different mediation methods, strategies or styles—which the above conceptual discussion also reflects—there are still very few contributions that strive to explain these (see discussions in Bercovitch and Jackson 2001; Wall and Dunne 2012). Rather, it appears more common to reflect on potential theoretical explanations without empirically exploring them (see Wilkenfeld et al. 2003; Beardsley 2011). In doing this, several, particularly large-N, studies implicitly or explicitly assume that mediation is strategic. For example, mediators are said to “tailor their tactics based on the chance of reaching a particular outcome” (Beardsley et al. 2006: 82), so that “whether to use heavy-handed tactics or not” is a “choice” (Beardsley 2011: 114). A similarly limited theorizing and empirical investigation can be gauged among several of the few existent case studies (see Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010; Beardsley 2011: 74, 117–20, 151). Those who do reflect on potential causes of mediators’ light or heavy mediation styles and other dimensions point to a few possible suspects. These include conflict intensity, the mediating organization’s self-interests or power resources, or the mediating individual’s personality or previous experiences.

There are, however, a few contributions that theoretically and empirically explore why mediators use facilitation, formulation and manipulation. Though they present contradictory results, they point to some possible explanations. While some find support for contextual factors such as the nature of the conflict or the mediator’s immediate environment, others emphasize the power resources of the mediator. These largely social-psychological empirical studies tend to use quantitative observational or experimental methods and approach mediation as a contingent phenomenon (Rubin 1980; Carnevale 1986; Bercovitch and Houston 1993; Bercovitch and Wells 1993; Bercovitch 1996;
In particular, they operate under the assumption that “mediation cannot be viewed only as a series of independent decisions by mediators” (Bercovitch and Houston 2000: 199). Mediation is rather an “active strategy”, which requires identifying “what behaviors mediators use in different contexts” (Bercovitch 1996: 4; Bercovitch 2011: 48). Some of the studies find support for an explanatory role for contextual factors, such as the nature of the conflict and its main parties (Rubin 1980; Bercovitch and Houston 1993). Others highlight the importance of the mediator’s characteristics, such as cost-benefit payoff analyses and power resources (Young 1967; Young 1972; Bercovitch and Houston 1993). Yet others point to something in between, in the form of the mediator’s environment, as in when and where mediation takes place, as well as how the conflict parties relate to each other (Bercovitch and Houston 2000).

In summary, research dealing with mediation methods, strategies or styles highlights three contextual and two characteristics-related clusters of possible explanatory factors. The main contextual factors are (1) the features of the parties to the conflict (internal unity, democracy levels, power relations, historical background); (2) the nature of the conflict (intensity, stakes and issues, ripeness levels, internationalization); and (3) the mediation environment (mandate, resources, process unification, place of negotiations) (Ott 1972: 579; Bercovitch and Wells 1993: 20–21; Bercovitch 1996; Beardsley 2011; Svensson 2014). Similarly, the main characteristic variables are (1) the political and monetary incentives of the mediating organization, and (2) the material, economic and political sources of power and leverage directly or indirectly at hand (Young 1972; Touval and Zartman 1985b; Beardsley 2011).

2.1.2 Gaps, Challenges and Opportunities

The review provides evidence for one important larger gap and two specific challenges related to conceptualizing and theorizing explanations for mediator style. Drawing on insights from closely related domestic mediation research, these challenges also serve as opportunities for progressing our understanding of mediator style in armed conflict.

Although a few recent international mediation studies shed light on some of the more visible high-level mediating individuals, there is still a large gap in research when it comes to systematic theorizing on, and empirical investigation of, mediator style at the level of the individual. In fact, scholars of international mediation have yet to pick up on the many appeals for further and more disaggregated analyses of mediator style to explicitly investigate the

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In a related experimental study of peacekeepers’ mediation techniques, conflict severity and mediator rank, but not time pressure, are found to explain most variations in used techniques, making mediators overall more forceful in higher-severity situations (Druckman and Wall 2003).
interpretations, intentions and choices of “the actual people [mediating] with varying abilities and positions” (Beardsley 2011: 15; see also Bercovitch and Houston 2000; Beardsley et al. 2006: 82). Research on domestic mediation, however, has a longer experience of mapping and understanding individual mediators’ different styles. This knowledge may help address the challenges that international mediation research faces when it comes to conceptualizing and theorizing the causes of mediator style. Therefore, I now turn to discuss these challenges in light of insights from research on domestic mediation.

As illustrated in the review above, most concepts dealing with how international mediation is carried out are broad and vague, which limits their theoretical usefulness for measuring and explaining mediation. This conceptual challenge expresses itself in a confusing use of multiple terms, vague conceptual boundaries between categories and measurements, and an overall tendency to emphasize variations in coercion. The general conflation between related terms such as method, strategy and style, coupled with a predominant organizational focus, obscures the role of the individual mediator.4 Here, research on domestic mediation would suggest that we focus on the “style” of the individual and do this as themes in both behaviors and goals. Style has in domestic mediation research been defined as, “the practitioner’s overarching concept of what is to be achieved in mediation and the behaviors associated with pursuing these objectives” (Kressel et al. 2012: 136). Such themes are either seen as closely intertwined in expressions of style so that they represent both the mediator’s (1) overarching goals to strive for, and (2) concomitant salient behaviors (Kressel 2007; Butts 2010: 166; Kressel et al. 2012). Or they are separated so that a mediator’s coercion reflects her/his behavior and the desired outcome her/his goal (Baitar et al. 2013). Conceptualizing mediator style as themes in behaviors and goals has been shown to be fruitful in domestic mediation, which is why it is also worth exploring for international mediation.

International mediation research seems to largely rest on the assumption that all mediators are equally interested in producing an agreement so that mediation methods, strategies or styles mainly vary along the dimension of coerciveness. However, alternative dimensions such as the mediator’s goals and objectives are not only proposed to be important in recent case studies on mediation (Curran et al. 2004; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010), but have also received a lot of attention in domestic mediation research. In particular, certain domestic mediation research has recently begun to differentiate between “directiveness” and “orientation”, where the former captures a mediator’s coerciveness and the latter its outcome-related objective. Orientation relates to whether mediators are overall “resolution” or “settlement” oriented

4 Although the original meaning of strategy indeed implies some kind of plan that comes of conscious decision-making (see Kolb 1983; Marks 2005), most large-N research on international mediation uses it to measure ex-post themes in mediation behavior.
and strive for settlement, or whether they are overall “dialogue” or “relationally” oriented and seek to help the parties diagnose, understand and improve their interactions (Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012: 88–89, 157). Orientation has been identified as an overarching stylistic variation reflecting four common and training-related “schools of thought”—the facilitative, evaluative, diagnostic and transformative styles. The bulk of style research in domestic mediation originally concerned these four styles (see Riskin 2003; Bush and Folger 2004; Kressel 2007).

Studying directiveness and orientation separately and simultaneously would thus contribute to further specifying the conceptual boundaries of the two mediator style dimensions. In the process, risks of inadvertently incorporating explanatory factors could be mitigated (Goertz 2011; Goertz and Mahoney 2012). Such risks may arise due to international mediation scholars’ overall focus on the organizational level and several domestic mediation scholars’ emphasis on culturally defined styles. Detaching possible explanatory factors, such as aspects of the mediators’ characteristics, from the concept of mediator style could begin to address such conceptual challenges. Thus, and in summary, by conceptually separating directiveness from orientation, detaching potential explanatory factors from their definitions and studying both dimensions simultaneously, we may address and turn the conceptual challenges into opportunities.

Moving on to the proposed explanations for variations in style, the strategic assumptions and large-N nature of previous research on international mediation appears to have lead to an overwhelming focus on contextual factors. Conversely, because domestic mediation scholars have predominantly been interested in the individual mediator, this research has come to focus more on characteristics-related explanations. The bulk of research on domestic mediation approaches style from a psychological perspective, using a multiplicity of methodological approaches such as surveys, simulations, computer-based laboratory experiments, and participant observation (see e.g. Kolb 1983; Tracy and Spradlin 1994; Kruk 1998; Wall et al. 2001; Kressel et al. 2002: 535; Herrman et al. 2003; Burns 2004; Wall and Chan-Serafin 2009; Kressel et al. 2012; Wall and Dunne 2012). One of the main findings of this research is that the educational and professional background of the individual mediator sometimes matters more for explaining variations in mediator styles than contextual factors (Marlow 1987; Roberts 2005; Baitar et al. 2013). Style, and in particular the four training-related ones and orientation, can thus be seen to be explained by the mediator’s characteristics in terms of background. This has, for example, been shown in studies where mediators first self-report using multiple styles, but are later measured recounting past cases or mediating a simulated dispute using only one style (Herrman et al. 2003; Charkoudian et al. 2009: 303, 309f, 312; Noce 2009: 210; Kressel et al. 2012).

In particular, domestic mediation research has shown that trained and professional lawyer mediators are generally more advocacy-oriented than their
more integrative mental health counterparts (Baitar et al. 2013); more experienced mediators are more open to settlement-oriented styles than younger ones (see e.g. Shaw 2010; Baitar et al. 2013); US state labor mediators are somewhat more aggressive than their federal counterparts, which is partially attributed to different cultures (Kolb 1983); and older, male, community mediators are more resolution-oriented, whereas younger, female, family mediators are more dialogue-oriented (Butts 2010: iii, 81ff). This research also finds some contradictory effects of gender differences and style (Herrman et al. 2003; Butts 2010: 82f; Baitar et al. 2013: 82). A few studies also lend support for conditionalities between the characteristics and context of the individual mediator. Mediator style, particularly the orientation of the mediator, seems to be affected by time pressure, the disputants’ level of animosity and whether or not the disputants have an ongoing relationship (Golann 2000; Picard 2004; Kressel 2007; Butts 2010: 86; Wall and Dunne 2012: 225; Coleman et al. 2015).5

In conclusion, to address the main research question of this dissertation, there are ample opportunities to fill an overall research gap in the explanations for mediator styles of individuals engaged in international mediation. More precisely, a further specified and multidimensional understanding of mediator style at the individual level and along the dimensions of both directiveness and orientation is needed. An updated definition of mediator style should benefit from building on those who define it as both goals and behaviors (Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012), so that directiveness is expressed in terms of a mediator’s goals (and not just behavior), as well as orientation in terms of a mediator’s behaviors (and not just goals) (opposite to Baitar et al. 2013). Furthermore, there is room for systematizing and specifying a theoretical framework on mediator style that covers explanations concerning both context and characteristics. Such a framework could help illuminate how factors within the two explanatory clusters independently and together produce variations in both directiveness and orientation. In this way it may directly pick up on some of the requests from international mediation scholars to build on past contingency framework writings in relation to mediation (Bercovitch 2011). By building on domestic mediation research and taking heed to how armed conflicts are indeed “not interpersonal disputes writ large”, such a theoretical framework can be tailored to take into account the complexities of armed conflicts (Bercovitch and Wells 1993: 11). These opportunities now serve as a basis for defining as well as theorizing individual mediators’ mediator styles in armed conflicts.

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5 Specific studies on mediator tactics have also shown how mediators adapt to their context by being more directive and using humor in hostile environments, simplifying the agenda in the face of complex issue structures and managing expectations in environments of “unrealistic” such (Carnevale and Pegnetter 1985).
2.2 Mediator Style Defined

The review of past conceptualizations of mediator style showed a need for a clearer definition of the phenomenon. Such a definition should be detached from any of its potential preceding, explanatory factors. It should also be specified to both directiveness and orientation, representing two of its most central expressions. Finally, a mediator style definition should also cover themes in both goals and behaviors for directiveness and orientation, respectively. Mediator style is a concept relevant for the phenomenon of mediation, which is here defined as a third-party-assisted process of structured communication between two or more organized, armed actors designed for purposes ranging from addressing their behavior to resolving their contested issues (see Beardsley 2011: 18; Beber 2012). In armed conflict mediation processes, third parties may be states, organizations or individuals who are not involved as main parties or their supporting allies (Svensson 2014). Mediators, hereafter, are the individuals officially or unofficially mediating on behalf of such third parties.

Building on previous research on both international and domestic mediation, mediator style captures how individuals mediate in terms of themes in goals and behaviors, varying along the dimensions of directiveness and orientation. The goals and behaviors of the mediators are not just abstract elements of mediator style (Kressel 2007; Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012), but rather directly relate to and help clarify expressions of both dimensions of directiveness and orientation, as shown further below. In this way, mediator style is closely related to, yet slightly different from, mediation strategies and tactics as it cuts across the two. Mediation strategies embody the overall goals of a mediation engagement in the form of a case-specific plan. Mediation tactics express the specific behaviors of this plan in the form of activities confined in time and space (Kolb 1983; Hill 2015). Conceptualizing mediator style as themes in both goals and behaviors implies looking for patterns and themes in the strategies and tactics of mediation. It also implies that mediator style can be the product of both conscious strategic or subconscious non-strategic decision-making (Ogilvie and Kidder 2008: 134). This differentiates it from strategies and tactics, which are both commonly seen as products of exclusively conscious, strategic decision-making.

The first dimension of mediator style, directiveness, captures how much leverage the mediator both strives to use and actually uses toward the parties. The mediator may have different goals for how much she/he wants to be directive and express this through behaviors that are more or less directive. In line with previous research, directiveness varies from non-directive to directive (Kressel 1972; Beardsley et al. 2006). The second dimension, orientation, captures what type of outcome the mediator wants to emphasize and actually emphasizes in her/his engagement. This implies that the medi-

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6 Alternative and complementary dimensions may very well exist, but are not further explored in this framework.
ator may nourish goals related to either settling the conflict or improving the
debates’ interactions, which in turn can be expressed through behaviors that fa-
vor settlement production or relationship improvement. In line with previous
research, orientation varies from relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented
(Butts 2010). Directiveness and orientation may exist simultaneously, but
both are not necessary for mediator style (Goertz 2011). In this way, medi-
ators can theoretically be non-directive and settlement-oriented or directive
and relationship-oriented, besides the commonly assumed non-directive and
relationship-oriented and directive and settlement-oriented combinations (see
Butts 2010). The following discussions further refine the two dimensions of
directiveness and orientation.

2.2.1 Directiveness

Directiveness covers the extent of influence the mediator exerts toward the
parties in negotiations. Directiveness varies depending on how much leverage
and coercion the mediator is willing to use and actually uses at the cost of the
conflict parties’ self-determination in negotiation. In this way, directiveness
concerns the voluntary nature of mediation and the embedded power trade-off
between mediators and parties to the conflict. It is central to how mediation
has been understood in both international and domestic mediation (Touval and
Zartman 1985b; Beardsley 2011; Bercovitch 2011; Wall et al. 2011). At the
non-directive end, behaviors are non-coercive with the goals of getting the par-
ties’ perspectives and preferences across. Conversely, at the directive end of
the continuum, behaviors are coercive with the goals of getting the mediator’s
perspective and preferences across. Directiveness is here further specified to
four central components that can be identified in previous research (see Butts
2010; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010; Beardsley 2011). Each of the four
components capture different facets of the mediator’s degree of influence in
the process of mediating negotiations. They deal with the parties’ incentive
structures, information-sharing, process control and evaluations.

First, directiveness materializes in how mediators coercively try to change
the incentive structures of the conflict parties. This component of directiveness
has been most clearly expressed in the “manipulation” strategy category and
discussions about power diplomacy (Princen 1992; Touval 1994). At its most
extreme this implies using so-called “carrots and sticks” in order to forcibly
change the external and often material incentive structures of the conflict par-
ties (Touval and Zartman 1985b). Carrots can involve arranging side-notes of
financial “benefits” or promising security guarantees in exchange for certain
concessions (Beardsley 2011). Some of the sticks include threatening and im-
plementing sanctions, embargoes or other economic, political or social costs
connected to negotiations (Beardsley 2011). At its opposite end, mediators
refrain from influencing the incentives of the conflict parties and instead exert

as little pressure as possible, not changing incentive structures. Between the two extreme points, mediators may use oral persuasion or simply try to clarify the parties’ incentives for resolution by using light reframing techniques emphasizing different perspectives and interpretations of the conflict (Pruitt and Kim 2004; Dewulf et al. 2009).

The second component of directiveness captures how mediators share information with the parties and to what extent they are open to controlling it. The informational component is central to many different theoretical perspectives of mediation—not least bargaining theories on information failure (Kydd 2006; Savun 2008; Fey and Ramsay 2010; Mattes and Savun 2010). It can even be said to constitute a core function of any mediation as it always entails some form of communication (Kleiboer 1998: 2). At the directive end of information-sharing, mediators actively and significantly distort the information they gather from and share with the parties by silencing, adding or removing parts. At the non-directive end, mediators relay all information to the parties as true to the original formulation and content as possible.

A third component of directiveness deals with how tight of a grip the mediator has over the process of communication; in other words, the mediator’s process control. This component picks up on one of the core features of formulation strategies, which are also at times referred to as the procedural aspect of mediation (see Touval and Zartman 1985b). A mediator’s control in relation to procedural aspects can be expressed in anything from drafting proposals to designing the overarching process for when, where and how to meet (Bercovitch and Houston 2000). Thus, at the directive end, the mediators (and not the parties) are in charge, writing and sharing all drafts, setting the agenda, chairing any meetings and controlling when and where to meet, if at all. At the non-directive end, the parties are in charge. While the mediator may suggest venues for meetings and share information on, for example, agenda and drafts, she/he never decides on behalf of the parties.

The final and fourth directiveness component explicitly deals with the mediator’s judgment and evaluation. This facet of directiveness reflects writings on “evaluative” mediator styles in domestic mediation, where the mediator shares her/his judgments with the parties to help influence their decision-making (Charkoudian et al. 2009; Noce 2009). It also echoes discussions on mediator neutrality, which though often today acknowledged as a practical impossibility, still shape the perceptions of a mediator’s power vis-à-vis the conflict parties (Astor 2007; Poitras 2013). This component covers a continuum from highly evaluative where the mediator’s judgments are continuously shared in a proactive and explicit manner, to highly non-evaluative where the mediator instead actively avoids sharing her/his views and judgments on the

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7 Information-sharing is also, to some extent, related to mediator partiality and bias, as the message and content of the shared, silenced or manipulated information may favor certain outcomes or particular parties in negotiations (Nathan 1999; Svensson 2009).
parties’ preferences and choices. At this non-directive end, mediators do not share their evaluations even if they disagree with the parties (Butts 2010).

2.2.2 Orientation

Orientation concerns the main outcome priority of the mediator and her/his way of working toward that outcome in order to help resolve the conflict. A mediator’s orientation may vary between two poles. Mediators can actively focus on getting an agreement by attending to the substantive issues and grievances. Or mediators can strive to actively emphasize the interactions, communication and relationships of the parties. Orientation deals with the purpose of mediation, its overall objective, and captures what outcome the mediator is willing to prioritize and actually prioritizes. It builds on conceptualizations in domestic mediation research and spans a continuum from relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented (see Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012). At the relationship-oriented end of the continuum, behaviors are process-focused with the goals of contributing to improved interactions and relations between the parties. At the settlement-oriented end, behaviors are product-focused with the goals of contributing to resolved grievances. While some research indicates that these two poles represent separate dimensions and thus two conceptual continuums (Baitar et al. 2013), orientation is here conceptualized in line with most other scholarly work for which the two are seen and found to operate along the same continuum (Charkoudian et al. 2009; Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012). Orientation comprises three main components highlighted in previous research: trust, focus of analysis and underlying rationales.

Orientation can first be identified in relation to how mediators deal with creating and fostering trust between the parties. The role of trust has long been a core feature of several mediation debates, claimed to provide the crucial legitimacy and credibility to successful mediation (Davidons et al. 2004; Pruitt and Kim 2004; Kydd 2006). At the relationship-end, mediators place great emphasis on and produce active initiatives to improve the trust between the parties. This can take the form of supporting confidence-building measures that help signal costly concessions and sincere intent (Kydd 2006; Svensson and Brounéus 2013). It can also imply designing processes that encourage honesty and mutual respect during negotiations (Albin and Druckman 2012), all with respect to addressing the parties’ interactions. At the opposite settlement-end mediators do not pay any attention to the conflict parties’ trust levels beyond engaging them in the process toward a settlement. The parties’ issues and resolving those, not the quality of their interactions and relationships, dominate this settlement-oriented end of the continuum.

The second aspect of orientation captures priorities and activities in the mediator’s focus of analysis. How mediators analyze a conflict, negotiations and possible ways forward is not only important for differentiating between me-
Mediator style orientations, but also central to how mediators evaluate their own and others’ mediation (see Kressel et al. 2012: 155). It also reflects the original four mediator style schools in domestic mediation: mediators trained in the transformative or diagnostic traditions are seen to be more concerned with understanding the parties’ relationships and interactions based on the parties’ perceptions and emotions. This is compared to mediators trained in the facilitative or evaluative traditions, who usually give less weight to such factors (see Noce 2009). Mediators with a settlement-oriented style are generally more interested in mapping the stated priorities and interests of the conflict parties, relying primarily on the mediator’s own resources, intelligence and evaluations. At this end, the conflict analysis is usually more limited in terms of invested time and energy. Mediators with a relationship-oriented style instead place great weight on a conflict analysis that goes deeper and beyond the readily available information. In particular, mediators invest a lot of time and energy into diagnosing the original causes and dynamics of the conflict, relying on information about the parties’ emotions and values in addition to stated positions and interests.

A third and final component of orientation can be gauged by looking at the mediators’ underlying rationales. This component highlights how mediators rely on rationality versus intuition as the main justification for their engagement. This component essentially differentiates between emotive and social versus technocratic and individual approaches to mediation. It picks up on the different assumptions of mediator style as exclusively strategic or also potentially unstrategic (Kressel et al. 2012: 137). These have assumed that settlement-oriented mediators think and act mainly strategically, whereas relationship-oriented mediators are also open to using emotive and intuitive thinking and acting. Mediators are settlement-oriented when they deal with the contested issues as technical problems that can be understood and addressed independently, relying mainly on rational and strategic calculations. Conversely, relationship-oriented mediators address the grievances as emotional and social problems, which require stated incompatibilities to be acknowledged in their interactional context. In this sense, relationship-oriented styles have on average more room for intuitive thinking.

In summary, mediator style is a combined expression of how individuals mediate in terms of goals and behaviors, varying along two dimensions: directiveness and orientation. Directiveness captures how much leverage the mediator both strives to use and actually uses toward the conflict parties, varying from non-directive to directive. Orientation concerns what

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8 This framework does not evaluate the accuracy of skilled intuitions, differentiating between naturalistic decision-making and heuristics and biases (see Kahneman and Klein 2009). Rather, and in accordance with the approach of Dane et al. (2012), it understands intuitive decision-making as an “affectively charged judgment” surfacing “non-consciously” in situations of time pressure. The opposite analytical, rational decision-making is defined as conscious, systematic evaluations of benefits and costs (see also Harteis and Billett 2013).
type of outcome the mediator wants to emphasize and actually emphasizes in her/his engagement, varying from being relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented.

2.3 Context, Characteristics and Mediator Style

With a clarified definition of mediator style fresh in mind, this final part of the chapter presents a theoretical framework that seeks to explain variations in directiveness and orientation. Speaking to the identified challenges and opportunities in previous research, this framework contributes in two ways. First, the framework explicitly centers around the mediator and her/his experiences in armed conflicts. Second, it studies potential pathways through which effects of context and characteristics may impact mediator style. In particular, it zooms in on conflict intensity, mediator profile and personality as three of the most prominent factors explaining mediator style at the individual level. Because this dissertation strives to build theory in the thus far relatively uncharted territories of mediator style in international mediation, this initial framework is set in fairly general terms, focusing first on direct effects. Later, however, and in light of the empirical analysis, this framework may be further refined and expanded to also encompass expectations on potential contingent relationships between context and characteristics.

Context and characteristics represent central building blocks for understanding mediator style that are separate yet intricately related. While each mediator comes with her/his characteristics—features embedded in the presence and existence of the mediating individual—she/he also operates in and interacts with a particular context outside of that existence. Therefore, we need to account for both what mediators are like and where they mediate in order to get a comprehensive understanding of how mediator styles come about. In other words, mediator style is likely to be contingent on both the context and characteristics of the mediator. This understanding reflects general contingency framework logics, used in some social-psychological research on international mediation (Bercovitch 1996: 16; Bercovitch 2011).9 According to these logics, we should evaluate the impact of mediation contingently by identifying “what behaviors mediators use in different contexts” (Bercovitch 1996: 4).

The current theoretical framework focuses on three explanatory clusters: (1) conflict intensity as an important contextual factor and (2) mediator profile and (3) personality as important characteristics factors. While there are indeed

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9 The original contingency model of mediation builds on the work of Sawyer and Guetzkow (1965) and has in research on international mediation mainly been used to evaluate mediation’s effect on outcomes (Druckman 1973; Bercovitch 1996; Druckman 1997), such as the initiation of mediation (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001), violence escalation (Fisher and Keashly 1991; Bercovitch and Langley 1993), cease fires and peace agreements (Ott 1972; Young 1972; Bercovitch and Jackson 2001), and party satisfaction (Fisher and Keashly 1988).
several alternative variables and relationships of relevance to explaining mediator style, a narrower focus on these three is beneficial for producing more nuanced, though confined, theoretical understandings of the phenomenon in question (Pearl 2000). The framework elaborates on eight hypotheses specifying expectations relating to each of these three clusters for both directiveness and orientation. The framework begins by exploring conflict intensity, as one of the most prominent factors in writings on international mediation. It then moves on to theorize characteristics, as central to most studies on domestic mediation. These expectations on the direct effects of context and characteristics will help guide the empirical analysis on potential contingent effects between context and characteristics. In this way, while the framework does not yet explicitly shed light on such conditionalities, as requested by some research on domestic mediation (Barry and Friedman 1998; Mintu-Wimsatt 2002), it does help set the parameters for the empirical analysis that may guide explorations into such dynamics.

2.3.1 Context: Conflict Intensity
Conflict intensity is one of the largest determinants of where mediators mediate (Böhmelt 2016), what mediators do and, even more commonly argued, what impact they have on mediated outcomes (Ott 1972: 579; Bercovitch 1996; Kressel 2007; Butts 2010; Wall et al. 2011). Böhmelt (2016) even claims that “patterns of violence” are “arguably the most visible and salient conflict characteristic” of all. Although it surfaces less frequently in studies of domestic mediation (Carnevale and Conlon 1988; Donohue 1989), violence is indeed a signifying feature of armed conflicts. This has also come to shape how most research understands and studies political and armed conflicts (Wallensteen 2015; Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). In these particularly complex environments, the extent, shape and effects of armed violence constitute a costly and tangible measure of severity, reflecting indirectly the resolve with which parties are willing to fight for their cause (Ohlson 2008). In this way, it also captures the relationship between and within the parties, which has also been emphasized as an important element of armed conflicts (Stedman 1997; Cunningham 2006; Nilsson and Söderberg Kovacs 2011). Therefore, while alternative contextual factors such as the parties’ relationships and features, or the mediator’s immediate environment may certainly also influence mediation, this dissertation prioritizes focusing on conflict intensity as one of the most prominent features of armed conflict.

In this framework, conflict intensity relates to the type and magnitude of the effects of organized, armed violence. In particular, focus is on the effects of direct armed violence on human beings, combatants as well as non-combatants (Galtung 1969).10 We may think of conflict intensity as relating to three par-

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10 This delineation implies excluding effects of indirect and structural violence.
particularly tangible direct effects on humans. These include death or physical injuries, forced migration and other human rights violations. All of these are highly relevant to the peacemaking work of several organizations, such as for example the UN, and will therefore also likely matter for the mediator who mediates on their behalf. This was indeed the case when UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon tried to convince Staffan de Mistura to be the UN’s next mediator for the Syrian conflict. In presenting his case, which also successfully made de Mistura accept the assignment, de Mistura recalls the Secretary-General emphasizing: “how many dead, how many refugees, the level of horrors” (Giovanni 2015). Thus, knowledge about the Syrian death toll, forced migration and other violations of human rights were important for de Mistura’s analysis. While mediators may have different reference points for the precise line between low and high intensities, a fruitful starting point is differentiating these along the common academic “civil war” threshold: conflicts with more than 1000 deaths per year, with extensive refugee flows and human rights violations, can typically be categorized as high intensity, whereas others below this threshold represent low intensity.

How, then, does conflict intensity affect mediators’ mediator styles? I propose that mediators in contexts of high-intensity conflicts become on average both more directive and settlement-oriented than they would in low-intensity conflicts. This may happen consciously or subconsciously through two different pathways. One in which the mediator interprets a higher-intensity context as significantly costlier in humanitarian terms, something which she/he feels obligated to address. Another in which the mediator perceives the higher-intensity context as significantly costlier with regard to her/his own reputation for being a “successful” mediator. While the effects of high-intensity conflict may travel through any of the two pathways of humanitarian or reputational concerns, both are here expected to make mediator style more directive and settlement-oriented. The discussions below take a closer look at how this occurs.

When armed conflicts escalate to higher intensity levels, the stakes, urgency and challenges to address the conflict usually heighten for interested mediators and their organizations (Bercovitch 2011: 42-43). One way of understanding these contradictory processes through the eyes of the mediator is to conceptualize high-intensity conflict as a crisis situation. While there are many different elements to crises overall (see Rosenthal and Kouzmin 1997), past political, sociological and psychological research emphasizes three key aspects of political crises. These relate to perceptions of (1) threat, (2) urgency and (3) uncertainty (Boin 2005: 2-4; see also Sayegh et al. 2004). External stimuli is perceived as a threat when it challenges “the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system” (Boin 2005: 2). This in turn is coupled with a sense of urgency and “time compression”, as well as a heightened uncertainty surrounding the current expression of the threat and its possible solutions. Thus, while urgency and uncertainty exist and affect our behavior
in many different settings (Kahneman and Klein 2009), their combined effect with a threat perception makes it a crisis (Rosenthal and Kouzmin 1997).

Turning back to the mediator, high-intensity conflict may constitute a threat to the norms and values of the individual mediator. In particular, it may challenge the embedded values and drivers motivating the mediator to engage and invest her/his energy in the first place. This is where the two different pathways of humanitarian and reputational concerns come into play. When mediators interpret high-intensity conflict as a serious threat to their role as safeguards of human lives and well-being, this crisis perception will trigger increased engagement to fulfill this role and personal responsibility (see Svensson 2014: 22). Similarly, yet through a slightly different pathway, when mediators interpret high-intensity conflict as a serious threat to their opportunity for successfully assisting a resolution of the conflict, this crisis perception will trigger escalated engagement to safeguard the image and reputation of the mediator her/himself (Touval 1994). The two pathways will, in different ways, make mediators feel both pressured and allowed to be more directive and settlement-oriented.

In particular, given that mediators perceive high- rather than low-intensity conflict as a crisis of relevance to either their humanitarian or reputational concerns, they will be more directive. For example, the mediator may judge it to be harder to get through to the fighting parties with a non-directive style, and therefore mediate more directly. The mediator may even feel a need to take charge, in order to help the conflict parties to save face, to dare interact with each other or to make particularly costly concessions (Novak 2004). Finally, the mediator may want to speed up the negotiations to faster and more effectively reach her/his goals and therefore opt for a more directive mediator style. This general pattern applies both in situations where these goals are spurred by interests in alleviating the human suffering of the people, and where the motivation is safeguarding the success and reputation of the mediator. This gives us the first general hypothesis of this framework:

\[ H1a: \text{High-intensity conflict makes mediators more likely to be directive than low-intensity conflict.} \]

Likewise, given that mediators perceive high-intensity rather than low-intensity conflict as a crisis of relevance to either their humanitarian or reputational concerns, they will be more settlement-oriented. For this dimension of mediator style, mediators may see tangible settlement as a preferred and more measurable way out of the current high-intensity crisis than less tangible outcomes such as improved relationships and a deeper understanding of the conflict’s underlying causes. Crisis-like situations encourage people to favor short-term perspectives and thinking as opposed to long-term (De Dreu et al. 2009; Krebs and Rapport 2012). These situations have also been shown to be conducive to competitive negotiations (De Dreu et al. 2009: 547; Henderson et al. 2010).
Applied to mediation, this finding points to how shortened time horizons may spur mediators to favor a tangible agreement before other less-tangible outcomes. The mediator may also deem the parties’ relationship too distrustful and strained to deserve to be actively addressed, at least at the current intense stage of developments. Formulated as a hypothesis, this implies that:

\[ H1b: \text{High-intensity conflict makes mediators more likely to be settlement-oriented than low-intensity conflict.} \]

### 2.3.2 Characteristic: Mediator Profile

Mediator style is also likely to be shaped by the particular characteristics of the mediator. One of the most important such characteristics identified in research on domestic mediation is the background of the mediator in terms of training and accumulated experiences (Herrman et al. 2003; Charkoudian et al. 2009: 303, 309f, 312; Noce 2009: 210; Kressel et al. 2012). This educational and professional background is here termed mediator profile. Mediators trained in evaluative or facilitative mediation have been shown to be more settlement-oriented than those trained in either diagnostic or transformative mediation (Butts 2010; Kressel et al. 2012). While similar formal mediation trainings and particular schools of thought are less common (if not rare) among mediators in armed conflicts (Herrberg and Davies 2009; Wils and Herrberg 2011; Herrberg and Varela 2015), it is conceivable that their backgrounds and past experiences of mediation also have an influence on how they mediate today. Recent sociological research supports such a reasoning by showing that the organizational culture of the UN has come to shape both its mediation policies and its practices (see Convergne 2012a; Convergne 2012b).

