KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ACTORS ON THE COURSES OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS: PKK, LTTE, AND FARC

TUĞBA SEZGİN

MASTER'S THESIS

ISTANBUL, MAY, 2019

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ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This work entitled **"THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ACTORS ON THE COURSES OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS: PKK, LTTE, AND FARC"** prepared by **TUĞBA SEZGİN** has been judged to be successful at the defense exam held on **27 May 2019** and accepted by our jury as **MASTER THESIS.**

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27 May 2019

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THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ACTORS ON THE COURSES OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS: PKK, LTTE, AND FARC

ABSTRACT

Non-state armed groups that have shown an increase after World War II constitutes the main subject of civil conflicts. In this study, the question of how the non-state armed groups can continue their existence against the stronger side of the conflict which is state, is problematized. And it is argued that even though they are the disadvantaged side in terms of power, thanks to the acquisition of assistance provided by external actors they become able to maintain their capacity to inflict cost. As for external actors, this study contends that they influence the course and settlement of the conflicts as well as the behaviors of the warring parties significantly. To test the validity of the arguments, the thesis employs a comparative analysis of three different armed groups which adopted the asymmetric warfare. These armed groups are the ones that managed to survive for many years by the external support as follows: the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), the Liberation Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE), and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The detailed analysis of these cases provides important implications in terms of understanding the persistence of armed groups and the ways to end their violent activities.

Keywords: asymmetric warfare, non-state armed groups, external assistance, insurgent capacity, PKK, LTTE, FARC

DIŞ AKTÖRLERİN ASİMETRİK SAVAŞLARIN SÜRECİNE OLAN ETKİSİ: PKK, LTTE ve FARC

ÖZET

İkinci Dünya savaşından sonraki dönemde artış gösteren ve bugün dünyanın birçok yerinde farklı motivasyonlarla varlık gösteren silahlı örgütler iç savaş literatürünün ana konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışma da asimetrik yöntemlerle savaşan devletdışı silahlı örgütlerin güçlü taraf olan devletlere karşı varlıklarını nasıl sürdürebildiğini sorunsallaştırmaktadır ve silahlı örgütlerin savaşın zayıf tarafı olmalarına rağmen dış aktörlerden aldıkları destek sayesinde uzun yıllar şiddet kullanma kapasitelerini devam ettirebildiklerini savunmaktadır. Dış aktörlerin ise silahlı örgütlere yardım etmekle savaşın sürecine, aktörlerin tutumlarına ve dolayısıyla sonucuna ciddi ölçüde etki ettiğini iddia etmektedir. Bahsi geçen argümanların ne derece geçerli olduğunu görebilmek için asimetrik taktikler benimseyen üç farklı silahlı örgütün karşılaştırmalı incelenmesi yoluna başvurulmaktadır.Bu örgütler uzun süre çeşitli dış desteklerin varlığı sayesinde ayakta kalabilmiş Kürdistan İşçi Partisi (PKK), Tamil Eelam Kurtuluş Kaplanları (LTTTE) ve Kolombiya Devrimci Silahlı Güçleri (FARC)'tır. Bu örgütlerin detaylı analizi, diğer silahlı örgütlerin var olmasına etki eden faktörlerin anlaşılması ve neden oldukları şiddete son verilmesi açısından önemli bulgular sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: asimetrik savaş, devletdışı silahlı örgütler, dış aktör desteği, örgüt kapasitesi, PKK, LTTE, FARC

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To my parents

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ASALA	Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
ELN	National Liberation Army
ENLF	Eelam National Liberation Front
EPRFLF	Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front
EROS	Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna; Basque Country and Freedom
EUROPOL	European Police Office
FACT	Federation of Associations of Canadian Tamils
FARC	The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IISS	The International Institute for Strategic Studies
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IS	Islamic State
KCK	Democratic Communities of Kurdistan
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KKK	Democratic Confederation of Kurdistan
KONGRA-GEL	Kurdistan People's Congress
KP	Kumaran Pathmanatham
LTTE	The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NAGs	Non-state Armed Groups
OAS	Organization of American States
PCDK	The Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PJAK	The Kurdistan Free Life Party

PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan; The Kurdish Workers' Party
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PLOTE	People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
PYD	Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat; The Democratic Union Party
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
SATP	South Asia Terrorism Portal
TAF	Turkish Air Force
TELO	Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization
TLO	Tamil Liberation Organization
TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front
UCDP/ PRIO	Uppsala Conflict Data Program/ Peace Research Institute Oslo
UP	Unión Patriótica; Patriotic Union
UTO	United Tamil Organization
WTCC	World Tamil Coordinating Committe

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICT

The nature of war has changed considerably after World War II, and interstate wars have given its place to other kinds of conflicts increasingly (Gleditsch, 2007, p. 294) Because of the grim lessons of two world wars and the invention of nuclear weapons together with 'institutionalization of territorial nationalism', states started to engage in different ways, and new kinds of interactions came to the scene. As a result of these, the incident of interstate conflict has become a rare phenomenon, and civil wars once regarded as "residual type of warfare" developed into the main one replacing the major wars that predominated in the World (Chenoweth and Lawrence, 2010, pp. xi-1).

The occurrence of intra-state conflicts, internal conflicts, or civil wars has kept growing dramatically, and insurgencies started to appear frequently in many parts of the globe. In this transition period from total wars to indirect forms of struggle, international relations scholars that study war shifted their focus more into this genre and several new concepts were proposed in the literature to cover the different aspects of these conflicts, such as limited wars, small wars, proxy wars, local wars, insurgency, counterinsurgency, guerilla warfare. Concordantly, the unit of analysis belongs to the war studies changed, and non-state actors under different names as insurgent or rebel, guerilla, and terrorist became the new focus of analyses since the intrastate conflicts mainly took place between state and non-state armed group. It has also brought the discussion of increasing non-state violence in internal conflicts, which is mobilized by ethno-nationalist, religious, and ideological characteristics (San-Akca, 2016, p. 9).

A large part of the armed conflicts that happened in the postwar period is different from typical interstate aggression in which parties of the conflicts are more or less equal in material capabilities. These new forms of conflicts are brought close together under the roof of "asymmetric warfare" since their common characteristic between warring factions is "ascending asymmetry." Present-day phrases like guerilla tactics and terrorist strategies are all seen asymmetric in nature because of its common usage by

disadvantaged parties. Of course, symmetry does not mean precise parity but rather, it suggests "potential reciprocity in the interactions: what A could do to B, B might likewise do to A." (Womack, 2006). The term is broadly used to explain the fights between belligerent parties which are unequal in power and resources (Deriglazova, 2014).

The world in the second half of the 20th century has become the scene of asymmetric conflicts in the forms of civil wars, insurgencies, guerilla and anti-colonial movements, especially in the Africa, Asia and Latin America. In this period, 89 % of armed conflicts have been generated by ethno-nationalist and religious groups, guerillas, terrorists, and revolutionary movements (San-Akca, 2016, p. 22). Asymmetric threats or challenges have had a place in political analyses frequently since the late 1990s because weak actors in conflicts turned to asymmetric strategies to disable their disadvantaged positions against superior actors. Between 1945 and 2010s, there has been 181 incidents of insurgency and this gradual increase can be followed from the below **Figure 1.1** (Jones, 2017).
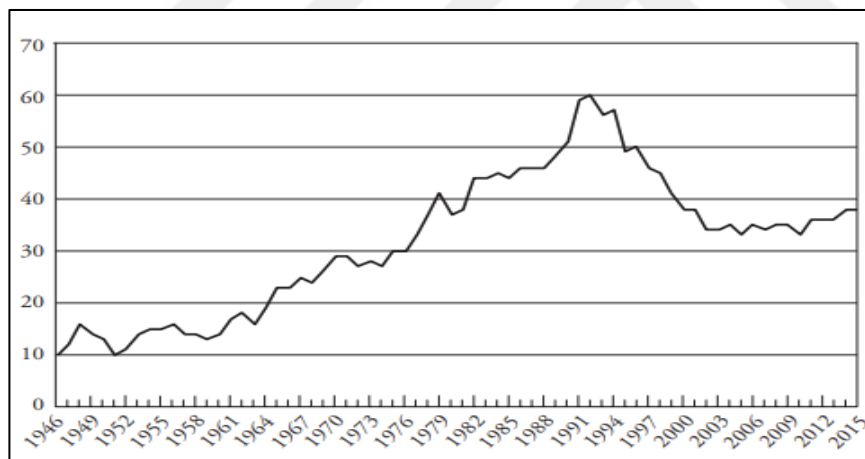
Figure 1.1. The number of active insurgencies annually (Source: Jones, 2017)

The interesting part with these insurgencies is that they showed twelve years of survival averagely and managed to resist against the powerful sides of the intra-state conflict - states- with considerable lethality (Jones, 2017). Regardless of remarkable developments in military technology, states remained to face challenges from insurgent violence (San-Akca, 2016, p. 22). The changing nature of wars further created a paradox: the defeat of strong actors by the weaker side or strong loses to a weak actor. There is an increasing trend in intrastate conflicts that favors weak actors as can be seen from **Figure 1.2**.
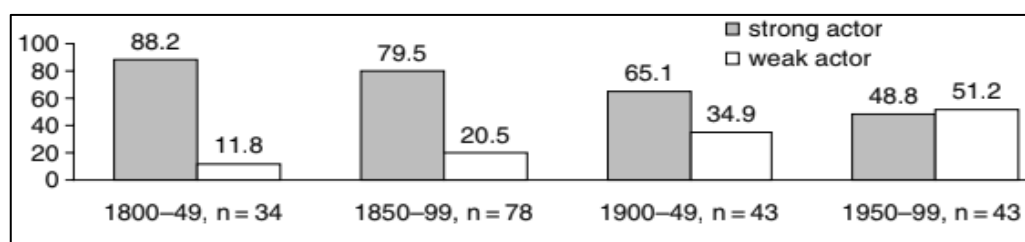
Figure 1.2 Percentage of conflict victories according to the type of actor over time (Source: Toft, 2005, p. 4).

1.2 EMPIRICAL PUZZLE AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

The question of why does the strong lose to the weak has been examined by many scholars. What explains this unexpected outcome? Why have insurgents begun to be more successful compared to before? How they managed to survive against the powerful side of the conflict?

According to realist theories of international relations, we should see a few numbers of asymmetric conflicts since power imbalance between warring parties determines certain conflict outcome: the victory of the powerful. "Since you know as well as we do that right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." (Thucydides, 1989). This logic implies that strong should always win and as the gap in power widens, the strong is expected to beat the weak more likely in the conventional sense.

Other than the simplistic view of power theories, there are four other main explanations proposed to clarify why conflicts ended with unexpected outcomes. These theories of asymmetric conflict are built on the arguments on "interest asymmetry" (Mack, 1975); "the nature of the actor or regime type" (Merom, 2003); "strategic interaction" (Toft, 2005); and last but not least "external support" (Record, 2006). Interest asymmetry emphasizes the importance of relative resolves parties have during the conflict and contends that the outcome favors the side with higher political will or interest to win and greater readiness to sacrifice, while the nature of actor argument highlights the sensitivity of democratic regimes and its effect on warfighting capacity against the insurgencies compared to authoritarian regime. Strategic interaction thesis, on the other hand, stresses the strategies that actors employed during the conflict and points out the

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determinant role of superior strategy on the likely consequence of war. The common characteristic of these explanations is that they underline the significance of different "intangible" factors in answering the puzzle. However, there are also "tangible" suggestions stemming from the prominence of material elements in non-state violence. Among them, external support comes to the forefront. Different scholars explained the endurance level of insurgents by several factors such as strategy, tactics, information campaign and propaganda activities as well as external support (see also, Byman et al., 2001, Record, 2006; San-Akca, 2016).

Regardless of developing scholarship, violence between insurgents and states stands puzzling in some points. The contribution of external support to the insurgent activity has been emphasized by the scholars since it is believed to play an important role in tipping the scale in favor of insurgents. Among 181 insurgencies between 1946 and 2015, 148 ones of them benefitted various kinds of outside support in differing degree (Jones, 2017). That amount constitutes 82% of the total number and requires a detailed investigation. According to another work, 45% of complete support to the insurgent groups acquired in the post-Cold War period, eliminating the idea that external support is not intrinsic to an era featured with superpowers competition on different proxies (San-Akca, 2016).

However, counting the role of external assistance in internal wars does not rule out the significance of the other factors proposed by scholars mentioned above, considering that material capacity does not guarantee victory without having the sound strategy and adequate willingness to fight. Plus, receiving assistance may not directly translate into a greater likelihood of success for insurgent groups since the term "external support" is quite broad to assess (Jones, 2017, p. 136). External actors may provide insurgents with different services like sanctuary, training, training camps, logistics, military advice and goods such as arms, funds, and other non-lethal material (San-Akca, 2016; Jones, 2017). Each one these might influence the capacity of the insurgent forces in different ways and measuring the effects and usefulness of different types of assistance to rebel capacity can be realized only by a more detailed examination of all kinds of supports together. Thus, the correlation between external assistance and rebel odds of success can be validated, and the proposed contribution to the understanding of insurgent movement can be provided.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A range of conflict theories has been reviewed in the preceding part, and alternative arguments of scholars are shown to explore the possible causes of exceptional insurgent survival against the states. Regardless of considerable concentration oriented to the asymmetric conflicts and more specifically, the influence of outside help, we still need the detailed investigation of consequences that it led and opportunities it allowed the insurgents in intrastate conflicts.

The discussion of main arguments show us that while several quantitative studies examining the role of external assistance has been produced, there are few analyses reveal the specifics of this factor. Therefore, the field remains limited and lack of in-depth inspection that would illustrate and validate the importance of external assistance in its manifold structure. Theories mentioned above help us to grasp different aspects of internal conflict; however, they stand partial on their own. Examining the part of external support will provide additional inputs to build a comprehensive understanding that is strong enough to explain all the aspects of asymmetric conflicts and non-state violence.

We need to put forth what accounts for the increasing trend in weak side's ability to endure, by going beyond of traditional two-dimensional view of civil wars. Moreover, different from what has been done, the study aims to ask more of "how" question rather than "why" question to elaborate the process and put likely effects on rebels' fighting capacity forward. As a starting point, I raise the following questions:

- How external actors affect the course of the conflicts that are marked by power asymmetry?
- Do every kind of assistance impact the capacity of the insurgents equally?
- What are the roles of external state and nonstate actors in helping insurgencies?

To cover the whole aspects of external influence, this study also includes the role of external actors on negotiated settlements of the conflicts and asks:

- What roles external actors play in negotiation processes between the warring parties?

To address these questions and provide further explanations for asymmetric conflicts, two different variables depended on the external assistance are drawn from research questions and applied to the cases that this study focuses on. These are:

(1) Rebels capacity to inflict a cost on government and its resilience for a long period of time;

(2) Failed efforts of a peaceful settlement.

Through these, the hypotheses proposed as follows will be tested:

H1: External assistance to the insurgencies whether it is active or passive, inreases the longevity of asymmetric intrastate conflicts.

H1a: External backing enhances rebels' ability to inflict cost on government, makes them more resilient, and helps them survive against the assaults of government for longer periods.

H1b: External involvements complicate negotiation dynamics between warring parties and make a succesful negotiation less likely.

The relevance of this study is that it challenges the superficial treatment of external assistance and provide close exploration by dividing external actors into two as states and nonstate backers, discussing the significance of different types of support separately. The study also provides a combination of two dimensions of intra-state conflicts by building a bridge between the battlefield and the negotiation table. I argue that only that kind of elaboration help us determine how external actors shape the conflict processes and behavior of non-state actors not only on military terms but also on political matters. With this attention, theories of asymmetric conflicts might be richer and comprehensive.

1.4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Although the large-N studies have already demonstrated the positive relationship between external sponsorship and insurgents' survival, we still need empirical knowledge to figure out how this mechanism works, which would make available for us to reach certain generalizations. To this end, the thesis employs a method that is focused on small-N comparison to see how arguments translate into case settings. Thus we can closely observe how the interaction between actors took place and how the behaviors of

the actors are shaped by this particular interaction during the complex conflict processes. Moreover, we will able to see the opposing responses or variation of impacts led by external actors depending on the type of assistance they provide. Although each conflict has its own characteristics and "uniqueness," by asking some questions, we can reach relevant inferences that predictive value.

Process tracing of different cases in this study is believed to bring analytical input to the understanding of the conflict studies through empirical evidence or specific information on calculations and motivations of insurgent groups proposed by the above-stated hypotheses. In order words, by employing comparative case study, we can test suggested assumptions with different factors preserving the possibility of falsification in three different cases. To show the main contention of the study, three violent non-state actors who were able to sustain their insurgencies for a long period of time by employing irregular warfare, and more importantly, by acquiring some external assistance, are selected: PKK, LTTE, and FARC. All of these groups have four things in common:

(1) they are armed and violent non-state actors who fought against states to realize their ideological motivations;

(2) they employed guerilla warfare, and there is discernable power asymmetry between parties;

(3) they all have external assistance and state sponsors that provide them different kinds of assistance, implicitly or explicitly;

(4) their insurgencies are long enough to enable us to analyze different periods of the conflicts.

These three case studies of asymmetric war are undertaken to assess the propositions advanced in the preceding part. The rebel groups have different objectives and identities (ethno-nationalist and/or revolutionary) which let us go beyond single categorization. By examining these cases separately, we will be able to reach generalizable observations and able to understand the conditions they occur. Data for the cases are collected from primary and secondary sources dealing with these conflicts. Since determining the external support is difficult, different types of sources are used such as news sources, scholarly case study analysis of individual conflicts and rebel groups when it is accessible. Besides, the study applies to the datasets that are designed to

examine external support to non-state actors: UCDP/PRIO External Support Dataset and Non-state Armed Groups (NAGs) dataset.

1.5. THE PLAN OF THE STUDY

The rest of the study is formed as follows. Chapter 2 offers the main arguments proposed by the scholars of conflict studies and then links them into the discussion of external assistance in an organized manner. By presenting the key suggestions in the literature, it plays a preliminary role in providing major factors that are related to the asymmetric conflict outcomes, and show what is missing or what remains to be addressed further. Following Chapter 3 lays out the theoretical framework and the arguments of the thesis to be tested. It also covers the research design including the conceptualization and operationalization of independent and dependent variables, and methodological scheme applied in this study in detail.

Subsequent three chapters, from Chapter 4 to 6, start with cases that are suggested to test the main contention of this study. These chapters offer a systematic analysis of 3 case studies. Each case study has the same design: historical background, external backers and type of assistance that was acquired, and the effect of external interactions on insurgents' capability and negotiated settlements of these conflicts. The focus of these chapters is mainly the close inspection and detailed analysis of conflict in question and track the relative existence of variables to acquire necessary evaluation and come with a conclusion. Following these chapters, there is an analysis chapter where I provide my key findings and generalizable observations regarding the case studies as well as their variation, policy relevance, and contribution to the literature singularly or additively.

The concluding chapter presents a summary of arguments in this study including the theoretical and empirical findings for propositions suggested in Chapter 3. It ends with the implications and suggestions for future research related to conflict studies and policy-making.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The postwar period has witnessed notable changes in the features of armed conflicts that are qualified with ascending asymmetry. The number of asymmetric conflicts began to rise throughout the period in many parts of the world. Contrary to the typical interstate wars, these wars occurred within the borders of a single state, constituting intra-state conflicts. The essence of these conflicts is asymmetric. The struggle that is initiated by the weaker party to make a change in the situation and achieve certain aims, while the stronger aimed to restore the order and to preserve its advantaged status. The main feature is the "incommensurability" of power in adversaries, an asymmetrical struggle between the whole and its parts, the center and the periphery (Deriglazova, 2014, p. 7). The concept of asymmetric conflict covers different other overlapping notions, including insurgency, terrorism, guerilla warfare, and small wars.

The study brings three different but interrelated areas of research together and links them in the argument of the thesis: the effect of external assistance to the asymmetric conflicts. First, we look into how the scholars answer the paradox of weak's endurance against the strong or strong's failure to beat the weak and try to explore the gap in the explanations. Second, the study examines third party effects on the course of asymmetric conflicts with the help of the bargaining theories in the literature.

2.1. THE THEORIES OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS: COMPETING EXPLANATION OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICT OUTCOMES

The questions of how "underdogs" survive against the dominant side of the conflict, and how they beat their military weaknesses, are answered by several different explanations. Andrew Mack (1975), who coined the term of asymmetric conflict, argues that asymmetric conflicts damaged the erstwhile belief that conventional military predominance guarantees victory in war. He asserts that the strong sides do not win or lose on military terms, but they lose politically in forcing their will to the weaker. In other words, the weaker "lose the battle but not the war" (T.V. Paul, 1994, pp. 168-170). The target of the weaker is not the enemy's military capacity, but rather its political capability, its willingness to continue the fight (Mack, 1975). He highlights the

importance of nonmilitary factors in the determination of victory or defeat, such as a higher political will or being ready to sacrifice more than the enemy. If the stronger side is less interested in winning as much as the other side, it is politically vulnerable. The interest asymmetry is the key to understand why strong lose to the weak (Andrew Mack, 1975).

Besides having access to more resources, the governments also have the advantaged position in legitimacy, sovereignty, allies, and armies against which the rebels have to resist. To balance their subordinate position in means, rebels try to counter this volume of capacity with their commitment or resolve, and focus on their attachment to the cause (Zartman, 1995, pp. 7-9).

The military victory is a slippery concept here, and no longer the same thing as in the days of the industrial wars (Ovalle, 2017, p. 524). This changing character of warfare became an important component of scholarly debate and aroused the attention of the others. The transition from direct military confrontation to indirect forms of conflicts and the prevalence of low-intensity conflicts started to be examined by many others. According to the calculations of Ivan Arreguin-Toft (2005), between 1800 and 2003 the strong won 71.5 % of all asymmetric conflicts and the percentage steadily declined with the next century: between 1900 and 1949 the strong won 65.1%, but 1950-1999 won only 48. 8 % (See, **Figure 1.2**). He believes the best explanation of insurgent success is the superiority of the strategy that is preferred by the adversaries. The real reason why strong lose conflict is very much related to its choice of strategy, and this strategic interaction is essential to designate the conflict outcome (Toft, 2005:3-4). This explanation shows parallelism with what Kenneth Waltz argues, "the fate of each state depends on its responses to what other states do" (Waltz, 1979: 127).

Another scholar, Gil Merom (2003) asserts that insurgent success is tied to the political regime of adversary governments. Regardless of its military superiority, democracies are more vulnerable in small wars against the insurgents because it is quite difficult for them to intensify the violence to the level of brutality that can lead to victory. There are institutions in the domestic structure that will restrain them from doing so. On the other hand, insurgents are less advantaged against dictatorships because they lack the red line for brutality (Merom, 2003). Sullivan (2007) similarly contends that although militarily

strong parties cannot be prevailed by weak sides, they can be overwhelmed by the costs of victory, and decide to retreat before achieving their objectives.

Simply put, cost tolerance of the insurgents impairs the military competence of the strong actor (Sullivan, 2007, p. 506). Both very similar arguments related to the fact that a state in a small war also fights against time since the legitimacy for war shrinking continually and the logic of protracted war appears. The insurgents who apply guerilla warfare scores as long as it can avoid losing and the army that fights conventionally are subject to fail unless it wins decisively (Deriglazova, 2014, p. 46).

All above key arguments regarding the puzzle, have one thing in common: they emphasis on weaker's possession of the intangibles such as strategy and political will, and discount the effect of the tangible factor like external assistance. Andrew Mack finds the best answer in possession of the higher political will or resolve, thus greater readiness to sacrifice while Ivan Arreguin-Toft argues that superior strategy explains the insurgent's success. Gil Merom subject this success to the political vulnerability of the adversary government. However, none of them addresses the significance of tangibles like assistance to the weaker side, even though the most dedicated and organized insurgency needs material resources.

To fill this gap, Jeffrey Record (2006) presents the importance of external assistance to explain weak victories against the stronger side. He argues that if an insurgent group has external assistance, it is more likely that the weak side will survive against the superior military capacity (Record, 2006, p. 36). He based this proposition on the fact that such assistance can change the balance of power between belligerents, and thus have an influence on the conflict outcome, increasing the likelihood of insurgent victory. Record (2006) also adds that the external support does not guarantee success, while victories of unassisted insurgents are quite rare against the determined and resourceful governments. The inclusion of the role of foreign assistance does not lessen the effect and significance of the other factors (intangibles such as will, strategy, organization, morale and discipline) proposed by above-mentioned scholars, considering that material capacity does not guarantee victory without having the sound strategy and adequate willingness to fight (Record, 2006, p. 48).

As it is seen from **Figure 2.1**, two third of the internal conflicts take place between 1975 and 2009, include external states' assistance to one of the warring parties. Although

external support was somewhat more common during the Cold War, it has not remained limited to that era and continued to be significant for future conflicts (Karlén, 2016, p. 120).
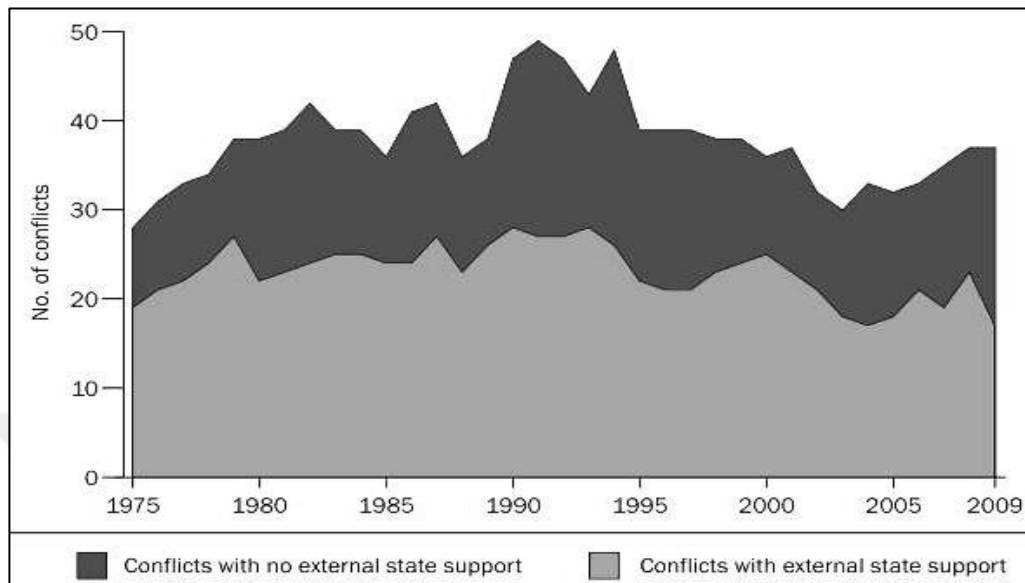
Figure 2.1 Number of conflicts with and without external state support. (Source: Karlén, 2016, p. 120)

Why some insurgencies failed, become victorious, or gained concession by the state in a peaceful negotiation? The theories of asymmetric conflict try to explain these questions, exploring certain strategies and conditions lead weak sides to sustain and prevail against their stronger adversaries (e.g., Arreguin-Toft 2001, Mack 1975). Power advantage of governments against rebels does not necessarily mean shorter war in favor of the powerful. This stems from differences in fighting: although rebel group receives series of blows, it may retreat into hiding where they gather strength, regroup and go on targeting; they can blend into civilian life, "host population."

An insurgent strategy can be separated into two dimensions: carrying out attacks on the government in the center, and the ability resist and evade government's counter-attacks in the periphery. Territorial control can provide weaker side-insurgents- the critical security they needed, especially if they are weak in the conventional sense, they may be able to reverse their disadvantaged position. Just like power advantage does not necessarily translate into a decisive victory for the government or easy eradication of rebels, rebels' ability resist does not guarantee the success in negotiating table or gaining concessions (Walter, 1997, p. 335). This leads us to the conclusion that in protracted intrastate conflicts, there are rebels who are not strong enough to extract concessions or

make their opponents address their demands but at the same time, resilient and hard to eradicate by the government (Walter, 1997, p. 575). This guerilla strategy imply that rebels, when they avoid losing for a long period of time, believe to increase the costs of war in the government side to the level that eventually erode its popular support behind it and resolve to continue to war (despite power advantage in military capacity) (Mason and Fett: 1996, p. 552; Derouen and Sobek, 2007, p. 307). Duration "as a classic guerilla strategy" "can offset an imbalance of coercive capacity" (Mason and Fett 1996, p. 552) between government and rebels, and thus incentivize a negotiated settlement.

These wars are short when a decisive victory is possible (Fearon, 2004, p. 276). According to Fearon's and Olsson & Fors's model, changes in relative power and effectiveness of defense are seen as also crucial in determining the outcome. Rebels, to tip the scale in their favor and to dodge power asymmetry, try to reach finance for its military campaign from an external sponsor who can alter the military balance as it grows and expands. Thus it becomes even more compelling to the government. (Hegre, 2004, p. 248).

2.2. THIRD PARTIES TO THE INTRASTATE CONFLICTS

The effect of external support in insurgencies leads us to another area of study: third party involvements in intrastate conflicts. Most of the current intrastate conflicts show a transnational character, where actors, resources, and events go beyond national boundaries and challenge the once prevalent "closed polity" approach of the studies (Gleditsch, 2007, p. 293). The characteristics of the conflict in itself, such as the balance of power between government and rebels, intensity of conflict, they are all exposed to the external effect, and examining the scholarship on the external involvements will give us some insights about their influence on the course and outcome of the conflicts.

The external intervention has been a practice of the international community in dealing with internal conflicts, and it can be realized by several mechanisms. Much of the scholarship has examined the direct or overt military interventions in these wars. Involvements which have different characteristics result in different consequences for the conflicts, and the question of how the intervention affects the course of the conflict

depends on which side the intervener ties up with and on the initial power distribution between parties (Hegre, 2004, p. 248).

Previous scholarships show that neutral interventions prolong the conflicts, but biased ones do not. Because, the latter might increase the possibility of quick military victory for one side and thus end the conflict as the duration is negatively associated with the chance of winning for both government and rebel group (Brandt et al., 2008, p. 421). Regan and Aydin (2006, 2011) present an invaluable understanding of different types of intervention on conflict outcome. In the same vein, Cunningham (2010) reviews the role of biased mediation efforts in internal conflicts-either on the side of government or the insurgent. In their joint work, Linebarger and Enterline (2016) assort interventions into different types: government biased, rebel biased, and balanced. Intervention sides with one side shorten the span and increase the possibility of military victory. When it comes to balanced intervention which is on behalf of both the government and rebels at the same time, it decreases the chances of settlement and protracts the conflict. In his empirical studies, Regan (2002) similarly finds that neutral intervention takes longer than the others, while interventions biased toward either the government or the opposition shorten them.

Interventions that were investigated by these scholars are direct ones no matter they are military, economic or diplomatic intervention. Yet, the problem has remained in explaining the covert support to the insurgencies, regardless of its significance and increasing prevalence. Direct interventions from other states in civil wars have become rare in the time since it constitutes a violation of the state's sovereignty and leads huge costs on behalf of the intervening state.[1] Instead, states have been interested in more indirect ways of involvements in other countries such as covert support to the rebels (Gleditsch, 2007, p. 296). This includes more indirect forms of assistance like money, arms, training, and logistics, and diverges from direct participation of external actors.

No matter it is undercover or not, several studies have concluded that external actors might have a significant role in conflict escalation and settlement (Gleditsch &

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[1] *"No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights or to secure from it advantages of any kind. Also, no State shall organize, assist, foment, finance, incite or tolerate subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another State, or interfere in civil strife in another State" (UNGA A/RES/2131)*

Beardsley, 2004; Regan 2000; Walter, 1997) and this effect replicated in many analyses. Regan (1998, 2000, 2002), Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000), all studied intervention of outside states on whether on rebel or government side in the intrastate conflict and found a connection between the external interference and the conflict duration and outcome. Fearon (2004, p. 276) notes that "civil war last a long time when neither side can disarm the other, causing a military stalemate." If it lasts longer, then it is less likely to end in a decisive victory of one side, leading to "mutually hurting stalemate" (Zartman, 1989). "Protracted civil wars" are quite difficult to bring to an end since it involves high stakes. Because after all that fight and hostility, any negotiation would require the warring parties coexist together within the same borders (Linebarger and Enterline, 2016).

2.3. BARGAINING ENVIRONMENTS IN THE SHADOWS OF OTHERS

Any type of external support to the parties of the conflict creates uncertainty regarding how these turn into fighting capacity and thus make a possible settlement or negotiation difficult. Because it is hard to estimate the effect of support and in return, it influences the parties' commitments and decreasing the chance of resolution. This is described as "forecast error" of warring parties regarding each other's capability. Both the rebels and the government exaggerate themselves and make wrong judgments, consequently lead to longer wars (Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2000, p. 2).

War-ending is already compelling despite mutual gains. Organizational inertia, lack of confidence, distrust, and miscommunication are all against an early settlement or negotiation. The main obstacle to bargaining between insurgents and target government is "the perceived inability to form credible commitments" (Walter 1997; Kydd and Walter, 2002). Governments usually do not trust the rebels and expect them to break their words at first chance (Bapat, 2006, p. 214). When the fight becomes inevitable, position and beliefs against the adversaries become fixed in such a way that is not quickly changeable. Even when sides agree to negotiate, there are still risks, and uncertainties of cooperation remained (Walter, 1997, p. 336). Bargaining is a tacit communication environment where the parties exchange threats, bluffs, and concessions. The parties bargain over the resolution of the issue with three possible

outcomes: government victory, insurgent victory, and a negotiated settlement. The ongoing crisis may lead the other to leave its demands, continue to hold them, or to war (Morrow, 1989, p. 941-946). Warring parties tend to change policies only when they believe that they cannot fulfill their objectives by violence at a tolerable cost and a durable agreement is attainable only if both believe at the same time (Zartman, 1989, p. 266-273).

Each side's resolve determines the next move and crises are like contests of resolve. However, since the inherent resolve cannot be known for sure, parties have to judge their adversary's resolve from its actions during the crisis and anticipate the likely reactions of their adversaries. The resolve of the parties are determined by the expected outcome for war and increased by greater military capabilities, greater willingness to take risks and a less favorable status quo, and determined by a cost-benefit analysis of fighting (Morrow, 1989, p. 942). Each side have a belief about the probable quality of military capacity of other side's but knows their quality of forces before the war begins; however, neither side knows whether it can win the war or not (Morrow, 1989, pp. 946-947).

Military balance is hard to measure particularly if the conflict conducts in unconventional means such as guerilla warfare, and make knowledge of the opponent's position even less clear. Some believe that war "provide a means of revealing information that is not available in the standard bargaining models" (Wagner, 2000, p. 472; see also Fearon, 1995; Wittman, 1979; Goemans, 2000; Filson and Werner, 2002). In the process of time, the probability of an agreement increases not because of wearing down of one side, but because of the revelation of information about capabilities once uncertain (Mason and Fett, 1996; Fearon, 2004; Regan, 2002, p. 70).

George Modelski (1994, pp. 126-29) contends that "every internal war creates a demand for foreign intervention." Third party involvements can be classified as military assistance/aid on the one hand and reconciliation efforts of various types on the other. The former is critical in establishing military balance. Zartman (1995) argues that internal negotiations are asymmetric and rebels have no leverage without establishing some sort of military balance against their adversary government. When third parties choose not to intervene in support of the rebels, they let the government establish and

maintain military superiority and defeat the insurgent forces more easily (Licklider, pp. 303-312).

Negotiation under the circumstances of asymmetry constitutes paradox since the process functions best under the equality and sides of the conflict come to terms when they have some mutual veto power over the results. Such negotiations also require mutual recognition and representation of the parties (Zartman, 1995, pp. 3-7). There are several arguments proposes that equals make peace more readily and more easily than unequals (see Mitchell, pp. 33-37; Hultquist, 2013, p. 623; Butler and Gates, 2009, pp. 333-5). Some, however, oppose that by arguing asymmetry may be a factor to catalyze settlement as the weaker side may end its struggle at protest and coercion while the stronger may consider a suitable offer to prevent possible future trouble (Mitchell, pp. 33-37).

Power parity is seen as related to peace or somewhat peaceful resolution of conflict. According to the claim, parity reveals information about each side's endurance while expanding costs of war, provide the incentive to negotiate, to make ceasefire, and peace agreement (Hultquist, 2013, p. 623). Because governments become ready to recognize and legitimize rebels only when they grow strong enough to realize serious attacks. Yet, governments still face difficulties in defeating the rebels because of the way of fighting, asymmetric warfare (Hultquist, 2013, p. 623). On the other hand, relatively a weaker group may want to fight instead of engaging in negotiation. As the group gets weaker, it dedicates its resources more and more to sustain the fight. As it thinks of a higher marginal benefit from fighting, by that it is expected to stay out of any settlement or resolution of the conflict. Butler and Gates (2009, pp. 338-339) associates the chances of war with an increase in the rebel's relative power and asserts that the more information rebel the group has about its capability, the more devoted it is to the fighting.

However, these issues are subject of dispute, since governments mostly find it difficult to acknowledge the legitimacy of the rebels and their claims, and to recognize them as representatives that have right to state interests of the group. Instead, governments try to turn asymmetry into escalation, to defeat the insurgency and force them to lay down arms. Insurgents, on the other hand, seek to get over their asymmetry by aligning with an external host state or neighbor, thereby internationalizing and complicating the

conflict. However by doing so, they entirely change the frame of the conflict from an asymmetric dyad to a triad of complexity, multiply the actors involved, who have their agenda and perception on how the conflicts need to resolved (Zartman, 1995, pp. 3-7).

Bargaining literature demonstrates that if the adversaries are less able to commit and have higher uncertainty about each other's intentions and capabilities, the probability of peace will be lower (Bapat, 2007, p. 266). Cunningham (2013, pp. 39-41) in a similar way contends that intrastate conflicts including more than two players have substantially different bargaining dynamics. Reaching an agreement is complicated under these circumstances: external actor may heavily involved with its interests and considerations as a veto player or severe the commitment problems by adding the distrust, thus make conflicts longer. Cetinyan (2002, pp. 646-47) differs in his suggestion argues that rebel group's finding of outside help is nothing to do with reaching peaceful bargaining with the government; instead, it affects how much rebels would demand and get. When it is proven, capabilities of rebels could only change the terms of the deal, not its likelihood and bargaining mostly fails because of strategic dilemmas such as information and commitment problems, not power asymmetry (Cetinyan, 2002, pp. 646-47).

The outcome and duration of civil war are seen as "a function of military capabilities between rebels and state, including to find peaceful settlements" (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009, p. 572). Rebels groups generally have goals and demands that they desire to be met by the opponent government. Once the conflict begins, it does not end until one of the parties becomes victorious, or decide to agree on terms of a settlement. In each stage of civil war, warring parties opt between continuing to war and agreeing to bargain. However, both military and political circumstances play a determinant role in the duration and outcome. Military factors may be the insurgent capability to target the government (offensive) and tactics employed to sustain the insurgency and prevent a possible defeat (defensive) (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009, pp. 573-74).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: EXTERNAL SUPPORT TO REBEL

Contrary to interstate wars, intrastate conflicts occasionally conclude in negotiated settlements. The former does not require parties to live within the same borders after the all fighting ends. In place of the bargaining table, most of the intrastate conflicts found an end in eradication, neutralization or laying down arms of the losing side (Walter, 1997, p. 335). However, by this point, a general part of these wars lasts for decades because of several factors. Following the different evaluations in the literature, it can be said that internal wars hardly occur in isolation and (actors go beyond where the conflict takes place) they include external influence to different degrees (Gleditsch and Beardsley, 2004, p. 379).

The relative power and expectations of the warring parties are shaped by the assistance of third parties considerably. External involvements, whether intentional or defacto in various forms, affect not only conflict outcomes but also the scale and lethality of the conflict. Duration is key here and can cancel out the power asymmetry between governments and rebels even if one has the upper hand and higher chance of a decisive victory (Mason and Fett, 1966, p. 552). Three factors determine the conflict processes generally- how long an intrastate conflict lasts: (i) military capacity of rebels to target government; (ii) ability to endure against governments attacks; (iii) existence of nonmilitary strategies to force their demands.

All these factors are open to external influence. Any support coming from outside to one of the party, influence the balance of power between warring factions. And since actor A becomes uncertain about actor B's relative capacity, the third party affects the bargaining dynamics between government and rebel group(s) in turn. Because as long as a rebel group gets the support, it reduces its fighting costs and increases expectations about how much it gets from a deal. On the side of government, since it can not estimate the strength of the rebel group, which is further bolstered by external assistance, it tends to continue fighting than coming to the negotiation table. That is to say, external support creates commitment problems between parties and complicates any settlement by slowing down information flow that enables opponents to make more consistent estimates of relative strength. Because in the absence of this information, the opponents

distract from "coordinating expectations about what each is prepared to accept in a negotiated settlement." (Narang, 2017:185)

The above discussion leads us to develop some hypotheses as follows:

H1: External assistance to the insurgencies whether it is active or passive, increase the longevity of asymmetric intrastate conflicts.

The first effect is related to the duration. Intrastate conflicts with the external support last longer since none of the parties attain a decisive victory thanks to power dynamics altered by externals. As the marginal utility from war increases and costs of war are lightened by the additional resources provided from outsiders, parties prefer to continue fighting instead of laying down arms, and they cannot reach the environment that facilitates peace.
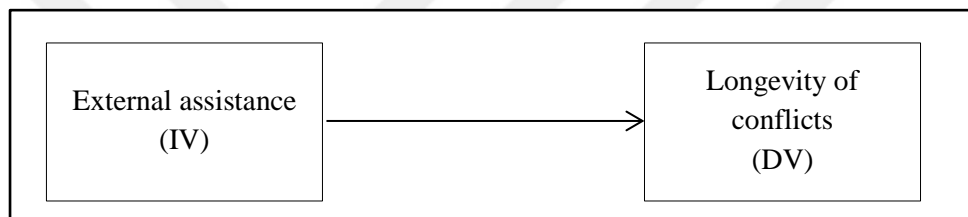
Figure 3.1 Causal chain suggested by the hypothesis

H1a: External backing enhances rebels' ability to inflict cost on government, makes them more resilient, and helps them survive against the assaults of government for longer period.

The profound impact of state assistance was found in 44 out of the 74 insurgencies since the end of the Cold War. It is proven that the effectiveness of these insurgencies was increased significantly. Although state support had no major role for the other cases, it helps rebel movements survive and gain recognition (Byman et al., 2001:9). War becomes more deadly as a result of resources, which otherwise rebels cannot obtain, are made available to the parties. The external actors can make an insurgency far more effective by providing different sorts of assistance.

H1b: External involvements complicate negotiation dynamics between warring parties and make a successful negotiaion less likely.

Negotiation is already compelling and generally considered as "bad idea" by governments (Deriglazova, 2014). The logic behind it simple: negotiation gives rebels legitimacy; rebels are as irreconcilable and unreliable extremists with non-negotiable

demands; the only reason that rebels agree to come to the table, is to gain time, to recover and to get ready to fight again (Zartman, 1995, p. 8). In asymmetric conflicts, the likelihood of rebel's military victory is very low against the superior side, government. However, this does not directly translate into quick and easy the defeat for the rebels. On the contrary, they have a low probability of defeat that discourages them from settling and seeking a negotiated settlement. With these circumstances in mind, when rebels apply to outside sponsor, they become more disposed of fighting and will request more from a future deal. Rebels see the higher marginal utility in fighting; thus conflict is more probable. The government then finds it harder to agree to a settlement (Derouen and Sobek, 2004, p. 308).

In asymmetric conflicts, violent rebel groups need a certain type of resources to continue their fight against the relatively stronger sides-states. These resources might be in the forms of funds, arms, infrastructure, training, safe havens and, other kinds. Some violent non-state actors manage to acquire these necessary resources with the (un)intentional support of the external actors. However, these sponsorships contribute to aggravating and prolonging of intra-state conflicts. As **Figure 3.2** shows, the frame of the conflict shifts from an asymmetric dyad to a triad of complexity, when third parties decided to involve.
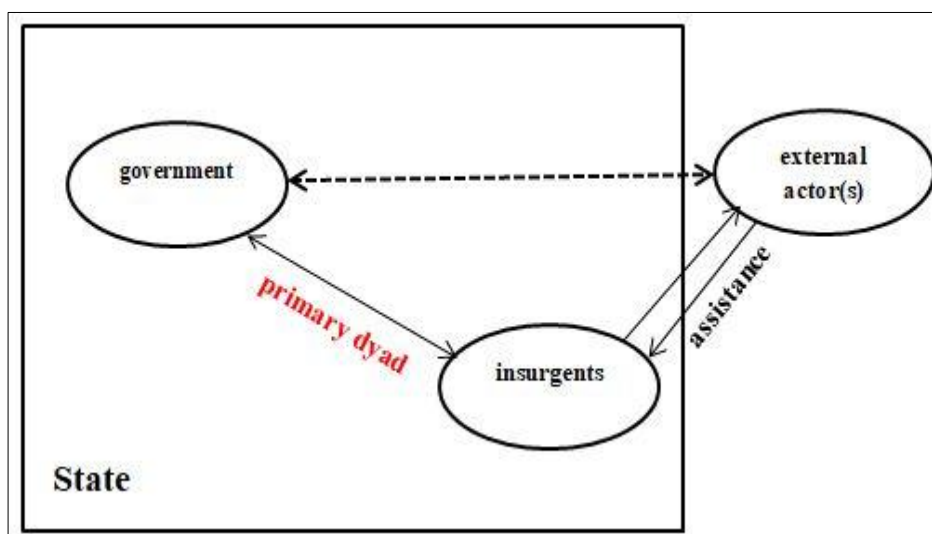
Figure 3.2 Triangulation of intrastate conflicts

These external actors might be neighboring states, distant powers, or groups that have an ideological/religious/ethnic affinity to the rebel group in question. This help might be

intentional, active or passive; rebels can be the first one to reach out to redress asymmetry without offering or vice versa. Rebels can force externals to extract resources, take advantage of ungoverned territories, and failed states. Externals instead of active support might let rebel group freely move on its territory, propaganda activities. Whether the assistance is on a voluntary basis or not, it has to be included in the scope of this study since either way influence how the conflict evolved.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The theoretical framework presented above suggests a comparative case study to examine the relative importance of variables. Previous studies applied to a fight between an insurgent group and an external power, which are unequal in power, to develop theories of asymmetric conflict (Mack, 1975; Arreguin-Toft, 2005; Merom 2003); or took two asymmetric warring states as examples to show the effect of external assistance in favor of one of the parties (Record, 2006). However, we need to able to test this variable that has a significant bearing on the conflicts, in intrastate conflicts that happen within a single state.

3.1.1   Unit of Analysis

This study seeks to answer how the interaction between rebels and external actors affects the course of asymmetric conflicts in which the main adversaries are unequal in power and resources. The unit of analysis is the triad of a violent rebel group, a state (subject to rebels' violence) and external actor(s) (not limited to government or certain political regime but also the non-state backers) that help rebellion survive. By adding external actors into the equation, the study contributes to the conflict studies, goes beyond the "closed" polity approach of internal wars. Although the previous scholarship addressed the effect of outsiders in these conflicts by several quantitative studies, there is a lack of close examination of specific cases which would present valuable insights. The preceding discussion suggests that we need a country-based focus for theory testing despite the strength and significant contribution of large-N studies. To this end, this research applies to small-N approach to gain fully account of the theory suggested.

3.1.2   Case Selection Criteria

To show the main contention of the study, three violent non-state actors who were able to sustain their insurgencies for a long period of time by employing irregular warfare, and more importantly, by acquiring some external assistance, are selected: PKK, LTTE, and FARC. All of these groups have four things in common:

(1) They are armed and violent non-state actors who fought against states to realize their ideological motivations;

(2) They employed guerilla warfare, and there is discernable power asymmetry between parties;

(3) They all have external assistance and state sponsors that provide them different kinds of assistance, implicitly or explicitly;

(4) Their insurgencies are long enough to enable us to analyze different periods of conflicts.

(5) They varies in terms of group's identity: ethno-nationalist secessionist and Marxist-Leninist revolutionary.

These three case studies of asymmetric war are undertaken to assess the propositions advanced in the preceding part. The rebel groups have different objectives and identities (ethno-nationalist and/or revolutionary) which let us go beyond single categorization. By examining these cases separately, we will be able to reach generalizable observations and able to understand the conditions they occur. Data for the cases are collected from primary and secondary sources dealing with these conflicts. Since determining the external support is difficult for obvious reasons, different types of sources are used such as news sources, scholarly case study analysis of individual conflicts and rebel groups when it is accessible. In addition, the study applies to the datasets that are designed to examine external support to non-state actors: UCDP External Support Dataset and Non-state Armed Groups (NAGs) dataset.

3.2. DEFINITIONS AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

Insurgency or Rebel Movement

Insurgency is defined as "insurgency is a protracted political-military activity directed toward completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations" (CIA pamphlet Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency, p.2). Activities of insurgent groups vary from terrorism, guerilla warfare, and political mobilization (such as propaganda, front and covert party organization, and international activity), and aim to target government to realize their objectives. Insurgents' political goals change according to their own ideologies or type whether it is an ethno-nationalist, religious and/or revolutionary movements.

An insurgent organization may or may not apply to terrorist tactics. However, it is seen empirically rare for a group to use only guerilla war but not terrorism at the same time (Byman, 2005, p. 24). In this study, I choose insurgent organizations that employed terrorism in their fight against the government to realize their agendas whether it includes changes in the territory, regime, and leadership. I used San-Akca (2016)'s definition of rebel groups to assess the subjects of this study. According to this, there are certain features that needs to be considered as a rebel group: resorting to violence to accomplish goals; no formal ties with a state in the international system; usage of several tactics, both guerilla tactics that targets military personnel and terrorist tactics that directed at noncombatants civilians; and locating within the country where fighting takes place.

Asymmetry and Asymmetric Warfare

Symmetry does not mean precise parity but rather, it suggests "potential reciprocity in the interactions: what A could do to B, B might likewise do to A" (Womack, 2006; Deriglazova, 2014). Asymmetry, on the other hand, is simply described as a power imbalance between two parties or inequality in reciprocity. According to Mitchell (n.d), asymmetry more than imbalance, it is a dynamic and multidimensional notion that depends on different resource distribution and characteristics between opponents in a conflict.