Therefore, this dissertation defines mediator profile as the accumulated mediation experiences of a mediator, whether emanating from formal training or on-the-job learning-by-doing. Mediator profile captures the type of experiences mediators have in terms of three particularly central elements: past employers, mediation processes and conflict intensities. These elements of profile reflect how most research on domestic mediation has come to study and explain mediator style with reference to the mediator’s characteristics. For example, some of the earlier anthropological studies indirectly explain variations in strategies with reference to cultural aspects of the social environment, the format and setup of negotiations, and the type of dispute (Kolb 1983; Baker and Woss 1992: 334). Regardless of whether mediator profiles have come about through processes of self-selection or socialization, the experiences of different mediations and conflict contexts contribute to influencing mediator style. Before looking closer at how mediator profile might impact mediator style, its three components merit further specification.
First, mediator profile expresses itself in what type of employing organization the mediator has mainly worked for. Two types are relevant for this dissertation: the mediating IGO and the mediating NGO. Recent studies point to how organizations have their own and often particular practices that in turn shape or resonate with the professional behaviors and norms of its employees (Lorsch and McTague 2016). While such practices may vary significantly between different mediating IGOs and between different mediating NGOs, there are reasons to believe the greatest variation is to be found in comparisons between IGOs and NGOs. This also reflects related research results on conflict resolution styles that identify a central role for different organizational cultures and whether these emphasize addressing the interests and needs of one’s self (self-concern) or those of others (other-concern) (Holt and Vore 2006; Kaushal and Kwantes 2006). Mediating IGOs are typically more formal, hierarchical and characterized by state interactions and NGOs more informal, flat and close to civil societies (see Simonelli 2011: 150–153; Wong 2012: 17-19). Because of this, mediators having mainly worked for IGOs will more likely foster the political power dynamics of not just the conflicts they mediate but also the mediations they engage in. Mediators with more experience from working for NGOs may instead be more inclined to acknowledge and strive for equality in terms of power in the conflict and their mediation, looking for other ways to understand the conflict and their mandate. Thus, mediators having mainly worked for IGOs can be categorized as high-profile mediators, while those having predominantly worked for NGOs represent low-profile mediators.

Second, mediator profile can also be gauged by past experiences of different tracks of mediation. Mediation tracks represent the format of negotiations and are commonly categorized into Track 1, Track 1.5, Track 2 and Track 3 level processes (Saunders 1999; Strimling 2006; Böhmelt 2010a; Mitchell 2013). Track 1 covers official and formal diplomatic processes involving the highest leadership, such as state or other official actors. Closely related, Track 1.5 implies unofficial, public or private, diplomatic processes involving official representatives of the parties, complementing Track 1 initiatives. Track 2 processes are unofficial and informal involving members of adversarial groups or nations, whereas Track 3 constitutes unofficial and informal processes, involving other actors and groups not directly related to the main parties yet still relevant for long-term peacebuilding. High-profile mediators have mainly operated in Tracks 1 or 1.5 where settlement is a common goal, whereas low-profile mediators draw on experiences from Tracks 2 or 3 where dialogue is a common goal.

Third, experiences of different conflict intensities constitute a final component of mediator profile. Conflict intensity is, again, defined as the type and magnitude of the effects of organized, armed violence. Here, however, it is the accumulated experiences of perceived low- or high-intensity conflicts that feed into a mediator’s profile. In particular, mediators having mainly worked in high-intensity contexts can be categorized as high-profile and those with...
greatest experience of low-intensity conflict, in turn, as low-profile. This is because mediators with a predominant experience of high-intensity contexts will themselves have been spurred to be directive, for example, or seen others be more directive in high-intensity conflicts, as opposed to low-intensity conflicts. These experiences, in turn, serve to create preferred models for how to understand and mediate in similar contexts (Khong 1992). Combining all three elements, we can theoretically differentiate between low and high mediator profiles by looking into their past employers, mediation tracks and conflict intensities.

How then does a mediator’s profile affect her/his mediator style? I propose that high-profile mediators will be inclined to be both more directive and settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators. More precisely, accumulated experiences of different employers, tracks and intensities will have either fostered or reinforced particular views in the mediator that in turn consciously or subconsciously guide her/him to different mediator styles. The practices of domestic mediators have previously been explained by the “world views” of these mediators (see Goldberg 2009). For international mediators, I suggest that we may differentiate between three different types of views. These three pathways capture the mediator’s views on conflict and stem directly from the theorizing of Kleiboer (1998).11 The realist, psychological and sociological views each has its own understanding of how conflict comes about, and therefore also how it should be solved. The realist view assumes rational actors and understands conflicts as a result of scarce resources and power imbalances (see e.g. Touval and Zartman 1985a; Hopmann 1995; Kleiboer 1998). The psychological view sees violent conflict as a result of mistrust and misperceptions, relating in particular to the parties’ attitudes and behaviors (see e.g. Stein 1985; Fisher and Keashly 1988; Kelman 1992; Kleiboer 1996: 380f). Finally, the sociological view thinks of conflict as consisting of identity (sub)groups and arising from unmet basic human needs (see e.g. Azar 1990; Burton 1991; Kleiboer 1996: 382f). While Kleiboer (1998) uses these categorizations to understand mediation scholars and their research, they are here argued to be equally relevant for understanding the views of mediation practitioners.12

When mediators have an overall high rather than low profile, they are more likely to understand armed conflict from a realist perspective, which in turn paves the way for a more directive mediator style. The organizational cultures

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11 This analysis does not pick up on a fourth philosophical perspective, the structuralist view, as it discards mediation as inherently irrelevant and ineffective for solving conflicts (Kleiboer 1998)—assumptions any mediator is highly unlikely to host.

12 Related research on negotiation styles further supports this choice. Some work explaining bargaining and problem-solving negotiations claims that variations partially stem from realist and liberalist philosophical understandings respectively (see Hopmann 1995; Wagner 2008). The similarities between bargaining and problem-solving negotiation styles and a mediator’s orientation and directiveness are here leveraged to apply the theorizing of Kleiboer (1998) on the practice of mediation.
of the IGO, the formality of Track 1 and 1.5, and the experiences of mainly high-intensity conflict settings themselves embed aspects of realist and psychological views on conflict. For example, IGOs ultimately consist of and are steered by states, have a generally more hierarchical organizational culture and are commonly better resourced for implementing various “carrots and sticks” when mediating. These aspects resonate well with world views emphasizing geopolitics and power imbalances. So does the formality, elite focus and official status of higher mediation tracks (1 and 1.5). Even experiences of past high-intensity conflicts will propel mediators to be directive as they have seen other mediators deal with similar situations directly, inferring that this is a suitable way of mediating in high-intensity conflicts. Thus, realist views will spur mediators to want to change incentive structures and keep a tight grip over the mediation process and information flows in order to help solve the conflict. In other words, realist views urge the mediator to be directive. Low-profile mediators, in turn, are more likely to nurture psychological or sociological views on how conflicts come about. This comes from working for less-power-resourced NGO employers and being more used to focusing on dialogue and open-ended processes and lower-intensity conflicts. Such mediators may have a particular sensitivity for the voices, needs and self-determination of the conflict parties and their civilian constituents. In this way, low-profile mediators, through proclivities to alleviate misunderstandings or help fill underlying social needs, are inclined to be non-directive. This reasoning lead to a first expectation on mediator profile:

**H2a: High mediator profile makes mediators more likely to be directive than low mediator profile.**

Similarly, high-profile mediators, through realist or psychological views, will be inclined to be more settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators. High-profile mediators hosting realist or psychological views on conflict are likely to emphasize tangible outcomes, strategic thinking and analyses focused on internal intelligence and elite resources. This enables them to address power imbalances or misunderstandings perpetuated by political elites. In higher-level mediation tracks, most commonly used by IGOs in high-intensity conflicts, settlement-oriented mediator styles are inherently encouraged through their focus on negotiation, concession-making and sometimes attitudinal change (Mapendere 2005). Conversely, Track 2 and 3 level initiatives, more concerned with dialogue-like formats, resonate more with sociological or psychological views. Low-profile mediators with such views will serve to sensitize the mediator to wanting to improve the interactions of the conflict parties based on a more inclusive and comprehensive analysis that not only rests on strategic, but also emotive and intuitive, reasoning. In other words, low-profile mediators will, through sociological or psychological views, be shaped to be
more relationship-oriented. This gives us the formal hypothesis:

\textit{H2b: High mediator profile makes mediators more likely to be settlement-oriented than low mediator profile.}

2.3.3 Characteristic: Mediator Personality

A second characteristic of theoretical importance to mediator style is a mediator’s personality. Not only is personality often assumed to guide mediator style in armed conflicts (see Young 1972; Martin 2006), it has also been shown to be related to conflict resolution styles and negotiation styles in interpersonal disputes (Barry and Friedman 1998; Park and Antonioni 2007; Wood and Bell 2008). For example, experimental investigations find personality-related variations in the four common conflict resolution styles of competing (domination), accommodating (obliging), collaborating (integration) and avoiding (withdrawal). Overall, experimental studies based on self-evaluations point to conflict resolution and negotiation styles as explained by elements of personality (Sternberg and Soriano 1984; Ogilvie and Kidder 2008; Wood and Bell 2008; O’Neill and Allen 2014). In fact, personality traits have consistently been shown to shape various kinds of political behavior (Gerber et al. 2011). Thus, although few studies have directly explored the role of personality in relation to mediator style and although some question its measurement and explanatory relevance (see for example Block 2010; Boyle 2008), conflict resolution research and popular assumptions make it relevant to study here.\textsuperscript{13}

The concept of personality encompasses several innate, subconscious and enduring elements reflecting the nature of individuals. Personality usually forms very early in life, or later in relation to rare and transformative events (Gerber et al. 2011). While there are a multitude of approaches to understanding and measuring personality—ranging from self-esteem, anxiety, and motivation, to emotional intelligence (EQ), critical thinking (IQ) and trusting nature (Barry and Friedman 1998; Mintu-Wimsatt 2002; Kaushal and Kwantes 2006; Ogilvie and Kidder 2008; Monich and Matveeva 2012)—this dissertation conceptualizes personality as traits in line with a growing body of personality research (Wood and Bell 2008; Gerber et al. 2011; Sundberg 2015). In particular, personality is here conceptualized as consisting of five different dispositional categorizations called the “five-factor traits” or the “Big Five”. The five categories of personality traits encompass “individual characteristics that are affective, experiential, and motivational, as well as interpersonal” (McCrae and Costa 1989; Barry and Friedman 1998: 346). The Big Five personality

\textsuperscript{13} Although some previous studies have found stylistic variations between men and women mediators (Herrman et al. 2003; Nelson and Ben-Ari 2010), this is not studied here for two reasons. First, there is still no consensus on if and how gender affects mediator style. Second, there is currently, and unfortunately, not enough variation in biological, psychological, social or legal gender among mediators of armed conflicts—particularly those in high-level positions.
profiles include (1) Openness to experience, (2) Conscientiousness, (3) Extraversion, (4) Agreeableness and (5) Neuroticism (OCEAN).\footnote{Trait profiles can also be further disaggregated into “facets” as done by, for example, Jennstål (2012).}

In the interest of theorizing and studying relationships of greatest relevance to mediator style as conceptualized here, two of the five personality factors will be further explored in this dissertation: Agreeableness (A) and Extraversion (E). These two personality profiles have received more consistent support for explaining competitive conflict resolution and negotiation styles in interpersonal conflicts, than the other three (Park and Antonioni 2007; Wood and Bell 2008: 128). For example, Wood and Bell (2008) find that Agreeableness and Extraversion together best explain variations in the four common conflict resolution styles. They are also closely related to each other and often covary (Wood and Bell 2008), which further merits studying the two. Furthermore, related studies of negotiation behavior have shown that Agreeableness and Extraversion seem to determine how individuals interact in negotiations (Jennstål 2012: 169).

Agreeableness (A) concerns how friendly and compassionate versus analytical and detached individuals are (Gerber et al. 2011). Agreeable persons strive for positive interactions with others and are generally conciliatory and conflict-avoiding (Park and Antonioni 2007). Individuals of high Agreeableness are also more altruistic and modest than their low counterparts, who are more inclined to place their own needs and capacities before others, often expecting and striving for “personal gain” (Jennstål 2012: 171f). Extraversion (E) captures how individuals relate to their surroundings, whether they are outgoing and energetic or solitary and reserved (Gerber et al. 2011). Confidence levels and “inter-personal assertiveness” are also part of this dimension (Costa and McRae 1992; Barry and Friedman 1998: 246), making extraverts dominant, “committed to action” and resistant to others’ judgment (Jennstål 2012: 160). Extraverts are also more excitement-seeking, fast-paced and overall passionate and enthusiastic than introverts (Jennstål 2012: 158-65).

How can we expect differently agreeable and extravert mediators to vary in mediator style? I propose that mediators of low Agreeableness or high Extraversion will on average be both more directive and more settlement-oriented than those of high Agreeableness or low Extraversion. While the exact pathways through which Agreeableness and Extraversion impact mediator style remain to be further specified in light of this study, previous research points to three relevant “personality processes” that are either cognitive, emotional or motivational (Park and Antonioni 2007: 111). More precisely, different personalities will perceive conflict differently and thus engage accordingly (cognitive processes). When behaviors resonate with personalities, individuals will experience positive feelings (emotional processes). Finally, motivations, covarying with personalities, will make individuals value certain approaches
more than others (motivational processes) (Park and Antonioni 2007: 111; Hampson 2012).

Turning first to Agreeableness, low-Agreeableness individuals have been shown to value “power-assertion tactics” more than high-Agreeableness individuals and should therefore likely be more directive as mediators (Graziano and Hair 1996; Jensen-Campbell and Hair 1996; Wood and Bell 2008). These mediators will typically be comfortable with more confrontative behavior as they are not afraid of conflict and have an overall easier time emotionally distancing themselves from others. Furthermore, and related to the motivational pathway, the fact that low-Agreeableness mediators may place their own “egoistic” needs over others will likely also make these mediators more sensitive to reputational concern as discussed in relation to conflict intensity. Resonating with results on conflict resolution styles, low-Agreeableness personalities will therefore be more inclined to coerce others and promote themselves before others. In short, Agreeableness is expected to relate to directiveness in the following manner:

**H3a:** Low Agreeableness makes mediators more likely to be directive than high Agreeableness.

Similarly, low-Agreeableness mediators are likely more settlement-oriented because of their inclination to boast, promote their own advancement and look for “success”. When mediators are less interested in positive interactions they will likely interpret the conflict as more closely related to the contested issues than the parties’ interactions. In this way, cognitive processes filtering the analysis of low-Agreeableness mediators will have them favor a settlement-oriented before a relationship-oriented style. Furthermore, emotive and motivational processes may together lead mediators of low Agreeableness to strive for “success” in terms of tangible progress on the contested issues. In armed conflicts in particular, low-Agreeableness mediators will detach the problem and solution from that of the parties’ interactions and look to other elements, such as the grievances. These processes produce the following hypothesis:

**H3b:** Low Agreeableness makes mediators more likely to be settlement-oriented than high Agreeableness.

Moving on to Extraversion, previous research has shown that more extravert personalities are more likely to have an impact on others and be confrontative, whereas introverts are most likely to choose avoiding conflict resolution strategies (Barry and Stewart 1997; Wood and Bell 2008). High-Extraversion mediators are therefore also likely to be more directive. As they are more outgoing and assertive, extravert personalities are likely to enjoy interacting with others (Hampson 2012). Having a more directive rather than non-directive mediator style will also imply interacting more with others, which will resonate more
with high-Extraversion mediators with high self-esteem. In other words, a directive mediator style likely gives extravert mediators positive feelings, where introvert mediators would experience negative ones. High self-esteem also makes extraverts less sensitive to the judgment of others, which is why directive mediator styles will be experienced as less costly for high-Extraversion mediators than for their low-Extraversion colleagues. In this way, Extraversion can be expected to shape directiveness:

**H4a: High Extraversion makes mediators more likely to be directive than low Extraversion.**

Finally, it is also conceivable that extravert mediators are also more settlement-oriented, even though there is less mediation-related research on the relationship. Some research has proposed that extraverts are more open to addressing problems head on and being kind of “problem-solvers” (Hampson 2012). In the context of conflicts, problem-solving implies identifying and creating solutions to concrete issues and grievances of the parties (Fisher and Ury 1981; Wagner 2008). This indicates that high-Extraversion mediators could be inclined to be more settlement-oriented. They may feel greater satisfaction from getting to work with and focusing on identifying solutions to an armed conflict than investing in improving the communication, working trust and relationship between the parties. Coupled with a fast way of working and high confidence, extravert mediators may experience settlement-oriented mediation as more concretely rewarding and “effective”. This gives the final hypothesis:

**H4b: High Extraversion makes mediators more likely to be settlement-oriented than low Extraversion.**
3. Research Design

This chapter introduces the general layout and detailed elements of the research design of the dissertation. This implies discussing the overall approach used for explaining mediator styles in light of the theoretical framework on context and characteristics. First, it presents the studied sample of mediators and the larger mixed-method approach designed to help build theory. Second, it takes a closer look at the survey experiment by discussing survey item operationalizations, implementation, analysis methods and data. Third, and finally, the chapter elaborates on the details of the semi-structured interviews in terms of operationalizations of the questions, implementation, analysis and material.

3.1 Mixed Mediators and Mixed Methods

Two overarching questions help specify the foundation and structure of this study’s research design: 1) Where do we look for answers? 2) How do we best collect and interpret these answers?

3.1.1 The International Mediators

This study deals with mediator style in armed conflict at the level of the individual mediator. As previously specified, mediation of armed conflict implies a third-party-assisted process of structured communication between two or more organized, armed actors designed for the purpose of addressing their behavior and resolving the contested issues (see Beardsley 2011: 18; Beber 2012). Armed conflicts engage at least two or more formally or informally organized actors with political grievances concerning governance or territorial control for which the actors use armed violence (UCDP 2016; Wallensteen 2015). While intra-state armed conflicts, often referred to as civil war, represent the largest proportion of ongoing armed conflicts, this dissertation also studies related inter-state as well as communal conflicts.15 Mediator style is a combined expression of how individuals mediate in terms of themes in goals and behavior in directiveness and orientation.

Given these definitions and the overall research question, which mediators, more precisely, does this study concern and why? This dissertation focuses

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15 Communal conflicts are “violent conflict[s] between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity”, which may vary along ethnic, religious or land claim related lines (Elfversson 2015: 792).
on individual mediators, which includes all who de facto engage in mediation activities, from preparing and setting up meeting space for the parties, to shuttling between them, to chairing and coordinating direct negotiations. Here referred to as “mediators”, “international mediators”, “mediating individuals” or “intermediaries”, these individuals can thus be categorized as either 1) the typical official and high-level mediators, with some form of title, including Special Representatives, Envoys and Directors; or 2) the less visible but nevertheless actively mediating mediators, found among political advisors and staff, mediation support staff and mediation consultants. These individual mediators are in turn sampled from two out of four types of peacemaking third parties: inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individual mediators (Svensson and Onken 2015). This dissertation studies peacemaking IGOs and NGOs. They represent important international players in contemporary conflict resolution and are explicitly mandated to mediate armed conflicts and therefore staff a broad variety of relevant mediating individuals. IGOs are often identified as the second most common type of third-party peacemaker (30%) next to states (59%) (Svensson and Onken 2015). While NGO peacemakers appear to mediate less frequently (6%)—on par with independently mediating individuals (5%) (Svensson and Onken 2015)—several NGOs have played important roles in progressing peace processes in, for example, Aceh (Indonesia) and Kosovo (Kivimäki and Gorman 2008). Both IGOs and NGOs are also mandated to preserve peace and security through mediation, which differentiates them from state and individual third parties who may choose, but are not required, to offer their mediation services where needed or requested (see Nissen 2015). At the same time, the overall organizational differences between IGOs and NGOs in terms of structure, size, hierarchy and culture offer important opportunities for exploring mediator styles of low- and high-profile mediators.

Out of the universe of possible peacemaking IGOs and NGOs, I sample individual mediators from four IGOs and three NGOs. The four IGOs include the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The three NGOs include Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC), and MediatEur. These are relevant to study and compare as

16 Note however that a few other peacemaking organizations are also represented in some of the survey and interview material.
they all have explicit international mediation mandates and identities. They also operate in similar types of intra-state armed conflict contexts.

Sampled individuals within these organizations span a broad range of positions and experiences that fall within the two types of mediators mentioned above. For the UN, this covers 1) Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs), Special Envoys (SEs) and 2) their closest Political Advisors and Officers, as well as the leadership and Civil Affairs Officers of peacekeeping missions (Department of Peacekeeping Operations, DPKO); Peace and Development Advisors (UNDP/DPA); Standby Team Members, Mediation Support Officers and their external experts affiliated with the Mediation Support Unit at the Department of Political Affairs (MSU, DPA). EU mediators encompass positions such as the 1) High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU Delegation Heads and the Special Representatives (EUSRs), as well as 2) delegation staff, EUSR team members, and the Political Advisors and Officers at the European External Action Services (EEAS). AU mediators include 1) Special Envoys, members of the Panel of the Wise and 2) Political Advisors and Mediation Support Officers. IGAD mediators include appointed 1) Special Envoys and 2) their Political Advisors and Mediation Support Officers. Sampled NGO individuals are both of higher and lower authority types, covering CMI “facilitators”, be they directly employed by or indirectly affiliated with CMI; HDC internal mediators or external consultants; as well as MediatEUr staff with mediation experience.

3.1.2 Step-Wise Theory Building

The dissertation serves to build theory by first constructing a theoretical framework, then exploring its expectations through newly collected empirical material, and, finally, refining and reformulating the framework into updated theoretical expectations for future research.

In order to fulfill this stepwise construction of a theoretical framework for mediator style, I use a mixed-method design that leverages the complementarity of survey experimentation and semi-structured interview conversation. Survey experiments are systematic and structured inquiry forms with a randomized component usually representing an independent variable of interest.

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17 The UN mediation mandate covers the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the General Assembly and is enshrined in Articles 33 and 89 of its Charter as well as Articles 10, 12, and 14 in Resolutions 283 (UN 2011), and 303 (UN 2014). The EU formalized its mediation mandate with the institution of its European External Action Services (EEAS) on December 1, 2010 (EU 2012; EU 2009: 2–3). The AU mediation mandate concerns the Peace and Security Council, was formalized in 2002 with the formation of the AU Peace and Security Architecture (PASA), and is enshrined in Articles 6 and 3 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. IGAD, as a sub-regional and independent entity of the AU, also follows the AU’s mediation mandate. Finally, HDC (start 1999), CMI (start 2000), and MediatEUr (start 2007) all have formalized mandates in the form of objectives relating to mediation, dialogue and conflict transformation in armed conflicts.
for a theorized relationship (Dunning 2010). The randomized component is what makes survey experiments unique among survey types. It offers the opportunity to eliminate concerns for the existence of alternative explanations driving the results, so-called confounding (Fisher 1937). In other words, by using a randomized scenario in a survey, we may significantly increase our confidence in that the treatment (the independent variable of the scenario) is independent of expected outcomes (the dependent variable mediator style) (Morgan and Winship 2007: 74f, 82). This study randomizes low- and high-intensity conflict scenarios (vignettes) and asks closed multiple choice or single choice questions about mediator style, mediator profile, personality and a few other background questions. The format facilitates the identification of general patterns using relatively simple and straightforward analyses (Angrist and Pischke 2009; Fowler 2009; Angrist and Pischke 2010: 17f, 22).

Semi-structured interviews are oral inquiry-based interactions between researcher (interviewer) and researched (interviewee), partially guided by a preset structure and a set of questions (Kvale 2009). The content of the interview manuscript reflects the theoretical framework of the researcher while allowing for some flexibility to ask follow-up probes and let the interviewee bring forward new points and perspectives (Kvale 2009; Lamont and Swidler 2014). Interviews are particularly suitable for getting closer to the experiences and perceptions of the persons of interest (Lucas 2014). Therefore, this study uses the interviews to further illuminate potential relationships between context, characteristics and mediator style with a particular interest in both theorized and new pathways.

A mixed-method approach requires an active bridging between assumptions and purposes in order to effectively have its components speak to and complement each other (Checkel 2008; Goertz and Mahoney 2013: 247). In the context of this study, this implies using the survey experiment to explore the general traction of the theoretical expectations on mediator style among several mediators. This analysis gives an idea of how the theorized direct expectations—as well as non-theorized and inductively explored contingent relationships—play out in general and probabilistic terms. The interviews, in turn, help us learn more about the same relationships from a qualitative point of view. In particular, the interviews serve to explore why context and characteristics may impact mediator style. This qualitative material helps “validate the causal and statistical models used in quantitative analysis” (Freedman 1991; Dunning 2010: 26), providing qualitative observations on processes and mechanisms (Collier and Brady 2010). In other words, insights from within as well as across the interviews will help illuminate the details of possible causal pathways between context, characteristics and mediator style.18

18 To further bridge the quantitative and qualitative elements of this research design, the study treats its core concepts as non-causal, meaning that lower-level components are constitutive of higher-level definitions (Goertz 2011: 54, 62, 65). While this is fairly common for most
A causal pathway is here understood in line with Hedström and Swedberg (1998: 7), as the channel through which “the occurrence of the cause or input” of the independent variable “generates the effect or outcome” (see also Beach and Pedersen 2013; Bennett and Checkel 2015). We may think of causal mechanisms as “analytical constructs whose objective is not to match actual social instances, but to draw useful connections between them” (Pouliot 2015: 238). In this way, the study may point to relationships between X and Y by investigating their overall correlation as well as the specific causal pathways between them (see Arjona 2008; Elster 2007).

In sum, the study creates a general theoretical framework that develops our understanding of mediator style and its explanations. It revisits the conceptualization of mediator style and nuances its original definition in light of the survey and interview findings. It also provides refined expectations for how context and characteristics, independently and conditionally, may impact mediator style for cases similar to those of the studied sample.

3.2 The Survey Experiment

This section takes a closer look at the survey experiment’s design in terms of operationalizations, implementation, method of analysis and data. The final design of the survey experiment builds on a larger pre-tested pilot survey conducted in June 2014 as well as on a few quantitative and qualitative pre-tests of the new, updated survey design during the fall of 2015. Figure 3.1 illustrates each of these steps leading up to the final survey design. Further details on the survey can also be found in the appendices: Appendix A includes the final survey, Appendix B presents complementary descriptive statistics and analyses. Further details of the various pre-tests, some additional analyses of relevance to Chapter 4 and survey data and a codebook are also available upon request.

3.2.1 Survey Item Operationalizations

Operationalizing the theoretical concepts and making them measurable in the context of a survey experiment implies translating abstract and general phenomena and expectations into concrete and specific examples and questions. Mediator style is measured as indices based on the combined answers of multiple choice closed-end questions that reflect the theorized scales of directiveness and orientation respectively. The theoretical discussion on conflict intensity is translated into a text-based hypothetical conflict scenario where the treatment, the independent variable, varies between low- and high-intensity.

other research on international mediation, it differs from psychological studies of mediator style in domestic mediation: several of these are interested in identifying latent construals and underlying principal components of concepts from a causal perspective.

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Figure 3.1. Timeline over implemented pilot and pre-test surveys as well as the final survey, and three phases of interviewing, all conducted during the period 2013–2015.

contests and the potential mechanisms of humanitarian and reputational concerns are embedded into two versions of the high-intensity scenario. Mediator profile is gauged in an index based on three multiple choice closed-end questions, one for each of the three theorized components of past employers, past mediation tracks and past conflict intensities. Finally, mediator personality in the form of Agreeableness and Extraversion are measured in indices relying on a few 5-point Likert scale propositions. Further details about the precise format of these measurements, their validity and interpretation are specified below. The full survey with all its questions can be found in Appendix A while descriptive statistics for each of the below discussed indices are located in Appendix B.

Mediator Style
The survey measures mediator style in ten multiple choice, closed-end questions. Each question starts with a “stem” consisting of the beginning of a proposition relating to how the respondent would mediate the conflict scenario they just read. The proposition of the stem reflects either one of the theorized four components of directiveness or three components of orientation. The respondent answers the question by choosing one or several of five options that finishes the sentence. The answer options are formulated to capture degrees of directiveness and orientation and can be translated to non-

19 The survey also includes some general background questions on age, country of origin and education, as well as mediation learning and overall mediation experience.
directive/relationship-oriented (number 1 on the scale) and directive/settlement-oriented (number 5 on the scale). If a respondent chooses more than one option, these are ranked from most to least prioritized. This multiple-choice arrangement was chosen to mitigate potential aversion from the respondents to being forced to choose only one among potentially multiple relevant options. The precise operationalizations build on how others have theorized and measured elements of directiveness and orientation. The final items of the survey are designed and formulated specifically for this study and have thus not previously, to the best of my knowledge, been used in this form.

Directiveness is measured in questions reflecting the four theorized components: the parties’ incentive structures, information-sharing, process control and evaluations. Question 3 concerns the type of means the mediator would use to change the parties’ incentive structures, from “as few means as possible” (1) to “material sanctions” (5). Question 11 concerns the same component, capturing the extent of actors the mediator would engage, from “as few actors as possible (at most the conflict parties)” (1) to “as many actors as possible (from the conflict parties to the international community)” (5). The options of both questions have been inspired by suggested operationalizations by Touval and Zartman (1985b), Bercovitch (2011) and Kressel (1972). Directiveness expressed as information-sharing is also measured in two items. Question 2 asks about how the mediator would talk to the conflict parties, ranging from “mostly together” (1) to “mostly one at a time” (5). Question 9 deals with how the mediator would share messages between the parties, ranging from “using the conflict parties’ exact wording” (1) to “magnifying some information” (5). Experimental research of Welton et al. (1988) and theoretical writings of Poitras (2013) have informed the item on caucusing, and theoretical writings by, for example, Savun (2008) and Fey and Ramsay (2010) have informed the item on information-sharing. The two final components of directiveness, process control and evaluation, have one survey item each as they have been less theorized and explored in international mediation. Question 4 captures how much process control the mediator has over agreement drafting, ranging from “they have produced without my input” (1) to “I have produced without their input” (5). Question 7 measures how the mediator shares her/his evaluations with the parties, ranging from “as little as possible” (1) to “as much as possible” (5). The content and formulations of these two items have primarily been inspired by the questions in the Social Support Opinion Survey index adapted for mediation by Butts (2010: 142–43).

Similarly, orientation is measured in questions reflecting the three theorized components: trust, focus of analysis and underlying rationales. Questions 8 and 10 measure the first component of trust. Question 8 deals with what type of trusting relationship between the parties the mediator would strive to contribute to, ranging from it being “strongly positive and trusting” (1) to “as it is, but bridged via trust in me” (5). Question 10, in turn, captures what the mediator would prioritize overall, ranging from the parties’ “relationship” (1)
to “settlement of grievances” (5). Orientation as focus of analysis is operationalized in question 6 and asks the mediator to prioritize between the type of information she/he would use in her/his analysis, ranging from the parties’ “positions, interests, needs, emotions and values” (1), to their “positions” (5). Finally, question 5 serves to capture the underlying rationales of the mediator, asking her to specify how she/he would decide using processes ranging from “mainly intuitive reasoning” (1) to “mainly logical reasoning” (5). All orientation question formulations draw inspiration from the questions of the Approach to Mediation Scale (ATMS) by Butts (2010: 158–61), which expresses variations in orientation along extent and rationale of analyses. The design of question 5 has also benefited from input from writings by Kahne- man and Klein (2009) on intuitive decision-making.

The items are combined into dynamic unweighted indices for directiveness and orientation respectively. The indices measure the mean value of all items that the respondent has provided an answer to. In this way, missing data, or so-called not-available data (NAs), are removed and the constituent components are treated as independently sufficient. The analyzed sample unfortunately includes several NAs for the mediator style indices: 54 (31%) NAs for directiveness and 75 (57%) for orientation. Survey non-responses can pose a challenge to making unbiased inferences if they are systematic and widespread (Chen et al. 2013: 81–82). Biasing NAs are those that, for example, reflect the existence of potential taboos, represent reactions to other questions or survey treatments (in this case the conflict scenario), or signal an irrelevance of the survey item to certain respondents.

The NAs of the directiveness and orientation indices could be systematically related to three survey variables. An NPC analysis (see description below) indicates that respondents given the low-intensity scenario appear to be significantly less likely to respond to any of the directiveness items than those given either of the two high-intensity scenarios (ATE -0.171, p-value 0.027). In other words, the many NAs for directiveness might imply missing out on answers from respondents with the low-intensity scenario. Furthermore, basic cross tabulations suggest that respondents that are employed by NGOs rather than IGOs, or respondents with a personality profile of low rather than high Openness have a significantly higher ratio of all NAs for the orientation index. In other words, the many NAs for orientation might reflect missing out on NGO and low Openness respondents. These NA patterns could imply that the analysis will be less relevant to respondents given the low-intensity scenario, who have an NGO employment or personality profile of low Openness. At the same time, the odds ratios of these tests are still relatively small. Also, several other important covariates, such as age, years of mediation experience, number of mediated processes, percentage working as lead mediator, the other four personality profiles of the Big Five (CEAN), and Civil Affairs Officer status, do not seem to be systematically related to the NA patterns in the data. Details on these analyses can be accessed upon request.
Most plausible, however, is that the NAs are systematic and widespread because of the multiple-choice question format. Only these kinds of questions yield many NAs in the survey. It is plausible that the time-pressed respondents have perceived the multiple-choice ranking setup as too challenging or time consuming. This plausibility is further strengthened by the fact that the sample appears to report high values for Conscientiousness and have in general taken a long time to reflect on the mediator style questions according to survey metadata. Conscientious individuals generally want to do a good job and fulfill duties thoroughly. Therefore, the widespread nature of NAs potentially implies missing out on some variations, which though not biasing the results might have truncated the sample in unknown ways. Two of the items, however—the directiveness question 4 on process design and the orientation question 6 on focus of analysis—are particularly weak with less than 20% response rates. Because this likely also reflects their irrelevance, they are dropped from the indices. This implies that directiveness de facto covers five items on conflict parties’ incentives, information-sharing and evaluation; and orientation de facto covers three items on trust and underlying rationales. While the responses for the directiveness index are relatively evenly spread across its 5-point scale, the orientation index is generally skewed towards its relationship-oriented end. This implies that the survey is less able to identify variations in the settlement-end of orientation (as operationalized here). See Appendix B for more descriptive statistics on the mediator style items.

**Conflict Intensity**

The experimental component of the survey measures both conflict intensity and the theorized pathways of humanitarian concerns and reputational concerns. In particular, three different conflict scenarios are fully randomized so that each respondent gets one scenario reflecting either (1) low intensity, humanitarian and reputational concerns; (2) high intensity and humanitarian concerns, but low reputational concerns; or (3) high intensity, humanitarian concerns and reputational concerns. This setup acknowledges that pathways can be overlapping, fluid and unobservable as it embeds attributes of the two proposed mechanisms in the variable treatment. It allows for investigating causal pathways by “adding and subtracting elements of the treatment itself”, in this way capturing the relative effectiveness of the two pathways (Gerber and Green 2012: 333). Conflict intensity is operationalized as degrees of violence along “fighting”, “human rights violations” and “fleeing […] homes”. The low-intensity scenario depicts fighting as “rare” and “low”, human rights violations as “limited” and forced migration as affecting “few people”. Conversely, the two high-intensity scenarios talk about “recurrent” fighting “at a very high level”, “grave and widespread” human rights violations and “thousands of people” fleeing their homes. These adjectival qualifiers are written in boldface in the survey to make sure respondents register the treatments. Humanitarian concerns are included in the scenarios as information on the con-
lict causing “human suffering”, with the two high-intensity scenarios reporting “a lot” and the low-intensity scenario “very little”. Reputational concerns are included as the public profile of the mediator and her/his image concerns. In particular, and in the second high-intensity scenario, respondents learn that “all eyes are on you and your reputation as a mediator is on the line”, whereas in the low- and first high-intensity scenario, the texts state that “your identity is not revealed to the public, so your reputation as a mediator is not a concern”.

A set of treatment check questions toward the end of the survey serves to check whether, and if so to what extent, the respondents have interpreted the operationalizations as intended (Gerber and Green 2012). Respondents are asked to rate the scenario on a 7-point scale for the degree of perceived civilian casualties and military casualties (intensity), as well as human costs (humanitarian concerns) and challenge to mediation reputation (reputational concerns). They are also asked to evaluate the scenario on perceived urgency, complexity and realism, as these are relevant to the validity of the treatments. The results of the treatment checks show that the high- and low-intensity treatments as well as the pathway of humanitarian concern have worked as intended. The results for reputational concerns are, however, less straightforward (see Appendix B). While treatment check questions for intensity, urgency, complexity and humanitarian concerns are significantly different between the low-intensity and the combined high-intensity scenarios—as expected given functioning treatments—reported reputational concerns in the treatment check seem to be relatively high for all scenarios. In particular, although the mean reputational concern for the first high-intensity (mean=5.509) and the second high-intensity scenarios (mean=5.912) are significantly higher than for the low intensity scenario (mean=3.820), there is no similar significant difference between the two high-intensity scenarios. The survey respondents thus do not seem to have experienced the second high-intensity scenario as more costly in terms of their reputation, which is why this embedded pathway treatment appears to be less effective than the humanitarian one. This limits opportunities to differentiate between the proposed humanitarian and reputational concerns in the conflict scenario. In other words, if effects are identified for the scenario including reputational concerns, these could reflect effects of reputational concern that respondents are not reporting in the treatment check answers or be spurred by alternative, confounding factors. This makes it particularly important to interpret potential differences between the two proposed pathways with care and further explore their expressions and relevance in the complementary interview material.

Yet another way to evaluate the randomized treatment is to study the balance on pre-treatment covariates between the three different treatment groups of respondents (see Rubin 2005; Dunning 2012). Balance checks using randomization inference (see below) have been conducted for all background factors (age, region of origin, educational degree and field, current affiliation), the personality profile of the respondent (OCEAN), past mediation experience
tracks, intensities and employers) and extent of mediation experience (years, processes and percentage in the lead). This analysis shows there is full balance across pre-treatment covariates so that respondents of each of the treatment groups are on average similar across a broad range of factors. See Appendix B for further details.

**Mediator Profile**

Mediator profile is measured in three multiple-choice closed-end questions. Each question reflects the theoretical conceptualization as pertaining to the mediator’s main experiences of past third-party employers, mediation tracks and conflict intensities. Question 22 asks whether the respondent has mediated “on behalf of any of the below third-party actors?”, listing the options 1) individual capacity, 2) NGO (international or domestic), 3) state or 4) IGO. Question 20 asks whether the respondent has mediated in any of the following “types of negotiation processes”, listing the options 1) Track 3, as least formal and most civil society-based; 2) Track 2, as more informal and lower level; 3) Track 1.5, as a complement to Track 1; and 4) Track 1, as the highest level, formal process. Question 21, finally, asks whether the respondent has mediated in “conflicts of the below intensities”, listing and specifying the options 1) low intensity, 2) medium intensity, 3) high intensity and 4) very high intensity.

Just as for the mediator style indices, the three mediator profile items are combined into an unweighted index of dynamic means. The mediator profile items also suffer many NAs (n=88, 51%). Analyses similar to those for the mediator style indices suggest that one covariate may be particularly strongly correlated with respondents choosing not to answer any of the three profile items. Cross tables show that those who work as Civil Affairs Officers within the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations have significantly more cases of all NAs than other respondents. This could be the result of these respondents not recognizing and identifying with the questions. In general, the multiple choice nature of the items also adds to the prevalence of NAs. Most of those who do respond to these questions have mainly been working within the IGO world, which contributes to a relative right-hand skewness of the profile item. As a result, and in order to differentiate between low- and high-profile mediators, the analysis uses sample mean as a cut-off point. Low-profile mediators are therefore those with profile index values covering the range 1–3.698 and high-

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20 Past employer thus treats both individual and NGO employment, and state and IGO employment, as closely related.

21 Among four different theoretically and empirically relevant cut offs—first quartile, median, mean and middle of scale—the mean for a full mediator profile index is empirically most informative as its median is here equivalent to its maximum expression (4).
profile mediators those within the range of 3.699–4.22. These patterns together imply that the survey is not able to capture variations in mediator profile for its most low expressions and that analyses of mediator profile and mediator style may be less relevant to portions of Civil Affairs Officer respondents.

Mediator Personality

Personality, with a particular interest in theorized Agreeableness and Extraversion, is measured using a pre-existing set of Big Five survey items. In particular, the dissertation implements the 10-item Big Five Inventory (BFI-10) that measures all five personality profiles, including Openness to experience, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism. The BFI-10 consists of short statements about the respondent’s personality coupled with 5-point Likert scales, ranging from disagree strongly (1) to agree strongly (5). While there are several longer and more comprehensive survey instruments for the Big 5, the short 10-item inventory is particularly suitable for surveys where personality is one of several factors under study and time constraints are high (Rammstedt and John 2007: 203, 201). A ten-item battery is also more reliable than a five-item measure (Crede et al. 2012), as well as sufficiently applicable for analyses that do not rely on latent factor modeling (Lang et al. 2011: 550).

As Agreeableness and Extraversion are of particular interest for this study, one more item is added for each of these two personality profile traits from the 15-item Big Five Inventory (BFI-S) (see Rammstedt and John 2007; Lang et al. 2011). Thus, the survey measures Agreeableness in the two 10-item propositions “tends to find faults with others” and “is sometimes rude to others”, as well as the additional 15-item proposition “is considerate and kind to almost everyone” (as suggested by Rammstedt and John 2007: 110). It measures Extraversion in the 10-item statements “is outgoing, sociable” and “is reserved”, as well as the added item “is talkative”. In order to have all item responses ranging from 1=low and 5=high, the first two of the Agreeableness items and the second of the Extraversion items are reverse-coded.

The items are combined into an index of dynamic means as well as dichotomous versions of the indices, differentiating between low and high Agreeableness and Extraversion, respectively, along their sample medians. This implies, more specifically, that low Agreeableness covers respondents reporting index values 1-4.332 and high Agreeableness covers index values 4.333-5. Low Extraversion, instead, covers respondents reporting index values in the range of 1-3.332 and high Extraversion 3.333-5. Even though the theoretically most relevant cut-off point would be the mid of a scale, here 3 (1-5), this cut-off

22 Current employment is also explored as an alternative proxy for and measure of mediator profile, translating the open-ended answers from question 27 into categories of NGO versus IGO employments (see Bercovitch and Jackson 2001).

23 The medians 4.333 for Agreeableness and 3.333 for Extraversion are calculated from the datasets used in the matched analysis (see further below) and these differ slightly from the medians of the full dataset.
cannot meaningfully be used for Agreeableness due to its right-skewed nature. Therefore, to adopt comparable types of cut-off points this analysis relies on median values of the studied sample. Therefore, to adopt comparable types of cut-off points this analysis relies on median values of the studied sample. 24 This also implies that the analysis for Agreeableness can really only speak to variations in Agreeableness among an already overall “highly agreeable” sample. In other words, it may not be able to fully explore effects of Agreeableness.

3.2.2 Survey Implementation and Respondents

Who are the respondents of the survey and what implications does the survey implementation have on the interpretation of results? About 1600 individuals were originally invited to take the online survey as of early November 2015. 25 These individuals were mediation-relevant employees of, consultants for, or otherwise affiliated with IGOs such as the UN and EU; NGOs such as CMI, MediatEUr and HDC; mediation training providers such as the Folke Bernadotte Academy and other mediation networks like the so-called “Consortium” of which MediatEUr is a member. Because it is inherently difficult to know beforehand which individuals have mediation experience as defined in this project, it was estimated that at least 50% of those invited would not respond due to lack of mediation experience. Most of the invited (80%) received a direct invitation to their e-mail address with an individual link to the survey. The other 20% received e-mail invitations from their employers or affiliates who served as gatekeepers. Such indirect invitations went out to the UN’s Mediation Support Unit staff, Standby Team members and Expert Roster; HDC, MediatEUr and EU Special Representative Offices. Each original invitation to the digital survey was followed up with two reminder invitations when possible. 26

A total of 207 individuals responded to the full survey, which represents approximately 16% of all invited. While this is generally a rather low response rate, it is also not unusual in the context of certain elite surveys (Hoffman-Lange 2006: 10). Out of these, 173 constitute the main sample as they report having mediated according to the provided definition. 27 Of the relevant sample of 173 respondents with mediation experience, the bulk of the analysis rests on a subsample of at most 84 respondents. This stems directly from the fact that only 84 respondents provided enough answers to the mediator style items.

24 Robustness checks with alternative cut-offs are also conducted, covering the mid of the scale (3) and observational mean (Agreeableness 4.054, Extraversion 3.333).
25 I am only certain of 1275 of these receiving my invitation, as the other 335 represents my own rough estimate for the indirect invitations gatekeepers and colleagues shared on my behalf.
26 This was not possible in several of the indirect invitation procedures where gatekeepers did not respond to inquiries for distributing e-mail follow-up reminders.
27 In total, 21 respondents reported not having mediated according to the provided definition, which implies that 13 never answered this question and are therefore not included in the analysis.
Figure 3.2 summarizes some of the main background and mediator characteristics of the analyzed sample. These descriptive statistics show that the analyzed sample of 84 respondents well reflects the theoretically relevant group of mediating individuals. The respondents come from all over the world, with the bulk originating from Africa (39) and Europe (16). The median age of the sample is 49 years, but respondents range in age from 27 to 77. Many are well educated with master’s degrees (66%), bachelor’s degrees (13%) or doctorates (13%). Not surprisingly, a large proportion of these degrees cover a variety of social science fields such as international relations, political science and peace and conflict. The respondents have also studied other fields such as law, development studies and policy, business and administrative management.

When it comes to more mediation-related features, a total of 62 (73%) of the respondents were working for IGOs at the time of the survey, whereas only 8 (10%) were working for NGOs and the rest reported operating individually (11%) or for states (1%) (5% NAs). UN staff constitute the bulk of the IGO respondents, with 45% of the full sample working as Civil Affairs Officers for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Other IGOs represented in both the analyzed and full sample include staff from the EU Special Representatives offices, the AU and some regional IGOs such as ECOWAS, IGAD and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). MediatEUr and CMI are represented among the NGOs in both samples, as are some other European, African and Asian NGO mediators. Categorizing the respondents’ open-ended answers, 41% of the sample hosts typical formal, high-level mediator positions—such as main and deputy Special Representatives and Envoys, Directors and Chairs of organizations and units, as well as Senior Political Advisors to these. The rest of the sample (59%) hold less classical and formal mediator positions, such as Peace and Development Advisors, Civil Affairs Officers, Mediation Support Officers and other desk or field officer positions.

As expected, few have learned to mediate in formal academic training (14%), but rather through on-the-job training (43%) or individual learning-by-doing (40%). This stands in stark contrast to domestic mediation where the bulk have some formal academic training (Charkoudian et al. 2009; Kressel et al. 2012). The respondents have on average (median) mediated for 8 years and in 3 peace processes, though indeed some outliers report being active for over 50 years and in up to over 300 processes. In total, 27 (32%) of the respondents have been the lead mediator for at least 50% of their reported mediation years. Put in relation to the respondents’ current positions, there is a large variation for each category in terms of how much each respondent feels she/he has been in the lead. This lends further support to broadening our understanding and study of mediation in armed conflicts from the typical Special Representatives, Envoys or organizational Directors, to also include Peace and Development Advisors, Senior Political Advisors and other actively mediating individuals.
Figure 3.2. Some descriptive statistics for the analyzed survey sample n=84. The map shows region of origin, while the barplots summarize information on the respondents' ages, highest degrees, current employers in the top row; and years of mediation experience, number of mediated peace processes and main source of mediation learning in the bottom row.
3.2.3 Survey Analysis Methods

Three main methods are used to analyze the survey data for both hypothesized and exploratory relationships. These are descriptive graphical analyses, non-parametric randomization inference methods and parametric matching procedures. The first approach of illustrating the data transparently and in this way “letting the data speak” is a powerful tool for understanding trends, relationships and the quality of the data (see Pinker 2011). The survey analysis uses mainly scatterplots to graph relevant relationships. A few other plot types also help illustrate the data.

The second approach explores expected patterns and relationships using non-parametric randomization inference (RI) and non-parametric combination (NPC), which in turn builds on the logic of RI. RI is particularly suitable for experiments with smaller convenience samples, for which assumptions of normal distribution and independence of standard errors do not apply (Rosenbaum 2010). This is what makes RI non-parametric. It does not make assumptions about the data generation process, as for example parametric regression analyses methods do. Instead, it allows for testing of null hypotheses of pre-specified effects using the information within the dataset itself. RI uses the exchangeability of the randomized treatment labels by permuting (reshuffling) these within the sample in multiple simulations (thereof “randomization” inference) (see Edgington and Onghena 2007). In this way, RI produces multiple experiments using simulated data, which serve as points of comparisons against the collected, observed data (Gerber and Green 2012). RI lets you explore the so-called “sharp” or “strong” null hypothesis of no effect, first formulated by Fisher (1937). Such sharp hypotheses produce exact tests with a relatively small sample without relying on parametric assumptions.28

Using RI, a first step consists of specifying the null and the alternative hypotheses, and choosing relevant test statistic for each test. The hypotheses of Chapter 2 are all one-sided, meaning that the null hypothesis of no effect should for each test be coupled with an alternative hypothesis of a greater effect.29 The p-value helps determine whether or not the stated null hypothesis may be rejected in light of its alternative: the p-value reflects the probability of observing a test statistic that is as, or more, extreme than the one measured, given that the null hypothesis is true. The main test statistic used in this analysis is the average treatment effect (ATE), which is the difference in means

28 The sharp null hypothesis is more restrictive than the weak null hypothesis. Tests of the sharp null may, as Caughey et al. (forthcoming: 10–11) point out by referring to Romano (1990), lead to rejecting the null even though a weak null hypotheses of some effect might exist. This is particularly the case when using average treatment effect as test statistic and when variances differ. However, limited sample size and convenience samples together support using the sharp null hypothesis as it will be more reliable, albeit “tougher”.

29 I use one-sided hypotheses tests to evaluate my directional hypotheses in line with, for example, Dafoe and Caughey (2016) and Caughey (2016). Balance checks leverage two-sided tests.
between treatment groups. ATE fits well with the theoretical framework and is sensitive to “the expected alternative [hypothesis] while remaining robust to deviations from the hypothesized model” (Caughey et al. forthcoming: 11). Calculating observed and simulated ATEs for each hypothesis using the statistical software R, p-values can be obtained for the relevant alternative hypotheses. The p-value for each sharp hypothesis test indicates the probability of getting the observed ATE given the sample. In other words, whether the studied effect is significantly different from zero (sharp null hypothesis). Following statistical standards, effects are reported as “supportive” of theorized hypotheses when significant at the 1 or 5 percent level.

More precisely, the hypothesized effect of conflict intensity on directiveness and orientation is explored through three comparisons. First, mediator style results from the low-intensity scenario (1) are compared with the two high-intensity scenarios combined (2 + 3), to get at the overall effect of intensity, regardless of pathways. This effect speaks to the hypothesized relationships between conflict intensity, directiveness (H1a) and orientation (H1b). Second, the low-intensity scenario (1) is compared with the high-intensity and humanitarian concern scenario (2), to begin to explore the role of the humanitarian pathway. Third, the two high-intensity scenarios are compared to get at the effect of reputational concerns, given high intensity. Because both of the high-intensity scenarios embed information on high humanitarian concerns, subtracting the mean of scenario 2 from scenario 3 gives the ATE of the reputational pathway (see Gerber and Green 2012). Possible differences between the proposed pathways can thus be illuminated. Comparing multiple closely related hypotheses in this manner can, however, bias the inferences. In particular, when several theoretically related tests are performed on different sections of the same data and variables, 5% of all tests will be significant by chance and not by substantive difference (Type I error, false positives, given a 95% significance level cut-off). Therefore, in order to prevent such multiple comparisons bias and be more confident in the inferential power of the partial tests, the survey analysis also calculates overall p-values using NPC.

NPC builds on RI and calculates a “global p-value” for multiple alternative hypotheses without model assumptions or other approximations. If a global p-value lets you reject the global null hypothesis, this means that any of the alternative sub-hypotheses is true (Caughey et al. forthcoming). In this way, NPC first calculates multiple one-sided tests and p-values—just as for the above exemplified RI tests for conflict intensity and mediator style—and then combines these with a combining function to create a global p-value that accounts for dependence among the multiple tests. Following the recommendations of Caughey et al. (forthcoming), as well as Pesarin and Salmaso (2010: 128), the NPC used to analyze the survey results on conflict intensity and mediator
style makes use of Fisher’s product-combining function. Global p-values are estimated for both the ATE test statistic on a sample excluding NAs in the directiveness and orientation indices, as well as for a special difference of sum test statistic including NAs. Basic NPC is used to evaluate hypotheses H1a and H1b by calculating the combined effects of conflict intensity on directiveness and orientation. This implies that, using the R code of Caughey et al. (forthcoming), p-values for comparisons between the low-intensity and the two high-intensity scenarios combined are calculated for the two test statistics ATE and the difference of sums including NAs. In a next step, these p-values are combined using Fisher’s product-combining function to produce a global p-value for each of the two test statistics and the two dependent variables directiveness and orientation. The substantive interpretation of one-sided NPC analyses on the effects of low versus high conflict intensity is that a global p-value at or below 0.05 implies that mediator style overall, as either directiveness or orientation, has changed with the treatment.

The third and final analysis method of matching is relevant for the two characteristics clusters. These cannot directly be analyzed using RI, which depends on the logic of randomization. It is, however, possible to approximate randomization and calculate the effects of mediator profile and personality by first matching the respondents on a set of relevant covariates to make them as similar as possible. Matching mimics experimental randomization by balancing observations on potentially confounding covariates (Morgan and Winship 2007; Rosenbaum 2002). As a parametric method that relies on certain data generation assumptions, it is imperative that matching is done on all theoretically important covariates that precede the independent variable of interest in time (Pearl 2000; Sekhon 2009). Matching on variables that follow the independent variable in question will induce bias and should be avoided at all costs. This propels specifying two different covariate matching models for mediator profile and personality, respectively, as personality theoretically and generally is formed earlier in life than mediator profile (Gerber et al. 2011). Mediator profile is matched on the three preceding covariates of respondent age (continuous), region of origin (Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Northern America, Southern America) and degree in social science (1/0). Together, they may account for variations in experience, values and expectations of importance to mediator profile and mediator style. Similarly, Agreeableness and Extraversion are both matched against the respondent’s age and region of origin, as the only two surveyed covariates likely preceding the formation of the respondent’s personality. The precise covariate models used to match profile and personality, respectively, include the mentioned covariates and a lagged version of age, as well as, and for mediator profile only, an interaction be-

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30 Fisher’s combining function is particularly useful when you do not have explicit expectations for how the alternative sub-hypotheses will behave: either one or a few may be significant or all of them jointly true (Pesarin and Salmaso 2010: 129). Other well-known combining functions are those of Tippett and Liptak (see Pesarin and Salmaso 2012; Caughey 2016).
tween age and social science degree. Sekhon (2011) recommends including transformed variables in the form of lagged and interacted ones in order to improve matching.

The results of the matching procedures provide overall better balance on the above-introduced covariates between the compared groups of respondents: low versus high profile, low versus high Agreeableness and low versus high Extraversion (see details in Appendix B). Balance is evaluated based on the standard mean differences for each of the matched covariates. Where these mean differences become smaller or non-significant in the matched sample, balance is seen as having improved. The model that provides the best balanced—or is rather the least imbalanced, given limited access to measured covariates as well as a limited survey sample—is later used for RI analysis. For mediator profile, the balance is generally improved for orientation with no significant differences, whereas directiveness exhibits significant differences after matching for respondents of North American, South American or European origin. Alternative matching model specifications on the other hand do not provide a markedly better balance. Similarly, the balance across all covariates between low and high Agreeableness respondents is markedly improved, and particularly for respondents of European origin, for both directiveness and orientation. The minor remaining differences after matching are all non-significant. Finally, for Extraversion, balance on all covariates is markedly improved for directiveness and somewhat improved for orientation. In particular, matching indeed minimizes standard mean differences across the board, but still measures relatively large differences, for example, on North American origin. Although the final matched samples are all better overall, they still suffer from a few imbalances that may bias the results. Cultural differences of European or American respondents, for example, may account for some of the results for Extraversion, rather than actual personal characteristics related to Extraversion. Furthermore, and as for any study relying on parametric matching, results may be biased by other, here unobserved covariates that this study cannot capture. This will be taken into consideration when analyzing the results.

3.2.4 Survey Data

What type of data, more precisely, does the survey collect, what implications does this have and which are the ethical dimensions involved in the process?

31 This analysis uses the R package “Matching” and its GenMatch function (Sekhon 2011; Diamond and Sekhon 2013; Sekhon 2013). This implies identifying “optimal balance using multivariate matching where a genetic search algorithm determines the weight each covariate is given” (Sekhon 2011: 2). The GenMatch function determines balance “by examining cumulative probability distribution functions of a variety of standardized statistics”. The output of GenMatch in the form of optimal matched weights for each covariate setup is then analyzed using Match and MatchBalance to evaluate balance.
The survey data reflects the evaluations, expectations and memories of the international mediator respondents. It thus captures the self-reports of the actors of interest for this study. The self-reports serve to illuminate patterns in past experiences and present, hypothetical behaviors and goals. Self-reports constitute the most common type of empirical data collected for exploring mediator style in research on domestic mediation (see Charkoudian et al. 2009; Kressel et al. 2012; Wall and Dunne 2012). Such self-reports are also ethically more defendable than asking parties to conflicts to evaluate mediators, as this could have negative repercussions on concluded or ongoing mediation processes. At the same time, Kressel et al. (2012: 139) point to how some domestic mediation research shows that “mediator self-reports are highly unreliable guides to mediator behavior”. In the context of international mediation, however, where “mediator behavior” has mainly been studied at the level of third-party states and organizations, self-reports of the individual mediators constitute an important first means to mapping and explaining mediator style at the level of the individual.

To prevent potential biases arising from fading memories, most of the survey questions engage current choices and perceptions of the respondents, particularly in relation to the conflict scenario, personality and mediator style. Thus, while the three questions covering past experiences for mediator profile and some background questions do engage longer-term memory, most of the survey data is likely not constrained by fading memories. Furthermore, to safeguard the ethical quality of the collected material, the survey asks the respondents to share their answers anonymously. It also and early on stresses the voluntary nature of participating, so that potential taboos and other sensitive issues may be circumvented. The survey also collects the explicit informed consent of each respondent to participate in a study on “the actions and goals of actors mediating in armed conflicts”. In this way and by informing about the overall purpose of the study without revealing the details of its mediator style focus, the survey avoids priming the respondents into certain answer patterns.

3.3 The Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews, like the survey, rest on a foundation that can be specified to operationalization, implementation, method of analysis and material, which this part of the chapter takes a closer look at. The discussion serves to shed further light on how the interviews provide qualitative material on overall patterns and, primarily, possible causal pathways embedded in such patterns. Where the survey experiment was designed to quantitatively identify patterns in line with or challenging the theorized hypotheses, the interviews are designed to conduct a closer and more open-ended exploration of both theorized as well as new, complementary patterns and causal processes.
3.3.1 Interview Question Operationalizations

Operationalizing concepts and theoretical expectations into interview questions requires a slightly different approach than for the survey. Measurements need both to reflect theorized expectations and capture new, empirically driven insights of relevance to the theoretical framework and overall research question. In other words, the format and wording of interview questions should be specific yet open enough to invite the interviewee to share experiences on theorized and new expressions and causes of mediator style. As a result, the interview template consists of eleven core questions, several follow-up probes and four occasional questions. All questions with numbers are presented in detail in the full interview template in Appendix D. Besides these questions on the prepared template, each interview also often consists of specific follow-up questions and probes exploring comments related to the central elements of the theoretical framework and their potential pathways: mediator style, conflict intensity, mediator profile and personality. A few background questions (numbers 1-3) on the interviewee’s age, origin, education and current position and mediation activities commence each interview.

Overall, mediator style is operationalized in general terms, as the ways in which and how the interviewee or other mediators mediate. Likewise, conflict intensity, mediator profile and personality are captured in questions that speak to elements of the theoretical framework, yet invite the interviewees to share their experiences and reflections on or related to the topic in question. Follow-up probes help further illuminate the details of how variations in directiveness and orientation come about, as well as what potential pathways and conditionalities may be involved. In this way, the interview questions do not ask about each of the theorized components of the main concepts nor do they use the terms explicitly, but instead invite the interviewees to talk about their experiences of and thoughts on the larger concept in question, following up with specific probes to explore its details and nuances.

Mediator Style

Mediator style is, as mentioned above, primarily operationalized as the how of mediation, inviting interviewees’ reflections on how they themselves have previously mediated, usually would mediate or currently mediate in a certain type of context (emphasizing the role of conflict intensity). In this way, themes in behaviors and goals may be elicited through the interview material. Directiveness is operationalized as the way in which mediators relate to the parties in terms of control, decision-making and power. Expressions of directiveness in the interviews relate to terms such as facilitating, pushing, driving, forcing or controlling. Orientation, in turn, is operationalized as the way in which mediators relate to the outcome in terms of prioritizing addressing the parties’ interactions or the contested issues. Elements of orientation are identified in
relation to terms such as relationships, communication and understanding, as well as settlement, solution and agreement.

Four different questions are specifically designed to capture variations in mediator style, but other discussions of the interviews may also provide material of relevance to the operationalizations of mediator style (see section 3.3.3 Interview Analysis Methods). The first questions deal with in what way the interviewees characterize their own way of mediating. Designed to capture mediator style in its broadest sense, these offer the opportunity to elicit variations in style from the perspective of the mediators. The questions ask about how the interviewee’s colleagues would describe the interviewee as a mediator (number 6) and what things the interviewees “almost always do or prioritize” as well as would never do/prioritize (number 7). The indirect formulation of question 6 is designed to expand on the interviewees’ subjective evaluation by encouraging them to think about themselves from the perspective of a familiar outsider with whom they have worked and mediated closely (see Pouliot 2010). The last two questions both invite the interviewees to reflect on explanations for their way of mediating: by explaining their (or others’) style overall (number 8) and by contrasting their way of mediating in low-intensity versus high-intensity conflict contexts (number 9). For these questions, specific probes related to directiveness and orientation are often used to follow up, expand on and further clarify comments on mediator style. Finally, and only for some of the interviews toward the end, an explicit question on directiveness and orientation is posed to gauge the interviewee’s views on these (occasional question 4).