In this study, a conflict is regarded as asymmetric when there is a "subordinate" participant that initiated the struggle against the advantaged side to change the unequal situation, while the latter seeks to protect the hierarchical status quo and to restore the order. The method of warfare employed to wage is irregular which favors asymmetric and indirect approaches aimed to deteriorate the opponent's capacity, influence, and will (Deriglazova, 2014, p. 27). The strong party is represented by state actors and the weaker by the insurgent organizations that employed guerilla warfare and terrorist tactics in their fight against the government. Terrorism requires the following criterias: (i) political aims and motives; (ii) resorting violence to induce fear and psychological impact beyond the immediate target; (iii) perpetration by a "subnational" group or non-state actor; (iv) more importantly deliberately targeting not only the security personnel but also the civilians/noncombatants (Hoffman, 1998, p. 43). Although all terrorist organizations are not necessarily insurgencies, a majority of insurgent groups apply to terrorism. The most troubling terrorist groups of today are also insurgent movements. The Kurdish Workers' Party, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which are examined in this research, all use guerrilla war as well as terrorist tactics in their struggles (Byman, 2005, p. 23).

3.3. INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: EXTERNAL SUPPORT

External support is defined in the literature as an intervention of third-party government in an intrastate conflict in the side of either the government or the rebel group in concern. This support might cover direct attendance of military personnel along with more indirect forms of assistance such as money, weapons, logistics, sanctuary or training. However, this definition does not include other types of third-party involvement like mediation efforts and peacekeeping missions since these are not aimed to side with a certain party, by definition (Karlén, 2017, p. 16-17).

Different definitions exist in the literature to refer external support: it is categorized as tangible and intangible (Byman et al., 2001); intentional or defacto (San-Akca, 2016); active or passive (Byman, 2005a, 2005b). Each one of these categorizations has lists that are made according to different considerations, but with many overlapping points (see **Table 3.1 and Figure 3.3** below). However, I prefer to define external

involvements by bringing all types of above-mentioned assistance types provided to the rebels together and by excluding direct military interventions and mediation efforts since they are not subject of this study. Preferably, I differentiate between actors not just by their intention, but also according to their nature as state and nonstate sponsors. The study includes cases in which there is not only the active, intentional support to the rebel groups but also the passive, unintentional assistance of which the rebels take the advantage, to reinforce their capacity to attack. The rationale to keep definition that wide is to fully cover the scale and range of backing that insurgents acquire during their rebellion.

Table 3.1 Different classifications of external assistance

Tangible	Intentional	Active
-Money, -Arms or weapons and materials, -Logistics, -Organizational assistance, -Training and operations, -Sanctuary or transit	-Safe havens for rebel group members/leaders, -Headquarters/open offices -Training Camps -Training -Weapons and logistics support -Financial aid -Transport of arms, military equipment, and supplies -Troops	-Arms, -Money, -Training -Sanctuary
Intangible	**Defacto**	**Passive**
-Intelligence -Political support and propaganda -Ideological direction	All of the above excluding troop support	-Raising money, -Enjoying sanctuary -Recruiting or otherwise flourishing without interference -Transport of weapons
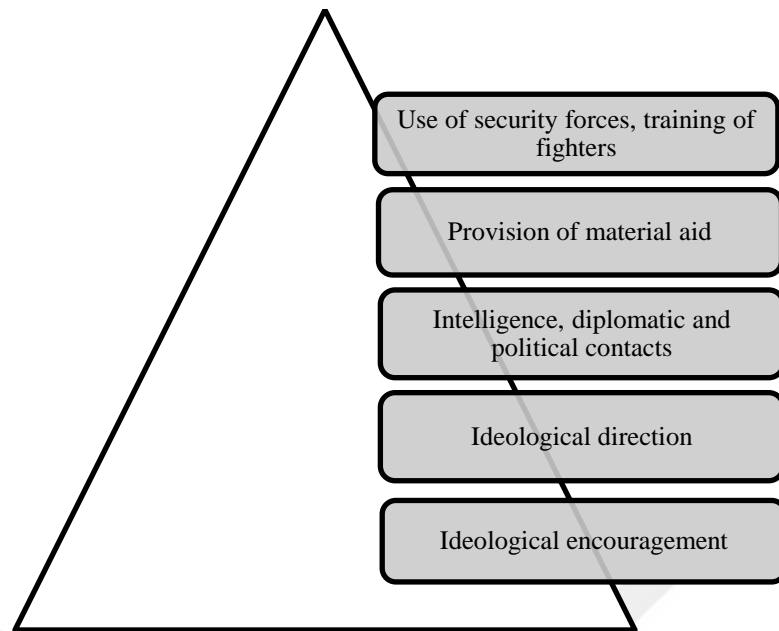
Figure 3.3 Forms of state sponsorship of terrorism (Source: Alexander Cline, 1986, p. 74f)

3.3.1. Types of Support and Supporters

Active or intentional support happens when external state chooses deliberately assist a rebel group by different means and channels (Byman, 2007; San-Akca, 2016; Jones, p. 137). On the other hand, it is regarded passive or defacto support when an external state is aware of rebels' activities and exploitation of resources but chooses to tolerate and not to block or states that have weak capacity to do so. In the latter, an external actor may not be voluntary to help, but rebels can take advantage of state weakness, fragile environment, and ungoverned territories. The insurgents became able to flourish without the interference of any authority. Since World War II, states have supported insurgent groups in nearly three quarters (70 percent) of insurgencies—compared to 54 percent for diasporas, 35 percent for refugees, 35 percent for outside terrorist and insurgent groups, and 5 percent for international organizations (Jones, 2017, p. 137).

3.3.2. Forms of Support

Byman et al. (2001, p. 83) divide insurgent's needs into two as human and material requirements. Human requirements are listed as follows: ability to mobilize local and international support; capable leadership, including effective command and control;

training; intelligence; inspiration and organizational aid, while material requirements are seen as safe haven and transit; financial resources, direct military support; arms and material, including ammunition, food, and fuel. These requirements show parallelism with the types of support that external actors provided for.

I choose to distinguish them as tangibles and intangibles. The tangibles include: safe haven/sanctuary, training camps, headquarters/open offices, arms, money, intelligence, transit and logistics aid, and other kinds of military supplies that are needed by rebel organization (San-Akca, 2016). When it comes to intangible ones, political support, diplomatic advocacy, publicity, propaganda, ideological direction, and inspiration can be counted.

3.3.3. State Support

Sanctuary/Safe Havens and Transit

It is regarded as the most significant and vital kind of help that the external state can provide for the insurgents. Thank to this, a rebel group is given the right to operate and live within the borders of another country, and it is so potent that makes all other forms of support easier such that a group may use this space to organize, hide, recruit, and train its militants and more importantly protect its organization from government assaults, regain strength to continue fight (Byman, 2005, p. 65). Safe havens are not only provided for members but also the group's leaders who frequently have to live in other states for security concerns (San-Akca, 2016, pp. 51-52). The rebel leaders generally choose to reside in safe places, mostly democratic countries because of institutional freedoms and liberties in democracies, which make detention and deportation less likely (San-Akca, 2016, p. 52). Democratic countries provide favorable grounds where rebels can have a high level of autonomy (San-Akca, 2014, p. 40). It is more likely that rebels find sanctuary in their neighborhood easily, especially when neighboring states are weak or unable to oust them (Byman, 2005, pp. 65-66). In other words, the provision of safe haven may be as a result of the state's weakness instead of a deliberate decision. In this situation, it is not correct to use "sponsorship" label for these states, but since the rebel group benefits from it, they are included in the scope of assistance in this research (Byman et al. 2001, pp.106-107).

Transit is similar to acquiring a safe haven. With the right of transit members of the organization can freely get through the host state in question, either through consent or lack of capacity to block. Both safe haven and transit right make the rebels hard to eliminate and defeat by providing living space for them (Byman, 2005, p. 66).

Training, Training Camps and Organizational Assistance

Training is considered as the most prevalent form of state support. Because most of the organization's recruits have no military backgrounds and no clue or information regarding fighting.Therefore, basic and advanced training is seen as a vital organizational need (Byman, 2005, p. 59). External states may provide training either via operating camps for rebels or sending its military personnel to educate the militants. The former one is more compelling since it requires additional equipment and tools while the latter necessitates fewer efforts (San-Akca 2016, p. 53). Besides, a state may assist a rebel group by helping them organize, especially in the initial phase of formation. Organizational help can be in the forms of transmission of skills or guidance via professionals for inexperienced members about how to structure, form its branches, cell structure and recruitment network, and avoid early extermination by the adversary government (Byman, 2005:, pp. 62-63).

Money, Weapons and Logistical Aid

This includes supplying a group with financial resources, guns, and other weapons. Among them money remains more important as it is highly fungible, serving to many needs such as recruitment, safe houses, propaganda activities and of course it let rebels buy weapons and other requirements (Byman, 2005, pp. 60-61). Arms in question may not be originated supporting state and rebels can acquire weapons by illegal ways from the black market and a state may be used as a transport point. Similarly, money can be acquired within an external state by fundraising, not directly from its hand (San-Akca, 2016, p. 54, Jones, 2017, p. 153). As for logistical aid, external actors can also enable a group to travel, smuggle and conduct operations freely on their territory; may provide them with passport, legal documents (Byman, 2005, p. 61).

Political and Diplomatic Support: Propaganda and Fundraising Activities

Differently, from safe havens and training camps, an external state can let the organization open headquarters and offices within its borders for the propaganda/publicity, recruit new members and fundraising activities (San-Akca, 2016, p. 52). It can also use diplomatic channels subtly to endorse the cause of the organization and to put pressure on the adversary government often by criticizing government policies and supporting the political wing of the group. All this tolerance make rebels' overall recognition easier, legitimize their cause, help them to attract more attention, money, and recruits they need (Byman, 2005, p. 61). It is even much easier to operate in democratic countries since civil liberties and political pressure of diasporas has an influence on toleration for activities of the rebel organization (Chalk, 2000).

Ideological Support or Direction

Another form of intangible support is about shaping or endorsing the group's ideas. By providing "ideological blueprint" or "spiritual guidance", they help them form their cause which attracts attention (Byman 2005, p. 63).

3.3.4. Non-state Support

I differentiate external actors not just by their intention, but also according to their nature as state and nonstate sponsors. The reason for this specification is to examine the "non-state backers" separately and prevent it go unnoticed in covering the effect outside assistance to rebel movements. States are not the only source of support for rebel movements. Especially, when rebel organization has transnational identities- ethnic, religious or ideological-, it is more likely that they receive help from their outside non-state backers (Kirchner, 2016, p. 57).

Non-state backers can be listed as diaspora, wealthy individuals, other violent armed groups, criminal organizations, aid agencies or human rights organizations and other actors. Diasporas, "immigrant communities live in other countries," are inclined to support rebels which they have ties (ethnic, religious or ideological) with, campaigning in their motherland, no matter how far they are. These communities, besides funding the rebel group, may provide them with pivotal materials such as arms and recruits. Their

importance grows if other sources of funding come to a halt or turn to unattainable (Byman et al., 2001, pp. 41-42; Jones, 2017, p. 139).

In addition to the diasporas or migrant communities, there are other categories of non-state actors: other revolutionary groups, organizations, and wealthy individuals. Even though they are way less effective than the other external actors, they can provide additional assistance which is proven to be valuable, including guidance, training, financial backing and distributing propaganda (Byman et al., 2001: 83; Jones, 2017, p. 143)

The effectiveness of their assistance, however, is closely tied with the state they reside or operate, with its tolerance level. Yet this sponsorship may be realized without knowledge of the country in question, otherwise, passive or de facto supporters either voluntarily or not, let rebel groups benefit from nonstate actors in its territory for different reasons such as direct threat, and a higher level of popular support for the group. Thanks to these actors, the insurgents may be able to raise money, recruit new members, spread its ideology by propaganda activities, smuggle or supply different sorts of arms. In short, it can acquire many forms of assistance mentioned above (Byman, 2005, pp. 220-221). The problem with this kind of support is that it is less tractable and hard to prevent. Plus, it incorporates additional actors beyond state supporters into the equation and curbs capability of the targeted state to eliminate the insurgent challenge both politically and militarily (Kirchner, 2016, p. 57). RAND Corporation made a comparison between external aids to assess their impact relatively as it is seen from **Table 3.2** :

Table 3.2 Comparative analysis of external contributions. (Source: Rand Corporation)

Forms of Support	States	Diasporas	Refugees	Other Non-state
Money	▲	▲		△
Safe Haven	▲		△	△
Diplomatic Backing	▲	◬		
Arms	▲	△		◬
Training	▲	△		△
Intelligence		△		
Direct Military Support	▲		◬	△
Inspiration	◬	△		△

▲ : significant   ◬ :limited contribution   △ :minor contribution

3.4. DEPENDENT VARIABLES (DV): REBELS CAPACITY and FAILURE OF BARGAINING EFFORTS

Both the rebels' capacity to inflict cost on government and its resilience against the government assaults are under the influence of external actors as discussed in preceding parts. In this study, the former is measured by the scale and numbers of violent attacks perpetrated by the terrorist insurgents, arms procurement, and territorial control while the latter is determined by the survivability of insurgents against the government, namely, their ability to sustain their rebellion for long durations.

Bargaining failure happens when there is poor information about an actor's capability and resolve, and this complicates reaching an appropriate distribution of benefits. Under

the uncertainty, bargaining mostly ends in the absence of any agreement. In this research, the failure of peace efforts is identified if there were unsuccessful peace attempts held between parties during the conflict.

4. THE KURDISTAN WORKER'S PARTY (PKK)

4.1.1. Description, Aim, and Ideology

PKK is an ethno-nationalist secessionist insurgent organization which has conducted violent attacks against Turkey to achieve an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey from 1984 until today. Ideologically, it is a far-left Marxist/Leninist organization that combined Kurdish nationalism and revolutionary socialism (UCDP, 2019). Ideology plays a central role for the members of the organization, and it depends mostly on Öcalan's ideas and speeches (Davis, 2012, p. 102; Özcan, 2005, p. 405). In the process of time, there has been an ideological shift in the PKK, and the organization softened its tone against the religion in the 1980s to gain the support of the pious Kurd, although it sustained its main Marxist-Leninist core (Bruinessen, 1994). Furthermore, the group declared the revision in its separatist goal after the party congress in 1995 into a demand for autonomy (Barkey and Fuller, 1998, p. 25).

The group began its armed rebellion in 1984 although it was founded and organized in the late 1970s by figurehead Abdullah Öcalan. After almost a decade of its formation, the PKK applied to guerilla warfare and terrorist tactics that included attacks on security forces, government offices, and officials (at home and abroad), kidnappings, suicide bombings, raiding villages and small towns. The organization first resorted to violence in parallel assaults on military targets in southeastern Semdinli and Eruh, on August 15, 1984. It also targeted civilians on many occasion, even Kurdish ones who refused to cooperate and support the group (Kirchner, 2016, p. 139).

4.1.2. Organizational Structure

When organizational structure analyzed, like in many other Marxist origin groups, party-army-front trio keeps a highly important place: (i) pioneering role played by the highly disciplined party, (ii) an armed force is ruled by the party, and (iii) the front organization works as supportive to the army (Davis et al., 2012, p. 107). According to this classical structure, there are a General Secretary, an Executive Committee, and the Party Congress (Soner, Aslan, and Kıyıcı, 2017, p. 12). The PKK is organized very hierarchically in which all the activities are headed by the leader, Abdullah Ocalan.

Although Ocalan is always accepted as the figurehead and honorary leader, after his capture and imprisonment in 1999, others took over the leadership, executive role. First, Murat Karayılan took the lead of the organization until 2013. After 2013, Cemil Bayık and Bese Hozat became the current joint leaders. Due to the imprisonment of the leader, the organization is governed by an assembly called Kurdistan People's Congress (Kongra-Gel), which serves as the group's legislature. In 2005, the PKK reorganized under a new being the KKK (Koma Komalên Kurdistan; Democratic Confederation of Kurdistan) later renamed KCK (Koma Civakên Kurdistan; Democratic Communities of Kurdistan) led by Öcalan. It turned into an umbrella entity governs its member organizations: the PKK in Turkey, the PYD in Syria, the PJAK in Iran and the PCDK in Iraq. (Soner, Aslan and Kıyıcı, 2017, p. 12; Davis et al., 2012)

The PKK had many different sub-organization. Its paramilitary forces include HPG (armed/military wing), YJA STAR (women unit), YDG-H (youth unit) together with other related groups such as TAK, YPG, YPJ, YBŞ, YPS, TKP/ML, MLKP. On the political front, the organization affiliated with different pro-Kurdish parties. Currently, HDP (a pro-PKK political party) holds seats in the Turkish parliamentary.

4.1.3. Resources, financing

It is estimated that the PKK acquires $50-100 million revenue annually, less than what it was raising, $200-500 million during the 1990s (Davis et al., 2012: 111; Jonsson and Cornell, 2008). Since the PKK has armed militants between 5,000 and 15,000 in a wide region, it needs huge amounts of finance. To meet this necessity, the organization applied extortion and taxation in the late 1980s. The rise of drug trafficking activities also provided new finance opportunities. Considering its areas of operation, PKK earned a lot of money from drug trade since the 1990s (Pek and Ekici, 2007, p. 143). Its involvement in the drug trade has been certified by a report of Interpol and designated by the EUROPOL and US authorities (Interpol, 2008; EUROPOL, 2011; The US Department of Treasury, 2011).

Other than drug money, the PKK's main funds are donations and membership fees coming from people at home and abroad, especially Kurdish diaspora living in European countries, and revenue earned by the sales of publications of the PKK (Özcan,

1999, p. 43; Criss, 1995, pp. 18-19; Özdemir and Pekgözlü, 2012, pp. 92-93; Marcus, 2010, pp. 84, 244-45; EUROPOL, 2011; Rudaw, 2015). Besides, through sympathizer front organizations in European countries such as the Confederation of Kurdish Associations in Europe and the International Kurdish Businessmen Union, the PKK has made significant amount money (Gücenmez, 2014, p. 56). It is also believed that the organization takes part in money laundering, human trafficking and illegal immigration (Roth and Sever, 2007, p. 906).

4.1.4. Recruitment

The PKK has recruited its militants mostly from Turkey, but also from Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Western countries by promoting nationalist propaganda and equalitarian ideology. The organization drew Kurdish women in by emphasizing "male oppression of women as an extension of state oppression" (Davis et al., 2012, p. 107). It recruited a significant number of female fighters over time, in the early 1990s, 30 % of its militants were women. In 2007, approximately 1,100 of 4,500–5,000 total members were women (Özcan, 2007). Some of the women have joined the organization voluntarily since they believed the equality was a key objective or kidnapped by the PKK (Özcan, 2007). The PKK also forced families to give their children for the cause of the organization and accused of kidnapping more than 2,000 children since the 1990s (Human Rights Watch, 2016; Hurriyet, 2007). It is reported that 42% of the PKK recruits were under the age of 18 and they have been used in violent criminal activities of the organization (TEPAV, 2012; Global Report, 2008).

4.2. EXTERNAL SPONSORS OF THE PKK

4.2.1. State Supporters

Appearance and maintenance of PKK's existence happened thanks to international politics and interstate relations. Such that, PKK's operational areas of activities (development of armament capacity, training) are concentrated in Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Iran, and Iraq, while organizational activities are extended to the different European countries. The organization got in touch with all kinds of states

and tried to manipulate interstate relations to its favor (Kurubas, 2004:115). In the foundation phase, it took advantage of the hostile interstate relations and the unstable situation in the region. The external life space of the organization has two main footholds: military formation which is efficient in the Middle East and political organization based on Europe (Demir, 2017, p. 321; Kurubas, 2004, p. 116).

Approaches of external states to the PKK were shaped and changed according to their relations with Turkey. There is a considerable variation between the groups' supporters. Some countries preferred to use PKK as a foreign policy tool while others either chose to turn a blind eye to the activities of the group or to provide active support in various forms in accordance with their perception of the group. Other than these, the vacuum of power emerged in neighboring countries in the 1990s, also provided physically secure areas which PKK could take advantage of.

The PKK's external sphere of influence or areas of activities, mostly located in the Eastern and Southern neighbors of Turkey with Kurdish inhabitants, and European countries with Kurdish diaspora communities. Even though the organization has a Marxist-Leninist ideology, by building its dynamics on Kurdish identity and claiming to be the sole representative of the Kurdish people, it was able to acquire support from these countries regardless of its ideology (Kurum, 2017, p. 212).

Syria

The first external state that the PKK set foot in was Syria. The political regime in Syria chose to support the terrorist group because of its sour relations with Turkey in that period, stemming from the water issue, Hatay question, Turkey's close ties with Israel, and other problems of inter rivalries (Kurubas, 2004: Marcus, 2010, pp. 87-88). The leader of the organization, Abdullah Ocalan, afraid of a military intervention of Turkish army, crossed into Syrian territory where the organization got in contact with leftist Palestinian groups and subsequently took full control of abandoned Helve camp (after the PLO departure), in Bekaa Valley with implicit approval of Syrian regime (Marcus, 2010, p. 86; Kirchner, 2016, p. 175). It is claimed that between 1980 and 1982 more than 300 militants received training there (Özcan, 1999, pp. 245-246, Marcus, 2010, p. 84).

The organization carried out its first conference in Helve camp in 1981 and continued its training activities in other places (Sayda, Sur, Nabatiye, Selahaddin Eyyubi, Haspiye, Pamar, and Beirut) with the help of Marxist Palestinian groups (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)). These camps were located in Lebanon's occupied northeast, on areas that were controlled by Syria, and it allowed Syrian authorities to plausibly deny its "indirect and opaque" hosting (Kirchner, 2016, p. 217). In 1981, the PKK held its first conference with 80 members at the Helve camp. However, in 1982, when Israel began its occupation to Lebanon, the PKK became obliged to move from the Valley to the Damascus and at that period, turned the Valley into training placed named "Mahsun Korkmaz Academy." Between 1987 and 1992, Syria became a safe haven and training center for the organization and more than 10,000 militants got trained in there (Özcan, 1999, p. 248).

Despite the pressure and the diplomatic efforts of Turkey to end this support, Syria made small changes only to get rid of the label of "terror-sponsoring country" in the region. However, the organization continued to its activities in small scale training centers (Polat, 2013, pp. 112-114). With Turkey's engagement in Northern Iraq, Syria renewed its support to the group and opened an institute to educate the high-level militants both politically and ideologically in 1993. Besides, the PKK opened offices in all Kurdish populated areas including Damascus by 1987 and Syria reportedly actively encouraged Kurdish people living within its borders to join the organization and freed them from military duty in Syrian army (number alleged to be thousands throughout the decade accounting for up to 30 percent by mid-1990s), tolerated the transfer of recruits where they could obtain military training between (Kirchner, 2016, p. 222; Özcan, 1999, pp. 249-251).

Syrian regime allowed the PKK's activities not only in Lebanon but also on its territory (Kirchner, 2016, p. 173). In its first years, the PKK used Syria as a political and military sanctuary, frontline and a point of logistics support where it could take shelter, train, carry out the attacks against its target state, Turkey. Ocalan, while residing in Damascus, controlled the activities of group and took advantage of camps dispersed into different cities of Syria, (such as El Saka, Ayn al-Arab and, Zebedan) and organization house and offices (Kurum, 2017, p. 170; Kurubas, 2004, p. 120; Polat, 2013, p. 116).

In the late 1990s, Turkey's efforts yielded results. After Turkey pursued the policy of brinkmanship against the Syrian government to stop its backing to the PKK, they eventually decided to expel Ocalan with the signing of the Adana Agreement in late 1998 (Kirchner, 2016, p. 139). Later, PKK camps in Syria and Lebanon were closed down, and all activities of the group were banned according to the Damascus' announcement (Kirchner, 2016, p. 232). Ocalan who sought refuge from several countries, was captured in Kenya and brought to Turkey in 1999. After Ocalan was expelled from Syria, the country was no longer an administration center for the PKK and remaining militants crossed into northern Iraq, making this place new headquarter of the organization (Kurum, 2017, p. 213; Kurubas, 2004, p. 120; Polat, 2013, p. 116).

Iraq

The PKK was able to acquire a military base in Northern Iraq which provides much more efficient geography than Syrian border area, to realize attacks against Turkey (Demir, 2017, p. 322; Kurum, 2017, p. 213; Özcan, 1999, pp. 244-247; Polat, 2013, p. 68). With the help of Barzani, the PKK gained a military base in Lolan which is under the control of KDP and close to the border area of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran (Kurum, 2017, p. 213; Marcus, 2010, pp. 100-101).

Northern Iraq offered a more convenient geographic place infiltrate to Turkish soil (Demir, 2017, p. 324). For this reason, the PKK made a deal with Barzani, with the help of Syria and Iran, and settled into the KDP controlled areas as from 1982, first Lolan and then Lak-1, Haftanin, Lejna, Zaho and Miroz (Kurubas, 2004, pp. 120-121; Marcus, 2010, pp. 100-101). The war between Iran and Iraq make Northern Iraq an uncontrolled place where different Kurdish groups clashed over. The PKK, by forming different alliances with group leaders: Barzani and Talabani, achieved to find a place in this region (Kurum, 2017, p. 214; Polat, 2013, pp. 69-70).The organization was given elbow room after reaching a deal, "Principle of Solidarity" accord, with KDP in 1983 and it became able to conduct armed attacks against Turkey (Demir, 2017, p. 325). It is also claimed that Syrian leader Assad reconciled between Barzani and the PKK in person to catalyze the group's settlement in the region (Kirchner, 2016).