**Conflict Intensity and Potential Pathways**

Conflict intensity is operationalized to reflect the overarching theoretical definition of intensity as type and magnitude of the effects of organized, armed violence. Where the survey experiment specifies conflict intensity to casualties, refugees and human rights abuses in concrete numbers and quantitative qualifiers, the interview operationalization first speaks of “low” and “high” intensity in the form of a current crisis. This more general operationalization is then followed by qualitative examples such as “many people dying”, “intense fighting in parallel to negotiations” or “large refugee flows and human rights violations”. This setup allows for capturing expressions of low and high intensity in different types of conflicts, ranging from communal conflicts, to civil wars, to inter-state armed conflicts. Later, when analyzing the interview material to gauge potential effects of and pathways related to conflict intensity, low- and high-intensity contexts are calibrated to fit the intra-state armed conflict reference point. This helps comparability across the survey and interviews and allows for a broader range of experiences to be collected from the interviewed mediators. The theorized humanitarian pathway is operationalized as references to concerns for others and related worries over the humanitarian aspects of armed violence. The theorized reputational concern is operationalized as
concerns for self and related quandaries over the image, career or success of
the mediator. It should be noted here that reputational concerns are overall
less visible in the material than humanitarian concerns. This is possibly due
to potential taboos and silences attached to such perspectives, which current
interview questions may not be able to capture or reveal.

One main question (number 9) serves to capture the role of conflict inten-
sity, as operationalized above, for mediator style. It does so by inviting inter-
viewees to reflect on a specific hypothetical situation. Not only does it echo
the design of the survey experiment, but also helps elicit honest and critical
reflections of the interviewee (Pouliot 2015: 247). This may in turn mitigate
some of the concerns raised by domestic mediation researchers regarding re-
liance on the self-reports of mediators (see Kressel et al. 2012). At the same
time, it is important to contextualize such a scenario in order to make use
of their experiences of the mediator. Therefore, the interview template in-
cludes a comparative question on conflict intensity focused on the experiences
of the interviewee: “If you think about how you mediated in a low-intensity
conflict [specified when possible] and in a high-intensity conflict [specified
when possible], were there any differences in your way of mediating and if
so, what affected these differences?”. Follow-up probes on how, more specifi-
cally, intensity has or has not affected the interviewees’ way of mediating help
illuminate the theorized pathways, as operationalized above, as well as collect
reflections on potential new and alternative pathways.

Mediator Profile and Potential Pathways
Mediator profile is measured with reference to the background of the intervie-
wee in terms of the accumulated past experiences of third-party employers,
mediation tracks and conflict intensities. Similar to the survey setup, low-
profile mediators are those who have mainly worked for NGOs, in lower tracks
and lower-intensity conflicts. High-profile mediators are those with a main
background in the IGO world, higher tracks and high-intensity conflicts. In-
formation on the interviewee’s past is used to categorize the interviewee along
profile. Additionally, the interviewees’ spontaneous reflections on their per-
ceived mediator identity also feed into the analysis. The potential pathways
of conflict views are also studied. More precisely, the realist view is identified
through references to geopolitics, power politics, strategizing and competition;
the psychological view through references to misunderstandings, attitudes, un-
certainties and distrust; and finally, the sociological view through discussions
on needs, group dynamics, social understandings and identity.

Answers to four interview questions help collect material of relevance to
mediator profile, two of which also elicit information on the potential path-
way of views. A first and early question (number 4) invites the interviewee
to describe her/his professional background and accumulated mediation expe-
rience. By encouraging the interviewee to identify potential themes in these
experiences, the question helps map out variation in the dimensions of pro-
Mediator Personality and Potential Pathways

Out of the three independent variable clusters, the interview operationalizations are most open-ended for personality. Personality overall is operationalized as the person and her/his traits and typical features. More specifically, Agreeableness is identified in discussions on kindness/rudeness, empathy and altruism/egoism. Extraversion, in turn, is measured in reflections on, for example, outgoing/solitary, careful/excitement-seeking and charm-related traits. Personality-related pathways are measured with reference to reflections revealing possible motivational, affective or cognitive processes. In other words, potential pathways are measured where the interview material on Agreeableness or Extraversion speaks to certain rationales, feelings or thought processes.

Three questions indirectly capture expressions of personality and concomitant possible pathways. Question 5 on the interviewees’ role models allows the interviewees to relate themselves to other mediators, revealing information of relevance to their own personalities in the process. Question 8, explaining variations in mediation overall, picks up on the role of personality in a follow-up probe related to the features of a person. A final question of the interview template (number 11) also indirectly captures the formation of the personality of the mediator in relation to potential lessons: “If you could give some advice to your younger self, when you were still very new to the business of peacemaking, what would you say to yourself?” Reflections on this question help shed light on constant personality traits and potential life-changing events through the lens of learning. Similarly, occasional question 1 on how the interviewee learned how to mediate serves to complement this information.

3.3.2 Interview Implementation and Interviewees

From October 2014 to December 2015, 46 mediating individuals and nine of their non-mediating colleagues were interviewed in three phases. A first inter-
view phase focused on UN mediators, during the period of late October 2014 to January 2015 and with a basis in New York, USA. A second round of interviews broadened the sample to include NGO mediators from CMI, MediatEUr and others, as well as IGO mediators from the EU, AU and IGAD. This interview phase covered the period April–June 2015 and two field research visits to AU and IGAD headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and EU and MediatEUr headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. A third and final round of interviews, concentrated to November 2015 and implemented in parallel to the survey experiment, collected insights from several EU mediators around and during a visit to Brussels (see Figure 3.1 for an overview).

Interviewees were engaged in the study through strategic snowball sampling. This first allowed identifying and approaching a few representative and accessible interviewees and then, through the recommendations of these interviewees, inviting other similar mediators (Butler and Nickerson 2011; Butler and Broockman 2011; Höglund and Öberg 2011; Gerber and Green 2012: 211-52; Lelkes et al. 2012). In particular, this meant first mapping out potential interviewees for the already specified international IGO and NGO mediators. Subsequently, these were invited via e-mail and telephone directly or through gatekeepers, such as mediation support offices, knowledge production offices or academic networks. Finally, during and after each interview, further recommendations for other relevant interviewees in the same or a related organization were encouraged. The result of this sampling procedure is a group of interviewees with different positions, experience and organizational affiliations that roughly overlaps with that of the survey sample, with a few other IGOs and NGOs represented. Most interviewees have mediated themselves, while a few have not. Insights from the non-mediating colleagues are used for triangulation of information as they are not part of the main population of cases of interest (Beach and Pedersen 2013). See Appendix C for a full list of interviewees.

The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or over the phone or Skype. Each interview lasted between 25-90 minutes. They were generally shorter with field-based Civil Affairs Officers and active field-based Special Representatives and Special Envoys over the phone/Skype, and longer with more senior lead mediators in face-to-face sessions. Most commonly, the interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes and were recorded and later transcribed verbatim, including non-verbal and background sounds, according to a pre-set manual (available upon request) (McLellan et al. 2003). The few times when recording was not possible (due to requests of the interviewee or technical hindrances), thorough note-taking allowed mimicking transcription.
3.3.3 Interview Analysis Method

An iterative process of structured exploration was used to analyze the interview material. This method is designed to let the material speak to both pre-theorized concepts and expectations as well as new expressions and contingencies of and between context, characteristics and mediator style. Therefore, the interview analysis method is markedly more exploratory and qualitative in nature than the survey analysis methods. This also implies a greater interpretive responsibility of the analyst. The steps of the interview analysis are specifically tailored to the purposes of this study, drawing inspiration from process tracing procedures and cross-case comparisons (see Elster 2007; Beach and Pedersen 2013: 16; Bennett and Checkel 2015).32 Three separate but closely related steps reflect the general analysis process.

A first step maps the overall relationships and theorized pathways between context, characteristics and mediator style using the qualitative software atlas.ti. In particular, this step identifies and categorizes relevant segments of the transcribed interviews using pre-specified codes reflecting the theorized variables and pathways as operationalized above. The detailed coding schemes with original operationalizations and additional, inductive terms are available upon request. New codes for alternative explanatory variables and pathways identified during the process of coding are created and added to this scheme. Short summary notes are also added to the marked segments to contextualize in what way the text passage feeds into the code and the overall research question. In this process, each interviewee is also categorized into certain overall descriptions. For example, interviewees are differentiated between according to whether they speak of their own mediation experiences or mainly reflect on those of others, who their current employer is, their type of mediation roles and whether they received the question on conflict intensity or not. This first step thus helps lay the groundwork for where evidence can be found in the interview material for the various variables and pathways.

A second step nuances the identified pieces of evidence by comparing the application of codes across the interviews and further specifying some of the larger codes using subcategories where relevant. In this way, the analysis breaks down larger codes such as “conflict views” into their separate components, whether pre-theorized or new. It also attempts to systematize the new, inductive codes by also applying them to the interview material analyzed before the new code was first identified in the analysis. This process calibrates and refines the coding of the interview material.

A third and final step takes a closer look at the coded and commented segments and identifies larger themes of particular relevance to the pathways of context, characteristics and mediator style. This part of the process involves the greatest analytical decision-making, as it evaluates the evidence and iden-

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32 This differentiates both the design and the analysis from traditional process tracing which commonly focuses on one single case.
tifies the larger themes of the analysis. This happens first in relation to the interviewee and second in contrast to other interviewees on the same or similar topic. The intra-interviewee analysis loosely leverages Bayesian inferential logics of subjective probability.\textsuperscript{33} It weighs the “trustworthiness” of the presented information by evaluating the probability of evidence for any of the analyzed relationships and pathways in question (Beach and Pedersen 2013: 83-85; Bennett and Checkel 2015: appendix). For example, if a high-profile mediator with experience of public scrutiny seems to think that being concerned about her/his reputation is something bad, yet critically reflects on her/his own mediator image, this evidence for reputational concerns will be relatively more trustworthy than if a low-profile mediator who has not experienced similar public scrutiny hosts the same views and shares similarly self-critical reflections. Once evidence has been evaluated as independently convincing in relation to the interviewee, it is related and contrasted to similar evidence from other interviewees. In other words, this second part of the pattern identification process starts off in the identified trustworthy within-case evidence, and moves on to explore its cross-case representability. This allows identifying larger and recurrent themes as both independently trustworthy and recurrent. Results are finally represented as themes when they are based on reliable within-case evidence that is recurrent among some, several or many interviewees.

3.3.4 Interview Material

Just as for the survey data, the type of interview material and its ethical aspects are worth reflecting on. Similar to the surveys, the interviews collect the experiences and views of the subjects of interests, meaning they rely primarily on self-reports that engage memories as well as potential self-censorship. The interview material, however, differs in two important ways. First, apart from inviting reflections on the interviewee’s own mediation experiences, the interview also opens up for eliciting reflections related to other mediators’ mediation practices and style. While only interviewees with mediation experience may share material of the first kind, interviewees without mediation experience but working with mediation-related activities may provide material of the second kind. Together, the two types facilitate a kind of triangulation, incorporating both internal and external perceptions on mediator style. Second, the material focuses on the nuances and processes engaged in explaining variations in mediator style. More precisely, it emphasizes potential causal pathways of context and characteristics through the identification of “observable

\textsuperscript{33} Bayesian logics are commonly used for within-case process-tracing analyses and involve setting up and analyzing prior and posterior subjective probabilities for hypothesized relationships and alternative hypotheses, in light of a specified likelihood ratio (Beach and Pedersen 2013). Here, however, I only use the likelihood ratio element of this logic to facilitate the evaluation of the evidence.
implications of [...] underlying causal mechanism[s]” (Beach and Pedersen 2013: 16). As most of these pathways express themselves in the perceptions, choices and decisions of the individual mediator, interview material is particularly helpful for learning about the “implicit mediator thinking that is arguably at the core of mediator behavior” (Kressel et al. 2012: 156).

The mediator’s own causal models of mediation also seem to set the bounds for how they understand, explain and evaluate mediation overall and their own style in particular. In this study, this means that the interviewees are more likely to talk about mediation activities, views and characteristics that spring from conscious decision-making and, in the eyes of the interviewees, lead to “success”. Results of the interview analysis may therefore speak more to the “ideals” rather than the “reality” of the interviewees concerning mediator style—a challenge already identified in domestic mediation research (Charkoudian et al. 2009; Kressel et al. 2012). Such concerns may be mitigated in light of the overall purpose of the study, which is primarily to build a theoretical framework on mediator style.

A further significant feature of the interview material is the interactive process between interviewee and interviewer. This real-time, often also face-to-face, interaction reveals the identity of the interviewee, opens up for more variation in the content of the material and gives the interviewer a particularly central role in co-creating the material (Zahar 2009). Explicit and informed consent is elicited early on in the interview session to safeguard the identity of the interviewee, encourage open and honest reflections and to clarify the voluntary nature of the process (see Appendix D for details). Several other complementary measures help mitigate potential self-censorship in relation to taboo subjects such as reputation or details of specific mediation processes. While the theoretical expectations are not revealed to the interviewee, a brief note on the overall research focus on mediation and mediator style begins each session. Short of influencing the final analysis, interviewees again get to consent to their quotes if this has been requested during the interview session. Also, discussions off the record are not transcribed and therefore not included in the study. Finally, my role as interviewer has a particular influence on the data collection as it implies co-creating the material in dialogue with the interviewee (Brown 2009). This possible influence comes through in the way questions are framed, follow-up probes applied and discussions encouraged (Sriram 2009). The analysis procedure considers this when evaluating the interview material in relation to the interviewee (before comparing across cases). This is also further discussed in Chapter 6 when elaborating on the studies’ limitations and possible alternative explanations.

34 The interview setup itself also encourages reflections on conscious rather than subconscious processes (Kressel et al. 2012).
4. Survey Analysis

This chapter presents the main results of the survey experiment by first studying the direct and hypothesized effects of conflict intensity (H1), mediator profile (H2) and personality (H3 and H4) on mediator style. Two measures of mediator style are used: directiveness (hypotheses denoted with a) and orientation (hypotheses denoted with b). The analysis then explores the existence of potential contingent effects between conflict intensity and the characteristics of mediator profile and personality. The chapter concludes with some reflective discussions on the interpretations of the main results.

Results are reported in terms of average treatment effects (ATEs) and p-values from randomization inference (RI) and non-parametric combination (NPC) comparisons between treatment groups. While RI is used for both randomized conflict intensity as well as non-randomized, matched mediator profile and personality, NPC is only used in the analysis of conflict intensity. The ATE is the difference between the mean values of the treatment groups of each dependent variable. Each treatment mean is denoted with a blue diamond in scatterplots for both hypothesis tests and the exploratory analysis. When ATE is positive with a p-value below 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis of no effect and interpret this as support for the hypothesized positive effect. The size of ATE also tells us how many points on the 5-point directiveness and orientation scales respondents differ between treatment groups. All findings should be evaluated in light of some of the limitations discussed in Chapter 3 and further elaborated on later, in Chapter 6.

4.1 Conflict Intensity (H1)

The theoretical framework expects mediators to become more directive (H1a) and settlement-oriented (H1b) in high-intensity conflict contexts. An NPC analysis comparing the low-intensity scenario (1) with the combined high-intensity scenarios (2+3) measures a positive average treatment effect (ATE) of 0.846 points on the directiveness index (p-value 0.001) and a positive ATE of 0.430 points on the orientation index (p-value 0.077). Illustrations of these relationships can be found in Figure 4.1. In other words, surveyed mediators appear to become on average 21 percentage points more directive in the high-intensity scenarios than in the low-intensity scenario (H1a). However, to the extent that intensity has a positive effect on orientation, this is not significant.
in the studied sample (H1b). The global NPC p-value for the two hypotheses on directiveness and orientation combined is smaller than 0.001, further confirming that one of the hypotheses can be rejected. In other words, this should increase our confidence in that conflict intensity indeed and as expected seems to have a positive effect on directiveness in the studied sample. Multiple comparisons bias can be seen as less of a concern given the results of the NPC analyses.

Conflict Intensity and Mediator Style (NPC)

Figure 4.1. Distribution of respondents on the two mediator style indices and conflict scenarios of low and high intensity (n=83), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from basic NPC analysis and blue diamonds as treatment means. The global p-value for the hypotheses H1a and H2a, using NPC and Fisher’s combining function, is less than 0.001.

35 An NPC analysis using the test statistic difference in sum with NAs—and therefore also the larger sample size of 173 respondents—provides similar results with values of 35.73 for directiveness (p-value 0.003), 9.65 for orientation (p-value 0.21), and a global p-value of 0.007.
The survey analysis thus provides support for conflict intensity affecting directiveness in the expected direction (H1a), while no similar significant effect is measured for orientation (H1b). The finding on directiveness speaks to both earlier research on conflict intensity as a particularly important contextual factor shaping mediation, as well as common claims on the adaptability of international mediators (see Ott 1972; Bercovitch 1996; Wall et al. 2011). The analysis is not, however, able to identify whether this adaptive pattern indeed reflects assumed strategic or alternative subconscious decision-making of the mediators. That orientation does not significantly change with conflict intensity in this study challenges previous findings on domestic mediation. For example, studying the self-reports of domestic mediators, Butts (2010) identifies a correlation between the social context in which mediators report having operated and an overall dialogue- or resolution-oriented mediator style. The findings presented here could reflect a potential difference between domestic and international mediators when it comes to explanations for orientation. Alternatively, we see the differences as a result of varying research designs or slightly different conceptualizations. The survey of Butts (2010) is non-experimental and her conceptualization of orientation to some extent subsumes elements of directiveness.

The survey also indirectly explores whether, and if so to what extent, the two pathways of humanitarian and reputational concerns channel different effects on directiveness and orientation. RI analyses show that there are no significant differences in ATEs between the two high-intensity scenarios for any of the two mediator style dimensions (see Figure 4.2). This could be the result of respondents not perceiving the two high-intensity scenarios as differently costly for their mediator reputations, as shown in the treatment checks (see Chapter 3 and Appendix B). At the same time, respondents report on average less directive and settlement-oriented mediator styles in the high-intensity, humanitarian and reputational concern scenario, compared to the exclusively high-intensity humanitarian concern scenario. While not significant, this could be indicative of some respondents reacting to the scrutinizing eyes of the international community.

### 4.2 Mediator Profile (H2)

The theoretical framework also foresees that mediators with high mediator profiles will be on average more directive (H2a) and settlement-oriented (H2b) than those with low mediator profiles. As illustrated in Figure 4.3, RI analyses on a matched dataset produce an ATE of 0.072 (p-value 0.863) for directiveness and an ATE of 0.807 (p-value 0.023) for orientation. This implies that high-profile mediators are not significantly more directive than low-profile mediators (H2a). It also means that high-profile mediators are on average and significantly about 20 percentage points more settlement-oriented than low-
Conflict Intensity and Mediator Style (RI)

Figure 4.2. Distribution of respondents on the two mediator style indices and all three conflict scenarios of low and high intensity (n=83), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from RI analyses of Low versus High (hum) and High (hum) versus High (hum+rep), and blue diamonds as treatment means.

profile mediators (H2b). These results are worth relating to the fact that most mediators report an overall more relationship- than settlement-oriented style. Therefore, it might be more accurate to talk about high-profile mediators being on average less relationship-oriented than low-profile mediators.

The results thus indicate that surveyed high-profile mediators are on average significantly more settlement-oriented (or less relationship-oriented) than their low-profile counterparts (H2b). There is, however, no similarly significant difference in directiveness between low- and high-profile respondents (H2a). The significant relationship between profile and orientation echoes previous research on domestic mediation, which has found orientation to be shaped by mediator characteristics related to their past experiences and training (Chark-
Figure 4.3. Distribution of respondents on the two mediator style indices and mediators of low and high profile (directiveness n=70; orientation n=51), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from basic RI on matched observations, and blue diamonds as treatment means.

oudian et al. 2009; Butts 2010). Although the precise causal pathways merit further exploration, the identified pattern could potentially be explained by the views of the mediators: previous research has indeed found that accumulated social values and cultural expressions serve as mechanisms for negotiators’ conflict resolution styles (Holt and Vore 2006; Ogilvie and Kidder 2008). The dominance of relationship-oriented styles, however, contrasts with common assumptions about international mediators being settlement-focused. At the same time, it may also reflect the calibration of the survey items as well as the specifics of the surveyed sample. The insignificant and relatively small-sized effect of profile on directiveness challenges common assumptions about how mediators’ past backgrounds, here termed profile, contribute to certain
inclinations in directiveness. In other words, the results suggest that low- and high-profile mediators may not be as different in terms of directiveness as originally expected.

4.3 Mediator Personality (H3 and H4)

Personality in the form of Agreeableness and Extraversion is also theorized to matter for mediator style. Mediators of low Agreeableness are expected to be on average more directive (H3a) and settlement-oriented (H3b) than those of high Agreeableness. RI analyses for Agreeableness in samples matched on age and region of origin produce a positive ATE of 0.354 (p-value 0.200) for directiveness, and an equally positive but smaller ATE of 0.059 (p-value 0.845) for orientation (see Figure 4.4). As the high p-values show, these findings do thus not allow us to reject any of the null hypotheses related to Agreeableness. Therefore, neither hypothesis H3a nor H3b is supported.

Similarly, mediators of high Extraversion are expected to be more directive (H4a) and settlement-oriented (H4b) than mediators of low Extraversion. The matched RI analyses for Extraversion measure a positive ATE of 0.522 (p-value 0.078) for directiveness and a positive ATE of 0.749 (p-value 0.010) for orientation (see Figure 4.5). In other words, while there is an expected positive effect of Extraversion on directiveness, it is not significant (H4a). Conversely, the expected positive effect of Extraversion on orientation is significant (H4b). In particular, high-Extraversion respondents are on average 19 percentage points more settlement-oriented (less relationship-oriented) than their low-Extraversion counterparts. These findings are robust in comparison to alternative cut-off points for low and high Extraversion.36

The results thus indicate no significant effects of Agreeableness on either directiveness or orientation (H3a/H3b), as well as no significant relationship between Extraversion and directiveness (H4a). However, the analysis measures a significant and expected positive effect of Extraversion on orientation (H4b). The identified potential relationship between Extraversion and orientation reflects back on research indicating that high Extraversion individuals may be predisposed to enjoy problem-solving. This finding brings new insights to mediator style research. While the Big Five personality traits have previously been shown to be important for understanding political behavior of, for example, voters, politicians, military personnel, and consumers (Gerber and Green 2012; Jennstål 2012; Sundberg 2015), they have not before been systematically studied for international mediators. At the same time, the insignificant relationship between Extraversion and directiveness challenges common expectations about high-Extraversion personalities being particularly appreciative of assertive behaviors (Hampson 2012). It may also be viewed

36 Alternative cut-offs for Extraversion include scale median (3) and observational mean (3.333).
from a critical perspective that questions the explanatory role of personality for political attitudes and behaviors. While not studied here, some recent research on political orientation claims that the Big Five personality traits play less of an explanatory role than, for example, genetics (Verhulst et al. 2012; Hatemi and Verhulst 2015).

The insignificant results for Agreeableness need to be interpreted in light of the overall sample being highly skewed to the positive end of Agreeableness. In other words, where theory speaks of mediators with low Agreeableness as being more directive and settlement-oriented, the empirics do not directly reflect this category: very few respondents self-report Agreeableness ratings below the mid of the scale (3). Therefore, while the results presented here help
us differentiate between relatively lower and higher Agreeableness among the surveyed respondents, they do not directly allow us to measure low Agreeableness in its original, theoretical meaning (see for example Sternberg and Sori-
anno 1984; Kaushal and Kwantes 2006; Park and Antonioni 2007; Wood and Bell 2008; Kressel et al. 2012: 138). The relationships between Agreeableness and mediator style need to be further explored with a sample of greater variation in Agreeableness. At this early stage of researching mediator styles among international mediators and based on the above results, we may neither discard nor confirm a role for the Big Five personality traits and Agreeableness and Extraversion in particular. The findings do suggest that high-Extraversion

Figure 4.5. Distribution of respondents on the two mediator style indices and medi-
ators of low and high Extraversion (E) (directiveness n=110; orientation n=90), with
average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from basic RI on matched observations, and
blue diamonds as treatment means.

Extraversion and Mediator Style (matching & RI)
mediators, in this sample and given the matched covariate balance, may be inclined overall to be more settlement-oriented.

All in all, the analysis of hypothesized direct effects finds support for three of the eight theorized general effects of context and characteristics on mediator style. As illustrated in Figure 4.6, these would have us expect conflict intensity significantly influencing directiveness (H1a) as well as either mediator profile (H2b) or Extraversion (H4b) significantly shaping orientation of international mediators.

**Overview of All Theorized Hypothesis Tests**

![Graph](image)

*Figure 4.6. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for each of the eight theorized hypotheses on directiveness (black) and orientation (green). All confidence intervals above 0 indicate significant results. Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).*
4.4 Contingencies of Context and Characteristics

Characteristics may together with context also produce heterogeneous and contingent effects on directiveness and orientation. While such conditional effects have not been explicitly theorized yet, they may be explored by looking at a few select patterns in the data. Such an exploratory analysis implies sub-categorizing an already limited sample, no longer guided by pre-theorized expectations. The findings of this analysis should therefore be interpreted with extra care in light of the risk of multiple comparisons bias (Dunning 2010). This analysis looks closer at potential heterogeneous effects of conflict intensity for mediators of different mediator profile and personality. More precisely, it studies the potential positive or negative one-sided effects of conflict intensity on mediator style contrasting the results in sub-samples for low and high mediator profile, low and high Agreeableness, and low and high Extraversion. Because conflict intensity is the main independent variable for each of these sub-sample analyses, matching procedures are no longer required and we may rely on graphical and RI analysis directly. This analysis first looks at the combined effect on both directiveness and orientation of the two high-intensity scenarios as compared to the low-intensity scenario. It then explores and graphs the separate effects of the three scenarios of low intensity, high intensity with humanitarian concerns, and high intensity with humanitarian and reputational concerns. Only the significantly contingent effects are illustrated in these discussions, whereas further graphs can be found in Appendix B.

The analysis of contingent effects points to five findings of relevance to the overall theoretical framework: three related to mediator profile and two concerning personality expressed as Extraversion. No significant and contingent effects can be gauged for Agreeableness, likely as a result of its limited variation. First, only low-profile mediators become on average more directive in the two high-intensity scenarios combined than they are in the low-intensity scenario (ATE 1.125, p-value 0.037) (see Figure 4.7). In other words, high-profile mediators do not seem to become more directive in the two high-intensity scenarios combined, as compared to the low-intensity scenario (ATE 0.108, p-value 0.398). Although low-profile mediators are indeed and overall less directive than high-profile mediators in the low-intensity scenario—which reflects the theoretical expectations of hypothesis H2a—they are slightly more directive than high-profile mediators in the combined high-intensity scenarios. This suggests that low-profile mediators change their mediator style and become more directive in higher-intensity contexts, whereas high-profile mediators’ directiveness is less changeable. However, a closer look into directiveness and all three conflict scenarios reveals another possible explanation for high-profile mediators’ supposedly “unchanged” directiveness, representing another contingency finding.

Second, high-profile mediators become significantly less directive in the third scenario than in the second scenario (ATE -0.914, p-value 0.012)—a
pattern not present for the low-profile mediators (ATE 0.334, p-value 0.314) (see Figure 4.7). Thus, high-profile mediators of the surveyed sample are significantly less directive in the high-intensity scenario with both humanitarian and reputational concerns than in the high-intensity scenario with exclusively humanitarian concerns. This could potentially indicate that high-profile mediators become more concerned with their reputation than their low-profile colleagues when the stakes, urgency and pressure increase, making them less, not more, directive. This again challenges the hypothesized expectation of high-profile mediators being more directive than low-profile mediators (H2a). It remains unclear, however, whether high-profile mediators are more susceptible to having “the ego” subconsciously take charge in situations of urgency (Smyth 2012), or whether these reputational concerns are more conscious and strategic. These patterns also beg the question of to what extent and in what way low-profile mediators relate to image and reputational concerns.

Third, and turning to orientation, low-profile mediators seem to become significantly less settlement-oriented (or rather, more relationship-oriented) in the high-intensity scenarios combined than in the low-intensity scenario (ATE -1.313, p-value 0.021). This is also illustrated in Figure 4.7. This finding goes against theorized expectations on mediators becoming more settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts (H1b). It also sheds further light on the earlier non-significant finding of the direct effect of intensity on orientation. The split sample analysis suggests that intensity may indeed affect orientation, but differently depending on the mediator’s background. This can be interpreted as the high-intensity context subconsciously activating internalized schemata among low-profile mediators for more relationship-oriented mediator styles, in line with the argument by Kressel et al. (2012). Alternatively, it can imply that high-intensity conflict spurs an active investment in a more relationship-oriented mediator style because of conscious strategic decision-making. This potential contingency for orientation does, however, rest on fewer responses by the low-profile than the high-profile mediators, which could influence the measured results.

The analyses of mediator profile and conflict intensity together indicate that low-profile mediators become more directive and less settlement-oriented in the high-intensity scenarios combined, which is in line with expectations for context and directiveness (H1a), but challenges expectations for orientation (H1b). It also points to how mediators can be both directive and relationship-oriented. A possible interpretation of these patterns is that high-profile mediators may already be familiar with mediating in high-intensity intra-state armed conflicts, whereas this kind of situation, as presented in the scenario, is less familiar to low-profile mediators. To the extent that the result on orientation does reflect a conditional effect, it resonates with domestic mediation research showing that mediators commonly refer back to and apply insights from previous experiences to current mediations (Shaw 2010). In this reading, low-profile mediators could possibly be inclined to further emphasize internal
Conflict Intensity and Mediator Style in Split-Profile Samples (RI)

**Low Profile data**
- **p-value 0.037**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator Style</th>
<th>Low (hum)</th>
<th>High (hum)</th>
<th>High (hum+rep)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directive</strong></td>
<td>ATE 1.006</td>
<td>ATE 0.394</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(p = 0.052)</td>
<td>(p = 0.314)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-directive</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator Style</th>
<th>Low (hum)</th>
<th>High (hum+rep)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settlement-oriented</strong></td>
<td>ATE 1.452</td>
<td>ATE 0.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(p = 0.052)</td>
<td>(p = 0.318)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship-oriented</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**High Profile data**
- **p-value 0.398**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator Style</th>
<th>Low (hum)</th>
<th>High (hum+rep)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directive</strong></td>
<td>ATE 0.608</td>
<td>ATE 0.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(p = 0.103)</td>
<td>(p = 0.012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-directive</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator Style</th>
<th>Low (hum)</th>
<th>High (hum+rep)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settlement-oriented</strong></td>
<td>ATE 0.292</td>
<td>ATE 0.398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(p = 0.318)</td>
<td>(p = 0.827)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship-oriented</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4.7.** Split-sample comparisons between low- and high-profile respondents on the two mediator style indices (y-axis) and the three conflict intensity scenarios (x-axis), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from RI analyses of Low versus High (hum) and High (hum) versus High (hum+rep), and blue diamonds as treatment means. Title p-values compare the low-intensity with the two high-intensity scenarios combined.

ized preferences for a relationship-orientated style when in a crisis situation. Finally, that high-profile mediators are significantly less directive in the high-intensity scenario with both humanitarian and reputational concerns compared to the high-intensity scenario with exclusively humanitarian concerns, could potentially be reflecting career and image dynamics particularly relevant for mediators with experience of working in more public and official processes of Track 1 or 1.5. To what extent these patterns travel beyond the studied sample remains to be explored in future studies. The analysis, however, suggests a particular sensitivity for contextual variations and both dimensions of
mediator style among low-profile mediators and for reputational concerns and directiveness among high-profile mediators.

Fourth, moving on to contingencies related to personality, the two high-intensity conflict scenarios have a combined positive and significant effect on directiveness for mediators of high Extraversion (ATE 1.113, p-value 0.002) (see Figure 4.8). Low-Extraversion respondents show a very small and non-significant difference in directiveness between the low-intensity and the two high-intensity scenarios (ATE 0.177, p-value 0.34). Thus, although Extraversion did not earlier appear to significantly vary with directiveness as expected by hypothesis H4a, this analysis suggests that high-Extraversion respondents are sensitive to conflict intensity in the expected direction while low-Extraversion respondents are not. One way of understanding the identified variations is to look to the excitement-seeking features of high-Extraversion individuals and the reserved nature of low-Extraversion individuals (Costa and McRae 1992; Cyders and Smith 2008). The urgencies and raised stakes of high-intensity contexts could encourage high-Extraversion mediators to take greater risks and challenge the voluntary nature of their relationship with the parties and the parties’ relationship with each other by being more directive, feeling a sense of rush and excitement in the process (Park and Antonioni 2007). This could potentially explain why we see only high-Extraversion respondents, who are generally more outgoing and energetic, becoming on average more directive in the high-intensity scenarios than in the low-intensity one.