The establishment and resettlement of the PKK in northern Iraq were facilitated by the lack of state control arising from the Iran-Iraq War. With the Gulf War, Iraqi central

administration lost its authority over Northern Iraq in 1991. Since that time, the vacuum of power led the PKK to increase its activities and the number of camps in the region, specifically in the Qandil and Dohuk mountains. Until 1996, the organization established 12 big military base and 28 small ones (Kurum, 2017, p. 214; Polat, 2013, pp. 117-118). After the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the power vacuum in question left the PKK a much more wide room and let them acquire any weapons and material they need (Yavuz and Ozcan, 2006, p. 109; Polat, 2013, p. 175).

It was estimated that the PKK has 18 camps in Northern Iraq, eight of these located in Qandil Mountain while others in Hakurk, Hinere, Lolan, Zap, Metina, Avaşin, Haftanin, Kelereş, Piran, and Makhmur. The organization uses these camps as bases for shelter, training place, logistical support, and other sorts of activities (Kurum, 2017, p. 214; Demirel, 2005, pp. 393-400).

Iran

The PKK first contact with Iran occurred at the beginning of the 1980s when a militant was placed in Urumiye by Iranian intelligence. Iran because of the ongoing war with Iraq, developed relations with PKK after 1988. In 1989, under the leadership of Osman Ocalan, different training camps were founded, Urumiye being the main one (Kurubas, 2004, p. 123; Çagaptay, 2007). The reasons for Iran's support to PKK were the prevention of the US and Turkey from controlling Northern Iraq after the Gulf War; seeing Turkey as a rival in that power vacuum; the attitude of Turkey regarding the Azerbaijani Turks living in Iran; and the belief of Turkish support the Kurdish groups in Iran (Kurum, 2017, p. 215; Kurubas, 2004, pp. 302-303).

However, since the US supported the formation in Northern Iraq and this very formation constituted a security threat both to Turkey and Iran, Iran agreed to cooperate and stop its backing between 1993 and 1995. Later on, Turkey's engagements in Northern Iraq made Iran continue its support to the PKK. But Turkey's calls for stopping the support came to results and Iran agreed to end (Kurubas, 2004, pp. 306-307).

When it comes to the types of support, in addition to shelter and training camps, Iran provided the organization safe transit from its borders to the Agrı-Kars region; the transfer of militants from different place; treatment-purpose centers for the wounded militants; custom checkpoints in the borders which enabled the drug trafficking,

pumped money into the PKK's pocket, and its territory functioned as a "rear front and hideaway" for the organization. In 1986-87, the PKK allegedly exchanged arms, logistic resources and money in the transborder area following its establishment in Iran's northwestern region (Kirchner, 2016; Kurum, 2017, p. 215; Özcan, 1999, pp. 233-34). By that, Iran capacitated the group to target Turkey easily. When the PKK's offset in Iran PJAK, defined its aim as a federal structure, Iran recognized the PKK as a terrorist organization, began to take measures against the group (more than 20 anti-PKK operations), and signed two security protocols with Turkey in early 1993 and mid-1994 (Kirchner, 2016; Polat, 2013, pp. 154, 177-178; Bacık and Coskun, 2011, pp. 261-262). After that, Iran allowed Turkey to conduct cross-border operations and air assaults on camps in its border area (Kirchner, 2016).

Western European Countries

The PKK that was quite effective in Turkish borders, also able to find living space in European countries. While using the Middle East as a place to develop and protect its armed forces, the group turned to Europe for political purposes. By posing itself as a representative of Kurds, it was able to gain diplomatic support, open offices, conduct meetings and run propaganda activities in many parts of Europe. The PKK's activities in Western countries have mostly based on gaining political and diplomatic recognition. The first people who went to Europe were projected as the human and material resource of armed struggle (Kurum, 2017, p. 215; Özcan, 1999, p. 289). In this context, the first office in Europe was founded in 1981 and local organizations connected to this office started its publications in the forms of books, magazines, and bulletins, to make propaganda, gain recognition and attract support to its cause (e.g., Roj TV, Med TV, Serxwebun and Berxwedan) (Polat, 2013, p. 77). In addition, the group was able to hold conferences, form different associations to realize their activities. At the beginning of the 1990s, the organization established the necessary ground and became able to act in a wide area efficiently (Kurubas, 2004, p. 142). In that period, the PKK was organized in whole Europe horizontally (Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, Benelux, Scandinavian countries, The United Kingdom, Greece, Balkans), and administered all its organizational units from a single center in a hierarchical manner.

Approaches of European countries were shaped according to how they perceive of the group, and this perception was heavily influenced by "ideological framing of grievances" of the Kurdish lobbies and diaspora, the propaganda activities of Kurdish population in these countries (Davis et al. 2012, p. 112), increasing concerns on human & minority rights and Turkey's efforts to enter the European Union, and last but not least the desires of European countries to take advantage of Kurds in their policies regarding Middle East and Turkey (Kurum, 2017, p. 216; Kurubas, 2004, pp. 221-22). Because of these factors, European countries took the part of the PKK whether directly or indirectly. The attitudes towards the group have been in the forms of either state support or state tolerance, and it developed into basis where terror dimension took a backseat and human rights issue brought into the forefront (Kurubas, 2004, pp. 222-223, 244). Especially during the accession period of Turkey to the European Union, the PKK used the sympathy of European countries as leverage against Turkey.

Although some of these countries recognized the PKK as a terrorist organization in time, the group continued its propaganda and fundraising activities. Besides, no matter how they labeled the organization officially, they kept up with their understanding or perception and tended to tolerate (turn a blind eye to) the existence of the group (Kurum, 2017, p. 217; Polat, 2013, p. 182). The PKK took advantage of "unwillingness and inability" of European government to cut out diaspora support and financial resource coming from drug smuggling (Kirchner, 2016; Soner, Aslan, and Kıyıcı, 2017, p. 27).

Greece

Greece is examined separately since the nature of its relationship with PKK, differs from other European countries to some extent. In other words, while the support of these countries mostly remains in a passive way, Greece deliberately chose to assist the organization because of the interstate rivalry between Turkey and Greece (Kurum, 2017).

The PKK first contacted with Greece in 1988. Greek Intelligence Service with some military personnel met with Ocalan in Syria. After this conversation, the camp of Lavrion was opened in Greece. Ocalan in his statements, admits that Greece provided safe havens, let the group leaders take shelter (Lavrion, Haldiki, and Eviya camps), and

gave training to the militants in its territory (Çagaptay, 2007; Demir, 2017, p. 329). It is also argued that an academy was founded for the training of ranking executives. In addition, two different camps named Stavrovouni and Mahera established in Southern Cyprus in 1989, and 135 militants got training (Kurubas, 2004, pp. 150-51). Activities of the PKK in Greece were carried out in different organization houses, offices, and camps where militants could also take political and military instructions including sabotage techniques, usage of explosives from Greek military personnel. Besides Greece provide arms, explosives and other kinds of weaponry to the organization with the help of Syria with the beginning of the 1990s (Kurum, 2017, p. 220; Kurubas, 2004, pp. 151-52; Latif, 1999, p. 217). Other than military assistance, Greece also provides financial help, logistics aid and let the PKK conduct its propaganda and fundraising activities in its soil. Moreover, the group leader, Abdullah Ocalan was captured in Kenya with a Greek passport in 1999. Although the Greek government claimed to end its support after that day, the PKK continued its activities in Greece (Kurubas, 2004, p. 270).

Armenia

Instead of direct contact with the Armenian government, the PKK developed most of its relations through the terrorist organization ASALA over Syria and took lessons from it about explosive materials. It is also claimed that Armenian arms smugglers provided the PKK's military camps with weapons and Turkey's pressure on Iran led the organization move to Armenia and established six camps in its border (Kurubas, 2004, p. 158).

4.2.2. Non-state Supporters

Diaspora and Other Armed Groups

Other than states, the insurgent groups are assisted by nonstate actors. The PKK has survived for many years thanks to the network of potential supporters, such as Kurdish diaspora which is distributed over a wide area from Europe to the neighboring countries in the Middle East where it was attained a serious amount of financial resources (Byman, Chalk and Hoffman, 2001, p. 56) Especially after 1986, following the PKK's loss of many fighters in clashes with Turkish military personnel and the establishment

of village guard system, the support from Kurdish population abroad became much more significant since it poses a source of recruitment, money, food, and shelter (Kirchner, 2016). Thanks to helping of diaspora community comprised of 800,000 Kurdish people in Europe, the PKK has been able to produce publications, establish mass media institutions to disseminate its propaganda to a larger audience (Romano, 2002, pp. 136–137; Davis et al. 2012, p. 107).

Other than diaspora in European countries, there is a Kurdish population dispersed between neighboring countries of Turkey: Syria, Iran, and Iraq. This situation opened the way for cross-border support between these groups, created a "safety net" for hard times, and help the militants to avoid total defeat/annihilation against the government attacks by gathering strength and regrouping (Gurses, 2015). Thus, intrastate conflicts become protracted and more lethal. Indeed, the transborder nature of ethnically mobilized rebel groups has a significant influence on conflict onset and the duration (Gurses, 2015).

Some marginalized local Kurdish groups out of Turkish borders also built the social and economic connection with the organization and help it to perform smuggling, drug trade, and other petty crimes. Not all funding was on voluntary basis. The PKK also collected money through extortion or taxation of Kurdish villages (unwilling contributors). It also has to be noted that the assistance of non-state actors does not take place independent from the state they reside in. As mentioned previously, states may choose to tacitly approve, tolerate these kinds of activities for different reasons and facilitate the role of third parties, or remain incapable to cut off the network.

The PKK has also been affiliated with other leftist groups in home and abroad such as Turkish Devrimci Sol (DEVSOL), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), ASALA, and the Greek 17 November Revolutionary Organisation as mentioned above.

4.3. THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

As we can see from the above discussion, the PKK has been able to prolong its life cycle substantially with the tangible and intangible assistance of external actors. Even Ocalan confirmed the influence of external assistance in his words: "Have you ever seen

a revolution so fed by outside on such a scale" (Özcan, 1999, p. 112). Indeed, since its foundation, the organization has benefitted from the opportunities emanated from international environment whether it was interstate hostility, the vacuum of power, or changes in status quo. Especially the unstable region it operates, provided a huge advantage compared to other violent armed groups. The group was supported by the most important forms of assistance such as shelter, training grounds and/or financial help.

As its foundation phase, the group took the help of Palestinian groups, acquired military bases for training in Lebanon, took shelter in Syria. With the help of Syrian sponsorship, the PKK improved its organizational capacity, mobilization strategies and the number of trained militants (the number is claimed to be approx. 15,000 by early 1990s) (Kirchner, 2016, pp. 183-84). Later on in the north of Iraq and the east of Iran, the PKK found physically secure areas. These areas let the group cross border, carry out attacks and, turn back safely and be protected from possible counter attacks (Kurum, 2017: 224). Even today, the ungoverned territories in the north of Syria and Iraq stand as the most important factor on how the PKK survived up until today.

In a similar manner, the PKK's political activities have been tolerated by many European countries on accounts of "Kurdish ethnic identity" or "independent Kurdistan ideal." Thus, the organization created a political and financial safe ground for itself where it could freely act, efficiently make propaganda and raise funds. This helped the group to sustain and further develop its capacity. By emphasizing human rights and minority rights, it has been able to organize on the political level, established the image of "only rightful representative of Kurdish people" which seek to obtain democratic rights of them. It is also worth to note the role of diaspora community living abroad especially the European countries. They played the initiator role in mobilizing support for the PKK.

To sum up, it can be said that terrorist group, the PKK by using host states' soil and tolerant behavior, it was able to realize its activities with ease (Davis et al., 2012, p. 111). The organization was supported by many states directly, either tolerated, or some remained incapable of restraining the activities of the group. Nonetheless, all eventually played a decisive role in contributing to its overall capacity, extensity, ability to escape

or resist retaliation and survivability, thus led to change the expected utility of conflict and prolongation of the conflict.

4.4. THE FAILED EFFORTS OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT

The negotiation process between warring parties, the PKK and Turkey, cannot be assessed without paying attention to the changes in neighboring countries. Resources that were provided for the PKK contributed to the military or political capacity of the rebels as mentioned earlier. External actors have endangered bargaining environment by constantly boosting the group's ability to inflict cost.

There has been a high power asymmetry between Turkey and the PKK. Yet, the group has been able to challenge the advantaged power position of government by the virtue of external sponsors and turned the intrastate conflict to a costly war. The tactic adopted by the group mostly based on guerilla warfare in which militants refrain from the conventional direct military confrontations with a stronger party. However, the PKK also resorted to terrorism by targeting non-combatants on many occasions. From its inception, 2366 terrorism incidents took place according to the Global Terrorism Database (see **Figure 4.1**). The phases of PKK insurgency might be divided into six periods:

- 1978-1984: Political Activity
- 1984-1999: First Armed Rebellion
- 1999-2004: Ceasefire
- 2004-2012: Second Armed Rebellion
- 2013-2015: Ceasefire and Peace Process
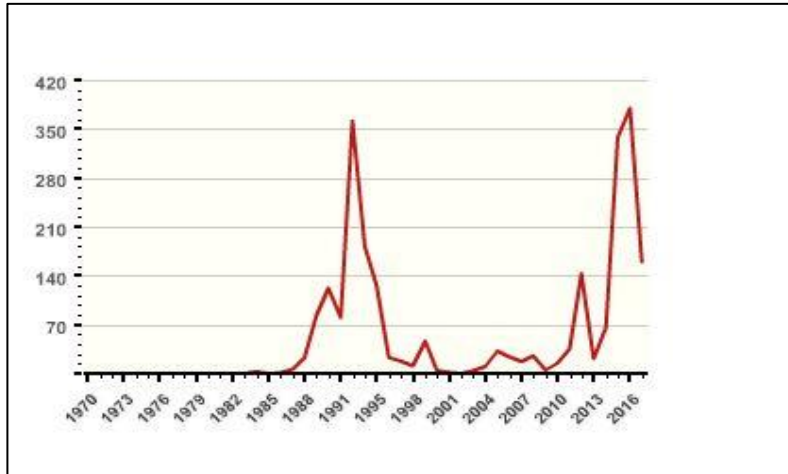- 2015-present: Renewed Clashes

Figure 4.1 The 2366 terror incidents related to the PKK since its formation. (Source: Global Terrorism Database)

The PKK's capacity to inflict costly damages on Turkey have changed over time. As can be seen from **Figure 4.1**, the PKK was able to survive for years and resist against Turkey by retreating into safe zones and gathering strength for future attacks. In the late 1990s, when Turkish army increased its military measures (frequency of attacks, TAF's air assaults, and pressure to the sponsors) on the group and the PKK became deprived of resources and shelter in Turkey, thus came to the point of eradication (more than 5,000 PKK's members were neutralized). The PKK's alliance with KDP broke down in the face of the Turkish raids into northern Iraq and PKK's targeting of Kurdish civilians between 1987 and 1994. Yet, the PKK was benefited from KDP/PUK discord and this time reestablished in PUK-controlled areas after 1994 (Kirchner, 2016, p. 150). When it comes to Iran, during this period, its bilateral relations with Turkey deteriorated because of Turkey's security agreement with Israel in 1996. As a response, it returned to assist the PKK on material terms. This development coincided with Turkey's increasing efforts to eradicate the PKK. During the TAF "Hammer" operation in northern Iraq in 1997, the PKK's fighters got sheltered in Urumiye base in Iran (Kirchner, 2016, p. 152). The first ceasefire took place between 1999 and 2004 after the leader of the organization, Öcalan was captured in Kenya by Turkish Intelligence Agency. The PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire to be able to survive, reorganize and buildup with new recruitments; determined the new leaders of the organization following the imprisonment of Öcalan and stayed inactive in its cross-border safe havens during this period. However, after June 2004, the PKK announced its ended ceasefire period with

the pretext that Turkey disregarded the truce. The PKK militants began to turn up from their sanctuaries in the cross-border area.

The clashes between Turkey and the PKK resumed while the PKK continued to benefit from external sponsorship. During this period the PKK carried out many indiscriminate bombing attacks in urban areas, which led to many civilian casualties. The increase in terror activities of the organization after 2004 can be followed from **Figure 4.1**. The violence was intensified increasingly and 2012 turned to be the most severe year in terms of fatalities since 1999.

To end this, the government of Turkey decided to initiate ceasefire and began to peace talks with the representatives of the organization in late 2012. The new ceasefire period was officially announced on 21 March 2013 and the period named "Solution Process" began. According to the terms of the deal, the PKK promised to leave Turkey and Turkey pledged to make reforms on the Kurdish issue. After two years of nonviolence, the peace process was terminated by PKK attacks on two Turkish security officials in Ceylanpınar, Şanlıurfa. The organization accused the government of being inactive against Islamic State (IS) and connected with the IS bombing in Suruç, Şanlurfa. The PKK also blamed Turkey being disrespectful to the peace process. However, the battle of trenches started in southern provinces of Turkey following these developments, revealed that the PKK used this process to store weapons and ammunition contradictorily to the terms of peace.

After the efforts to solve the issue on political grounds failed, the clashes between Turkey and the PKK renewed once again to a great extent with late 2015. Since then, the government has turned back to military methods in countering the group. By depriving the PKK of its resources in and outside of the country, the government has been aiming to cripple the organization's capacity. Turkish security forces have targeted many top-cadres members to create psychological breakdown inside the organization (Alptekin, 2018). However, as the main contention of the study and historical experience suggests without isolating the organization from the outside world and disrupting its nourishment network, it seems quite difficult for Turkey to end the insurgency completely.

5.   THE LIBERATION TIGERS TAMIL EELAM (LTTE)

5.1.1. Description, Aim, and Ideology

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is an ethno-nationalist secessionist rebel group who sought the creation of an independent homeland for Tamil minority that resides in the north and east of island state of Sri Lanka, to be called "Tamil Eelam." It was founded in 1976 by Velupillai Prabhakaran and fought the Sri Lankan government between 1983 and 2009 until it was defeated by government forces. The ideology of the militant group was predominantly Tamil nationalism whose primary goal was "struggle for the Tamil people." The group explicitly stated that it was a secular organization and a revolutionary movement aiming certain changes within traditional Hindu Tamil society such as the elimination of caste system and gender inequality. Prabhakaran named his ideology as "revolutionary socialism" with the object of establishing an egalitarian society (UCDP, 2019).

The LTTE is known for its ability to employ guerilla warfare concept in the forms of assassinations, full-scale attacks and indiscriminate acts of violence (Byman et al., 2001). It targeted both security forces and civilians from Sinhalese and Tamil people time to time. The organization led to many high profile cases in Sri Lanka including attacks on government targets and highest rank officials such assassinations of presidents, prime ministers: Indian PM Rajiv Gandhi (1991), Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa (1993) and Sri Lankan Presidential candidate Gamini Dissanayake (1994) (Alptekin, 2018). The conflict between the government and the LTTE claimed more than 40,000 lives (13,503 civilians, 5,251 security forces, 22,584 LTTE militants) until the organization was defeated militarily in 2009 (Alptekin, 2018; see also South Asia Terrorism Portal).

5.1.2. Organizational Structure

In the beginning, the LTTE comprised of a very small group with only 50 members. However, the organization expanded very quickly over time. The LTTE had a hierarchical organization under the leadership of the group's founder and chief leader,

Vellupillai Prabhakaran. He led the whole organization with a rod of iron. A central committee led by the leaders governs and monitors all political and military the activities of the LTTE (Richards, 2014, pp. 13-35). The military wing was subdivided into several groups like the Sea Tigers, the Air Tigers, the Black Tigers, an elite fighting unit and an intelligent unit. Political activities of the group were run by Prabhakaran's political advisors and its political party, The People's Front of Liberation Tigers which was formed for negotiations with the Sri Lankan government. The LTTE formed its political front, The People's Front of Liberation Tigers, in 1989, during a time in which the LTTE was in negotiations with the Sri Lankan government (Colombo Embassy, 1987).

There were different Tamil insurgency groups other than the LTTE. In 1984, the LTTE chose to join into common alliance with other groups such as TELO (the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization) and EROS (the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students), PLOTE (the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam), and EPRLF (the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front- constituting the the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF). However, after 1986, the LTTE decided to leave this front, claimed to be the only representative group of the Tamil insurgency.

5.1.3. Resources and Financing

The annual budget of the LTTE is estimated at around 200-300 million (Chalk, 2008, p. 97; SATP, 2018). The LTTE was funded by revenue from taxation and extortion in LTTE controlled areas, but also was supported substantially by Tamil diaspora overseas (Chalk, 2008, pp. 97-104). Between the 1970s and 1980s, its primary resource was obtained from Tamil diaspora communities living in North America, European countries, India, and Malaysia. Donations from Tamil diaspora were sent either directly to the organization or Tamil associations in these countries (Jayasekara, 2007, p. 3). In the early 1990s, the share of funds collected within Sri Lanka was constituting less than 20%, while international financing was comprising almost 90% of the total amount (Chalk, 1999). Other than these, the LTTE earned money via criminal activities such as piracy, human and drug trafficking, money laundering, arms smuggling and other crimes including passport forgery, credit card fraud, and cyber attacks.

5.1.4. Recruitments

The LTTE was infamous for recruiting children and women. To meet the need of new militants, it applied to recruit women and children systematically. It was estimated that 20-30% of the LTTE's fighters were women and approximately 4,000 died as a result of 26 years of the conflict (SATP, n.d). While some of them joined the group voluntarily, there were others forced to participate. UNICEF reported that there were 5,800 child soldiers within the LTTE, abducted from their families or unprotected orphanage kids from Tamil-controlled areas (Becker and Thapa, 2004).

5.2. EXTERNAL SPONSORS OF THE LTTE

5.2.1. State Supporters

India

In its formation, the Tamil Tigers and other Tamil rebel groups, got support from India in the forms of arms and training with safe havens for militants and operatives in Tamil Nadu. Considering different geopolitical and economic factors as well as the connection of ethnic kin, India provided military equipment, training camps, and financial support to six different Tamil rebel group covertly via its intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) between August 1983 and May 1987 (Raina, 1981). The agency coordinated most of the assistance either via training or the provision of arms. India let Tamils establish 32 training camps for the LTTE's militants, around 495 ones as well as 90 women in 10 batches (Sunday Times, 1997). The first group was trained in Establishment 22 based in Chakrata, Uttarakhand, while the second one in Himachal Pradesh, together with Pottu Amman the LTTE intelligence chief. It is claimed that the leader of the group, Prabakaran visited these places to monitor the militants' situation. The remaining eight of the training camps were located in Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The assassin, Thenmozhi Rajaratnam who killed Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sivarasan in 1991, was also trained by the very same Indian Intelligence in Nainital, India (Gunaratna, 1997, pp. 11, 17-19).

It is believed that until May 1987, approximately 20,000 Tamil militants got military training in India, most of them locating in Tamil Nadu, while specialized education was given in New Delhi, Bombay, and Vishakhapatnam (Byman et al., 2001, pp. 117-118). During that period, the LTTE also acquired most of its weapons straightly from India and India became the number one sponsors of military equipment for the Tamil militants (not only the LTTE but also other insurgent groups) in Sri Lanka. India chose to assist insurgency because of its geopolitical and ideological considerations, mainly Sri Lankan government's expanding relations with the West, and its unwillingness stay in "nonaligned orbit" of India. These concerns resulted in supporting groups like the LTTE to force the government change its mind.

However, as from 1987, the Indian government made a change in its policy regarding the Tamil insurgency and stopped supporting the militants which were locating the northeast of the country. The reasons in reversing the policy were various: refugee problem worsened increasingly in the south of the country as a result of intensified violence (approximated 13,000 Tamil refugees by 1987); the risk of secessionist encouragement between Tamil sentiments in Indian city, Tamil Nadu by the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka; change of political regime by succeeding of Rajiv Gandhi as prime minister who was in a more neutral opinion on the insurgency. India entered into Sri Lankan soil with its peacekeeping force as a result of Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord which was signed between Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan government to end violence and aimed to bring a settlement in the country, in July 1987. The accord was planned to provide cease-fire and devolution of local power to the Tamil province by the help of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) (Byman et al., 2001, pp. 117-18). This time instead of supporting the Tamil militants, India promised to assist the government in demobilizing the group and monitoring the transition period from violence to democratic practice in the north. Yet, the presence of Indian forces enraged both Sinhalese who had bad memories about India, and the Tamil Tigers whose readiness to agree on proposals was miscalculated. The Tamils refused to agree on accord and took a violent stand against the IPKF. Consequently, Indian forces were attacked by the frustrated Tamil militants after six weeks of involvement. The Tamil Tigers saw the decision of India to reverse their position as a betrayal and attacked the very same country that had provided a serious amount of support to the group in the first place.