Fifth and finally, turning to orientation, low-Extraversion respondents appear to become slightly more settlement-oriented in the higher-intensity scenarios combined than in the low-intensity scenario (ATE 0.564, p-value 0.040). This is also illustrated in Figure 4.8. Thus, even though high-Extraversion respondents are overall more settlement-oriented than low-Extraversion respondents, only those of low-Extraversion become more settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts. A possible explanation for this pattern might lie in the perceived pressure of high-intensity crisis that pushes low-Extraversion persons to be more risky. The urgency of the situation might make them challenge their non-social nature to be more engaged in problem-solving, as crises have been shown to push decision-makers into more risky behavior (see Rosenthal and Kouzmin 1997: 293–294; Goslin et al. 2003). In this way, they may become more settlement-oriented even though they are commonly less comfortable addressing problems head on.

Thus, the analysis of personality and conflict intensity suggests that Agreeableness continues to play a minimal role for mediator style in this particular sample, whereas low- and high-Extraversion respondents may be reacting to conflict intensities differently. In particular, the exploratory investigation indicates that high-intensity contexts make particularly high-Extraversion mediators more directive and low-Extraversion mediators more settlement-oriented. The exploratory nature of the analysis demands making particularly careful
Conflict Intensity and Mediator Style in Split Extraversion Samples (RI)

Low Extraversion data

- **p-value 0.340**

  - **Directive**
    - ATE -0.046
    - p = 0.543
  - **Non-directive**
    - ATE 0.198
    - p = 0.065

High Extraversion data

- **p-value 0.002**

  - **Directive**
    - ATE 1.319
    - p = 0.002
  - **Non-directive**
    - ATE -0.350
    - p = 0.879

---

**Figure 4.8.** Split-sample comparisons between low- and high-Extraversion respondents on the two mediator style indices (y-axis) and the three conflict intensity scenarios (x-axis), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from RI analyses of Low versus High (hum) and High (hum) versus High (hum+rep), and blue diamonds as treatment means. Title p-values compare the low-intensity with the two high-intensity scenarios combined.

inferences, as identified conditional effects could also be driven by factors not controlled for in the conducted analysis.

4.5 Concluding Discussion

The survey analysis provides several informative findings on both direct and contingent relationships of relevance for refining our understanding of mediator style. In terms of context, the main take-away of the survey analysis is that it appears to affect respondents’ directiveness. More precisely, high-
intensity contexts make mediators on average more directive. The precise process through which intensity affects directiveness can, however, not be determined. While humanitarian concerns indeed seem to play a role, the survey is not able to effectively juxtapose and evaluate it against the alternative pathway of reputational concerns. In terms of characteristics, the main take-away is that mediator profile and Extraversion personality seem to affect mediators’ orientation, all in expected directions. In particular, high-profile mediators or high-Extraversion mediators are on average more settlement-oriented, or rather less relationship-oriented according to survey responses.

All respondents may not, however, react similarly to variations in conflict intensity. Exploratory analyses indicate that contingencies may arise for low-profile, high-Extraversion and low-Extraversion mediators. Concerning contingencies for mediator profile, the analysis suggests that low-profile mediators become on average more directive and less settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts, whereas overall directiveness and orientation do not change significantly for the high-profile mediators. Concerning contingencies for personality, high-Extraversion mediators seem to be the ones most sensitive to high-intensity contexts, making them on average significantly more directive. Conversely, only low-Extraversion mediators seem to change their orientation in high-intensity contexts by becoming more settlement-oriented.
5. Interview Analysis

Moving on to the interview component of this study, this chapter presents the findings of the interview analysis of relevance to both the theorized direct relationships (H1a—H4b) and the not-yet theorized contingent relationships between context and characteristics. In particular, it looks for the causal mechanisms and pathways of conflict intensity (H1), mediator profile (H2), and mediator personality in the form of Agreeableness (H3) and Extraversion (H4). It does so for mediator style along the dimensions of both directiveness (hypotheses denoted with a) and orientation (hypotheses denoted with b). The chapter also explores to what extent and in what way aspects of mediator profile and personality condition the effects of conflict intensity. Thus, overall, the chapter identifies explanations for mediator styles from a qualitative point of view, looking in particular for new insights on the potential causal pathways channeling effects of context and characteristics.

The reported findings reflect the larger themes identified in the interview material for both overall relationships and their detailed causal processes. Smaller themes, though relevant to the research question, are not reported here. The themes have been identified in an iterative process that first evaluates relevant relationships and their explanations within each interview, and then looks for recurring themes among all interviews. Relationships and explanations are in turn gauged from the interviewees’ reflections of their own and others’ experiences. Just as for the survey findings in Chapter 4, the discussions below should be evaluated in light of some of the limitations addressed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6.

5.1 Conflict Intensity

Many interviewees report having mediated differently in high-intensity versus low-intensity conflicts not only in terms of directiveness, but also for some aspects of orientation. This is clear from patterns in their recounts of past experiences, as well as from the interviewees’ own explanations of mediator style. In line with the theoretical framework, several of the interviewees also spontaneously refer to high-intensity contexts as crises where heightened humanitarian concerns represent a pathway through which high-intensity contexts both require and allow greater directiveness. High levels of human suffering appear to raise the perceived stakes of resolving the conflict, encourage greater risk-taking and spur a faster working pace. Although ending and resolving
low-intensity conflicts may be equally important, such low-intensity contexts lack in humanitarian acuteness. For example, Senior NGO Mediator Martin Griffiths compares himself to “war junkies” when feeling the adrenaline and wanting “to take more risks” in the face of human suffering (B9). These recounts add further nuance to our understanding of how, more precisely, intensity may make mediators more directive. Very limited evidence, however, suggests that reputational concerns vary with conflict intensity. Instead, it appears as if reputational concerns are more constant and of particular relevance to high-level mediators, which is further discussed in the section on mediator profile.

5.1.1 Directiveness: Rushed to Stop the Suffering

In these high-intensity contexts, how, more precisely, do mediators become more directive? A closer look at the interviewees’ responses indicates a central role for humanitarian concerns as a pathway for a more directive mediator style. They also point to a few related elements that further nuance these humanitarian concerns. The urgency of current human suffering produces a particular need for expedient “stopgapping” that differentiates the effects of ongoing violence from “past human suffering”, according to UN Official N8. Ongoing human suffering makes MediatEUr’s Antje Herrberg want to push for “a solution” and Senior UN Mediator N26, says that it “put[s] some push on what would normally be a slow motion, step-by-step approach”. Former EUSR Michael Sahlin (B1) also alludes to how not only ongoing human suffering but also its imminent future risk spurred him to engage more as a Special Representative in the Balkans in the early 2000s. He also references the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where stopping the war made it “necessary” to “sort of strong-arm and twist the arms of Milosevic and others to make them agree on things […] even though it created a world of problems for the long term.”

The above statements point to how perceived ongoing or imminent suffering exerts a kind of pressure for ending the violence as soon as possible. That it is a matter of human suffering is particularly clear in senior UN mediator N26’s comment on conflict intensity as one of the most important factors for mediation:

... conflict intensity means not just a scientific, statistical aspect. It means the level of suffering, death and pain, and consequences for actual, physical people, not just numbers. [...] At the end of the day, why are we trying to mediate? Because it’s an intellectual exercise to have the pleasure of affirming, stating that we have made peace? Or because that has reduced the pain, produced a chance for people to go back to normality? The answer is obviously this one. (N26)

While some interviewees characterize directiveness in high-intensity contexts as greater risk-taking, others claim that being directive is in fact less costly in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. They point to how
directiveness in such contexts is less likely to destabilize the voluntary consent between the mediator and the conflict parties. One reason for this is that the conflict parties are less likely to reject and disagree with the mediator’s more directive initiatives in a crisis. In other words, where humanitarian concerns push mediators to be more directive, actively fighting conflict parties also allow them to be more directive within the realms of the parties’ consent. Conversely, in low-intensity conflicts—particularly intractable contexts, such as for example in Cyprus—some interviewees talk about things being “very sensitive” so that those mediating operate in a “really narrow space” (B11). In these kind of contexts, CMI Assistant B11 claims that mediators have to be non-directive as well as secretive: “Anytime you say something it can, you know, become a huge thing [...] so you need to be careful about words you use, for example”. The term “mediation” may even come to signal too much of a directive approach to the conflict parties, so that terms like “good offices” come to replace activities that “classically” and in practice represent mediation.

Very few interviewees allude to potentially increased reputational concerns for variations in directiveness in high-intensity as compared to low-intensity contexts. Most rather speak of reputational concerns as if constantly present, embedded in the profession of international mediation. The few who bring it up in relation to variations in intensity often try to distance themselves from it and indicate that notions of “ego” or “pride” may arise as if subconsciously in the process. For example, while Senior NGO Mediator Martin Griffiths (B9) singles out humanitarian concerns as his main driving factor for increased engagement and directiveness, he is also quick to issue a warning not to “get too proud” in the process. In his view, the escalating notion that “mediation is a glamorous, worthy and high-value activity” has been overstated and added “a bit of a smell about it, which is not good.”

Referencing the humanitarian dimension of high-intensity contexts, interviewees speak of becoming more directive in different ways, most commonly referring to putting “pressure” on the parties or “pushing” the process in more general terms. When specified, directiveness is commonly related to information-sharing and changing of the parties’ incentive structures. High-intensity contexts “require a completely different approach”, according to senior IGAD mediator A20, in which the mediator spends more time alone with each of the parties in order to produce a “good agreement” without “running over” the parties. Humanitarian urgencies, in particular, may legitimize exaggerating information to coordinate the actions of central actors, according to experiences of Senior UN Mediator N26. And finally, though most of the interviewees are quick to distance themselves from having used or being open to using “carrots and sticks” to change the incentives of the parties, some point to how mediators may be more open to using side notes to induce or military force to coerce concessions in pressing situations. Although former Envoy Álvaro de Soto “take[s] a dim view” on the use of side notes, as they “go against the
nature of mediation” and even “dishonor the craft itself”, he alludes to how other colleagues may still use them. Similarly, on military coercion as a complement to directive mediation, UN Official Jack Christofides (N18) has over time learned that while “massive transformations” cannot be rushed, “some things must be rushed, like ending suffering, ending human rights violations, ending, you know, conflict”. In his view “the use of force is not the last resort, it’s a necessary resort” when the parties have “blood, not just up to their elbow, [but] up to their armpit” (N18).

To sum up, mediators may feel a heightened pressure from or opportunity for stopping violence due to the humanitarian costs of high-intensity settings, making them inclined to be more directive. While several of the interviewed mediators often distance themselves from the most extreme expressions of directiveness, such as the use of carrots and sticks, they still refer to their existence and likely use in high-intensity settings. This gives credence to the theorized role of humanitarian concerns being escalated in urgent and violent crises. However, comprehensive references to humanitarian concerns and the overall limited evidence for reputational concerns, as well as alternative pathways, could also be the result of strong social norms for sympathizing and caring for others (see Pinker 2011). Mediators, mandated to resolve armed conflicts, may be particularly sensitive to such norms. In the interviews, this could take the form of social desirability biases. Therefore, international mediators may either be or feel a need to be seen as being particularly affected by the humanitarian costs of high-intensity contexts. This likely also affects how reputational concerns come out in the analysis. As to the extent that reputational concerns are amplified in high-intensity contexts, this can only be gauged from very few interviewees, indirectly or at the level of the employing organizations. Thus, humanitarian concerns serve as an explicit but also non-taboo pathway through which many mediating interviewees are motivated to take charge and be directive.

5.1.2 Orientation: Constrained by the Head Count

While the interview evidence is more limited on the relationship between conflict intensity and orientation, it nevertheless provides a number of observations that speak to its potential existence. Accounts of some of the interviewees posit that crisis-triggered humanitarian concerns encourage mediators to be more settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. Three closely related elements come up to nuance our understanding of this particular pathway: the mediator’s shortened time horizons, limited creativity and increased security concerns. Some mediators speak of the urgency of the human suffering encouraging short-term perspectives in terms of “the easier solutions” or “status quo”, rather than more “all-encompassing solutions”. In the words of MediatEUr mediator Antje Herrberg, high-intensity
contexts push mediators to become “problem solvers” rather than “genuine facilitators”. The fact that “there’s people dying” makes mediators want ”to have a solution”. In the process, space for creativity shrinks, which according to Antje Herrberg is “the problem with Syria at the moment: so many people want a solution that there’s no space for creativity anymore” (B5). Closely intertwined with shortened horizons and constrained creativity are also more pragmatic security concerns that appear to constrain mediators from a more relationship-oriented mediator style. High-intensity fighting, according to UN Advisor Jeffrey Mapendere, increases “the stress level” in and uncertainty of most mediation processes. He recounts that imminent risks from one of the leaders being killed and everything stopping causes mediators to “get distracted from discussing the real issues that underpin the conflict” (N6). UN Official Jack Christofides also admits that the context of armed conflict makes mediation particularly messy and constrained, often making mediators inclined to focus on “the men with guns” (N18). UN Official N8 is even more explicit in how high-intensity violence seems to force you to prioritize short-term goals:

You can think about it as... do you know when staff sometimes do head-counting on airplanes? So, it’s a little like that, somebody counting the dead for you. You focus on long-term goals but also have to stop that head counting machine. It is common knowledge that, how do most people rate the level of seriousness? In the number of people killed and injured. […] As with a wounded patient with a clotting disorder, you want to address the patient’s underlying condition, but you also want to stop the bleeding as quickly as possible. The present then matters more. (N8)

Concerns from the heightened security risks for those involved in the mediation also play into these dynamics. According to UN Official N10, such risks imply that “your style and your strategies have to change” as conflict parties and interlocutors become harder to reach, and as a result, the mediation becomes “disconnected” and “segregated”. UN Official N10 further illustrates these dynamics by pointing to how uncertainty and suspicion may prevent mediators from making “recommendations about a mediation process, or a dialogue process, or institution building etcetera, because they’re not able to meet anybody”. High-intensity contexts also make comprehensive analyses harder, in the view of EU Advisor B3. This is suggested to be due to increased uncertainty around whether identified stakeholders “are the right people” with “the real issues” whose “personal security is at risk”. Checking facts and analyzing the situation becomes a challenge overall during intensive fighting. In lower-level Track 2 and 3 processes, it may even practically stop the mediator from accessing the conflict parties when negotiators and fighters are one and the same. In the words of CMI Assistant B11, “it’s very difficult to talk to people about peace if you know their son is on the [front] line”. While a few mediators also reference their own security as playing into how careful they are when mediating, their comments remain unclear as to how, exactly, their mediator style is affected by this.
The pre-theorized alternative pathway of reputational concerns is, again, seldom brought up in relation to high-intensity contexts and possible variations in orientation. Though two of the interviewees allude to how reputational concerns of their peacemaking organizations indeed increased and served as important driving forces for the organizations’ engagements during or at the risk of high-intensity fighting, it is unclear whether, and if so to what extent, these concerns also resonated at the level of the individual mediators.

Taking a closer look at how orientation expresses itself in the interviews that suggest a connection to conflict intensity, it is generally specified to two of the three pre-theorized components of orientation as well as one potential new component. Among the pre-theorized components of trust, focus of analysis and underlying rationales, the interviews primarily speak to the latter two. The raised stakes that come from the human suffering in high-intensity contexts make failure costlier, and some mediators accordingly report being more strategic and carefully analytical. This is the case for UN Mediator N9, who otherwise states that he does not change his way of mediating between low- and high-intensity contexts. Some of the interviews also show how heightened uncertainty makes it increasingly harder for mediators to conduct comprehensive and reliable analyses using information from a wide range of actors and sources. The interviews also reflect a potentially new dimension of orientation that echoes “scope” in the mediation study of Svensson and Wallensteen (2010). This dimension represents how inclusive a mediation process is in terms of stakeholders. Who partakes in negotiations may in this way be practically circumscribed as intense fighting limits access to the parties.

In summary, the urgency of the high-intensity context and its humanitarian costs in the form of a “head count” could make relationship-oriented styles both less desirable and less possible. Some of the processes involved relate to shorter-time horizons, constrained creativity and greater security concerns. The finding indirectly reflects some recent psychology research on the role of crisis, time-horizons and negotiation behavior (De Dreu et al. 2009; Henderson et al. 2010; Trope and Liberman 2010). Yet, as will be elaborated upon below, many more interviewees portray orientation as shaped by a mediator’s past experiences rather than current conditions. The qualitative evidence for a causal relationship between intensity and orientation is therefore more confined than that for intensity and directiveness.

5.2 Mediator Profile

The interview material shows, as will be further elaborated on below, that mediator profile and the background of the international mediator shape orientation, whereas similarly clear inferences are harder to draw for directiveness. These general patterns surface both in the interviewee’s own causal models for mediator style and patterns between the mediator’s past experiences and...
reported dos and don’ts. When it comes to directiveness, several interviewees allude to a particular group of high-profile mediators that might be inclined to be more directive: the official high-level mediators. These high-level, high-profile mediators are, according to some interviewees, inherently more directive. This seems to be the result of both varying conflict views as well as a particular reputational concern among these mediators, which constitutes a new empirically driven insight. The relatively stronger evidence for profile shaping orientation seems to be explained by the theorized mechanism of conflict views and how the mediators interpret the causes and dynamics of armed conflict. Overall, high-profile mediators seem to host more realist or psychological views on conflict than low-profile mediators, which makes them predisposed to be more settlement-oriented. New and additional expressions of conflict views are also added in the analysis. In particular, it is not just how mediators view conflicts but also to whom they see themselves accountable that seems to feed into whether they are more inclined to be relationship- or settlement-oriented. More precisely, mediators feeling primarily accountable to their employing organization also appear to be generally more settlement-oriented than those feeling accountable directly to the conflict parties, who seem to be more relationship-oriented.

5.2.1 Directiveness: Competing for Recognition

In what way are high-profile mediators inclined to be more directive than low-profile mediators? The interviews suggest that only a specific type of high-profile mediator may be inclined to be more directive due to common realist views of conflict and a sensitivity to the competitive nature of high-level politics. This sub-group of high-profile mediators represent those earlier identified as “high level”, with a formal mediation title and an official mediator role. The interview material suggests that these individuals may nurture a kind of constant reputational concern as a result of working in a highly competitive environment. Several also host realist understandings of armed conflict and have a background in government politics, reflecting common practices of appointing former politicians to higher-level mediation positions.

Some interviewees identify mediators that are “diplomats”, former presidents and other political actors as particularly likely to be overall directive, due to their past experiences and current interpretations of politics and conflicts. They also claim that such mediators are not uncommonly appointed to typical high-level positions because of their accrued political gravitas. This indicates an understanding of directiveness as explained by the mediator’s characteristics. For example, AU Officer A9 says that the AU strives to appoint former “political official[s]” when it needs mediators with an ability to “speak with authority”. UN Political Officer Diana Baker (A12) also claims that the AU, in her view, has a history of appointing “high-level politicians” from the “exclu-
sive and overwhelmingly male club of former heads of state”. Furthermore, alluding to how such politically motivated appointments may imply a lack of mediation experience, UN Advisor N5 characterizes higher-level appointment processes as sometimes “speculative”, motivated by interests on the part of governments in “getting rid of people who were tired and old within their own political system” or “placing someone because of the interests of certain states”, rather than choosing “professionally qualified and capable individuals”. Even though some interviewees normatively seek to distance themselves from mediators with directive “power diplomacy” styles, which they deem are different from those of “purely political” or bureaucratic mediators, they also speak of their benefits. They acknowledge that directive mediator styles of high-level, high-profile mediators may at times be useful in particularly intransigent situations where the conflict parties are more likely to listen to a fellow politician than an IGO or NGO official.

Not only former heads of state, but also other career mediators with experience in high-level positions may be inclined to be more directive due to having developed a particular awareness of their own image and reputation. While mediation seems to be generally prestigious and even “glamorous” to some, it appears that those in high-level positions serve to benefit most from this potential prestige. Coupled with the relative freedom of being in the lead when in a high-level position, some interviewees speak of greater room for being directive when mediating as Special Envoy rather than as Political Advisor. This freedom and prestige can be discerned in EU Advisor B3’s exclamation that “everybody wants to be a mediator”. Statements of former UN Official A17 also exemplify this. When discussing the respected nature of mediation, he claims that “people who deal with that have a very good standing, in particular when they were sufficiently successful to claim some ground”. While A17 does not explicitly connect these prestigious features of high-level mediation to directiveness, others do. For example UN Political Officer Diana Baker (A12) connects bad leadership to a “kind of ego approach” where mediators say: “I will arm-twist these guys into finding this peace agreement, so we can all go home”. Although “mediation is not about the mediator”, the above examples point to how it could be easier to make it so in high-level positions.

While many of the interviewed mediators seem to want to strike a balance between mediating to help others and to progress their own careers, reputational concerns seem indeed to be significantly intensified among high-profile mediators of high-level positions. This is at least the picture that emanates among mediating interviewees who are not themselves high-level, high-profile mediators. For example, EU Advisor B4 mentions peer-to-peer learning as one of the most efficient ways of capacity building for Special Representatives, as they “often are respected diplomats and politicians” and therefore “rarely read long advisory notes, but they respect other people who are or have been in the field […] on the same level”. Thus, in his view, “if you want to organize a retreat for senior mediators, you need to ensure good attendance of a few big
names to get the others to join’. In a similar vein, EU Advisor B7 recalls an incident where a senior diplomat with limited mediation experience wanted to chair and mediate a process. The mediation team then also brought in a “professional mediator who had no visibility and wasn’t part of the hierarchy”, so as not to threaten the diplomat’s “standing” while strengthening the mediation.

That high-level mediators operate in a more competitive environment with intensified reputational concerns can also, though only to a limited extent, be discerned among a few of the interviewed high-level mediators. For example, UN Official Jack Christofides strongly underlines the importance of being patient and operating like a “gardener” rather than an “engineer” in assisting the parties to come to an agreement. At the same time, he also alludes to elements of pride and prestige when showing a photo of him and the main peace agreement signatories from [Country]. Showing the photo, he reflects on how “that defining moment of the signature, was so important to people you know”, while at the same time acknowledging that “we all want the picture on our wall”. The experiences of Abdel-Fatau Musah—current Director of Africa II in the Department of Political Affairs at UN Headquarters and former Deputy Head of Political Affairs at UNOAU—also reflect this relationship between appointing statesmen as high-level mediators and seeing more directive and reputation-driven mediation:

So you talk about former heads of state, sitting heads of state, former ministers or former high-ranking officials of, say, the United Nations. I mean, people with stature and who command respect usually are those chosen to lead these mediations. And invariably also, because of this—this stature—the organizations that appoint them at times do not have control over what they do. You know I mean this is the thing here. Because their reputation supersedes that of the organization that appoints them, they at times consider the mediation as “their” mediation, and not the organization’s. They are also always focused on achieving a resolution at all costs to boost their reputation so, often, they prioritize deals over principles. (A8)

In summary, the competitive, exclusive and high-status nature of formal and high-level lead mediator positions may be fostering these high-profile mediators to be directive through a combined process of the appointment of politicians and reputational concerns. Having largely worked in elite-level political settings, these mediators may both interpret conflicts as expressions of competition and be particularly exposed to the competitive nature of elite mediation. Similar geopolitical, hard power-centered world views among state diplomats have previously been discussed and identified in studies on gender and diplomacy (see for example Aggestam and Towns forthcoming; Towns 2010), the study of international relations (see Guzzini 2002), and international negotiations (Hopmann 1995). They also resonate with research on mediators’ face concerns, which lend credence to mediators relating to their own reputation. Face concerns reflect a sense of self-worth that may relate to images of maturity, fellowship, and reputational capability, as well as self-projections (social
position, status, credibility), all closely intertwined with how we believe others think of us (Ginkel 2004; Wang et al. 2011). While most mediation literature deals with the mediators’ face-saving initiatives on behalf of the parties (see Pruitt and Johnson 1970), some also address face concerns of the mediator. These studies explain mediators’ face concerns with reference to cultural traditions, high-stake environments, challenging negotiations and the mediator’s personality (Ginkel 2004: 485; Novak 2004)—some of which closely reflect those of mediator profile, conflict views and competitive cultures. Directive-ness is in these discussions on profile only vaguely specified, relying on more general terms of pushing or arm-twisting. Furthermore, the finding largely rests on the evaluations of respondents who are not themselves high-level, high-profile mediators. Thus, although it appears possible that high-level mediators of high profile are inclined to be more directive than their low-level or low-profile colleagues, this finding merits further and broader exploration.

5.2.2 Orientation: Resonating With the Views Within

If the interview material suggests that high-level, high-profile mediators are inclined to be more directive, there is even greater evidence for mediator profile and concomitant conflict views shaping orientation. This evidence relates to both patterns in the interviewee’s background experiences and statements on how they mediate, as well as the interviewees’ own explanations for variations in orientation. As theorized, different types of conflict views seem to serve as pathways for this dynamic. What is new to this theorized pathway is the additional variation in perceptions of mediator accountability.

Several high-profile mediators, as conceptualized here, explicitly express appreciation of the politics and the strategic analytical elements of mediating armed conflict on behalf of IGOs and in higher mediation tracks. In this way, their views on conflict causes also resonate with the realist or psychological perspectives, both expected to foster a settlement-oriented mediator style. Several of the interviewed mediators who exemplify settlement-orientation in their dos and don’ts also express views on conflict causes that resonate with realist and psychological interpretations. For example, Former EUSR B1, with a long background as a European diplomat, seems to understand armed conflicts as expressions of geopolitical, highly strategic dynamics where his role as an individual mediator is marginal as compared to that of the more powerful states and organizations. Another example of the workings of this pathway can be gauged in the comments of former UN Under-Secretary-General and Envoy Álvaro de Soto (N23). When explicitly juxtaposed, de Soto favors settlement-oriented mediation, discarding relationship-oriented approaches and instead focusing on “developing and consolidating good relationships between himself and the parties”. This is necessary, according to de Soto, because in most of his mediations the “level of suspicion and distrust between the parties has
been such that an improvement in their personal relationship is not likely to affect the process or its outcome.” As a result of these experiences, de Soto appears to mainly have mediated with a settlement-oriented style that has even, by necessity, been directive with regard to agreement drafting and procedural aspects. In El Salvador, de Soto claims that “the bulk of the negotiations took place in separate meetings between me and one or two members of my team, and each of the two sides” and he and his team drafted almost “everything they agreed to”.

Low-profile mediators, as conceptualized in this study, seem typically more and overall relationship-oriented than high-profile mediators, in part as a result of how they interpret and view conflicts and their causes as related to the conflict parties’ social needs. Exemplifying a low-profile mediator, UN Advisor Graciela Tapia (N15) reflects this when stating how peace, to her, is “not just about signing agreements” and dealing with the politics, but also connecting with “those who are really suffering the conflict”. This also implies, according to Tapia, that when you are not able to help the parties trust each other, you have to at least try to make them trust the mediation process. Further highlighting a role for conflict views, a Regional Unicef Head N9 who has remained active in missions at the grass-roots level also vents feelings of discomfort against higher-level positions and settlement-focused mediations, as these would clash with his view on how conflicts are “best” solved (N9). In particular and in his view, meaningful conflict resolution happens at the level of the “foot soldiers” who have “lost brothers, and sisters and uncles and fathers and mothers”. N9 states that he has “always felt more valuable as a person, working at that level where I can influence them [the soldiers], and negotiate with them”. Another example on the role of sociological views on conflict can be found with Senior Consulting Mediator Stella Sabiiti (A13), who has mainly worked for NGOs in Track 2 or 3 level processes but also consulted IGOs and higher-level processes. Early in life, she experienced a life-changing violent encounter with soldiers which made her dedicate her life to understanding and studying the psyche of soldiers. As a result, and in her view, “there is humanness in each one of us”, which is why she prefers “working with armed groups” directly. Judging from her comments on how she commonly mediates—emphasizing the grassroots perspective, civil society (“where the action is”) and broad-based conflict diagnoses including emotive aspects—Stella Sabiiti also exhibits evidence for a relationship-oriented mediator style.

Beyond views on conflict, some mediators also point to related parts of these pathways that help nuance our understanding of the relationship between mediator profile and orientation. In particular, it appears as if mediators’ interpretations of conflict causes also relate to their sense of accountability. Some high-profile mediators, and particularly those with past IGO employment and familiarity with the higher and formal mediation process Tracks 1 or 1.5, see their mediation as primarily accountable to their employing or-
ganization. Conversely, some low-profile mediators appear more inclined to interpret their sense of accountability toward the conflict parties. In this way, high-profile mediators’ emphasis on organization could further help explain their settlement-orientation, and low-profile mediators’ emphasis on parties, in turn, their relationship-orientation. For example, reflecting on the IGO environment of high-profile mediators, Senior UN Mediator N26 identifies the “traditional diplomatic [UN] mediator” for its distinct commitment to working toward an agreement. This mediator is often “looking at the different options, making different analyses, [then] comes up with proposals, and then makes counter proposals”. One of the interviewees even claims that the UN and its mediators have over time and overall become more concerned with “getting the paper done” as a result of increased bureaucracy (A19). Interviewees having mainly worked in higher-level processes for the UN, AU or EU, or for states, commonly talk about their formal mandates enshrined in charters or provided by Secretary-Generals. This is, for example, shown in the reflections of former UN Official A17: “In my case, my bible has always been, you know, decisions of the General Assembly, decisions of the Security Council and instructions I was getting from my bosses from New York”.

Conversely, several low-profile mediators, particularly those with experience of Track 2 and 3 processes, seem more concerned with setting up and nurturing a mediation process where the relationships with and between people are core. CMI Advisor B12 captures this aptly, referring to how the techniques of the different tracks may be the same, but higher tracks foster a greater focus on settlement than lower, more inter-personal tracks. In her view, the main difference between them lies in their emphasis on “the problem” rather than “relationship-building and empowering” of the parties. The former favors orientations compatible with getting “a compromise” or “a win-win situation” and the latter “focusing on the root causes” of individuals “able to, you know, transform a process” (B12). In this way, having more frequently operated within informal mandates, low-profile mediators seem to be more concerned with accountability vis-à-vis the parties. Head of MediatEur Antje Herrberg (B5) reflects such views when stating that she feels “uncomfortable” in typical UN Special Envoy environments and rather prefers processes closer to the conflict parties and their needs. Having worked with both direct mandates from parties and more formal UN mandates, Antje Herrberg appears to prefer continually negotiated mandates between herself and the conflict parties:

What gives the UN the right to give me a mandate for a particular situation? Did they ask any of the parties what they actually want? Usually they haven’t. So you know, that’s an awkward situation. (B5)

In conclusion, there seems indeed to be a difference between typical low- and high-profile mediators and their orientations that can be explained by their past experiences of mediation tracks and intensities for some and organiza-
tional cultures for others. The pre-theorized pathway of conflict views indeed surfaces as illuminating for how profile may influence orientation. The interviews even suggest that not only conflict views but also to whom mediators feel accountable—their organization or the parties—help explain why some are inclined to be more relationship-oriented and others more settlement-oriented. These findings indicate that applying the theoretical thinking of Kleiboer (1998) is a fruitful endeavor for understanding mediator styles of international mediators. Thus, even though the analysis does not identify how conflict views and perceived accountabilities relate to each other in more detail, it supports looking further into how the conflict- and conflict resolution-related world views of international mediators influence orientation.

5.3 Mediator Personality

Personality appears to be core to some aspects of mediator style, although the evidence on Agreeableness and Extraversion is overall less clear-cut than for profile and conflict intensity. However, as will be elaborated upon below, some interviewees connect aspects of Agreeableness and Extraversion to directive mediator styles. How personality relates to orientation, conversely, is less clear in the material. Mediators with low Agreeableness seem to be more directive than those with high Agreeableness through pathways related to less altruistic motivations. Extravert mediators, on the other hand, may be inclined to be more directive than introvert mediators through pathways relating to feeling confident and being motivated by challenges. These suggested pathways for Agreeableness and Extraversion emanate from the interview material and thus add new insights to our understanding of personality and mediator style. Overall, however, the more elusive expressions of personality imply that inferences on personality and mediator style are somewhat more limited in scope than for conflict intensity and mediator profile.