The assault of Tamils was responded by India very harshly and bloody conflict between Indian forces and the LTTE ensued. Although India was able to press the Tamils seriously, they were never able to eliminate the group or capture the leading figures like Prabakharan and told to leave the country by the Sri Lankan authorities in March 1990, following a great number of casualties, 1.155 dead and 2,987 injured (Wriggins, 1995, pp. 50-52; Byman et. al, 2001, pp. 117-118). But the Tamils did not calm down and these developments eventually led to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by the Prabhakaran's order in 1991 (Manoi Joshi, 1996, pp. 25-26; Samaranayake, 1997, pp. 115-116). This meant the end of Indian assistance and sympathy for the group once and for all.

The Other External States

The LTTE developed a sophisticated external network for arms procurement and acquiring arms and munitions constitutes the most significant operation of the group in showing the global reach of them. After losing the backing of India, the LTTE searched new alternative venues of sources beyond its borders. The group tried to reach post-Cold War weapons markets ranging from Eastern Europe, Southeast, Northeast, and Southwest Asia for years and formed an undercover international arms network led by Tharmalingam Shunmugham, also known as Kumaran Pathmanathan (See **Figure 5.1**). "KP" was the most credible man of the Prabhakaran and once the second most wanted man in Sri Lanka. He contacted with several arms dealers around the world from Croatia to South Africa and mainly operated in Rangoon, Bangkok, and Johannesburg while transactions were realized via bank accounts located in Germany, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada (Byman et al., 2001, p. 118).

Figure 5.1 LTTE's arms procurement network. (Source: Quora)

The KP Branch was created as a response to the Indian decision to stop its support to the group following the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. It had different missions beside arms procurement, such as making money from trade and transportation of commercial goods, arms, and drug smuggling, raising money globally and leading the branches and fronts of the organization abroad. "KP Department" was mainly composed of non-combatant members of the group for the fear that they would be detected by the intelligence service and law enforcement agencies. The department became able to obtain various kinds of weapons from rapid-fire pistols and assault rifles to rocket-propelled grenades and surface-to-air missiles, from countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, and Afghanistan. On the other hand, military equipment like mortar, artillery, and machine-guns were acquired from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and North Korea while explosives-like materials were taken generally from the Ukraine and Croatia. The group also reached to an environment that has had a long-standing practice of underground arms smuggling with the necessary infrastructure, to South Africa that is also located next to the richest ammunition sources on the continent, Mozambique and Angola. These countries supported the Tamil insurgency actively, and the LTTE quickly realized opportunities lied on the ground and exploited them.

Most of the group's arms procurement activities were done by clandestine shipping of Sea Tigers. Before 1983, the LTTE acquired weapons from Afghanistan and explosives were bought from India. Between 1983 and 1987, a serious amount of arms were provided by RAW, Lebanon, Cyprus, Singapore, and Malaysia arms dealers. The first

ship of the organization, MV Cholan, received weapons from Singapore in 1984; the organization purchased a substantial amount of explosives from Ukraine payments made by banks accounts in Singapore in 1994 and these very same explosives used for the Central Bank bombing in 1996. With the help of Indian politicians in Tamil Nadu, the LTTE was also able to carry its funds collected. After Indian stopped assisting the group, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia and Indonesia became the dependable places of assistance (Chalk, 2000, pp. 10–11; Chris Smith, 1994, pp. 3–13; Chris Smith, 1995, pp. 583–589; Krott, 2000, pp. 35–39; and The Economist, 1994). Among these countries, Thailand rose as an essential logistical junction between different supply sources of surplus weaponry during the 1990s since the country has a high number of foreigner arrival and it was easy to blend in for the members of the organization. Thai seaboard used by the Sea Tigers for arms deliveries.

After 1997, North Korea became a prominent source of arms, ammunition, and explosives to the LTTE. There was a deal between the government of North Korea and a member of World Tamil Coordinating Committee of the United States who also worked both as the accountant of the organization and an employee at the North Korean embassy in Bangkok later. It is claimed (not verified) by different sources that the LTTE acquired direct assistance from Eritrean government, including aircraft between 2000 and 2003 with the help of a Norwegian facilitator.

The LTTE used second-hand ships, which bought in Japan, registered and sailed under different flags (such as Cyprus, New Zealand, Panama or Malta) to make these vessels untraceable. The organization took advantage of lax legal requirements of these countries which made the group obscured the possibility of tracking or being caught by law enforcement authorities by different tricks. When the deal was cut, cargo of weapons was loaded and transferred (came back) to the outside territorial water of Sri Lanka. These ships played a significant role in the LTTE's procuration of necessary military war-related equipment. The KP Branch used vessels in transporting commodity goods to a large extent, but they also carried weapons and military materials which were delivered the naval branch of the LTTE, the Sea Tigers clandestinely. Because of the immense activities of Sea Tigers, the Sri Lankan government aimed to target and destroyed the navy capacity of the organization during 2005-08 (Lintner, 2000; The

Bangkok Post, 1995). In 2009, the last cargo vessel of the LTTE was captured by Sri Lankan Navy.

5.2.2. Non-state Supporters

Tamil Diaspora, Wealthy Individuals, NGOs, and Other Armed Groups
Apart from the sponsoring states, the LTTE also acquired the assistance of non-state actors whether these might be the Tamil diaspora living abroad, wealthy businesspeople, or other violent armed groups. To endorse its political and military wings, the group had tried to establish a wide international network from its very beginning. With the late 1970s, the organization began to create international contacts, the Tamil Liberation Organization (TLO) was founded in London and later began to operate as an international offset of the group.

The LTTE also has connections with Tamil political party. The political representatives in Sri Lankan parliament such as TULF politicians and its leader A. Amirthalingam introduced the organization to Europe and reached out the external environment by sending letters to get help from potent and wealthy Tamil expats living overseas for their activities in the late 1970s. They also contacted with different national liberation movements in other countries and held meeting with them to make the LTTE known (for ins. Polisario Front in Morocco). Furthermore, the World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC) was founded in 1978 by London-based Tamil member, S. K. Vaikundavasan, which later functioned as a front organization of the group and helped the network of the LTTE grow substantially since then. On its peak, the organization had 42 offices in general that ran the activities such as propaganda, fundraising, arms procurement, and shipping. The organization divided its offices according to its function as Front, Cover, and, Sympathetic.

Before the massive anti-Tamil riots (so-called the Black July ethnic riots) in Sri Lanka took place in 1983 and following armed conflict between 1983 and 1987, the organization was not able to collect enough money to sustain its military campaign. However, following the riots and the mass migration of Tamils to neighboring countries (Tamil Nadu, India) and Western countries (North America, Europe, and Australia), the

LTTE became able to get sympathy and different sorts of support from these countries. More importantly, among the individuals who fled to other countries, there were the ones that seriously offended by practices of the Sri Lankan government, became financially successful in their migrated countries, and eager to support the LTTE.

As a result, the organization expanded its network significantly in 1980s. It was estimated that the annual budget of the LTTE was around the $200-300 million (Shanaka, 2007; Duhart, 2015, p. 60) and the share of international resources was believed to be 90 percent of the total amount between 1995-6 (Alptekin, 2018, p. 91; Chalk, 1999). But when the conflict intensified, the donations of voluntary basis decreased considerably and the organization applied to forced taxation and extortion to raise funds.

Tamil Diasporas in Western Countries

Diaspora might support their ethnic brethren with the motivation of kinship and sympathise internal struggle in their home country. Insurgent groups take the advantage of this feeling to extract financial and political support. The international support structure that benefitted from the diaspora of the LTTE played a critical role in helping the group survive by forming a "lifeline" for Tamil militants. "Vocal and very sizable" Tamil diaspora became the de facto political representative of the LTTE's abroad. The organization took advantage of strong support from Tamil expatriates who were residing in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, and the United States (see **Figure 5.2**). Tamil diaspora constitutes a textbook example to show how efficient the diaspora support can be when combined with an international network. Apart from the relatively close examples of the PKK and the PIRA, no other organization neither has benefitted in such scale nor could create international system as the LTTE (Byman et al., 2001).

Figure 5.2 Tamil Diaspora abroad. (Source: News.lk)

The organization established a structure in these countries similar to each other: a political group in charge of propaganda and galvanizing support to the group; a finance unit responsible for fundraising; and procurement and an intelligence unit (Richards, 2014). The assistance of the diaspora predominantly realized by these two means: propaganda and raising funds. The former covered the political activities and publicity of the LTTE and aimed to collect political support for the organization while villainizing the Sri Lankan government by disseminating the Tamil propaganda (Byman et al., 2001; Davis, 1996). These activities were supervised by Anton Balasingham and Sivagnam Gopalarathinam who built a network of pressure groups, media units, charities, and benevolent nongovernmental organization (NGOs). By 1998, the LTTE expanded its reach over 54 locations in 32 countries by several front organizations, most of which located in Western countries with considerable Tamil communities (Richards, 2014). Top-level ones involved the United Tamil Organization (UTO) in the United Kingdom, the Federation of Associations of Canadian Tamils (FACT) in Canada, the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations in Australia, the French Federation of Tamil Associations in France, and the Swiss Federation of Tamil Associations in Switzerland. The Tamil Coordinating Committee (in France, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Australia, South Africa, Sweden, Belgium, and New Zealand), the World Tamil Movement (in Canada), the World Tamil Coordinating Committee (in

Switzerland and the USA), and the British Tamil Association (in the United Kingdom) (Richards, 2014).

The LTTE intentionally chose to emphasize on these countries to take advantage of liberal democratic values and human rights. They operated freely and established offices to publicize the Tamil cause, overwhelming the counter-campaign of the Sri Lankan government. Among these offices, the one in London functioned as a main headquarter of activities overseas and international secretariat of the organization, where the official Tamils' strategy for political support was defined through statements, memoranda, and proclamations (Richards, 2014). The propaganda was realized mostly through electronic mail; the Internet (see, the World Wide Web and Usenet); TV programs and radio broadcast of Tamils (Byman et al., 2001; Gunaratna, 2000). The target of the propaganda was both the host governments and Tamil population residing there with the aim of mobilizing support from. The organization effectively used the Internet by creating a connection with internationally prominent nongovernmental organizations, humanitarian and development agencies like the World Council of Churches, the International Educational Development Inc., and Robert Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights. These organizations eventually provided the LTTE opportunity of worldwide appearance.

Figure 5.3 The LTTE's international network. Source: Poonththalir

The second mean of diaspora support was fundraising as mentioned above. Financial aid is the most prevalent form of assistance that diaspora communities could provide due to its ease in transferring. The LTTE was able to collect a serious amount of finance by its established international structure. Tamil diaspora contributed to the organization via direct money; donations to the NGOs, and charities; legitimate investments in Tamil-related businesses; and illegal acts of making money such as human smuggling. The separate shares of these contributions could not be estimated, but at the total they constituted somewhat $50 million for the organization annually (Byman et al., 2001). The money was earned predominantly from Tamil expatriate living in the UK, Canada, and Australia (three combined approx. $1.5 million for a month) (Byman et al. 2001; Davis, 1996, p. 35; Daily News, 1998; International Herald Tribune, 1998; and Lanka Outlook, 1998, pp. 24–25).

The LTTE introduced this practice to the Tamil community as "taxation" to be provided by all Tamils living in external countries. Each member had an identity card and PIN that they were registered in an online system to be checked (Richards, 2014). The well off diaspora members were expected to grant more. With the performance of propaganda, the Tamils were able to raise money on a voluntary basis. However, they also applied to force when consent was not available, and collect money through intimidation or coercion. Most of the time, the pressure of the organization is indirect via emotional abuse on the importance of the cause and necessity to stand by insurgents. However, when this practice "voluntary support" does not work, coercion follows. For instance, if the members of the diaspora wanted to visit their home country, they were checked on the borderline, and they had to be paid their contribution beforehand to be able to enter the country.

The amount of the contribution coming from diaspora was closely related to the success of the LTTE on the battleground. Therefore military gains were accompanied by a remarkable rise in voluntary support, yet when the Tamil forces weakened by the government forces, donation decreased as a result. When the willing contributions fell following the increasing LTTE's violence, and terrorist activities, the representative of organization forced the Tamil community to extract money. Collected funds sent to the LTTE headquarters and named as "special collections" to procure arms for the

organization's military activities. The organization also used the diaspora members for their illegal activities such as creating forged National Identity Cards for the cadres of the LTTE, human smuggling, money laundering, and blackmail (Richards, 2014).

Wealthy Individuals

The LTTE acquired a considerable amount of financial resources from legitimate business and commercial holdings of wealthy individuals, which helped the group survive against the Sri Lankan government. The member of diaspora generally became wealthy compared to their homeland kin, turning them into a perfect source of funds. The organization had multiple business initiatives distributed over different countries. The most prominent ones were industries, real estate, gold and jewelry stores, shipping, grocery stores, and mass media organizations (radio, TV, print). It is hard to measure the total amount of money generated from these business ventures; however, it is estimated that the share of Canada constitutes $6.5 million between 1998 and 1999 (National Post, 2000a). Among these, there was an example of a strong supporter of the group, Shan Sunder who unapologetically backed the Tamil insurgents and contributed more than $4 million.

Other Non-State Armed Groups

The LTTE depicted itself as a national liberation movement which fights for a legitimate cause throughout the 1990s. It built a connection with the internationally well-known organizations like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and gained their permission to open representative offices and engage in lobbying activities freely (Richards, 2014). For instance, one of the Tamil military commanders, Eliyathamby Ratnasabapathy, created contact with the military wing of Fatah and other Palestinian groups like PFLP, some members of the LTTE even took to Lebanon and allegedly got trained by these groups. In addition, the organization gained the alliance of some non-profit NGOs and used donations to fund their violent activities. Among these charitable organizations, there was the Tamils Rehabilitation Organization that was closed and banned by the US in 2007 by reason of funding terrorism. It was just one example of that money collected for humanitarian objectives could be canalized to promote terrorism or other kinds of violent activities.

Approaches of Host Government against Diaspora Activities of Tamils

The efficiency of the assistance coming from the diaspora community is closely related to the position of the host nations against the insurgent group in question. The Tamil diaspora did not only reside in the West but also other parts of the world. However, the LTTE purposefully emphasized on the Tamil expatriates in the Western countries to galvanize support, because of broad and protected civil rights of these countries which made restriction related to support harder. More importantly, the host government mentioned in preceding parts experienced difficulty in distinguishing between non-insurgent expats and pro-LTTE ones. Because making such distinction might necessitate intelligence and serious efforts by law enforcement agencies (such as border and export controls) on these communities and cause eyebrows to raise against the democratic ideals of the West. After all, there was no visible benefit for them in countering the organization. On the contrary, there was popular support behind the LTTE mobilized by Tamil residents and political pressure against any countering acts of these governments. For these reasons, although they had the capacity, the Western government might have hesitated to act or preferred to turn a blind eye to the activities of the group instead of targeting them, which would be regarded as "costly and controversial" (Byman et al., 2001).

Besides, it is also true that some politicians in the Western countries were sympathetic to the Tamil cause and sensitive to the grievances the community experienced. Especially some politicians in top-level contributor countries saw political support of the Tamil minority as an advantage for their favor, so chose to show understanding to the Tamil cause. No matter what the motivations of these politicians, they defacto served to the insurgent's cause, let them organize freely by opening representative offices, and survive its campaign for a long period of time thanks to continuous assistance. The organization gradually built and developed a strong, multilayered and integrated structure that was quite strong to eliminate. The members of the LTTE also used these "free" environments as safe havens for cadres, for transit and logistics thanks to the tacit approval of them.

Apart from the Western countries, there were also other host states that were not capable of stopping the activities of the LTTE. The organization took advantage of the

weak structure of law enforcement, corruption, inadequate border security in some countries such as Thailand where the LTTE created logistical juncture for their transfers with the characteristics of a "lifeline". The country constituted vital importance to the organization so that without import and export of military equipment from Thailand, the LTTE would be eliminated in a shorter period.

5.3. EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

A weak and fragmented minority group by origin confronting an established army with a sense of grievance. This relatively weaker party applied to protracted guerilla warfare tactics and took pivotal support from abroad (ethnic kin living close, a strong neighboring sponsor government, and a diaspora, an expatriate community living abroad) to realize its cause, independence or full autonomy. This intrastate conflict prolonged not only because of the government incompetence combined with the dedication of Tamil Tigers but also as a result of the international support structure (Byman et al., 2001).

The contributions of all external actors mentioned before played a significant role in the LTTE's survival. Especially the diaspora support and funds raised in host countries became quite vital for the activities of the group. When the LTTE began to lose grounds in Sri Lanka in mid-1990s, the money sent from overseas constituted the 95 percent of the LTTE revenue (Byman et al., 2001). And for obvious reasons, it would be difficult for the group to continue fighting without such help. As long as the LTTE was provided with the diaspora funds, it was able to sustain its struggle.

As it can be seen from **Figure 5.4** and **Figure 5.5** following the anti-Tamil riot in 1983, the LTTE's insurgency shows a general uptrend "hump" as a result of an aggressive campaign which continued until the end of the 1990s and this period corresponds to the significant part of the external assistance the organization acquired. When the organization increased its violent attacks, terrorist practices, and atrocities, it lost most of its backing and legitimacy. This resulted in a downgrade of the military capacity on the battleground and the end of voluntary diaspora funding. However, the organization continued its targetings, resorted to the terrorist attacks (mostly suicide bombings), and

refused any settlement. In 2002, the Sri Lankan government decided to agree on the LTTE demands and allocated semi-autonomous self-ruling to the Tamils over Jaffna. Yet, the organization withdrew from peace talks, persisted in its terrorist attacks and its recalcitrance resulted in an all-out war of the government to annihilate group no matter what it takes.
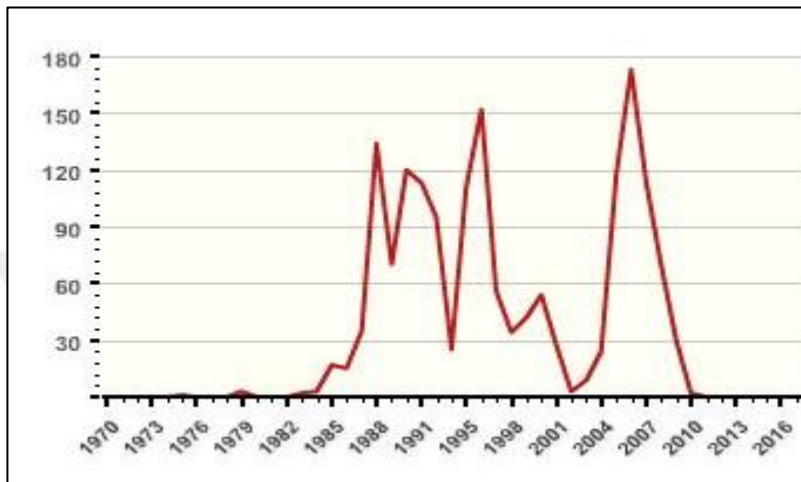

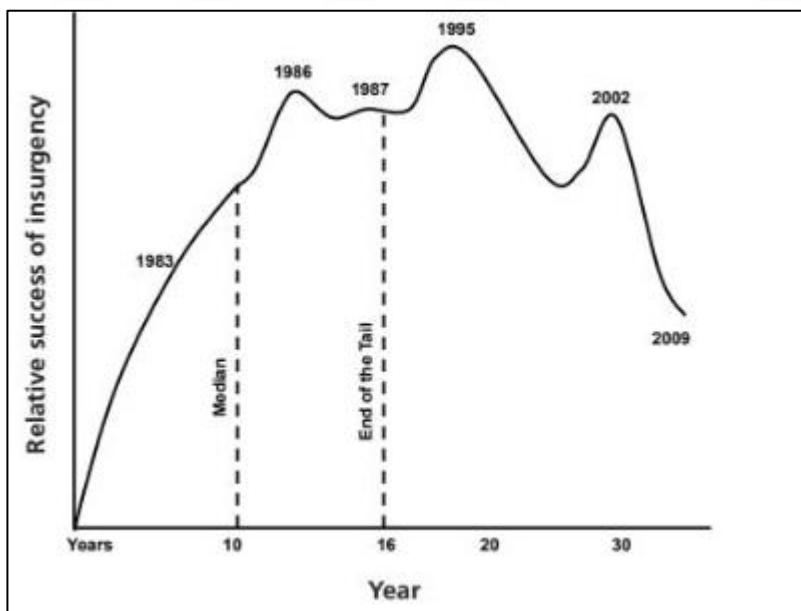**Figure 5.4** 1654 terrorism incidents related to the LTTE. (Source: Global Terrorism Database)

Figure 5.5 The course of Tamil Insurgency. (Source: RAND)

In addition to its military campaign, the government took action to isolate the LTTE which was still acquiring funding and military equipment offshore to some degree. The

strategy of government worked out, and the organization was recognized as a terrorist organization and banned in 32 countries. Following the countless suicide attacks, the Western government decided to take a "harder line" against the organization: the US included the LTTE to its terrorist organization and officially outlaw its activities (Byman et al., 2001; Ranetunge, 2000, p. 3; The National Post, 2000b; The Bangkok Post, 1997; Washington Post, 1999; Daily News, 1999); the US was followed by Canada and the United Kingdom, the European Union. All kinds of Tamil associations were closed and banned such as the Tamil Coordinating Committee; the Eelam Tamil Associations of Canada, Quebec, and British Columbia; and the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (The National Post, 2000c). The US, due to its concerns emanating from the 9/11 era, assisted the Sri Lankan government efforts to cripple the LTTE's offshore network (The Diplomat, 2000). All these development severely impacted the organization; it consequently took serious blows, suffered significant losses and accepted military defeat in 2009 (Connable and Libicki, 2010, pp. 32, 112).

The Tamil Tigers obtained the most important necessities that any insurgent movement needs-international legitimization, financial resources, arms and munitions, and external safe havens. The need of international recognition and money were met with the help of the external host governments and their passive attitudes, specifically the Western countries where the organization raised funds, made propaganda and gained political/diplomatic support. When it comes to weapons, the LTTE procured necessary military equipment through its sophisticated international network that established across different countries either through the consent or involuntary help of them. While some of these countries chose intentionally support the group, others had no option or power to resist against the existence. Last but not least, the organization had secure external safe havens with a logistical value, and the military camps opened in India and continued until the 1990s, which fostered the growth of the organization considerably. Without these spots, the LTTE would be trapped naturally and could not expand the scope of guerilla attacks to a widespread one which is necessary for Maoist third-phase operations in guerilla warfare. All of this assistance contributed to the "non-compromising" attitude of the organization against any settlement which is referred in the following part in detail.

5.4. THE INCONCLUSIVE BARGAINING EFFORTS OF THE WARRING PARTIES

The two-party negotiation between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE turned into a complex structure with the involvement of Indian government, and the sympathetic Tamil minority in southern India with different kinds of assistance such as money and arms. The Indian government engaged with this conflict directly by two forms: first, it involved as a mediator between the warring parties to reach a peaceful solution; and as a supplier of arms, safe havens, training camps, and logistical support to the Tamil insurgents (Wriggins, 1995, p. 35).

At the beginnings, the Tamil insurgents were not seemed capable to confront with the government forces, and there is power asymmetry between parties. But they quickly adapted and acquired the specifics of guerilla warfare not only with the help of armed groups in Lebanon, just like PKK, but also thanks to the training camps in India. When an anti-Tamil riot took place by Sinhalese majority in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, the intensity of violence increased. Tamil became more radicalized, and the government began to take harsh measures. The riot also led thousands of Tamils to flee to Madras, an Indian city which was famous for the sympathizing the Tamil cause. This development gave an opportunity for the Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi who was looking for involving more actively in this intrastate conflict. The politicians in Madras and Indian government had already assisting Tamil Tigers with sanctuaries and communication, and overlooking its fundraising and arms smuggling activities. However, it became more public and active with Mrs. Gandhi's diplomatic visits to Sri Lanka to the favor of Tamil insurgents.

The LTTE members became more encouraged by India's support to reject any government proposal since they were already frustrated with the result of the 1979-82 peace talks and suffering emanating from the 1983 riots. Thus, reaching a peaceful resolution became more of a distant image. In other words, the parties' "bona fides" were weakened by India's tutelage and its contributions to the resolve and military capacity of the militants such as firepower, training, and intelligence, regardless of constant denial of the Indian authorities (Wriggins, 1995, pp. 42-44).

Furthermore, the protracted negotiation process was used by both sides to gain time, to gather strength, improve their respective military capacity to inflict a cost on the other. Tamils' military units widened rapidly; the training in India by retired Tamil military personnel, and supplies from India and Singapore, made them more capable and resilient. Each side increased its efforts to force the other to yield. Hence, the violence persisted with a higher level of devastation that was not enough to bring parties to a negotiated settlement (Wriggins, 1995, p. 47).

When Rajiv Gandhi came to power in India as a prime minister, the policy towards the Tamil insurgents was changed for the fear that the LTTE rebellion in Sri Lanka might encourage Indian Tamil minority in southern India similarly. Therefore, he took a more "neutral" position, tried to break the military stalemate between confronting parties by brokering meetings in 1985. Yet, the LTTE insisted on behalf of full independence, in its demand to merge northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka under the Tamil authority as a separate homeland. So, the deadlock continued. India, on the other hand, enunciated that the Tamil militants are no longer to get Indian support by taking the leaders of the group into custody and seizing their weapons and military equipment.