5.3.1 Directiveness: Limited Altruism and Limitless Confidence

How are mediators of low and high Agreeableness and Extraversion, respectively, different in directiveness? Some evidence in the interviews point to certain mediators being more directive than others. In particular, individuals of low Agreeableness may, according to the interviewees, be inclined to be more directive because they are also commonly driven by more egoistic, or at least less altruistic, motivations. Furthermore, high-Extraversion mediators may also be more open to pushing the parties with a directive mediator style as a result of them being more confident in their ability to influence the conflict. In more general terms, however, several interviewees speak of an overall connection between mediators’ personalities and directiveness. For example, AU Officer A9 claims that style is fixed to the personality of the mediator who
comes with her/his “own style, own feelings, own intuition”. Therefore, “if you need someone who is able to take a strong stance, then you might need to change the person”—a practice A9 considers the UN to be somewhat better at than the AU. The ability to be directive, in A9’s view, cannot be “quantified” or “infused”, “no matter how many workshops”. Similarly, comparing different EUSRs working in the same country, CMI Assistant B11 states that the “personality type and background of the person who has the post” influences what “actions” the EUSR takes and where the mediator “wants to lead his work”. Within the context of the same conflict and mandate, and according to B11, EUSRs were perceived to have been differently open to visiting the region, meeting with civil society and making public statements. That personality-related features may in this way shape mediator style, at least to a certain point, is also evident in the reflections of UN Advisor N1:

I believe both things [style and strategy] are variable. You can vary your style to some extent. For example, you might have a neutral approach and from time to time, you may offer some suggestions to the parties. However, it’s harder to vary your personality. Richard Holbrook, for example, could probably not adapt to a five-year-long mediation on legal points. You have to deal with personality largely as a given. Personality in a way is your style. You can vary the way you behave within that style, but only up to a point. (N1)

Taking a closer look at first the possible relationship between Agreeableness and directiveness, some interviewees point to altruistic and egoistic motivations as potential pathways through which personality affects mediator style. Indeed, they talk about their overall motivation for mediating as shaping the extent and form of directiveness. While few of the mediating interviewees seem to have been motivated to start mediating for egoistical reasons—at least not openly so—those explicitly altruistically motivated seem to be more sensitive to the humanitarian elements of conflict overall. This, in turn, seems to make them empathize and commit, or at least strive to commit, in a more non-directive manner. Mediators less explicitly motivated to mediate for altruistic reasons, also with lower Agreeableness features, are contrasted as being less concerned with respecting or more comfortable challenging the self-determination of the parties. For example, CMI Advisor A18, with a typical high-profile background, reports being motivated to work with mediation for contributing to avoiding another genocide in the Great Lakes Region, having witnessed it up close in his earlier professional career. This “empathy” makes CMI Advisor A18 look for and respect the intuitions and delicate dynamics of a mediation by preserving a facilitative, non-directive approach. Further exemplifying the pathway of altruistic motivations for non-directiveness are the reflections of UN Advisor Jeffrey Mapendere (N6) on mediator Jimmy Carter. He accredits Carter’s ability to empathize and make conflict parties feel heard and understood to his honesty, religious beliefs and altruism, molding “the way he carries himself with humility”. Related to these reflections, Mapen-
dere also shares his general view on the interlink between personality, ability to connect and mediate:

Not everybody trained in mediation can do mediation, because it’s connecting with other people: How do you connect to people? Do people really feel your heart? Do your souls connect? So, I strongly believe that mediation is not just academic skills. […] I’ve seen people with PhDs in conflict resolution and they know everything of mediation, they’ve trained people in mediation themselves, but they can’t mediate. (N6)

Some interviewees also talk about a certain type of trade-off between “respecting the parties” and protecting their own “integrity”, which in turn shapes how directiveness is expressed. These dynamics are often mentioned in relation to altruistic motivations and confidence that seem to allow mediators to put the parties first but also challenge them when deemed necessary. The ability to empathize with the parties and interests in respecting their perspectives seems to have prompted EU Advisor B3 to nurture a more non-directive mediator style. In his view, he actively avoids pushing himself onto the parties because, as he says, “the parties will actually have no respect for you” if you do (B3). Former Senior UN Official A17, who early on in the interview mentions being driven to mediate in order to alleviate human suffering, also tries to stay non-directive yet engaged in the face of having to negotiate with actors “who do not deserve even to be called, some of them, a human being for what they’ve done”.

At the other end of the spectrum, reflections on integrity may spur mediators to motivate and legitimize more directive mediation, even if they generally prefer a non-directive style. Such comments often surface when discussing role model mediators and relate to integrity for protecting important principles of the mediator. This can be exemplified with the reflections of UN Mediator N9 who connects his “deep sense of a need to always make sure that I am helping somebody” with him feeling “confident” in that what he does is “righteous”, as long as it protects these “principles”. In N9’s view, this “influences me to sort of, even when I’m frustrated, to sort of [keep] pushing forward”. These indications of directiveness are also supported by his related recount of demanding cooperation from conflict parties when the situation needs it. Another interviewee, Consultant A2, reflecting on African regional mediators, claims that variations in directiveness commonly relate to the organizations or the mediator’s personality. Conflict intensity, in his view and for the African region in particular, is commonly always high. A2 differentiates between directiveness that results from certain principles embedded in the mediator and directiveness reflecting a “too diplomatic” and “face-saving” interest in getting “any agreement”. The former type of directiveness can take time and places equal pressure on all parties, whereas the latter is often rushed and can be focused on one or a few of the parties. This balance between being directive yet not too directive is also exemplified in the reflections of UN Official N3, who states that “I don’t think as a mediator you can be too focused on your own dignity,
as I think the dignity of the parties is more important.” Mediator N3 goes on to claim that UN mediators, in particular, may still be directive when it comes to ensuring the respect of certain international principles, which makes them different from state mediators. In this way, there may be a qualitative difference between expressions of directiveness based on the mediator’s overall motivation.

Moving on to the possible relationship between Extraversion and directiveness, some evidence points to the mediator’s confidence as a potential pathway through which personality may affect mediator style. Being comfortable in your position as a mediator and having confidence in yourself is something several interviewees bring up as not only crucial for carrying out mediation in general, but also for being directive in particular. Special Assistant/Liaison Officer of the AU Panel of Eminent African Personalities Neha Sanghrajka summarizes this sentiment in her claim that “Too many people doubt your ability, and you don’t need to be one of them!” (A22). Confidence as a belief in one’s abilities can also be understood as aspects of ego, blurring the lines between potential pathways of Agreeableness and Extraversion. Some interviewees explicitly connect elements of Extraversion to elements of ego, and at times relate this to mediator style. For example, EU Advisor B7 alludes to how “personality issues” can make some feel a greater “need” to be “heard”, which in turn, and particularly for lead mediators, “plays a very important role in how the process unfolds […] which can be positive or negative.” These feelings of comfort from being confident and rather unafraid of confrontation also surface in relation to what a few mediators deem themselves to be “good at”. For example, NGO mediator Martin Griffiths states he has always found it “really important to challenge established authority” as he says it “gets me going”. This in turn, he believes, also sheds light on his inclination to work outside of bureaucracies and close to “pariahs” (B9).

To sum up, though the interview material speaks more generally of personality and at times blurs the lines between Agreeableness and Extraversion, some point to a possible relationship with directiveness that seems to travel through pathways of either egoistical motivations or high self-confidence. The discussions on the pathways of Agreeableness also point to how there could be a qualitative difference between directiveness driven by more egoistical motivations and directiveness resulting from interests in protecting certain principles of the mediator. This finding is further elaborated on in discussions below on contingencies between egoism/altruism and humanitarian concerns of high-intensity conflicts. Overall, the findings on personality and directiveness partially resonate with social-psychological research on self-concern, other-concern and conflict styles. In particular, earlier studies have identified a relationship between high self-concern, low other-concern and contentious negotiation tactics (Pruitt and Kim 2004: 40–46). To some extent, the interview findings on egoism, self-confidence and directiveness reflect similar dynamics,
which indicate fruitful overlap between research on conflict style and mediator style.

5.3.2 Orientation: Triggered by the Challenge

The interviews also provide some limited and contradictory evidence for how personality relates to orientation. While the material does not allow making fruitful inferences about Agreeableness and orientation—as few of the interviewees explicitly touch upon this expression of personality in relation to components of orientation—it does speak to contradictory relationships between Extraversion and orientation. Two new pathways are identified in relation to these contradictory patterns. These suggest that high-Extraversion mediators may either be more settlement-oriented as a result of their quest for challenges and appreciation of problem-solving, or they may be more relationship-oriented, due to enjoying interacting and networking with the conflict parties, using their “charm” in the process. While both patterns appear to relate to extravert mediators’ appreciation of challenges and adventure, the interview material points to how this may have contradictory effects on orientation.

That high-Extraversion mediators could be inclined to solve problems is proposed by one of the interviewees to relate to their confidence and ego. More specifically, UN Advisor N5 claims that “mediator[s] have egos, right, I mean, it takes ego to think that you can fix it”. Here, “fixing it” alludes to solving the identified issues, which in turn hints at a potential connection between Extraversion and settlement-orientation. Conversely, certain interviewees posit that extravert, more than introvert mediators, are also likely to use their charm and emphasize the communication between themselves and the parties. While this does not directly reflect a relationship-oriented mediator style as theorized here, it indicates a qualitative difference between mediators in how they prioritize relationship-building in mediation processes overall. For example, and referring to her own experiences of local UN mediation within peacekeeping missions, UN Political Officer N19 claims that some senior UN officials have a personality-related inclination to continually and systematically invest in relationship-building with key actors, along with active listening skills. This difference seems to have related to these mediators being differently comfortable in interacting with people, which maps on to understandings of Extraversion. Similarly, UN Advisor N1 discusses mediator styles along personality features that closely reflect elements of Extraversion by differentiating between those who “just chat with everyone” and those who are “more strategic in their mediation”.

In summary, while the interview material is too limited for any clear inferences on the connections and pathways between personality and orientation, the reflections of some interviewees point to possible variations related to high-Extraversion individuals’ appreciation of challenges. However, due to
the contradictory findings of how such adventurous appreciations impact ori-
entation, this analysis is not able to draw any clear inferences on orientation
for either Agreeableness or Extraversion.

5.4 Contingencies of Context and Characteristics

It is time to take a closer look at how characteristics and some of their dis-
cussed potential pathways condition the effect of context on mediator style. This concluding part of the interview analysis looks at the identified contingent themes between pre-theorized conflict intensity and mediator profile, as well as between conflict intensity and personality. In so doing, two central conditionalities are discussed. One relating to contingencies between the me-
diator’s personality, altruistic/egoistic motivations and conflict intensity, and another covering contingencies between the mediator’s profile, conflict views and the urgencies that arise from intense conflicts.

Some interviewees provide evidence for conditional dynamics between a
mediator’s Agreeableness, altruistic motivation to mediate and her/his sensi-
tivity to humanitarian concerns in high-intensity contexts. This evidence sheds
light on how certain mediators may be spurred to be more directive in high-
intensity conflicts for humanitarian rather than other concerns. Even though
altruistic motivations and empathic capabilities were earlier connected to an
overall non-directive mediator style, some interview evidence indicates that
high-intensity contexts may push individuals of high Agreeableness to be di-
rective. When this happens, it appears also more likely that these type of mediators will be more concerned with being directive in a “fair” and princi-
pled way, placing equal demands on all and not just some of the parties. Two
examples illustrate this dynamic here. First, Senior IGAD Mediator Lazaro
Sumbeiywo (A20) claims that “the main thing that drives me is the suffering
of the people”, and as such, that “where people are suffering I would like to
relieve them of that suffering” and help produce an “agreement that will bring
those people back to family”. Second, NGO mediator Martin Griffiths also
captures the intimate interplay between perceived human suffering of high-
intensity conflicts, a mediator’s altruistic motivation to mediate and her/his
increased engagement:

I think it sharpens my mind that there is this unacceptable draining of human life in
front of you because people are being destroyed or hurt or killed or whatever. So, I
think it sharpens your resolution to do something. It’s not daily business kind of thing.
It’s. . . unacceptable. […] And I used to think at the time, and I still kind of think, that’s
a privilege. To witness a terrible thing and tragedy, is a privilege because it refuels your
desire to do something about it. (B9)

This heightened resolution to influence the process can also trigger the other
side of the coin, namely egoistic motivations within the mediator. At least
this is what NGO mediator Martin Griffiths alludes to when he elaborates on his practice of looking up some of the civilians affected by the war, just to be reminded of why he mediates. According to Mr. Griffiths, it is important to harness the humanitarian concerns spurred by violent conflict, but “not to get off on the tragedy of the conflict”. Instead, mediators should remain “really cool” and “professional” like “good humanitarian aid workers”, that are not going to “make a big deal about the fact that I’ve saved three people today’, or ‘I didn’t’” (B9). Overall, the interviews thus point to a potential contingency between the humanitarian concerns of high-intensity conflicts and the altruistic motivations of high-Agreeableness mediators that may make mediators more, yet differently, directive. In other words, while both altruistically and egoistically motivated mediators may become more directive overall in high-intensity conflicts than in low-intensity conflicts, these processes may happen through different pathways and lead to more or less balanced directiveness.

Some interviewees also attest to potential contingent dynamics between mediator profile, her/his conflict views, and the different urgencies of conflict intensity of particular relevance to orientation. This potential conditionality may amplify low- and high-profile mediator’s inclinations toward a particular orientation, at least to the extent pragmatically possible. For example, deeply engaged in a certain UN peace process in the 1990s, former SRSG (N22) reports strongly believing in a settlement involving a self-determination referendum. Accordingly, when the opportunity arose and the risk of violence escalated, he pushed forward to get “the issue” resolved for the “right solution”. This example shows how perceived urgencies related to humanitarian concerns made SRSG N22 believe even more in his initial inclination for a settlement-oriented style. Other interviewees connect conflict views to embedded time horizons, which may then be exacerbated or challenged by the urgency of high-intensity conflict. In particular, and in the words of Senior IGAD Mediator A7, some mediators with settlement-oriented styles, focusing on getting an agreement, may already look for “quick fixes” from the outset because of their “mechanical, rational approach to mediation”, busy schedules and because they are “concerned about their reputation”. Other mediators, to which A7 categorizes himself, look for the real problem patiently and “settle for the long haul”, if there is time for it.

These variations may be further exacerbated in high-intensity settings so that mediators with shorter-time horizons become even more settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. For example, reflecting on the mediation of others in the African context, UN Political Officer Diana Baker (A12) claims that politician mediators coming from the region may, due to proximity, be “lacking impartiality and having an interest in returning to the status quo ante”, and may also lack the “time to dedicate to long-term processes”. In light of her also characterizing many African conflicts as being of high intensity, these statements can be interpreted as if such regional mediators are more settlement-oriented as a result of their background, time horizons and
conflict context. Overall, the interviews suggest that mediators’ orientations may be amplified in crisis situations so that high-profile mediators, with realist or psychological views, may become more settlement-oriented, whereas low-profile mediators with sociological views on conflict may become even more relationship-oriented in high-intensity settings than in low-intensity settings.

To sum up, two potential contingent patterns arise from the interviews. First, humanitarian concerns in high-intensity contexts seem to be more important to mediators of high Agreeableness with a significant altruistic motivation than to low-Agreeableness mediators with less such. While altruistically and egoistically motivated mediators may both become more directive overall in high-intensity contexts, the former will more likely be so as a result of humanitarian concerns. Furthermore, the analysis also suggests that altruistically motivated mediators may express a more balanced and equal type of directiveness in high-intensity contexts than egoistically motivated mediators. The finding indirectly reflects theoretical discussions on mediator bias and partiality, which remains one of the most researched and debated elements of international mediation (Nathan 1999; Pruitt and Kim 2004; Kydd 2006; Beber 2012; Svensson and Lundgren 2015). More precisely, it hints toward possible individual-level explanations for variations in “equal” and “unequal” directiveness in high-intensity conflict contexts—the effects of which have been studied in relation to negotiation behavior, justice and long-term peace (see Albin and Druckman 2012).

Second, it appears as if the urgency of high-intensity contexts may come to amplify high- and low-profile mediators’ orientations, making them more settlement-oriented or relationship-oriented in high-intensity conflicts than they would be in low-intensity conflicts. If this finding travels beyond the interview material, it would constitute support for the assumption of Kressel et al. (2012) that mediators collect and embed certain schemata on how to “best” mediate certain situations, which are activated in urgent crisis-like contexts. It would also add further nuance to the understanding of orientation as relatively inflexible (Charkoudian et al. 2009), as mediators potentially remain within their overall orientation, but change to become more settlement- or relationship-oriented with variations in conflict intensity. At least, this could apply to the extent that a relationship-oriented style is implementable in the high-intensity context in question—reflecting back on the direct and overall findings of intensity and orientation.

5.5 Concluding Discussion

The interview analysis presents several central findings on the roles and contingencies of theorized and new potential pathways between context, characteristics and mediator style. The main take-aways of the interview analysis are that directiveness varies with humanitarian crisis; past mediation experience
shapes orientation; and egoistic personality traits further form directiveness among international mediators. Furthermore, altruistically motivated mediators with high Agreeableness personalities may be particularly sensitive to humanitarian crises, and embedded orientation preferences among differently profiled mediators may be further amplified in the urgencies of high-intensity contexts.

In other words, mediators seem to become overall more directive in high-intensity contexts, mainly as a result of the urgency of heightened humanitarian concerns. Orientation, on the other hand, appears to be explained by past mediation experiences. In particular, the views fostered by these experiences seem to shape how mediators interpret armed conflicts and their mediator accountabilities. This in turn creates a basis for how to best mediate, prioritizing reaching a resolution through an overall settlement- or relationship-oriented style. Directive mediator styles can also according to the analysis be explained by egoistically motivated low-Agreeableness or self-confident high-Extraversion personalities. Exploratory conditional patterns furthermore point to how personality-related motivations and profile-related views, respectively, may come to produce qualitatively different expressions of directiveness and amplify preferred orientations in high-intensity conflicts. Therefore, while conflict intensity may indeed have an overall effect on directiveness, the humanitarian pathway is likely most relevant to mediators who are already altruistically motivated to mediate. The humanitarian pressure may even make these mediators even more inclined to be directive in a balanced and “fair” manner. Furthermore, although mediator characteristics are found to be relatively inflexible to conflict intensity overall, urgent crisis could possibly have an impact of mediator profile so that already settlement- or relationship-oriented mediator styles are amplified. At least this seems likely to the extent that implementing a relationship-oriented style is practically possible—something which the interviews show may not always be the case due to the complexities, urgencies and insecurities of high-intensity contexts.
6. Synthesized Analysis: Explaining Mediator Styles

This is where the results of the survey and interview analyses merge to provide an updated understanding of how variations in mediator style of international mediators can be better captured and explained. The chapter discusses overlapping and contradictory results of the survey and interview analyses, in relation to both the concept of mediator style and its potential explanations. The synthesized findings shed new light on the original theoretical framework (see Chapter 2), which is here developed and fine-tuned to reflect the main empirical take-aways. More concretely, the chapter first revisits and critically discusses the concept of mediator style and its dimensions. It then identifies the main direct effects of context and characteristics and relates these to previous research. Next, it translates and summarizes exploratory and new findings on contingent effects to complement the pre-theorized direct effects. The chapter wraps up with a few additional findings and limitations to further contextualize the synthesized analysis. In a concluding discussion, the chapter summarizes the main findings and elaborates on how to fruitfully theorize context, characteristics and mediator style.

6.1 Mediator Style Revisited

The quantitative and qualitative perspectives on mediator style both reflect and nuance the original conceptualization. In general, the analyses point to it being meaningful to study the how of mediation in terms of style at the level of the individual international mediator. Both survey and interview findings highlight interesting thematic variations in the behaviors and goals of international mediators that cut across case-specific mediation strategies and tactics. The analyses also suggest it to be fruitful to explore directiveness and orientation as independent but closely related dimensions of mediator style. In this way, the study builds on and supports previous research that suggests differentiating between the two dimensions (see Butts 2010). At the same time, it presents new empirical evidence for how the two dimensions may not covary as commonly assumed. Mediators expressing a relationship-oriented style can in certain situations also be directive just as mediators with a settlement-oriented style can be non-directive. At least this is what the current sample and research design indicates.
The analyses also suggest that there is room for re-balancing and recalibrating some of the original components of directiveness and orientation. The interview and survey analysis together point to how variations in directiveness may be particularly relevant to the components of information-sharing, incentive structures and evaluations. The fourth component of process design appears less relevant, with limited responses in the survey and few references in the interviews. Similarly, and for orientation, the component related to trust seems to be central to our understanding of this mediator style dimension as it recurs in both the survey and interviews. Conversely, the second component of focus of analysis garners very few responses in the survey and the third component of underlying rationales is somewhat less recurrent in the interviews. Some of the survey items could also be re-calibrated to better reflect the experiences of international mediators (see appendix B for descriptive statistics). This is especially true for survey measurements. For directiveness, the information-sharing item on caucusing (number 2) and the evaluation item (number 7) may need to be reformulated to cover more variations in what is now the non-directive end of the scale. An opposite re-calibration at the directive end of the scale seems relevant for the information-sharing item on editing of parties’ messages (number 9) and the influencing incentive item on number of actors involved (number 11). A similar re-scaling at the relationship-oriented end also seems relevant for orientation and the trust item concerning the parties’ relations (number 8).

The interview analysis also points to potential additions and nuances to directiveness and orientation worth exploring further. First, it suggests that there may be a qualitative difference between directiveness in terms of whether it is implemented toward all parties equally or only some of the parties. Several interviewees contrast a kind of “fair” and balanced directiveness to an “unfair” and imbalanced directiveness. While international mediators may be directive in similar ways and degrees, this directiveness thus can either be implemented equally directive on all parties, or only on one or a few of the parties. This new expression of directiveness reflects writings on justice in negotiations as well as procedural mediator bias and partiality in international mediation (Kydd 2006; Albin and Druckman 2012). Second, the interview analysis suggests that orientation, and in particular its trust component, not only concerns how mediators try to improve the parties’ relationship and trust between each other, but also the relationship and trust between themselves and the parties. This nuance seems to be particularly relevant for high-profile mediators. Even though they may see a relationship-oriented style as inefficient, they may still vary in how much they work on building their own relationships with leadership, interlocutors and other elements of the conflict parties. Third, the interviews also, though to a more limited extent, indicate that orientation could be complemented with a style component others have referred to as “scope” (Svensson and Wallensteen 2010). Where the original conception of orientation identified variations for how broad and inclusive a mediator’s
analysis is, the interviews suggest that such variation may also be relevant for who and how many actors the mediator involves in the negotiation process. Whether an additional component of orientation or a separate mediator style dimension, this variation seems particularly relevant for armed conflicts, with multiple and often complex layers of constituents, secondary supporters and third parties (Lounsbery and Cook 2011).

In refining our conceptualizations and measurements of mediator style, we should also be cognizant of the fact that our scholarly knowledge on mediator style at the level of the individual international mediator is still limited. Therefore, we should remain open to the possibility that other samples may exhibit different distributions than the ones measured in this study.

6.2 Context: Adapting to Crisis

Both the survey and interview results show how international mediators change mediator style in high-intensity crisis-like contexts. Recurrent themes in the survey and interview evidence indicate that mediators become more directive in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts (H1a), commonly explained by urgent and intensified humanitarian concerns. However, while the survey results on conflict intensity and orientation are insignificant (H1b), interview results also suggest that pragmatic concerns and shortened-time horizons may necessitate a more settlement-oriented style in high-intensity contexts.

What do these findings tell us about context and mediator style in armed conflicts in general? Overall, they suggest that international mediators’ directiveness, in the face of differently intense conflict contexts, is potentially as adaptive as commonly assumed in some of the international mediation literature (Ott 1972; Bercovitch 1996), and more adaptive than recently concluded by some domestic mediation research (Herrman et al. 2003; Charkoudian et al. 2009; Noce 2009). This lends further credence to the idea of the strategic international mediator as proposed by Beardsley (2011: 114) and others (see Savun 2008; Bercovitch 2011). At the same time, the interview material does not directly study the extent to which the processes affecting directiveness are indeed conscious and strategically calculating. Therefore, we cannot rule out the possibility that the crisis urgencies of high-intensity contexts may trigger deeper and less conscious decision-making processes among international mediators. If this is the case, then alternative psychological interpretations with roots in behavioral psychology may challenge the idea of the strategic mediator (Khong 1992; Kahneman 2012). Some evidence for such embedded schemata and cognitive templates for how to mediate have recently been found in behavioral mediator style studies on domestic mediation (see Kressel et al. 2012).
The findings together offer only limited support for the theorized general relationship between high-intensity conflicts and settlement-oriented mediator style. Even though the interview analysis suggests that high-intensity contexts may indeed make it more difficult to be relationship-oriented—including being inclusive—the survey results are insignificant for this relationship. This slightly challenges earlier survey findings on the impact of social context and orientation in domestic mediation. Alternatively, it highlights a qualitative difference between international and domestic mediators. In her survey, Butts (2010) identifies a positive relationship between mediators who report previously having worked in time-pressured conflicts and who also exhibit an overall resolution-oriented style. Relying on the reports of past experiences on time pressure may, however, encourage social desirability biases. Such concerns are mitigated in this study by using a randomized scenario that encourages reporting mediator style in the present. Thus, when exploring the effects of current crises and urgencies, this does not seem to have a discernible and general effect on orientation for international mediators. However, and as discussed further below, there may still be certain heterogeneous effects.

The survey and interview results further indicate that humanitarian concerns are indeed a relevant mechanism for conflict intensity and directiveness, in particular. In other words, the humanitarian aspect of armed conflict contexts thus likely plays a role in international mediators’ directiveness, concretizing the urgencies and raised stakes of armed violence. However, neither the survey nor the interview analysis is able to provide enough evidence for contrasting this mechanism against the proposed alternative pathway of reputational concerns. This is either a result of taboos and sensitivities related to the studied mediators’ images and reputations, or a reflection of limitations of the survey and interview designs. In order to fully explore the potential role of reputational concerns in high-intensity settings, future research needs to devise designs that circumvent both potential taboos on reputational concerns as well as social desirability biases on humanitarian concerns. One way of doing this is contrasting humanitarian and reputational elements of high-intensity contexts against general time and resource constraints. In doing this, more concrete and multiple measures of both humanitarian and reputational concerns could facilitate their identification. Furthermore, it could also be relevant to take a closer look at the different expressions of conflict intensity to learn more about how casualties, human rights violations and forced migration interact in relation to mediator style, potentially also contrasting these to effects of armed violence on infrastructure rather than humans.

6.3 Characteristics: Shaped by the Past

Survey and interview results together align to suggest that the orientations of international mediators are generally shaped by the past in terms of the
mediators’ accumulated characteristics. This conclusion mainly rests on recurrent survey and interview findings showing that high-profile mediators are generally more settlement-oriented than low-profile mediators (H2b) (or less relationship-oriented, according to the survey). The pattern seems to be explained by the mediators’ embedded views on conflict and resolution. In particular, realist or psychological views and accountability feelings toward employing organizations—rather than sociological conflict views and accountability feelings directly toward the parties—seem to contribute to high-profile mediators being more settlement-oriented than their low-profile colleagues.

The hypothesized relationship between profile and directiveness finds limited support in the survey and interview analyses (H2a). Some findings from the interviews indicate that only a certain type of high-level, high-profile mediator may be inclined to be more directive due to embedded views and reputational sensitivities. These limited findings therefore confine the expectation on profile and directiveness to mainly concern the new sub-group of high-level mediators.

The survey and interview analyses also present some contradictory findings of relevance to direct effects of personality on mediator style. While interview findings suggest that low-Agreeableness or high-Extraversion personalities may be inclined to be more directive overall—as a result of egoistic motivations or high self-confidence, respectively—the survey analysis presents insignificant results for the effects of both Agreeableness (H3a) and Extraversion (H4a). Furthermore, while survey findings show that high-Extraversion mediators are generally more settlement-oriented than low-Extraversion mediators, no similar pattern can be discerned for Extraversion and orientation in the interview analysis (H4b). Insignificant findings in the survey and a too-limited empirical material in the interviews prevent this study from fully exploring the hypothesized relationship between Agreeableness and orientation (H3b).

How can these results on characteristics inform our theoretical understanding of international mediators’ mediator style? That orientation seems to be explained by mediator characteristics resonates with earlier research findings on domestic mediation (Charkoudian et al. 2009). Some of this research has explained orientation-related style variations with reference to the past experience and training of the mediator (Noce 2009; Kressel et al. 2012). Formal mediation training is indeed very rare among the studied survey respondents and interviewees. However, their past professional experiences seem to fruitfully capture similar patterns among international mediators as identified for domestic mediators. Two of the three mediator profile components appear to be particularly central for variations in orientation: past experiences of different mediation tracks and employing peacemaking organizations. The interview finding on high-level, high-profile mediators’ overall directiveness also points to the potential importance of differentiating between mediators with and without past mediation experience. The effects of previous mediation ex-
perience, as well as type of mediation tracks and peacemaking organizations, in turn reflect the cultures and customs that these practices, processes and employers nurture. Mediators with experience from state agencies will likely be accustomed to a different diplomatic culture than those with experience from the UN. Furthermore, different cultures seem to prevail within the UN depending on the part of the organization and type of mediation track used. Therefore, cultural variations may be important to study in terms of both past mediation-related experience as well as other professional experience. This is further confirmed by research on international state diplomacy, which has pointed to variations in individualistic and collectivistic cultures for explaining different negotiation styles (Cohen 1991; Macduff 2006). In fact, mediation-related cultural variations have even been identified at very local levels of politics (Davidheiser 2005).

The interview analysis provides some indications for the relevance of realist, psychological or sociological conflict views and mediator accountabilities toward either the employing organization or the parties as explanations for the impact of mediator profile on orientation. However, the precise link among and between these views and mediator profile could be further specified. The connection between profile and conflict views now mainly rests on the interview findings. This speaks for future studies placing greater emphasis on the views, evaluations and values of international mediators, particularly in relation to how they interpret the common causes of conflicts and the general role of the mediator. An important question to be further explored in this regard is also how mediators’ interpretations of conflicts and mediation relate to variations in current mediation tracks, peacemaker employments and other similar contextual mediation environment factors—something which is further discussed in Additional Findings (6.5) below.

As none of the findings on personality recur in both the survey and interview analyses, I am not able to draw any clear conclusions on the general relevance of Agreeableness and Extraversion for mediator style. This could imply that personality, at least in the form of Agreeableness and Extraversion, is not particularly relevant for explaining variations in mediator style. Such a conclusion would add to those voicing skepticism about personality explaining political behavior (see Boyle 2008; Block 2010). At the same time, the interview material recurrently points to how personality, in general terms, is crucial for mediator style. Coupled with the interview analysis’ relatively clear theme that personality-related characteristics such as egoism and confidence may be connected to directiveness, it can still be worth further theorizing and exploring the dynamics of these two elements. Closely related research findings on conflict and negotiation style covering self-confidence and egoism point toward such a conclusion. More precisely, some studies have found that negotiators’ confidence levels may be related to the use of distributive or integrative negotiation tactics (Sullivan et al. 2006). Similarly, conflict parties who prioritize their own preferences and have low interest in those of others have been
shown to be more likely to contend and challenge others in a directive way (Pruitt and Kim 2004). The precise mechanisms involved in these potential relationships require more thorough theorizing, leveraging psychological research on motivational, cognitive and emotive processes.

6.4 Theorizing Contingencies

Both the survey and interview analyses point to two potentially contingent relationships between context and characteristics. One between conflict intensity, personality and directiveness, and another between conflict intensity, mediator profile and orientation.