Following the failed attempts of negotiation, the violence intensified yet again. The government increased its military activity so that repelled the Tamil militants to Jaffna peninsula and then enclosed them by blockading any upcoming shipment to Jaffna. The government also started a military invasion of the peninsula to interrupt its supply source from the sea and to cripple their position.

Efforts to reach a peaceful settlement could have worked at the beginning in convincing the government and the moderate leading figures of Tamil minority and resolving the conflict. However, the prolonged nature of the violent struggle made available concessions to be higher, and the parties more polarized. The Tamils became more radicalized and moderate representatives left its place to irreconcilable militants, while the Sri Lankan government maintained a violent attitude.

More importantly, when the large neighbor, India, engaged in as an active supporter of the LTTE, the political and military capacity of the Tamils increased decisively to survive its attacks on the public. After that development, the Tamils also became less inclined to agree on a settlement and more insistent on full independence or secession, but nothing less (Wriggins, 2015, p. 55). The lack of trust was enhanced and reaching a

peaceful settlement got complicated further by the shadow of India. The role played by India was significant: its size, its ethnic connection with the Tamil insurgents, its domestic political support to the ethnic kin in Madras, and its foreign policy agenda deeply affected the probable outcome and considerations of the warring parties (Wriggins, 1995, p. 56).

The LTTE, in addition to its experience in guerilla warfare and tactics, was able to use diplomatic channels efficiently. When their military capacity was about to deteriorate, they declared ceasefires, issued calls for peace and thus able to gain the support of the international community to pressure the government to do same. However, the real intention of the organization during these periods was to gain time to recover and build up for future attacks. For instance, when the Sri Lankan government declared peace as a response to the international pressure in 2001 and retreat from the areas that the LTTE was active. But as expected, the organization used this ceasefire process to prepare for the next battle with the government as it can be seen from below figure. The government decision to loosen the control on the LTTE also made the arrival of external assistance much easier. While the militant force of the group fell around 6,000 before the ceasefire, it was able to recruit new militants during this period and got the number into 16,000 (Ratnayake, 2010). As it is illustrated in the Figure below, following this period of buildup, there has been a significant increase in the LTTE's terror-related incidents.

The recalcitrant attitude of the organization led the Sri Lankan government to start an offensive military campaign against the LTTE's targets. After seeing the ceasefire periods worked against itself, the government initiated a reckless campaign after 2005 by ignoring all external pressures. This uncompromising and brutal campaign of government had continued for three years, did not pay regard to the terrorist-civilian distinction and brought disproportionate violence to the Tamil community until the last the LTTE member was neutralized (Anderson, 2011). When the military campaign came to an end, the LTTE lost all of its violence capacity, accepted the defeat with almost 20,000 civilians were killed during the campaign (Kaplan, 2009). The Sri Lankan government by the military assistance and diplomatic backing of China was able to get rid of international pressure about its indiscriminate use of force against civilians (Kaplan, 2009). To avoid a reappearance of Tamil insurgency in future, the

government initiated rehabilitation programs for Tamil people and remaining members of the organization estimated around 11,000 (Alptekin, 2018, p. 157; Daily Mirror, 2011).

6. THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC)

6.1.1. Description, Aim, and Ideology

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is a leftist Marxist insurgent organization in Colombia that was founded in 1964 during the period known as "La Violencia" (the Era of Violence) with the aim of regime change. Unlike ethnic secessionist conflict, the FARC sought change in entire Colombia by pushing agrarianism, the redistribution of wealth, and anti-imperialism from its inception. With its military force predicted around 20,000 (in 2002) militants or operatives, the organization was the largest insurgent group in the country and fought for an armed revolution to seize power and change the rule in favor of rural poor (Martinez, 2016; Boraz, 2007; Dube and Vargas, 2013). During its insurgency, the FARC resorted to the violence through bombings, assassinations, hijacking, and other armed assaults against different targets. It was also involved in crimes such as kidnapping for ransom, extortion, and drug trafficking which provided a huge amount of funds annually into the group. It is known for various attacks and 750 hostage-taking incidents according to the government data (CNN, 2008). After a 52-year long conflict, the settlement was reached in 2016, and the FARC agreed to end its rebellion, laid down arms, and delivered its weapons to the UN in compliance with the peace agreement.

6.1.2. Organizational Structure

The FARC had a well-defined structure and line of command. The whole organization was governed by the Secretariat comprised of seven members who gave political direction to the group and inspected 25-member the Central High Command (Estado Mayor Central) together with the army's chain of command (Rabasa, Chalk and Khilko, 2007). The secretariat supervises 70 fronts scattered around the whole of Colombia (See **Figure 6.1**). The FARC was hierarchically divided into several units as follows: Block, Front, Columns, Company, Guerilla, and Squad. Each of these units comprised of

different numbers of soldiers who had a specific military duty besides political objective.

The organization had never faced a serious challenge to authority. From its beginning, it had been run by Pedro Antonio Marín, (aka "Manuel Marulanda Vélez"). When the founder of the organization, commander-in-chief, Marulanda died together with two Secretariat members, Luis Edgar Devia Silva (aka "Raul Reyes) and Jose Juvenal Velandia (aka "Ivan Rios") in 2008, the leadership was replaced rapidly without any disruption (McDermott, 2013). Marulanda was replaced by Alfonso Cano (a.k.a. Guillermo Saenz Vargas) who became the new leader of the organization (Rabasa, Chalk and Khilko, 2007).

Figure 6.1 FARC Fronts dispersed around the country. (Source: The Economist)

The FARC's militants, predicted around 10,000 to 15,000, were divided into fronts as it can be seen from the Figure above. These fronts were known by a strong hierarchical structure and discipline, governed by the Secretariat.

The organization was represented on the political front by the UP (Unión Patriótica, Patriotic Union). The party was founded in 1986, took part in the elections and gained a significant amount of the votes. It was functioned as a political wing of the group until its members were killed by the right-wing armed groups and the party was wiped from the political scene. The FARC was also known by its connection with the Bolivarian Movement and the Communist Party of Colombia. However, after the fall of the UP, the organization cut loose with them. Throughout its insurgency, the FARC was able to gain the support (willing or forced) of the rural population as well as urban students, intellectuals and workers. Yet, following the criminal activities, atrocities against civilians, and attacks on economic targets, the group began to lose its main support base increasingly and turned into a quite unpopular figure for Colombian public (Rabasa, Warner and Chalk, 2007).

6.1.3. Resources and Financing

The FARC was known to finance its movement by heavy involvement in drug-trafficking together with kidnapping for ransom, taxation, and extortion. Annual revenue of the organization was estimated around $200 to $400 million, a serious amount of it coming from drug business (Rabasa, Chalk and Khilko, 2007, p. 62). This number varies according to different sources around billions, but Insight Crime claims that the FARC's drug income was less than $1 billion annually (McDermott, 2013). Initially, like many other revolutionary movements, the FARC was unwilling to entangle in drug smuggling because it was seen "counter-revolutionary" and something that could lead corruption in armed forces (Otis, 2014, pp. 3). However, as the money generated fell short of serving the purpose, they first began to create revenue from the illegal drug trade in 1982 (Otis, 2014, p. 3; Rabasa, Chalk and Khilko, 2007, p. 60).

In addition to production and distribution of cocaine, the FARC also engaged in taxation or extortion of large landowners and multinational business, illegal gold mining (in Peru) as well as kidnapping for ransom. The practice of kidnapping created a considerable amount of revenue for the FARC as it applied quite frequently than any other armed insurgent movements. The organization largely kidnapped of high-value

targets such as politicians, security officials and elites both to make revenue and create pressure on the Colombian government.

6.1.4. Recruitment

The recruitment by force was a rare phenomenon for the FARC. Rather the organization recruited new member on a voluntary basis via offering money. According to the UNICEF, the child soldiers within the organization were not recruited by force; instead, they became a volunteer to join as it was providing a "lifelong employment and income" (UN n.d.; see also Refworld, 2008; Reuters 2007; *Le Temps*, 2007). Low-income families, too, offered their children to the group because of poverty (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 29). Secretariat member, Raul Reyes who was killed in 2008, claimed that the FARC was recruiting members between the ages of 15 and 30 voluntarily, yet evidence shows that children were recruited by the organization before reaching the age of 15 (Refworld, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2003). Children under 18 years of age were constituting 42% of all FARC the militants (Human Rights Watch, 2003, p. 29).

6.2. EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE TO THE FARC

6.2.1. State Supporters

During its insurgency, the FARC acquired the assistance of external states, mostly regional (Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011, p. 711) and other armed groups for its activities. Even though the drug trade constituted the primary source of the FARC, it exploited its neighboring countries as safe havens, and places to supply weapon, raise funds and training. The supportive government such as the Cuban government of Fidel Castro and the Venezuelan government of Hugo Chavez.

The Soviet Union and Vietnam
It is quite common and expected that Marxist-Leninist organizations acquired support from the Soviet Union considering the environment of the Cold War era. Among them,

the FARC was provided training assistance by the Soviet Union between 1970 and 1979 (San-Akca, 2016). The Soviet Union also worked as a source of ideological direction for the group and had a close connection with the Colombian Communist Party up to the mid-1980s. When the Soviet Union fell, the group began to less emphasized its ideological foundation as it expanded its presence. Vietnam with similar reasons assisted the FARC in training between 1970 and 1999 (San-Akca, 2016).

Cuba

The national liberation movements in Colombia were inspired by the Cuban Revolution and the Soviet assistance for the movements in Latin America, and they defended a revolutionary change in Colombia by armed rebellion. During the 1970s and 1980s before the drug-trade boom, Cuban government supplied financial resources, training, weapons, safe havens for members, medical care and political/ideological direction for the organization (San-Akca, 2016; Stanford.edu, n.d.).

Venezuela

It is believed that the Venezuelan government provided safe havens, weapons and other military equipment for the FARC for years. Besides, military support, president Hugo Chavez showed its political and diplomatic support to the group (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007). The sympathy of Chavez for the organization was well known. However, Colombian authority claimed that it is more than simple political support or rhetoric, based on the statements of the FARC deserters. The Colombia further accused Venezuela of ignoring and letting the organization exploit the Venezuelan border area for guerilla camps and its cross-border activities (see **Figure 6.2**).
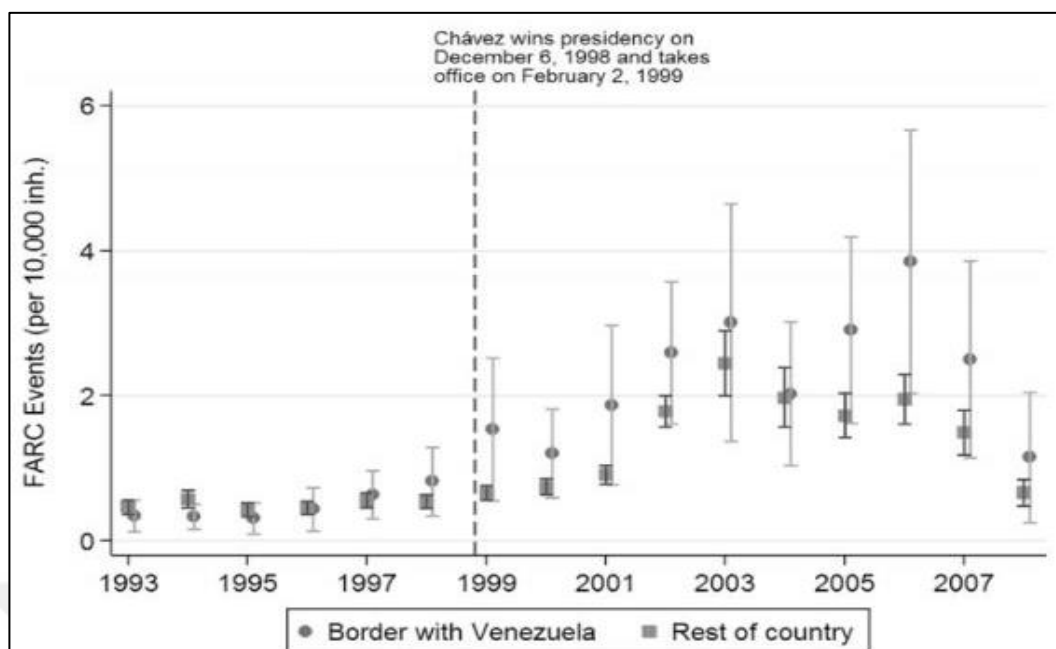
Figure 6.2 FARC activity at the border with Venezuela (Source: Martinez, 2017)

Following developments underlined the claims of the Colombian government. In a video appeared in 2001, Venezuelan military forces were seen together with FARC militants in Colombia, showing the connection between them. The allegations regarding the Venezuelan assistance were proved once again on March 1, 2008, following the raid by Colombian security personnel on a FARC encampment in the Ecuador border area. During the raid, one of the top leaders, second in command, Luis Edgar Devia Silva, known as Raul Reyes was killed and documents and laptop belonging to him were seized. The information contained in the computer and its hard drive revealed that Hugo Chavez is assisting the FARC. An email correspondence posed evidence with regard to the military and financial support of the Venezuelan government (Schoen & Rowan 2009, p. 88; The Economist, 2008). According to these documents in Reyes' laptop, the president Chavez gave $300 million to the FARC since 1999 alongside of oil which was ready to be marketed for extra revenue. The money provided by the Venezuelan government was even passing beyond the amount the US supplied for the Colombian government in countering narco-trade.

Another interesting detail from the Reyes' laptop was showing the FARC financial help around $150,000 to Chavez while he was in prison in 1992. According to the file, the FARC assisted Chavez to strengthen its political movement which eventually resulted in the presidency of Venezuela, so that he would pay back when the organization in need.

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He returned this favor by giving $250 million to procure arms (Shoen & Rowan 2009, p. 94). Documents showed that Venezuelan military personnel assist the organization in acquiring weapons either through itself or by arranging the meetings with arms smugglers. Although the FARC was thought to be financially strong owing to the drug trade, it was very willing to take assistance from Venezuela since the drug trade was interrupted to some degree by the pressure of the Colombian army. The government official alleged that the FARC caught short and had a difficulty to pay coco-workers during that period.

In addition to the financial support, it is known that the FARC had a strong presence all along the border area between Colombia and Venezuela and used this place to retreat when it took blows from Colombian army (InSight Crime, 2015). Venezuelan government created safe havens for the organization on the Venezuelan side of the border so that, wounded FARC militants would come to get treatment and recover. The organization also benefited from safe havens for training, arms supply, and its criminal activities (as drug and contraband smuggling). These FARC encampments were located on different places close to several Indian reservations in western Venezuela such as Elorza, Apure, Achaguas, (Mountain area) Sierra del Perija (Vieira, 2013, p. 7; Los Angeles Times, 2009). These areas were also resided by Colombian refugees who fled from the conflict; however, the FARC member became visible increasingly for the need of medical care and supplies according to local people (Los Angeles Times, 2009).

Colombian representative to the OAS, Luis Alfonso Hoyos alleged that there were other FARC encampments over 75 in Venezuela harboring 1,500 FARC militants (Washington Post, 2010). One of the Venezuelan officials, the Chief of Military Intelligence General Directorate, General Hugo Carvajal confessed that he has had talks with the FARC's commander of the 45th Front in Barinas, Venezuela and provided him with Venezuelan ID cards, shelter, and food supplies for the FARC members residing in Venezuela (Semana, 2008). According to the work of InSight Crime, there is evidence regarding the FARC militants having Venezuelan ID cards and purchasing estate in the country (InSight Crime, 2016)

Figure 6.3 FARC Presence and Drug Routes in Venezuela. (Source: Insight Crime, 2015)

An analysis brings forward by the International Institute for Strategic Studies also showed the complex ties between the FARC and the Chavez government. According to the report, Hugo Chavez deliberately let the FARC harbor in its territory, linking the guerilla organization to Venezuela and Ecuador (BBC, 2007; BBC, 2011; IISS, 2011). It was significant in showing the strategy of the FARC in expanding their international network and how they built an alliance with the Chavez administration. But the study was reviewed as "Latin America dodgy dossier" "part of an aggressive propaganda tool against Venezuela" at a time when relations between Venezuela and Colombia had "reached a level of stable cooperation and friendly dialogue" by the UK embassy of Venezuela (BBC, 2011).

Although the Venezuelan authorities denied all the allegations by labeling these documents as forge evidence, the Interpol, depending on two-month detailed study of 64 experts, announced that the dossiers captured from the FARC camp were not fabricated or modified in no sense: "No user files have been created, modified or deleted on any of the eight FARC computer exhibits following their seizure on 1 March 2008" (BBC, 2011). Plus, when the police found $480,000 in a house in accordance with an intel revealed from these documents, the authenticity of them was confirmed. The Venezuelan government yet insisted in its denial by accusing the Interpol chief as a

"gringo policeman" (The Economist, 2008). Some of Republican in the US Senate saw this enough to declare Venezuela as a "state sponsor of terrorism," however, this decision could mean imposing trade sanctions on the country which the US purchases 10% of its oil import from; therefore the idea was quickly abandoned.

In 2007, Chavez played a mediator role between the FARC and the Colombian government. The president Alvaro Uribe requested Hugo Chavez to arbitrate with the organization in swapping the hostages for prisoners which included a politician Ingrid Betancourt with Colombian and French nationalities. The FARC sent one of its secretariat members to meet with Chavez and discuss releasing hostages in exchange for its captured guerillas (The Economist, 2008). However, email correspondence discovered from the raid was proving the FARC's cynicism on hostage swapping. In these emails, the FARC member was arguing that as long as Mr. Uribe is in power, the FARC will cause troubles for the government and use hostages as a card against them (The Economist, 2008). The organization saw kidnapping practice both as a source of revenue through ransom, and a way to create international recognition and pressure on the Colombian government by taking high-value political targets hostage as Ingrid Betancourt. However, in the end, it did not work for the group as expected since the other countries took a position not against the government but the FARC itself (Ministry of National Defense, n.d.).

Chavez's political and diplomatic support continued in its calls for the Colombian government, Alvaro Uribe to recognize two Marxist organization the FARC and the ELN as "legitimate belligerent": "I say this even though somebody might be bothered by it: the FARC and the ELN are not terrorist groups. They are armies, real armies... that occupy a space in Colombia." He continued by arguing these groups are "insurgent forces" have a goal, "a project," that is "Bolivarian" and that "we respect." (Scribd.com, 2010; CNN, 2008). He also invited the European Union to retrieve the organizations, the FARC and the ELN from its terrorist organizations list, which he believed the groups were included as a result of the US' demand at the first place: "I will ask Europe to remove the ELN and the FARC from the list of terrorist groups in the world, because that only has one source: the pressure of the United States," Chavez said (The CNN, 2008).

However, his invitation was declined "unanimously" by the international community. The left-prone countries in Latin America were feeling uneasy about the close relations between Colombia and its military benefactor the US; however, they had signed the Organization of American States' democratic charter that necessitated them to assist, but not threaten the each other's democracies (The CNN, 2008). Therefore, they did not respond the Chavez's call, just like European countries and high officials of the EU. On the contrary, they continued to recognize the FARC as a terrorist organization (Ministry of National Defense, n.d.).

The factors that determined Venezuelan support or sympathy of Hugo Chavez for the FARC might be manifold. One factor was stemming from the ideological affinity. The FARC was a far-leftist guerilla movement which has common ideological traits with the political regime in Venezuela. "Bolivarianism" is an ideology formed by the ideas of Simon Bolivar who liberated many Latin American countries from Spanish rule including Colombia and Venezuela (Calderon, 2007) and it was included in the manifesto of the FARC to establish a Marxist-Leninist and Bolivarian state (Discovery en Español, 2008).

Mr. Chavez, on the other hand, with his three friends founded the MBR-200 that was a Bolivarian movement within Venezuelan army in 1983 (Vieira, 2013) and announced that the movement was dedicated to realizing the revolutionary struggle in Venezuela and within Latin America. Later, it produced the Chavista movement in Venezuela (Schoen & Rowan 2009, p. 31). The sum and the substance of it, Bolivarianism constituted a source of ideological motivation for both the FARC and Venezuela administration and led them to create bonds and co-operate. Another reason why the Chavez government supported the organization was a strategic move against the weight of the United States. From revealed documents from Raul Reyes laptop, it was seen that Chavez's interior minister exchanged emails with the FARC members to demand the group to train Venezuelan soldier in guerilla warfare in case of any future invasion of the US. During his term of presidency, Chavez had always been opponent of the United States and showed closeness for the FARC. Once he stated that Venezuela did not have a border with Colombia, instead it shared a border with the organization. According to one of the former officials from Chavez government, Montiel, this attitude stems from

the fact that Chavez administration saw the FARC as a strategic ally and "line of defense" against the US interference (Los Angeles Times, 2009).

Ecuador

The FARC's efforts to gain the support of Ecuador similarly with Venezuela less paid off. Compared to Venezuela, Ecuador was less interested in helping the organization since there was a significant presence and penetration of Colombian or US intelligence (IISS, 2011). When Colombian forces carried out military raid to a FARC encampment established on region that the 48th Front operates in the Ecuador territory in 2008, the tension was heightened (Encyclopedia of Britannica, n.d.) and other Latin American countries criticized the Colombian government for its border violation to target the FARC (Salehyan, 2011: 713). Diplomatic relations between Colombia and Ecuador deteriorated (The New York Times, 2008).

It is argued that the FARC was able to acquire assistance in the forms of funds, arms procurement or safe havens from Ecuador, independent from the will of Ecuador's government to support them (San-Akca, 2016, pp. 4). In other words, the organization managed to extract resources from the country without deliberate sponsorship (San-Akca, 2016, pp. 4). There is no evidence showing Ecuador's direct involvement in catalyzing the presence of the group. Between 1997 and 2010, Ecuador unwillingly hosted the FARC and enabled its activities such as arms smuggling and drug trade either because of its weakness or reluctance to control its jungle border and territory and to counter against the group (San-Akca, 2016; The New York Times, 2008).

Panama

It is common practice for the group like FARC to exploit poorly controlled areas in the surrounding region (Global Security, n.d.). The porous international borders present opportunities for the organizations to get protection, preferably a weak neighbor which has no capacity or willingness to repel it (Salehyan, 2007). As illustrated in the example of Ecuador, the FARC used Panama's border area to execute their activities between 1997 and 2010 (San-Akca, 2016; Martinez, 2017, pp. 141). Thanks to unprotected permeable borders and limited existence of the country the FARC was able to transport military equipment, drugs, and supplies across the region.

The Colombian government, on the other hand, had a great challenge to establish a secure environment on these porous border areas with Panama, Ecuador and, Venezuela. It has never had enough military capacity to clear the borders and thus its efforts to end the FARC presence in the neighboring region turned unfruitful as the organization sustained its existence for l7 years of time (Rabasa et al., 2007).

6.2.2. Non-state Supporters

Criminal Organizations, Drug Cartels, and Arms Smugglers

In addition to the state sponsors, the FARC gained support from non-state actors such as other armed groups and criminal organizations. For instance, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) is known for its established links with the group since 1998. It assisted the FARC in explosive management techniques that were used in attacks on government targets and infrastructures such as bridges, power lines, reservoirs, and other facilities (GlobalSecurity, n.d.). Moreover, two members of the IRA specialized on explosive and mortar with a politician from Sinn Fein were seen in Cuba, and they were captured at the Colombian airport following their departure from the FARC controlled area. They had forged ID cards and documents on them together with traces of explosives. They were later charged with assisting FARC militants in explosive training and carrying false IDs to conceal their real identity (GlobalSecurity, n.d.). Allegedly the FARC also got explosive training from other foreign terrorists suspected to be Cubans, Iranians and the ETA (the Spanish Basque terrorist group) which developed the group efficiency in its terrorist activities.

Apart from armed insurgent groups, the FARC improved its capacity through business connection with drug cartels that were purchasing cocaine directly from the organization (The New York Times, 2008). According to the Colombian security officials, the FARC got in contact with the Mexican criminal groups which were in drug business along the border areas of Ecuador and Colombia (Otis, 2014, pp. 7). Besides that, the organization is known to use the route over Venezuela for drug trade (The New York Times, 2008). This network was vitally important since a considerable amount of FARC's budget was coming from drug-smuggling and it would be

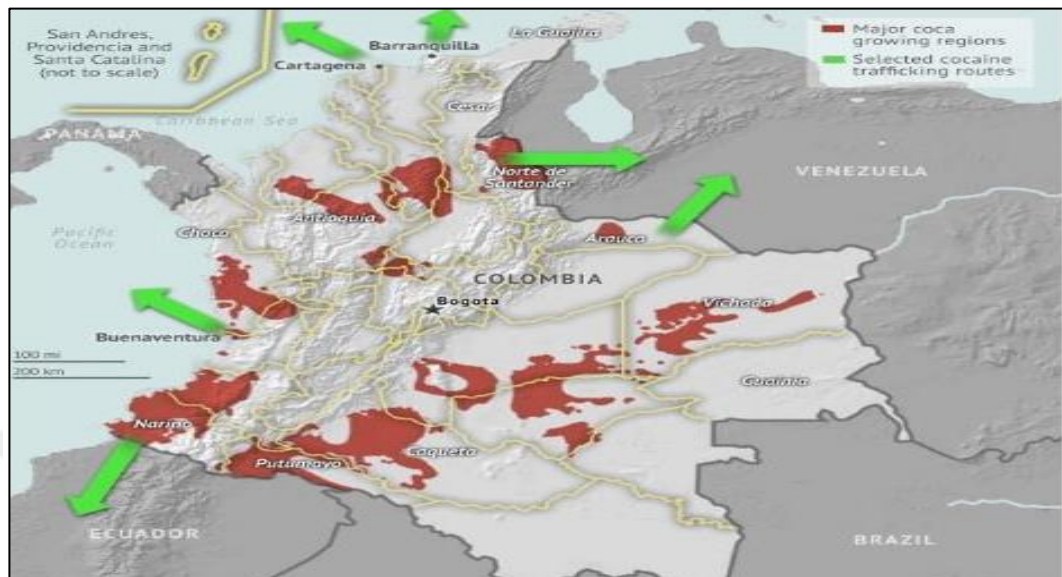impossible for the group to survive if it could not form partnerships with cocaine cartels.