First, it may be possible that mediators with particular sensitivities to the humanitarian urgencies of high-intensity contexts express different degrees of directiveness in high- and low-intensity contexts. This pattern emanates from survey findings on Extraversion and interview findings on Agreeableness. When it comes to Extraversion, survey findings suggest that only high-Extraversion respondents become more directive in high-intensity contexts. Low-Extraversion respondents, conversely, do not significantly change their directiveness in differently intense contexts. This could reflect that high-Extraversion individuals are generally more confident and emotively spurred to push forward in the face of heightened humanitarian costs. Indeed, outgoing personalities have been connected to assertive behaviors (see Hampson 2012), which could well be further triggered by urgent crises. When it comes to Agreeableness, interview findings indicate that high-Agreeableness mediators may become more directive toward all and not just some specific parties to the conflict in high-intensity contexts. Low-Agreeableness mediators, while also overall more directive in high-intensity contexts than low-intensity ones, may conversely not be directive to all parties. Interviews propose that this pattern could be explained by the fact that high-Agreeableness mediators are also more altruistically motivated to mediate than low-Agreeableness ones. Altruistic motivations condition and strengthen the impact of the humanitarian concerns of high-intensity conflicts, making mediators directive in a principled way. Egoistic motivations may conversely make mediators more open to a biased kind of directiveness directed at one or a few of the parties. This indirectly reflects previous research on egoistically motivated individuals being likely to implement power-assertion conflict tactics (see Graziano and Hair 1996). Together, these patterns on personality and directiveness propose contingencies of relevance to the urgencies and humanitarian concerns of high-intensity contexts. They also encourage us to take a closer look at features such as confidence, risk-taking and altruism. Some of these features have indeed been shown to be independent of the Big Five personality traits (Paunonen and Ashton 2001; Zeigler-Hill et al. 2015).
Second, both survey and interview findings provide some indications for how the profiles of international mediators and their embedded views on conflict may be further amplified in situations of high-intensity crisis. In particular, they suggest that high-profile mediators already inclined to be settlement-oriented will become comparatively more settlement-oriented and low-profile mediators inclined to be relationship-oriented will become more relationship-oriented in high-intensity settings than they would be in low-intensity settings. The survey findings present evidence for the latter pattern, pointing in particular to how low-profile mediators become on average more relationship-oriented in high-intensity settings. The interview findings in turn produce evidence primarily supporting the former pattern on the amplification of high-profile mediators’ settlement-orientation. The interviews also point to how the views of the mediator may play a role in explaining this pattern, in terms of both how the mediator views armed conflict and in terms of mediator accountability. If this indeed is, as the analyses suggest, a recurring pattern for international mediators of different experiences and views, it feeds into research on historical analogies and experiential short-cuts (Khong 1992; Rosenthal and Kouzmin 1997; Kahneman and Klein 2009). More precisely, it resonates with previous findings on how urgent situations may activate auto-pilots and deeply embedded professional schemata for how to operate in similar situations (Kressel et al. 2012). If mediators in non-urgent settings are already inclined to view conflicts as political power games where a mediator best serves to help produce an agreement, or as needs-based social dynamics where the best contribution can be made through a relational focus, then increased urgencies may further amplify these sentiments.

6.5 Additional Findings

This dissertation strives to conceptualize and explain mediator styles of international mediators by focusing on the contextual factor of conflict intensity and the mediator characteristics of profile and personality. However, the survey experiment and interviews have also come to illustrate three additional observations of relevance to explaining mediator style.

A first additional finding concerns the role of the immediate mediation-relevant context of the international mediator. Besides conflict intensity, the interviews also suggest that this “mediation environment” in which the international mediator operates may set the bounds for how mediator style varies. Constraints appear to mainly emanate from the position and hierarchy of the international mediator as well as from the overall mandate of the mediating organization. For example, lower-level mediators, who work underneath or support higher-level mediators in the lead, may be less able to be directive than their higher-ranking colleagues who have greater freedom of choice from being in charge of the mediation team. While some lead mediators
may indeed grant extensive autonomy to their mediating team members, the power of the lead mediator remains central to how directive and overall influential lower-level mediators de facto can be. Similar hierarchies in teams and setups of mediation mandates appear to shape how much space mediators have to be relationship-oriented. Some interviewees’ discussions indicate that mediators with issue-centered, technical advisory functions commonly assume more settlement-oriented mediator styles than their advisor colleagues with a greater mediation-processes focus. Furthermore, lead mediators with agreement-focused mediation mandates necessarily express more settlement-oriented mediator styles than those with more relationship-focused mandates. Together, this additional finding brings new insight into how future studies may investigate mediator style with reference to the influence of the mediation environment. Rather than focusing on the site where mediation takes place (Bercovitch and Jackson 2001), researchers interested in mediator style at the level of the individual should focus on the mediator’s position and mandate. Although the mandates for international mediation remain relatively under-researched—which is remarkable considering their centrality for international mediation overall and for organizational peacemakers in particular—scholarly attention on the topic is increasingly growing (see Lindgren et al. 2010; Bercovitch and Schneider 2000; Nathan 2007; Svensson and Wallenstein 2010: 11–15, 24).

A second additional finding from the interview material concerns the conflict parties’ “readiness” to resolve their grievances non-violently. This readiness relates to the conflict parties’ motives and resolve for making compromises, which may influence in what way mediators are directive. Some interviewees point to how high-intensity conflicts may be driven by parties that are not genuinely interested in resolving the conflict and therefore “deceive” and “manipulate” the mediator. Or they may be fueled by parties that have an underlying interest in resolving the conflict but also suffer intense fears of making the necessary commitments. Both situations may result in extensive fighting, but for different reasons. This variation in readiness of the parties reflects the theoretical concept “ripeness” for resolution, originally coined and developed by Zartman (2001). The interview material suggests that mediators may see insincere motives as an opportunity to legitimize a more forceful directiveness with elements of military coercion or even the mediator’s withdrawal. Conversely, insecure motives allow a mediator to be directive though less likely to use military coercion or threaten withdrawal. These kinds of motives may even make leveraging the shared humanitarian concerns from high-intensity violence more plausible. UN Official N4 summarizes this latter sentiment stating that “If the parties are listening, you can play loud and they will follow, but if they’re not listening and you play loud, they’ll try to move away from the noise”. That any conflict resolution is ultimately dependent on the readiness and will of the disputing parties is widely acknowledged in the international mediation literature (Svensson and Wallenstein 2010; Bercov-
itch 2011). However, that this potentially also influences the international mediator’s style along the spectrum of directiveness has been less explicitly studied.

A third and final additional finding pertains to the development of mediator style over time and with experience. Two main insights related to mediator style development emanate in relation mainly to the interview discussions on lessons learned and learning, although the survey results also indicate that mediators primarily learn from earlier experiences. First, more experienced mediators seem to perceive themselves as having become better at “controlling” themselves overall and adapting to the needs of the situation in particular. Some who even characterize themselves as naturally impatient attest to having become significantly better at curbing such impatience over time and with experience. This appears to imply that more experienced mediators are less likely to be inclined to be directive, even though certain situations may still spur them to be so. At the same time, mediation experience could also make mediators more confident in being directive toward conflict parties that may be particularly costly to challenge, such as governments. At least this is what some interview material suggests. Second, and related, some interviewees talk about starting off their careers with an overall settlement-focus, prioritizing the technical issues and problem-solving aspects of mediation. A few even connect this eagerness for producing agreements to feelings of prestige. This settlement-focus appears, however, to loosen with experience, concurrently with an increased appreciation of the importance of relationship-building and networking between themselves and the parties. This additional finding thus indicates that more experienced mediators may be less concerned with the production of an agreement overall, and more interested in investing in the relationships and networks within and surrounding the mediation process. Together, these additional reflections point to the fruitfulness of investigating how mediator styles develop and evolve over time with different kinds of mediators—something which has been outside of the scope of this dissertation.

6.6 Alternative Explanations

Which other factors besides conflict intensity, mediator profile and personality may potentially explain the identified findings of this study? While alternative explanations for mediator style in general are many, as shown in the review of previous research (Chapter 2), two seem to be particularly relevant to this study. The resources available for the mediators and the interests of their employing organizations both set the boundaries for how mediator style varies. Thus, not only the individual-level reactions and inclinations shape mediator style, but also how much the mediator actually can and wants to live out and implement a certain general directiveness or orientation.
One of the most common ways of differentiating among international peace-making actors and mediators is to look at their power resources (Young 1972; Svensson and Lundgren 2015). Such resources may vary along military, economic, political and even social dimensions, although the role of this latter is commonly more marginal than the other three in armed conflicts (Shapira 2009; Faget 2011; Heemsbergen and Siniver 2011). A relatively clear resource differentiation can be made among the studied organizations based on both previous research and insights from the interviews (see Siniver 2006; Wall and Dunne 2012). For example, the NGOs are generally less resourced than the IGOs. Applied to this study, this implies that while NGO mediators may become more directive overall in high-intensity contexts, they may be less likely able to implement similar carrots and sticks as a UN Special Envoy or an EU Special Representative. The availability of resources constrain and enable variations in directiveness at the level of the individual mediator. Some of the experiences of the interviewees also reflect these dynamics. For example, some of the mediators used to working for NGOs speak of being comparatively more directive when working in missions for the UN. Others also highlight how the closeness to member states in regional organizations such as the EU, AU and IGAD offers greater opportunities to either directly or indirectly engage more comprehensive military, economic or political sticks and carrots, than what is usually possible in positions for the UN. The availability of resources may in this way set the bounds for the extent to which international mediators can be directive in the face of challenging contexts of high-intensity fighting.

Which resources are actually made available for an international mediator rests in turn on the interests of the employing organization (Gerami 2009: 434). Although this interest may indeed closely reflect the urgency and lethality of the conflict, this does not have to be the case. The interview material points to how political and strategic interests, to some extent independent of ongoing violence, may determine the scope of engagement of organizations such as for example the EU or the AU. Furthermore, IGOs, more so than NGO and state peacemakers, face particular challenges in coordinating the interests of their many member states. Indeed, some of these states may even be one of the parties to the armed conflict, making such coordination particularly challenging. For example, several have pointed to the EU’s strategic political interests as an explanation for its large preventive engagement in the Macedonian civil war in 2001. The interests of the peacemaking organization is not only relevant for directiveness, but they may also influence orientation. In particular, NGO peacemakers who are explicitly focused on and interested in creating space for dialogue, understanding and improved communications, will likely make it easier for mediators to mediate along a relationship-oriented style. Conversely, peacemakers with an explicit interest in producing an agreement of sorts, will make such relationship-oriented mediation more challenging. However, this potential relationship also likely depends on the autonomy
of the individual mediator vis-à-vis her/his employer. Indeed, some of the interview material suggests that where the employing organization’s interests in the conflict are limited, a mediator may sometimes exercise a rather extensive freedom of operation in the field. These discussions on interests and mediator style fruitfully remind us of how the international mediator in the end represents and is an extension of her/his employing organization. The interests of these organizations may therefore amplify or constrain the directiveness or orientation of the international mediator due to the overall will to engage in general and in a certain way.

These resources and interests could indeed explain some of the variations identified in the interview material. At the same time, these rather seem to set the bounds for how mediator style de facto can be expressed, than challenge the identified impact of conflict intensity on directiveness and mediator profile on orientation. Indeed, the study indicates that mediators may still show relative variations in directiveness and orientation within the confines of resources and organizational interests, as a result of the studied characteristics and context. However, when moving on to explore the traction of the proposed theoretical framework on mediator style of international mediators, we would do well to acknowledge and control for the influence of a mediator’s access to organizational resources and will. This is likely particularly important if the current approach based on self-reports in surveys and interviews is complemented with behavioral measures of mediator style.

6.7 Limitations and Scope Conditions

The above-identified developments of a theoretical framework on mediator style should also be evaluated in light of the limitations of the study. This section discusses four such limitations that together set the scope conditions for the contributions of this dissertation.

First, this study deals with a broad variety of international mediators of a select group of IGOs and NGOs. Its findings are therefore likely to be particularly relevant to other similar kinds of mediators working for the UN, EU and AU as well as NGOs such as CMI, HDC and MediatEUr. In particular, and speaking to one of the rationales of this study, the new empirical material has facilitated the production of a theoretical framework on mediator style specifically tailored to international mediation. Although some of the general effects may also travel to related international mediators, such as those employed by states, new direct and contingent findings also indicate potential differences. For example, the characteristics, conflict views and peacemaking cultures may be different between mediating state diplomats or other state officials, and organizational mediators. Furthermore, studying a broad variety of mediators varying with regard to type of organization (NGO/IGO), and level of mediator position (low/high) also implies missing out on some of the more refined
nuances between the many different types of mediators. At the same time, a considerable benefit of this broader approach has been the ability to identify and highlight commonalities in variations of directiveness and orientation across distinctively different types of mediators.

Second, the added value of combining survey and interview methods has been questioned by some researchers, which merits further elaboration here. For example, some have raised concerns over using mixed methods as it may not necessarily be the case that “one method can offer external validity for the findings of another” (Ahmed and Sil 2009: 3). This study has, however, shown that by learning about phenomena from different methodological perspectives, survey and interview material can indeed serve to “corroborate each other’s findings” (Ahmed and Sil 2009: 3). The theory-guided exploratory endeavor has also pre-empted risks of conceptual stretching, often raised as a potential cost of mixed methods (Ahram 2009; Sartori 1970; Sartori 1984). In particular, by carefully designing tight and clear concepts with both the survey and interview needs in mind, this study has been able to produce definitions applicable to both close-ended survey and open-ended interview questions. Furthermore, combining these methods, the dissertation has also facilitated “a richer and more robust basis to inform policymaking”, as requested by, for example, Walton (2014: 58).

Third, the original framework and the identified findings center around several deeply embedded psychological processes within international mediators, whereas the current research design only partially and indirectly captures these. The synthesized analysis overall emphasizes the importance of several psychological processes such as altruism/egoism, confidence, excitement-seeking features, realist/psychological/sociological views and humanitarian and reputational concerns. While probing their concrete expressions and nuances more directly in both the survey or interviews would have been interesting, this level of detail was outside the parameters of this study. Therefore, future research could take a closer look at these processes by designing more specific survey and interview questions. Even psychological field experiments or ethnographic studies of specific mediation processes or mediator types may be useful in this regard. This may even allow studying mediator style behaviors beyond self-reports on the same (see Kressel et al. 2012).

Fourth, all findings should be evaluated in light of the study’s reliance on self-reports. The fact that answers are sought after among the research subjects themselves could imply collecting information on the international mediator’s ideals rather than their real-life experiences. Indeed, this critique has previously been voiced in domestic mediation research, within which only two single studies have thus far measured mediator style in terms of behaviors (Wall and Chan-Serafin 2009; Kressel et al. 2012). For example, interviewees may be inclined to report experiences and evaluations that fit their own ideals on mediation or their expectations on what the interviewer might want to hear. This is particularly likely in light of the findings on conflict intensity
and directiveness, as a “good” mediator is commonly equated with a versatile and adaptive mediator who cares about human suffering (Martin 2006; Beardsley 2011; Bercovitch 2011). This is also something that recurs in the interviews. Although questions explicitly deal with mediator style and its potential explanations, interviewees often and spontaneously relate their reflections to evaluations of what they deem is “successful” or “good” mediation. At the same time, there are still several benefits to using self-reports. Coupled with the randomized conflict scenarios in the anonymous survey experiment, which partially counteract potential self-censorships and similar biases, self-reports may capture some of the internal dynamics of international mediators. In addition, the fact that the interview findings rely on the reflections of mediators’ own and others’ experiences, as well as those of some non-mediating interviewees to triangulate some of the findings, gives further credence to their quality. Finally, the collected self-report material constitutes an important first effort to systematically explore mediator styles of international mediators at the level of the individual.

6.8 Concluding Discussion

The above analysis points to several findings of relevance for future theorizing on directiveness and orientation in international mediation, both in terms of conceptualizations and explanations. Looking first at directiveness, the analysis suggests it should be conceptualized to focus on three of its four pre-theorized components. Variations in directiveness among international mediators appear best captured along the components of incentive structures, information-sharing and evaluations. This suggests that international mediation scholars would do well to add the domestic mediation component of evaluations to their understandings of directiveness, which hitherto has often been limited to how mediators influence incentive structures and share information. The analysis also suggests that not only variations in degrees of directiveness, but the extent to which directiveness is implemented against all or only some of the parties, may be relevant to study further. In this way it begins to connect mediator style at the individual level with larger debates on mediator bias as well as just negotiations.

Concerning explanations for mediator style, the analysis first shows that general variations in directiveness could fruitfully be explained by contextual differences related to armed conflict. In particular, high-intensity conflicts are here shown to be associated with more directive mediator styles. This is in turn explained by the heightened humanitarian concerns that come with increased fighting. An urge to stop ongoing human suffering may thus spur mediators to invest more of their time and energy into their mediation efforts, making them more open to compromising the self-determination of the conflict parties in negotiations. We should therefore theorize directiveness in relation to
the urgencies and costs of conflict intensity, with a particular emphasis on its humanitarian expressions.

Second, the analysis suggests that the personality of the mediator may condition the effects of conflict intensity on directiveness. In particular, high-Extraversion mediators seem to become more directive in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. A similar pattern is not identified for low-Extraversion mediators. This could be explained by the confidence high-Extraversion mediators feel in the face of heightened humanitarian stakes to push forward. Furthermore, high-Agreeableness mediators may become more directive toward all and not just some of the parties to the conflict in high-intensity contexts than they would be in low-intensity contexts. Low-Agreeableness mediators may conversely not be equally inclined to implement a similar kind of balanced directiveness. This could be explained by their different sensitivities to the humanitarian concerns of high-intensity violence. More precisely, altruistic motivations of high-Agreeableness mediators will resonate particularly well in situations of high humanitarian concerns, paving the way for a principled kind of directiveness. We could therefore theorize the influence of conflict intensity on directiveness as contingent on personality characteristics of international mediators specifically related to their confidence levels and altruistic motivations.

Moving on to orientation, the analysis indicates that it should be conceptualized to focus on one of its three pre-theorized components. The analysis suggests that orientation is best captured along the trust component elaborated on in the theoretical framework. Interview findings also indicate that a mediator’s orientation along the trust component can vary beyond that between the parties to also cover that between the mediator and the parties. Thus, it is possible that international mediators also vary in terms of how much they prioritize and work to improve their relationship with the parties. This additional expression of orientation could be particularly relevant for armed conflicts where prospects for inter-party trust are significantly challenged in light of armed violence and complex political dynamics. The fact that orientation is found to be a relevant dimension of style implies that mediator style of international mediators both can and should be expanded beyond directiveness to also include orientation.

Concerning explanations for orientation, the analysis first shows that overall variations in orientation could fruitfully be explained by the characteristics of the international mediator. More precisely, high-profile mediators are shown to be more settlement-oriented than their low-profile colleagues. A possible reason for this relationship relates to the conflict views of the different mediators. High-profile mediators are likely to interpret conflicts from a realist perspective, which emphasizes scarce resources, competition and rational actors. Conversely, low-profile mediators are likely to nurture interpretations that favor a sociological perspective, which highlights social dynamics, underlying needs and group relationships. High-profile mediators also seem to feel more
accountable to their employing organizations than low-profile mediators, who instead talk about feeling accountable directly toward the parties. These different conflict views seem to filter how mediators evaluate the conflicts they work in and how they mediate with an overall relationship- or settlement-oriented mediator style. We should therefore theorize orientation in relation to the international mediators’ backgrounds and past mediation experiences, with a particular focus on their understandings of their larger working environment.

Second, the analysis proposes that mediator profile may condition the effects of conflict intensity on orientation. High-profile mediators who are overall settlement-oriented appear to become even more settlement-oriented in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. Conversely, low-profile mediators who are overall relationship-oriented in turn seem to become even more relationship-oriented in high-intensity contexts than in low-intensity contexts. Although the analysis only partially captures the details of this pattern, it suggests that this could be the result of a kind of amplification of the embedded conflict views and internalized interpretations of international mediation. This proposes that we should take into account potential contingent and amplifying effects of conflict intensity on the overall relationship between mediator profile and orientation.

The theoretical framework sketched here reflects the core of the original expectations first produced in Chapter 2, while introducing some updated conceptual and explanatory understandings of mediator style. In particular, the overall and direct effects of context and characteristics have been condensed into two general expectations: conflict intensity influences directiveness and mediator profile influences orientation. Furthermore, expected yet not pre-theorized contingent effects have been specified into two relationships between personality, conflict intensity and directiveness as well as profile, conflict intensity and orientation. The proposed theoretical framework still needs to be further studied in alternative samples and designs in order to further validate its quality and relevance for international mediation. At the same time and in light of this study being a first systematic attempt at explaining mediator styles of individual, international mediators, the present findings constitute a unique starting point for expanding the research agenda on mediator styles in international mediation.
7. Conclusions

This dissertation set out to find explanations for variations in mediator style among international mediators working for peacemaking IGOs and NGOs. It was spurred by a puzzling variation in mediator style among international mediators and a significant research gap on the causes of these styles in international mediation. To understand the variations and address the research gap, the dissertation sought to make three general contributions: first, to produce a theoretical framework explaining mediator style, building on previous research on both international as well as domestic mediation; second, to collect and present new empirical material on mediator style at the level of the individual international mediator; and third, to refine our understanding of mediator styles in terms of both general patterns and causal processes by leveraging both a survey experiment and semi-structured in-depth interviews. In this way, the study sought to align existing theories on international mediation with the empirics and practices of the same.

The study has been guided by the research question: *What explains mediator styles of individuals mediating for peacemaking organizations in armed conflicts?* To answer this question, the dissertation constructed a theoretical framework on context, characteristics and mediator style, which it then explored and developed in light of the synthesized findings from new empirics on international mediators. The original theoretical framework defined mediator style as themes in goals and behaviors along firstly directiveness—covering a mediator’s use of leverage and varying from non-directive to directive—and secondly orientation—covering a mediator’s prioritized type of outcome and varying from relationship-oriented to settlement-oriented. It designed several hypotheses on the direct effects of context in the form of conflict intensity (H1) and characteristics in the form of mediator profile (H2) and mediator personality (H3 and H4), on directiveness and orientation. The framework also posited that context and characteristics would have contingent effects on mediator style—effects which were left to be identified in the empirics for later theorizing.

The proposed framework was explored in a mixed-method design involving a unique survey experiment and 46 in-depth interviews. These together helped create an understanding of whether and how context and characteristics affect directiveness and orientation. This was done by studying the general and quantitative patterns as well as the more specific and qualitative processes underlying these patterns. The survey and interviews engaged individual mediators from four IGOs and three NGOs that represent some of the most active and prominent international organizational peacemakers of today. The
findings on both hypothesized direct and exploratory contingent relationships were synthesized into a developed theoretical framework on mediator style. This chapter now takes a closer look at the main findings and contributions of the dissertation, as well as their academic and practical implications.

7.1 Main Conclusions

Mediator style in international mediation has hitherto mainly been approached at the organizational level and then evaluated in light of its impact. A general and first conclusion of this study is that important variations in mediator style can be both fruitfully mapped and explained at the level of the individual. Conceptually, variations along both directiveness and orientation show that international mediators’ mediator styles cover all cells of a two-by-two matrix. This challenges popular assumptions about directiveness and orientation as exclusively covarying. It also reveals a plurality of mediator style hitherto not captured in research on international mediation, partly due to a focus on the organizational, peacemaker level, partly due to an assumption of mediators commonly prioritizing settlement production. The dissertation furthermore shows that directiveness is particularly fruitful to define along variations in information-sharing, incentive structures and mediator evaluations, while expressions of orientation can be best captured in variations in trust between the parties. Degrees of directiveness could additionally and potentially be gauged in relation to whether it is implemented equally toward all or only some of the parties, and degrees of orientation in relation to what extent the mediator prioritizes improving the trust between herself/himself and the parties. Together, these refined conceptualizations give weight to combining insights from both domestic and international mediation when studying the mediator styles of international mediators.

Causally, how international mediators react to different contexts and what characteristics they host, have here been shown to play significant roles for explaining mediator style at the level of the individual mediator. More precisely, the dissertation finds that high rather than low conflict intensity makes mediators overall more directive, and high rather than low mediator profile gives rise to more settlement-oriented mediators. The plausibility of these general patterns is further strengthened by findings on possible pathways channeling the effects of context and characteristics on mediator style. These causal pathways are intricately interwoven with the study’s individual analysis level, as they speak of the mediators’ humanitarian concerns in high- and low-intensity contexts and her/his views and understandings of conflict among low- and high-profile mediators. It now remains to be seen how these individual-level dynamics translate to organizational-level expressions of mediator style: perhaps mediator styles of peacemaking organizations are similar to those of international mediators? Or perhaps individual-level expressions of mediator
style are different from those at the organizational level, due to varying mediation resources, mandates and positions? Future research will have to tell.

A second conclusion is that contextual contingencies are not only relevant for evaluating the impact of mediation on conflict resolution, but also for explaining variations in mediator styles. The exploratory analyses of the dissertation indicate that context in the form of conflict intensity has contingent effects on mediator style in relation to the two mediator characteristics of profile and personality. More precisely, the findings suggest that elements of personality conditions the effects of conflict intensity on directiveness, and mediator profile condition the same on orientation. High rather than low conflict intensity makes mediators with high not low Extraversion more directive; and high rather than low Agreeableness makes mediators more likely directive toward all and not just some parties; high-profile mediators already inclined to be settlement-oriented even more settlement-oriented, and low-profile mediators even more relationship-oriented. These findings provide important rationales for expanding on current contingency models for mediation to also account for conditionalities related to the causes of mediator styles. Not only do they suggest that international mediators’ priorities and behaviors change with contextual variations in conflict intensity, they also reveal a central role for the characteristics of the individual mediators in the process. In other words, future contingency models on mediator style should not only theorize “what behaviors mediators use in different contexts” (Bercovitch 1996: 4), but also who the international mediators are and how their characteristics relate to the context in which they operate.

A third conclusion is that the findings of this dissertation give further credence to the importance of first understanding the causes of mediator style, in order to better evaluate the impact of the same. Previous research on the occurrence and impact of international mediation has shown that mediation happens in the “tough” cases where fighting is intense and conflict dynamics are complex. As a result of this, mediation may appear to be ineffective in contributing to the conflict’s resolution, when rather this may instead be due to the particularly challenging conditions facing the mediator (see Beardsley and Greig 2009; Beardsley 2010; Hellman 2012). This dissertation has shown that international mediators are more likely to be directive in contexts of high-intensity fighting. Thus, when future research moves on to investigate the conflict resolution impact of individual-level directiveness, it can account for these patterns by making sure to compare mediator styles of mediators in similarly intense conflict contexts.

A fourth and final conclusion of this dissertation is that the theoretical framework introduced here can and should be further elaborated on in light of other existing traditions to complement its current mid-range nature in order to produce broader and more parsimonious theoretical implications. Given the theory-generating nature of this study, it has approached explanations to mediator style in an eclectic and open-minded manner. It has drawn on several
different theoretical traditions and perspectives to produce a framework tai-
lored to fit the reality of international mediators, particularly those working for 
peacemaking IGOs and NGOs. However, and as the introductory discussion 
already highlighted in Chapter 1, international mediation has been and can 
be studied from several theoretical perspectives. This has perhaps best been 
illustrated by Kleiboer (1998) in her thorough analysis of the international me-
diation of the Falkland Islands/Malvinas War, using the four perspectives of 
realism, political psychology, sociology and structuralism. The general frame-
work produced in this study could be similarly adapted and refined to reflect 
the larger logics of, for example, bargaining or social-psychological theories 
on mediation and armed conflict.

7.2 Academic Implications

The findings of this dissertation can be translated into four academic implica-
tions for future research on international mediation: three related to the con-
tinued exploration of explanations for mediator style and one related to the 
evaluation of the impact of mediator styles. First, the study identifies general 
relationships between conflict intensity and directiveness as well as between 
mediator profile and orientation. Both relationships merit further testing on 
alternative samples and development with regard to pathways. Future studies 
on conflict intensity could be designed to differentiate between potential con-
scious and subconscious psychological processes triggered by high-intensity 
crises. A possible approach would be to zoom in on alternative mechanisms 
of violent crisis and contrast effects of humanitarian costs, other material or 
political costs, overall time pressure and other pathways such as expectations 
to succeed. Similarly, for mediator profile, future research should look more 
closely into how international mediators view conflicts and related aspects, 
such as their feelings of accountability. In particular, variations in views 
among mediators over time could help illuminate how these relate to mediator 
profile more precisely. Furthermore, conflict views mapping exercises could 
be coupled with both self-reports and behavioral measures of mediator style 
to get a better grasp of the relationship between conflict views and orientation.

Second, connections between proposed independent variables and causal 
mechanisms should be further elaborated on to better identify relationships 
and interactions between these. For example, the direct effect of mediator 
profile on orientation seems to plausibly be channeled by the conflict views of 
the mediators. At the same time, the proposed contingent effect for orienta-
tion between conflict intensity and profile could be happening at the level of 
the mechanisms of profile, the conflict views, rather than at the level of the 
independent variables of profile and conflict intensity. This is also the case for 
conditionalities related to directiveness between altruistically or egoistically 
motivated mediators and the humanitarian concerns of conflict intensity. Fu-
ture research could help illuminate the general relationship between context, characteristics and mediator style by placing greater emphasis on the differentiation between independent variables and their causal mechanisms.

Third, future research will be imperative in refining, testing and advancing our knowledge on both the direct and conditional findings of this study in light of alternative explanations. The studied factors of conflict intensity, profile and personality need to be contrasted to that of alternative explanations, such as the available resources of the international mediators. The additional findings of this study also suggest that we should take into account mediators’ positions and mandates when explaining orientation, as well as the conflict parties’ readiness for understanding directiveness.

Fourth, and finally, the generated framework may facilitate future systematic evaluations of the impact of mediator styles. This serves as one of the rationales for understanding mediator style in the first place, as discussed in Chapter 1. The theoretical framework on mediator style proposed here indicates that directiveness is overall endogenous to the intensities of the conflicts mediators engage in, whereas orientation, conversely, is overall exogenous to the same. Therefore, when setting out to compare, for example, the conflict resolution impact of different directive mediators, future research should theoretically and design-wise take into account that we are more likely to see directive mediator styles in high-intensity conflicts rather than low-intensity conflicts in the first place. In other words, if context and characteristics indeed matter for the mediator styles of international mediators, as this study suggests, then they also deserve to be taken into account when evaluating the effects of different mediator styles in armed conflict contexts. Furthermore, as such evaluations on the impact of mediator style preferably should focus on the individual, future research also now has a unique opportunity to learn more about how individual mediators, in themselves and as teams, influence the progression of armed conflicts (see Beardsley 2011). Indeed, it would be particularly interesting to study how mediator style at the level of the individual relates to expressions of mediation at the level of mediation teams. Such future research could even begin to connect individual-level mediator style to group-level mediation strategies and tactics, further advancing our understanding of the how of mediation.

7.3 Practical Implications

Although the dissertation primarily deals with building theoretical knowledge on mediator styles from an academic perspective, its findings may also speak to the practices of mediation. In fact, four practical implications can be discerned. First, as intensities rise, so will likely the mediator’s directiveness, either consciously or subconsciously. Therefore, it may be important to reflect on what this may imply for the specific objectives of a mediation process.
The study suggests that the urgency of high-intensity contexts may spur mediators to push and even coerce conflict parties that are not ready, which in turn may lead to the parties withdrawing their consent from the voluntary mediation. Also, some mediators may even “get stuck” in a directive style in high-intensity contexts where this strategically may not be beneficial for the progression of talks. Alternatively, it may also serve as a welcome and necessary development if the mediation objective indeed is to “stop the bleeding”. There may also be variations in directiveness within mediation teams depending on the positions and functions of the mediating individuals. Even though mediators have been shown to become more directive overall in high-intensity crises, the study also points to how high-level, high-profile mediators may be particularly disposed to be directive—knowledge of particular relevance for the appointment processes of Special Representatives, Special Envoys and the like. The study suggests that there may be a qualitative difference among particularly high-level mediators with and without previous mediation experience, in which those without previous mediation experience may be inclined to be more directive.