Figure 6.4 Colombia's Cocaine Routes and Regions. (Source: Stratfor)

The FARC is seen as the largest and most well-funded armed group, committed to the drug trade which constituted the primary base of the financial resource (GlobalSecurity, n.d.). The organization improved its capacity to the level that it carried out attacks on major target. This was realized thanks to the expanding source of weapons supply during the late 1990s. The arms that the FARC acquired, mostly came from external sources over the routes of black market (RAND, 2005). The FARC used black market dealers from neighboring countries and Central America to procure arms and ammunition, seized or stolen from governments in different sorts during the late three decades. Colombia is positioned on a corridor between Central and South America, which is "permeable" and controlled limitedly. Since the government forces were mostly present in the mountainous area in the north, the southern parts of Colombia including marine outlets provided elbow room for arms smuggling (RAND, 2005). Accessing easily to the flow of supplies enabled the FARC to reinforce its armed struggle (RAND, 2005). The supplier black market dealer mostly depended on the redundant weapons left from Cold War era insurgencies applicable (especially stockpiles in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, and Honduras) and there were already a well-established networks facilitated the FARC to acquire necessary military equipments, not only like handguns and assault rifles but also sophisticated ones (CIA,

2001). These arms dealers (mostly Brazilian and Mexican crime network) were also engaged in drug smuggling; therefore they agreed to exchange cocaine for weapons (GlobalSecurity, n.d.). This served the purpose of the FARC: instead of buying arms with cash, they preferred "arms-for-cocaine swaps" through the same routes used to transit drug out (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007, p. 62; Logan, 2006).

6.3. EFFECT OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

In asymmetric conflicts, having the opportunity to access the outside sphere has significant effects on the course of conflict (Lindsay, 1962). The weaker parties that employ irregular warfare requires some help to tip the scale to its favor. Unless it is well-prepared, it faces the risk of elimination by the advantaged party. External actors at this point present vital importance for these groups.

In the case of the FARC, we see that the organization enjoyed several opportunities provided by the outside actors. The capacity of the group was boosted significantly by cross-border safe havens for a long period, and this contributed to the group's survival (MercoPress, 2011). Through the safe havens, the FARC militants had a large autonomy, took shelter, got training, and retreat when necessary to recover from the government assaults (Rabasa, Warner and Chalk, 2007; Public Broadcasting Service, undated; Martinez, 2017, p. 141). The limited presence of state and favorable geographical characteristics of these areas allowed the group act freely and employ guerilla warfare easily (Martinez, 2016; Rangel, 2000; Semana, 2005; Pizarro, 2007; Palacios, 2012; Richani, 2013). This turned the conflict into a long-lasting one that is characterized by low-intensity conflict (Martinez, 2016, p. 5).

These safe havens not only carried militaristic and logistical value to the organization but also generated bases where the FARC could advance its political plan to gain international recognition as a belligerent force and create pressure on Colombian government. The existence of criminal networks also crippled the government struggle with the group and its ability to reinforce state control. These criminal organizations whose activities ranging from drug trafficking, trade of weapons and other illegal equipment, assisted the FARC in many ways while obstructing the government task of

dealing with the organization. (Rabasa, Warner and Chalk, 2007, p. 66). In publishing related to the FARC's annual meeting, the importance of illegal arms networks to the group found a voice as following: "The acquisition of arms currently has permitted us a qualitative jump in our process of becoming the Ejército del Pueblo [People's Army or FARC-EP]." (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007, p. 62; Semana, 2000).

The dossier seized during the raid on FARC encampment showed the strategy of the organization to realize its cause: employ guerilla warfare against the government and manipulate the political and social issues in the country; stay focus on a military victory while convincing others to comply a peaceful settlement; and last but not least, manage to acquire military, financial and political support from external sphere whether the suppliers are states or non-state actors (IISS, 2011).

The FARC's strategy regarding the external assistance came true to a considerable extent, and the military balance between conflicting parties was changed in favor of organization. Receiving support from external actors pursued different paths and resulted in a varying degree of benefit. The FARC either formed ties with the governments and other actors in neighboring countries such as Venezuela on a voluntary basis or took advantage of these actors' weak capacities unwillingly. Regardless of intention or willingness of actors in question, it helps the organization to sustain its existence quite a while (IISS, 2011). However, when the clandestine connections of the FARC with neighboring countries rose to the surface (from Reyes' documents), and the FARC was widely condemned because of the drug trade and kidnapping for ransom, its ability to receive assistance was crippled (IISS, 2011).

The FARC began to take serious blows after the political dynamics switched into the favor of hard-liners in Colombia (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007) and the group's capacity was constrained by increasing pressure. Yet, it was able to survive for a while by virtue of cross-border sanctuaries where the host nations had limited capacity to control and the financial resources coming from criminal activities. The disadvantage of government while fighting against insurgent groups, is the groups' access to external soil which would develop their operation range considerably and eventually intensify the conflict between main adversaries. That is exactly what happens in Colombian

conflict. Counter-terrorism campaign of the government failed as long as the group took advantage of the vacuum of power in the surrounding area. Because this design was facilitating the FARC militants to evade from any serious attack that would result in a total annihilation every time and re-attack when necessary preparation was done (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007). Another factor that proved the counter-campaign of the government unsuccessful was the constant flow of weapons into the organization. Only when the government disrupts the external interaction of the group, it became possible to discourage the FARC from fighting and convince it to agree on a peaceful settlement.

6.4. THE DISCUSSION OF THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

The FARC leadership decided to end its armed campaign following the hard hits received, and seek a political solution. Therefore, negotiations began between the parties of the conflict which at last resulted in FARC disarmament process. However, how did the external assistance shape the process that was going to settlement? Did the third parties contribute to the intensity of the conflict or on the contrary help the confronting parties compromise?

The role played by the primary sponsor of the FARC, Venezuela in a possible peaceful settlement is evaluated differently by the scholarship. A major part of them sees Venezuela as a facilitator and "accompanying country" in the negotiation process (Vieira, 2013; Beaumont, 2012; InsightCrime, 2016). Chavez administration was seen as "integral" in enabling peace and bringing the government with the FARC together which is regarded as "the most difficult part" (see, Beaumont, 2012). Among them, Colombian journalist Constanza Vieira views Hugo Chavez as essential to negotiations and believes that he played a significant role in gaining the trust of the FARC and convincing the group to enter into peace talks (Vieira, 2013). "Venezuela has already played the most important role it could play with respect to peace in Colombia, by getting the FARC to have the confidence and trust to sit down at the table for peace talks." Chavez did this by displaying how circumstances would be if they agree to lay down their arms and waive their political aims. Some officials from the Colombian government held that Venezuela will be motivated to work together in peace talks even

when president Chavez passed away since it is everyone's interests. Venezuela, too, got affected the violence the FARC caused on many sectors by the presence and incidents related to the group such as kidnapping and extortion (Vieira, 2013).

Venezuela fulfilled the hardest part so that other countries such as Cuba and Norway could walk in as guarantors to the peace. Cuban government together with Norway supported peace talks held in gathering venue-Havana (first assembled in Oslo in 2012, later the moved to Havana permanently) and consolidated the mutual trust between parties. They were also partly responsible for the credibility and fruitful conclusion of the negotiation process. Chavez enabled the FARC negotiator members to transit for back-channel preliminary talks in Havana, had observer status with the government of Chile in the peace talks. Other Latin American countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia also showed their support to the process.

However, some beg to differ about the effect of the external actors. They argue that the FARC ties with the governments sympathetic to its cause had quite destabilizing aspects. According to this perspective, by assisting the organization constantly in its activities, these actors led to a decrease in the possibilities of peace and democratization and increased in expectations of the FARC regards to the possible outcome. Although the leaders like Chavez claimed that they were in a partial position, they continued to defend the FARC as a diplomatic representative on many occasions. This was illustrated in 2008 when Chavez called the Colombian government to recognize the FARC as belligerent force (Scribd.com 2010).

The above discussion suggests that Venezuela and to some extent the other external states influenced the intrastate conflict between the FARC and the Colombian government changeably. In other words, these actors both helped the FARC boost its capacity to challenge the government in varying degrees and facilitated the negotiated settlement at the same time. Chavez explained this irony and justified their positions in his words: "Who can imagine the possibility of reaching any peace agreement if there is no contact between the confronting parts?". This quotation demonstrates that without the close relations of neighboring countries with the FARC, it would be hard to realize peace since there was no contact at all. The sympathizer governments especially Venezuela, gained the respect and trust of the organization at the beginning by assisting

it, and thus they were able to convince the group to sit in negotiation table to end the conflict.

This decision of FARC to agree on the negotiated settlement was not independent of the changes that occurred within the organization itself, thereupon the shift in expectations and considerations regarding the conflict. There had been many efforts for a peaceful negotiation under different Colombian governments. César Gaviria (1990–1994), Ernesto Samper (1994–1998), and Misael Pastrana (1998–2002), all tried to reach a deal with the organization, however, they failed since the FARC were not willing to agree on a settlement but instead used these ceasefire and peace talks as an opportunity to gain time and acquire tactical advantage (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007). The Pastrana administration demilitarized a 16,000-square-mile (42,000-square-km) area in 1998 as a gesture of goodwill to convince the FARC for peace. However, this effort remained inconclusive as the FARC withdrew from peace talks (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.).

When the Uribe government came to the office in 2002, the zona de despeje (demilitarized zone) recaptured and militarized again by the Colombian forces and the military plan named as Plan Patriota was launched. The plan was envisaged on an intensive military campaign against the FARC's targets, and it eventually led the organization to get a defensive position portrayed by low military profile (Rabasa, 2007). The military capacity of the group was undermined and the incidents of attacks diminished (see, **Figure 6.5**). However, the FARC continued to say no to the peace proposals and invitations to release hostages (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.).
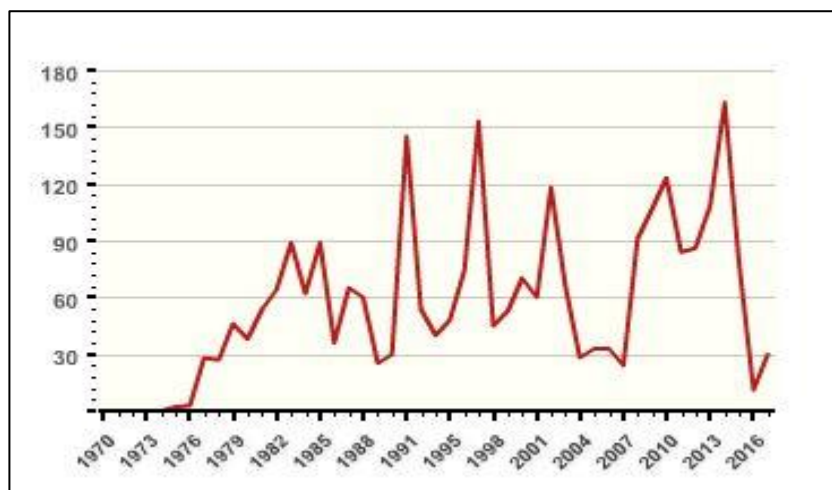
Figure 6.5 Terrorism Incidents related to the FARC. (Source: Global Terrorism Database)

After losing the commander-in-chief, Alfonso Cano together with another leading figure, "Mono Jojoy" (aka Jorge Briceño or Luis Suárez) during a military strike, the FARC was shaken seriously. More importantly, the organization lost most of its popular support as a result of its activities while the Colombian government was backed by an international coalition. The image of the FARC was tarnished following the heavy involvement in drug trade and kidnapping incidents. Although the money coming from the drug trade was quite profitable, it had a strong drawback on the organization. Involvement in drug smuggling not only led to the loss of domestic and international support but also generated dissolution within the organization. Since the top executives were more concerned about the profits of coca trade instead of promoting the group's political agenda, ideological cohesion was lost in time (Rabasa, Chalk, and Khilko, 2007, p. 63).
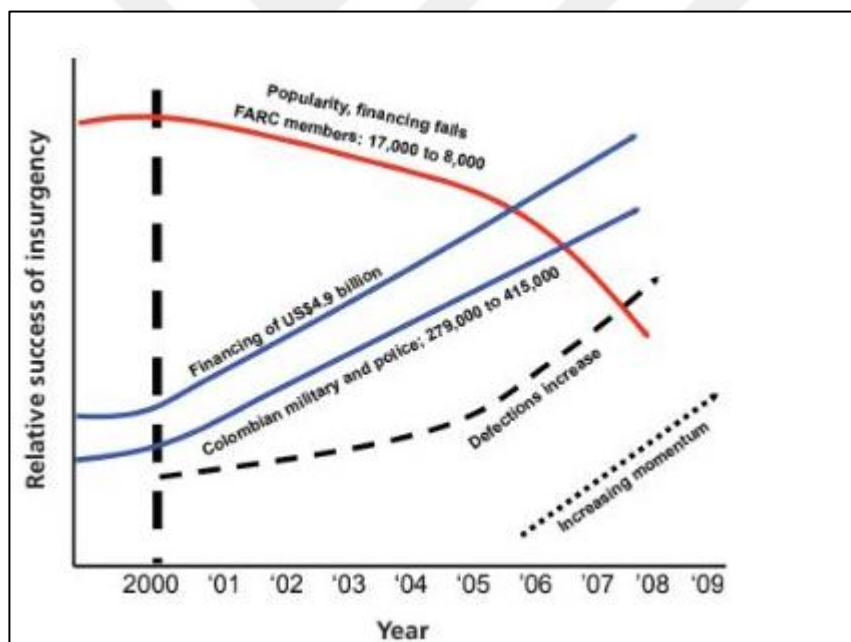
Figure 6.6 The Course of Colombian Insurgency. (Source: RAND)

The United States, European countries along with several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) endorsed the Uribe administration in his fight against the FARC both financially and diplomatically (see **Figure 6.6**) (Rabasa, Warner and Chalk, 2007, p. 65). Even the Chavez government stated his uneasiness with the violent practices of the organization such as kidnapping in his words: "I do not agree with kidnapping, and I do not agree with the armed struggle" (Reuters, 2008; Venezuelanalysis.com, 2008).

Later in 2012, the group called that it would not apply to kidnap for ransom anymore by releasing every last of the hostages held and it agreed to sit on the negotiation table. It was the last chance or opportunity for the group to solve the conflict before total annihilation (Beaumont, 2012).

After years of talks, the parties agreed on a final peace agreement on 23 June 2016, in Havana by the FARC's leader Rodrigo Londoño ("Timoleón Jiménez" or "Timochenko") and the successor of Uribe, Juan Manuel Santos. The deal was signed in the trust of the UN and the governments of Cuba, Venezuela, and Chile and required the FARC to deliver all of its weapons to the UN officials. It also included the government promise to invest in rural areas and catalyze the transition of the FARC into a legal, political party. However, the agreement had to be approved through a referendum voted by Colombian people, and it resulted in rejection by 50.2% vote to 49.8. (Encyclopedia Britannica,n.d.). However, the Colombian government amended the deal with the organization by renegotiations, and it was approved by the Congress on 30 November 2016. By 15 August 2017, the FARC handed its weapons over to the UN and the conflict lasted for more than 50 years was ended officially by the declaration of the Colombian government (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.).

7.   COMPARISON ACROSS THE CASES

The cases examined in preceding parts of the study are chosen specifically depending on their distinct features. Before the selection process, different datasets which specialized on external support to the non-state armed group was reviewed. Illustrating the effect of the external assistance to the insurgent groups and intra-state conflicts are the first objective of the study. Therefore, the groups that acquired external backing during their fight against the governments are selected to indicate to what extent their capacity and existence were influenced by the external actors.

Three insurgent movements that were able to survive and sustain for a long period are chosen. These are the PKK (The Kurdistan's Workers Party), the LTTE (Liberation Tamil Tigers Eelam), and the FARC (The Revolutionary Forces of Colombia). This section follows the causal analysis of the study. The causal mechanisms suggested in the theory section are analyzed comparatively over the cases. How the independent and dependent variables show an alteration among the cases, whether the hypotheses are validated or not will be answered. First, the detailed observation of the cases from different aspects will be presented to gain insights before introducing the main findings of the study.

7.1.   THE DETAILED OBSERVATIONS OF THE CASES

Characteristics of the groups

The PKK, the LTTE, and the FARC are armed non-state actors who fought against states by employing guerilla warfare and terrorist tactics to realize their ideological motivations. In terms of ideological stance, these groups are similar to each other. The PKK and the FARC define themselves as being far-left Marxist/Leninist organizations, while the LTTE stated that it is a secular organization and religion did not play any significant part in its ideology. All of them promoted revolutionary socialism and claimed to represent some part of their societies. When it comes to motivations of the groups, the PKK and the LTTE are the two ethno-nationalist, secessionist organizations aiming to achieve an independent state for their ethnicities in question. Yet, FARC differs in its aim -revolutionizing in the whole country by seizing control of the

government for Colombia's rural poor to redistribute wealth among the country's population - and on its population level. It based on no specific ethnicity or group at the beginning it gained support from peasants, but also students and intellectuals.

The PKK, the LTTE, the FARC had similar hierarchical organization structure headed by a leader who governs all activities of the organization through different units or branches. On the political front, these groups were represented by political parties which would contact between the governments and the organizations itself.

Resources, financing

All of these three organizations were funded through identical sources of revenue. They collected huge amounts of money through taxation and extortion in their controlled areas either by force or on a voluntary basis in the forms of donations, and membership fees. Both the PKK and the LTTE had diaspora communities abroad which they obtained money from. It is also shared between these organizations to engage in criminal activities such as human and drug trafficking, money laundering, arms smuggling, and other petty crimes. The FARC, distinctly, applied to kidnap for ransom and earned money from illegal gold mining.

External Assistance

They all had external assistance and state sponsors that provide them with different kinds of support. However, the organizations differ in their patterns of external interactions.

7.2. INTENTIONAL AND DE FACTO STATE SUPPORT

Compared to the other two cases, the PKK has enjoyed more intentional state support from its neighboring region. Countries shares border with Turkey, such as Syria and Iran assisted organization for years as a part of their state policies, in the forms of the sanctuary, training, and manpower. PKK also took advantage of the power vacuum left from regional conflicts and got settled in areas like Northern Iraq by establishing ties with local authorities. Although the degree of support has shown an alteration in time, these countries supported the group deliberately at least one period for different

strategic reasons. Even today, the protection provided by these countries constitutes a "pillar" of the organization's security. Indeed, since its foundation, the organization has benefitted from the opportunities emanated from international environment whether it was interstate hostility, the vacuum of power, or changes in status quo. Especially the unstable region it operates provided a huge advantage compared to other violent armed groups. The group was supported by the most important forms of assistance such as shelter, training grounds and/or financial help.

On the other hand, the LTTE and the FARC were less fortunate in terms of intentional state support they took. They had one strong sponsorship state, India and Venezuela respectively that assisted the groups in many ways from providing sanctuary to financial help for their interests. Both the government of India and Venezuela backed the insurgent organizations to have "strategic ally" for their political agenda. In addition to the strategic reasons, these insurgent groups were supported because of ethnic or ideological ties with their backers. The LTTE utilized the southern state of India, Tamil Nadu as a safe havens and training base for their fighting against the Sri Lankan government. However, since Sri Lanka is an island state, it has been easier for the government to control the border (Jones, 2017, p. 199).

In the case of the FARC, we see that the organization enjoyed several opportunities provided by the outside actors. The existence of cross-border safe havens contributed to the group's survival (Insight Crime, 2015). The limited presence of state and favorable geographical characteristics of these areas allowed the group to act freely and employ guerilla warfare easily. However, most part of the FARC's external assistance realized unwillingly because of neighboring countries weak capacities such as Ecuador. The weak state capacity and limited controlled areas around Colombia let the organization to settle in the region and use these places as safe havens. The number of unwilling hosts in the FARC case higher compared to the other two.

If we continue with the passive sponsor states which tolerate the activities of the insurgent groups, it can be seen that the PKK and the LTTE had quite advantageous on that. These insurgent groups' need of international recognition and political support were met with the help of the external host governments and their passive attitudes, specifically the Western countries where the organizations freely raised funds made propaganda activities and gained political/diplomatic support. The political activities of

the PKK and LTTE have been tolerated by many European countries on accounts of their ethnic identity and minority rights. Thus, the organizations were able to create a political and financial safe ground for themselves where they could freely act. They mobilized support on the political level and established the image of only rightful representatives of their respective communities.

The attitudes of Western countries were not the same for all three organizations. While the PKK and the LTTE were able to gain the sympathy of these countries, thereby freedom of movement for their propaganda activities, the FARC had never benefitted that kind of tolerance. It had always been condemned for its criminal actions especially, drug trafficking even though the PKK and the LTTE involved in similar activities. The Western governments including the United States and the European Union countries assisted the counterterrorism activities of the Colombian government, let alone sympathizing the FARC's cause. The only country that backed the FARC diplomatically was Venezuela as mentioned in preceding parts.

To sum up, it can be noted that all three insurgent groups benefitted from external states either welcomed or hosted unwillingly. Some of these organizations additionally had the chance to utilize the political support and tolerated behaviors of Western countries. All aside, external actors with different characteristics eventually played a decisive role in contributing to the overall capacity of these groups and their ability to escape or resist retaliation, thus led to changes in the conflict environments.

7.3. NON-STATE ACTOR SUPPORT

The insurgent groups have both similarities and differences in their connections with non-state actors. All enjoyed opportunities provided by these actors but in differing and patterns and degrees. The LTTE and the PKK have strong diaspora communities abroad dispersed around the globe, and they acquired a significant amount of material assistance from their ethnic brethren for a long time. A considerable amount of financial resources that these insurgent groups got was coming from these diaspora communities as mentioned before.

The diaspora support and funds raised in host countries became quite vital for the activities of the LTTE. When it began to lose grounds in Sri Lanka in mid-1990s, the

money sent from overseas constituted 95 percent of the LTTE's revenue (Byman et al., 2001). And for obvious reasons, it would be difficult for the group to continue fighting without such help. As long as the LTTE was provided with the diaspora funds, it was able to sustain its struggle. The PKK similarly depended on its diaspora network in Western countries to find financial resources through cultural associations, political offices, and publications (Jones, 2017, p. 140).
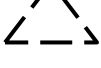
In addition to the financial backing, these communities functioned as a pressure mechanism on their host governments to convince them to take a stand against the confronting governments. They played an initiator role in creating political or diplomatic support in favor of insurgent groups, and justified the tolerant policies of the host governments.

Unlike them, the FARC did not hold any specific support base abroad that would assist itself financially and politically in a similar manner. Instead, the FARC had strong business connections with criminal organizations like drug cartels and arms dealers which it extracted profit from. The existence of criminal networks was not only led a "qualitative jump" in the group's capacity but also crippled the government struggle with the group and its ability to reinforce state control. These criminal organizations whose activities ranging from drug trafficking, trade of weapons and other illegal equipment obstructed the government task of dealing with the organization (Rabasa et al., 2007, pp. 62-66). However, this connection turned to be counter-productive over time: while helping the group to benefit from, it worsened already tarnished the image of the organization in the international community and served the purpose of the Colombian government.

The PKK and the LTTE resemble the FARC in establishing an international network for their activities. Both the LTTE and the FARC built strong arms procurement networks which they significantly drew advantage from. To a lesser extent, the PKK, too, used the black market which is swarmed with surplus weapons belongs to the Soviet era, to meet its necessit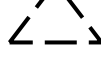y. The PKK and the FARC also converge on their heavy engagement with the drug trade. Both organizations made millions of dollars profit by extending their demand reach to a wide region. Additionally, these insurgent groups acquired the support of other non-state armed groups especially during their foundational phase to improve their organizational capacity, mobilization strategies, and trained militants.

The cases tend to prove the point hypothesized in the theory section which is: *External backing enhances rebels' ability to inflict cost on government, makes them more resilient, and helps them survive against the assaults of government.* However, the availability of the main argument proposed in this study varies across these cases as it can be followed from **Table 7.1** below.