Second, if orientation is indeed overall reflective of the international mediators’ views and personality features, then those employing and appointing mediators may be interested in learning more about these characteristics among potential recruits. This may facilitate matching mediators to their formal or informal mandates as well as to their mediating colleagues. Understanding mediators’ ways of interpreting conflict and their mediator roles could even be more informative than their mediator profiles and their political statue, which today seems to be increasingly important to IGOs and higher-level mediation appointments. That we should look closer into the views and values of international mediators becomes particularly relevant in light of the increasing movement of mediators across IGOs and NGOs, as well as across different tracks. This kind of migration of mediators across mediation environments may come to blur the lines between different profiles and past experiences. A possible result of that could be a greater relevance for the effects of these experiences embedded within international mediators—something which has also already been proposed within research on domestic mediation (Goldberg 2009).

Third, the results of the dissertation suggest placing greater emphasis on self-awareness among the international mediators themselves. If indeed high-intensity contexts encourage more directive mediator styles and particular characteristics promote certain orientations, learning more about these variations and inclinations would contribute to further professionalize international mediation. Both stress and crisis management training, value and attitude mapping and other introspective exercises for increased self-awareness could benefit the mediators themselves. Such trainings may also serve to complement already existing programs on various technical elements or thematic issues of mediation. Increased self-awareness on mediator style could also potentially
help mediators concretize their particular strengths and develop a vocabulary for categorizing their ways of mediating. This kind of profiling along the spectrum of mediator style is already widespread among domestic mediators, although then commonly related to the type of mediation training received (Charkoudian et al. 2009). A greater discussion on and awareness of mediator styles could also serve to help evaluate international mediation, albeit indirectly. While this evaluation would not study the mediator’s impact, it would at least help map and evaluate the different mediators’ ways of mediating overall and in particular situations. Systematic evaluation of international mediators remains a contested and sensitive issue (see Lanz et al. 2008: 9–10). Therefore, international mediators’ self-evaluations on mediator style could constitute a complementary, and potentially less sensitive, instrument for quality control.

Fourth, and finally, the dissertation makes a case for broadening our common focus on the public and well-known high-level IGO and NGO mediators to include also their lesser-known colleagues engaged in mediation though not necessarily titled mediators. This is particularly relevant for the IGOs in this study, which are commonly more hierarchical than NGOs. Even though position and team functions may set the boundaries for how mediators can mediate, the study has shown that the activity and process of mediating is equally relevant to many more individuals than those typically studied by academia, reported in the news or promoted within peacemaking organizations. It therefore seems to be high time to also acknowledge and support these less publicly known mediating individuals in their endeavors and developments. Although some training programs exist that target lower-level IGO and NGO officials, these could fruitfully be complemented with a more encouraging organizational culture that further helps all kinds of mediating staff to be better equipped to both support others mediating and to mediate themselves.

As indicated in the above academic and practical implications, this dissertation has provided several important insights into how mediator styles among international mediators can be explained. More generally, it has contributed to expanding the research agenda on mediator styles in international mediation into the realms of the individual mediator.
Appendix A: Survey Experiment Template

This appendix presents a text-based version of the digital survey template. Pages are illustrated in brackets and all questions and answer options are specified. Multiple-choice questions in the digital version of the survey were originally answered by using “drag-and-drop” functions. However, in the following survey template, which reflects the paper-and-pen version, multiple-choice questions are answered by ranking the chosen options using numbers.

[page 1]

SURVEY ON MEDIATION

This academic study by Uppsala University researchers explores the actions and goals of actors mediating in armed conflicts.

In this survey, you will be asked to read a short description of a hypothetical conflict situation. You will then be asked questions about how you would mediate a situation such as the one described.

Participation in the survey is voluntary. You may skip questions you do not feel like answering and you may end the survey at any time. The survey takes about 15 minutes.

The study has been approved by the formal Swedish Academic Review Board. Uppsala University is responsible for all personal data management. According to the Personal Data Act (Personuppgiftslagen, PUL 1998:204) you have the right to review all your personal data information in the research and have potential errors corrected once a year and free of charge. No unauthorized parties will be able to see and identify your responses.

A donation of 2 EUR is given to the work of UNHCR for each registered response.

More information can be found on the project website or by contacting:

http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/negotiation-and-mediation/understanding-mediator-style/
MEDIATION DEFINITION

There are many definitions of “mediation”. In this study, we use the following definition:

- Mediation is a voluntary and non-coercive third-party activity with the purpose of alleviating and in the end resolving an ongoing dispute.
- The purpose of such engagement may be establishing contact between the parties; de-escalating tensions; facilitating a solution acceptable to the primary parties; facilitating the implementation of solutions; and enabling changed structures and interactions.
- The process by which third parties mediate may be formal and public or informal and private. It may occur at multiple levels of society with different stakeholders (also known as “tracks” of mediation).
- The third parties mediating may either have a formal appointment as lead or team member mediator, or they may be practicing mediation in their daily work without a formal mediator role or title.

1. According to the definition you just read, have you ever mediated?
   
   Yes
   No

CONFLICT SCENARIO

On the next page you will read a description of a conflict situation. The situation is not about a specific country in the news today. Some parts of the description may strike you as important; other parts may seem unimportant. After the description, we will ask you some questions about mediation. Please answer these questions according to how you would behave in a situation such as the one described.
CONFLICT SCENARIO

An armed conflict has erupted between a government and a rebel movement. The conflict concerns government power and has been going on for a while. The current situation is summarized below.

- Fighting is rare (1) / recurrent (2 + 3) and at a low level (1) / very high level (2 + 3).
- There are a few (1) / many (2+3) reports of limited (1) / grave and widespread (2 + 3) human rights violations.
- Few people (1) / Thousands of people (2 + 3) have had to flee their homes.

Negotiations have been initiated, but no solution has been agreed on. You become engaged in mediating the conflict between the parties on behalf of an international organization. You have a clear mandate and unlimited resources that give you free reins to work as you like.

As you can see, the conflict is causing very little human suffering (1) / a lot of human suffering (2 + 3). Your identity is not revealed to the public, so your reputation as a mediator is not a concern (1 + 2). / Therefore, all eyes are on you and your reputation as a mediator is on the line (3).

MEDIATE THE CONFLICT

How would you go about mediating a conflict situation such as the one described? [specific to paper-and-pen version:] Mark all options that apply. If you choose more than one, rank them using numbers so that 1 represents your main choice, 2 your second, and so on. (You may return to the conflict description on page 3 for reference.)

2. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would talk to the parties… [DIR: information-sharing]
   1. mostly one at a time
   2. somewhat more one at a time
   3. both one at a time and together
   4. somewhat more together
   5. mostly together

3. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would influence the conflict parties’ incentives with at most… [DIR: incentive structures]
1. material sanctions
2. threats of sanctions
3. material inducements
4. argumentation and persuasion
5. as few means as possible

4. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would have the conflict parties work with draft agreement texts... [DIR: process control]
   1. I have produced without their input
   2. I have produced with their input
   3. we have produced collaboratively
   4. they have produced with my input
   5. they have produced without my input

5. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would be guided by and base my decisions on... [ORI: underlying rationales]
   1. mainly logical reasoning
   2. somewhat more logical than intuitive reasoning
   3. both logical and intuitive reasoning
   4. somewhat more intuitive than logical reasoning
   5. mainly intuitive reasoning

6. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would analyze the conflict using primarily information on the conflict parties’... [ORI: focus of analysis]
   1. positions
   2. positions and interests
   3. positions, interests and needs
   4. positions, interests, needs and emotions
   5. positions, interests, needs, emotions and values

7. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would share my evaluations of the conflict with the conflict parties... [DIR: evaluation]
   1. as little as possible
   2. rarely
   3. occasionally
   4. frequently
   5. as much as possible
MEDIATE THE CONFLICT

Continue mediating. How would you go about mediating a conflict situation such as the one described? Mark all options that apply. If you choose more than one, rank them using numbers so that 1 represents your main choice, 2 your second, and so on.
(You may return to the conflict description on page 3 for reference.)

8. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would make efforts to have the conflict parties’ relationship be... [ORI: trust]
   1. strongly positive and trusting
   2. moderately positive and trusting
   3. at least free from negative expressions in public interactions and during negotiations
   4. at least free from negative expressions during negotiations
   5. as it is, but bridged via trust in me

9. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would share the conflict parties’ messages by... [DIR: information-sharing]
   1. using the conflict parties’ exact wording
   2. paraphrasing some information
   3. re-framing some information
   4. excluding some information
   5. magnifying some information

10. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would prioritize the conflict parties’... [ORI: trust]
    1. relationship
    2. communication
    3. communication and mapping of grievances
    4. mapping of grievances
    5. settlement of grievances

11. In a conflict situation such as the one described, I would influence the conflict parties’ incentives by involving... [DIR: incentive structures]
    1. as many actors as possible (from the conflict parties to the international community)
    2. a broad range of actors (from the conflict parties to their allies)
    3. a limited group of actors (from the conflict parties to their constituents)
    4. a select group of actors (from the conflict parties to my mediation team)
    5. as few actors as possible (at most the conflict parties)
You have now finished mediating the conflict situation. The rest of the survey will ask some questions about your personality and background.

13. How well do the following statements describe your personality? Choose one option for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I see myself as someone who...</th>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
<th>Disagree a little</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree a little</th>
<th>Agree strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gets nervous easily</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is outgoing, sociable</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has few artistic interests</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is reserved</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tends to find faults with others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tends to be lazy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is considerate and kind to almost everyone</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does a thorough job</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is sometimes rude to others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has an active imagination</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remains calm in tense situations</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is talkative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIEWS ON CONFLICT AND BIAS
Choose one option below that best captures your views.

14. Armed conflict is commonly the result of...
   1. scarce resources and competition.
   2. misunderstandings and lack of trust.
   3. unmet needs and disrupted social relationships.

15. Mediators should act in a biased manner towards one of the conflict parties in negotiations...
   1. anytime this is deemed beneficial for resolving the conflict.
   2. only on rare occasions when it is unavoidable or beneficial for resolving the conflict.
   3. never.
MEDIATION EXPERIENCE

Below questions relate to your mediation experiences and background.

16. Approximately how many years of mediation experience do you have?

17. In approximately what percentage (%) of the above specified mediation experience have you been lead mediator?

18. Approximately how many peace processes have you mediated in?

19. Which of the below options best represents how you learned to mediate?

   1. Formal academic training
   2. Formal on-the-job training
   3. Individual learning-by-doing

20. Have you mediated in any of the below types of negotiation processes? (Mark all options that apply and rank them with number 1 representing your main experience, number 2 your second and so on.)

   • Official diplomatic processes involving the highest leadership such as state or other official actors. (Track 1)
   • Unofficial, public or private, diplomatic processes involving official representatives of the conflict parties, complementing Track I initiatives. (Track 1.5)
   • Unofficial and informal processes involving members of adversarial groups or nations. (Track 2)
   • Unofficial and informal processes involving other actors and groups not directly related to the conflict parties yet still relevant for long-term peacebuilding. (Track 3)

21. Have you mediated in conflicts of the below intensities? (Mark all options that apply and rank them with number 1 representing your main experience, number 2 your second and so on.)

   • Very high intensity: widespread and grave human rights violations, more than 1000 casualties in one year
   • High intensity: localized and severe human rights violations, over 100 and under 1000 casualties in one year
   • Medium intensity: some human rights violations, over 10 and under 100 casualties in one year
• Low intensity: no or limited human rights violations, no or up to 9 casualties in one year

22. **Have you mediated on behalf of any of the below third-party actors?**
(Mark all options that apply and rank them with number 1 representing your main experience, number 2 your second and so on.)

• An inter-governmental organization (IGO)
• A non-governmental organization (NGO) (international or domestic)
• A state
• Individual capacity

[page 9]

**BACKGROUND**

23. **What is your current age?**

24. **What is your country of origin?**
If born and raised in different countries, please specify country where you spent most of your childhood.

25. **What is your last completed degree?** (Choose one option)

   High School Diploma or equivalent
   Associate’s Degree or equivalent (undergraduate academic degree of two years)
   Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent
   Master’s Degree or equivalent
   Doctorate or equivalent
   Other, please specify

26. **What is your main field of study?**

27. **Where are you currently working?**

   Employing organization

   Position/Title
28. Please rate how you experienced the conflict scenario along each item scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low military casualties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low civilian casualties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low challenge to your mediation reputation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrealistic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low human costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. Have you previously taken an Uppsala University survey on mediation in 2014?
   Yes
   No

30. Have you previously been interviewed by researcher Mathilda Lindgren for this research project?
   Yes
   No

31. Which conflict, if any, did the scenario remind you of?

[page 10]
Thank you for your participation!
Appendix B: Survey Descriptions and Additional Analyses

The appendix on survey descriptions and additional analyses takes a closer look at the distribution of the survey items, the pre- and post-matching balances, treatment checks and balance checks, and the additional exploratory graph on contingent effects between Agreeableness and conflict intensity (referred to in Chapter 4). Further additional analyses, the survey data and its codebook can be accessed upon request.

Survey Item Descriptions

This section briefly discusses and illustrates some of the descriptive statistics for survey items on mediator style, mediator profile and the Big Five personality traits.

Mediator Style

Descriptions of the directiveness and orientation indices are briefly illustrated in Table 7.1. The table shows that while the observations span the full scale (1–5) for both indices, the mean and median values of orientation are under the mid of the scale, indicating an overall more relationship-oriented sample. For example, when it comes to some of the directiveness items, responses for questions on caucusing (2) and evaluation (7) are highly left-skewed. Conversely, responses for questions on information-sharing (9) and scope of actor engagement (11) are highly right-skewed. Similarly, for orientation, responses to question 8 on trust are left-skewed (toward the relationship-end) and responses to question 5 on the underlying rationales are right-skewed (toward the settlement-end). Thus, while the composite indices still reflect interesting variations explored in this study, future surveys would likely benefit from further calibrating some of the index items to mitigate potential floor and ceiling effects.37

---

37 Basic item analysis of Cronbach’s alphas further reflect ceiling and floor effects of the mentioned items, as the standardized overall alpha for the directiveness index is 0.75 when questions 2 and 7 are reverse-coded, but otherwise -3.9. Similarly, for orientation, the standardized overall alpha is 0.72 when question 5 is reverse-coded, as compared to the original model alpha of -1.8.
Table 7.1. *Mediator Style Indices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directiveness</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.163</td>
<td>1.288</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2.362</td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mediator Profile**

Descriptive statistics of the mediator profile index are illustrated in Table 7.2. The mediator profile index is relatively right-skewed, meaning that most respondents have a high mediator profile index value. This appears to be particularly driven by responses to question 22 on main past employers. The fact that most respondents have worked for IGOs, and some also for states, bounds the inferences that can be made from the material to a predominantly IGO-experienced sample.\(^{38}\)

Table 7.2. *Mediator Profile Index*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profile</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3.714</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mediator Personality**

Table 7.3 shares some descriptive statistics of all the Big 5 index measures for the surveyed sample. With a median of 4 out of the maximum 5, the level of overall Agreeableness among the respondents is relatively right-skewed. Extraversion, conversely, has a more even distribution across its scale from 1 to 5.\(^{39}\) Although the other three dimensions of the Big 5 are not explicitly studied here, it is worth noting that Conscientiousness exhibits highly right-skewed values for this sample with a median of 4.5. Also Neuroticism is highly skewed, but to the left with a median of 1.5 and a maximum of 3.5 (out of 5).

---

\(^{38}\) The skewness is further illustrated in a basic item analysis studying Cronbach’s alphas where a reverse coding of question 22 gives the mediator profile index an overall standardized alpha of 0.71, compared to the original model alpha of -0.98.

\(^{39}\) The indices, which have been thoroughly pre-tested by others, have standardized alphas below the common threshold of 0.7, but within the acceptable range for these kind of few-question survey indices: Agreeableness reflects a standardized alpha of 0.46 and Extraversion a standardized alpha of 0.4.
Table 7.3. Personality Indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>4.017</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>3.298</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>3.709</td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>4.402</td>
<td>0.745</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1.640</td>
<td>0.665</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matching

This discussion complements that on matching in Chapter 3 by elaborating on the pre- and post-matching balances for the models relating to mediator profile, Agreeableness and Extraversion.

Each matched model uses mediator profile and dichotomized versions of Agreeableness and Extraversion as dependent variables. Mediator profile is matched on the three theoretically preceding covariates of respondent age (continuous), region of origin (Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Northern America, Southern America) and social science degree (1/0). Mediator personality is matched on covariates specific to Model 1 and mediator profile specific to Model 2—both elaborated on in Chapter 3. Table 7.4 illustrates pre- and post-matching statistics for Model 1 and analyses on the effects of Agreeableness, Table 7.5 illustrates pre- and post-matching statistics for Model 1 and analyses on the effects of Extraversion, and Table 7.6 illustrates pre- and post-matching statistics for Model 2 and analyses on the effects of mediator profile. Further discussions of pre- and post-matching balance of Models 1 (personality) and 2 (profile) can be found in Chapter 3.

Treatment and Balance Checks

This section illustrates the main results for the treatment and balance checks. The treatment checks serve to evaluate whether, and if so to what extent, the three randomized conflict scenarios and the conflict-intensity treatment, including the embedded mechanisms of humanitarian and reputational concerns, have worked according to expectation. The expectation is that the two high-intensity scenarios are significantly higher in terms of human costs, urgency, military and civilian casualties and complexity, than the low-intensity scenario. Furthermore, all three scenarios should be equal in terms of perceived realism and the third scenario (the second high-intensity scenario with high reputational concern) should constitute a significantly greater reputational concern.

---

Note that while the matching procedure also includes Africa as one of six regions of origin, this is not reported as a separate category in the tables.
Table 7.4. Agreeableness: Pre- and Post-Matching Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>48.255</td>
<td>48.152</td>
<td>48.848</td>
<td>48.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>48.017</td>
<td>48.033</td>
<td>48.341</td>
<td>48.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>2.747</td>
<td>1.289</td>
<td>6.231</td>
<td>-2.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
<td>3.372</td>
<td>1.237</td>
<td>4.114</td>
<td>1.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>0.756</td>
<td>0.822</td>
<td>0.672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>2.747</td>
<td>1.289</td>
<td>-23.004</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
<td>3.372</td>
<td>1.237</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>0.756</td>
<td>0.377</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.0455</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>-10.205</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-16.085</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.540</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.256</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>-42.21</td>
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<td>-43.577</td>
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<tr>
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<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
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<td>0.182</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. America</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.122</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.114</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>-18.148</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.933</td>
<td>-3.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.008</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.810</td>
<td>0.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. America</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>std mean diff</td>
<td>10.159</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17.021</td>
<td>5.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean raw eQQ diff</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-test p-value</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.329</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age lagged</td>
<td>mean treatment</td>
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<td>2450.8</td>
<td>2442.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean control</td>
<td>2453.1</td>
<td>2418.3</td>
<td>2492.8</td>
<td>2489.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>std mean diff</td>
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<td>-1.862</td>
<td>-5.3196</td>
<td>-5.5111</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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Model 1 Min. p-value 0.051 0.072 0.196 0.317
### Table 7.5. Extraversion: Pre- and Post-Matching Statistics

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Model 2

| Min. p-value | 0.083 | 0.002 | 0.325 | 0.195 |

Randomization inference shows that there are indeed significant, and expected, positive differences between the low-intensity scenario and the first high-intensity scenario when it comes to human costs, urgency, military and civilian casualties, and complexity. These ATEs and confidence intervals for Comparison 1 are illustrated in red in Figure 7.1. The three scenarios do not, however, seem to be equal in terms of realism. Respondents seem to perceive the two high-intensity scenarios as significantly more realistic than the low-intensity scenario. Furthermore, Comparison 2 in Figure 7.1, which compares the two high-intensity scenarios to each other, indicates that the high-intensity scenario with embedded reputational concerns may potentially be slightly less realistic than the high-intensity scenario exclusively with the humanitarian mechanism. However, this is only significant for a one-sided negative effect at a 10% significance level. This could indicate that respondents perceive the second scenario of high-intensity and humanitarian concerns to be most realistic. Finally, turning to the evaluation of reputational concerns, these are indeed different between the low-intensity scenario and the first high-intensity scenario. However, to the extent that the second high-intensity scenario implies greater reputational concerns than the first high-intensity scenario, this is only significant at 10%. In other words, the reputational concern mechanism is not well isolated in the survey. Inferences related to the role of reputational concern may therefore be less informative than expected.

Moving on to the balance check, these serve to evaluate to what extent the experimental component of the survey has been distributed randomly among the survey respondents. Good balance for this dissertation’s survey experiment implies no significant differences between the three groups of respondents receiving either the low-intensity, the high-intensity and humanitarian concerns or the high-intensity, humanitarian and reputational concerns sce-
Overview of All Treatment Check Tests

![Graph showing comparison between ATEs (Average Treatment Effects) with 95% confidence intervals for each of the seven treatment checks for comparison 1 between the low- and the first high-intensity scenario (red) and comparison 2 between the two high-intensity scenarios (blue). All confidence intervals above 0 indicate significant results.](image)

*Figure 7.1. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for each of the seven treatment checks for comparison 1 between the low- and the first high-intensity scenario (red) and comparison 2 between the two high-intensity scenarios (blue). All confidence intervals above 0 indicate significant results. Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).*

... scenario. Four figures illustrate randomization-inference tests for four groups of respondent covariates: 1) background factors (Figure 7.2), 2) personality-trait profiles (OCEAN) (Figure 7.3), 3) mediator profile (Figure 7.4), and 4) mediation experience (Figure 7.5). These show that there are no significant differences between the three treatment groups, except for one comparison on Extraversion (see Figure 7.3). Because this is the only significant test of many others, it is likely the result of chance. The balance is therefore good and we can trust and leverage the inferential power of randomization.
Figure 7.2. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for background covariates, comparing the three conflict scenarios to each other (y-axis). Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).

Figure 7.3. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for OCEAN personality covariates, comparing the low-intensity with the first high-intensity scenario (Comparison 1), the two high-intensity scenarios (Comparison 2), and the low-intensity with the second high-intensity scenario (Comparison 3). Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).
Figure 7.4. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for mediator profile covariates, comparing the three conflict scenarios to each other (y-axis). Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).

Figure 7.5. ATEs with 95% confidence intervals for mediation experience covariates, comparing the three conflict scenarios to each other (y-axis). Produced using code related to the work of Dafoe (2011).
Contingencies: Additional Graph for Chapter 4

This final section illustrates the conditional effects of conflict intensity for low- and high-Agreeableness respondents, complementing the exploratory analysis on contingent relationships in Chapter 4.

**Low Agreeableness data**

- ATE: 0.963, p-value: 0.024
- ATE: 0.218, p-value: 0.711

**High Agreeableness data**

- ATE: 0.669, p-value: 0.051
- ATE: 0.073, p-value: 0.589

**Figure 7.6.** Split-sample comparisons between low- and high-Agreeableness respondents on the two mediator style indices (y-axis) and the three conflict intensity scenarios (x-axis), with average treatment effects (ATE), p-values from RI analyses of Low versus High (hum) and High (hum) versus High (hum+rep), and blue diamonds as treatment means. Title p-values compare the low-intensity with the two high-intensity scenarios combined.
Appendix C: List of Interviewees

All analyzed interviews are listed and specified in this appendix. The list of interviewees differentiates between “mediating” and “other” interviewees based on whether they report mediating according to this dissertation’s definition of mediation in armed conflicts (see Chapter 3). The list includes 46 mediating interviewees and nine other interviewees. The analysis in Chapter 5 mainly rests on the 46 mediating interviewees. The letter code refers to the mode in which the interview was conducted.

FTF = face to face
P = phone
S = IP phone

MEDIATING INTERVIEWEES

African Union and IGAD

A4 Advisor, AU, Addis Ababa, 16 April 2015 (FTF)

A7 Senior Mediator, AU, Addis Ababa, 20 April 2015 (FTF)

A8 Abdel-Fatau Musah, current Director of Africa II, UN DPA, and former Deputy Head, UNOAU, Addis Ababa, 21 April 2015 (FTF)

A20 Lazaro Sumbeiywo, Senior Mediator, IGAD, Addis Ababa, 29 April 2015 (FTF)

A22 Neha Sanghrajka, Special Assistant/Liaison Officer, AU Panel of Eminent African Personalities, Stockholm, 2 June 2015 (S)

European Union

B1 Michael Sahlin, former EUSR, EU, Uppsala, 20 May 2015 (FTF)

B3 Advisor, EU, Brussels, 15 June 2015 (FTF)
B13 EUSR, EU, Brussels, 12 November 2015 (FTF)

B14 Bjoern Kuehne, Chief of Cabinet/Political Advisor, Office of the EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia, EU, 12 November 2015 (FTF)

B15 former EUSR and current Director, Egmont Institute, Brussels, 13 November 2015 (FTF)

S5 Advisor, EU, Stockholm, 6 November 2015 (S)

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United Nations

N1 UN Advisor, UN DPA, New York, 14 October 2014 (FTF)

N3 Official, UN DPA, New York, 22 October 2014 (FTF)

N4 Official, UN DPA, New York, 30 October 2014 (FTF)

N5 Advisor, UN DPA, Professor at University of Ottawa, New York, 5 November 2014 (S)

N6 Jeffrey Mapendere, Advisor, UN DPA, New York, 10 November 2014 (S)

N7 Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York 11 November 2014 (P)

N8 Official, UN DPA, New York, 11 November 2014 (FTF)

N9 Regional Head, Unicef, New York, 11 November 2014 (S)

N10 Official, UN DPA, New York, 12 November 2014 (S)

N11 Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 12 November 2014 (P)

N12 Inza Dosso, Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 13 November 2014 (P)

N13 Political Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 13 November 2014 (P)

N15 Graciela Tapia, Advisor and former SBT Member, UN, New York, 14 November 2014 (S)

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**N16** Michel Seka, Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 17 November 2014 (P)

**N17** Kodzo Segla, Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 18 November 2014 (P)

**N18** Jack Christofides, Official, UN, New York, 20 November 2014 (FTF)

**N19** Political Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 21 November 2014 (P)

**N20** Emmanuel Cimanuka, Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 25 November 2014 (P)

**N21** Mohammed Mohammed, Civil Affairs Officer, UN DPKO, New York, 26 November 2014 (P)

**N22** former SRSG, UN DPA, New York, 3 December 2014 (FTF)

**N23** Álvaro de Soto, former Under-Secretary-General and Envoy, UN, New York, 10 December 2014 (FTF)

**N24** Advisor, UN DPA, New York, 10 December 2014 (P/S)

**N26** Senior Mediator, UN DPA, New York, 18 December 2014 (S)

**N27** SRSG and Head of Mission, UN DPA, New York, 14 January 2015 (FTF)

**N28** SRSG, UN DPA, Stockholm, 4 February 2015 (S)

**A17** former UN Official, Addis Ababa, 27 April 2015 (S)

**S1** Chetan Kumar, former Senior Conflict Prevention Advisor, UNDP (New York) and current Senior Advisor on Peacebuilding, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP (Manila), Stockholm, 13 October 2015 (S)

**CMI, HDC, MediatEUr and Other NGOs**

**B5** Antje Herrberg, Head, MediatEUr, Brussels, 16 June 2015 (FTF)

**B9** Martin Griffiths, Senior Mediator and Head, European Institute of Peace, Brussels, 17 June 2015 (FTF)
B12 Advisor, CMI, Brussels, 20 June 2015 (S)

A13 Stella Sabiiti, Consulting Mediator, Addis Ababa, 24 April 2015 (FTF)

A16 Advisor, HDC, Addis Ababa, 27 April 2015 (S)

A18 Advisor, CMI, Addis Ababa, 28 April 2015 (S)

A19 Advisor, NGO, Addis Ababa, 28 April 2015 (S)

S7 Dr. Emma Leslie, Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Stockholm, 11 November 2015 (S)

OTHER INTERVIEWEES

N14 Political Officer, UN, New York, 14 November 2014 (P)

A2 Consultant, AU/IGAD, Addis Ababa, 14 April 2015 (FTF)

A9 Officer, AU, Addis Ababa, 21 April 2015 (FTF)

A12 Diana Baker, Political Officer, UNOAU, Addis Ababa, 23 April 2015 (FTF)

B4 Advisor, EU, Brussels, 15 June 2015 (FTF)

B6 Political Officer, EU, Brussels, 16 June 2015 (FTF)

B7 Advisor, EU, Brussels, 17 June 2015 (FTF)

B11 Assistant, CMI, Brussels, 25 June 2015 (S)

S6 Mihaela Osorio, Chief Political Advisor to Operation Althea Force Commander, EU, Stockholm, 10 November 2015 (S)
Appendix D: Interview Guide

This final appendix shares the full interview guide, including both introductory information and oral consent form shared with the interviewee. It describes the specific interview questions related to the overall research question of this dissertation. An overview of the full transcribing scheme and the interview coding scheme are available upon request.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Overall Information

- **Introduction:** I am a researcher doing my doctoral studies at Uppsala University in Sweden. I am particularly interested in learning about the mediation experiences and views of individuals, such as yourself, with varying experiences of third-party mediation, within [organization], whether or not you usually call yourself a mediator.
- **Informed consent I:** For approximately an hour, I will invite you to reflect on several questions. You are free to choose not to answer if you do not feel like it, you are welcome to ask questions during the interview and you may choose to end the interview at any time, or withdraw your participation at any time, including after the interview is concluded. [Hand over “Contact Information and Consent Sheet” or mention that this will be e-mailed to the interviewee after the interview.]
- **Informed consent II:** Are you ok with me using quotes from this interview in my research? [Agree on how: full name, pseudonym, to be negotiated contingent on explicit consent]
- **Informed consent III:** May I record the interview for internal, academic purposes?
- **Informed consent IV:** Before we start, do you have any questions?

2. Background Questions

[Only asked when preparatory research had not already provided sufficient answers.]

Q1: What is your country of origin, or where did you spend most of your childhood? [origin]
Q2: What is your date of birth? [age]
Q2: What is the highest educational degree you’ve earned and in what subject? [education]

3. Mediation in General

Q3: What is your formal title and employment position with [employer]? What are your main work areas? How does it relate to the mediation of [organization], in your view? [position]

Q4: What kind of mediation are you commonly involved in? Has there been any theme to your mediation experience? [mediation background]

Q5: Do you have any role model mediators that inspire you? What about them are inspiring? [ideals/views/learning/personality]

Q [occasional 1]: How did you learn how to mediate? [learning]

4. Describing Mediator Style

Q6: How would your colleagues describe you as a mediator? [mediator profile/mediator style]

Q7: Are there things you almost always do or prioritize, and things you would never do? [mediator profile]

Q [occasional 2]: In what ways can [the way mediators mediate/ style] vary among mediators such as yourself?

5. Explaining Mediator Style

Q8: In your view, and based on our discussions on mediation, what do you think influences your way of mediating? [explanations for style]

- 1) conflict intensity: In what way does conflict intensity affect your mediation?
- 2) mediation mandate: In what way does the power you have from your mandate influence your mediation?
- 3) mediator profile: What in particular about your past mediation experiences shapes your mediation?
• 4) views and ideas: Which types of values have been most influential for your mediation and in what way?
• 5) organizational cultures: How have the employing organization[s] that you have worked with differed or been similar in the way they understand and work with mediation? What has the environment been like?
• 6) personality: Which aspects of personality, more precisely, influence variations in your mediation?
• 7) mediator training: What, more precisely, about the training has shaped your mediation?

Q9: If you think about how you mediated in [low-intensity conflict] and in [high-intensity conflict], were there any differences in your way of mediating and if so, what affected these differences?

  • What, more precisely was it about the intense conflict that made you more [X]?
  • What is the main difference between a low-intensity and a low-intensity context?

Q [occasional 3]: Do you have any particular characteristics that you believe shape your style?

Q [occasional 4]: Previous interviews have highlighted variations in mediation along two dimensions. How relevant are these in your own experience and which ones would you say are most influential in peacemaking? Would you add other dimensions? [validating mediator style and exploring relationships and new dimensions]

  • 1. degree of directiveness: facilitating talks with limited versus extensive involvement in leading negotiations and solutions
  • 2. orientation: towards settlement, where problem-solving of the contested issues is the main focus or relationship-building, where the interactions and relationships between the parties is the main focus

6. Concluding Questions

Q10: How would you say you develop your way of mediating more specifically? What other driving forces besides rational thought have guided your mediation? [reasoning/strategizing vs intuition/improvisation]

Q11: If you could give some advice to your younger self, when you were still very new to the business of peacemaking, what would you say to yourself? [personality/profile/learning]
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