Table 7.1 Comparison of the cases over the effectiveness of state and non-state actors support (Source: The Author)

		PKK	LTTE	FARC
State support	Sanctuary	⬤	⬤	⬤
	Training Camps & Training	⬤	⬤	⬤
	Arms & Logistics	⬤	⬤	⬤
	Financial Resources	◯	◯	⬤
	Political & Diplomatic Support	⬤	◯	◯
Non-state support	Diaspora	▲	▲	
	Wealthy Ind. & Businesses	▲	▲	
	Other Armed Insurgent Groups	▲	▲	▲
	Criminal Organizations	△	△	▲
	NGOs & Human Rights Associations	▲	▲	

The organizations have many similarities in their external interactions, but they also differ in terms of the type of external actors and forms of assistance. For instance, while some of them enjoy direct, intentional state support, other distinguishes by its ability to exploit opportunities stemming from its external environment. However, all three cases converge on the idea that the insurgent groups owed to the outside actors (either these are states or nonstate ones) for their survival to a certain extent. They countered power asymmetry which favors the stronger side of the conflict, by establishing an external network of assistance with a differing degree.

7.4. NEGOTIATION PROCESSES OF THE CONFLICTS

When it comes to the influence of the external actors on the negotiation of the conflicts, each case tells different stories with common features. While two of the cases confirm the arguments about the negative effect of external actors on the course of conflicts, other falsified it contrary to what is expected. In the theory section, I hypothesized that: ***External involvements complicate negotiation dynamics between warring parties.*** However, after studying the cases, I realized there are different responses from each case.

All three insurgencies bear a resemblance in their negotiation processes. But while two of the cases, the LTTE and the FARC, resulted with the military defeat of these groups, the conflict with PKK is still ongoing after 40 years of fight and the failed negotiation efforts, and the organization still holds the capacity to inflict cost compared to other organizations.

When the evolution of conflicts reviewed, we see that in all three cases, there had been failed peace initiatives that resulted in no deal at the end. It is common between these insurgent groups that they used ceasefire periods and concessions given by the respective governments, as an opportunities to close the power gap, to gain strength or build up for future battle with the government. In a similar manner, they ended these periods by accusing governments of being disrespectful to the terms of the deal.

If we take the examples of the FARC and the LTTE, both organizations exploited the zones that were granted by their governments, as safe havens where they developed

their military capacities as mentioned earlier (Connable and Libicki, 2010: 117-8). In response to this manner, the governments decided to initiate offensive military campaigns that brought an end of the movements. Similarly, in PKK case, the peace processes between 2013 and 2015 were terminated by the organization after claiming the lives of two Turkish soldiers in late 2015. The PKK accused the government of being disloyal to the peace accord however the subsequent clashes took place in southern provinces of Turkey showed that the organization had been storing weapons and ammunition, quite contrary to what it promised at the beginning of the solution processes.

As mentioned earlier, the negotiations are made in an already fragile environment where the parties of the conflict have a low level of trust against each other. And governments as a stronger party views responding to the demands of insurgents as a sign of weakness that would suggest the weaker side is winning (Connable and Libicki, 2010: 118). Under these circumstances, an indication of non-compliance would automatically mean the end of peace efforts. This is what happened in all cases. After the failure of the peace process between Turkey and the PKK in late 2015, the possibility of a negotiated settlement withered away just like in other cases. The government of Turkey came to the conclusion that military option as an only way to solve the issue.

Following the quick overview of the bargaining experiences of the cases, we can go back to our original question: what are the roles of external actors in these outcomes? The cases both resemble and differ in their reaction to the external actors. **Table 7.2** demonstrates the comparative responses of the cases over the variables suggested in this study.

Table 7.2 Comparison of dependent variables

	PKK	LTTE	FARC
Rebel Capacity	(+)	(+)	(+)
Negotiation Processes	(+)	(+)	Mixed

Note: Plusses represent the score demonstrated by the case on a particular variable.

The negotiation process between the PKK and Turkey cannot be assessed without paying attention to the changes in neighboring countries. Resources that were provided for the PKK contributed to the military or political capacity of the rebels as mentioned earlier. External actors have endangered bargaining environment by constantly boosting the group's ability to inflict cost. The existence of safe havens and continuous support from external actors provide the PKK a lifeline, and as a result, the organization never feels obliged to end its violent activities. This influence can easily be followed by the LTTE case.

The two-party negotiation between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE turned into a complex structure with the involvement of the Indian government with different kinds of assistance. At the beginnings, the Tamil insurgents were not seemed capable to confront with the government forces, and there is power asymmetry between parties. But they quickly adapted and organized thanks to the assistance coming from India. The LTTE members became more encouraged by India's support to reject any government proposal. Thus, reaching a peaceful resolution became more of a distant image. In other words, the parties' "bona fides" were weakened by India's tutelage and its contributions to the resolve and military capacity of the militants such as firepower, training, and intelligence (Wriggins, 1995, pp. 35, 42-44).

When the administration in India was replaced, the policy towards the Tamil insurgents was changed for the fear that it might encourage Indian Tamil minority in southern India similarly. Therefore, a more "neutral" position was taken to break the military stalemate between confronting parties by brokering meetings in 1985. Yet, the LTTE insisted in its demand to merge northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka under the Tamil authority as a separate homeland. So, the deadlock continued. India, on the other hand, enunciated that the Tamil militants are no longer to get Indian support by taking the leaders of the group into custody and seizing their weapons and military equipment.

Efforts to reach a peaceful settlement could have worked at the beginning in convincing the government and the moderate leading figures of Tamil minority and resolving the conflict. However, the prolonged nature of the violent struggle made available concessions to be higher, and the parties more polarized. When the large neighbor, India, engaged in as an active supporter of the LTTE, the political and military capacity of the Tamils increased decisively to survive its attacks on the public. After that

development, the Tamils also became less inclined to agree on a settlement and more insistent on full independence or secession, but nothing less (Wriggins, 2015: 55). The lack of trust was enhanced and reaching a peaceful settlement got complicated further by the shadow of India (Wriggins, 1995: 56).

However, the case of FARC quite different what was expected in the argumentation. Contrary to the suggestion of the hypothesis, the role played by external actors turned to be positive during the peace process. The level of international support was quite prominent compared to other cases. The FARC leadership decided to end its armed campaign and agree to seek a political solution. Therefore, negotiations began between the parties of the conflict which at last resulted in FARC disarmament process. Although the external actors by assisting the organization in its activities led to a decrease in the possibilities of peace and increased in expectations of the FARC regards to the possible outcome, they also played a facilitator role in the negotiation process.

The primary sponsor regime of the FARC, Chavez administration played an "integral" role in enabling peace and bringing the government with the FARC together, which is regarded as "the most difficult part." Hugo Chavez was seen as essential to negotiations and played a significant role in gaining the trust of the FARC and convincing the group to enter into peace talks (Vieira, 2013). Venezuela got affected the violence the FARC caused on many sectors by the presence and incidents related to the group such as drug trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion (Vieira, 2013). Chavez's involvement in the peace process allowed present himself as a "responsible member of the international community" and improve Venezuela's image from being a "rogue state" (Smilde and Pantoulas, 2016). Following Juan Manuel Santos taking office as the new president of Colombia, the relations with Chavez government were improved. The Chavez government changed its FARC policy and increased countermeasures against the group (InSight Crime, 2015).

Venezuela fulfilled the hardest part so that other countries such as Cuba and Norway could walk in as guarantors to the peace. Cuban government together with Norway supported peace talks held in gathering venue-Havana (first assembled in Oslo in 2012, later the moved to Havana permanently) and consolidated the mutual trust between parties. They were also partly responsible for the credibility and fruitful conclusion of the negotiation process. Chavez enabled the FARC negotiator members to transit for

back-channel preliminary talks in Havana, had observer status with the government of Chile in the peace talks. Other Latin American countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia also showed their support for the process.

The above discussion suggests that Venezuela and to some extent the other external states influenced the intrastate conflict between the FARC and the Colombian government changeably. In other words, these actors both helped the FARC boost its capacity to challenge the government in varying degrees and facilitated the negotiated settlement at the same time. Chavez explained this irony and justified their positions in his words: "Who can imagine the possibility of reaching any peace agreement if there is no contact between the confronting parts?"

The complex influence of external actors in the FARC case is illustrated in **Figure 7.1** below. As suggested in this study, external help increases the capacity of insurgent groups and negatively affect the bargaining environment between government and insurgent groups. However, when external state(s) see its assistance began to conflict with its interest and get harmed by the decision of sponsorship, it might decide to change its policy against the insurgent group and play a facilitator role in peace negotiation as in the case of the FARC.
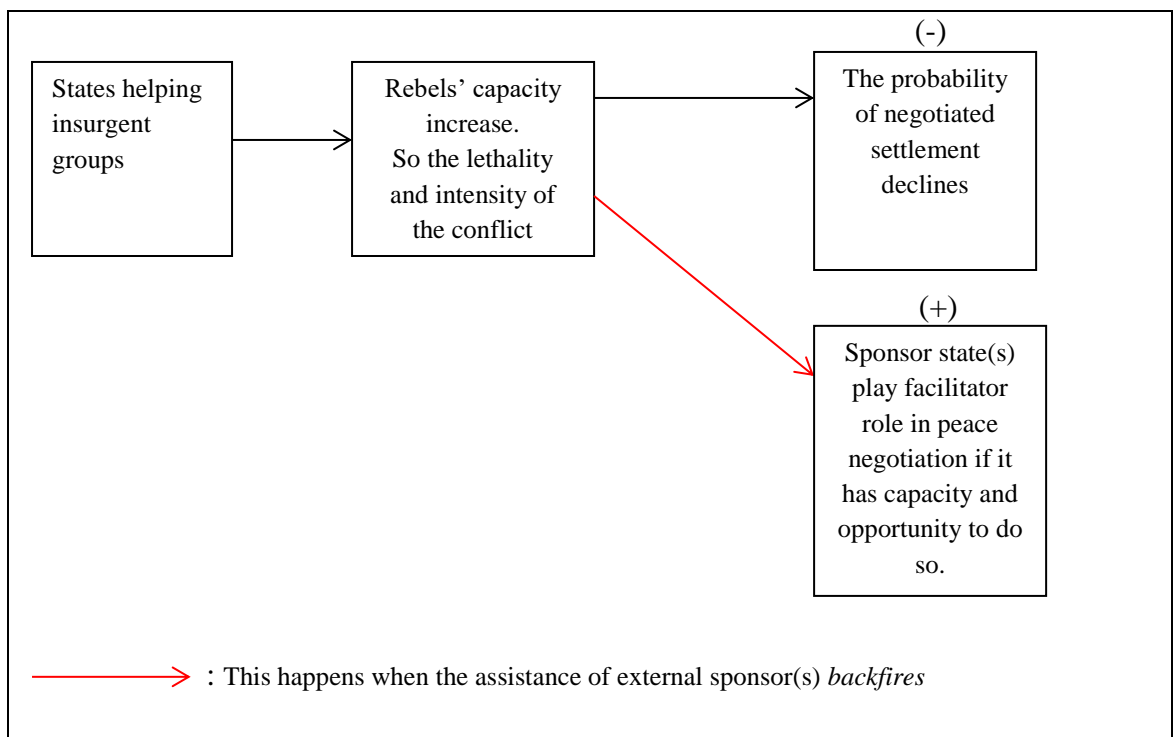

Figure 7.1 Mixed Response of State Assistance

What made it possible for the governments of Sri Lanka and Colombia to end their respective insurgencies and not for the government of Turkey? The key answer to this question is quite related to the level of external support to the governments of Sri Lanka and Colombia that became decisive in combating with the insurgents groups.

Although the governments of Sri Lanka and Colombia were backed by the international community in their counterterrorism efforts, the government of Turkey has never acquired that kind of large scale support from other countries. Indeed, the level of support to both Colombia and Sri Lanka was significant. In the FARC case, the role of the international community was also quite critical. The US together with the European countries both politically and financially assisted the Colombian government's efforts to tackle the FARC's activities. The United Nations played supervisor role in peace negotiations and supported disarming process of the FARC.

In the LTTE case, the government policy to isolate the organization corresponded in many Western countries: all activities of the group were banned, the offices shut down, and the group was recognized as a terrorist organization in 32 countries (Byman et al., 2001; Ranetunge, 2000, p. 3; The National Post, 2000b; The Bangkok Post, 1997; Washington Post, 1999; Daily News, 1999); the US was followed by Canada and the United Kingdom, the European Union. The US, due to its concerns emanating from the 9/11 era, assisted the Sri Lankan government's efforts to cripple the LTTE's offshore network (The Diplomat, 2000). Although the harsh policies of Sri Lankan government and the practice of indiscriminate violence took criticisms from Western countries, the government of Sri Lanka continued to be backed by China until the defeat of the LTTE (Connable and Libicki, 2010, pp. 32, 112).

It is a must for Turkey to end the network of the organization both in Europe and the region and create a network of cooperation through diplomatic channels, in order to eliminate the group. The fight with the PKK should not be seen sustainable both militarily and economically by the government of Turkey. Instead, substantial solutions must be sought to end the group's capacity of violence. Comparative analysis of this study provides some components of a successful counterterrorism strategy. Cutting the supply line and intelligence network of the organization together with its propaganda activities by forming an international cooperation environment both with regional and international actors is a part of military strategy.

On the political side of the spectrum, the government should make clear that the real target of its counterterrorism strategy is the PKK violence, not the Kurdish people itself, by developing embracing discourse to its Kurdish citizens without creating any victimization and leaving any propaganda material for the PKK (also look for, Alptekin, 2018, p. 212; Stohl, 2006, pp. 57-70; Ross and Gurr, 1989, pp.405-426). By selecting military targets vigilantly and avoiding from using disproportionate force together with political and cultural space opened to the Kurdish people, the government would make the PKK both militarily and politically weak and eventually bring its end. Only that kind of counterterrorism strategy which combines military methods (in and outside of Turkey) and political process together may lead to the defeat of the organization.

8. CONCLUSION

This study began with a puzzle that has been long debated by the scholars of conflict studies: How the weak side of interstate conflicts manages to survive and sometimes defeat the stronger side of the conflicts, states. After searching different answers to that, I had the chance to find what is under-researched and still requires further attention in the literature, which is external assistance to non-state actors. Although different scholars appreciated the significance of this factor with their invaluable works (see, Byman et al., 2001; San-Akca, 2016; Salehyan et al., 2011), I realized that conflict studies still lack some in-depth analysis of intra-state conflicts.

External assistance to non-state actors-might be guerillas, insurgents/rebels or terrorists-have certain bearing on the process of internal conflicts. When outside actors decided to involve in these conflicts which take place between government and insurgent group dyad, they complicate the environment and turn dyad into a "triad of complexity." It has been proven by many studies that external involvement works in prolongation of the conflict and negatively affects the behaviors of actors by contributing to commitment problems. (see, Cunningham, 2010; Aydin and Regan, 2011; Regan, 2002; Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 2000). While these works take external involvement as a direct third-party intervention either on the side of government or insurgents, this study went beyond this logic and focused more on the covert engagement between external actors and insurgent groups. Among 181 insurgencies between 1946 and 2015, 148 ones of them (82 % of the total number) benefitted various kinds of outside support in differing degree (Jones, 2017). This shows an important trend that deserves close examination.

Internal conflicts most of the time involve asymmetric warfare since insurgent forces employed irregular tactics to avoid total annihilation. When the power between warring parties incommensurate, insurgent group embarks on a quest for outside help that would change the power ratio decisively in favor of the weaker party. Thus these conflicts are intensified and last longer that expected.

With this consideration in mind, this study sought to uncover how the interaction between external actors and insurgents groups influences the course of the conflicts. In other words, it aimed to address consequences of that kind of relation in real case settings by emphasizing some important factors such as rebel capacity to inflict cost, its

resilience level, and failed efforts of negotiated settlements. By including peace endeavors of warring parties, the study promised to bring military and political environments of internal conflicts together and proposed an inclusive discussion. More importantly, differently from other studies that examined external assistance to insurgent groups by states solely, this work included non-state actors as another external backers since they might play vital roles in insurgents' survival. In addition, by dividing the support of state and non-state actors into different types and forms, the thesis aimed to measure the weight of each on the capacity of the rebels comparatively.

Three main arguments presented at the beginning of Chapter 3, pertaining to the external assistance in asymmetric conflicts. To summarize my findings and discuss the implications, I present them here once again. As an answer to my research question, "how the external actors affect the course of asymmetric conflict" I hypothesized that:

H1: External assistance to the insurgencies whether it is active or passive, negatively affects intrastate conflicts which are marked by power asymmetry.

> *H1a: External backing enhances rebels' ability to inflict cost on government, makes them more resilient, and helps them survive against the assaults of government.*

> *H1b: External involvements complicate negotiation dynamics between warring parties.*

As we can see, some important factors have been hypothesized to have a causal connection to the course of conflicts. The hypothesized relationships between external assistance and insurgents war-fighting capacity were elaborated in the light of three different case studies of the 21st century. The aim was to establish the relative impact of external assistance on each individual cases. These are the PKK, the LTTE, and the FARC that were able to survive against the government they fought against for a long period of time. Through seeking causal logic through case studies, I have found that external actors have a critical role in the conflict processes of all three cases.

8.1. EVIDENCE FROM CASES

Different cases in this study were to bring analytical input to the understanding of the conflict studies through empirical evidence or specific information on calculations and

motivations of insurgent groups proposed by the above-stated hypotheses. In order words, by employing comparative case study I have been able to test suggested assumptions designed with different factors preserving the possibility of falsification in three different cases.

The following discussion presents the comparative level of existence of the variables in the cases. In 3 cases that I have examined in this study, the external assistance seems to have considerable implications in the courses of the conflicts. As shown in Table 7.1, the organizations all managed to acquire outside help in similar forms during their insurgencies. However, there is also variation between these three in terms of the type of actors they get help from and the form of assistance they acquire. While some of them stand out with certain forms, the other benefits less compared to them. For instance, while some of them enjoy direct intentional state support, other distinguishes by its ability to exploit opportunities stemming from the external environment. Regardless, all three cases converge on the idea that the insurgent groups owed to the outside actors (either state or nonstate) for their survival to a certain extent. They countered power asymmetry which favors the stronger side of the conflict, by establishing an external network of assistance with a differing degree.

If we go to more detailed analysis, we see that while the capacity and survival level are strongly represented in all cases, the second dependent variable peace efforts are present in two of the cases, the PKK and the LTTE, except the FARC whose negotiation process followed a different trajectory. In that case, the effects of external actors are mixed. A peaceful settlement became possible through the very same external states that once supported the FARC at a considerable level, such as Venezuela and Cuba. This falsifies one of my hypothesis related to the external actors' negative roles in the peaceful settlement of intra-state conflicts. However, the reason of why this case responded like that is very much related to the backfire effects of external sponsorship which I elaborated in the analysis section.

When it comes to the PKK, we know that it still holds the capacity to inflict cost compared to other organizations. Yet, its reluctance to lay down its arms and end its terrorist activities largely stems from the fact that the organization still has a significant level of external support both in the political level and in military terms. External actors by supplying the PKK with sanctuary, logistics, political backing, and financial

resources, provide the group the freedom of action and thereby the low probability of military defeat. The PKK, reducing the cost of war thanks to its sponsors, sees a higher marginal utility in fighting and less willing to negotiate. This is more or less what happened in the case of the LTTE. The LTTE members became more encouraged by India's support to reject any government proposal for a settlement many times, which eventually led to its eradication by the government forces. Although the Indian government altered its policy regarding the Tamil Tigers and sided with the government in its efforts for a settlement, the damage had been done and the parties' "bona fides" had been weakened by India's contribution to the group's capacity.

8.2. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The case studies and the arguments introduced in this study have some value with regard to conflict studies, especially to the asymmetric conflicts. This study methodologically embraced the approach of theory testing rather than a theory building one. External support as an enabler of insurgents' survival has been covered by different scholars, and I aimed to test arguments in the lights of evidence provided from three different cases to confirm or refute its validity. The relevance of this study is that it provided close exploration instead of the superficial treatment of outside help by widening understanding of external actors and various forms of assistance. It aimed to figure out how the mechanism works, presented an observation on how the interaction between external actors and rebel groups took place and how the behaviors of the actors are shaped by this particular interaction during the complex conflict processes.

Although each conflict has its own characteristics, the study reached some generalizations: insurgents groups have a good reason to find external backers since they help these groups redress power asymmetry. Comparative analysis of the cases has also led some realizations: the influence of external actors might not be the same for negotiated settlements of the intra-state conflicts. By tracing peace processes of the conflicts, I have been able to discover "mixed response" of external assistance on peace efforts (go to Figure 7.2). When the support to insurgents groups by external actors, (in this condition states), begins to have consequences or becomes dangerous for themselves, they choose to shift their position against these insurgent groups in a

negative way. I called this "backfire effect" because of repercussions caused by these groups. External states if they adopt an attitude favoring insurgents, led insurgents to increase their expected utility, and thus they complicate negotiation environment. However, when their assistance backlashes against their interests, they might play a facilitator role in peace negotiations as illustrated in the case of the FARC. The countries like Venezuela and Cuba which were once in the forefront of supplying the organization are the very same ones that brought the FARC militants in negotiation table and convinced them to end their violence, because of increasing threats and international pressure about the issue.

This effect does not apply to the non-state backers as far as the study concerns. It might be related to the fact that these actors are not operating within the structure states do and the nature of their relations with insurgents groups is quite distinct compared to the states. Beyond doubt that they play a significant role in rebels' ability to survive; however the possibility of backlash is much lower since they have ideological affinity to these groups (sympathizers such as diaspora communities, wealthy individuals) or business relations based on profits and mutual interests (criminal organizations such as arms dealers and drug cartels). Supporter states, too, might have an ideological affinity to the insurgent group in question arising from ethnicity, religion or ideological disposition, but since the risks are higher for them, they have to make loss and profit accounts before deciding to assist the group. To give an example, the Venezuelan government that had common ideological disposition with the FARC, chose to support the group as a strategic move against the interference of the United States (also see, Jones, 2017, pp. 156-157).

As a conceptual contribution, this study brought two types of external actors assisting insurgents groups together to measure the effect of external interaction truly, which is evaluated in separate works as state supporters and non-state supporters. Beside that, by combining different forms of support that insurgent groups acquire, the study highlighted relative significance of them for different insurgent organizations.

In a nutshell, I tried to cover some important elements of external assistance in this thesis. The cases I chose proved and validated the significance of that factors for rebel groups in intrastate conflicts. The cases study also confirmed that closed polity approach towards these conflicts that exclude the outside aspects are not sufficient to

explain behaviors of actors and the conflict processes. To assess asymmetric wars fully, one should consider the external dynamics as it can be clearly seen from the cases of this thesis covered.

8.3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The analysis in this work shows some key policy implications for governments that suffer from rebel violence. One can see the significance of external actors from the above-stated discussion and more importantly evidence provided from the cases studies. Considering that, it can be argued that the success of a counterterrorism strategy largely contingent upon the government ability to isolate the group as much as possible from any external interaction. Because the nature of the war is asymmetric and insurgents like living organism depend on the resources provided by the external environment, therefore if one aims to end them, it should begin with cutting supply line and removing living spaces which they somewhat benefit from. However, the military success of the strategy is not promising without necessary political and diplomatic channels. A government in combating insurgents or terrorists would require the legitimacy and international support as cases the LTTE, and the FARC suggest. The role of the international community in the Colombian government efforts to tackle the FARC was remarkable. Thanks to the government wise framing policy of the organization with its drug and kidnapping activities, there was a quite strong diplomatic backing behind the Colombian government. In the case of the LTTE, although the Sri Lankan government applied to indiscriminate violence and the gruesome methods to eradicate the group and came under the criticisms of the international community, it was able to cut the loose under the favor of China diplomatic backing.

The evidence from these two cases (with reservations for the Sri Lankan brutal conduct) demonstrate some important elements for an efficient counterterrorism strategy. Defeating the determined rebel groups are challenging task. Therefore, a military plan that is designed to confine the insurgent group in the battlefield might succeed only if it is incorporated with a meaningful political strategy which includes a wise framing policy and strengthening the case of yours to gain legitimacy and backing of other states.

8.4. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study might be extended or improved through subsequent works in many ways. First of all, this research covers a limited amount of cases and cannot provide enough variation to provide a more nuanced discussion of asymmetric conflicts because of time and space constraints. The insurgent groups of this thesis were chosen in terms of the range of external assistance they managed to acquire to show how the mechanism works. However, there could be additional kind of insurgent groups other than the ethno-nationalist and revolutionary ones such as religiously motivated movement. Thus, we would have an idea about whether the trend suggested in this thesis, is valid or not for them, how they differ when it comes to the type of actors or forms of assistance they obtain. Future research might combine all kinds of insurgent organizations together for a close examination and provide relevant insights into the conflict studies.

The second suggestion that calls for further studies is about the relative efficiency of different external actors for rebels' capacity. A mixed study that incorporates the statistical analysis of large data with in-depth case study might develop more knowledge about their comparative role of external actors for insurgent groups.

Last but not least, preliminary findings of the mixed responses for the external influence in negotiation processes might be confirmed or falsified through further evidence provided by future research. Do the sponsorship states really change their assistance policy in the face of backlash or increasing threats to its interests? What are the possibilities for non-state actors? To my opinion, these questions definitely ask for future investigation. Although my work does not have a chance to seek an answer for these above-stated proposals, I believe that it opened a new venue for future research which would bear fruitful results in regards to the scholarship.

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